

SUBURBAN FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

Proposed Rules and Administrative Items for the Fall 2011 Season

(Adopted August __, 2011)

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SUBURBAN FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

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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) 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

John Paladino
Email: u14girls@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

Jim Rodden
Email: u19boys@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
2 c. A player may be listed on only one roster in a given season and each player on a given
3 team must have a unique uniform number that remains constant during a given season.
4 See related section on combining teams for additional information on how to handle
5 duplicate numbers when teams are authorized to combine teams.
6

7 Example

8
9 Player A is assigned to Team 1 and the Master Player Roster shows that Player's A
10 uniform number is 17. No other player on Team 1 may wear number 17 and Player A
11 must always wear the number 17.
12

13 Discussion

14
15 Some clubs provide the team uniforms to the coaches who then distribute the uniforms
16 to the player on game day. This is an acceptable practice when (1) the club provides the
17 coach with a sufficient number of uniforms so that each player assigned to the team will
18 have a unique number and (2) the coach ensures that the every player always receives
19 the same number as that shown on the Master Player Roster and Team Roster.
20

- 21 (1) The requirement for unique and consistent uniform numbers may be waived by the
22 opposing coach. However, if a coach (1) waives the requirement or (2) allows the
23 game to be played with uniform numbers that are not unique and consistent with
24 the Team Roster, then the coach cannot request a forfeit after the game due to
25 uniform number issues.
26
27 (a) The SFL does not expect this to be a common occurrence and both coaches
28 are required to report (1) that such a request was made and (2) whether the
29 request was approved.
30

31 Example

32
33 Player A on Team 1 shows up at the game with a uniform used in a prior season
34 and the uniform number is not the same as that shown on the team roster for this
35 player. The coach of Team 1 approaches the coach of Team 2 and notifies the
36 coach of this situation and requests the coach of Team 2 to allow Player A to play
37 using a uniform that does not comply with the SFL's rules. If the coach of Team 2
38 agrees to this request, then the coach of Team 2 may not request a forfeit because
39 Team 1 used a player whose uniform did not comply with the SFL's uniform
40 number requirements.
41

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

- 43
44 a. Clubs must submit the Master Player Roster on the SFL provided form.
45

- 46 (1) SFL Form SFL-4E is the official form used for submitting Master Player Rosters.
47 No substitute forms may be used even if those forms provide the same
48 information.
49
50 (2) Master Player Rosters are Emailed to the general SFL Email address
51 (sfl@sflsoccer.org). The subject line should contain (1) Master Player Roster and
52 (2) the club's name, e.g., Master Player Roster – Reston. The SFL will make sure
53 that this roster is distributed to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioners.
54

- 1 b. The Master Player Roster contains the official information used by the SFL to resolve
2 roster issues such as whether a given player has been assigned to a specific team.
3
4 c. Master Player Rosters are required to be submitted as follows.
5
6 (1) March 15 for the spring season and August 15 for the fall season.
7
8 (a) Teams will not be registered for play in the SFL if a Master Player Roster is
9 not provided by March 15 for the spring season and August 15 for the fall
10 season.
11
12 (2) April 15 for the spring season and September 15 for the fall season.
13
14 (a) If a proper Master Team Roster is not received by April 15 for the spring
15 season and September 15 for the fall season, then that club's teams will not be
16 allowed to play in the tournament.
17
18 (3) Within 5 days after adding a player to a team's roster after April 15 for the spring
19 season and September 15 for the fall season.
20
21 d. Required information.
22
23 (1) Age group.
24
25 (2) SFL Division – The division that will be used for the player's assigned team.
26
27 (a) Divisions for the Under 12s and 14s are primarily based on age.
28
29 (i.) Division 1 is for the better teams who meet the division 2 age criteria
30 and those with players at the top end of the age group (Under 12 or
31 Under 14). **(SKILL LEVEL DOES NOT AFFECT THE**
32 **PLACEMENT OF TEAMS WITH PLAYERS THAT MEET THE**
33 **DIVISION 1 AGE CRITERIA.)** The goal of the SFL is to have
34 competitive soccer rather than to see who can win by the biggest margin
35 and a number of clubs follow the practice of moving a team up a
36 division.
37
38 (ii.) Division 2 is for teams whose players are at the bottom end of the age
39 group (Under 11 or Under 13).
40
41 (b) The divisions for Under 16 Boys, Under 16 Girls, and Under 19 Boys are
42 based on skill level with the better teams placed in division 1.
43

44 Discussion

45
46 The web site has an Age Group Calculator page that provides additional
47 information on the age groups and a calculator that can be used to determine the
48 age group for a given player (<http://www.sflsoccer.org/agegrp.htm>). Player age
49 groups based on birth dates will also be calculated automatically when player birth
50 dates are entered in the Master Player Roster (SFL-4E) and Team Roster
51 (SFL-2E).
52

- 53 (3) Team name – The SFL standard team name used during the team registration
54 process.

- 1
2 (4) Uniform number – The uniform number assigned to the player.
3
4 (a) Uniform numbers may be omitted from the Master Player Roster submitted on
5 March 15 and August 15.
6
7 (5) Player’s name.
8
9 (6) Player’s birth date.
10
11 e. Only the SFL Club Representative may submit the Master Player Roster using the
12 Email address on file with the SFL. Rosters submitted in this manner are considered
13 “signed” by the SFL Club Representative.
14

15 3. A Team Roster, using a SFL approved form, must be provided to a coach before the
16 coach’s team plays its first game.
17

- 18 a. Team rosters should not be provided to the SFL since the Master Player Roster contains
19 the official information used by the SFL to resolve roster issues such as whether a given
20 player has been assigned to a specific team.
21
22 b. It is expected that all players at the field will be listed on the team roster and have
23 uniform numbers that match what is shown on the team roster. In addition, a proper
24 Team Roster meets the following requirements:
25

- 26 (1) The roster is provided on SFL Form SFL–2E or an approved substitute form.
27
28 (2) The roster contains a handwritten signature from the SFL Club Representative or
29 Club Registrar. If the coach performs both of these functions, then a club officer
30 or than the coach must sign that team’s roster.
31
32 (3) The roster does not contain handwritten player names, birth dates, or uniform
33 numbers.
34
35 (4) The roster includes as an attachment any waivers provided to the team by the SFL.
36

37 c. SFL form SFL–2E is the standard Team Roster form. However, a club may request
38 approval to use a substitute form.
39

- 40 (1) All requests for approval of substitute forms must be received by the SFL prior to
41 March 25 for the spring season and August 25 for the fall season. All substitute
42 rosters must (1) be signed by the SFL Club Representative or Club Registrar, (2)
43 contain all the player data contained on the SFL Team Roster form (player’s
44 uniform number, name, and birth date), (3) contain all certifications on the
45 standard SFL Team Roster forms (SFL-2E), and (4) contain a statement that the
46 substitute form has been approved by the SFL. Approvals of substitute forms are
47 only good for one season, i.e., clubs must submit a request each season even if the
48 form has not changed and the SFL approved the form the previous season.
49

50 As of August 31, 2011, the following clubs have been granted approval to use substitute
51 forms:
52

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54 •
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- 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.

