

# Suburban Friendship League

## Frequently Asked Questions – Placement of Teams In Divisions

(March 12, 2011)

The following are a list of Frequently Asked Questions relating to the placement of teams in divisions. While we attempt to keep this information consistent with the rules, sometimes through unintentional oversight, some inconsistencies may occur. In these cases, the rules are used to resolve any inconsistencies.

**Question:** How does the SFL determine the teams that should be placed in divisions 1 and 2 for the Under 12s and Under 14?

**Response:** The divisions for the Under 12s and Under 14s are guided by age. Division 1 is for the better teams who meet the division 2 age criteria and those with players at the top end of the age group (Under 12 or Under 14). Therefore, if you have a younger team (Under 11 or Under 13) which is very good, then you should move them to division 1 rather than place/leave them in division 2. **(SKILL LEVEL DOES NOT AFFECT THE PLACEMENT OF TEAMS WITH PLAYERS THAT MEET THE DIVISION 1 AGE CRITERIA.)** The goal of the SFL is to have competitive soccer rather than to see who can win by the biggest margin and a number of clubs follow the practice of moving a team up a division. Division 2 is for teams whose players are at the bottom end of the age group (Under 11 or Under 13). If you have any questions on what division applies to a given player, then the necessary information is contained on our Web Site under Age Group Calculator (<http://www.sflsoccer.org/agegrp.htm>).

**Question:** I know that the divisions for Under 12s and 14s are based on age. However, I need to place an Division 1 aged player on a Division 2 team. Is this allowed and how do I get a waiver?

**Response:** You may ask the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner for a waiver from these age requirements **BEFORE** the season begins. Any waiver requests should be submitted soon as possible. However, do not assume that a waiver will be granted. The following are the guidelines that have been used in prior seasons by the SFL Age Group Commissioners:

- Players must play in the age group dictated by their birthday unless medical reasons dictate otherwise. For example, a player meeting the Under 14 age criteria cannot play in the Under 12 age group even if that person missed the Under 12 birth date cutoff by one day. If you believe that person should be placed in a younger age group because of medical reasons, then you need to review the rules very carefully since they outline the procedures that will be used to evaluate such requests. These include having a statement from a doctor and a formal club board recommendation that such a waiver should be granted.
- Players meeting the division 1 age criteria are generally not allowed to play on division 2 teams for a given age group. The SFL Age Group Commissioners have made exceptions when it makes sense and should not affect the team's competitive abilities.

1 For example, in the Under 12s, the SFL Age Group Commissioners have allowed one or  
2 two players who meet the division 1 age criteria to play on division 2 teams. However,  
3 if a team has 4 or 5 such players, then the team is moved to division 1. Please remember  
4 that a number of division 1 teams contain a mixture of Under 11s/12s or Under 13s/14s.  
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6 **Question:** How does the SFL determine the teams that should be placed in divisions 1 and 2 for the  
7 Under 16s and 19s?  
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9 **Response:** The divisions for Under 16 Boys, Under 16 Girls, and Under 19 Boys are based on skill  
10 level with the better teams placed in division 1. Under 19 Girls do not have divisions since  
11 we normally do not have enough teams to break them into meaningful divisions.  
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13 **Question:** Does the SFL make adjustments to the placement of teams in divisions between seasons,  
14 e.g., moving a division 1 team to division 2? If yes, how does this work?  
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16 **Response:** At the start of each season, the appropriate SFL Commissioner reviews the results of the  
17 prior season to determine if teams should be moved between divisions. Division 2 teams  
18 that did well are placed in Division 1 and Division 1 teams that did poorly are moved to  
19 Division 2. A club can always moved a Division 2 team to Division 1. The process works  
20 as follows:  
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- 22 • The results from the prior season are adjusted to eliminate the effects of forfeits and  
23 penalties for reporting scores late. This is done to obtain the results based on the actual  
24 games played. For example, if a team was awarded a scheduling forfeit because the  
25 other team failed to show up for a game, the game points for this win are not used to  
26 compute that team's season game point percentage and the loss is not counted against  
27 the other team in computing its game point percentage. This is the same process that we  
28 use for ranking teams for determining the tournament divisions.  
29
- 30 • These results are then reviewed and a determination is made on where "to make the cut".  
31 An exact percentage is not used since we attempt to "move up" about the same number  
32 of teams that are "moved down" where possible. As a rule of thumb, Division 2 teams  
33 that have a game point percentage of 70 percent or greater are considered candidates for  
34 being moved from Division 2 to Division 1 while Division 1 teams with a game point  
35 percentage of 60 percent or less are considered candidates to be moved to Division 2.  
36 During the Spring 2011 season, the actual results were as follows:  
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  - 38 ▶ Under 16 Boys – 14 teams were moved from Division 1 to Division 2. The game  
39 point percentage break point was 66.7 percent, i.e., teams with a game point  
40 percentage of 66.7 percent or less were moved to Division 2. On the other hand, 15  
41 teams were moved from Division 2 to Division 1. The game point percentage break  
42 point was 75 percent, i.e., teams with a game percent percentage of 75 percent or  
43 greater were moved to Division 1.  
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  - 45 ▶ Under 16 Girls – 12 teams were moved from Division 1 to Division 2. The game  
46 point percentage break point was 62.5 percent, i.e., teams with a game point  
47 percentage of 62.5 percent or less were moved to Division 2. On the other hand, 9

