

COLUMBUS SOCCER

TOURNAMENT RULES

REFUND POLICY

If withdrawing after registering for the tournament, a refund will only be given if a replacement team is found by the withdrawing team. Should all or a portion of our tournament be canceled due to just cause or should teams not play three games as the result of the tournament being shortened or cancelled, minimum refunds will be made as follows: No games played – 60% of the total cost; one game played – 40% of the total cost; two games played – 20% of the total cost. Games will be considered played when completed in regulation time, shortened time, or shootouts.

LAWS OF PLAY

The FIFA Laws of the Game will govern play, except where amended by US Youth Soccer and Nebraska State Soccer Association Rules of Play, and/or the Tournament Rules. These rules may be modified before the beginning of tournament play. The final Tournament Rules will be published and made available to teams prior to the event.

- For **U8 and younger divisions**, these rules will apply:
 1. Games will be played 5v5, with no goalkeepers
 2. The ball will be thrown-in when it crosses the touch line and kicked in (goal kick/corner kick) when it crosses the goal line
 3. There will be no offside in the U8 Division
 4. The center line will serve as the build-out line for U8 division and younger games.

- For **U9 and U10 divisions**, these rules will apply:
 1. The build-out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called
 2. Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the midfield line and the build out line
 3. Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and the opposing goal line
 4. Attacking team must retreat to the build-out line for all goal kicks or any time the goalkeeper secures the ball with his/her hands. Attacking team is not permitted to cross the build-out line until the ball is put in play by the defending team. In the event the defending team “plays fast” and puts the ball in play before the attacking team can retreat to the build-out line, the attacking team is permitted to begin pressuring the ball from their current positions on the field.
 5. Goalkeepers are not allowed to punt or drop-kick the ball.

ELIGIBILITY

All Nebraska players must be registered with the Nebraska State Soccer Association (NSSA). All Out of State teams must have proper Travel Papers (Application to Travel) authorized by their governing organization. Each player must have a valid player pass with current photo and must have a signed medical release form. Each player must be available for identification by the referee prior to each game. Each coach must have a coach pass if they intend to be in the team technical area by the field during the match.

Players are permitted to play for more than one team, so long as they are not in the same age division and they are included on the roster at the time of check-in before the tournament begins play.

ROSTER LIMIT

- U8: Up to 10 rostered players
- U9/U10: Up to 14 rostered players
- U11/U12: Up to 18 rostered players
- U13 & up: Up to 22 rostered players

Teams may include up to three guest players for the U8 division, or up to five guest players for the U9 through U19 divisions. Roster limits cannot be exceeded with the use of guest players. Guest players must be the same age as the team registered. Once a team is checked in, the roster is complete. A team will forfeit any game in which an ineligible player participates and will not be allowed in the championship or consolation games. Rostered Secondary Players will be checked for team conflicts.

HOME TEAM

The team listed first in all rounds on the schedule will be the home team. The home team will be responsible for wearing the lighter color jersey, while the visitor team will wear a darker jersey. In the event of conflict, the home team will be responsible for wearing an alternate color jersey. Teams will use the side of the field with team benches and canopies. If a technical area is marked at the field, coaches, team personnel, and players must remain within the technical area during play.

Spectators will use the side of the field opposite of the teams. Spectators found on the team side of the field will be asked to return to the other side of the field. Players, coaches, and spectators are reminded that there is to be no standing anywhere behind the goal line (behind the goal, touchline to touchline). Spectators are to remain behind the spectator line, if so marked, or else approximately ten feet back from the touch line.

PLAYING CONDITIONS

Teams will be expected to play according to the schedule of games regardless of weather. Only the Tournament Director, or designated representative, may reschedule games or alter the competitive format because of inclement weather or other just cause. All games will be required to go into a 30-minute lightning delay any time lightning is detected within ten miles of the soccer complex. The 30-minute clock will reset for each lightning strike within the ten-mile radius.

Games shall be considered complete if one half of the game is completed and the Field Representative, Referee, Referee Assignor, Tournament Director, or designated representative stops play. When necessitated by playing conditions or other just cause, the game format may be altered to include shortening of games, penalty kicks, or coin tosses.

SCORING METHOD

Bracket winners will be determined by the following point system: Maximum points per game are three (3). Maximum goal differential is four (4).

- **Win = 3 (three) points, Tie = 1 (one) point, Loss = 0 (zero) points.**
- **Player or coach red card = Loss of one point for each dismissal.**

A team that forfeits a game will give up three (3) points to the declared winner of the game. The match will be scored as a 1-0 victory for the declared winner. Any team forfeiting a match shall not advance to the semifinal round or to the championship match.

TIEBREAKERS

If at the conclusion of bracket play, two or more teams have the same point total, the following tiebreakers will be used in the order listed until a team is eliminated. Once a team is eliminated, advancement among the remaining teams shall again be determined by the tiebreakers in the order listed starting with head-to-head competition.

1. **Winner of Head-to-Head Competition.** (This criterion is NOT used if more than two teams are tied).
2. **Goal Differential** (MAXIMUM 4-goal differential per game)
3. **Fewest Goals Allowed**
4. **Most Shutouts**
5. **Most Goals For**
6. **Fewest Red Cards**
7. **Kicks from the penalty mark**

WATER BREAKS

In hot conditions, the Tournament Director may require water breaks for player safety. If not required by the Tournament Director, the referee may still ask both teams if a water break is wanted and if at least one team wants the break, there will be a water break for that game (running clock). Players may be substituted after checking in at the flag and being acknowledged by the referee.