Discussion

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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).

- 51
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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.¹ 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

¹ 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 demerit, and (3) the SFL Club
8 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 demerit, and (3) the SFL Club Representative will
16 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 August 31, 2011, the following teams have been allowed to combine teams:

- 21
22 • No teams have been approved to combine 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. For games where the game format is 11 v 11:
36
- 37 a. A team must have seven players to play a game.
- 38
- 39 b. If one team has seven players, then the opposing team is required to play no more than
40 nine players.
- 41
- 42 c. If one team has eight players, then the opposing team is required to play no more than
43 ten players.
- 44
- 45 d. If one team has nine or ten players, the other team may play all eleven players.
- 46
- 47 2. For games where the game format is 8 v 8:
48
- 49 a. A team must have at least 5 players to play a game.
- 50
- 51 b. If one team has 5 players, then the opposing team is required to play no more than 7
52 players.
- 53
- 54 c. If one team has 6 or 7 players, the other team may play all eight players.

3. The above play down rules also apply when players from the team with the lesser number of players leave a game due to injury or illness. In these circumstances, the opposing team should not continue play with more than two players over the number that the other team has on the field of play.
4. Red carded players on the short sided team do not cause the team with more players to play down. For example if Team A has 11 players and Team B has 9 players and Team B receives a red card, Team A is not required to play down.

K. Coaches are strongly encouraged to reduce the number of players on the field once a team has scored 5 goals more than the other team. For example, if a team is winning the game 5 – 1 and scores another goal, they should reduce the number of players on the field down at least one player. A game score of 10 – 0 provides no more benefits than a game score of 3 – 0 since goals scored is not used in any of the ranking factors.

1. Mercy rule – The losing coach has the option to terminate a game without penalty when the winning team has a 6 or more goal lead. The game is terminated once the referee has been notified by the losing coach or the captain of the losing team that the mercy rule is being invoked. The losing coach has the sole discretion when to implement the mercy rule. The score reports filed for the game should also include a statement that the game was terminated early because of the mercy rule.

L. Home Team Responsibilities – Regular Season Play

1. Providing a suitable game field for the given age group (for example, for the Under 14 age group the field shall be a minimum of 50 yards X 100 yards), goals with nets, lines, corner flags, and game ball.
 - a. The SFL web site (under SFL Documents) contains the field guidelines for 8 v 8 games. Clubs registering teams playing the 8 v 8 format are expected to provide fields that comply with these requirements. For example, these guidelines state that the field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 90 yards nor less than 70 yards and its width not more than 50 yards nor less than 40 yards.
 - (1) If a team does not believe that a game is being played on a field that is not compliant with the US Youth Soccer guidelines, the coach should play the game and then notify the appropriate SFL Club Representative of the problems. The SFL Club Representative may then request the SFL to review the matter and make a decision on whether a forfeit should be awarded.
 - (a) Forfeits will not normally be awarded for the following conditions:
 - (i.) Fields that are properly sized (e.g., the field is between 70 and 90 yards long and between 40 and 50 yards wide for an 8 v 8 game) but the markings are not entirely compliant with the US Youth Soccer guidelines.
 - (ii.) Corner flags not being present.
2. Providing either three USSF certified referees (one Center Referee and two Assistant Referees) using the Diagonal System of Control (DSC); or two USSF certified referees using the DSC with one “club” Assistant Referee provided by one of the two teams; or, in

1 an emergency, a single USSF certified referee. If the proper number of officials are not
2 present by game time plus 15 minutes, the game will be forfeited by the home team.

- 3
4 a. Referees should not be immediate family members to team officials except in an
5 emergency.

6
7 Discussion

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

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

- 25
26 b. Center referees shall be at least two (2) years older than the age group they are
27 officiating except as noted in section (1) below. For example, the referee shall meet at
28 least the Under 14 age criteria to officiate Under 12 games or meet the Under 16 age
29 criteria to officiate Under 14 games. Therefore, individuals meeting the Under 13 age
30 criteria or lower may not act as a center referee for Under 12 games.

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

39
40 (2) Clubs are expected to provide adequate officials for the games. If adequate
41 officials cannot be provided, then (1) the visiting team should be notified by Friday
42 night that the game cannot be played and (2) a forfeit will be assessed to the home
43 team.

44
45 (a) If a question on whether the center referee is of the appropriate age arises on
46 game day, then the game should be played unless the home team coach has
47 positive knowledge that the center referee does not meet the age requirements.

48
49 (i.) If the home team coach has positive knowledge that the center referee
50 does not meet the age requirements, then the game should not be played
51 and the home team is assessed a forfeit upon verification of the referee's
52 age.
53

1 (ii.) If the home team coach does not have positive knowledge of the center
2 referee's age, then the visiting coach may then file a protest through
3 their SFL Club Representative and request the SFL to determine whether
4 the center referee for the subject game was of the appropriate age. Once
5 the SFL receives this request, it will request the home team's club to
6 confirm that the center referee was of the appropriate age. If the referee
7 was not of the appropriate age, then the home team will be assessed a
8 forfeit.

9
10 (iii.) Under no circumstances may a coach, team official, or other individual
11 request the referee to provide evidence of their age.

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

22
23 (3) Forfeits assessed for referee problems may be removed if the both teams agree to
24 play the game at a later date.

25
26 Example

27
28 Team A notifies Team B that its club cannot provide proper officials on Friday
29 night for Saturday's game. Team A is assessed a forfeit. Team A and Team B
30 then agree to play the game at a later date. Once this game is played, the forfeit
31 against Team is removed and the actual game result is used.

32
33 3. **The home team is required to call the visiting team by the Wednesday preceding the**
34 **game to confirm the game time, team colors, location, directions, and any other**
35 **information they may need.** In addition, both teams should discuss how the team roster
36 exchange process will be handled. If a coach does not have the information needed to place
37 this call, then the Club Age Group Commissioner or SFL Club Representative should be
38 called.

39
40 a. If you have not been contacted by a coach and do not know the name or phone number,
41 then you should call either the Club Age Group Commissioner or the SFL Club
42 Representative that applies for that age group. For example, if you are scheduled to
43 play Reston 1 and you are in the Under 14 Girls age group and you do not know the
44 coach's phone number, then you would first call the Reston Under 14 Girls Age Group
45 Commissioner. If you cannot reach the appropriate Club Age Group Commissioner,
46 then you should call the SFL Club Representative. A listing of Club Age Group
47 Representatives and SFL Club Representatives is provided in the regular season
48 mailing.

