

# SUBURBAN FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

## Proposed Rules and Administrative Items for the Spring 2010 Season

(Adopted March \_\_, 2010)

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# SUBURBAN FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

## Rules and Administrative Items for the Spring 2010 Season

### I. PURPOSE

- A. The Suburban Friendship League (SFL) was established to coordinate and provide competitive soccer amongst the various house league teams who desire to compete with teams from other clubs. Although limited travel is involved, the teams in the SFL are recreational teams as defined by the United States Youth Soccer Association and travel or *select* players may not participate.
- B. The SFL is set up and run “**For the GOOD of the PLAYERS**” first and foremost in all actions taken.
- C. The SFL recognizes that each soccer club has different operating procedures and that this is healthy for the league. The clubs are expected to adhere to their appropriate state soccer association (such as the Virginia Youth Soccer Association) guidelines and rules; their own operating procedures; and provide guidance, cooperation and, if necessary, discipline in carrying out the SFL’s requirements. The SFL Commissioner and SFL Age Group Commissioners are given authority to adjust to the various operating procedure differences, if it is in the best interest of the organization. A member’s club procedures and rules may be more stringent, but not any less stringent than those imposed by the SFL.
  1. The SFL shall be notified in writing if a club does not comply with any rules and regulations issued by their applicable state soccer association.
  2. Payment of the team registration fee signifies that the club (1) is in compliance with applicable state soccer association rules and regulations, (2) has properly registered all players playing in SFL scheduled games with the applicable state association, and (3) agrees to abide by the rules imposed by the SFL.

### II. PLAYER REGISTRATION, TEAM ROSTERS, AND ROSTER CHALLENGES

- A. A youth league player must be registered with an associated club, who registers them with the appropriate state soccer association (such as the Virginia Youth Soccer Association) and meet their requirements for being a recreational or house player. A player, therefore, cannot be on a select or travel team and participate in the SFL during the same season.
  1. If a player played on a travel or select team during the previous season, the player should complete SFL Form 3 (Players No Longer Playing Travel or Select Soccer). This form should also be signed by the Coach and SFL Club Representative. A copy should be mailed to the SFL Age Group Commissioner with the original maintained by the coach. Players appearing on this form and complying with its certifications are not considered travel or select players.
  2. If a question is raised on whether a player should be considered a recreational player the definition used by the United States Youth Soccer Association shall be used.
- B. As stated in Section I, PURPOSE, the SFL Commissioner and SFL Age Group Commissioners can make adjustments in unique situations to accommodate the various club rules. The ruling must be in the best interest of the *players and the league*.

1 C. A player must meet the USSF birth date requirements for their age group.  
2

3 1. The club may allow a player to play in an age group older than the player (commonly  
4 referred to as playing up) but cannot play in a younger age group (playing down).  
5

6 a. It is up to the club to assign players to teams in accordance with the SFL policy and  
7 guidelines for age groups and divisions. These guidelines can be found at our web site  
8 ([www.sflsoccer.org](http://www.sflsoccer.org)) under SFL Documents. **It is not the responsibility of the**  
9 **applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner to check a roster to verify that the club**  
10 **has not made an error.**  
11

12 (1) If a club needs to assign a player to a team that would result in not complying with  
13 the applicable SFL policies, then the SFL Club Representative should request a  
14 waiver **BEFORE** the season begins. The approval of this request shall be in  
15 writing and provided to the coach. If a coach does not have written approval of  
16 this waiver, then the coach should not use the player until a written waiver is  
17 received.  
18

19 (2) It is considered an error if it is later found that (1) a player's age is inconsistent  
20 with the applicable SFL policies that would normally be applied to members of that  
21 team and (2) a written waiver was not received from the appropriate SFL Age  
22 Group Commissioner.  
23

24 (a) If the error is found before the team is scheduled for tournament play, then the  
25 appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner may instruct the Administrator to  
26 (1) eliminate the team from tournament play or (2) place the team in a higher  
27 tournament division. It does not matter whether the incorrect team  
28 assignment was either intentional or inadvertent.  
29

30 (b) If the error is found after the team is scheduled for tournament play but at  
31 least 2 days before the first tournament game, the SFL Age Group  
32 Commissioner shall make a determination on whether the team shall be  
33 required to forfeit its tournament games. It does not matter whether the  
34 incorrect team assignment was either intentional or inadvertent.  
35

36 (c) If the error is found during the roster exchange process of a tournament game,  
37 the team shall be required to forfeit its tournament games. It does not matter  
38 whether the incorrect team assignment was either intentional or inadvertent.  
39

40 b. **A club may request that a medical waiver from the appropriate SFL Age Group**  
41 **Commissioner to allow a player to play in an age group younger than the player's**  
42 **age (commonly referred to as playing down) for medical reasons.**  
43

44 (1) Requests for play down waivers are only granted for medical reasons and the SFL  
45 Club Representative must provide the following information:  
46

47 (a) Signed statement from the club's board of directors that they have reviewed  
48 the application and believe that the player should be allowed to play down for  
49 medical reasons. The individual signing this determination for the board must  
50 (1) be a Board Member and (2) someone other than the SFL Club  
51 Representative or a coach in the SFL.  
52

53 (b) Signed statement from a doctor explaining the medical condition that requires  
54 the player to play down.

- (2) If the request is granted, the waiver shall state that the waiver is a medical waiver but not provide the reason the medical waiver was granted.
- (3) Clubs must submit a request each season for medical waivers even if a request has been approved in the prior season. This request must include a new determination by the applicable club's board that the player should be granted a medical waiver.
- (4) All requests for medical waivers must be submitted prior to March 31 for the spring season and August 31 for the fall season.

D. Player eligibility and roster questions should be directed to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner by the appropriate SFL Club Representative. The Email addresses for the SFL Age Group Commissioners are as follows:

Under 12 Girls

Lonny Tullia  
Email: u12girls@sflsoccer.org

Under 12 Boys

Jack Smit  
Email: u12boys@sflsoccer.org

Under 14 Girls

John Paladino  
Email: u14girls@sflsoccer.org

Under 14 Boys

Rick Reid  
Email: u14boys@sflsoccer.org

Under 16 Girls

Frank Calcagno  
Email: u16girls@sflsoccer.org

Under 16 Boys

Ralph Wills  
Email: u16boys@sflsoccer.org

Under 19 Girls

Greg Giovanis  
Email: u19girls@sflsoccer.org

Under 19 Boys

Jim Rodden  
Email: u19boys@sflsoccer.org

E. The SFL has two player roster forms – Master Player Roster (SFL–4E) and Team Roster (SFL–2E). The Master Player Roster is submitted to the SFL while the Team Roster is provided to the team and used in the roster exchange process between teams. Both of these forms, when properly completed, will automatically calculate the age groups. While the current forms are similar to the forms used last season, the SFL suggests that the new forms be used since they have improved data checking edits and slight format changes.

1. The following are the general requirements that apply to the Master Player Roster and Team Roster forms.
  - a. The SFL Club Representative is responsible for ensuring that the Master Player Roster and Team Rosters are prepared, distributed, and submitted in accordance with the SFL requirements. Furthermore, the SFL Club Representative is required to ensure the information on Master Player Roster and Team Rosters remain consistent.
  - b. Changes to a team's roster may be made up until April 25 for the spring season and September 25 for the fall season, but only through the SFL Club Representative. No changes to a team roster may be made after April 25 for the spring season or September 25 for the fall season without approval of the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.

- 1 c. A player may be listed on only one roster in a given season and each player on a given  
2 team must have a unique uniform number that remains constant during a given season.  
3 See related section on combining teams for additional information on how to handle  
4 duplicate numbers when teams are authorized to combine teams.  
5

6 Example  
7

8 Player A is assigned to Team 1 and the Master Player Roster shows that Player's A  
9 uniform number is 17. No other player on Team 1 may wear number 17 and Player A  
10 must always wear the number 17.  
11

12 Discussion  
13

14 Some clubs provide the team uniforms to the coaches who then distribute the uniforms  
15 to the player on game day. This is an acceptable practice when (1) the club provides the  
16 coach with a sufficient number of uniforms so that each player assigned to the team will  
17 have a unique number and (2) the coach ensures that the every player always receives  
18 the same number as that shown on the Master Player Roster and Team Roster.  
19

- 20 (1) The requirement for unique and consistent uniform numbers may be waived by the  
21 opposing coach. However, if a coach (1) waives the requirement or (2) allows the  
22 game to be played with uniform numbers that are not unique and consistent with  
23 the Team Roster, then the coach cannot request a forfeit after the game due to  
24 uniform number issues.  
25  
26 (a) The SFL does not expect this to be a common occurrence and both coaches  
27 are required to report (1) that such a request was made and (2) whether the  
28 request was approved.  
29

30 Example  
31

32 Player A on Team 1 shows up at the game with a uniform used in a prior season  
33 and the uniform number is not the same as that shown on the team roster for this  
34 player. The coach of Team 1 approaches the coach of Team 2 and notifies the  
35 coach of this situation and requests the coach of Team 2 to allow Player A to play  
36 using a uniform that does not comply with the SFL's rules. If the coach of Team 2  
37 agrees to this request, then the coach of Team 2 may not request a forfeit because  
38 Team 1 used a player whose uniform did not comply with the SFL's uniform  
39 number requirements.  
40

- 41 2. A Master Player Roster must be prepared by each club.  
42

- 43 a. Clubs must submit the Master Player Roster on the SFL provided form.  
44

- 45 (1) SFL Form SFL-4E is the official form used for submitting Master Player Rosters.  
46 No substitute forms may be used even if those forms provide the same  
47 information.  
48  
49 (2) Master Player Rosters are Emailed to the general SFL Email address  
50 (sfl@sflsoccer.org). The subject line should contain (1) Master Player Roster and  
51 (2) the club's name, e.g., Master Player Roster – Reston. The SFL will make sure  
52 that this roster is distributed to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioners.  
53

- 54 b. The Master Player Roster contains the official information used by the SFL to resolve  
55 roster issues such as whether a given player has been assigned to a specific team.

- 1 c. Master Player Rosters are required to be submitted as follows.  
2  
3 (1) March 15 for the spring season and August 15 for the fall season.  
4  
5 (a) Teams will not be registered for play in the SFL if a Master Player Roster is  
6 not provided by March 15 for the spring season and August 15 for the fall  
7 season.  
8  
9 (2) April 15 for the spring season and September 15 for the fall season.  
10  
11 (a) If a proper Master Team Roster is not received by April 15 for the spring  
12 season and September 15 for the fall season, then that club's teams will not be  
13 allowed to play in the tournament.  
14  
15 (3) Within 5 days after adding a player to a team's roster after April 15 for the spring  
16 season and September 15 for the fall season.  
17

18 d. Required information.

- 19 (1) Age group.  
20  
21 (2) SFL Division – The division that will be used for the player's assigned team.  
22  
23 (a) Divisions for the Under 12s and 14s are primarily based on age.  
24  
25 (i.) Division 1 is for the better teams who meet the division 2 age criteria  
26 and those with players at the top end of the age group (Under 12 or  
27 Under 14). **(SKILL LEVEL DOES NOT AFFECT THE**  
28 **PLACEMENT OF TEAMS WITH PLAYERS THAT MEET THE**  
29 **DIVISION 1 AGE CRITERIA.)** The goal of the SFL is to have  
30 competitive soccer rather than to see who can win by the biggest margin  
31 and a number of clubs follow the practice of moving a team up a  
32 division.  
33  
34 (ii.) Division 2 is for teams whose players are at the bottom end of the age  
35 group (Under 11 or Under 13).  
36  
37 (b) The divisions for Under 16 Boys, Under 16 Girls, and Under 19 Boys are  
38 based on skill level with the better teams placed in division 1.  
39  
40

41 Discussion

42 The web site has an Age Group Calculator page that provides additional  
43 information on the age groups and a calculator that can be used to determine the  
44 age group for a given player (<http://www.sflsoccer.org/agegrp.htm>). Player age  
45 groups based on birth dates will also be calculated automatically when player birth  
46 dates are entered in the Master Player Roster (SFL-4E) and Team Roster  
47 (SFL-2E).  
48  
49

- 50 (3) Team name – The SFL standard team name used during the team registration  
51 process.  
52  
53 (4) Uniform number – The uniform number assigned to the player.  
54

1 (a) Uniform numbers may be omitted from the Master Player Roster submitted on  
2 March 15 and August 15.

3  
4 (5) Player's name.

5  
6 (6) Player's birth date.

7  
8 e. Only the SFL Club Representative may submit the Master Player Roster using the  
9 Email address on file with the SFL. Rosters submitted in this manner are considered  
10 "signed" by the SFL Club Representative.

11  
12 3. A Team Roster, using a SFL approved form, must be provided to a coach before the  
13 coach's team plays its first game.

14  
15 a. Team rosters should not be provided to the SFL since the Master Player Roster contains  
16 the official information used by the SFL to resolve roster issues such as whether a given  
17 player has been assigned to a specific team.

18  
19 b. It is expected that all players at the field will be listed on the team roster and have  
20 uniform numbers that match what is shown on the team roster. In addition, a proper  
21 Team Roster meets the following requirements:

22  
23 (1) The roster is provided on SFL Form SFL-2E or an approved substitute form.

24  
25 (2) The roster contains a handwritten signature from the SFL Club Representative or  
26 Club Registrar. If the coach performs both of these functions, then a club officer  
27 or than the coach must sign that team's roster.

28  
29 (3) The roster does not contain handwritten player names, birth dates, or uniform  
30 numbers.

31  
32 (4) The roster includes as an attachment any waivers provided to the team by the SFL.

33  
34 c. SFL form SFL-2E is the standard Team Roster form. However, a club may request  
35 approval to use a substitute form.

36  
37 (1) All requests for approval of substitute forms must be received by the SFL prior to  
38 March 25 for the spring season and August 25 for the fall season. All substitute  
39 rosters must (1) be signed by the SFL Club Representative or Club Registrar, (2)  
40 contain all the player data contained on the SFL Team Roster form (player's  
41 uniform number, name, and birth date), (3) contain all certifications on the  
42 standard SFL Team Roster forms (SFL-2E), and (4) contain a statement that the  
43 substitute form has been approved by the SFL. Approvals of substitute forms are  
44 only good for one season, i.e., clubs must submit a request each season even if the  
45 form has not changed and the SFL approved the form the previous season.

46  
47 As of March 31, 2010, the following clubs have been granted approval to use substitute  
48 forms:

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51 •  
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53

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41
- d. Coaches are required to provide a **copy** of their approved Team Roster containing the signature of the SFL Club Representative, or Club Registrar, to the opposing team before the start of every game. If a team is unable to provide a copy of their approved roster the team is assessed a forfeit. Therefore, it is a good idea to provide copies of the approved roster to more than one individual on your team.
    - (1) If a Team Roster is requested but not provided and both teams agree to play, then neither team can request a forfeit because a roster was not available.
    - (2) If a forfeit is accepted because of a roster problem, then the teams should leave the field. In other words, the teams **should not** use the game as a scrimmage.
    - (3) The referee may also request a copy of each team’s approved Team Roster.
      - (a) If either team does not have a proper Team Roster available when requested by the referee, then the referee may declare a forfeit with the team not having a proper Team Roster being assessed the forfeit. If both teams do not have proper Team Rosters, then both teams will be assessed a forfeit.
        - (i.) If a forfeit is awarded by the referee because of a roster problem, then the teams should leave the field. In other words, the teams **should not** use the game as a scrimmage.
  - e. A Team Roster is not expected to contain any handwritten information other than (1) the signature of the SFL Club Representative or Club Registrar that signs the roster and (2) the date the roster was signed.
    - (1) **A coach may not add any names or other information, such as uniform numbers, to a Team Roster.**
    - (2) **A SFL Club Representative may not add any players to a Team Roster by handwriting the name onto an existing roster.**
    - (3) If the SFL Club Representative is the same individual as the coach, then another officer of the club must perform this function. Only the SFL Club Representative or the Club Registrar may prepare these rosters. If the coach performs both of these functions, then a club officer or than the coach must sign that team’s roster.
    - (4) Rosters provided to teams and rosters used for exchanging with other teams must contain a handwritten signature from the individual authorized to certify the roster.