RED CARDS AND EJECTIONS

Any player or coach who receives a red card or is otherwise ejected from the game must immediately leave the area of all playing fields and the player or coach shall not return to the area of the playing fields until the game from which he/she was ejected has been completed. Any ejected player or coach will automatically be prohibited from participating in the team's next game. At the discretion of the Tournament Director(s), the suspension may be increased and could result in ineligibility for more than one game.

The player or coach pass will be retained by the referee and turned over to the Tournament Director after the game has been completed. The player or coach must report to the Tournament Director after the completion of the match from which he/she was ejected to determine his/her status for future games. Decisions will be based upon the rules of the Nebraska State Soccer Association, the sanctioning organization for the tournament. If it is a player that is ejected, the coach must accompany the player when he/she reports to the Tournament Director.

Physical assault of a referee will result in **criminal charges** being filed, and possible civil action against the offender.

GRACE PERIOD

A game may begin if a minimum number of players are present. The minimum number of players for the U8 age group is four (4), five (5) players for U9-U12 age groups, and seven (7) players for the U13 and older age groups. A (10) ten-minute grace period shall be extended beyond the scheduled kick off time if the minimum number of players are not available at the scheduled kick off time. If a delay is in effect while a team is waiting for players, that team must begin play immediately upon the arrival of the minimum required number of players. If at the end of the 10-minute grace period the team still does not have the minimum required number of players, the referee shall declare the game suspended and report the failure of the team to appear to the Tournament Director or his/her designated representative. The Tournament Director (or designated representative) may declare a forfeit.

UNIFORM

Each player will wear an official uniform with a unique number on the back of the jersey. The goalkeeper is not required to have a number on his/her jersey. Players must wear a shirt at all times while on the sidelines or on the playing field. All players must wear shin guards that are properly sized, and the referee has the right to request that players put on shin guards that are sized properly.

Players are not allowed to swap jerseys once a contest has begun, unless directed to do so by the referee (blood on uniform, etc.). Each player must have their own uniform that matches the rest of their team. Players who are not properly equipped will not be allowed to participate in the match. Violations may result in dismissal from the game (red card) for the player and/or coach or a forfeit of the match by the offending team.

BALL

The home team shall supply two game balls. The Referee must approve the ball for play and may also ask the away team to provide a ball. The ball size is designated in the chart below.

CASTS, SPLINTS, or BRACES

A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to him or herself or another player. Cast, splints and braces of any type fall under the determination of the Referee if it is safe. If allowing the cast, splint, or brace to be padded can make the equipment safe, then the player shall be allowed to play. The Referee has the final determination if any equipment is safe for play or safe to the players on the field.

SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions must be made from the center flag with the consent of the referee. Substitutions are allowed for either team any time the ball is out of play in the U8 through U12 age groups. For the U13 and older age groups, substitutions are allowed prior to your throw-in or either team's goal kick, after a goal is scored by either team, during a stoppage of play for an injury, and in accordance with the Laws of the Game. A player who is cautioned (shown a yellow-card) may be substituted for, before the restart of play, with the Referee's permission. Substitution of a player receiving a caution is not mandatory.

BALL SIZE, GAME LENGTH, OVERTIME PROCEDURES, AND NUMBER OF PLAYERS

AGE GROUP	BALL SIZE	GAME LENGTH	OVERTIME PROCEDURES	PLAYERS
U8	3	TWO (2) 20 MINUTE HALVES	N/A	5V5 (No GK)
U9 & U10	4	TWO (2) 25 MINUTE HALVES	(1)	7V7
U11 & U12	4	TWO (2) 30 MINUTE HALVES	(1)	9V9
U13 & U14	5	TWO (2) 35 MINUTE HALVES	(1)	11V11
U15 & up	5	TWO (2) 35 MINUTE HALVES	(1)	11V11

(1) Overtime procedures will be in effect for Semi-final and Championship matches. If a Semi-final or Championship match remains tied at the completion of regulation, both teams will immediately proceed to a shootout.

SHOOT-OUTS (PENALTY KICKS)

Penalty kicks will be used to determine the winner of tie breakers. Championship matches will be run in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game. The Referee chooses the goal at which the kicks will be taken. **The Referee tosses a coin and the team who wins the toss will have the choice of kicking first or last.** The home team will call the coin toss.

Both teams take five kicks; the teams take kicks alternately. **Any player on the field at conclusion of overtime is allowed to kick.** A different player must take each kick. Each coach will identify to the referee the numbers of his/her first five kickers. If before both teams have taken five kicks, one team has scored more goals than the other team could score even if it were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks are taken.

If after five kicks the score remains tied, the coach will identify a second set of five players to kick. Teams will alternate kickers, and kicks will continue until one team has scored one goal more than the other (sudden death) from the same number of kicks.

AWARDS

- U8 Age Group - Participation awards to all players.
- U9-U19 Age Groups - Player awards will be given to each player on the teams finishing first and second.

TEAM, PLAYERS AND COACHES CREDENTIAL

All team coaches and players must be affiliated with the U.S. Youth Soccer. Player and coach passes will be checked prior to each match. Teams must be properly checked in at the team check-in. All teams must have U.S. Youth Soccer Players Passes with photographs attached and signed. All player and coach passes shall be laminated.

TEAM WARMUPS

Teams are not allowed to warm up in the goal area.

TEAM DISCIPLINE

A coach is responsible for the words and actions of his players and their fans. Verbal abuse of opponents, referees, or others by players, coaches, or spectators will not be tolerated. Violations may result in dismissal of the coach, forfeiture of the game, and/or expulsion from the tournament. All abuse will be reported to the Nebraska State Soccer Association for additional action.

PROTESTS

No protests toward referees are allowed, and referee abuse will not be tolerated. Please contact the Tournament Director with any concerns.