49
50 4. Determining if a color clash exists. In case of a color clash, the home team must change
51 colors. The requirement for unique uniform numbers is waived for the team required to
52 change colors.
53

- 1 5. Notifying the visiting team if a game is postponed due to weather. The home team should
2 call the visiting team at least 3 hours before the scheduled start time. The home team
3 should then call the Age Group Commissioner and notify them that the game has been
4 postponed and, if possible, the makeup date. Games will not be played if the field has been
5 closed by either the Department of Recreation, the local club, or referee. (See section on
6 Game Rescheduling for additional information on how games are rescheduled.)
7

8 **M. Other**
9

- 10 1. Slide tackling is permitted unless otherwise stated, however, the referee will have the final
11 decision as to whether the tackle was properly executed. Coaches are directed to instruct
12 their players on proper technique and the potential of injury to other players and themselves
13 when improperly done.
14
15 2. Under 12, Under 14, Under 16, and Under 19 girls are allowed to place their arms across
16 their chest for protection. The referee has the final decision as to whether the action was
17 legally executed.
18
19 3. A team must be ready to play the game within 15 minutes of the scheduled game time. If a
20 team is not ready to play, then the opposing team has the right to request a forfeit or have
21 the game rescheduled. If a forfeit is accepted because a team is not ready to play, then the
22 teams should leave the field. In other words, the teams **should not** use the game as a
23 scrimmage.
24
25 4. Teams are required to check the web site after Friday at 8:00 PM to ensure that no changes
26 have been made to their Saturday (or Sunday) game schedule for that week.
27

28 **V. GAME CONDITIONS AND WEATHER RELATED CANCELLATIONS**
29

- 30 A. The home team should call the visiting team as soon as possible that a game has been canceled
31 because of weather. This notice should be at least 3 hours before the game time. In the case
32 of inclement weather, the home team should also notify the visiting team that a game will be
33 played. Unless otherwise shown below, the decision of Fairfax County Parks Authority will
34 apply to all game fields regardless of whether the field is actually managed by the Fairfax
35 County Parks Authority. The following phone numbers can be used to check field conditions:
36
37 • Fairfax County Parks Authority – (703) 324-5264
38
39 • Games played at Alexandria – (703) 883-4697
40
41 • Games played at Arlington – (703) 228-4715 and Press 1
42
43 • Games played at Bles Park (Ashburn) – (703) 729-7050 or www.ashburnsoccer.org
44
45 • Games played at Ashburn – use Loudoun – (703) 777-5897
46
47 • Games played at Braddock Road – (703) 354-7101 or www.brycsoccer.org.
48
49 • Games played at Burke Athletic – (703) 440-8078 and select a field for information after
50 7:30 AM on Saturday and 8:30 AM on Sunday
51
52 • Games played at Chantilly – (703) 830-1272 or www.cyaweather.com
53
54 • Games played at Clarke County – (540) 955-9002 or www.clarkesoccer.org

- 1 • Games played at Fairfax – (703) 385-7976) (This is a Fairfax City recording)
- 2
- 3 • Games played at Falls Church – (703) 248-5125
- 4
- 5 • Games played at Fauquier – (540) 349-8722 and go to mailbox #94
- 6
- 7 • Games played at Gunston – (703)360-7013
- 8
- 9 • Games played at Haymarket – www.vysaonline.com
- 10
- 11 • Games played at Herndon – (703) 318-8552
- 12
- 13 • Games played at Lee-Mt. Vernon – (703) 799-1112
- 14
- 15 • Games played at Little River – (703) 752-7220
- 16
- 17 • Games played at Loudoun – (703) 777-5897
- 18
- 19 • Games played at McLean – (703) 761-1601 www.mcleansoccer.org/page/show/38975
- 20
- 21 • Games played at Northern Virginia – Ben Lomond – (703) 792-3281, Hellwig – (703)
- 22 792-3283, Nokesville (703) 792-3294
- 23
- 24 • Games played at Prince William – Tyrell – (703) 792-3285
- 25
- 26 • Games played at Reston – (703) 859-6267
- 27
- 28 • Games played at Nottoway – (703) 938-7532
- 29
- 30 • Games played at Southwestern – (703) 644-8046
- 31
- 32 • Games played at Sterling – (703) 729-8728
- 33

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

37
 38 Example 1

39
 40 You are scheduled to play on a field that is not controlled by Fairfax County Parks Authority
 41 and the field is not listed above, if the Fairfax County Parks Authority closes its fields, then
 42 the field you are scheduled to play on is also considered closed.

43
 44 Example 2

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

- 52
 53 A. If either coach does not believe that a game should be played because of the game conditions,
 54 they have the right to request a forfeit from the other team. This request must be in writing
 55 and mailed to the SFL within 12 hours of the scheduled game time. The appropriate SFL Age

1 Group Commissioner will make a ruling on which team will be assessed a forfeit and notify
2 the SFL Commissioner and Administrator. If a game is played, neither team can protest the
3 game conditions unless both coaches agree before the game begins to play the game under
4 protest. If a game is agreed to be played under protest, then both coaches must document the
5 reason for the protest and signify their agreement by printing and signing their names.
6 Examples of items that would normally result in a forfeit being charged to the protesting team
7 include:

- 8
- 9 1. only having a properly qualified center referee,
- 10
- 11 2. poorly lined fields, and
- 12
- 13 3. field conditions when the referee has made a determination that the field is playable.
- 14

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

- 17
- 18 1. If due to unsafe playing conditions a regular season game is halted prior to half-time, it
19 will be replayed unless waived by the SFL Age Group Commissioner.
- 20
- 21 2. If a tournament game is halted due to unsafe playing conditions after being started, the
22 game result at the time of termination will be used as the final game result unless waived by
23 the SFL Age Group Commissioner.
- 24

25 Example

26
27 A regular season game is terminated 30 minutes into the first half due to weather
28 conditions. The game is rescheduled to be played at a later date unless waived by the
29 appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner. On the other hand, a tournament game
30 terminated 5 minutes into the first half because of weather conditions would use the game
31 results at the time of termination. The SFL will decide how to handle tournament games
32 ending in a tie that are scheduled using the in single elimination format.

