

- 1 • The infractions and the associated penalties have been clearly specified and grouped into
2 one of four categories. The penalties, with one exception, have not changed from the
3 prior rules, however, it is much easier to see how they are applied.
4
- 5 • The major change in the penalties involves teams receiving more than one red card in a
6 season. We had a complicated rule on additional penalties for subsequent red cards and
7 have changed it simply say that after the first red card a team receives, one additional
8 Team Demerit is assigned.
9
- 10 • We are implementing a more automated process to keep track of suspensions and
11 penalties. In prior seasons we had a manual process that did not do a good job of making
12 sure that when games were cancelled, rescheduled, or forfeited that the suspension notice
13 was properly handled. The new system is designed to address this weakness.
14
- 15 • We are implementing a process that matches the infraction information received to the
16 information contained on the Master Player Roster. Significant discrepancies between
17 names and uniform numbers will need to be addressed before the suspension notices are
18 sent. Otherwise, additional players may also have to serve suspensions. Accordingly, we
19 are delaying the issuance of the suspension notice until later in the week, unless a team
20 plays sooner, for the coach and club to resolve these issues.
21

22 As part of this process, the SFL went back over all infractions for the Fall 2015 season and
23 applied the penalties assigned in the proposed rules. While the number of Team Demerits may
24 have changed for a given team, no team would have been suspended from play or put on
25 probation because of these changes. If you would like to see how your club would have been
26 treated under the new system, just let us know.
27

28 This document is broken down into two sections. The first section summarizes the proposal
29 received and whether the proposal is recommended for adoption. If the proposal is
30 recommended for adoption, then it summarizes the proposed change. The second section
31 describes each proposal in detail and provides the rational used when deciding not to adopt a
32 given proposal.
33

1 Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
2 PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES – SFL 3 TEAM ROSTERS	
4 Issues relating to a referee not performing the 5 requirement that a roster check be performed 6 before every tournament game.	Process adopted that allows for forfeiture of game.
7 Issues relating to a referee not enforcing the 8 automatic forfeit for tournament games when 9 a team does not have a paper copy of their 10 SFL Team Roster.	Process adopted that allows for forfeiture of game.
11 Eliminate the ability of a coach to allow roster 12 discrepancies during the tournament and 13 clearly state that such players are not allowed 14 to play in a tournament game.	SFL Commissioners requested comments from the SFL Club Representatives on whether this proposal should be recommended for adoption. Based on the majority of responses, the SFL Club Representatives did not desire to consider this as a proposal that should be adopted.
15 Allowing tape to be used for uniform 16 numbers.	Proposal not recommended for adoption. Rule clarified to state that permanent ink, such as marker, can be used to make one time uniform number adjustments.
17 PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES – 18 TEAM REGISTRATION	
19 Update the document to reflect the addition of 20 the Under 11 and Under 13 age groups and 21 the establishment of divisions based on skill 22 for all age groups.	Proposal accepted. Changes will be made in document.
23 Use the regular season standings, excluding 24 any tournament games, when making division 25 placement recommendations to the clubs for 26 the subsequent season.	Proposal not recommended for adoption.
27 PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES – 28 TOURNAMENT SCHEDULING	
29 Eliminating the round robin tournament 30 format and eliminating single elimination 31 formats where a team is required to play two 32 games on Saturday.	Proposal not recommended for adoption.

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 Delaying the establishment of the tournament 2 divisions until all but the last regular season 3 game results are known, i.e., after the week 7 4 games are played in an eight game regular 5 season and week 6 in a seven game regular 6 season.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption.</p>
<p>7 Adopting a more flexible approach on 8 accepting tournament field slots from the 9 clubs by allowing clubs to provide two fields 10 at different field complexes when those two 11 fields will provide the desired five 12 consecutive game slots.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption.</p>
<p>13 Revising the definition of a tournament field 14 from a field that has five (5) Saturday field 15 slots to one that has four (4) Saturday field 16 slots.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption.</p>
<p>17 RULE CHANGES</p>	
<p>18 Section I – Purpose 19 20 • Allowing SFL players to participate on 21 travel teams as guest players.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption. However, changes were made in the definition of what players are eligible to play in the SFL.</p>
<p>22 Section II – Player Registration, Team 23 Rosters, and Roster Challenges 24 25 • Allowing SFL players to participate on 26 travel teams as guest players. 27 28 • Requiring coaches to give referees copies 29 of the SFL Team Rosters.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption.</p>
<p>30 Section III.B.4 31 32 • This material really belongs in Section IX. 33 since it involves suspensions. 34</p>	<p>Proposal accepted and material moved to Section IX.</p>

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 Section V. – Game Requirements</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 • Adoption of the US Youth Soccer</p> <p>4 Association’s substitution guidance</p> <p>5 relating to concussions.</p>	<p>Proposal accepted. Once US Youth Soccer publishes its guidance, the substitution rules will be adopted.</p>
<p>6 Section VII. – Tournament</p> <p>7</p> <p>8 • Tournament ranking process for round</p> <p>9 robin tournament divisions should be</p> <p>10 changed to eliminate bonus points and</p> <p>11 goals allowed as tie breakers and replace</p> <p>12 them with goal differential and goals</p> <p>13 scored.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption.</p>
<p>14 Section IX. – Discipline, Protests, and</p> <p>15 Appeals</p> <p>16</p> <p>17 Summary of changes</p>	<p>A number of proposals and recommended changes were received to this section. Accordingly, the existing material in this section underwent significant reorganization. The proposed changes and any comments applicable to a given proposal are listed. All accepted changes are shown in the revised section.</p>

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 Section IX.A. – The SFL does little to (1) 2 monitor problem players and teams and (2) 3 take disciplinary action against the clubs that 4 have these problem players and teams.</p>	<p>Changes made to Section IX. As in the past, the SFL uses the penalties prescribed in section IX. as the means to (1) identify problem players and teams and (2) eliminate them from participating in the SFL. This approach was taken since the penalties are based on the actions of the team and players as seen through the eyes of the game officials and the ability of the club and team to comply with the SFL’s rules. Players and coaches that commit offenses are assessed Individual Demerits. Players and coaches that received three (3) Individual Demerits are suspended for the remainder of the season and tournament. (Same as existing rules.) The actions of the players and a team’s inability to comply with the SFL rules also result in Team Demerits. Any team that accumulates eight (8) team demerits is (1) eliminated from additional SFL games and (2) automatically put on probation for the following season assuming that the SFL. (Same as existing rules.) Furthermore, any team that accumulates an average of one (1) Team Demerit per game played when the tournament schedules are prepared is eliminated from the tournament. Finally, teams that have two (2) or more forfeits for any reason when the tournament schedules are prepared are eliminated from the tournament. The proposed changes to Section IX. hopefully has increased the visibility over problem players and teams.</p>

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 Section IX.A. – Referees have made errors 2 during the tournament. Some of these errors 3 have potentially adversely affected a team 4 advancing in the tournament. Proposals have 5 been received to (1) hold the referee assignors 6 accountable for making sure that the referees 7 know the SFL rules, (2) withhold 8 reimbursement to the clubs where referees 9 make errors that may adversely impact teams, 10 and (3) compensate teams that may have been 11 adversely impacted by improper referee 12 decisions.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption. Material has been added to formalize the SFL’s historical position that referee errors are part of the game and that (1) reimbursement to the clubs for tournament officials will be processed in such cases and (2) teams will not receive compensation in such cases.</p>
<p>13 Section IX.B.</p>	
<p>14 • Material in Section IX.B. appears better 15 suited to Section IX.C.</p>	<p>• Material in Section IX.B. that is better suited to Section IX.C. has been moved.</p>

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 • The SFL has two type of penalties – game 2 suspensions and Team Demerits. 3 Questions have been raised on the 4 relationship between these two penalties 5 since differences may exist in how they 6 are applied.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed changes include a new category called Individual Demerits which is designed to help eliminate this confusion. Essentially, each violation of the Laws of the Game and SFL rules are assigned Team Demerits and, if applicable, Individual Demerits. • The proposed rules maintain the existing definition of a problem player as one that has committed offenses that would result in the assignment of a total of three (3) Individual Demerits. • The proposed rules now clearly defines a problem coach as someone that has accumulated three (3) Individual Demerits. • When a player or a coach has accumulated three (3) Individual Demerits, that individual is suspended for the remainder of the season including the tournament. • Problem teams are still defined as teams that have received an average of one (1) Team Demerit per regular season game scheduled. Once a team reaches this level, the team is suspended from further play in the SFL and automatically placed on probation.
<p>7 • Questions have been raised on the number 8 of Team Demerits that a team can have 9 when the tournament schedules are 10 prepared.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed rules state that any team having an average of one (1) Team Demerit per game played when the tournament schedules are prepared (normally after week 5 in a 7 game season and week 6 in an 8 week season) is automatically eliminated from the tournament scheduling process.