1 teams were moved from Division 2 to Division 1. The game point percentage break  
2 point was 72.5 percent, i.e., teams with a game percent percentage of 72.5 percent or  
3 greater were moved to Division 1.  
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- 5 ▶ Under 19 Boys – 9 teams were moved from Division 1 to Division 2. The game  
6 point percentage break point was 58.3 percent, i.e., teams with a game point  
7 percentage of 58.3 percent or less were moved to Division 2. On the other hand, 5  
8 teams were moved from Division 2 to Division 1. The game point percentage break  
9 point was 72.5 percent, i.e., teams with a game percent percentage of 72.5 percent or  
10 greater were moved to Division 1.  
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12 **Question:** In the Spring, I was an Under 14 team division 1 team. In the fall my team was placed  
13 moved up to the Under 16s and placed in division 1 although all the players meet the  
14 Division 2 age criteria. What happened?  
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16 **Response:** The divisions for Under 16s and 19s are based on skill level rather than age. For the Under  
17 14 teams moving up to Under 16, the appropriate SFL Commissioner reviews the results  
18 from the spring season and using a process much like discussed above, determines which  
19 teams should be placed in Division 1 with the remainder being placed in Division 2. We do  
20 this for several reasons. If we did not have some Under 14 teams play in Division 1, we  
21 would not have enough teams to support the division since (1) some returning Under 16  
22 teams would need to be moved to Division 2 based on the prior season's performance and  
23 (2) some Division 1 teams would be moving to Under 19.  
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25 **Question:** In the team registration spread sheet for the fall, it shows a spring Under 16 Boys Division 2  
26 team as being moved to an Under 16 Boys Division 1 team. However, the players on this  
27 team now meet the Under 19 age criteria. When I prepared my team registration spread  
28 sheet, I moved the team to Under 19 and left them in Division 2 since they are changing age  
29 groups. However, the SFL told me that this team needed to still considered as an Under 19  
30 Boys Division 1 team. This does not seem fair and why did the SFL penalize this team?  
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32 **Response:** Using the process described above, in the fall we review the spring results for the Under 16s  
33 and 19s and make the division changes as if no teams were moving up to Under 19. We do  
34 this since we do not know (1) which Under 16 teams are moving up and (2) which teams are  
35 not returning. These divisions are then used for any teams moving up. For example, an  
36 Under 16 team shown on the spread sheet as a Division 1 team that moves up to the Under  
37 19s should be considered as an Under 19 Division 1 team. We do this for the same reasons  
38 as discussed above for placing Under 14 teams that are moving up to Under 16s in Division  
39 1 of the Under 16s.  
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41 **Question:** Our club does not place any Under 14 teams in the SFL and based on our experience, we  
42 registered our rising Under 14 teams as Under 16 Division 2 teams last fall. In the spring  
43 we were told by the SFL that several of these teams needed to be moved up to Division 1  
44 based on the performance during the fall. However, these are not the same teams. The  
45 better teams had players that are now playing other sports and did not return so we wanted  
46 to leave them as a Division 2 team but the SFL would not let us. Why is this team being  
47 penalized?

1 **Response:** What some clubs do is take a proactive approach and tell us in the fall that a team should be  
2 placed in Division 1 since it has a number of good players on it even if that “team” is shown  
3 as a Division 2 team based on our information from the previous season or it is a new team  
4 moving up to the Under 16/19 age group. They also tell us that they expect that in the  
5 Spring, the team will have a significant change of players (e.g., many players will play other  
6 sports or play on high school teams) and they expect that this team should be considered as a  
7 Division 2 team in the spring. In these cases, we normally allow the change of division in  
8 the spring. Other clubs that do not take this proactive approach, place all the new teams as  
9 Division 2 even though one or more should probably be a Division 1 team. Accordingly, in  
10 the spring it moved up to Division 1 with a new set of players when it should be a Division 2  
11 team. However, the SFL has no basis to know whether the team should really be left as a  
12 Division 2 team. The next fall, it is moved back to Division 2 with the good players  
13 returning but once again the club does not tell the SFL that it should be left in Division 1.  
14 Accordingly, the cycle continues.

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