33 34 **VI. REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE**

- 35
- 36 A. The regular season play will consist of 7 or 8 games with a post season tournament.
- 37
- 38 B. Game points will be awarded for each game played. Game points are awarded as follows: 4
39 points for a win, 2 points for a tie, 1 point for a loss, and 0 points for a forfeit. The game score
40 for a forfeited game is 1 – 0 unless both teams are assessed a forfeit. When both teams are
41 assessed a forfeit, then the game score is 0 – 0. Bonus points will also be awarded based on
42 the goal differential up to a maximum of 3 points per game. For example, a game score of 5 –
43 1 would result in 3 bonus points.
- 44
- 45 C. The SFL web site displays team rankings in the following order: game point percentage, game
46 points, bonus points, and goals allowed.
- 47
- 48 1. The game point percentage is calculated as follows: game points earned divided by total
49 games played times maximum number of points that can be earned for a game. For
50 example, if a team plays 4 games, wins 2 games, ties 1 game, and loses the remaining
51 game, its game point percentage would be calculated as follows: (11 game points earned (4
52 + 4 + 2 + 1) / 16 game points (4 games X 4 points per game)) = 68.8 percent.
- 53
- 54

1 **VII. REPORTING GAME RESULTS AND RESCHEDULING GAMES**

2
3 A. The following three methods are acceptable for reporting scores: Email (**sfl@sflsoccer.org**),
4 voice mail (703-476-6610), and through the Web site (**www.sflsoccer.org**). **The preferred**
5 **method of reporting game results is Email.** Both teams are responsible for reporting the
6 game score, regardless of the outcome, by 6:00 PM on the Monday following the game.

7
8 1. If a score is not received by 6:00 PM on Monday, both teams will be assessed a 1 game
9 point penalty. Therefore, failure to promptly report a score will effect game points and may
10 affect a team’s standing.

11
12 2. Teams are required to provide the following information when reporting scores: name of
13 individual reporting the score, team name, game number, score for each team, and
14 **information on any yellow or red cards awarded.** For example, Sam Jones, Reston 1,
15 Game 4421, Reston 1 – 2, Reston 2 – 0, no red or yellow cards. In addition, if the opposing
16 team did not provide a roster when requested, this should also be included with the game
17 report. **When reporting scores by Email, please put the game number in the “Subject”**
18 **field. It makes filing the scores easier for us.**

19
20 a. When a report is received that a team did not have a roster, then this report shall be sent
21 to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner, SFL Club Representative, and other
22 individuals that are considered appropriate by the SFL for their information. The
23 individuals receiving these reports are not required to respond to the SFL on whether
24 any actions were taken or the actions that were taken. Repeated offenses may result in a
25 team being suspended from the tournament by the appropriate SFL Age Group
26 Commissioner.

27
28 Instructions for Using
29 the Voice Mail System

30
31 Call (703) 476-6610 and you will hear the following greeting:

32
33 Hello, this is the SFL. Press 1 to leave scores for boys games, 2 to leave scores for girls
34 games, 3 for general messages, and 4 to leave a message for a SFL Commissioner. You
35 may press your selection at any time. When leaving scores, please speak slowly and
36 state your name, age group, team name, game number, and score for each team. For
37 example, Joe Smith, Under 14 Girls, Reston 1, Game 4421, Reston 1 – 2, Reston 2 – 0.
38 Thank you.

39
40 Press the proper number and leave your message.

41
42 B. The process and procedures used to reschedule regular season games are discussed in the
43 **Process and Procedures – Rescheduling Regular Season Games.** This document may be
44 obtained from the web site under SFL Documents.

45
46 **VIII. TOURNAMENT GAMES**

47
48 A. The **Process and Procedures – Tournament Scheduling** document discusses the following
49 topics:

- 50
51 • General tournament requirements
52
53 • Teams eligible to participate in the tournament
54

- 1 • Placement of teams in tournament divisions
- 2
- 3 • Tournament format
- 4
- 5 • Actions taken when tournament games cannot be played as scheduled
- 6

7 This document may be obtained from the web site under SFL Documents.

8

9 **B. Tournament Ranking** – The following methods will be used to rank teams unless otherwise

10 stated the **Process and Procedures – Tournament Scheduling** document which discusses

11 how tournament game cancellations and handled.

12

- 13
- 14 1. **Round Robin Divisions** – When the tournament schedule is played as expected and teams
- 15 within a tournament division are scheduled using the round robin format, they will be ranked
- 16 in the following order: (1) tournament game points, (2) head to head competition during the
- 17 tournament, (3) tournament bonus points, (4) least goals allowed during the tournament, (5)
- 18 whether the team received a regular season award (if applicable), (6) head to head
- 19 competition during the regular season games if they have played each other, (7) least
- 20 average goals allowed during the regular season, and (8) shoot out. A 3 or 4-way tie is
- 21 broken in the following order: (1) tournament bonus points, (2) least goals allowed during
- 22 the tournament, (3) whether the team received a regular season award (if applicable), (4)
- 23 least average goals per game allowed during the regular season, (4) regular season game
- 24 point percentage, and (5) coin flip. After one team is eliminated, then the remaining teams
- 25 will be ranked by starting at the top of the appropriate tie breakers. Note: Normally head to
- 26 head results are not used in breaking 3 or 4-way ties since one team will not have defeated
- 27 all the other teams during the tournament. However, if one team has beaten all the other
- 28 teams that are tied in the tournament, then that team will be placed ahead of all the other
- 29 teams that it is tied with based on game points.

30 **Notes:** Normally, the results of the first 2 games a team plays in a 6 team round robin

31 division with mini groups are used to determine (1) the two teams that play for first

32 and second trophies and (2) the two teams that play for third place trophies. If

33 either of the two games used to determine the trophies end in a tie, then a shoot-out

34 will be conducted to determine the winner of the game. The games used to

35 determine which teams may play for trophies can end in ties.

36

37 Normally only the Under 19s are provided regular season awards. Furthermore,

38 coaches should ensure that a shoot out is not required before dismissing their

39 players.

40

- 41 2. **Single Elimination Tournament Divisions** – When the tournament schedule is played
- 42 using the single elimination format, the teams will be ranked as follows:
- 43

44 a. **Three, Four, Five Team Divisions** – The winner of the final game receives the first

45 place trophies while the loser receives the second place trophies.

46

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

48

- 49 (1) **Original tournament game schedule played** – In 6 team divisions, the two teams
- 50 winning the second round games, play for first and second place trophies with the
- 51 winner of this game receiving the first place trophies and the loser receiving the
- 52 second place trophies. Fields and officials permitting, another game to decide the
- 53 winner of third place trophies will also be played. The teams playing in the game to

1 determine who wins the third place trophies are the losers of the second round
2 game.
3

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

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

16 (1) Players who participate in the shoot out:
17

18 (a) If the tournament is scheduled as a single elimination tournament, then only
19 the players on the field at the end of the game may participate in the shoot out.
20 This is consistent with the FIFA rules.
21

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

29 (2) Coaches may stay with the players in the midfield circle.
30

31 C. **Tournament Responsibilities** – A coach may be assigned to be a Site Coordinator, Division
32 Commissioner, and/or Trophy pickup person.
33