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 Section IX.C.</p>	
<p>2 • It is recommended that this section be 3 better structured to clearly state the game 4 suspensions and Team Demerits that 5 apply to a given type of misconduct.</p>	<p>• Section reworked to clearly show the game suspensions, Individual Demerits, and Team Demerits applicable to given offenses.</p>
<p>6 • The current rules have a discussion in the 7 combined teams section that discusses 8 what happens when a player receives a red 9 card on a combined team. This material 10 should be moved to Section IX. since it 11 involves suspensions. In addition, the 12 material should be expanded to include 13 individuals who coach one of more teams 14 and players who coach teams.</p>	<p>• Proposal accepted and material has been added to the proposed rules.</p>
<p>15 • The current rules define fighting in a 16 manner that does not allow a player to 17 defend himself/herself especially if the 18 referee assigns both players a red card, 19 i.e., the referee makes a mistake and does 20 not issue a yellow card to the player that is 21 defending himself/herself. Accordingly, a 22 process is needed to allow players to 23 defend themselves without being 24 suspended from play or at least only 25 assign the player a one game suspension 26 rather than the two game suspension 27 required by the current rules when a red 28 card is issued that can be defined as 29 fighting under the SFL rules.</p>	<p>• Proposal not recommended for adoption. The basic premise when the original rule was adopted was that the rule should be structured under a “no fault” concept. This approach was taken since, based on prior experience, depending on referee and coach reports to identify the individual “who started” an event was difficult to understand in many cases.</p>

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 • A question has been raised on what 2 happens when a referee issues a red card 3 to the coach for the actions of someone 4 other than the coach. For example, 5 assume Person A takes actions either 6 before, during, or after the game that 7 results in the referee telling the person to 8 leave the field or where the referee feels 9 threatened. The referee then shows the 10 coach a red card to make it “official” 11 although the referee states that the coach’s 12 actions were not the reason for the red 13 card.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed rules clearly defines the penalties that are assessed to coaches when (1) the coach’s conduct results in the coach being asked to leave the field and (2) individuals other than the players or coach being ask to leave the field.
<p>14 Sections IX.D., E., and F. 15 16 • No comments or proposed changes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes made.
<p>17 Section IX.G. (New section) 18 19 • A request has been received to formalize 20 the process on (1) whether the SFL will 21 allow video evidence to be submitted 22 when the SFL Commissioners are 23 reviewing disciplinary actions and (2) if 24 allowed, under what conditions will it be 25 accepted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A section has been added to clarify the process used by the SFL Commissioners when deciding whether video evidence will be used.
<p>26 SFL MAILINGS</p>	
<p>27 Including the SFL Tournament Referee Guide 28 in the season mailing.</p>	<p>Proposal partially accepted. It was decided to include the document in the tournament mailing.</p>

Proposal	Summary of Recommended Change
<p>1 Eliminate the hard copy mailing of the 2 registration, standard season, and tournament 3 packages.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption. However, it was agreed that the tournament schedules would be omitted in the tournament mailing so that packages can be sent to the printer earlier. An updated listing of the site coordinators and division commissioners would be included in the package. Furthermore, it was agreed to Email the standard season and tournament packages that are sent to printer to the SFL Club Representatives so they can distribute them to their coaches.</p>
<p>4 Eliminating the customized mailing in the 5 season mailing.</p>	<p>Proposal accepted.</p>
<p>6 WEB SITE</p>	
<p>7 Adoption of the United States Youth Soccer 8 Association age group guidelines for the Fall 9 2016 season.</p>	<p>Proposal recommended for adoption.</p>
<p>10 Change the web site to also reflect a team's 11 win, loss, and tie records.</p>	<p>Proposal not recommended for adoption.</p>

12
13 Each proposal that was received is shown below along with a discussion of the implementation
14 advantages and disadvantages. Should a proposal be recommended for change, the proposed
15 changes are provided.

16
17 **PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES – SFL TEAM ROSTERS**

18
19 The following items were received related to SFL Team Rosters.

- 20
21 • Issues relating to a referee not performing the requirement that a roster check be
22 performed before every tournament game.
23
24 • Issues relating to a referee not enforcing the automatic forfeit for tournament games when
25 a team does not have a paper copy of their SFL Team Roster.
26
27 • Eliminate the ability of a coach to allow roster discrepancies and clearly state that such
28 players are not allowed to play in a tournament game.
29
30 • Allowing tape to be used for uniform numbers.

1 Each issue/proposal received, comments, and proposed change, if applicable, are discussed
2 below.

3
4 **Issue/Proposal** – The rules clearly state that a roster check should be performed prior to each
5 tournament game. In some cases, the referee disregards this requirement and players are on the
6 field whose number does not agree with roster, wears a uniform number that duplicates the
7 number of another player, etc. that is not allowed unless the opposing coach agrees. The rules
8 clearly state that once a game is played, the coach cannot protest the game because of roster
9 issues such as these which effectively means that should a referee not implement the rules, the
10 coach and team will be harmed if they lose or tie their tournament game simply because of a
11 referee mistake. Accordingly, the team should be allowed protest the game and obtain a forfeit
12 when the other team has uniform number issues.

13
14 **Comments** – Based on past history this issue is valid. However, experience has shown that
15 when a call is made from the field to the SFL, the problem can be adequately addressed, i.e., the
16 SFL can tell the referee that a roster check should be performed and that resolving “number
17 issues” is only allowed if the opposing coach agrees.

18
19 **Proposed Change** – Modify the current rules to state that when this condition exists, the coach
20 must call the SFL from the field at game time and obtain guidance on what should be done. If
21 the coach does not make this call, then no protest may be made and the game results will stand.
22 If the SFL guidance received provided in response to this game time phone call is not followed
23 by the referee, then the coach is responsible calling the SFL a second time at which point the SFL
24 will declare a forfeit.

25
26 **Issue/Proposal** – The rules clearly states that if a team shows up for a tournament game without
27 a paper roster, then that team is assessed a forfeit. However, in some cases referees do not
28 enforce this rule and tell the coaches to play the game or allow electronic rosters that may only be
29 shown to referee. The rules clearly state that once a game is played, the coach cannot protest the
30 game because of roster issues such as this which effectively means that should a referee not
31 implement the rules, the coach and team will be harmed if they lose or tie their tournament game
32 simply because of a referee mistake. Accordingly, the team should be allowed protest the game
33 and obtain a forfeit when the other team does not have a paper copy of the roster and the referee
34 does not declare a forfeit.

35
36 **Comments** – Based on past history this issue is valid and one club has told the SFL that they
37 have instructed their referees not to declare forfeits under any circumstances since that is a league
38 responsibility. However, experience has shown that when a call is made from the field to the
39 SFL, the problem can be adequately addressed, i.e., the SFL can tell the referee that the game is a
40 forfeit.

41
42 **Proposed Change** – Modify the current rules to state that when this condition exists, the coach
43 must call the SFL from the field at game time and obtain guidance on what should be done. If

1 the coach does not make this call, then no protest may be made and the game results will stand.
2 If the SFL guidance received provided in response to this game time phone call is not followed
3 by the referee, then the coach is responsible calling the SFL a second time at which point the SFL
4 will declare a forfeit.
5

6 **Issue/Proposal** – The tournament rules are clear that a team must have a paper SFL Team Roster
7 or otherwise the team is assessed a forfeit. The tournament rules also allow the opposing coach
8 to allow players with roster issues such as incorrect uniform numbers, uniform numbers made of
9 tape, duplicate uniform numbers, etc, to play. Peer pressure and, in some cases, comments made
10 by the referee that the coach should disregard the problems and play the tournament game puts
11 the coach in the position of being the “bad guy”. The proposal is that the tournament rules
12 should be changed to eliminate any discretion that the opposing coach may have in waiving
13 minor roster discrepancies. For example, if the SFL Team Roster shows duplicate uniform
14 numbers and one of more of these players show up for a tournament game, these players are not
15 allowed to play and the opposing coach cannot tell the game official that it is okay for those
16 players to play. This proposal does not affect any existing roster rules relating to these matters
17 for regular season games.
18

19 **Comments** – Originally when the current SFL Team Roster rules were developed, the SFL
20 proposed this approach. However, when this was discussed with the SFL Club Representatives,
21 it was desired to allow the current flexibility. After the December 5, 2015, SFL Commissioners
22 meeting, an Email was sent to the SFL Club Representatives requesting their specific views on
23 this proposal. Based on those responses, about 60 percent of the SFL Club Representatives
24 desired to retain the current flexibility contained in the rules.
25

26 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that this proposal not be adopted.
27

28 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL does not allow tape to be used for jersey numbers. What is wrong
29 with using tape to distinguish 7 from 17? The SFL allows 01 and 1 to be different, although no
30 travel club would allow such a thing. A referee could easily get confused between 01 and 1
31 which would not be a problem with a 7 converted to 17 using tape.
32

33 **Comments** – Currently, the SFL only allows tape to be used in a very specialized situation –
34 when teams are allowed to combine for the tournament. In such cases, the authorization is
35 provided in an Email to the coach, the club referee coordinator where that team will play its
36 tournament game, and a note in the tournament roster provided to the coach. In the Fall 2015
37 season we only had one situation where this process was used. This decision was made since it is
38 considered unrealistic to have a club or player get a new uniform for one weekend’s games.
39

40 The rule to prevent tape from being routinely be used for uniform numbers in regular season and
41 tournament games was suggested by several clubs to address problems experienced in prior
42 seasons. The current rule states that the numbers on the uniform must be permanent. One
43 problem that has been noted with tape was that it often disappears during the game, e.g., the 17

1 becomes a 7 again. Furthermore, players would show up at the field with no numbers on the
2 uniform and the coach would tape the number on the roster to the uniform which provided less
3 assurance that the player was actually assigned to that team. Moreover, as the game progressed
4 and the tape disappeared, the game official would be unable to report the uniform number of the
5 player receiving a yellow or red card.
6

7 The reason that the SFL allows a leading zero (0) is that several clubs issue uniform numbers to
8 players and as those players change teams, duplicate numbers may occur. Rather than force a
9 player to purchase a new uniform, the club simply has the player take the uniform to a printer and
10 add a zero in front of it rather than making it a three digit number.
11

12 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that this proposal not be adopted. Tape has historically
13 been a problem. Specifically, (1) it may disappear during the game, (2) provides less assurance
14 that the players on the field are the same players as those shown on the SFL Team Roster, and (3)
15 a number of clubs have requested that it not be allowed. However, it was agreed that the rules
16 should clearly state that using a permanent marker for a uniform number is allowed.
17

18 **Issue/Proposal** – SFL tournament rosters should be prepared and these rosters include a clause
19 about alternate jerseys and allowable game day changes.
20

21 **Comments** – The benefits of generating another set of rosters for the tournament are unclear.
22 This is a time consuming process for both the SFL and the clubs. In addition, a process change
23 that would probably be requested is to allow Master Roster changes to address any problems that
24 a club had experienced. In effect, the SFL Team Roster process would be a season process rather
25 than terminate, in effect, after the week 4 games are completed. This would also occur when the
26 SFL is busy on performing tournament activities such as addressing tournament problems and
27 handling the trophy distribution.
28

29 The current process has a tournament package that is mailed to the coaches and club officials that
30 discuss the uniform number issues and clearly states that no changes made be made on the game
31 day and that players shown on the SFL Team Roster with uniform number issues may not play
32 unless the other coach agrees. In addition, a one page club referee guide for the tournament is
33 distributed to the SFL Club Representatives and Club Referee Coordinators that discusses what
34 is allowed. Both of these documents are also posted on the web site.
35

36 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that this proposal not be adopted since the burden on the
37 SFL and clubs is significant and the additional benefits are not clear. If a note on the roster
38 stating that players with uniform issues may not play in the tournament is considered beneficial,
39 then that note can be added to the regular season rosters.
40

1 **PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES – TEAM REGISTRATION**

2
3 The following items were received related to the Team Registration process.