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43

#### Discussion

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49

It is recognized that after the rosters have been given to a coach, that players may be added to teams “at the last minute”. In these cases, the club must have a process that ensures that a properly prepared roster is provided to the coach before that player is allowed to play, i.e., the revised roster does not contain any handwritten information containing the new player’s information, (e.g., name, birth date, and uniform number).

- 50  
51  
52  
53  
54
- F. **Roster Challenges – If a coach does not have a proper Team Roster when challenged, they will be assessed a forfeit.** Therefore, it is a good idea to provide copies of your roster to more than one individual on your team. Two types of roster challenges may be made – field challenges and roster form challenges.

- 1 1. The SFL does not expect that roster challenges will become a common practice and the  
2 number of challenges will be monitored. If a coach appears to abuse this policy, then the  
3 appropriate SFL Club Representative will be notified and appropriate disciplinary action  
4 suggested.  
5
- 6 2. **Field Challenges** – Before a game is played, the coach of one team may challenge the  
7 roster of the other team through the official present. The coach must state which players  
8 the coach would like the official to check. The coach may also dispute a player that arrives  
9 **AFTER** the game has started or when that coach has some reason to question a player on  
10 the field.<sup>1</sup> However, this challenge should be made at half time and must be made before  
11 the second half starts unless the player arrives after the second half starts.  
12
- 13 a. Roster challenges will be conducted through the official present using the following  
14 process. Unless otherwise directed by an SFL official, the game shall be played in its  
15 entirety with the SFL making a decision on whether a forfeit or other penalty will be  
16 assessed being determined after the game has been completed.  
17
- 18 (1) Each team shall provide a copy of the Team Roster provided by that team’s SFL  
19 Club Representative to the official performing the roster check. Each player on  
20 both teams will be required to state their uniform number, name, and date of birth.  
21 They will also be required to sign their name on a blank piece of paper if required  
22 by the official. If any of this information (1) is not provided or (2) does not agree  
23 with the information on the Team Roster, then that player is considered ineligible  
24 to play in that game.  
25
- 26 (a) Coaches should ensure that their players understand the information that will  
27 be requested by the official conducting the review. However, the coach may  
28 not tell a player how to answer the questions, e.g., the coach may not tell the  
29 player the birth date that should be provided. Any instructions provided by  
30 the coach to the team concerning how the process works should be made in  
31 the presence of the official conducting the review.  
32
- 33 (b) The uniform number on the Team Roster must agree with the number shown  
34 on the player’s uniform unless the opposing coach has agreed to waive the  
35 requirement for consistent uniform number as discussed in the general  
36 requirements above.  
37
- 38 (2) A report on the results of the roster challenge must be submitted to the SFL by  
39 both coaches for review by the SFL. The report shall include (1) team making the  
40 challenge, (2) game reference number, (3) game date, (4) game field, (5) result of  
41 the challenge, (6) why the roster challenge was requested, and (7) the details  
42 associated any discrepancies. If no discrepancies were noted, then this should also  
43 be noted. The SFL Age Group Commissioner will review these reports and, if  
44 necessary, request the applicable SFL Club Representative to review the matter  
45 and provide any additional information that may be needed. Based on the reports

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<sup>1</sup> One valid reason a coach may challenge an existing player after the game has started is that the a coach receives an Email stating that John Smith from the opposing team received a red card and is not eligible to play in the game. However, after the game has started, the coach or one of the players, hears the other team refer to one of their players as “John”. A review of that team’s roster discloses that only one player is named John and that is the same player that is ineligible to play based on the red card notification.

1 received, the SFL Age Group Commissioner will make a decision on the  
2 appropriate penalties that should be applied.

- 3
- 4 (a) If a coach is found guilty of using players not assigned to the team, then (1)  
5 the team will be assessed a forfeit if any portion of a game has been played,  
6 (2) the coach will be considered to have received a red card and suspended for  
7 the team's next game and assessed one team red card point, and (3) the SFL  
8 Club Representative will be notified with a recommendation of censure.  
9
- 10 (b) If a player is assigned to the team is not wearing the proper number assigned  
11 to the player, the SFL Age Group may (1) assess a forfeit, (2) assess a one  
12 game point penalty based on the information received, or (3) waive all  
13 penalties if the mistake is deemed to be accidental, e.g., the SFL Club  
14 Representative transposed the uniform when a player's number was entered  
15 on a form and the mistake was not detected by the coach.  
16

### 17 Example

18  
19 A player assigned to the team shows up at a game with an old jersey whose  
20 number does not agree with Master Player and/or Team Roster. However,  
21 the player's coach makes no attempt to notify the opposing coach of this  
22 problem and obtain permission to use the player. During the roster challenge  
23 process, the player provides the correct name and birth date information. A  
24 review by the applicable SFL Club Representative confirms that the player in  
25 question was the actual player assigned to the team and the only problem was  
26 the uniform number. The SFL Age Group Commissioner may decide that  
27 only a one game point penalty should be assessed. On the other hand, if the  
28 problem was caused by the player using a different number to avoid serving a  
29 red card suspension, then a forfeit will be assessed. As discussed elsewhere,  
30 once a player has been identified as wearing an improper number, that player  
31 may not continue playing unless the requirement to wear consistent numbers  
32 is waived by the opposing coach.  
33

34 3. **Roster Form Challenges** – A coach may challenge the accuracy of the Team Roster  
35 provided by the opposing team through that coach's SFL Club Representative.

36  
37 a. The following process will be used for roster form challenges.

- 38
- 39 (1) The appropriate SFL Club Representative shall send an Email challenging the  
40 Team Roster of an opposing team to the appropriate SFL Age Group  
41 Commissioner with a copy to the general SFL Email address (sfl@sflsoccer.org).  
42 The Email shall contain (1) the reason the challenge is being made, (2) a copy of  
43 the Team Roster provided by the team in question, and (3) any other information  
44 that may be useful to the SFL Age Group Commissioner.  
45
- 46 (2) The SFL Age Group Commissioner will take the Team Roster provided with the  
47 challenge and compare it to the current Master Player Roster from the applicable  
48 club.  
49
- 50 (a) If the information on the Team Roster agrees with Master Player Roster, then  
51 the challenge is rejected.  
52

1 (b) If the information on the Team Roster does not agree with the Master Player  
2 Roster, then the player whose information does not agree may be considered  
3 ineligible by the SFL Age Group Commissioner.  
4

5 (i.) If the information on a Team Roster is inconsistent with the Master  
6 Player Roster, then the SFL Club Representative associated with the  
7 inconsistent Team Roster will be notified of the inconsistency and  
8 requested to provide an explanation.  
9

10 a) As noted elsewhere, the SFL Club Representative has 5 days after a  
11 player is added to a team to provide an updated Master Player  
12 Roster. If this timing is the reason for the inconsistency, then the  
13 Team Roster and Master Player Roster are considered in agreement  
14 and that all players on the Team Roster are considered eligible.  
15 However, if the reason is that the SFL Club Representative did not  
16 submit the revised Master Team Roster within the prescribed time  
17 frame, then the two rosters are considered inconsistent and player(s)  
18 in question are considered ineligible.  
19

#### 20 Example 1

21  
22 Player 19 is added to Team A on Thursday September 16 and the  
23 coach of Team A is provided with a new Team Roster that complies  
24 with the SFL requirements. The coach provides this roster to the  
25 opposing team on Saturday, September 18 who submits it to the SFL  
26 for review. The SFL Age Group Commissioner compares the  
27 information on the Team Roster to the Master Player Roster received  
28 on September 15 and finds that Player 19 is not contained on the  
29 Master Player Roster. The appropriate SFL Club Representative  
30 confirms that Player 19 was properly added to that team's Team  
31 Roster and submits a revised Master Player Roster by September 21.  
32 Accordingly, the rosters are considered in agreement and all players  
33 are eligible since the initial difference was caused by timing  
34 differences allowed by the SFL, i.e., the 5 day lag time allowed by  
35 the SFL between the time a player is added until a new Master  
36 Player Roster is required to be submitted.  
37

#### 38 Example 2

39  
40 Player 19 is added to Team A on Thursday September 16 and the  
41 coach of Team A is provided with a new Team Roster that complies  
42 with the SFL requirements. The coach provides this roster to the  
43 opposing team on Saturday, October 16 who submits it to the SFL  
44 for review. The SFL Age Group Commissioner compares the  
45 information on the Team Roster to the last Master Player Roster  
46 which was received on September 20 and finds that Player 19 is not  
47 contained on the Master Player Roster. The appropriate SFL Club  
48 Representative confirms (1) that Player 19 was properly added to  
49 that team's Team Roster no later than September 25 and (2) that a  
50 revised Master Player Roster should have been submitted that  
51 contained Player 19's information. Accordingly, the rosters are  
52 considered not in agreement and Player 19 is considered ineligible  
53 since the initial difference was not caused by timing differences  
54 allowed by the SFL, i.e., the 5 day lag time allowed by the SFL

1 between the time a player is added until a new Master Player Roster  
2 is required to be submitted was exceeded.  
3

4 (ii.) If an SFL Age Group Commissioner imposes a penalty because an  
5 ineligible player has been used, the commissioner will notify the SFL  
6 Club Representative for the team with the ineligible player of that  
7 penalty. The following are examples of penalties that may be imposed  
8 (or waived) although other appropriate penalties may be imposed.  
9

- 10 a) If a coach is found to have caused a roster violation, (1) a forfeit will  
11 be assessed for one or more games played by that team at the  
12 discretion of the SFL Age Group Commissioner and (2) the coach  
13 will be considered to have received a red card for each game that a  
14 forfeit has been awarded, suspended for the team's next game, and  
15 assessed one team red card point, and (3) the SFL Club  
16 Representative will be notified with a recommendation of censure.  
17
- 18 b) If the reason is caused by a clerical error, e.g., transposing a player's  
19 number during data entry, then the SFL Age Group Commissioner  
20 may assess a one game point penalty (or waive any penalties) based  
21 on the results of the investigation.  
22
- 23 c) If the reason that a player is considered ineligible is because of  
24 timing differences caused by the club (see example 2 above), then  
25 the SFL Age Group Commissioner may waive the penalty imposed  
26 for using an ineligible player (game forfeiture) for one or more  
27 games.  
28

### 29 **III. PLAYERS ASSIGNED TO TWO TEAMS AND COMBINING TEAMS**

- 30
- 31 A. Some clubs may allow a player to play on two teams which is not in accordance with SFL rule  
32 that a player may only appear on one roster. An exception to this rule is authorized when the  
33 following conditions are met by the SFL Club Representative and coach:  
34
- 35 1. The SFL Club Representative must request approval for a player to play on more than one  
36 team. This request must be sent to the applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner(s) and  
37 include (1) the reason(s) why the player is being allowed to play on more than one team, (2)  
38 the teams where the player is being assigned, and (3) the player's name and birth date.  
39 These submissions must be received prior to March 31 for the spring season and August 31  
40 for the fall season. If the request is approved, the appropriate notification will be sent to the  
41 SFL Club Representative and coach. This notification must be maintained by the coach and  
42 presented upon request to the opposing coach.  
43
  - 44 2. A club must make a good faith effort not to abuse this exception. For example, assigning  
45 very good players to two teams.  
46
  - 47 3. The team roster must clearly show which player(s) have been assigned to more than one  
48 team and the name of the other team where the player is assigned.  
49
  - 50 4. If a player covered by this section receives a red card during a game, the player must not  
51 play in that team's next regular scheduled game. In addition, they may not play with the  
52 other team during its next game. In other words, they serve a two game suspension rather  
53 than the normal one game suspension for a red card.  
54

1 5. Although a player may receive approval to play on two teams during the regular season,  
2 that player may only play on one team during the tournament. The SFL Age Group  
3 Commissioner and team coaches shall be notified by the SFL Club Representative one  
4 week prior to the start of the tournament the team that is considered the official team for a  
5 player that has been approved to play on two teams. For example, if Player A has been  
6 approved to play on Team B and Team C during the season, Player A may only play either  
7 on Team B OR Team C during the tournament.  
8

9 B. A club that has too many players for one team but not enough for two teams is allowed to form  
10 two teams and mix players to ensure an adequate number are available for a game. When the  
11 following conditions are met:  
12

13 1. The SFL must approve, in advance and normally before the season begins, any request to  
14 combine teams and the terms and conditions that will be used when teams are combined.  
15 At a minimum, after the SFL has agreed on how teams will be combined, the SFL Club  
16 Representative must be notified in advance whenever a coach plans to combine teams and  
17 which players will be added. A notification will be provided to the coaches who are  
18 approved to combine teams that outlines the terms and conditions agreed to by the SFL.  
19 The notification must be maintained by the coach and presented to the opposing coach  
20 during the roster exchange process.  
21

22 2. A club must make a good faith effort not to abuse this exception. For example, if a club has  
23 52 players, they should establish 3 teams to make sure that enough players will be available  
24 to play each game. They should not establish 4 teams.  
25

26 3. The club must provide the SFL rosters that shows the players assigned to each team.  
27

28 4. The team is allowed to add players from one team to the other team only to the extent that  
29 the normal players are insufficient to field a 14 player team when that team normally plays  
30 11 v 11 and 11 players when the team normally plays 8 v 8.  
31

32 5. The coach must notify the opposing coach and the officials before the game which players  
33 will play and which players are being added. The coach must also provide a roster, if  
34 requested for each team that is used to provide players for that game. For example, if Team  
35 A and Team B are allowed to combine teams and Team A is playing Team O, then Team O  
36 may request the rosters for Team A and Team B to show that the players being added to  
37 Team A's team have come from Team B.  
38

39 a. It is recognized that when teams are combined, duplicate uniform numbers may result  
40 and, as noted in Section II., duplicate uniform numbers are not normally allowed. **It is**  
41 **the responsibility of the coach that is combining teams to resolve the duplicate**  
42 **numbers.** The following process shall be used to resolve the duplicate uniform  
43 numbers.  
44

45 (1) The opposing coach must be notified that duplicate uniform numbers are being  
46 created by the process used to combine teams. Using the example above, since the  
47 coach combining teams should have a copy of the roster for Team A and Team B,  
48 then the duplicate numbers should be clearly shown on these rosters.  
49

50 (2) The coach shall either (1) provide the player being added from the other team with  
51 a uniform number that does not conflict with the team numbers on the primary  
52 team, (2) affix a piece of tape to the player being added uniform so that the number  
53 is unique, or (3) take any other action that is acceptable to both coaches.  
54 Regardless of the approach taken, the coach combining teams should ensure that

1 the opposing coach understands how the issue of duplicate numbers is being  
2 addressed.