34 1. The SFL Club Representative must provide **positive** confirmation by Email that a team
35 eligible to play in the tournament is willing to participate in the tournament and that the
36 club, if 4 or more teams are registered, can provide game field(s) and referees. This includes
37 confirmation that the coach is willing to serve as a tournament division commissioner and/or
38 pick up trophies. (As discussed elsewhere, if a club cannot provide adequate fields and
39 officials, then its teams may be excluded from the tournament.) In addition, if a coach is
40 unable to serve as a division commissioner or pick up trophies, then that team may be
41 eliminated from the tournament.
42

43 a. Since the tournament format for most groups is a single elimination tournament, it is
44 possible that the original division commissioner assigned to a given division may not
45 play in a subsequent tournament game. If this happens, the coach of the team beating the
46 division commissioner’s team becomes the division commissioner for trophy purposes.
47 However, other division commissioner responsibilities, such as phoning the other teams
48 in case of weather cancellations, remain with the originally assigned division
49 commissioner unless the tournament site coordinator decides otherwise.
50

51 2. The Site Coordinator is responsible for (1) providing the fields and nets (2) ensuring that the
52 field(s) are properly lined, (2) ensuring that adequate officials have been assigned for the
53 fields provided, (3) notifying the League Commissioner (703-406-8550) or the SFL
54 Administrator (703-476-6611), and the Division Commissioners for their site in case of

1 game cancellations due to the weather. Generally, the site coordinator is the SFL Club
2 Representative for the club hosting a given tournament site.
3

- 4 3. The Division Commissioner is approved by the applicable SFL Club Representative and is
5 responsible for the following.
6
- 7 a. Preparing a game board (round robin tournament divisions only) for their division and
8 ensuring that the scores are posted. (The SFL Web site has a sample game board on the
9 SFL Documents page.) If the division commissioner's team loses, then the board is
10 given to the new division commissioner who assumes this responsibility. In some cases,
11 the division commissioner's team may not play until later in the day. Therefore, the
12 game board may not be available until the division commissioner's team plays its game.
13
 - 14 b. Notifying the teams in their division of game cancellations. In the case of inclement
15 weather, the division commissioner should also notify the teams in their division if
16 games are going to be played and of any schedule changes. This responsibility remains
17 with assigned division commissioner even if the division commissioner's team loses
18 before the final tournament division game unless the site coordinator performs these
19 duties.
20
 - 21 c. Distributing the trophies for their division. Generally the site coordinator is assigned the
22 responsibility for picking up trophies. However, in some cases, in order to reduce the
23 travel requirements, other individuals are assigned this responsibility.
24
 - 25 d. The division commissioner is **NOT RESPONSIBLE** for collecting rosters. However, as
26 noted elsewhere, each team is required to present their roster to the other team **BEFORE**
27 the start of their game. **IF A TEAM DOES NOT HAVE A ROSTER, THAT TEAM**
28 **FORFEITS THE GAME**, the referee is notified that the game will not be played, and
29 both teams leave the field of play.
30
 - 31 e. In the case of teams playing the "round robin" tournament format, determines the final
32 team rankings for the division.
33
- 34 4. The individuals assigned for Trophy Pickup are also approved by the SFL Club
35 Representative. The SFL sends these individuals an Email on how to pick up the trophies
36 and when they are ready for pickup. All trophies should be picked up by the Friday night
37 preceding the first tournament game. All trophies should be taken to the first tournament
38 game.
39
- 40 a. When the SFL Rules call for the trophies to not be distributed because of cancellation of
41 one or more tournament division games (see section on tournament game cancellations),
42 then the SFL Club Representative responsible for the trophies assigned to that
43 tournament division must return those trophies to the SFL in accordance with the
44 guidance received from the SFL.
45

46 D. Other
47

- 48 1. In order to keep the tournament games on schedule, the referee will normally keep a running
49 clock, i.e., the clock is not stopped for injuries, substitutions, etc. However, the referee may
50 decide to stop the clock if the referee believes that it will not adversely affect the overall
51 tournament game schedule. This is a decision made by the referee and may not be
52 protested.
53

- 1 2. The referee is allowed to use their discretion on when it is too dark to play safely.
2 Therefore, the last games of the day may be shortened because of darkness. This is a
3 decision made by the referee and may not be protested.
4

5 **IX. DISCIPLINE, PROTESTS AND APPEALS**

- 6
7 A. It should be remembered that the SFL is governed by the principle that all actions are ***For the***
8 ***Good of the Player*** and unsporting behavior or violation of the Laws of the Game cannot be
9 tolerated. It should also be noted that the SFL is primarily a scheduling organization and that
10 the resolution of complaints, disciplinary actions, and protests is primarily the responsibility of
11 the affected clubs. The role of the SFL is to help facilitate the resolution of complaints,
12 disciplinary problems, and protests.
13
- 14 1. **Quality of Officials** – The SFL has no role in assigning the officials to a game since this is a
15 club responsibility. However, the SFL provides a mechanism for coaches to report on the
16 quality of the officials provided for their games. Comments can be sent directly to the home
17 team’s SFL Club Representative using the standard Email address that is contained in the
18 season package. When you report on the officiating, please provide the game number,
19 teams, game field, and game time. For those that would like a form, the web site has one
20 suggested form that can be used. (The form on the SFL Documents page.)
21
- 22 B. At the older age levels, the coach assumes an increased level of responsibility regarding team
23 leadership and maintenance of order and discipline of the team members and team spectators.
24 The SFL expects each of its coaches to set a positive example for their players and spectators in
25 promoting good sportsmanship and self-control. Accordingly, coaches are expected to be
26 present at every game with their team or to ensure that responsible adult leadership is present
27 for the team in their absence. A history of disciplinary infractions by one team can be grounds
28 for team, coach, and/or player dismissal from the league. Such decisions will not be made
29 lightly or hastily and will only be made after a careful review of the facts by a Disciplinary
30 Panel to resolve disputes.
31
- 32 1. Team demerits are used to identify teams and individuals that have a history of infractions
33 related to discipline issues. A team that averages one (1) team demerit per regular season
34 game scheduled is (1) suspended from all tournament games and (2) all remaining regular
35 season games. For example, if the regular season is eight (8) games and a team accumulates
36 eight (8) team demerits in week 2, then it would be suspended from the remaining six
37 regular season games and the tournament. On the other hand, if it accumulates the eight (8)
38 team demerits in week 8, it would be suspended from the tournament. Teams receiving an
39 average of one (1) team demerit per regular season game scheduled are automatically placed
40 on probation.
41
- 42 a. A team with a history of infractions may be placed on probation by the club or the SFL.
43 If a team is placed on probation, its conduct will be closely watched by the applicable
44 SFL Age Group Commissioner.
45
- 46 (1) The SFL Club Representative is responsible for ensuring that a team is notified that
47 it is considered on probation and aware of the rules that can affect their continued
48 participation in the SFL.
49
- 50 (a) team on probation has any of the following conditions, the remainder of its
51 regular season games shall be forfeited and team considered ineligible for
52 tournament play:
53
- 54 (i.) Accumulation of four (4) team demerits.