- 4
- 5 • Update the document to reflect the addition of the Under 11 and Under 13 age groups and
 - 6 the establishment of divisions based on skill for all age groups.
 - 7
 - 8 • Use the regular season standings, excluding any tournament games, when making
 - 9 division placement recommendations to the clubs for the subsequent season.

10
11 Each issue/proposal received, comments, and proposed change, if applicable, are discussed

12 below.

13
14 **Issue/Proposal** – Update the existing document to (1) reflect the inclusion of the Under 11 and

15 13 age groups, (2) state that divisions within an age group are based on skill rather than age, and

16 (3) state that clubs are allowed to change the proposed divisions.

17
18 **Comments** – These are valid comments.

19
20 **Proposed Change** – The document will be updated to reflect the current processes.

21
22 **Issue/Proposal** – Use the regular season standings excluding any tournament games when

23 making division placement recommendations to the clubs for the subsequent season.

24
25 **Comments** – Currently all of a team’s actual game results are used to make division placement

26 recommendations to the clubs. In computing these results, game penalties such as scheduling

27 forfeits and late score reporting penalties are not included in the computations. Game forfeits

28 related to such items as using illegal players or not properly reporting a red card are used with the

29 forfeit penalty removed. The Placement of Teams in Tournament Divisions section of the

30 Procedures and Processes – Tournament Scheduling provides more details on the methodology

31 used. The tournament methodology is the same process used to determine a team’s actual season

32 performance and develop a proposed division for the team’s subsequent season.

33
34 It is unclear why tournament games should not be used in recommending a team’s division

35 placement for the subsequent season. As noted in several SFL documents, the tournament is

36 designed to provide an opportunity for teams with comparable abilities to play games against

37 each other. In addition, normally several tournament divisions have teams assigned where the

38 games will or have the potential to have pairings where teams that played each other during the

39 regular season also play each other in the tournament. Why these tournament games should carry

40 less weight than a game that occurred in the regular season is unclear. Furthermore, the

41 tournament also has teams playing from different geographical areas against each other which

42 provides a more balanced view of the team’s performance against the other teams in that regular

43 season division. Specifically, when the regular season division schedules are prepared an attempt

1 is made to keep the teams within a geographical area when possible. This may cause some bias
2 in the standings which are addressed when the tournament divisions are established. Finally,
3 history has shown that the tournament games are much more competitive than regular season
4 games. For example, during the Fall 2015 season, about 70 percent of the games ended in ties,
5 settled by penalty kicks, or had a one/two goal difference. During the regular season, about 50
6 percent of games fell into the same game differential.

7
8 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that this proposal not be accepted since the tournament
9 games are (1) simply an extension of the regular season and (2) more competitive than regular
10 season games which provides a better assessment of a team’s capabilities.

1 **PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES – TOURNAMENT SCHEDULING**

2
3 The following items were received related to the tournament scheduling processes.

- 4
- 5 • Eliminating the round robin tournament format and eliminating single elimination
6 formats where a team is required to play two games on Saturday.
 - 7
 - 8 • Delaying the establishment of the tournament divisions until all but the last regular
9 season game results are known, i.e., after the week 7 games are played in an eight game
10 regular season and week 6 in a seven game regular season.
 - 11
 - 12 • Adopting a more flexible approach on accepting tournament field slots from the clubs by
13 allowing clubs to provide two fields at different field complexes when those two fields
14 will provide the desired five consecutive game slots.
 - 15
 - 16 • Revising the definition of a tournament field from a field that has five (5) Saturday field
17 slots to one that has four (4) Saturday field slots.
 - 18

19 Each issue/proposal received, comments, and proposed change, if applicable, are discussed
20 below.

21
22 **Issue/Proposal** – In terms of changes to the SFL tournament format, we would like to see the
23 robin format eliminated and the number of single elimination tournament games reduced
24 especially in the case of those involving a team potentially playing two games in a single day. It
25 is difficult to get a team to two games in a single day especially if significant travel is involved as
26 can be the case during the tournament. Fatigue and chance of injury are also concerns when
27 playing twice in one day especially in June, This would also ease field load and number of
28 referees needed.

29
30 **Comments** – Only one tournament format supports a team playing one game per day. This is the
31 4 team single elimination division. It is unclear what should happen when an age group has a
32 number of teams that is not divisible by 4. For example, assume an age group has 14 teams.
33 Should 2 teams be eliminated, should the top teams play one game to determine first and second
34 place, etc.? During the Fall 2015 season, the tournament had 18 different age/division groups
35 that were broken down into tournament divisions. Only eight of these had a number of teams
36 that was divisible by 4. In addition, 4 team divisions are not efficient for scheduling games when
37 a field only has 5 time slots which is a common practice during the fall tournament because of
38 daylight restrictions. Unless the club has provided an even number of fields, then only 2
39 divisions can be scheduled on the field. This translates into a number of slots that can end up
40 unused.

41

1 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that this proposal not be adopted because of the
2 difficulties in only having four team single elimination tournament divisions.

3
4 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL should wait till after the 7th week of games to seed tournament
5 groups.

6
7 **Comments** – The time frames adopted for the tournament scheduling are based on logistical
8 matters. Assuming that the season has 8 game weeks, the following is what is done each week.

- 9
10 • Week 7 – Week 6 games are completed and the scores received by Monday or Tuesday at
11 6 PM are used to determine the tournament divisions.
12
13 • Tuesday/Wednesday – Tournament divisions formed and sent to the SFL Commissioners
14 for review and approval.
15
16 • Thursday through Sunday – Week 7 games played and posted to the web site, tournament
17 divisions assigned to tournament fields, trophies delivered and stored for later processing,
18 schedules generated.
19
20 • Week 8 – Clubs notified of draft tournament schedules and schedules released to teams
21 before the week 8 games are played, labels are placed in trophy boxes and boxes are
22 labeled for distribution (generally about 250 boxes of trophies are processed), Week 8
23 games are played and scores are processed and posted to the web site, clubs are notified
24 to pick up trophies before the tournament weekend.
25

26 It has been our experience that clubs and teams like at least a week’s notice before the games are
27 played. Furthermore, the season statistics have historically shown that the tournament games are
28 much more competitive than the regular season games. For example, during the Fall 2015
29 season, over 2,000 regular season and almost 450 tournament games were played. During the
30 regular season about 50 percent of the games ended in ties or had a goal differential of 2 goals or
31 less. During the tournament, over 70 percent of the games had a goal differential of 2 goals or
32 less. This is consistent with the Spring 2015 season which had almost 2,500 games played.
33 About 54 percent of the games were ties or had a goal differential of 2 goals or less while the
34 tournament had over 75 percent of its games ending in a tie or having a goal differential of 2
35 goals or less. More importantly, the number of games where a team was defeated by six or more
36 goals dropped significantly during the tournament. For example, during the Fall 2015 season, the
37 tournament only had about 4 percent of its games with a goal differential of 6 goals or more
38 compared to the regular season’s 15 percent.
39

40 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that this proposal not be adopted because (1) of the
41 operational issues and (2) the tournament games have proved to be much more competitive than
42 the regular season games which makes their results much more meaningful. It is also unclear

1 whether the addition of an addition week before making the division placement decision would
2 improve the competitiveness of the tournament games.

3
4 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL should be more flexible on accepting tournament field slots from the
5 clubs. For example, if a club has slots say at 9 and 11 on one field and 1, 3 and 5 on another, that
6 is five slots in a row. It is the club’s problem to schedule referees on two different fields, not
7 SFL’s.

8
9 **Comment** – The current approach allows a club to provide two fields at the same field complex
10 to count as one field when the field slots are consecutive. Accordingly, the issue is not coming
11 up with 5 or 6 Saturday slots that are consecutive on two or more fields or the SFL’s attempts to
12 schedule referees since, as noted, this is a club responsibility. Rather, it is the difficulty that this
13 places on the teams playing in a given division and developing the tournament schedules. While
14 the fields may be close, they still require a physical move. Should the proposal to only have four
15 team single elimination tournament divisions discussed elsewhere be adopted, then this is an
16 acceptable option and can be supported with the existing standard schedules. Otherwise, the
17 proposal creates a number of problems. The following illustrates some of these problems.