3  
4 Example 1

5  
6 Teams A and B are allowed to combine teams and Player 1 from Team B is being  
7 added to Team A so that Team A can play Team O. Player 1 normally wears  
8 uniform number 1, however, Team A already has a player that has that number.  
9 The coach of Team A (1) provides Player 1 with a uniform whose number does not  
10 conflict with any of the other players on the field representing the combined Team  
11 A and (2) notifies the opposing coach that the duplicate uniform number was  
12 resolved by using a substitute number for Player A. It does not matter that this  
13 number may conflict with another player on Team A's roster who is not present,  
14 e.g., Player A may be given uniform number 12 which is already shown on Team  
15 A's roster, however, since the Team A player that normally wears 12 is not present  
16 for that game, a duplicate number conflict does not exist.

17  
18 Example 2

19  
20 Teams A and B are allowed to combine teams and Player 1 from Team B is being  
21 added to Team A so that Team A can play Team O. Player 1 normally wears  
22 uniform number 1. Team A's roster already has a player that has that number,  
23 however, the player from Team A normally wearing the number 1 is not playing in  
24 the game. Player A may continue to wear the uniform number 1 since no conflict  
25 is present on field during the game as the coach of Team A notifies the opposing  
26 coach that the duplicate uniform number does not exist since the player on Team A  
27 assigned uniform number 1 is not playing in that game.

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6. If a player receives a red card during a game, the player must not play in the team's next scheduled game. If the player receives a red card during the game as a substitute player, then they may not play in the next game that their regular team is scheduled to play. In addition, they may not play with the other team as a substitute player until they are eligible to play for their regular team. In other words, they must serve at least a 2 game suspension.
  7. A team is not allowed to add players from one team to the another team for tournament play without express written permission of the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.
    - a. The SFL Club Representative must prepare a "tournament roster" using a SFL approved team roster form before the tournament and provide it to the coach(es) of the teams showing the players that are eligible to play on each team. A name may only be shown once. For example, if Player A is shown on Team A's roster, Player A may not be shown on Team B's roster. A copy of the "tournament roster" shall be submitted to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner at least one week before the first tournament game is scheduled to be played by Email with a copy provide to the coach of each team. The SFL Club Representative should make sure that the coach(es) understand that they are not allowed to combine teams for tournament play.
    - b. If a club decides that it cannot field all the teams that have been allowed to combine players during the regular season for tournament play, then the SFL Club Representative is responsible for notifying the SFL prior to the tournament scheduling process the team(s) that should not be scheduled for tournament play. The players on the regular season roster of the team(s) not scheduled to play in tournament may be added to the other team(s) tournament roster.

- 1 (1) Only players on the teams that are allowed to combine players during the regular  
2 season may be merged onto a single team without the express written permission  
3 of the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.  
4

5 Example 1  
6

7 Teams A and B are allowed to combine players during the regular season and  
8 Team A decides that it cannot play in the tournament. Players from Team A may  
9 be added to Team B's tournament roster. However, players from Team A may not  
10 be added to any other team's roster without express written permission from the  
11 appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.  
12

13 Example 2  
14

15 Teams A and B are allowed to combine players during the regular season and  
16 Team C decides that it cannot play in the tournament. Players from Team C **MAY**  
17 **NOT** be added to either Team A's or Team B's tournament roster without express  
18 written permission from the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.  
19

- 20 8. As of March 31, 2010, the following teams have been allowed to combine teams:  
21

- 22 • Sterling 1 and Sterling 2 Under 19 Girls teams  
23

24 **IV. GAME REQUIREMENTS**  
25

- 26 A. All games will be played in accordance with "FIFA Laws of the Game" as modified by the  
27 USSF for youth play and as clarified in these operating instructions.  
28  
29 B. Nothing in these rules precludes a club from imposing more stringent rules on their own teams.  
30  
31 C. All players in good standing must play at least 50 percent of the game. The applicable club is  
32 responsible for defining what is considered good standing.  
33

- 34 D. **Regular Season Game Times** – The following game times were approved at the preseason  
35 meeting:  
36

- 37 1. Under 12 Boys and Girls: two 30 minute halves.  
38 2. Under 14 Boys and Girls: two 35 minute halves.  
39 3. Under 16 Boys and Girls: two 40 minute halves.  
40 4. Under 19 Boys and Girls: two 40 minute halves.  
41

42 **Note:** Several clubs needed to schedule games into 1 1/2 hour time slots. Therefore, we  
43 reduced the amount of time for the Under 16 and Under 19 age groups to 40 minute  
44 halves. However, if time is available and both teams agree, then the Under 16 and  
45 Under 19 age groups may play 45 minute halves.  
46

- 47 E. **Tournament Game Times** – The following game times were approved at the preseason  
48 meeting:  
49

- 50 1. Under 12 Boys and Girls: two 30 minute halves.  
51 2. Under 14 through Under 19 Boys and Girls: two 35 minute halves.  
52

53 **Note:** These times are subject to change depending on the tournament format that is selected  
54 for a given site. See the section on tournament schedules for additional information.

1 F. **Substitutions** – Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee, at the following  
2 times:

- 3
- 4 1. Prior to a throw-in when the ball is in possession of the team substituting. The opposing  
5 team may substitute as well if the team in possession is making a substitution.
- 6 2. Goal kick by either team.
- 7 3. After a goal by either team and prior to the succeeding kick-off.
- 8 4. During the half-time interval.
- 9 5. After an injury (the injured player may be replaced and the opposing team may also  
10 substitute one player).
- 11 6. After a caution has been issued, at the request of the player's coach, for the cautioned  
12 player.
- 13

14 G. **Team Size**

- 15
- 16 1. **Minimum** – Team must field a minimum of seven (7) players at game time when the game  
17 is being played using an 11 v 11 format. If the game format is 8 v 8, then a team must field  
18 at least 5 players.
- 19
- 20 2. **Maximum** – Although there is no maximum, the SFL suggests that no more than eighteen  
21 players be assigned to one team when that team normally uses 11 players for a game (11 v  
22 11) and 12 players when the team normally uses 8 players for a game (8 v 8). This is  
23 because of the fifty percent playing time rule (section IV.C.)
- 24

25 H. **Team Colors** – Teams must have matching colored jerseys with a unique number assigned to  
26 each player. If a color clash between two teams exists, it is the responsibility of the home  
27 team to change colors by using an alternate colored jersey. Required numbers will be waived.

28

29 I. **Equipment** – Shin-guards are mandatory and each player must wear FIFA acceptable sport  
30 shoes or sneakers are required. Metal cleats shall not be worn.

31

32 J. **Play Down Rule** – If one team has less than 11 players (8 players for 8 v 8 games), the  
33 following rules shall be used:

- 34
- 35 1. Coaches are strongly encouraged to reduce the number of players on the field once a team  
36 has scored 5 goals more than the other team. For example, if a team is winning the game 5  
37 – 1 and scores another goal, they should reduce the number of players on the field down at  
38 least one player. A game score of 10 – 0 provides no more benefits than a game score of 3  
39 – 0 since goals scored is not used in any of the ranking factors.
- 40
- 41 2. For games where the game format is 11 v 11:
  - 42
  - 43 a. A team must have seven players to play a game.
  - 44
  - 45 b. If one team has seven players, then the opposing team is required to play no more than  
46 nine players.
  - 47
  - 48 c. If one team has eight players, then the opposing team is required to play no more than  
49 ten players.
  - 50
  - 51 d. If one team has nine or ten players, the other team may play all eleven players.
- 52 3. For games where the game format is 8 v 8:
  - 53
  - 54 a. A team must have at least 5 players to play a game.

- 1  
2 b. If one team has 5 players, then the opposing team is required to play no more than 7  
3 players.  
4  
5 c. If one team has 6 or 7 players, the other team may play all eight players.  
6  
7 4. The above play down rules also apply when players from the team with the lesser number  
8 of players leave a game due to injury or illness. In these circumstances, the opposing team  
9 should not continue play with more than two players over the number that the other team  
10 has on the field of play.  
11  
12 5. Red carded players on the short sided team do not cause the team with more players to play  
13 down. For example if Team A has 11 players and Team B has 9 players and Team B  
14 receives a red card, Team A is not required to play down.  
15

16 **K. Home Team Responsibilities – Regular Season Play**  
17

- 18 1. Providing a suitable game field for the given age group (for example, for the Under 14 age  
19 group the field shall be a minimum of 50 yards X 100 yards), goals with nets, lines, corner  
20 flags, and game ball.  
21  
22 a. The SFL web site (under SFL Documents) contains the field guidelines for 8 v 8 games.  
23 Clubs registering teams playing the 8 v 8 format are expected to provide fields that  
24 comply with these requirements. For example, these guidelines state that the field of  
25 play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 90 yards nor less than 70 yards  
26 and its width not more than 50 yards nor less than 40 yards.  
27  
28 (1) If a team does not believe that a game is being played on a field that is not  
29 compliant with the US Youth Soccer guidelines, the coach should play the game  
30 and then notify the appropriate SFL Club Representative of the problems. The  
31 SFL Club Representative may then request the SFL to review the matter and make  
32 a decision on whether a forfeit should be awarded.  
33  
34 (a) Forfeits will not normally be awarded for the following conditions:  
35  
36 (i.) Fields that are properly sized (e.g., the field is between 70 and 90 yards  
37 long and between 40 and 50 yards wide for an 8 v 8 game) but the  
38 markings are not entirely compliant with the US Youth Soccer  
39 guidelines.  
40  
41 (ii.) Corner flags not being present.  
42  
43 2. Providing either three USSF certified referees (one Center Referee and two Assistant  
44 Referees) using the Diagonal System of Control (DSC); or two USSF certified referees  
45 using the DSC with one “club” Assistant Referee provided by one of the two teams; or, in  
46 an emergency, a single USSF certified referee. If the proper number of officials are not  
47 present by game time plus 15 minutes, the game will be forfeited by the home team.  
48  
49 a. Referees should not be immediate family members to team officials except in an  
50 emergency.  
51

1                   Discussion  
2

3                   It is recognized that, in most cases, the coach of the home team has very little, if any,  
4                   control over whether officials will be present for a game. Therefore, should a situation  
5                   arise in which at least one USSF certified official is not present by game time plus 15  
6                   minutes, the visiting team is encouraged to select one of the following options rather  
7                   than accepting the forfeit and leaving the field of play. One option is to reschedule the  
8                   game for a later date. (In this situation, the home team may want to consider offering to  
9                   play at the visiting team’s home field.) A second option is to play the game and use  
10                  team officials and consider the results binding.

11  
12                  If the two coaches believe that a safe and effective match can be played, then they  
13                  should play as long as the safety and the rules of the sport are not sacrificed. If either  
14                  coach believes that the match cannot be safely and effectively played, then the coaches  
15                  should consider a rematch. However, the visiting coach does have the right to accept a  
16                  forfeit. If a forfeit is accepted because either coach does not believe that a safe and  
17                  effective game cannot be played, then the teams should leave the field. In other words,  
18                  the teams **should not** use the game as a scrimmage.

19  
20                  b. Center referees shall be at least two (2) years older than the age group they are  
21                  officiating except as noted in section (1) below. For example, the referee shall meet at  
22                  least the Under 14 age criteria to officiate Under 12 games or meet the Under 16 age  
23                  criteria to officiate Under 14 games. Therefore, individuals meeting the Under 13 age  
24                  criteria or lower may not act as a center referee for Under 12 games.

25  
26                  (1) It is recognized that some clubs have a referee training program that allows  
27                  referees that do not meet the two (2) years or older requirement to officiate games  
28                  to facilitate their training. This practice is acceptable when (1) the referee is at  
29                  least the age of the game they are officiating, e.g., an Under 16 game must be  
30                  officiated by a referee who meets at least the Under 16 age criteria and (2) at least  
31                  one adult of 21 years or older and is a qualified referee serves as an assistant  
32                  referee.

33  
34                  (2) Clubs are expected to provide adequate officials for the games. If adequate  
35                  officials cannot be provided, then (1) the visiting team should be notified by Friday  
36                  night that the game cannot be played and (2) a forfeit will be assessed to the home  
37                  team.

38  
39                  (a) If a question on whether the center referee is of the appropriate age arises on  
40                  game day, then the game should be played unless the home team coach has  
41                  positive knowledge that the center referee does not meet the age requirements.

42  
43                  (i.) If the home team coach has positive knowledge that the center referee  
44                  does not meet the age requirements, then the game should not be played  
45                  and the home team is assessed a forfeit upon verification of the referee’s  
46                  age.

47  
48                  (ii.) If the home team coach does not have positive knowledge of the center  
49                  referee’s age, then the visiting coach may then file a protest through  
50                  their SFL Club Representative and request the SFL to determine whether  
51                  the center referee for the subject game was of the appropriate age. Once  
52                  the SFL receives this request, it will request the home team’s club to  
53                  confirm that the center referee was of the appropriate age. If the referee

1 was not of the appropriate age, then the home team will be assessed a  
2 forfeit.

3  
4 (iii.) Under no circumstances may a coach, team official, or other individual  
5 request the referee to provide evidence of their age.

6  
7 (b) Clubs that are unable to provide center referees of an appropriate age will be  
8 penalized if the SFL determines that two (2) or more games actually played  
9 are officiated by center referees that do not meet the age requirements.  
10 Specifically, all home games for the given age group and above will be  
11 cancelled and the home team(s) assessed forfeits for those games. For  
12 example, if Club A does not provide appropriately aged center referees for  
13 two of the Under 16 games actually played, then all Under 16 and Under 19  
14 home games for teams associated with Club A will be cancelled and those  
15 home teams will be assessed forfeits.

16  
17 (3) Forfeits assessed for referee problems may be removed if the both teams agree to  
18 play the game at a later date.

19  
20 Example

21  
22 Team A notifies Team B that its club cannot provide proper officials on Friday  
23 night for Saturday's game. Team A is assessed a forfeit. Team A and Team B  
24 then agree to play the game at a later date. Once this game is played, the forfeit  
25 against Team is removed and the actual game result is used.

