

AFC Spring Kick-Off Tournament Rules

1. GAME RULES

Tournament shall be governed by FIFA Laws of the Game as modified by US Club Soccer and as further modified herein.

2. SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is required of teams, officials, and spectators at all times. Coaches and managers are responsible for the conduct of their team's players, parents, and other affiliated spectators.

A coach may not enter the field of play except on a referee's signal. Coaches, players, and spectators shall not harangue, harass, or attempt to distract players or referees. Offensive, insulting, and abusive language will not be tolerated. Breaking these rules will result in a warning, to be followed by ejection if the unacceptable behavior does not stop immediately. Appropriate disciplinary action will be determined by the Tournament Director.

3. CREDENTIALS

US Club or USYS passes are required for all players and coach and coaches as described in tournament registration materials.

For Guest player info and Max number of players who can be dressed for any match – See table below.

At each game, teams must have these documents available for inspection if required:

- Valid Player Passes. 2024/2025
- Medical release form for each player, with an original signature by a parent or guardian
- Guest/Loan forms for the guest player(s)

A player may not play for more than one team in the same age division of competition. In the case that an illegible player is deemed to have played, there will be a forfeit loss for the team that has breached the rules.

4. TEAM AGE

The teams' age in this tournament is the 2024/2025 season age – Calendar Age Matrix.

5. TOURNAMENT CHECK-IN

Failure to perform online check-in by Thursday Noon will result in ONE POINT deduction from the team's total. In addition, the team will have to perform on-site check-in on Saturday morning.

ACCEPTANCE, PLACEMENT IN DIVISIONS, BRACKETS, QUALIFYING FOR QUARTER-FINAL, SEMI-FINALS, CHAMPIONSHIP, & CONSOLATION GAMES

6. TEAMS ACCEPTANCE AND PLACEMENT IN DIVISIONS AND BRACKETS

Teams will be accepted based on prior results/records. Teams' placement in divisions and brackets is based on rankings and seeding as determined by the Tournament Director. Specific Division applications are not accepted. Withdrawal due to disagreement with the placement will not entitle the team to any refund. Adjacent age groups may be grouped in the same division. Mixed levels may also be grouped in bigger divisions that will incorporate specific level Champions.

7. TOURNAMENT POINTS AWARDED IN POOL PLAY

Points will be awarded to teams for preliminary matches (same as group play) as follows:

- 6 points for a win
- 3 points for a tie
- 0 points for a loss
- 1 point for each goal scored up to a maximum of 3 goals per game
- 1 point for winning teams who shutout their opponents (including a 0-0 tie)
- 9 points for the winning team in the event of a forfeit (2-0)
- 0 points for both teams if both teams forfeit
- 1 point will be deducted from the team's total for each red card (ejection) issued to a player
- 2 points will be deducted from the team's total for each red card (ejection) issued to a coach or manager

8. TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES – TOURNAMENT POINTS

If teams have the same number of points at the end of preliminary games and this affects placement in playoff games, ties will be resolved using these criteria in the order shown below:

1. Head-to-head competition results
2. Most total wins
3. Goal differential (goals scored less goals allowed) with a maximum of 6 GD per game
4. Most goals scored (maximum of 6 per game)
5. Fewest goals allowed
6. Most total shutouts
7. Fewest red card ejections
8. If both teams are present at the field when the tie is determined - Penalty kicks as described by FIFA and modified for this event until a winner is determined.
9. Coin toss by the Tournament Director or member of the Tournament Committee at Tournament Headquarters.

9. POST BRACKET PLAY PAIRING

In divisions with quarter-finals, semi-finals or any other pairing, criteria for team placement will be as specified in each division's schedule. Teams that have already played each other in preliminary games will not play each other in these games (including quarter-finals and semi-finals) if avoidable. If required to prevent this situation, the re-pairing will match the highest-point qualifier with the lowest-point qualifier that it did not play in preliminary games(i.e. Only the lowest-point qualifiers will be swapped. Under no circumstances the top seeds (S1/S2 in Semis and S1-S4 in QFs will be paired in these games).

10. LOGISTICS

Teams will set up on the side of the field designated by field marshals, with spectators on the opposite side. Spectators are not allowed on the goal ends of the fields. Each team must have at least one properly credentialed adult present on the sidelines of each match.