- 18
19 • **Round robin tournament divisions** – With the exception of three-team divisions, where
20 only one team plays two games on Saturday, each team plays two games on Saturday –
21 one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Accordingly, a team and its parents would
22 have to play a morning game at one field and then pack up and move to another field for
23 its afternoon game. One of these teams would have to make this move during the one
24 game break between games. For example, using the standard time slots, one team would
25 play a game in the 10:15 to 12:00 PM slot and then be scheduled on another field not at
26 the same field complex for its game at 1:45 PM.
- 27
28 • **Five, six, and seven team single elimination tournament divisions** – These divisions
29 require, one, two, or three teams respectively to play two games on Saturday. Much like
30 the round robin discussion above, some of the teams may only have one “game slot” to
31 get between games.
- 32
33 • **Standard schedules would need to be developed to support process** – Almost 3,350
34 standard schedules have been developed to support the current two day tournament
35 scheduling process. While these schedules support having a given division play its games
36 on two different fields, they make the assumption that when a team plays more than one
37 game on Saturday, that game is held on the same field or field complex. If the proposal is
38 adopted, then standard schedules would need to be developed to support this concept. It
39 is hard to determine the exact number, but it would probably require at least another 750
40 to 1,000 schedules to be developed. This number would increase significantly if more
41 than 2 Saturday fields are allowed.
- 42

1 In theory, two 4 team divisions or a four and five team division could be placed on these two
2 fields so that no team has to move between locations. However, this is inefficient from a
3 scheduling standpoint and provides very limited flexibility in adjusting the schedule should a
4 change be needed after the schedules are developed. The tournament schedules are developed to
5 support where possible (1) a contingency plan should a team drop out of the division and (2)
6 allow more than a one game slot spread between games for teams that play two games on the
7 same day. Each season, including the Fall 2015 season, we have had several cases where teams
8 have dropped out after the schedules have been developed and, in many cases, published.

9
10 Currently a “standard” approach is used for scheduling tournament divisions that provides the
11 ability to adjust for division changes. The table below shows the “standard” Saturday game
12 schedule for a field assigned four and five team single elimination tournament divisions and how
13 those divisions may change when one or more teams drop out . When a division only has three
14 teams, it is also converted to the round robin format.
15

Table I: Standard Approach for Adjusting 4 and 5 Team Tournament Divisions

Standard Time	Standard	5 Team – One Team Dropped	5 Team – Two Teams Dropped	4 Team – One Team Dropped
8:30 AM	T4 v T5 (5 Team)		T2 v T3 (5 Team)	T4 v T5 (5 Team)
10:15 AM	T1 v T4 (4 Team)	T1 v T4 (4 Team)	T1 v T4 (4 Team)	T1 v T2 (4 Team)
12:00 PM	T2 v T3 (5 Team)	T2 v T3 (5 Team)		T2 v T3 (5 Team)
1:45 PM	T1 v Winner of Game 1 (5 Team)	T1 v T4 (5 Team)	T1 v T2 (5 Team)	T1 v Winner of Game 1 (5 Team)
3:30 PM	T2 v T3 (4 Team)	T2 v T3 (4 Team)	T2 v T3 (4 Team)	T2 v T3 (4 Team)

Notes

- **Bold** text shows the game changes.
- Assumes that the lowest team number is the one that drops out. When other teams drop out, other options are used to minimize the change in game schedule on the remaining teams.
- Should two teams in a five team division drop out and one team in the four team division drop out both divisions are converted to three team round robin tournament divisions. In effect, the only changes are the team pairings shown in the column above for what happens when two teams drop out of a five team division.

As can be seen above, this approach (1) allows a two game break for the team that plays two games on the same day and (2) if one or more teams drops out it is easy to convert the schedule to another form. For example, if the team dropping out is in a four team division, it is very easy to convert this to a three team round robin tournament division, i.e., the games are played in slots 2 and 5 so the team assigned to now play 2 games on Saturday has adequate time between games and no changes are needed for the referee assignments. Another key benefit of this approach is that one team is not automatically promoted to the championship game. On the other hand, if a team in a five team division drops out, the division is converted to a four team single elimination division and the games are scheduled in a manner that “pairs” the games on the field for referee scheduling purposes. Furthermore, if the team dropping out happens to only play one game on Saturday, then the other team is not automatically promoted to the championship game while another team has to play two games on Saturday to get to the championship game.

1 **Alternative Standard Scheduling**
2 **Approach to Reduce Impact On Teams**
3 **Playing Two Games On Saturday**
4

5 This proposed approach could be modified to also require that no tournament divisions will be
6 scheduled on those fields that are not at the same complex on Saturday. An advantage to this
7 alternative is that the clubs would have even more flexibility since the slots would no longer have
8 to be consecutive, i.e., they could use two fields in the morning (or afternoon) to provide the
9 desired five slots. The primary disadvantages include the following.

- 10 • Only four or five team single elimination divisions can be supported with these
11 restrictions. Currently the tournament scheduling approach supports eight different
12 tournament division structures.¹ In other words, these fields are useless for 75 percent of
13 the tournament divisions types that are routinely used.
- 14 • Should a team drop out of a four team division, then one team would automatically be
15 promoted to the trophy round while the other two teams would have to play a game, i.e.,
16 the division could not support the current approach of converting the division to a three
17 team round robin division.
- 18 • Should a team drop out of a four team division, the club may end up having to provide
19 referees for one tournament game. Although the SFL is not responsible for scheduling
20 the referees, several clubs have told us that single games are difficult to find the referees
21 willing to support it. Although in some cases the SFL may compensate the clubs for lost
22 games when teams drop out which should help address this concern, this is not always the
23 case. For example, at least 3 games in the Fall 2015 tournament were dropped where the
24 hosting club did not receive reimbursement for the referees that may have been assigned
25 to those games.

26
27
28
29
30 Another potential problem is the impact it would have on other constraints that are currently used
31 for assigning tournament divisions to a club's fields. A current requirement is that at least one of
32 the teams playing in a division come from the club providing the field and referees. A desired
33 constraint is to attempt assigning tournament divisions to a team's home field when two or more
34 teams from the same club are in a given division. Historically, about 40 percent or more of the
35 tournament divisions have two or more teams from the same club and over 95 percent of those
36 are assigned to their home field. The primary reason the remaining 5 percent are not assigned to
37 their home field is because another club had two or more teams in that division. The later
38 constraint can end up eliminating the ability to assign the single teams to their home field to use
39 the available slots. The following example shows the difficulties with a hypothetical club that

¹ The standard tournament division formats for round robin divisions are three (3) team, four (4) team, five (5), and six (6) team divisions. The standard tournament division formats for single elimination divisions are four (4) five (5), six (6), and seven (7) team divisions.

1 provides four partial fields to meet its two tournament field requirement. In this example, rather
2 than give the SFL two fields with five slots, the club decides to provide two fields with two slots
3 and two fields with three slots and that the club's teams fall into the following types of
4 tournament divisions.

- 5
6 • Four teams fall in a round robin division. The field slots would not support this format so
7 those teams could not play at home.
8
- 9 • Four teams play in a four different five team divisions. Only two of these divisions can
10 be supported at the home field with one of those divisions, in effect, only having one
11 game on a field.
12
- 13 • All but two of the remaining teams from the club play in six or seven single elimination
14 divisions. The field slots would not support this format so those teams could not play at
15 home.
16
- 17 • The remaining two teams are in two different four team single elimination divisions.
18 Each of these divisions have two teams from a different club in them so these divisions
19 are scheduled on those clubs' fields.
20

21 Accordingly, although the club provided the equivalent of two 5 slot fields for its 10 plus teams,
22 in reality, the club only provided one field that could be used and the other field was useless.
23

24 **Proposed Change** – Since this proposal has a number of factors that can impact the decision
25 whether to adopt it, the following are recommendations for the various alternatives.
26

- 27 • **Proposal to only have single elimination tournament divisions and teams are only
28 required to play one game on Saturday is accepted** – It is recommended that this
29 proposal not be adopted. However, if is adopted, then this is an acceptable proposal and
30 can be implemented within the existing tournament scheduling process.
31
- 32 • **Maintain existing scheduling constraints of (1) having at least one team from the
33 club assigned to its home field, (2) scheduling teams with two games on the same day
34 playing their games at the same field complex, and (3) assigning tournament
35 divisions with two or more home teams to their home fields when possible** – It is
36 recommend that is proposal not be adopted since it eliminates the fields from being used
37 for 75 percent of tournament divisions that are routinely used for the tournament.
38
- 39 • **Maintain existing scheduling constraints with the exception of scheduling teams
40 with two games on the same day playing their games at the same field complex** – It is
41 recommend that this proposal not be adopted since (1) it requires some teams to change
42 from one field complex to another field complex and potentially play the team's second

1 game within less than 2 hours after it completed its first game and (2) the significant
2 effort required to develop the standard schedules to support this approach.
3

- 4 • **Change the standard scheduling format to eliminate the standard schedules that**
5 **would require teams to play on different fields on Saturday** – It is recommended that
6 his proposal not be adopted because (1) it eliminates the ability to schedule 75 percent of
7 the tournament formats currently supported, (2) automatically promotes one team for a
8 four team division to the trophy round while the other two teams must play a game should
9 one team drop out, (3) can end up in a field only having one game that the SFL will
10 consider for referee reimbursement purposes, and (4) may eliminate the use of one or
11 more fields provided by a club. Should these disadvantages be considered acceptable,
12 then the proposed change would need to include the ability to eliminate teams from the
13 club from the tournament should all the field slots not be used. Specifically, the current
14 rules specify that if a club does not provide enough fields to support its teams, then the
15 SFL may drop teams. Using the example above where, because of the constraints, only
16 one field is available, the SFL could drop teams from that club because, in effect, it did
17 not provide enough fields to support its teams.
18

19 **Issue/Proposal** – The current rules define a field when evaluating whether a club has provided
20 adequate fields to support its teams as one that has at least five (5) Saturday field slots. Some
21 clubs may not have the necessary number of fields that can meet this requirement because of
22 field permit problems. For example, the field permit may only allow 4 slots on the field, i.e., the
23 lack of slots is not because the club did not reserve the field for the entire time it is available to
24 the club. Rather, it is caused by external factors beyond the club’s control.
25

26 **Comment** – When developing the current tournament scheduling process, this option was
27 considered. It was rejected since this field can only support the following tournament scheduling
28 group(s).
29

- 30 • A three team round robin tournament division when used in combination with a four team
31 division. Simply placing a three team round robin division on that field would leave two
32 single games since spacing is needed to provide the team that plays two Saturday games
33 adequate spacing between games. As noted elsewhere, finding referees for single games
34 is difficult.
35
- 36 • One 4 team single elimination division. It is important to note that this would not provide
37 any flexibility if a team dropped out since this division could not be converted to a three
38 team round robin division without creating single games as discussed above. In the Fall
39 2015 season, at least two 4 team single elimination divisions were converted to three
40 team round robin divisions.
41
- 42 • Two 4 team single elimination divisions.
43

- One five team division.