- 26  
27 3. **The home team is required to call the visiting team by the Wednesday preceding the**  
28 **game to confirm the game time, team colors, location, directions, and any other**  
29 **information they may need.** In addition, both teams should discuss how the team roster  
30 exchange process will be handled. If a coach does not have the information needed to place  
31 this call, then the Club Age Group Commissioner or SFL Club Representative should be  
32 called.  
33
- 34 a. If you have not been contacted by a coach and do not know the name or phone number,  
35 then you should call either the Club Age Group Commissioner or the SFL Club  
36 Representative that applies for that age group. For example, if you are scheduled to  
37 play Reston 1 and you are in the Under 14 Girls age group and you do not know the  
38 coach's phone number, then you would first call the Reston Under 14 Girls Age Group  
39 Commissioner. If you cannot reach the appropriate Club Age Group Commissioner,  
40 then you should call the SFL Club Representative. A listing of Club Age Group  
41 Representatives and SFL Club Representatives is provided in the regular season  
42 mailing.  
43
- 44 4. Determining if a color clash exists. In case of a color clash, the home team must change  
45 colors. The requirement for unique uniform numbers is waived for the team required to  
46 change colors.  
47
- 48 5. Notifying the visiting team if a game is postponed due to weather. The home team should  
49 call the visiting team at least 3 hours before the scheduled start time. The home team  
50 should then call the Age Group Commissioner and notify them that the game has been  
51 postponed and, if possible, the makeup date. Games will not be played if the field has been  
52 closed by either the Department of Recreation, the local club, or referee. (See section on  
53 Game Rescheduling for additional information on how games are rescheduled.)  
54

1 L. Other  
2

- 3 1. Slide tackling is permitted unless otherwise stated, however, the referee will have the final  
4 decision as to whether the tackle was properly executed. Coaches are directed to instruct  
5 their players on proper technique and the potential of injury to other players and themselves  
6 when improperly done.  
7
- 8 2. Under 12, Under 14, Under 16, and Under 19 girls are allowed to place their arms across  
9 their chest for protection. The referee has the final decision as to whether the action was  
10 legally executed.  
11
- 12 3. A team must be ready to play the game within 15 minutes of the scheduled game time. If a  
13 team is not ready to play, then the opposing team has the right to request a forfeit or have  
14 the game rescheduled. If a forfeit is accepted because a team is not ready to play, then the  
15 teams should leave the field. In other words, the teams **should not** use the game as a  
16 scrimmage.  
17
- 18 4. Teams are required to check the web site after Friday at 8:00 PM to ensure that no changes  
19 have been made to their Saturday (or Sunday) game schedule for that week.  
20

21 V. GAME CONDITIONS AND WEATHER RELATED CANCELLATIONS  
22

- 23 A. The home team should call the visiting team as soon as possible that a game has been canceled  
24 because of weather. This notice should be at least 3 hours before the game time. In the case  
25 of inclement weather, the home team should also notify the visiting team that a game will be  
26 played. Unless otherwise shown below, the decision of Fairfax County Parks Authority will  
27 apply to all game fields regardless of whether the field is actually managed by the Fairfax  
28 County Parks Authority. The following phone numbers can be used to check field conditions:  
29

- 30 • Fairfax County Parks Authority – (703) 324-5264
- 31
- 32 • Games played at Alexandria – (703) 883-4697
- 33
- 34 • Games played at Arlington – (703) 228-4715 and Press 1
- 35
- 36 • Games played at Bles Park (Ashburn) – (703) 729-7050 or [www.ashburnsoccer.org](http://www.ashburnsoccer.org)
- 37
- 38 • Games played at Ashburn – use Loudoun – (703) 777-5897
- 39
- 40 • Games played at Braddock Road – (703) 354-7101 or [www.brycsoccer.org](http://www.brycsoccer.org).
- 41
- 42 • Games played at Burke Athletic – (703) 440-8078 and select a field for information after  
43 7:30 AM on Saturday and 8:30 AM on Sunday
- 44
- 45 • Games played at Chantilly – (703) 830-1272 or [www.cyaweather.com](http://www.cyaweather.com)
- 46
- 47 • Games played at Clarke County – (540) 955-9002 or [www.clarkesoccer.org](http://www.clarkesoccer.org)
- 48
- 49 • Games played at Fairfax – (703) 385-7976) (This is a Fairfax City recording)
- 50
- 51 • Games played at Falls Church – (703) 248-5125
- 52
- 53 • Games played at Fauquier – (540) 349-8722 and go to mailbox #94
- 54

- 1 • Games played at Gunston – (703)360-7013
- 2
- 3 • Games played at Haymarket – www.vysaonline.com
- 4
- 5 • Games played at Herndon – (703) 318-8552
- 6
- 7 • Games played at Lee-Mt. Vernon – (703) 799-1112
- 8
- 9 • Games played at Little River – (703) 752-7220
- 10
- 11 • Games played at Loudoun – (703) 777-5897
- 12
- 13 • Games played at McLean – (703) 761-1601 www.mcleansoccer.org/page/show/38975
- 14
- 15 • Games played at Northern Virginia – Ben Lomond – (703) 792-3281, Hellwig – (703)
- 16 792-3283, Nokesville (703) 792-3294
- 17
- 18 • Games played at Prince William – Tyrell – (703) 792-3285
- 19
- 20 • Games played at Reston – (703) 859-6267
- 21
- 22 • Games played at Nottoway – (703) 938-7532
- 23
- 24 • Games played at Southwestern – (703) 644-8046
- 25
- 26 • Games played at Sterling – (703) 729-8728
- 27

28 **Note: Sometimes the numbers for field closures are changed after the rules are prepared**  
 29 **and mailed. Therefore, you should check the SFL Web Site (www.sflsoccer.org) to**  
 30 **make sure that the number above is current.**

31  
 32 Example 1

33  
 34 You are scheduled to play on a field that is not controlled by Fairfax County Parks Authority  
 35 and the field is not listed above, if the Fairfax County Parks Authority closes its fields, then  
 36 the field you are scheduled to play on is also considered closed.

37  
 38 Example 2

39  
 40 You are scheduled to play on a field which is not controlled by Fairfax County Parks  
 41 Authority and the field is not listed above. When you call the Fairfax County Parks Authority  
 42 you find out that it has closed some of its fields while others are open. In this case, then the  
 43 field you are scheduled to play on is also considered closed unless you are contacted by the  
 44 home team or your club and notified that the game is still scheduled to be played. Both teams  
 45 must be notified at least 3 hours before the scheduled game time of this decision.

- 46  
 47 B. If either coach does not believe that a game should be played because of the game conditions,  
 48 they have the right to request a forfeit from the other team. This request must be in writing  
 49 and mailed to the SFL within 12 hours of the scheduled game time. The appropriate SFL Age  
 50 Group Commissioner will make a ruling on which team will be assessed a forfeit and notify  
 51 the SFL Commissioner and Administrator. If a game is played, neither team can protest the  
 52 game conditions unless both coaches agree before the game begins to play the game under  
 53 protest. If a game is agreed to be played under protest, then both coaches must document the  
 54 reason for the protest and signify their agreement by printing and signing their names.

1 Examples of items that would normally result in a forfeit being charged to the protesting team  
2 include:

- 3
- 4 1. only having a properly qualified center referee,
- 5
- 6 2. poorly lined fields, and
- 7
- 8 3. field conditions when the referee has made a determination that the field is playable.
- 9

10 C. **Games Halted** – A game halted at half time or later due to unsafe playing conditions will  
11 stand as indicated by the score when the game was halted.

- 12
- 13 1. If due to unsafe playing conditions a regular season game is halted prior to half-time, it  
14 will be replayed unless waived by the SFL Age Group Commissioner.
- 15
- 16 2. If a tournament game is halted due to unsafe playing conditions prior to half-time, the game  
17 result at the time of termination will be used as the final game result unless waived by the  
18 SFL Age Group Commissioner.
- 19

#### 20 Example

21  
22 A regular season game is terminated 30 minutes into the first half due to weather  
23 conditions. The game is rescheduled to be played at a later date. On the other hand, a  
24 tournament game terminated 30 minutes into the first half because of weather conditions  
25 would use the game results at the time of termination.

## 26 VI. REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

- 27 A. The regular season play will consist of 7 or 8 games with a post season tournament.
- 28
- 29 B. Game points will be awarded for each game played. Game points are awarded as follows: 4  
30 points for a win, 2 points for a tie, 1 point for a loss, and 0 points for a forfeit. The game score  
31 for a forfeited game is 1 – 0 unless both teams are assessed a forfeit. When both teams are  
32 assessed a forfeit, then the game score is 0 – 0. Bonus points will also be awarded based on  
33 the goal differential up to a maximum of 3 points per game. For example, a game score of 5 –  
34 1 would result in 3 bonus points.
- 35
- 36 C. The SFL web site displays team rankings in the following order: game point percentage, game  
37 points, bonus points, and goals allowed.
- 38
- 39 1. The game point percentage is calculated as follows: game points earned divided by total  
40 games played times maximum number of points that can be earned for a game. For  
41 example, if a team plays 4 games, wins 2 games, ties 1 game, and loses the remaining  
42 game, its game point percentage would be calculated as follows: (11 game points earned (4  
43 + 4 + 2 + 1) / 16 game points (4 games X 4 points per game)) = 68.8 percent.
- 44
- 45
- 46

## 47 VII. REPORTING GAME RESULTS AND RESCHEDULING GAMES

- 48
- 49 A. The following three methods are acceptable for reporting scores: Email ([sfl@sflsoccer.org](mailto:sfl@sflsoccer.org)),  
50 voice mail (703-476-6610), and through the Web site ([www.sflsoccer.org](http://www.sflsoccer.org)). **The preferred**  
51 **method of reporting game results is Email.** Both teams are responsible for reporting the  
52 game score, regardless of the outcome, by 6:00 PM on the Monday following the game.  
53

1. If a score is not received by 6:00 PM on Monday, both teams will be assessed a 1 game point penalty. Therefore, failure to promptly report a score will effect game points and may affect a team's standing.
2. Teams are required to provide the following information when reporting scores: name of individual reporting the score, team name, game number, score for each team, and **information on any yellow or red cards awarded**. For example, Sam Jones, Reston 1, Game 4421, Reston 1 – 2, Reston 2 – 0, no red or yellow cards. In addition, if the opposing team did not provide a roster when requested, this should also be included with the game report. **When reporting scores by Email, please put the game number in the "Subject" field. It makes filing the scores easier for us.**
  - a. When a report is received that a team did not have a roster, then this report shall be sent to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner, SFL Club Representative, and other individuals that are considered appropriate by the SFL for their information. The individuals receiving these reports are not required to respond to the SFL on whether any actions were taken or the actions that were taken. Repeated offenses may result in a team being suspended from the tournament by the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.

Instructions for Using  
the Voice Mail System

Call (703) 476-6610 and you will hear the following greeting:

Hello, this is the SFL. Press 1 to leave scores for boys games, 2 to leave scores for girls games, 3 for general messages, and 4 to leave a message for a SFL Commissioner. You may press your selection at any time. When leaving scores, please speak slowly and state your name, age group, team name, game number, and score for each team. For example, Joe Smith, Under 14 Girls, Reston 1, Game 4421, Reston 1 – 2, Reston 2 – 0. Thank you.

Press the proper number and leave your message.

- B. If a field change is necessary, the visiting teams and SFL must be notified immediately. The SFL Club Representative is responsible for ensuring the proper notifications have been made and should provide written or verbal confirmation to the SFL that the proper notifications were made. In case of a conflict, the SFL data base will be used to determine the game schedule information.
- C. The schedule will show "Unscheduled" or 01/01/80 when the game date is unknown. In addition, it will show either a 6:00 AM or blank game time when the game time is unknown. For example, the schedules may show the first game with a game date of "Unscheduled" or 01/01/80 and a blank game time since the SFL could not schedule the first game for some teams or some teams wanted to postpone their first game.
- D. Clubs are required to provide Sunday field slots that start at 12:30 PM or later that can be used to reschedule games. These slots do not have to be provided until the Thursday after the first week's games are scheduled to be played and may be updated weekly. If no slots are provided, then the SFL will assume that the club does not have any field slots available for makeup games.
- E. **Game Rescheduling** – The SFL has four types of games that can end up in rescheduling actions – game field changes made by the clubs after the schedules are published by the SFL,

1 games initially scheduled by the SFL or rescheduled by the teams, scheduled games not played,  
2 and unscheduled games. The process for rescheduling games for each type is discussed below.  
3

4 **1. Game Field Changes Made By Clubs** – Sometimes clubs are required to change game  
5 fields after the schedules have been published. Generally, these should be caused by (1)  
6 reasons beyond a club’s control such as the club being notified after the season field permit  
7 has been received that a field is no longer available or (2) a club desiring to move the game  
8 to an “all weather” field to ensure the game can be played in case of rain.  
9

10 a. The changes can be made without the home team being assessed a scheduling forfeit  
11 when the following conditions are met:  
12

13 (1) The reason for the change is not to support refereeing scheduling issues that should  
14 have been addressed when the schedules were initially drafted. For example,  
15 during the development of the original schedules, games are scheduled on Field 1 at  
16 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM at the club’s request. Once the schedule is posted the club  
17 decides that they would like to move these games together for referee scheduling  
18 purposes.  
19

20 (2) The SFL is notified as soon as the club is notified of the change but no later than  
21 6:00 PM on Thursday preceding the game date. For example, the club is notified  
22 on May 1, that a game scheduled for June 1 needs to be changed, then the SFL  
23 should be notified on May 1. On the other hand, if the club is notified on Thursday,  
24 May 1 that a game scheduled for Saturday, May 3 needs to be changed, then the  
25 SFL must be notified on May 1 by 6:00 PM or the home team is assessed a  
26 scheduling forfeit as discussed below.  
27

28 (3) The SFL Club Representative takes reasonable actions to ensure that the opposing  
29 team is notified of the change. Examples of reasonable actions include (1) the SFL  
30 Club Representative attempting to contact the opposing coach (or the opposing  
31 coach’s SFL Club Representative) directly and (2) requiring their coach to attempt  
32 to contact the opposing coach (or the opposing coach’s SFL Club Representative)  
33 and reporting back to the SFL Club Representative on the results of the actions  
34 taken. Examples of unreasonable actions include (1) the SFL Club Representative  
35 simply asking the coach to contact the other team and expecting that the appropriate  
36 contact will be made and (2) expecting the visiting team to check the web site to  
37 determine that a change has been made. **The SFL should not be asked or**  
38 **expected to notify the visiting teams of changes.**  
39

40 (4) The game times generally remain the same. It is understood that sometimes when  
41 the games are moved, these games must be fit into the available slots. However,  
42 when the games are simply moved from Field 1 to Field 2, the same game times  
43 should be used.  
44

45 (5) The change does not result in the visiting team having 2 games on the same day  
46 unless the visiting team agrees in advance.  
47

48 b. A team may be assessed scheduling forfeits when a game field change is made by their  
49 club and the applicable requirements discussed above have not been met, e.g., the club  
50 decides to change the game field or game time on the Friday preceding a Saturday game  
51 and the visiting team does not agree to the change. As discussed elsewhere the teams are  
52 free to play these games at other times and, once played, the scheduling forfeit will be  
53 removed.  
54

- 1           2. **Games Initially Scheduled by the SFL or Rescheduled by the Teams** – Teams may  
2 reschedule any game originally scheduled by the SFL or rescheduled by the team as long as  
3 (1) both teams agree to reschedule the game, (2) the change is made prior to 6:00 PM on the  
4 Wednesday preceding the current scheduled date, (3) the home team’s club is properly  
5 notified of the change in accordance with that club’s guidelines, and (4) the SFL is notified  
6 by Email that the game will not be played prior to 6:00 PM on the Thursday preceding the  
7 scheduled game date.  
8
- 9           a. If a revised game date is not provided to the SFL by Thursday at 6:00 PM, then the game  
10 will be shown as unscheduled and rescheduled using the process discussed in the  
11 **Unscheduled Games** section below.  
12
- 13           b. If the SFL is not notified by 6:00 PM on the Thursday prior to the scheduled game date  
14 of the cancellation, then the SFL will not make any attempt to reschedule the game, both  
15 teams will be assessed a forfeit, and no game points will be awarded to either team.  
16
- 17                 (1) Teams are free to arrange alternate times, e.g., weekdays, to make up forfeited  
18 games caused by scheduling problems. However, the forfeits will stand until a  
19 game score is reported.  
20

21           Discussion  
22

23           Coaches should resolve any scheduling conflicts early in the season and should not wait  
24 until Wednesday preceding the weekend’s schedules. Many clubs have assigned referees  
25 and fields weeks in advance of a given game. Accordingly, a late change in schedule may  
26 cause clubs to lose scheduled referees for other games on that date. Coaches are reminded  
27 that SFL uses a play down rule to account for days when all your players may not be  
28 available and are strongly encouraged to keep your scheduled play date without changes.  
29

30           Example 1  
31

32           Team A realizes at the start of the season in March that a game scheduled on May 15 with  
33 Team B cannot be played as scheduled because of a conflict with a school event. Team A  
34 contacts Team B and they agree to play the game on May 16. Team A notifies the SFL of  
35 the change and the SFL makes the change. Since the teams arranged this rescheduled game,  
36 it may be rescheduled again by the teams at a later date.  
37

38           Example 2  
39

40           Team A realizes at the start of the season in March that a game scheduled on May 15 with  
41 Team B cannot be played as scheduled because of a conflict with a school event. Team A  
42 contacts Team B (who agrees to postpone the game), their club, and the SFL and notify them  
43 that the game cannot be played. However, Team A and Team B cannot agree on an alternate  
44 game date before 6:00 PM on the Thursday of the second regular season game week.  
45 Therefore, the game is shown as a unscheduled game and handled in accordance with the  
46 process described in the **Unscheduled Games** section.  
47

48           Example 3  
49

50           Team A realizes on the Tuesday (April 26) preceding a Saturday May 1 game with Team B  
51 that the game cannot be played as scheduled because of a conflict with a school event.  
52 Team A contacts Team B (who agrees to postpone the game), their club, and the SFL and  
53 notify each party that the game cannot be played as scheduled. However, Team A and Team  
54 B cannot agree on a alternate game date before 6:00 PM on Thursday (April 28). Therefore,

1 the game is shown as an unscheduled game and handled in accordance with the process  
2 described in the **Unscheduled Games** section.