- 1
2 (ii.) A game terminated because of the team's conduct.
3
4 (iii.) Any other disciplinary reason that the SFL Age Group Commissioner
5 deems significant to warrant suspension from the SFL.
6
7 (2) Any team on probation that is suspended is considered ineligible to return to the
8 SFL for at least two (2) seasons.
9
10 (a) The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner is responsible for determining
11 whether the members associated with a team constitute the team ineligible to
12 participate.
13
14 (i.) It is up to the SFL Club Representative to notify the appropriate SFL Age
15 Group Commissioner when any members of the suspended team or
16 coaches associated with the suspended team are placed on team(s) that
17 will be registered. The SFL Age Group Commissioner must approve of
18 each of these player(s) or coach(es) returning to the SFL before the 2
19 (two) season suspension is served.
20
21 b. The following are examples of the team demerits awarded for various discipline issues.
22
23 (1) **Red cards** – One (1) team demerit is assessed for each game that the player (or
24 anyone else receiving a red card) is suspended because of the red card. For
25 example, if an individual is suspended for two (2) games, then the team is assessed
26 two (2) team demerits. Under FIFA rules, the game where the red card is shown
27 does not count under any circumstances as a game where the player is suspended.
28 Accordingly, a team demerit is not assessed for the game where the red card is
29 shown.
30
31 (2) **Inappropriate behavior towards a game official** – Two (2) team demerits will be
32 assessed to a team anytime a referee report received by the SFL includes a reference
33 to the referee being harassed during or after the game by players, coaches or
34 spectators. Examples include, verbal threats, being followed to the parking lot in an
35 inappropriate manner, or other actions that would make a referee fear for his/her
36 safety. This penalty also applies to referee assault incidents. However, additional
37 disciplinary actions would also be required to be considered by the offending club
38 in those cases, e.g., referring the incident to VYSA, conducting a club disciplinary
39 hearing, etc.
40
41 (3) **Game Suspensions and Terminations** – Two (2) team demerits will be assessed
42 should a referee terminate a match due to disciplinary problems. These team
43 demerits are in addition to any other team demerits awarded that may have led up to
44 the game termination. For example, a player on Team A receives a red card
45 warranting a two game suspension and the spectators storm the field. The referee
46 then terminates the match. At least four (4) team demerits will be awarded – two
47 (2) for the player that received the red card and two (2) for the game being
48 suspended early because of disciplinary problems.
49
50 (a) The applicable SFL Club Representative shall notify the SFL whenever a game
51 is terminated early for disciplinary reasons along with the actions that the club
52 plans on taking to review the matter.
53

- 1 (i.) A written report will be provided to the SFL of the actions taken by the
2 club.
3
4 a) The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner will make a decision
5 on whether a SFL Disciplinary Panel is needed to investigate the
6 circumstances and notify the SFL Commissioner of his/her decision.
7
8 b) The SFL Commissioner may direct additional actions at the SFL
9 Commissioner's sole discretion.

- 10
11 (4) **Non player (coach or spectator) is asked to leave the field by the official**
12 **regardless of whether a red card is shown** – At least two (2) team demerits are
13 assessed to the team each time a non player (coach or spectator) is asked to leave
14 the field by a game official regardless of whether a red card is shown. In addition,
15 each person asked to leave the field is also automatically suspended for at least that
16 team's next two (2) games.
17

18 **Example**

19
20 A coach and a spectator are asked to leave the field by the game official. Each
21 individual is suspended for at least the next two games and at least four (4) team
22 demerits will be awarded to the team.
23

- 24 (5) **Failure to properly report red cards or coaches and spectators being asked to**
25 **leave the field** – As discussed below, a red card is considered properly reported by
26 the team when the report is received on time and includes the (1) player's name, (2)
27 player's jersey number, (3) nature of the infraction, and (4) recommended
28 suspension period. A report on an individual being asked to leave the field is
29 considered properly reported when the individual's name is provided. If a team
30 does not properly report (1) a red card or (2) a coach or spectator being asked to
31 leave the field, then the team will be assessed additional penalties.
32

- 33 (a) A forfeit for that game.
34
35 (b) An additional three (3) team demerits are assessed for each offense in addition
36 to the team demerits assessed for the offense for not properly reporting the red
37 card or the request to leave the field.
38
39 (c) An additional two (2) team demerits are assessed for each game that a team
40 plays before properly reporting a red card or request to leave the field.
41
42 (d) Forfeiture of any additional games played after the original game until the red
43 card or request to leave the field is properly reported.
44
45 (i.) When the next game is two (2) or more days in advance of the subject
46 game, then any reports received one (1) day or later before that game are
47 considered to be received after the game since the report does not allow
48 adequate time for the SFL to notify the other team of the suspension
49 where applicable.
50

51 **Example A**

52
53 A player on Team A receives a red card that warrants a one game suspension during
54 a game on Saturday of week one. However, the red card is not properly reported to

1 the SFL until the Friday before Team A's next game which is on Saturday of week
2 two. The team will be assessed (1) one team demerit for the red card offense, (2) a
3 forfeiture for the game where the red card was issued, (3) three team demerits for
4 not properly reporting the red card, (4) a forfeiture for the game being played on the
5 following week, and (5) two additional team demerits. In summary, since the
6 report was not submitted more than 1 day in advance of the next game being
7 played, the team is assessed two game forfeits and six (6) team demerits for an
8 offense that would have only warranted one (1) team demerit and no game forfeits
9 if it had been properly reported on time.

10 **Example B**

11 A player on Team A receives a red card for an offense that warrants a two (2) game
12 suspension and the team fails to properly report the red card until 2 days before that
13 team's next game. Team A is assessed (1) a forfeit for the game where the red card
14 was received and (2) five team demerits (two for the red card and three team
15 demerits for not properly reporting the red card).

16 **Example C**

17 A player on Team A receives a red card for an offense that warrants a one (1) game
18 suspension and the team fails to properly report the red card until two days before
19 its next game. Team A is assessed a forfeit for the game and is assessed four (4)
20 team demerits (one for the red card and three team demerits for not properly
21 reporting the red card). Team A also has received four (4) team demerits in prior
22 games. Team A would be suspended from the tournament and the remaining
23 regular season games because of the accumulation of team demerits.

24 **Example D**

25 Team A has two players receiving red cards for offenses that normally warrant a
26 one game suspension during the same game and fails to report both red cards until
27 two days before the team's next game. Team A is assessed a forfeit for the game
28 and is assessed eight (8) team demerits (one for each red card and three team
29 demerits for each red card for not properly reporting the red cards). Team A would
30 be suspended from the tournament and the remaining regular season games because
31 of the accumulation of team demerits.