This field would not support three of the round robin tournament divisions (4, 5, and 6 team) and the 6 and 7 team single elimination tournament divisions. In other words, it would not support over 60 percent of the tournament schedules routinely used by the SFL to schedule the tournament. In addition, much like the alternative discussed above, these restrictions could end up in the field going unused for the same reasons, i.e., the tournament divisions where the club's teams end up do not match the scheduling profiles that can be used for this field.

Proposed Change – It is recommend that is proposal not be adopted since it (1) eliminates the fields from being used for over 60 percent of tournament divisions that are routinely used for the tournament and (2) because of the limited scheduling groups that can be supported, it may result in the field going unused. Should these disadvantages be considered acceptable, then the proposed change would need to include the ability to eliminate teams from the club from the tournament should all the field slots not be used. Specifically, the current rules specify that if a club does not provide enough fields to support its teams, then the SFL may drop teams. Using the example above where, because of the constraints, only one field is available, the SFL could drop teams from that club because, in effect, it did not provide enough fields to support its teams.

1 **RULE CHANGES**

2
3 Rule changes were submitted for the following sections.

- 4
- 5 • Section I – Purpose
 - 6
 - 7 ▶ Allowing SFL players to participate on travel teams as guest players.
 - 8
 - 9 • Section II – Player Registration, Team Rosters, and Roster Challenges
 - 10
 - 11 ▶ Allowing SFL players to participate on travel teams as guest players.
 - 12
 - 13 ▶ Requiring coaches to give referees copies of the SFL Team Rosters.
 - 14
 - 15 • Section V. – Game Requirements
 - 16
 - 17 ▶ Adoption of the US Youth Soccer Association’s substitution guidance relating to
 - 18 concussions.
 - 19
 - 20 • Section VII. – Tournament
 - 21
 - 22 ▶ Tournament ranking process for round robin tournament divisions
 - 23
 - 24 • Section IX. – Discipline, Protests, and Appeals
 - 25
 - 26 ▶ A number of proposals and recommended changes were received to this section.
 - 27 Accordingly, the existing material in this section underwent significant
 - 28 reorganization. The proposed changes and any comments applicable to a given
 - 29 proposal are listed. All accepted changes are shown in the revised section. .
 - 30

31 **Sections I.A. and II.A.3.**

32
33 **Current Wording – Section I.A.**

34
35 The Suburban Friendship League (SFL) was established to coordinate and provide
36 competitive soccer amongst the various house league teams who desire to compete with
37 teams from other clubs. Although limited travel is involved, the teams in the SFL are
38 recreational teams as defined by the United States Youth Soccer Association and travel or
39 select players may not participate. Coaches should discuss with each player on their team the
40 prohibition of playing on a SFL team and a travel team and make sure that the team realizes
41 that the identification of a travel player on that team will result in forfeiture of games and
42 elimination from the SFL tournament.
43

1 **Current Wording – Section II.A.3.**
2

3 Some travel leagues may allow recreational players to play on the travel teams as guest
4 players. This is allowed under the following conditions:
5

- 6 a. The player does not routinely practice with the travel team. This does not exclude one
7 time “try outs” for the team.
8
- 9 b. **Travel tournaments** – The player is playing for a travel team participating in a
10 tournament that occurs either (1) before the first game of the SFL season, (2) after the last
11 game of the SFL season, or (3) during a week when the SFL does not hold games, e.g.,
12 holiday weekends. The SFL must be notified by Email of the player's name and date of
13 birth along with the game dates that the player is playing for the travel team if the game
14 dates fall between the start and end of the SFL season, e.g., holiday weekends.
15
- 16 c. **Regular season travel games** – Some travel leagues may allow recreational players to
17 play on a travel team during that team’s regular season travel games. The SFL does not
18 support this policy for many reasons including the potential that a player may end up
19 playing on a travel team and SFL team throughout the season which effectively eliminates
20 the prohibition against travel players playing on SFL teams. Accordingly, if a SFL player
21 participates in a regular season travel game, then (1) the club must notify the SFL of the
22 player’s name and birth date and (2) ensure that the player no longer plays on the SFL
23 team. Subsequent participation of the player in SFL games will result in game forfeits
24 and the team's elimination from the SFL tournament.
25

26 **Issue/Proposal** – Several travel leagues allow recreational players to play on their travel
27 teams on the same weekends as SFL schedules its games. The SFL has rules that (1) prevents
28 SFL players from routinely practicing with travel teams and (2) playing with their SFL teams
29 on the same weekends as the SFL normally schedules games. Furthermore, it has extremely
30 severe penalties should player violate these rules. For example, the team is assessed forfeits
31 and eliminated from the SFL tournament. These penalties seem overly harsh since a number
32 of children are penalized because of a simple mistake that is made by the parents. Since
33 these players are not carded travel players and are really “playing up” on an “on call” basis,
34 no real competitive advantage is gained and a more reasonable penalty is to simply eliminate
35 these players from tournament play. To determine whether a player was truly a travel player
36 could be easily determined by seeing if the player was carded. If the player was carded, then
37 the SFL could conclude that a travel player had been used. Another option proposed is that
38 the SFL should allow a player to play as a guest player for a limited number of games. For
39 example, allowing a player to play up to 3 games with a travel team might be a more
40 appropriate balance between wanting to limit travel players in the SFL while allowing some
41 opportunity for SFL players to test drive travel given the considerably commitment.
42

1 **Comments** – When the SFL was formed, it was designed to support recreational teams and
2 travel players were expressly prohibited. At that time it was very clear on what was
3 considered a recreational player and a travel player since travel players had cards and a data
4 base was maintained that could be checked to resolve any questions. Although some travel
5 tournaments would allow guest players, travel or recreational, this did not constitute a real
6 problem since these players were prohibited from playing in regular season travel games. In
7 addition, since the tournaments were always on weekends when SFL games were not
8 scheduled, there were no game conflicts.
9

10 Recently some travel leagues have modified their rules to allow guest players participate in a
11 travel team’s regular season games. When this policy was proposed, the SFL developed the
12 current rules since, once it was implemented, this policy change greatly blurred the lines
13 between recreational and travel players. In effect, the separation between recreational and
14 travel soccer would be eliminated especially if the policy was abused. Based on past
15 experience, the SFL had reason to believe that it would be abused.
16

17 The SFL and its member clubs have seen over the years where unscrupulous coaches and, to
18 be kind, “ignorant” coaches and parents place travel players on recreational teams. In some
19 cases the players showed up on the team’s roster while in others they simply had the players
20 show up and play the game. The current process was an evolutionary one where more and
21 more procedures and processes were implemented to try and prevent this from happening.
22 However, the penalties have remained consistent – forfeiture of games and the team being
23 eliminated from the tournament. In addition, the club is asked to review the matter and
24 determine whether additional actions are needed against the coach. Another item has also
25 been consistent. These illegal players are often identified by other players, parents, coaches,
26 or even referees who know them. While the SFL has received several suggestions that it
27 should also adopt a “card system” and processes like travel, the clubs have not adopted such
28 an approach because of the cost and difficulties in implementing it.
29

30 Whether a guest player is “playing up” is also a difficult matter to quantify. For example, is a
31 guest player really a guest player if they play on a travel team for 2, 3, or even more weeks?
32 Also, what happens if a recreational team decides that it wants to use travel players and gets
33 agreement with one or more travel teams to not card the player and simply use the player on
34 the travel team as a “guest player”? Rather than attempt to define and have an adjudication
35 process that can be used to make these kind of judgements, the SFL recommended, and the
36 clubs agreed, to go with the simple logic that if a player (1) participated in travel game during
37 a weekend where the SFL normally scheduled games or (2) routinely practiced with a travel
38 team, then that player was considered a travel player.
39

40 One possible alternative proposed was to allow a player to play up to a limited number of
41 games, e.g., 3, with a travel team since this would be a more appropriate balance between
42 wanting to limit travel players in the SFL while allowing some opportunity for SFL players to
43 test drive travel given the considerable commitment. It is unclear (1) whether this is needed

1 and (2) whether the coaches and clubs would effectively implement it. During the Fall 2015
2 season we had one team of the over 530 teams in the SFL, that reported, as required, that one
3 of their players would be playing in a holiday travel tournament. In the Spring 2015 two
4 teams provided this notification. This may mean that players did play as guest players on
5 travel teams on holiday weekends but did not report it. In addition, during the Fall 2015
6 season, one team had a player participate as a guest travel player during 3 SFL game
7 weekends and the coach said that he did not know that his daughter could not do this. (We
8 also had a coach whose child was a carded travel player with another club say that the coach
9 did not know that it was improper to have the child on the coach's SFL team.) Accordingly,
10 if the problem is that coaches and players do not know that such activities must be reported, it
11 is unclear whether (1) they will know about the game limit imposed and (2) properly report it
12 each time that a player participates as a guest player. Furthermore, it is unclear whether such
13 activities should be allowed for travel teams but not allowed between SFL teams since the
14 logic – the guest player is needed due to a shortage of players and the player is not “playing
15 down” – is the same in many cases.

16
17 The SFL also recognizes that a number of players may be penalized by the actions of one or
18 more adults when a team is eliminated. To help mitigate that possibility, the rules and the
19 season letter require a coach to have a “travel discussion” with the team. These documents
20 provide the materials needed for this discussion and includes the penalties that are imposed
21 should a travel player be identified. The SFL recognizes that the penalties impact the players
22 rather than the adults that caused the problem. However, the SFL has not identified a penalty
23 that can be imposed on the adults while leaving the children harmless.