3  
4 Example 4

5  
6 Team A notifies Team B on the Tuesday night before their scheduled game on Saturday,  
7 May 1 that they do not want to play their regularly scheduled game on May 1. Team B  
8 agrees to postpone the game and the home team's club is notified of the change. However,  
9 the SFL was not notified of the change until May 1. Since the SFL was not notified of the  
10 change in a timely manner (by 6:00 PM on the Thursday preceding the game date) the SFL  
11 will not make any attempt to reschedule the game, both teams will be assessed a forfeit, and  
12 no game points will be awarded to either team. Team A and Team B are free to attempt to  
13 reschedule the game on their own. However, the forfeit will stand until a game score is  
14 reported.

- 15  
16 3. **Scheduled Games Not Played** – As discussed elsewhere, teams have until 6:00 PM on the  
17 Monday following a game to report a game score. Until a score is reported for a game  
18 whose scheduled date has passed, the game is considered as a Scheduled Game Not Played.  
19
- 20 a. The SFL Club Representatives are responsible for notifying the SFL of all games  
21 cancelled on their home fields because of weather. If this notification, which must  
22 include the game reference numbers, is received by 6:00 PM on the Monday following a  
23 scheduled game date, then the game will be shown as unscheduled and rescheduled  
24 using the process discussed in the **Unscheduled Games** section below. Teams are free  
25 to reschedule any games cancelled because of weather or similar conditions as long as  
26 the rescheduling process is completed by the next Thursday night and both teams agree  
27 to the revised game date.
- 28
- 29 (1) Events that are unpredictable and outside of the club's control may also be treated  
30 as weather cancellations, e.g., national emergencies. However, events that are  
31 predictable, e.g., proms, school homecomings, PSAT tests, and SAT tests, will not  
32 be treated as weather cancellations since they should be handled using the  
33 procedures outlined in the **Games Initially Scheduled by the SFL or Rescheduled**  
34 **by the Teams** section above. The appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner shall  
35 make a final determination if a cancellation request should be treated as a weather  
36 cancellation.
- 37
- 38 (2) If the club does not properly notify the SFL weather cancellations, then the games  
39 will be added to the Scheduled Games Not Played list and processed as discussed  
40 below.
- 41
- 42 b. The SFL will review the list of Scheduled Games Not Played on Wednesday or  
43 Thursday during the season. All games appearing on this list that have a scheduled game  
44 date earlier than the preceding Monday, will be considered as games that were cancelled  
45 by the teams without notifying the SFL and be handled in accordance with the process  
46 discussed in the **Games Initially Scheduled by the SFL or Rescheduled by the Teams**  
47 section above. In other words, the SFL will not make any attempts to reschedule the  
48 game, both teams will be assessed a forfeit, and no game points will be earned by either  
49 team.

50  
51 Example 1

52  
53 Team A and Team B play a game on Saturday, May 1 but neither team reports the score by  
54 Wednesday, May 5. Therefore, the SFL considered that the game was cancelled by the

1 teams without notifying the SFL. Accordingly, the SFL did not make any attempts to  
2 reschedule the game and assessed both teams a forfeit. After reviewing the web site and  
3 seeing that the game was considered to be a forfeit, Team A reports the game score. The  
4 SFL would then post the game score, remove the forfeits, and assess each team a penalty for  
5 reporting a game score late.  
6

#### 7 Example 2

8

9 All games for the weekend of May 1 are rained out and all clubs but Club A notifies the SFL  
10 of the weather cancellations by 6:00 PM on the Monday, May 3. Club A had 5 games  
11 scheduled on its field for the weekend of May 1 and the coaches for 2 of these games  
12 notified the SFL prior to 6:00 PM on Monday, May 3 that their games had been cancelled  
13 because of weather related reasons. Since the SFL had not been notified that the other 3  
14 games were cancelled for weather related reasons on Club A's field, on Wednesday, May 5,  
15 the SFL considered that the 3 games were cancelled by the teams without notifying the SFL.  
16 Accordingly, the SFL will not make any attempts to reschedule the game and assessed all  
17 teams a forfeit. After reviewing the web site and seeing that the 3 games were considered to  
18 be forfeits, Team A and Team B arrange a new game and report the game score. However,  
19 the other 4 teams cannot agree on a game date to make up these 2 games. The SFL will post  
20 the game score of the game that was made up and remove the forfeits. The SFL will not  
21 make any attempts to reschedule the remaining 2 games since the SFL had not been notified  
22 in a timely manner of the game cancellations. Therefore, the game results for the remaining  
23 2 games would show that both teams had forfeited each game.  
24

- 25 4. **Unscheduled Games** – Two types of unscheduled games may occur – unscheduled games  
26 where both teams are affiliated with the same club and unscheduled games where the teams  
27 are from different clubs. The following procedures will apply to these two types of games.  
28
- 29 a. **Both Teams are Affiliated With Same Club** – The SFL Club Representative for that  
30 club is responsible for ensuring that the game is rescheduled. The SFL will not take an  
31 active role in rescheduling these games.  
32
- 33 b. **Teams Are Affiliated With Different Clubs** – During the regular season, the SFL will  
34 review the list of games that are shown as unscheduled weekly, i.e., the game date is  
35 unknown, and schedule those games, unless otherwise noted below.  
36
- 37 (1) The SFL will leave all games shown as unscheduled after the first game week of the  
38 season as unscheduled until after the start of the second game week to allow the  
39 teams and clubs additional time to reschedule the games. If these games remain  
40 unscheduled after the second regular season game week has started, then they will  
41 be rescheduled using the process described below.  
42
- 43 (2) The SFL will not attempt to reschedule any games shown as unscheduled after the  
44 last game week of the regular season has started.  
45
- 46 (3) On the next to the last week of the regular season, the SFL will review the list of  
47 unscheduled games and attempt to reschedule those games by Tuesday night for  
48 play on the Sunday of the final week of the regular season using the procedures  
49 discussed in the next section. For example, if the next to the last game week's  
50 Sunday date is June 1, the SFL will review the unscheduled games on June 3 and  
51 attempt to reschedule those games for play on June 8 using the process described  
52 below. However, the due to tournament scheduling demands, the SFL may not  
53 make an attempt to reschedule these games.  
54

- 1 (a) Either SFL Club Representative may request a one week delay in automatically  
2 rescheduling a game if they believe that the delay would facilitate the teams  
3 rescheduling the game on their own. Coaches may not request a delay in  
4 automatically rescheduling a game.  
5
- 6 (4) Except for the first week and the last two weeks of the regular season, the SFL will  
7 review the list of unscheduled games on Thursday and schedule the games by  
8 Saturday using the following procedures.  
9
- 10 (a) Games will be rescheduled to be played on the first available Sunday after the  
11 current week using the following criteria:  
12
- 13 (i.) Game will played on the home team's field if a field slot is available.  
14
- 15 (ii.) If the home team does not have an available field slot, then the SFL will  
16 make no attempt to reschedule the game and the home team will be  
17 assessed a forfeit.  
18
- 19 (b) Automatic forfeits will be awarded under the following conditions:  
20
- 21 (i.) If the home team does not have a field slot available during the entire  
22 season that can be used to reschedule the game at the time the  
23 rescheduling efforts are made, then the home team will be assessed a  
24 forfeit with no game points earned.  
25
- 26 a) Once the SFL has made a determination that a game cannot be  
27 rescheduled, this decision is considered final and the SFL will not  
28 make any more attempts to reschedule the game even if additional  
29 game slots are provided by a club at a later date. However, as noted  
30 below, the teams are able to reschedule this game and, if played, the  
31 forfeits will be removed. After a forfeit has been assessed, the SFL  
32 may not be requested to make a decision on whether either team has  
33 made a good faith effort to reschedule the forfeited game.  
34
- 35 (ii.) If either team declines to play on the date established by the SFL for a  
36 rescheduled game, then that team will be assessed a forfeit. However, as  
37 noted below, the teams are able to reschedule this game and, if played,  
38 the forfeit will be removed.  
39
- 40 (iii.) If the SFL schedules a game in a time slot provided by the club and the  
41 club later decides that it cannot support that game, e.g., referees are not  
42 available, field slot is needed for another game, etc., the home team will  
43 be assessed a forfeit. However, as noted below, the teams are able to  
44 reschedule this game and, if played, the forfeit will be removed.  
45
- 46 (c) The teams are free to arrange alternate times, e.g., weekdays, to make up  
47 forfeited games caused by scheduling problems. However, the forfeits will  
48 stand until a game score is reported. After a forfeit has been assessed, the SFL  
49 may not be requested to make a decision on whether either team has made a  
50 good faith effort to reschedule the forfeited game.  
51
- 52 (5) Teams and clubs are not allowed to ask for changes to a game rescheduled by the  
53 SFL.  
54

- 1 (a) Clubs may make minor changes to the games rescheduled by the SFL. For  
2 example, the club may need to move a game from one field in a field complex  
3 to another field in the same field complex to support referee assignments.  
4 However, clubs are not allowed to change the game dates. The SFL Age  
5 Group Commissioner will make a final determination on whether a game  
6 change is considered minor.  
7
- 8 (6) The following priority will be used in rescheduling games when adequate field slots  
9 are not available:  
10
- 11 (a) The oldest age group that can use the field will be assigned the field first. For  
12 example, if the field can support teams in the Under 14 age group or below,  
13 then only teams having an unscheduled game that meets the criteria for the  
14 Under 14 age group (or lower) will be scheduled on that field. On the other  
15 hand, if the field can handle all age groups, then the Under 19s having  
16 unscheduled games will be scheduled first.  
17
- 18 (b) If two or more games within an age group need the same game slot, the SFL  
19 Administrator shall determine the optimum schedule, e.g., move one game to  
20 another field slot. If an optimum schedule cannot be determined, the SFL  
21 Administrator shall flip a coin to determine which game will get rescheduled.  
22
- 23 (7) The SFL will update the web site with the change and attempt to send a standard  
24 Email notification that a game schedule change has taken place and that the  
25 individuals should check the web site for the revised schedule. The following is the  
26 standard distribution list:  
27
- 28 • SFL Club Representatives for each team
  - 29 • Referee and Field Coordinators for club hosting the game
  - 30 • Coaches of the two teams if Email addresses are available
  - 31 • Appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner
  - 32 • SFL Commissioner  
33
- 34 (a) Although the SFL will attempt to Email the notification of the change, it is the  
35 responsibility of each coach and the club officials to monitor the web site for  
36 game schedule changes. The SFL is not responsible for forwarding any  
37 returned Emails to the appropriate SFL Club Representative.  
38
- 39 (8) The SFL will prepare a field loading schedule each time the site is updated that will  
40 be available to the SFL Club Representatives, referee coordinators, and field  
41 coordinators from the web site. Instructions on how to obtain these schedules will  
42 be made available to these individuals at the start of a season.  
43
- 44 (9) Emails will not be sent when automatic forfeits are awarded.  
45
- 46 (10) On the Wednesday or Thursday of the final regular season game week, the SFL will  
47 review all games shown as unscheduled and assess both teams forfeits even if the  
48 game is between two teams of the same club. After this process, the only games  
49 that should be shown as unscheduled are those games that cannot be played during  
50 the final regular season game week.  
51
- 52 (11) The teams are free to arrange alternate times, e.g., weekdays, to make up forfeited  
53 games caused by scheduling problems. However, the forfeits will stand until a  
54 game score is reported. After a forfeit has been assessed, the SFL may not be

1 requested to make a decision on whether either team has made a good faith effort to  
2 reschedule the forfeited game.  
3

## 4 **VIII. TOURNAMENT GAMES**

5  
6 **A. Tournament Ranking** – The following methods will be used to rank teams unless otherwise  
7 stated in Section VIII.F.  
8

- 9  
10 1. **Round Robin Divisions** – When the tournament schedule is played as expected and teams  
11 within a tournament division are scheduled using the round robin format, they will be ranked  
12 in the following order: (1) tournament game points, (2) head to head competition (including  
13 regular season games if they have played each other), (3) tournament bonus points, (4) least  
14 goals allowed during the tournament, (5 ) whether the team received a regular season award<sup>2</sup>  
15 (if applicable), (6) least goals allowed during the regular season, and (7) shoot out. A 3 or  
16 4-way tie is broken in the following order: (1) tournament bonus points, (2) least goals  
17 allowed during the tournament, (3) whether the team received a regular season award if  
18 applicable), (4) least average goals per game allowed during the regular season, (4) regular  
19 season game point percentage, and (5) coin flip. After one team is eliminated, then the  
20 remaining teams will be ranked by starting at the top of the appropriate tie breakers.

21 **Notes:** Normally, the results of the first 2 games a team plays in a 6 team round robin  
22 division with mini groups are used to determine (1) the two teams that play for first  
23 and second trophies and (2) the two teams that play for third place trophies. If  
24 either of the two games used to determine the trophies end in a tie, then a shoot-out  
25 will be conducted to determine the winner of the game. The games used to  
26 determine which teams may play for trophies can end in ties.  
27

28 Normally only the Under 19s are provided regular season awards. Furthermore,  
29 coaches should ensure that a shoot out is not required before dismissing their  
30 players.  
31

- 32 2. **Single Elimination Tournament Divisions** – When the tournament schedule is played  
33 using the single elimination format, the teams will be ranked as follows:  
34

35 a. **Three, Four, Five Team Divisions** – The winner of the final game receives the first  
36 place trophies while the loser receives the second place trophies.  
37

38 b. **Six Team Divisions** – Teams scheduled for 6 team divisions are ranked as follows:  
39

- 40 (1) **Original tournament game schedule played** – In 6 team divisions, the two teams  
41 winning the second round games, play for first and second place trophies with the  
42 winner of this game receiving the first place trophies and the loser receiving the

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<sup>2</sup> Regular season awards, when authorized, are based on game points earned rather than game point percentage. This policy was adopted to encourage the playing of games. In the case of a tie, the preferred tie breaker is head to head competition. If the teams did not play each other during the regular season but will play each other during the tournament, then the winner of the tournament game will be used to break the tie. When more than 2 teams tie based on regular season game points or head to head competition cannot be used as a tie breaker, then the teams will be ranked based on regular season bonus points and regular season goals allowed until only two teams remain at which point the process described above for head to head competition will be used. The appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner may make the necessary adjustments to this process for unique situations.