- 32 (6) **Failure to serve a game suspension** – If an individual does not serve the required
33 suspension period for the offense, then an additional team demerit is awarded to the
34 player and the team.
- 35 (a) A player will be considered as not serving the suspension period if (1) any
36 player wears the same jersey number of the player who received the red card,
37 unless approval has been given by the appropriate SFL Age Group
38 Commissioner, or (2) the player who received the red card plays in the game
39 regardless of the jersey number. The team will also be assessed a forfeit.
- 40 (b) The suspended individual attends a game during the suspension period without
41 obtaining the required approvals from the SFL Club Representative.
- 42 (7) **Teams Fighting** – If a fight breaks out, then each team will receive at least two (2)
43 team demerits even if no red cards are awarded. For example, a fight may break out
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53

1 after the game and involve spectators, therefore, no red cards would normally be
2 issued.

3 4 C. Misconduct

- 5
6 1. **Yellow Card** – Two yellow cards during a game constitute a red card and the player must
7 leave the field without substitution.
8
- 9 2. **Game Suspensions** – In accordance with FIFA rules, a red card may be issued before,
10 during, or after a game. A red carded player, dismissed coach, dismissed team official, or
11 dismissed spectator will be required to leave the field of play immediately and sit out at least
12 the next game the team plays.
13
- 14 a. Red cards carry over to the next season.
15
- 16 b. If a player receives three (3) team demerits during a season, including post season
17 tournament play, the player is automatically suspended for the remainder of the season
18 including post-season play.
19
- 20 c. Red cards relating to fighting (or conduct treated as fighting) will result in an automatic
21 suspension from the next two (2) games the team plays. Conduct which will be treated
22 as fighting includes but is not limited to:
23
- 24 (1) fighting in the opinion of the referee,
25
- 26 (2) shoving another player or any other aggressive action after the whistle has blown to
27 stop play,
28
- 29 (3) kicking/striking or attempting to kick/strike a player, or
30
- 31 (4) spitting.
32
- 33 d. Red cards issued for dissent are also subject to 2 game suspensions. In addition, a
34 disciplinary hearing may be held that may result in additional penalties.
35
- 36 e. Red carded players, coaches, team officials, parents, and spectators serving their
37 suspension period are encouraged not to attend the game at all. If the individual desires
38 to attend the team's game during a suspension period, the individual must receive the
39 applicable SFL Club Representative's permission to attend any games where that
40 individual is serving a suspension by 6:00 PM at least two (2) days before the game is
41 scheduled to be played. For example, if an individual is suspended for a game being
42 played on Saturday and the SFL Club Representative decides to permit the individual to
43 attend the game, then this decision must be made by 6:00 PM on Thursday night.
44
- 45 (1) The SFL Club Representative must also notify the SFL when this permission has
46 been granted at the same time the individual is notified.
47
- 48 (2) If the individual receives the SFL Club Representative's permission and does attend
49 the game, the following applies.
50
- 51 (a) The individual should not be closer to the playing field than 100 yards
52 beginning 30 minutes before game time until the game is over. The fact that a
53 game can be seen from a public street or sidewalk which may be closer than

1 100 yards does not relieve the coach, team official, parent, or spectator from
2 complying with this 100-yard rule.

3
4 (i.) If a player is granted permission to attend the game, then that player may
5 be granted permission by the SFL Club Representative to sit on the bench
6 with the other players as long as the player does not wear a uniform and it
7 is clear to outsiders that the player is not eligible to participate in the
8 game.

9
10 (b) The individual will not be involved in any way with administration of the team
11 during the game.

12
13 (3) Since the tournament is only conducted during one weekend, any coach or spectator
14 who is asked to leave the field may not attend any of that team's remaining
15 tournament games since permission to attend the game cannot be obtained two (2)
16 days in advance of the team's remaining games.

17
18 (a) A player receiving a red card that warrants a one game suspension, may attend
19 and participate in that team's third tournament game assuming that it plays
20 three tournament games and the red card was received in the first game.

21
22 (4) Failure to comply with these restrictions may result in a forfeit of the game.

23
24 f. In accordance with VYSA rules, an individual is subject to a 3 game suspension for
25 misconduct at a referee. The information contained in the VYSA Adjudication Manual
26 will be used as guidance to determine whether the offense justifies a 3 game suspension.
27 The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner shall be responsible for making the initial
28 determination on whether the individual is subject to this suspension.

29
30 g. A red card associated with receiving a second yellow card for dissent automatically
31 carries at least a one game suspension. Should a team receive another red card during
32 the season where the second yellow card was for dissent, then the individual receiving
33 that red card must serve at least a two game suspension. If the individual receiving this
34 red card has received another red card during the season for any reason, then that
35 individual will be suspended for the remainder of the season since the individual has
36 now accumulated at least 3 team demerits.

37
38 **Example A**

39
40 Player A receives a second yellow card for dissent in the first game of the season. Based
41 on a review of the incident, it is decided that a one game suspension is warranted. Player
42 A is suspended for one game and one team demerit is awarded.

43
44 **Example B**

45
46 Player A receives a second yellow card for dissent in the first game of the season. Based
47 on a review of the incident, it is decided that a one game suspension is warranted. Player
48 A is suspended for one game and one team demerit is awarded. In a subsequent game,
49 Player B receives a second yellow card for dissent. Player B is automatically suspended
50 for two games and two team demerits are awarded unless a review of the incident results
51 in a decision that the infraction warrants more than a 2 game suspension. If Player B had
52 also received a previous red card or receives a red card in a subsequent game for any
53 reason, then the player is suspended for the remainder of the season since that player had
54 received at least three (3) team demerits.
55

- 1 h. Games cancelled or games where the team receives a forfeit for any reason are not
2 considered as games played when determining whether a player has served a game
3 suspension.
4

5 **Example A**
6

7 Player A receives a red card in week 5 and Player A's next scheduled game in week 6 is
8 cancelled due to weather and team's next game is during week 7. Player A would be
9 required to serve the suspension during the game scheduled for week 7.
10

11 **Example B**
12

13 Player A receives a red card in week 5. During the next game that Player A's team plays
14 (week 6), Player A's team is assessed a forfeit because it did not have a proper roster.
15 Player A would be required to sit out the next game that Player A's team plays.
16

- 17 3. **Reporting Cards** – Yellow and red cards must be reported to the SFL by both teams in a
18 **timely manner. Red cards must also be reported by the club who provided the officials**
19 **for the game.** The SFL will notify the teams in advance where players and coaches are
20 suspended and are not eligible to participate in the subject game. It is up to the applicable
21 SFL Club Representative to ensure that any other individuals suspended from a game do not
22 appear at the game. Email is the preferred method of reporting red card information.
23
- 24 a. A proper red card report for a player includes the following information (1) player's
25 name, (2) player's jersey number, (3) nature of the infraction, and (4) recommended
26 suspension period.
27
- 28 b. A proper report for a coach or spectator who has received a red card or been asked to
29 leave the field of play is the name.
30
- 31 c. Red cards are required to be reported no later than 6 PM on Monday following the game
32 where the red card was assessed unless the team is expected to play a game during the
33 next two days. If the team is expected to play a game the following two days, then the
34 red card must be reported no later than 8 PM on the game day.
35