24
25 **Proposed Change** – Section I.A. has been modified to clearly state what the SFL considers
26 to be a travel player. The following is the proposed change (change in bold):

27
28 The Suburban Friendship League (SFL) was established to coordinate and provide
29 competitive soccer amongst the various house league teams who desire to compete with
30 teams from other clubs. **Although limited travel is involved, the teams in the SFL are**
31 **recreational teams and travel or select players may not participate. The SFL considers**
32 **any individual that practices with or plays on a travel/select team to be a travel player**
33 **under any and all conditions and circumstances except for the limited exceptions noted**
34 **in the SFL rules.** Coaches should discuss with each player on their team the prohibition of
35 playing on a SFL team and a travel team and make sure that the team realizes that the
36 identification of a travel player on that team will result in forfeiture of games and elimination
37 from the SFL tournament.

38
39 No change is proposed to Section I.A.3.
40

1 **Section II.E.3.b.**

2
3 **Current Wording**

4
5 The referee may also request a copy of each team’s SFL Team Roster.

6
7 **Issue/Proposal** – As a general rule, referees do not ask for rosters and coaches do not often
8 have a spare when asked. Not sure what can done about this, but the SFL needs to think
9 about how it can encourage giving rosters to referees – ESPECIALLY on Under 16 Boys and
10 Under 19 Boys games. I have seen way too many instances where the referee was clueless on
11 which player actually received the red card. Sure the referee knew the player number, but that
12 does not always identify who actually received the red card.

13
14 **Comments** – The requirement for a coach to provide the referee a copy of the SFL Team
15 Roster was discussed at length during the Fall 2015 preseason meeting and the clubs at that
16 time did not desire to make this a requirement. It was agreed that (1) the cover sheet on the
17 season package should include this requirement, (2) the season letter specifically include this
18 requirement, and (3) if a club wanted to impose this requirement it should be allowed. It was
19 also recognized that (1) the requirement to have a copy of the SFL Team Roster for the
20 referee and the other team was already included in several SFL documents included in the
21 season package and (2) the rules already allow for a club to require their referees to obtain a
22 copy of each team’s SFL Team Roster. The change to the cover letter was made in the Fall
23 2015 season package. All the other requirements were already in the SFL documents.

24
25 Experience has shown that giving the referee a copy does not always result in the proper
26 name, or even uniform number, being reported to the SFL for red cards. In several cases
27 during the Fall 2015 season a discrepancy was noted in the names and even uniform numbers
28 between the information provided by the referee and the coach. In several of the cases, the
29 referee made an error in reporting the correct information even though the player in question
30 was wearing the uniform number shown on the SFL Team Roster.

31
32 In order to maintain the integrity of the names on the SFL Team Roster to the uniform
33 numbers, it would appear that a roster check before each game would be needed much like
34 that required for the tournament. This was also discussed at the Fall 2015 preseason meeting
35 and the clubs decided not to implement it. Among the reasons cited is that the game times,
36 like the game times for the tournament, would have to be expanded to allow for this and the
37 available fields in many cases would not be able to support as many games as the current
38 process.

39
40 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that this proposal not be adopted. A similar proposal
41 was discussed at length during the Fall 2015 preseason meeting and the clubs did not want to
42 make this a requirement. Rather, the clubs decided to (1) retain the current approach of

1 leaving this up to the club if they desired to make this a requirement and (2) modify the first
2 page of the season package that summarizes the key rules to include this requirement.
3

4 **Section III.B.4**

5 **Current Wording**

6
7
8 If a player receives a red card during a game, the player must not play in the team's next
9 scheduled game. If the player receives a red card during the game as a substitute player, then
10 they may not play in the next game that their regular team is scheduled to play. In addition,
11 they may not play with the other team as a substitute player until they are eligible to play for
12 their regular team. In other words, they must serve at least a 2 game suspension.
13

14 **Issue/Proposal** – This material really belongs in Section IX since it involves suspensions.
15

16 **Proposed Change** – This proposal was adopted. Section IX has been changed to reflect this
17 proposal.
18

19 **Section IV.F.**

20 **Current Wording**

21
22
23 **Substitutions** – Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee, at the following
24 times:
25

- 26 1. Prior to a throw-in when the ball is in possession of the team substituting. The opposing
27 team may substitute as well if the team in possession is making a substitution.
- 28 2. Goal kick by either team.
- 29 3. After a goal by either team and prior to the succeeding kick-off.
- 30 4. During the half-time interval.
- 31 5. After an injury(the injured player may be replaced and the opposing team may also
32 substitute one player).
- 33 6. After a caution has been issued, at the request of the player's coach, for the cautioned
34 player.
35

36 **Issue/Proposal** – Adopt the United States Youth Soccer Association's guidelines for
37 substitutions that are related to concussions.
38

39 **Comments** – The United States Youth Soccer Association has stated that it plans on issuing
40 guidelines on revised substitution rules related to concussions.
41

1 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended this proposal be adopted. Once the United States
2 Youth Soccer Association publishes its guidelines on the substitution rules related to
3 concussions, these guidelines will be incorporated into the SFL rules.
4

5 **Section VII.B.1**

6 **Current Wording**

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

26 **Issue/Proposal** – FIFA and other youth tournaments normally use goal differential as the
27 second tie breaker rather bonus points. In addition, none of the ranking factors include goals
28 scored. Accordingly, a team that has a goal differential of more than three goals is
29 disadvantaged when clearly they are the superior team especially if they have scored more
30 goals than another team. Accordingly, the ranking process should (1) drop bonus points and
31 goals allowed and (2) replace them with goal differential as the second tie breaker and goals
32 scored as third tie breaker.
33

34 **Comments** – When bonus points were limited to three goals and the tie breaking process
35 adopted bonus points and goals allowed rather than goal differential and goals scored, it was
36 understood that most tournaments, including FIFA, used goal differential and goals scored as
37 tie breakers. These factors were specifically eliminated because they provide an incentive for
38 teams to run up scores and do not encourage good sportsmanship. Adopting these tie
39 breakers also require changes to other sections of the rules which (1) require teams to take
40 players of the field when the goal differential exceeds 5 goals and (2) allow a team to
41 terminate a game without being assessed a forfeit when the team considers the goal
42 differential excessive. The later is commonly referred to as the mercy rule.
43

1 **Proposed Change** – It is recommend that this proposal not be adopted since it (1) does not
2 encourage good sportsmanship and (2) penalizes teams that do exercise good sportsmanship.
3 For example, coaches that hold down scores when clearly they are the superior team would
4 not rank as high as those that do not.
5

6 **Section IX.**

7
8 Section IX of the rules has a number of penalties prescribed for disciplinary issues. Questions
9 have been raised on whether these penalties treat players fairly and whether the issue that results
10 in a two or more game penalty has been properly defined. Furthermore, some comments have
11 been received that the SFL does little to (1) monitor problem players and teams and (2) take
12 disciplinary action against the clubs that have these problem players and teams. In order to
13 address the comments received, this section was undergone significant changes. The following
14 comments and proposals were received relating to section IX.
15

16 **Section IX.A.**

17
18 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL does little to (1) monitor problem players and teams and (2) take
19 disciplinary action against the clubs that have these problem players and teams.
20

21 **Comments** – When providing this issue, no proposal was included to describe what is
22 considered a problem player, team, or club. In the past, the SFL has used the penalties
23 prescribed in section IX. as the means to (1) identify problem players and teams and (2)
24 eliminate them from participating in the SFL. This approach was taken since the penalties
25 are based on the actions of the team and players as seen through the eyes of the game officials
26 and the ability of the club and team to comply with the SFL’s rules. Players that commit
27 offenses that result in the player being suspended for three (3) games are suspended for the
28 remainder of the season and tournament. The actions of the players and a team’s inability to
29 comply with the SFL rules also result in Team Demerits and any team that accumulates eight
30 (8) team demerits is (1) eliminated from additional SFL games and (2) automatically put on
31 probation for the following season assuming that the SFL Commissioner allows the team to
32 return. Finally, teams that have two (2) or more forfeits for any reason when the tournament
33 schedules are prepared are eliminated from the tournament. Teams are assessed forfeits for
34 many reasons including (1) failing to comply with SFL discipline penalties, (2) using illegal
35 players, (3) failing to properly reschedule games, (4) failing to show up for games or having
36 an adequate number of players to play a game, (5) failing to have a SFL Team Roster for a
37 game. The proposed changes to Section IX. hopefully has increased the visibility over
38 problem players and teams.
39

40 It should also be noted that section IX.E.1. of the existing rules allows the club to request a
41 review of a problem team or club.
42

1 “A SFL Club Representative may also petition the SFL through the appropriate SFL Age
2 Group Commissioner to place a team on probation by documenting the reason(s). If the
3 request to place a team on probation for conduct detrimental to the league comes from a
4 SFL Club Representative, the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner should opine on
5 the request when distributing it to the other SFL Commissioners.”
6

7 The SFL has never received a request to perform this review.
8

9 **Issue/Proposal** – Referees have made errors during the tournament. Some of these errors
10 have potentially adversely affected a team advancing in the tournament. Proposals have been
11 received to (1) hold the referee assignors accountable for making sure that the referees know
12 the SFL rules, (2) withhold reimbursement to the clubs where referees make errors that may
13 adversely impact teams, and (3) compensate teams that may have been adversely impacted by
14 improper referee decisions.
15

16 **Comments** – The adoption of this proposal has many implementation issues including (1)
17 what actions can the SFL take to hold referee assignors accountable, (2) how to define referee
18 errors that would result in the SFL withholding reimbursement for tournament officials, and
19 (3) how to define the situations when a team should be compensated for errors made by the
20 game officials. Historically, the SFL has taken the position that referee errors are part of the
21 game and that such errors do not warrant (1) withholding payment to the clubs for
22 tournament officials and (2) awarding compensation to the team adversely affected. In the
23 later case, the compensation is normally requested is to award the team trophies as if they had
24 won their game or replay a portion of the game, e.g., redo the penalty kicks. For example, in
25 the Fall 2015 season, teams were tied in their first round game and went into penalty kicks.
26 The officials stopped the penalty kicks after the third round rather than going to the FIFA
27 required five round minimum. At that point, one team had three goals and the other team had
28 two goals. That night, the team that was declared the loser of penalty kicks protested that an
29 insufficient number of penalty kicks were used and their team was harmed. An exception to
30 the normal policy of considering referee mistakes part of the game was made. Rather, a
31 decision was made that the team losing the penalty kicks should be awarded the same
32 trophies as the team that won the penalty kicks in that team’s subsequent game. This team
33 won its division and the team losing the penalty kicks because of the referee error was
34 awarded first place trophies.
35