1 second place trophies. Fields and officials permitting, another game to decide the  
2 winner of third place trophies will also be played. The teams playing in the game to  
3 determine who wins the third place trophies are the losers of the second round  
4 game.  
5

- 6 3. Should a game be tied at the end of regulation play **AND** the tournament division is  
7 scheduled as a single elimination tournament, then a shoot-out will be conducted.  
8 Therefore, games in divisions scheduled using the round robin format may end in a tie. The  
9 winner of a shoot out will be awarded one goal to their game score regardless of the number  
10 of goals scored in the shoot out. For example, if the game score is tied 2 – 2, and one team  
11 scored 5 goals during the shoot out while the other team scored 3 goals, then the final game  
12 score will be 3 – 2 with the team winning the shootout having the 3 goals.  
13

- 14 a. **Shoot Outs** – If a shoot out is required, the FIFA Procedures to Determine the Winner of  
15 A Match – Kicks from the Penalty Mark will apply, in accordance with applicable USSF  
16 guidance, except as noted below.  
17

18 (1) Players who participate in the shoot out:  
19

- 20 (a) If the tournament is scheduled as a single elimination tournament, then only  
21 the players on the field at the end of the game may participate in the shoot out.  
22 This is consistent with the FIFA rules.  
23  
24 (b) If a shoot out is required for some other reason, such as to determine the  
25 ranking of teams who are not playing each other in the final games, then the  
26 coaches may select the 11 players who will participate in the shoot out. This  
27 rule is very rarely used and generally only applies in tournament divisions  
28 scheduled using a round robin format where all other tie breakers have been  
29 exhausted.  
30

31 (2) Coaches may stay with the players in the midfield circle.  
32

33 **B. General Tournament Requirements** – The tournament weekend is normally held on the last  
34 weekend of the season. However, the tournament will only be scheduled if a majority of the  
35 regular season games can be played before the tournament scheduling process is expected to  
36 begin. If weather or other circumstances do not allow a majority of games to be played by the  
37 time that the tournament scheduling process normally begins, the tournament will not be  
38 scheduled and the tournament weekend will be used to make up games.  
39

- 40 1. A majority of regular season games will be considered played if scores have been received  
41 for 80 percent of the games that were originally expected to played at the start of the season  
42 by the tournament scheduling date. For example, if the SFL has 500 teams then about 250  
43 games can be expected to be played each game week. If, on average, less than 200 games  
44 are played each week, then the tournament will not be scheduled and the weekend reserved  
45 for the tournament will be used to make up games.  
46  
47 a. Forfeits caused by rescheduling problems are not considered games played for the  
48 purpose of determining whether the tournament will be scheduled. For example, if Team  
49 A was awarded a forfeit because a game was cancelled due to weather and an adequate  
50 slot was not available to make up the game (see section on game rescheduling), then the  
51 game will not be considered played for purposes of determining the number of games  
52 that have been played. On the other hand, if Team B was awarded a forfeit because  
53 Team A did not have a roster, then Team A and Team B would be given credit for a

1 game played. As noted elsewhere, although this forfeit counts towards the games  
2 played, it does not count for tournament division ranking purposes.  
3

- 4 b. If the tournament is cancelled under these circumstances, then no trophies or other  
5 awards will be provided to the teams.  
6

- 7 2. SFL Club Representatives will be requested to provide field and referee availability  
8 information for the tournament weekend, no later than five weeks after the season starts.  
9 The SFL will use this information to determine the maximum number of tournament time  
10 slots that are available for each club. The number of time slots will then be translated into  
11 number of teams supported. For purposes of this computation, a field available all day on  
12 Saturday and Sunday afternoon translates into 9 time slots which can support about 10  
13 teams.  
14

- 15 3. If a club has more teams than it can support in the tournament, the SFL Club Representative  
16 will be asked to assign a priority to each team in each age group. The SFL will use this  
17 information to determine which teams will play in the tournament. The SFL Club  
18 Representative is not required to provide an overall priority for the club's teams. For  
19 example, if a club has 5 teams in each age group and has 6 age groups, then the SFL Club  
20 Representative should provide a list for each age group showing the priority (1 to 5) for each  
21 team. The SFL Club Representative is not required to rank the 30 teams from 1 to 30.  
22

- 23 a. In making this decision, the SFL Club Representative should confirm that the coach of a  
24 given team is willing and able to (1) act as the division commissioner for a tournament  
25 division and fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the rules for a division commissioner,  
26 (2) pick up trophies for the tournament site, and (3) field a team on the tournament  
27 weekend. If a coach cannot, is not willing, or unable to perform tournament division  
28 responsibilities and pick up trophies, then that team should be given a lower priority. In  
29 addition, the SFL should be notified to ensure that this individual is not asked to perform  
30 these duties. If the coach cannot field a team, then the SFL should also be notified to  
31 avoid scheduling problems.  
32

- 33 b. During the scheduling process, the SFL will determine which teams will actually be  
34 scheduled as discussed elsewhere in this section. This will be primarily based on field  
35 and referee availability and the priority assigned to a given team. Based on past  
36 experience, we expect that most teams can be accommodated. However, the SFL  
37 reserves the right to limit the number of teams and determine which teams will not play  
38 in the tournament. The SFL Club Representatives will be notified of any teams not  
39 selected for tournament play before the tournament schedule is published. Clubs with 4  
40 or more teams are expected to provide at least one field and officials for the tournament.  
41 If a club has 4 or more teams registered in the SFL but the club cannot provide any fields  
42 and officials, all teams will be considered ineligible for tournament play unless adequate  
43 fields and officials can be obtained elsewhere. Clubs which can provide officials but no  
44 fields are given a higher priority than clubs which provide only fields.  
45

- 46 4. **Teams Eligible to Participate in the Tournament** – Teams that have played an adequate  
47 number of games and desire to play in the tournament will be scheduled for tournament  
48 games when the criteria for scheduling a tournament is met. In other words, teams do not  
49 have to register to play in the tournament if the club has provided adequate fields and  
50 referees to support the teams associated with their club.  
51

- 52 a. A team will be considered to have played an adequate number of games, if that team has  
53 played at least 40 percent of the games originally expected to be played at the start of the  
54 season by the tournament scheduling date. For example, if the tournament schedule is

1 being prepared after 5 regular season game weeks have passed, then a team must play in  
2 at least 2 games to be considered eligible for tournament play. On the other hand, if the  
3 tournament schedules are being prepared after 6 regular season game weeks have passed,  
4 then a team must have played in at least 3 games to be considered eligible for  
5 tournament play.  
6

7 (1) Forfeits caused by rescheduling problems are not considered games played for the  
8 purpose of determining tournament eligibility. For example, if Team A and Team  
9 B from the same club were awarded forfeits because a game was cancelled due to  
10 weather and an adequate slot was not available to make up the game (see section on  
11 game rescheduling), then the game will not be considered played for purposes of  
12 determining whether a team has played the minimum number of games. On the  
13 other hand, if Team B was awarded a forfeit because Team A did not have a roster,  
14 then Team A and Team B would be given credit for a game played. As noted  
15 elsewhere, although this forfeit counts towards the games played, it does not count  
16 for tournament ranking purposes.  
17

18 b. A team which has been assessed 2 or more forfeits for any non scheduling reason may be  
19 excluded from the tournament. Examples of forfeits that can result in a team being  
20 declared ineligible for tournament play include:  
21

- 22 • As noted in Section II., a forfeit may be assessed because the SFL Club  
23 Representative failed to turn in a roster by its due date. Therefore, it is critical that  
24 team rosters are received by their due date.  
25
- 26 • As noted in Section IX., if a team does not properly report a red card, then the team  
27 is subject to suspension from the tournament.  
28

29 C. **Tournament Responsibilities** – A coach may be assigned to be a Site Coordinator, Division  
30 Commissioner, and/or Trophy pickup person.  
31

32 1. The SFL Club Representative must provide **positive** confirmation by Email that a team  
33 eligible to play in the tournament is willing to participate in the tournament and that the  
34 club, if 4 or more teams are registered, can provide game field(s) and referees. This includes  
35 confirmation that the coach is willing to serve as a tournament division commissioner and/or  
36 pick up trophies. (As discussed elsewhere, if a club cannot provide adequate fields and  
37 officials, then its teams may be excluded from the tournament.) In addition, if a coach is  
38 unable to serve as a division commissioner or pick up trophies, then that team may be  
39 eliminated from the tournament.  
40

41 a. Since the tournament format for most groups is a single elimination tournament, it is  
42 possible that the original division commissioner assigned to a given division may not  
43 play in a subsequent tournament game. If this happens, the coach of the team beating the  
44 division commissioner's team becomes the division commissioner for trophy purposes.  
45 However, other division commissioner responsibilities, such as phoning the other teams  
46 in case of weather cancellations, remain with the originally assigned division  
47 commissioner unless the tournament site coordinator decides otherwise.  
48

49 2. The Site Coordinator is responsible for (1) providing the fields and nets (2) ensuring that the  
50 field(s) are properly lined, (2) ensuring that adequate officials have been assigned for the  
51 fields provided, (3) notifying the League Commissioner (703-406-8550) or the SFL  
52 Administrator (703-476-6611), and the Division Commissioners for their site in case of  
53 game cancellations due to the weather. Generally, the site coordinator is the SFL Club  
54 Representative for the club hosting a given tournament site.

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3. The Division Commissioner is approved by the applicable SFL Club Representative and is responsible for the following.
    - a. Preparing a game board (round robin tournament divisions only) for their division and ensuring that the scores are posted. (The SFL Web site has a sample game board on the SFL Documents page.) If the division commissioner's team loses, then the board is given to the new division commissioner who assumes this responsibility. In some cases, the division commissioner's team may not play until later in the day. Therefore, the game board may not be available until the division commissioner's team plays its game.
    - b. Notifying the teams in their division of game cancellations. In the case of inclement weather, the division commissioner should also notify the teams in their division if games are going to be played and of any schedule changes. This responsibility remains with assigned division commissioner even if the division commissioner's team loses before the final tournament division game unless the site coordinator performs these duties.
    - c. Distributing the trophies for their division. Generally the site coordinator is assigned the responsibility for picking up trophies. However, in some cases, in order to reduce the travel requirements, other individuals are assigned this responsibility.
    - d. The division commissioner is **NOT RESPONSIBLE** for collecting rosters. However, as noted elsewhere, each team is required to present their roster to the other team **BEFORE** the start of their game. **IF A TEAM DOES NOT HAVE A ROSTER, THAT TEAM FORFEITS THE GAME**, the referee is notified that the game will not be played, and both teams leave the field of play.
    - e. In the case of teams playing the "round robin" tournament format, determines the final team rankings for the division.
  4. The individuals assigned for Trophy Pickup are also approved by the SFL Club Representative. The SFL sends these individuals an Email on how to pick up the trophies and when they are ready for pickup. All trophies should be picked up by the Friday night preceding the first tournament game. All trophies should be taken to the first tournament game.
    - a. When the SFL Rules call for the trophies to not be distributed because of cancellation of one or more tournament division games (see section on tournament game cancellations), then the SFL Club Representative responsible for the trophies assigned to that tournament division must return those trophies to the SFL in accordance with the guidance received from the SFL.

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**D. Placement of Teams in Tournament Divisions** – Teams that have played a majority of their games will be ranked for tournament play based on their game point percentage (game points earned divided by total games played times maximum number of points that can be earned for a game), game points, bonus points, and least goals allowed. Games where a team is assessed a forfeit and points lost due to reporting scores late do not count in this calculation since the goal of the tournament is to place teams with comparable abilities against each other. Therefore the actual game results associated with games played are used to determine the rankings that are used for creating tournament divisions. The tournament ranking will normally be based on the results through the fifth or sixth game.

1. A team will be considered for tournament division placement purposes to have played a majority of games if that team has played at least 70 percent of the games originally scheduled rounded up to the next highest game at the time the tournament schedule is created. For example, if the tournament schedules are being prepared after 5 regular season game weeks have passed, then a team must have played at least 4 of those games to be considered eligible for top or bottom divisions. On the other hand, if the tournament schedules are being prepared after 6 regular season game weeks have passed, then a team must have played at least 5 of those games to be considered eligible for the top or bottom tournament divisions.
- a. Forfeits assessed because of scheduling reasons are not considered games played for this purpose. For example, if a Team A and Team B from the same club were awarded forfeits because a game was cancelled due to weather and an adequate slot was not available to make up the game (see section on game rescheduling), then the game will be considered not played for purposes of determining whether a team has played the majority of its games. On the other hand, if Team B was awarded a forfeit because Team A did not have a roster, then Team A and Team B would be given credit for a game played. As noted elsewhere, although this forfeit counts towards the games played, it does not count for tournament division assignment purposes.
- b. **Placement of Teams in the Top and Lowest Tournament Divisions** – A team will be placed in the top tournament division or the lowest tournament division only if they have played a majority of their games, as defined above, at the time the tournament divisions are determined.
- c. **Placement of Teams That Have Not Played a Majority of Their Regular Season Games** – All teams eligible for tournament play but not playing a majority of games, as defined above, when the tournament schedules are prepared, will be placed together in a separate tournament division(s) if practicable.

- (1) If it is not practicable to create a special division(s) for the teams that have not played a majority of games, then teams with a game point percentage of about 50 percent or less will be placed with teams that have a game percentage point ranking of about 50 percent. All other teams that have not played a majority of games will be placed with teams that are in the division after the top tournament division.

Example

Teams A and B have not played a majority of their games and are playing with teams in tournament divisions 1 through 10 for that age group with division 5 containing the teams with a game percentage point ranking of about 50 percent. Team A has won 3 games and Team B has lost 3 games. All other teams in the age group have played majority of their games. Therefore, Team A would be scheduled with the Division 2 teams and Team B would be scheduled in Division 5 against teams that have a game point percentage of about 50 percent.

- (2) The appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner or SFL Commissioner may determine that this requirement does not apply to a given team based on information obtained by that individual and place the team in another tournament division. For example, the SFL Age Group Commissioner may review the current season results and see that the team has lost every game by at least 3 goals and determine that a better placement for that team would be in a lower division.