11. GAME INFORMATION

Age	Format	Game Length	Number of Refs	Max # of players dressed for game	# of Guests Allowed
U8-U10	7v7	2 x 20 minutes	1	16	5
U11-U12	9v9	2 x 25 minutes	1 or 3	18	6

12. HOME TEAM

The team listed first on the schedule for the preliminary round of games will be the Home Team. For Championship and Consolation games, the team determined by the preset Play-off template will be the Home Team. In the event that both teams have the same colored jerseys, the Home Team will switch to alternate jerseys as determined by the referee. To simplify matters, we strongly suggest the Home Team wear a dark color and the visitor wear a light color.

13. GAME START

All games will start at the scheduled time. Teams must report to the Field Marshal 30 minutes before each game for check-in. If a team has not taken the field with at least 5(7v7), 7(9v9) or 8(11v11) players within 5 minutes of a scheduled game time, the game will be forfeited to the team with at least minimum number of players in attendance.

All preliminary games will be called not less than five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled start of the following game, regardless of the amount of time played up to that point. A game is "complete" upon completion of at least 15 minutes of play regardless of the circumstances of termination. Final results will be based on the score at the time the game is called unless the termination is due to a team's misbehavior. Preliminary games can end in a tie.

14. HALF TIME

Half Time will be exactly 5 minutes. Field Marshals may alter the length of any game at their discretion. Except for Championship & Consolation Games, games tied at the end of regulation time will be recorded as ties.

15. TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES FOR GAMES

Semi-final, 3rd Place Consolation game (or other games that must produce a winner) that end in a tie will go directly to penalty kicks as described by FIFA until a winner is determined. If Championship game ends in a tie in regulation time, two 5-minute overtime periods will be played (with no rest period between them). *Golden Goal rule will apply.* If the game is still tied after the overtime periods, both teams will take penalty kicks as described by FIFA until a winner is determined. Only the players who are on the field at the end of the last overtime period may participate in the penalty kick shootout.

16. SUSPENDED and TERMINATED GAMES

Tournament Officials may suspend and/or terminate games for reason. If a game is terminated, the game may be resumed at the discretion of Tournament officials, but is subject to ending five (5) minutes prior to the next scheduled game start. If a game is terminated due to field issues, or due to the serious injury of a player, play may be resumed at the discretion of the Tournament officials.

Tournament officials may also conclude the game, require completion of the game, or utilize penalty kicks to determine the winner of the game, depending upon the circumstance. If in the opinion of Tournament officials, a game must be terminated due to the serious or violent misconduct of players, coaches, or spectators; the offending team may be immediately suspended from further play and all remaining games. All previous points earned remain as played. Additionally, the home league, State Association and/or US Club will be contacted as appropriate.

Delays of game will only be allowed for an injury to a player that is unable to be moved from the field and/or requiring professional medical attention. Primary regard will be to the safety of the injured player. The delay will result in appropriate time being added to the full game time, based on the judgment of the referee. Preliminary games shall not be extended to affect game start of the next game as described herein. If more than a quarter of preliminary game cannot be completed due to a serious injury suspending game play, the game shall be determined by penalty kicks.

EXTERNAL CONDITIONS, WEATHER, ETC.

The tournament organizers cannot control the weather, field conditions or any other acts of God but will work very hard to deal with such situations if they occur prior or during the tournament.

In case of such an act of God or inclement weather, one or more of the following may occur:

Matches may be shortened, halves may be shortened, matches may be rescheduled, matches may go to PKs, some matches or the entire event may be cancelled.

17. SUBSTITUTIONS

Unlimited substitutions during a game are allowed at the discretion of the referee:

- Prior to any restart

18. SPECIAL RULES FOR SMALL-SIDED DIVISIONS

The tournament will follow the US Soccer Player Development Initiatives rules except for NO HEADING RULE WILL APPLY to all games U11 (2014) and below. Heading will be allowed at U12 (2013) age group.

19. EJECTIONS and CAUTIONS

A player, parent or coach who has been ejected in a single game shall not return for that game and will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game. Two yellow cards send-offs may be reviewed and the 1 game automatic suspension may be waived at the discretion of the Tournament Disciplinary Committee.

Ejections will be reviewed by the Tournament Disciplinary Committee and may result in a more severe penalty, including additional game suspensions in the tournament and potentially contacting of club, league, and playing association for additional penalties.

Fighting by players, violent conduct or harassment of referees by players, coaches, parents or spectators will be considered serious misconduct.

Each ejection will result in a cumulative **deduction** from the team's tournament points. Ejection of a player will result in a **1-point deduction** & any ejection of a coach, team official or a team-affiliated spectator will result in a **2-point deduction** from the team's tournament points.