36 **Proposed Change** – It is recommended that the SFL maintain its historical position that
37 referee errors are part of the game and that (1) reimbursement to the clubs for tournament
38 officials be processed in such cases and (2) teams not receive compensation in such cases.
39 This appears to be consistent with FIFA’s Laws of the Game. Changes have been made in
40 the proposed rules to formalize this position.
41

1 **Section IX.B.**
2

3 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL has two type of penalties – game suspensions and Team Demerits.
4 Questions have been raised on the relationship between these two penalties since differences
5 may exist in how they are applied.
6

7 **Comments** – The proposed changes include a new category called Individual Demerits which
8 is designed to help eliminate this confusion. Essentially, each violation of the Laws of the
9 Game and SFL rules are assigned Team Demerits and, if applicable, Individual Demerits.
10 The proposed rules maintain the existing definition of a problem player as one that has
11 committed offenses that would result in a total of three (3) game suspensions. These
12 suspensions are translated into Individual Demerits and when a player is assessed three (3)
13 Individual Demerits, that player is suspended for the remainder of the season including the
14 tournament. The rules have also been clarified to state that a coach that accumulates three (3)
15 Individual Demerits is also suspended for the remainder of the season. Problem teams are
16 still defined as teams that have received and average of one (1) Team Demerit per game
17 scheduled. Once a team reaches this level, the team is suspended from further play in the
18 SFL and automatically placed on probation.
19

20 **Issue/Proposal** – Questions have been raised on the number of Team Demerits that a team
21 can have when the tournament schedules are prepared. For example, a team may have six
22 Team Demerits when the tournament schedules are prepared which means that they are not
23 automatically eliminated from the tournament. It would be useful to clarify the rules to state
24 that at the time the tournament is scheduled, teams with an average of one (1) Team Demerit
25 per game played is considered ineligible for the tournament although it is allowed to
26 complete its regular season games until it meets the one (1) Team Demerit per regular season
27 game scheduled limit.
28

29 **Comments** – The proposed rules adds an additional penalty for teams having a significant
30 number of Team Demerits when the tournament is being scheduled to help identify problem
31 teams and eliminate them from the tournament. Specifically, any team having an average of
32 one (1) Team Demerit per game played when the tournament schedules are prepared
33 (normally after week 5 in a 7 game season and week 6 in an 8 week season) is automatically
34 eliminated from the tournament scheduling process.
35

36 **Proposed Change** – Some of the material in Section IX.B. appears better suited to Section
37 IX.C.
38

39 **Comments** – Reworked the material contained in Section IX.B. and moved applicable parts
40 to Section IX.C. These changes were designed to clarify (1) when a player is suspended
41 because of an accumulation of Individual Demerits and (2) whether a team should be
42 scheduled for the tournament when it has averaged one (1) Team Demerit per game played
43 when the tournament schedules are prepared.

1 **Section IX.C.**
2

3 **Issue/Proposal** – As noted above, this section and the current section IX.B. have some
4 overlap and may cause some confusion. It is recommended that this section be better
5 structured to clearly state the game suspensions and Team Demerits that apply to a given type
6 of misconduct.
7

8 **Comments** – Section reworked to clearly show the game suspensions, Individual Demerits,
9 and Team Demerits applicable to given offenses.
10

11 **Issue/Proposal** – The current rules have a discussion in the combined teams section that
12 discusses what happens when a player receives a red card on a combined team. This material
13 should be moved to Section IX. since it involves suspensions. In addition, the material
14 should be expanded to include individuals who coach one of more teams and players who
15 coach teams.
16

17 **Comments** – Material is now included in this section to address this issue/proposal.
18

19 **Issue/Proposal** – The current rules define fighting in a manner that does not allow a player to
20 defend himself/herself especially if the referee assigns both players a red card, i.e., the referee
21 makes a mistake and does not issue a yellow card to the player that is defending
22 himself/herself. Accordingly, a process is needed to allow players to defend themselves
23 without being suspended from play or at least only assign the player a one game suspension
24 rather than the two game suspension required by the current rules when a red card is issued
25 that can be defined as fighting under the SFL rules.
26

27 **Comments** – The current rules defining fighting were adopted shortly after the Under 16 and
28 Under 19 Boys joined the SFL. The basic premise was that the rule should be structured
29 under a “no fault” concept. This approach was taken since, based on prior experience,
30 depending on referee and coach reports to identify the individual “who started” an event was
31 difficult to understand in many cases. This season has also had examples of where both
32 coaches stated that their player was only defending himself while the referee gave each player
33 a red card and did not assign “blame”. History has shown in a variety of sports that
34 depending on an official to reliability identify the “perpetrator” is problematic at best.
35 Furthermore, the definition was designed to be able to suspend players even if a red card is
36 not shown. For example, we have seen cases where one player stuck another player post
37 game. While the referee did not see the contact, we were able to validate that the action did
38 occur and identify the individual. In addition, we have seen cases where a referee did not
39 award a red card to a player since, in the referee’s opinion, the player hitting the other player
40 was only “defending himself/herself” when other information was available that at least
41 questioned whether this was the actual case or whether the game officials simply missed the
42 “first punch”. Furthermore, a review of the 2015–2016 Laws of the Game does not appear to

1 have an example where a player is cautioned when a player is considered by the official as
2 “defending himself/herself”.

3
4 The proposed rules maintain the “no fault” concept associated with the definition of fighting.
5 This decision was made since adopting the proposal would require changes to the rules and a
6 process on how to define “fault”. While in theory this is a desirable change, in reality it may
7 be very difficult to effectively implement. For example, we have had several cases this
8 season where both coaches said that their player was only defending himself and the referee
9 report made no distinction on which player was really defending himself/herself. In another
10 case, both coaches reported that the home team’s player was the one who received the red
11 card, yet the home team’s referee report said that the red card was issued to the visiting team
12 and no card was issued to the home team since the home team’s player was only defending
13 himself/herself.

14
15 **Issue/Proposal** – A question has been raised on what happens when a referee issues a red
16 card to the coach for the actions of someone other than the coach. For example, assume
17 Person A takes actions either before, during, or after the game that results in the referee
18 telling the person to leave the field or where the referee feels threatened. The referee then
19 shows the coach a red card to make it “official” although the referee states that the coach’s
20 actions were not the reason for the red card.

21
22 **Comments** – It is recognized in the rules that “the coach assumes an increased level of
23 responsibility regarding team leadership and maintenance of order and discipline of the team
24 members and team spectators. The SFL expects each of its coaches to set a positive example
25 for their players and spectators in promoting good sportsmanship and self-control.”
26 Attempting to define a process that could reliability be used to penalize coaches for the
27 actions taken by others, was considered to be problematic at best. Accordingly, it was
28 decided to not suspend a coach when individuals other than the coach were asked to leave the
29 field or shown a red card since (1) experience has shown that if the game official considered
30 the Head Coach responsible or unsupportive in “controlling the sidelines”, the game official
31 would normally ask the coach to also leave the field which results in the coach receiving a
32 two game suspension and (2) the team is assessed Team Demerits when any individual is
33 asked to leave the field regardless of the actions taken by the coach.

34 35 **Sections IX.D., E., and F.**

36
37 **Comments/Proposed Changes** – No comments or proposed changes.

38 39 **Section IX.G. (New section)**

40
41 **Issue/Proposal** – A request has been received to formalize the process on (1) whether the
42 SFL will allow video evidence to be submitted when the SFL Commissioners are reviewing
43 disciplinary actions and (2) if allowed, under what conditions will it be accepted.

1 **Comments** – The concerns with allowing video evidence include (1) it may not necessarily
2 show the full story, (2) it may be viewed as undermining the referees’ authority on the field,
3 and (3) it is not consistent with NCSL/WAGS. In the past, the SFL has allowed video
4 evidence to be submitted when reviewing disciplinary issues. For example, teams using
5 illegal players that are not detected through the normal roster challenge process and physical
6 altercations that may occur on or off the field of play that were not detected by the officiating
7 crew. In no case has video evidence been used to overturn a referee decision, e.g., whether a
8 player was offsidess, whether a goal was scored, whether a red card was not warranted,
9 whether a yellow card should have been issued instead of a red card, etc. A section has been
10 added to clarify the process used by the SFL Commissioners when deciding whether video
11 evidence will be used.
12
13
14
15

1 **SFL MAILINGS**

2
3 The following items were received related to the season mailings.

- 4
- 5 • Including the SFL Tournament Referee Guide in the season mailing.
 - 6
 - 7 • Eliminate the hard copy mailing of the registration, standard season, and tournament
 - 8 packages.
 - 9
 - 10 • Eliminating the customized mailing in the season mailing.
 - 11

12 Each issue/proposal received, comments, and proposed change, if applicable, are discussed
13 below.

14
15 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL Tournament Referee Guide should be sent to all the coaches in their
16 season package.

17
18 **Comments** – This can be done although the tournament package is probably a better vehicle for
19 this distribution.

20
21 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL needs to look at how SFL communicates with coaches. Mailing fifty
22 page documents is so last century. Everyone has an Email address. The SFL can save a ton of
23 money by sending coaches a PDF of the preseason packet. The SFL should also Email the SFL
24 Tournament packet. I received mine on the Friday before the tournament as did probably almost
25 everyone else. I highly doubt many coaches even opened the packet so the effort was mostly
26 wasted. One of the reasons the season packet is so big, is it is the ONLY way coaches can get
27 contact info for their opponents. In my opinion, this is unnecessary. NCSL publishes coach
28 contact info on each team's page. WAGS does not.