1 E. **Tournament Format** – The teams selected for the tournament will be divided into divisions  
2 (generally 4 or 5 teams each). Most of the age groups have two regular season groups which  
3 are also commonly referred to as divisions. Resources permitting, the top tournament division  
4 in the top two regular season groups will use a “round robin” format while the remaining  
5 tournament divisions will use a single elimination format. Depending of the availability of  
6 fields and officials, additional divisions may also be scheduled using a round robin format.  
7

- 8 1. As the SFL has grown, the ability to conduct the tournament has become much more  
9 difficult. Due to the limited availability of fields and officials during the tournament  
10 weekend, the SFL has been forced to adopt a single elimination tournament format for most  
11 tournament divisions.  
12
- 13 2. **Single elimination format** – Teams playing in tournament divisions scheduled using the  
14 single elimination format will play games with the winners or each game advancing to the  
15 championship game. These games may not end in a tie. Section VIII.A. discusses how to  
16 rank teams in these divisions.  
17
  - 18 a. In some cases, a 6 team division may be scheduled. In 6 team divisions, the two teams  
19 winning the second round games, will play in the championship game. Fields and  
20 officials permitting, another game to decide the winner of third place trophies will also  
21 be played. The teams playing in the game to determine who wins the third place trophies  
22 are the losers of the second round game.  
23
- 24 3. **Round robin format** – Teams playing in tournament divisions scheduled using the round  
25 robin format will play at least 2, and in most cases, 3 other teams in their division. Unlike  
26 the single elimination format, games scheduled using this format generally may end in a tie.  
27 Section VIII.A. discusses how to rank teams in these divisions and the special special  
28 process used in 6 team round robin division with mini groups.  
29

#### 30 F. **Actions Taken When Tournament Games Cannot Be Played As Scheduled**

- 31 1. Coaches should assume, regardless of the weather, that tournament games will be played  
32 unless they are notified by their tournament division commissioner (or site coordinator) that  
33 the games have been canceled. Therefore, in the case of inclement weather, if a coach has a  
34 question on whether a game will be played, they should contact their tournament division  
35 commissioner. If this individual cannot be reached, then they should contact the appropriate  
36 site commissioner.  
37
  - 38 a. The division commissioners should contact coaches and notify them of game  
39 cancellations and schedule changes, however, the coaches are also responsible for  
40 checking to see if the games are canceled or if their games have been moved.  
41  
42
- 43 2. A cancelled game is a case where both teams are available for play, however, due to  
44 weather, field conditions, or some other reason, a scheduled game cannot be played.  
45
  - 46 a. Games where a team has received a forfeit are considered games played as scheduled  
47 regardless of the reason for the forfeit.  
48
  - 49 b. As noted in section V.C., when a tournament game is halted due to unsafe playing  
50 conditions, the game result at the time of termination will be used as the final game  
51 result unless waived by the SFL Age Group Commissioner regardless of when the game  
52 is terminated.  
53

- 1 c. The tournament is designed so that the clubs ensure that adequate officials have been  
 2 assigned to cover the scheduled tournament games. In the past, due to circumstances  
 3 beyond the control of the club, the assigned referees may not appear at the game. When  
 4 referees are not available at the scheduled start time, the teams should wait a reasonable  
 5 period to determine if officials will be present. After waiting a reasonable period the  
 6 referees do not appear, then the game is considered a cancelled game. In the past, some  
 7 teams have agreed to play the game using someone other than the assigned referees. The  
 8 SFL has consistently maintained that should the teams agree to play the game using  
 9 someone other than the tournament site assigned referees, then (1) the game is  
 10 considered as a game played and (2) no protests are allowed due to referee issues.  
 11
- 12 3. If one or more tournament games in a tournament division are cancelled, then (1) the  
 13 remaining tournament games in that tournament division are cancelled and (2) the trophies  
 14 will be returned to the SFL unless one of the following exceptions are met.  
 15
- 16 a. **All Saturday games are played in a 3 team round robin division and one team wins  
 17 both games, however, the Sunday game is cancelled.** In a 3 team round robin  
 18 division, one team normally plays two games on Saturday. If that team wins both of its  
 19 games on Saturday and Sunday's game is cancelled, then the first place trophies would  
 20 be awarded to the team winning both of its Saturday games since that team would have  
 21 received the first place trophies regardless of the outcome of the Sunday game. On the  
 22 other hand, if the team playing two games on Saturday did not win both games, then it is  
 23 impossible to determine which of the 3 teams should be awarded first place trophies and  
 24 no trophies will be awarded.  
 25
- 26 b. **A tournament division is scheduled using a 6 team round robin division with mini  
 27 groups or a 6 (or 7) team single elimination format and all Saturday games are  
 28 played, however, only one Sunday tournament game can be played since the field is  
 29 unavailable for the other game normally scheduled using this format.** In these three  
 30 game formats, the Saturday results clearly show the two teams eligible for first and  
 31 second place trophies and the two teams eligible for third place trophies. When only one  
 32 of the expected two games can be played because of field conditions, then (1) the field  
 33 slot available for play will be used by the teams eligible for first and second place  
 34 trophies, (2) the first and second place trophies will be awarded based on the results of  
 35 the game played, (3) the game for third place trophies will be cancelled with the SFL  
 36 Club Representative returning the third place trophies to the SFL. It should be noted that  
 37 this situation is only expected to occur when two fields are used for playing the Sunday  
 38 games.  
 39

40 The following are examples of how these rules apply to a tournament division.  
 41

Condition	Impact on Game Schedule and Trophy Awards
Saturday tournament games are cancelled	All Sunday tournament games are cancelled and no attempt is made to reschedule any tournament games. No trophies are awarded and the SFL Club Representative returns the trophies to the SFL.
Sunday tournament games are cancelled	No trophies are awarded and the SFL Club Representative returns the trophies to the SFL unless (1) the tournament division is a 3 team division playing a round robin format and (2) one team has won both of the Saturday games. In this specific case, first place trophies are awarded the team that won both of its Saturday games while the second place trophies are returned to the SFL by the SFL Club Representative.

Condition	Impact on Game Schedule and Trophy Awards
<p>1 One Saturday 2 tournament game is 3 cancelled</p>	<p>All remaining Saturday and Sunday tournament games are cancelled and no attempt is made to reschedule any tournament games. No trophies are awarded and the SFL Club Representative returns the trophies to the SFL.</p>
<p>4 All Saturday games 5 are played and one 6 Sunday game can 7 be played in a 6/7 8 team single 9 elimination 10 division or 6 team 11 round robin 12 division using mini 13 groups.</p>	<p>In these two game formats, the Saturday results clearly show the two teams eligible for first and second place trophies and the two teams eligible for third place trophies. For example, all tournament games are played on Saturday. Based on Saturday's results (1) Team A and Team B were scheduled to play for first and second place trophies on Field 1 and (2) Team C and Team D were scheduled to play for third place trophies on Field 2. However, due to weather or other conditions, Field 1 cannot be used on Sunday while Field 2 is available. Accordingly, (1) the game between Team A and Team B is moved to Field 2 with the results of that game used to determine who receives first and second place trophies and (2) the game for third place trophies is cancelled and the third place trophies are returned to the SFL by the SFL Club Representative.</p>
<p>14 Team A is assessed 15 a forfeit since it 16 does not show up 17 to play its 18 scheduled 19 tournament game 20 with Team B.</p>	<p>The tournament game is shown as a game played with Team B being declared the winner with a 1 – 0 score. Assuming the remaining games in that tournament division are played, the trophies will be awarded in accordance with the process applicable for that type of tournament division, i.e., teams will be ranked using the processes outlined elsewhere in this document if the tournament division is scheduled as a round robin division or the winner of the final game associated with the single elimination division.</p>

21  
22 G. Other  
23

- 24 1. In order to keep the tournament games on schedule, the referee will normally keep a running  
25 clock, i.e., the clock is not stopped for injuries, substitutions, etc. However, the referee may  
26 decide to stop the clock if the referee believes that it will not adversely affect the overall  
27 tournament game schedule. This is a decision made by the referee and may not be  
28 protested.  
29
- 30 2. The referee is allowed to use their discretion on when it is too dark to play safely.  
31 Therefore, the last games of the day may be shortened because of darkness. This is a  
32 decision made by the referee and may not be protested.  
33

34 **IX. DISCIPLINE, PROTESTS AND APPEALS**  
35

36 A. **Probation** – At the older age levels, the coach assumes an increased level of responsibility  
37 regarding team leadership and maintenance of order and discipline. The SFL expects each of  
38 its coaches to set a positive example for their players in promoting good sportsmanship and  
39 self-control. Accordingly, coaches are expected to be present at every game with their team or  
40 to ensure that responsible adult leadership is present for the team in their absence. A history of  
41 disciplinary infractions by one team can be grounds for team, coach, and/or player dismissal  
42 from the league. Such decisions will not be made lightly or hastily and will only be made after  
43 a careful review of the facts by a Disciplinary Panel to resolve disputes.  
44

- 45 1. A team with a history of infractions may be placed on probation by the club or the SFL. If a  
46 team is placed on probation, its conduct will be closely watched by the applicable SFL Age

1 Group Commissioner. Should a team on probation have any of the following conditions, the  
2 remainder of its regular season games shall be forfeited and team considered ineligible for  
3 tournament play:

- 4 a. Accumulation of four (4) team red card points.
- 5
- 6 b. A game terminated because of the team's conduct.
- 7
- 8 c. Any other disciplinary reason that the SFL Age Group Commissioner deems significant  
9 to warrant suspension from the SFL.
- 10

11  
12 2. Any team on probation that is suspended is considered ineligible to return to the SFL for at  
13 least 2 (two) seasons. The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner is responsible for  
14 determining whether the members associated with a team constitute the team ineligible to  
15 participate. It is up to the SFL Club Representative to notify the appropriate SFL Age  
16 Group Commissioner when any members of the suspended team or coaches associated with  
17 the suspended team are placed on team(s) that will be registered. The SFL Age Group  
18 Commissioner must approve of each of these player(s) or coach(es) returning to the SFL  
19 before the 2 (two) season suspension is served.

20  
21 3. The SFL Club Representative is responsible for ensuring that a team is notified that it is  
22 considered on probation and aware of the rules that can affect their continued participation  
23 in the SFL.

24  
25 **B. Sideline Control** – The coach is responsible for the behavior of his/her sidelines and may be  
26 assessed a red card for the behavior of his/her sidelines. The referee also has the power to eject  
27 any other team official, parent, or spectator at any time at the referee's discretion.

28  
29 1. A red card is considered awarded if the referee asks the coach, team official, parent, and/or  
30 spectator to leave the field even if no red card is shown.

31  
32 2. Individuals receiving these red cards must "sit out" one game and are encouraged not to  
33 attend the game at all. If the individual does attend the game, the following applies.

34  
35 a. The individual should not be closer to the playing field than 100 yards beginning 30  
36 minutes before game time until the game is over. The fact that a game can be seen from  
37 a public street or sidewalk which may be closer than 100 yards does not relieve the  
38 coach, team official, parent, or spectator from complying with this 100-yard rule.

39  
40 b. The individual will not be involved in any way with administration of the team during  
41 the game.

42  
43 c. Failure to comply with these restrictions may result in a forfeit of the game.

44  
45 **C. Disciplinary Panels and Appeals** – Should the SFL Commissioner or SFL Age Group  
46 Commissioner decide that a disciplinary panel should be convened, the applicable SFL Age  
47 Group Commissioner will select 3 other SFL Age Group Commissioners and form a  
48 disciplinary panel. If three panel members cannot agree on the proper decision, then the SFL  
49 Commissioner will make the final decision and no appeal is available.

50  
51 1. A SFL Club Representative may appeal a decision reached by a SFL Age Group  
52 Commissioner or the Disciplinary Panel to the SFL Commissioner for a final decision. The  
53 SFL Commissioner's decision is final and cannot be appealed.  
54

- 1 2. The SFL Age Group Commissioners selected for a disciplinary panel should not include a  
2 member who is involved with either the team or club who is the subject of the disciplinary  
3 panel. Should the dispute involve the SFL Commissioner's team or club, then the panel's  
4 decision is final and cannot be appealed.  
5

6 **D. Game Suspensions and Terminations** – Should a referee terminate a match due to  
7 disciplinary problems, the SFL Club Representative shall notify the applicable SFL Age Group  
8 Commissioner who will notify the SFL Commissioner. The SFL Age Group Commissioner  
9 will make a decision on whether the Disciplinary Panel will investigate the circumstances and  
10 notify the SFL Commissioner of his/her decision. A written report will be provided by SFL  
11 Age Group Commissioner of the actions taken, including game forfeiture, to the SFL  
12 Commissioner. The SFL Commissioner may direct additional actions at the SFL  
13 Commissioner's sole discretion.  
14

15 **E. Misconduct**

- 16
- 17 1. **Yellow Card** – Two yellow cards during a game constitute a red card and the player must  
18 leave the field without substitution.  
19
- 20 2. **Red Card Suspensions** – In accordance with FIFA rules, a red card may be issued before,  
21 during, or after a game. A red carded player, dismissed coach, dismissed team official, or  
22 dismissed spectator will be required to leave the field of play immediately and sit out the  
23 next game the team plays. If a player receives three red cards points during a season,  
24 including post season tournament play, the player is automatically suspended for the  
25 remainder of the season including post-season play. Red cards carry over to the next season.  
26 Red cards relating to abusive language toward an official or fighting (or conduct treated as  
27 fighting) will result in an automatic suspension from the next two (2) games the team plays.  
28 Red cards issued for dissent are also subject to 2 game suspensions. In addition, a  
29 disciplinary hearing may be held by the Disciplinary Panel which may result in additional  
30 penalties.  
31
- 32 a. Conduct which will be treated as fighting includes but is not limited to:  
33
- 34 (1) fighting in the opinion of the referee,  
35
- 36 (2) shoving another player or any other aggressive action after the whistle has blown to  
37 stop play,  
38
- 39 (3) kicking/striking or attempting to kick/strike a player, or  
40
- 41 (4) spitting.  
42
- 43 b. Coaches, team officials, parents, and spectators serving their suspension period are  
44 encouraged not to attend the game at all. If the individual does attend the game, the  
45 following applies:  
46
- 47 (1) The individual should not be closer to the playing field than 100 yards beginning 30  
48 minutes before game time until the game is over. The fact that a game can be seen  
49 from a public street or sidewalk which may be closer than 100 yards does not  
50 relieve the coach, team official, parent, or spectator from complying with this  
51 100-yard rule. In addition, the individual will not be involved in any way with  
52 administration of the team during the game.  
53
- 54 (a) Failure to comply with these restrictions may result in a forfeit of the game.

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- c. In accordance with VYSA rules, a coach is subject to a 3 game suspension for misconduct at a referee. The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner shall be responsible for making the initial determination on whether a coach that receives a red card is subject to this suspension. The following are examples of behavior that can result in the 3 game suspension and are not all inclusive:
- (1) Excessive incidences of foul or abusive language at the referee.
  - (2) Statements that diminish the authority of the referee.
  - (3) Statements or acts that serve to intimidate without threatening physical harm to the referee.
  - (4) Confronting the referee without physically threatening the referee.
  - (5) Spitting on the ground or in the air but not at the referee. (Spitting at the referee is considered assault.)
  - (6) Throwing or kicking an item as a sign of disrespect or dissent but without the chance of hitting the referee. Throwing an item at the referee is considered assault.)
  - (7) Re-entering the field.
- d. A red card associated with receiving a second yellow card for dissent automatically carries at least a one game suspension. Should a team receive another red card during the season where the second yellow card was for dissent, then the individual receiving that red card must serve at least a two game suspension. If the individual receiving this red card has received another red card during the season for any reason, then that individual will be suspended for the remainder of the season since the individual has now accumulated at least 3 red card points.

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Example A

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Player A receives a second yellow card for dissent in the first game of the season. Based on a review of the incident, it is decided that a one game suspension is warranted. Player A is suspended for one (1) game and 1 red card point is awarded.

39  
40

Example B

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Player A receives a second yellow card for dissent in the first game of the season. Based on a review of the incident, it is decided that a one game suspension is warranted. Player A is suspended for one (1) game and one (1) red card point is awarded. In a subsequent game, Player B receives a second yellow card for dissent. Player B is automatically suspended for two (2) games and two (2) red card points are awarded unless a review of the incident results in a decision that the infraction warrants more than a 2 game suspension. If Player B had also received a previous red card or receives a red card in a subsequent game for any reason, then the player is suspended for the remainder of the season since that player had received at least three (3) red card points.

- 51  
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55
- e. Games cancelled or games where the team receives a forfeit for any reason are not considered as games played when determining whether a player has served a game suspension.