36 **Example A**
37

38 Team A plays a game on Saturday and one of its players receives a red card. The next
39 game that Team A plays is the following Saturday. This red card must be properly
40 reported no later than 6 PM on the Monday following the game.
41

42 **Example B**
43

44 Team A plays a game on Saturday and one of its players receives a red card. The next
45 game that Team A plays is the next day (Sunday) or on Monday. This red card must be
46 properly reported no later than 8 PM on the day the game is played (Saturday).
47

- 48 d. A referee may request from the coach, player, or other team official the name of any
49 coach, player, or team official that the referee considers needed to perform their
50 reporting responsibilities. If this information is not provided or incorrect information is
51 provided to the referee, the team will be assessed two (2) team demerits in addition to
52 any other team demerits that may be assessed during the game.
53

1 **D. Club Review of Disciplinary Issues** – The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner or SFL
2 Commissioner may request a club to formally review any incident that involves a team
3 receiving a team demerit. If the SFL Age Group Commissioner or SFL Commissioner decides
4 that formal review is necessary, the club is expected to have its Rules and Disciplinary
5 Committee or similar organization (e.g., Rules Committee, etc.) formally review the requested
6 incident and provide a written report to the SFL that contains (1) names and titles of the
7 officials on the panel, (2) the approach taken to review the matter that was referred for review,
8 (3) the pertinent facts disclosed during their review, and (4) the actions that the club believe are
9 appropriate. It is expected that this Committee will comply with the VYSA rules for such
10 groups. The club is encouraged to include the club’s SFL Club Representative in this process.
11

12 1. If the SFL decides that a formal review is necessary, the individual(s) that should be subject
13 to the review will normally be identified, if possible, by the SFL.
14

15 a. If the SFL is unable to identify the individual(s) based on the information obtained that
16 led to the request, then the club must provide the name(s) and any other information
17 requested within 3 days of the SFL Club Representative being sent an Email requesting
18 such information.
19

20 (1) If a club is unable to provide the necessary information, then the team will be
21 suspended from SFL play until the necessary information is provided.
22

23 b. Any individual (player, coach, spectator, etc.) whose actions are being reviewed by the
24 club’s Rules Committee is ineligible to participate in SFL games until the SFL receives
25 the written report from the club unless this penalty is waived by the SFL. The SFL shall
26 identify the individual(s) subject to this penalty.
27

28 (1) This requirement does not apply to individuals that the Rules Committee may
29 request to appear before it for information gathering purposes only.
30

31 (2) It is recognized that the Rules Committee may later identify other individuals that
32 should be penalized.
33

34 **E. Disciplinary Panels and Appeals** – Should the SFL Commissioner or SFL Age Group
35 Commissioner decide that a disciplinary panel should be convened, the applicable SFL Age
36 Group Commissioner will select three (3) other SFL Age Group Commissioners and form a
37 disciplinary panel. If three panel members cannot agree on the proper decision, then the SFL
38 Commissioner will make the final decision and no appeal is available.
39

40 1. A SFL Club Representative may appeal a decision reached by a SFL Age Group
41 Commissioner or the Disciplinary Panel to the SFL Commissioner for a final decision. The
42 SFL Commissioner’s decision is final and cannot be appealed.
43

44 2. The SFL Age Group Commissioners selected for a disciplinary panel should not include a
45 member who is involved with either the team or club who is the subject of the disciplinary
46 panel. Should the dispute involve the SFL Commissioner’s team or club, then the panel’s
47 decision is final and cannot be appealed.
48

49 **F. Complaints and Protests** – Only a SFL Club Representative or the President (or equivalent) of
50 a club’s governing body are allowed to submit formal complaints or protest a game. SFL Club
51 Representatives or Club Presidents who wish to protest a game or provide a formal complaint,
52 must notify the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner in writing within 48 hours after the
53 match with a copy to the SFL Commissioner. Coaches and any other club officials are not
54 allowed to file formal complaints or protests directly with the SFL. Although the SFL Club

1 Representative or Club President may request other individuals to help the SFL Club
2 Representative or Club President file a complaint or protest, the applicable SFL Age Group
3 Commissioner is only responsible for accepting information from and discussing the complaint
4 or protest with the SFL Club Representative or Club President who is acting on behalf of the
5 club. Only one individual may act on behalf of the club during the complaint or protest
6 process.

- 7
8 1. The formal complaint or protest must include:
 - 9
10 a. the time and location of the match;
 - 11
12 b. the team names and age group;
 - 13
14 c. the nature of the complaint or protest (referee judgment is not considered an item for
15 protest);
 - 16
17 d. the referee's name, address, and phone number (if known); and
 - 18
19 e. the opposing team coach's name and other significant witnesses.
- 20
21 2. During tournament play, a phone report may be made by the SFL Club Representative but
22 must include the above information. The protest will be handled by the applicable SFL Age
23 Group Commissioner.
- 24
25 3. The SFL Age Group Commissioner is responsible for making the initial decision on an
26 appeal unless that individual is affiliated with a club involved in the protest. The
27 appropriate person making the protest may appeal the SFL Age Group Commissioner's
28 decision to the SFL Commissioner whose decision is final.
 - 29
30 a. If the SFL Age Group Commissioner is affiliated with a club involved in the protest,
31 then the protest shall be heard by the SFL Commissioner, unless the SFL Commissioner
32 is affiliated with a club involved in the protest, whose decision is final.
 - 33
34 b. If the SFL Commissioner is affiliated with a club involved in the protest, then the SFL
35 Age Group Commissioner's decision is considered final and cannot be appealed.
 - 36
37 c. If both the SFL Age Group Commissioner and SFL Commissioner are affiliated with a
38 club involved in the protest, then the protest shall be heard by an SFL Age Group
39 Commissioner that is not affiliated with any of the clubs involved in the protest. The
40 SFL Administrator shall determine which SFL Age Group Commissioner should hear
41 the protest. The decision of this SFL Age Group Commissioner is considered final and
42 may not be appealed.

43 44 Discussion

45
46 In the past, the SFL has received a number of protests which should not have not been filed
47 or requested to review actions which are the responsibility of a given club. For example,
48 games were protested because of referee decisions. The SFL recognizes that protest or
49 formal complaint is not appropriate for many conditions that a coach or club believes
50 warrants additional review by a club. Therefore, the SFL will accept informal complaints
51 and forward them to the appropriate club for informational purposes. The SFL is not
52 responsible for following up to determine what actions were taken by a given club on
53 informal complaints.
54

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
51

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