Coaches and Team Officials are fully responsible for the behavior of the players and parents.

20. DISPUTES and PROTESTS

Game conduct is under the total jurisdiction of the referee. The tournament will not overrule a referee's decision. All game results will be considered final. No protests will be allowed.

21. FORFEIT and BYES

All teams that forfeit will have the game(s) scored a 0-2 loss. The winner will be awarded nine (9) tournament points (six for the win, two for 2 goals and one for a shutout). Teams failing to report ready to play within five minutes of the scheduled kick off time will forfeit.

The tournament organizers have no financial responsibility to compensate a team whose opponent forfeits. Any team that has forfeited a game can not advance to final or consolation competition.

22. GAME BALLS

Game balls will be provided by the Home Team and are subject to Referee approval.

23. PLAYER EQUIPMENT

The following restrictions will apply:

- a. **CLEATS** - Players shall only wear soccer cleats or turf field shoes. No metal studs are allowed on turf fields.
- b. **SHINGUARDS** - Shinguards are required for all games. They must be worn properly and shall be professionally manufactured and unaltered.
- c. **CASTS and SPLINTS** - All players, coaches, parents, and referees are required to take reasonable precautions concerning player safety. This includes preventing players from wearing any equipment or device that is dangerous to themselves or others. Dangerous equipment and devices include, but are not limited to, orthopedic casts, air splints, or metal splints. Players wearing any dangerous equipment or device including orthopedic casts, air splints, or metal splints, shall not be eligible to participate in any tournament game.
- d. **BRACES** - It is strongly recommended for safety reasons that a player not wear a limb brace during tournament play. A brace may be allowed at discretion of the referee if, in his/her opinion, it would not pose a danger to any players. The brace must be properly covered for the entire match. Elastic-type supports without any metal, carbon fiber, and hard plastic or like devices are permitted, provided the referee does not deem the support to be potentially harmful to other players.
- e. **EYEGLASSES** - Players who must wear eyeglasses are encouraged to wear sports goggles. Any glasses worn must be safe, with unbreakable lenses and frames made of unbreakable plastic or sturdy metal.
- f. **JEWELRY** - Except for Medical Alert Warning Bracelets (which are to be taped as necessary), absolutely no jewelry may be worn while participating in any tournament play.

24. ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELDS, NO LOITERING

The artificial turf field rules are typically posted at the entrance to the fields. No food will be allowed onto the fields, particularly seeds or

any kind or gum. Please ensure that your team and the parents are aware of these restrictions and guidelines. Tournament staff will be observing that these rules are followed. Anyone caught disregarding these rules can be ejected from the facility by tournament staff and/or the field marshals.

At the conclusion of your games, please collect and dispose of all garbage generated by your team in trash receptacle or in the garbage bag provided by the Tournament. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

25. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Alcoholic beverages at all tournament venues are prohibited, without exception.

26. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

All injuries shall be reported to the Tournament Director or Field Marshal so that an Accident Report Form can be completed. In case of serious injury, Emergency Services (911) will be called if requested by the referee or the player, coach, manager or parent. Tournament Headquarters will be notified of the medical emergency.

27. WITHDRAWAL, CANCELATION, REFUNDS

Withdrawal request must be made in writing and addressed to the Tournament Director.

Withdrawal requests made after the registration deadline but prior to acceptance will be assessed a \$100 administrative fee.

Withdrawal after the team has been accepted will result in loss of the entire registration fee. Late applications will be assessed a \$75 late application penalty.

In the event of inclement weather, winners will be decided based on tournament points earned up to then for those games that have been completed or begun, with tie breakers determined as described elsewhere in these rules. Once the event begins, no refunds will be given. If the event is cancelled before the first game, teams will be given a partial refund. A percentage of the entry fee not to exceed 20% will be retained by the tournament to cover the start-up and fixed costs associated with the event.

The tournament organizers are not responsible for any expenses incurred by any team in the event the tournament is cancelled in whole or part or in the event games are shortened or cancelled due to inclement weather, adverse field conditions and other acts of God.

28. RULES CHANGES

The Tournament Director may alter these rules as necessary at any time prior to the start of the Tournament and such changes will be final and no appeal will be accepted. Any rule changes will be announced shortly after they were made or at the team check-in.

29. OTHER

Any situation not covered by these rules will be resolved by the Tournament Director who reserves the right to decide all matters pertaining to the tournament not specified within this document. The judgment of the Tournament Director is final.