1                   Example A

2  
3                   Player A receives a red card in week 5 and Player A’s next scheduled game in week 6 is  
4 cancelled due to weather and team’s next game is during week 7. Player A would be  
5 required to serve the suspension during the game scheduled during week 7.  
6

7                   Example B

8  
9                   Player A receives a red card in week 5. During the next game that Player A’s team plays  
10 (week 6), Player A’s team is assessed a forfeit because it did not have a proper roster.  
11 Player A would be required to sit out the next game that Player A’s team plays.  
12

- 13                   **3. Reporting Cards** – Yellow and red cards must be reported to the **SFL by both teams and**  
14 **the club who provided the officials for the game.** The applicable SFL Age Group  
15 Commissioner should notify the teams involved in the next week’s game of players who had  
16 received red cards and should not play. Email is the preferred method of reporting red card  
17 information. The team whose player received the red card shall include the following  
18 information in their report (1) player’s name, (2) player’s jersey number, (3) nature of the  
19 infraction, and (4) recommended suspension period. Red cards are required to be reported  
20 no later than 6 PM on Monday following the game where the red card was assessed unless  
21 the team is expected to play a game the following day. If the team is expected to play a  
22 game the following two days, then the red card must be reported no later than 8 PM on the  
23 game day.  
24

25                   Example A

26  
27                   Team A plays a game on Saturday and one of its players receives a red card. The next game  
28 that Team A plays is the following Saturday. This red card must be properly reported no  
29 later than 6 PM on the Monday following the game.  
30

31                   Example B

32  
33                   Team A plays a game on Saturday and one of its players receives a red card. The next game  
34 that Team A plays is the next day (Sunday) or on Monday. This red card must be properly  
35 reported no later than 8 PM on the day the game is played (Saturday).  
36

- 37                   a. If a team does not properly report a red card, then the team will be assessed a forfeit for  
38 that game. In addition, the team is assessed an additional three (3) red card points to the  
39 red card points assessed for the offense for not properly reporting the red card. A red  
40 card is considered properly reported by the team when the report includes the (1)  
41 player’s name, (2) player’s jersey number, (3) nature of the infraction, and (4)  
42 recommended suspension period.  
43

44                   Example A

45  
46                   Player A on Team A receives a red card for an offense that warrants a one (1) game  
47 suspension and the team fails to properly report the red card. Team A is assessed a  
48 forfeit for the game and is assessed four (4) red card points (one for the red card and  
49 three red card points for not properly reporting the red card).  
50

51                   Example B

52  
53                   Player A on Team A receives a red card for an offense that warrants a two (2) game  
54 suspension and the team fails to properly report the red card. Team A is assessed a

1 forfeit for the game and is assessed five (5) red card points (two for the red card and  
2 three red card points for not properly reporting the red card).  
3

#### 4 Example C

5  
6 Player A on Team A receives a red card for an offense that warrants a one (1) game  
7 suspension and the team fails to properly report the red card. Team A is assessed a  
8 forfeit for the game and is assessed four (4) red card points (one for the red card and  
9 three red card points for not properly reporting the red card). Team A also receives and  
10 properly reports red cards resulting in four (4) red card points. Team A would be  
11 suspended from the tournament because of the accumulation of red card points.  
12

#### 13 Example D

14  
15 Team A has two players receiving red cards for offenses that normally warrant a one  
16 game suspension during the same game and fails to report both red cards. Team A is  
17 assessed a forfeit for the game and is assessed eight (8) red card points (one for each red  
18 card and three red card points for each red card for not properly reporting the red cards).  
19 Team A would be suspended from the tournament because of the accumulation of red  
20 card points.  
21

- 22 b. A referee may request from the coach, player, or other team official the name of any  
23 coach, player, or team official that the referee considers needed to perform their  
24 reporting responsibilities. If this information is not provided or incorrect information is  
25 provided to the referee, the team will be assessed two (2) red card points in addition to  
26 any other red card points that may be assessed during the game.  
27

- 28 4. **Red Card Points** – Teams that receive an average of one (1) red card point per regular  
29 season game scheduled will be ineligible to play in the tournament and will only be allowed  
30 to return the following season with permission of the applicable SFL Age Group  
31 Commissioner. If the team is allowed to return, it will automatically be placed on probation.  
32 Once a team accumulates team red card points that would result in an average of one (1)  
33 team red card point per regular season game scheduled, the remainder of its regular season  
34 games will be forfeited and the team will not be allowed to play in the tournament. For  
35 example, if a team is scheduled for seven (7) games and it receives seven (7) team red card  
36 points after the sixth game, then that team will be assessed a forfeit for its remaining game  
37 and the team will not be scheduled for the tournament. Red card points are computed as  
38 follows:  
39

- 40 a. When a player is given a red card, the team and the player automatically receives one (1)  
41 red card point.  
42  
43 b. If a review of the infraction results in a suggestion by the applicable SFL Age Group  
44 Commissioner of more than a one game suspension, then an additional red card point  
45 will be awarded to the player and the team for each additional game. For example, if the  
46 recommended suspension is two (2) games for a given infraction, then the player and the  
47 team will be awarded two (2) red card points.  
48  
49 c. If a player does not serve the red card suspension period, then an additional red card  
50 point is awarded to the player and the team. A player will be considered as not serving  
51 the suspension period if (1) any player wears the same jersey number of the player who  
52 received the red card, unless approval has been given by the appropriate SFL Age Group  
53 Commissioner, or (2) the player who received the red card plays in the game regardless  
54 of the jersey number. The team will also be assessed a forfeit.

- 1 d. If a fight breaks out, then each team will receive at least one (1) red card point even if no  
2 red cards are awarded. For example, a fight may break out after the game and involve  
3 spectators, therefore, no red cards would normally be issued.  
4

5 Example 1  
6

7 A player on Team A receives a red card for a deliberate hand ball in the goal area. The  
8 coach reports the incident and recommends that the player only receive the mandatory  
9 one (1) game suspension. The player does not play in the team's next game. Therefore,  
10 the player and the team receive one (1) red card point.  
11

12 Example 2  
13

14 A player on Team A receives a red card for attempting to throw a punch at a player on  
15 Team B. The coach properly reports the red card and recommends that the player  
16 receive a one game suspension since the other player was not hit. The appropriate SFL  
17 Age Group Commissioner reviews the incident and recommends a two (2) game  
18 suspension. The club agrees with the SFL Age Group Commissioner's recommendation  
19 and the player does not play the next two (2) games. Therefore, the team and the player  
20 receive two (2) team red card points.  
21

22 Discussion  
23

24 A review of past disciplinary problems disclosed that most problems were associated  
25 with a few teams and players. It has also been brought to our attention that some teams  
26 do not properly report disciplinary problems and that the teams who do report the  
27 infractions are unfairly penalized. Therefore, a means was needed to quantify the teams  
28 and players who caused the problems and to better ensure that disciplinary problems are  
29 properly reported. The above rules were adopted to address these problems.  
30

- 31 5. The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner may request a club to formally review any  
32 incident that involves either (1) a red card offense regardless of whether a red card is  
33 awarded, e.g., fighting or (2) a situation where a game is terminated early.  
34
- 35 a. If the SFL Age Group Commissioner decides that formal review is necessary, the club is  
36 expected to have its Rules and Disciplinary Committee or similar organization (Rules  
37 Committee) formally review the requested incident and provide a written report to the  
38 SFL that contains (1) names and titles of the officials on the panel, (2) the approach  
39 taken to review the matter that was referred for review, (3) the pertinent facts disclosed  
40 during their review, and (4) the actions that the club believe are appropriate. It is  
41 expected that this Committee will comply with the VYSA rules for such groups. The  
42 club is encouraged to include the club's SFL Club Representative in this process.  
43
- 44 b. If the SFL Age Group Commissioner decides that a formal review is necessary, the  
45 individual(s) that should be included in the review will normally be identified, if  
46 possible, by the SFL Age Group Commissioner.  
47
- 48 (1) If the SFL Age Group Commissioner is unable to identify the individual(s) based  
49 on the information obtained that led to the request, then the club must provide the  
50 name(s) and any other information requested within 3 days of the SFL Club  
51 Representative being sent an Email requesting such information.  
52
- 53 (a) If a club is unable to provide the necessary information, then the team will be  
54 suspended from SFL play until the necessary information is provided.  
55

- (2) Any individual (player, coach, spectator, etc.) whose actions are being reviewed by the club's Rules Committee is ineligible to participate in SFL games until the SFL receives the written report from the Rules Committee. The SFL Age Group Commissioner shall identify the individual(s) subject to this penalty.
  - (a) This requirement does not apply to individuals that the Rules Committee may request to appear before it for information gathering purposes only.
  - (b) It is recognized that the Rules Committee may later identify other individuals that should be penalized.
- (3) The SFL Club Representative may appeal the decision of the SFL disciplinary panel using the procedures outlined for complaints and protests.

F. **Complaints and Protests** – Only a SFL Club Representative or the President (or equivalent) of a club's governing body are allowed to submit formal complaints or protest a game. SFL Club Representatives or Club Presidents who wish to protest a game or provide a formal complaint, must notify the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner in writing within 48 hours after the match with a copy to the SFL Commissioner. Coaches and Club Age Group Commissioners are not allowed to file formal complaints or protests directly with the SFL. Although the SFL Club Representative or Club President may request other individuals to help the SFL Club Representative or Club President file a complaint or protest, the applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner is only responsible for accepting information from and discussing the complaint or protest with the SFL Club Representative OR Club President who is acting on behalf of the club. Only one individual may act on behalf of the club during the complaint or protest process.

1. The formal complaint or protest must include:
  - a. the time and location of the match;
  - b. the team names and age group;
  - c. the nature of the complaint or protest (referee judgment is not considered an item for protest);
  - d. the referee's name, address, and phone number (if known); and
  - e. the opposing team coach's name and other significant witnesses.
2. During tournament play, a phone report may be made by the SFL Club Representative but must include the above information. The protest will be handled by the applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner.
3. The SFL Age Group Commissioner is responsible for making the initial decision on an appeal unless that individual is affiliated with a club involved in the protest. The appropriate person making the protest may appeal the SFL Age Group Commissioner's decision to the SFL Commissioner whose decision is final.
  - a. If the SFL Age Group Commissioner is affiliated with a club involved in the protest, then the protest shall be heard by the SFL Commissioner, unless the SFL Commissioner is affiliated with a club involved in the protest, whose decision is final.

- 1 b. If the SFL Commissioner is affiliated with a club involved in the protest, then the SFL  
2 Age Group Commissioner's decision is considered final and cannot be appealed.  
3  
4 c. If both the SFL Age Group Commissioner and SFL Commissioner are affiliated with a  
5 club involved in the protest, then the protest shall be heard by an SFL Age Group  
6 Commissioner that is not affiliated with any of the clubs involved in the protest. The  
7 SFL Administrator shall determine which SFL Age Group Commissioner should hear  
8 the protest. The decision of this SFL Age Group Commissioner is considered final and  
9 may not be appealed.

10  
11 Discussion

12  
13 In the past, the SFL has received a number of protests which should not have not been filed  
14 or requested to review actions which are the responsibility of a given club. For example,  
15 games were protested because of referee decisions. The SFL recognizes that protest or  
16 formal complaint is not appropriate for many conditions that a coach or club believes  
17 warrants additional review by a club. Therefore, the SFL will accept informal complaints  
18 and forward them to the appropriate club for informational purposes. The SFL is not  
19 responsible for following up to determine what actions were taken by a given club on  
20 informal complaints.  
21

- 22 G. **Quality of Officials** – The SFL provides a mechanism for coaches to report on the quality of  
23 the officials provided for their games. These evaluations will be forwarded to the club for their  
24 use and the SFL does not perform any followup actions. The web site has one suggested form  
25 that can be used. (The form on the SFL Documents page.) You may either mail or Email your  
26 comments. We would appreciate both positive and negative comments. When you report on  
27 the officiating, please provide the game number, teams, game field, and game time.  
28  
29 H. It should be remembered that the SFL is governed by the principle that all actions are ***For the***  
30 ***Good of the Player*** and unsporting behavior or violation of the Laws of the Game cannot be  
31 tolerated. It should also be noted that the SFL is primarily a scheduling organization and that  
32 the resolution of complaints, disciplinary actions, and protests is primarily the responsibility of  
33 the affected clubs. The role of the SFL is to help facilitate the resolution of complaints,  
34 disciplinary problems, and protests.  
35

## Glossary of Terms

1  
2  
3  
4 **Adult League** – Normally consist of players who meet the age criteria for Under 18s and above. Teams  
5 will be broken into three broad groups – Coed, Men, and Women. Members of either gender may play  
6 on a Coed or Men’s team. Only members of the female gender may play on a Women’s team.  
7

8 **Club Age Group Representative** – Each club may appoint one individual to represent the teams of a  
9 given age group. This individual may assist the SFL Club Representative but is not allowed to vote on  
10 SFL matters or act as an official representative of the club unless the club has also appointed this  
11 individual as the SFL Club Representative. Examples of duties perform by Club Age Group  
12 Representatives include providing information on the teams in their assigned age group and acting as a  
13 point of contact when another team has a problem contacting a coach.  
14

15 **Game week** – A game week starts on a Friday and normally lasts 7 days. However, if no games are  
16 scheduled for a period of 14 days, such as a holiday weekend, then the game week will consist of 14  
17 days.  
18

19 **SFL Age Group Commissioners** – Each age group will have a SFL Age Group Commissioner who is  
20 responsible to the SFL Commissioner. The SFL Age Group Commissioners are responsible for  
21 monitoring the operation of the teams in their age group and will coordinate with the SFL Club  
22 Representatives and, if necessary, notify the SFL Commissioner when problems arise or disciplinary  
23 action is required.  
24

25 **SFL Club Representatives** – Each club is required to appoint one individual as the SFL Club  
26 Representative. This individual is the official representative of the club and is responsible for ensuring  
27 that all rules and regulations of their club and that of the SFL are being followed. This individual also  
28 acts as liaison between the club and the SFL over disputes and rule infractions. **The SFL is not**  
29 **required to act upon any issues raised by someone other than the SFL Club Representative or the**  
30 **President (or equivalent) of the Club’s governing body.** The SFL Club Representative must also be  
31 able to communicate with the SFL using an Email service that is acceptable to the SFL unless a written  
32 waiver is granted by the SFL Commissioner. The season package contains the name of the individual  
33 who has been designated by the each club as their SFL Club Representative.  
34

35 **SFL Commissioner** – Monitors the seasonal and daily operations of the league. This is done with the  
36 assistance of the SFL Age Group Commissioners and the SFL Club Representatives. The SFL  
37 Commissioner also hears all appeals of decisions made by a SFL Age Group Commissioner or the SFL  
38 Disciplinary Panel. The SFL Commissioner’s decision is final and no other appeal is available.  
39

40 **SFL Disciplinary Panel** – The SFL Commissioner or a SFL Age Group Commissioner may also  
41 convene a Disciplinary Panel to investigate a complaint or protest submitted by a SFL Club  
42 Representative. The structure and role of this panel are discussed in Section IX.  
43

44 **Weather cancellation** – Games cannot be played for weather related reasons or conditions that are that  
45 are beyond the SFL’s control, e.g., regional and national emergencies.  
46

47 **Youth League** – Consists of teams who have players who meet the age criteria for Under 19s or younger.  
48 Normally teams will be broken into two broad groups – boys (or mixed) and girls. Only members of the  
49 female gender may play on a girl’s team while members of either gender may play on a “boy’s” team.  
50  
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