29
30 **Comments** – Electronically distributing the season and tournament packages is an option that
31 should be considered. In addition, the registration package should also be considered added to
32 his list since it goes to far fewer individuals and those users are much more familiar with the SFL
33 operations. As noted in the proposal, these three mailings are a costly process. The SFL spends
34 between \$8 and \$9 per team mailing out the three standard packages although they go to more
35 than just coaches. The statement that the Fall 2015 tournament package was received on Friday
36 appears to be a special situation. The packages were mailed from the printer on Monday and
37 several people received it on Wednesday. Regardless, the packages are mailed close to last
38 minute to finalize the information, such as team contact information, and in the case of the
39 tournament package, waiting for the clubs to confirm (1) the tournament game schedule on their
40 field and (2) the contact information for the tournament division commissioners.

41

1 The following are some of the items that should be considered when a decision is made on
2 whether to accept this proposal and, should the proposal be accepted, how it should be
3 implemented.
4

- 5 • We are unsure whether distributing the package electronically will increase its readership
6 since attempting to read a large PDF file on mobile devices such as smart phones can be
7 challenging.
8
- 9 • While “everyone has an Email address”, the SFL does not have Email addresses for
10 everyone. Furthermore, experience has shown that some of the Email addresses are not
11 valid. Moreover, we have found that some people have mailbox limits that would
12 prevent the package from ever arriving at the individual’s Email account. Another
13 alternative is to simply send an Email with links to the documents on the SFL web site
14 although this approach has its own set of challenges. At this time the SFL believes that it
15 is unrealistic to expect the SFL to Email packages to well over 550 people. If the
16 proposal is adopted, then the distribution process should be that the SFL will distribute
17 the packages to the SFL Club Representatives who will be responsible for distributing
18 them to the coaches and other club officials that should get the information. This is
19 consistent with how SFL Team Rosters are distributed.
20
- 21 • The reason for the packages size has little to do with contact information. For example,
22 the Fall 2015 season package was about 80 pages with 14 pages dedicated to the contact
23 information. The remaining pages included a one page summary of the key rules for
24 coaches and SFL Club Representatives, a season letter discussing the points of emphasis
25 for the season, and rules and other information such as the process used for SFL Team
26 Rosters to help the coaches discharge their responsibilities.
27
- 28 • The SFL currently provides electronic copies of the package to anyone who asks. The
29 SFL also provides the contact information electronically to the SFL Club Representatives
30 for distribution to their coaches and directly anyone else who requests a copy.
31
- 32 • Publishing the contact information on a team’s page has two issues associated with it.
33 First, our privacy policy would need to be revised. Next, the page would have to go
34 under redesign efforts and we do not know how much that would cost. If this proposal is
35 adopted, the SFL would need to guidance on how much should be spent on making this
36 change.
37

38 **Proposed Change** – The SFL Commissioners decided that maintaining the current mailing
39 process for the standard packages was worthwhile although several changes were made. These
40 include (1) Emailing the standard packages sent to the printer for the season and tournament
41 packages to the SFL Club Representatives (the contact information is already Emailed to the SFL
42 Club Representatives) and (2) eliminating the tournament schedules from the tournament
43 package so that it can be mailed earlier. In order to replace the site coordinator and division

1 commissioner contact information that is contained on those schedules, the tournament package
2 will include a listing of this information. This is expected to help ensure that the packages arrive
3 at the beginning of the week before the tournament begins.
4

5 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL should publish coach contact information for several reasons. More
6 than once the provided information was incorrect and there is zero way to fix it once it has been
7 printed. In two cases this season, contact information for my opponent was wrong. In one
8 situation, the SFL Club Representative helped me out. In the other, we simply showed up
9 wearing blue and bringing grey. Coaches do not always lug around the contact information so
10 during the day, they cannot look online and find their opponent. It then becomes very easy to
11 forget to make the call or send an Email after arriving home.
12

13 **Comment** – It appears that the intent of this proposal is for the SFL to publish the team contact
14 periodically throughout the season. This can be done, however, its utility may be less than
15 expected. The SFL receives very few changes to the team contact information after the
16 registration process has been finalized although the SFL has a process to do this. This process is
17 by several clubs especially when the coaches assigned to a team change. In addition, as noted
18 elsewhere, individuals who need the contact information should already have received it from
19 their SFL Club Representatives and, if not, the SFL will Email it to them.
20

21 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL also has a problem with coaches and officials not knowing the rules.
22 Giving coaches a one page summary – bullet list – of the important rules would help immensely.
23 Almost no one reads fifty pages especially when they think they know it already.
24

25 **Comment** – This is an easy change to implement. Currently the first page of the season package
26 is a one page document entitled Summary – Responsibilities of Coach and Club Representatives.
27 It will be very easy to change the numbers to bullets. If this document does not provide the
28 important rules that are desired, then those rules need to be articulated to the SFL so that it can
29 make the necessary changes.
30

31 **Issue/Proposal** – The season package currently consists of two mailings – the standard package
32 and a customized mailing. The standard package contains the following items.
33

- 34 • Summary – Responsibilities for Coaches and Club Representatives
- 35 • Season letter
- 36 • Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on concussions
- 37 • Listing of SFL Club Representatives.
- 38 • Listing of team contacts, Email addresses, and phone numbers. This listing also provides
- 39 the contact information for the SFL Commissioner and SFL Age Group Commissioners.
- 40 • Rules for the current season.
- 41 • Procedures and Processes – SFL Team Rosters.
- 42

1 The customized mailing contains the following items.

- 2
- 3 • Summary – Responsibilities for Coaches and Club Representatives
- 4 • Data confirmation card.
- 5 • Team Schedules (Coaches Only).
- 6

7 It is recommended that the customized mailing be discontinued since this no longer provides
8 much added value and is not cost effective.

9

10 **Comments** – The customized mailing was established when the SFL was first created and
11 designed to accomplish two primary purposes – provide a means for the coaches to obtain a hard
12 copy of their game schedule and field directions that could be given to their parents and update
13 the team contact information so that errors made by the club in the team registration process
14 could be corrected. The implementation of new web site has addressed the first objective.
15 Anyone can obtain a printed copy of a team’s schedule and the field directions from the web site
16 as a PDF file at any time. While the SFL makes changes to the data base to reflect any changes
17 received on the confirmation cards, experience has shown that the at least some clubs do not use
18 that data when registering teams for the next season. Accordingly, the same errors are present in
19 the next season’s submission and the individuals simply make the change again. This mailing
20 also costs both time and money. The costs of printing the items, postage, and envelopes are over
21 \$1 per letter or between \$550 and \$650 depending on the number of individuals that receive the
22 mailing. It also takes about 2 days to generate the items for these mailings, print them out, affix
23 the necessary postage on the data confirmation cards and envelopes, “stuff” the envelopes, and
24 then mail them.

1 **WEB SITE**

2
3 The following items were received related to the web site.

- 4
- 5 • Adoption of the United States Youth Soccer Association age group guidelines for the Fall
 - 6 2016 season.
 - 7
 - 8 • Change the web site to also reflect a team’s win, loss, and tie records.
 - 9

10 Each issue/proposal received, comments, and proposed change, if applicable, are discussed

11 below.

12

13 **Issue/Proposal** – The United States Youth Soccer Association has adopted new age group

14 guidelines for the seasons starting with the Fall 2016 season. Currently the web site does not

15 support these guidelines. It is proposed that the SFL adopt these guidelines and the web site be

16 updated to reflect these changes.

17

18 **Comments** – The United States Youth Soccer Association’s guidelines are mandatory starting

19 with the Fall 2017 season with implementation recommended to start with the Fall 2016 season.

20 The change is going from a school year age based system to a calendar year based system. For

21 example, players born in calendar year 2005 are considered Under 12 age players for the Fall

22 2016 and Spring 2017 seasons. Under current guidelines, players between August 1, 2004, and

23 July 31, 2005, would have been eligible for that age group. Accordingly, players born between

24 August 1, 2004, and December 31, 2004, would be assigned to the Under 13 age group.

25

26 **Proposed Change** –Adopting the United States Youth Soccer Association’s guidelines starting

27 with the Fall 2016 season. Once the Spring 2016 season is completed, the web site will be

28 changed to reflect this change.

29

30 **Issue/Proposal** – As a coach, I would like an easy way to figure out the win, loss, and tie records

31 for the teams. The game point percentage is great for ranking purposes but that is all. The SFL

32 should display the win, loss, and tie records and “hide” the game point percentage although the

33 standings should still be sorted that way since the game point percentage addresses the problem

34 of teams that have played an unequal number of games and forfeits.

35

36 **Comments** – It appears that this proposal is to maintain the current information on the standings

37 page since that information is desired by teams based on comments that have been received.

38 Accordingly, it appears that the proposal would (1) add wins, losses, and ties and (2) eliminate

39 the game point percentage column. This change would affect the current page and require our

40 contractor to change the page design and the data that is displayed. The following are the issues

41 with adopting this change.

42

- 1 • **Cost** – This effort would require the team standings pages to be redone by our contractor.
2 We are unsure of the expected cost and would get an estimate before committing to the
3 work. Based on past experience, we would expect that the cost would be at least \$5,000
4 and may be significantly more. Accordingly, we would like the clubs to provide us with a
5 “ceiling” on what this change is worth so that the SFL Commissioners can make a
6 decision based on cost proposal received from the contractor.
7
- 8 • **Ranking** – The proposal uses the current game point percentage to rank teams but hides
9 that computation. The impact of forfeits would not affect standings under the proposed
10 or current concept since both are considered losses although forfeits do impact a team’s
11 game point percentage. One issue is whether it would increase or decrease confusion
12 over how teams are ranked. For example, assume the following.
13
- 14 ▶ Team A has one win and 2 losses. It has 2 bonus points and 4 goals allowed (1 – 0 -
15 2).
 - 16
 - 17 ▶ Team B has four ties with 0 bonus points and 4 goals allowed (0 – 0 – 4).
18
 - 19 ▶ Team C has three ties with 0 bonus points and 2 goals allowed (0 – 0 – 3)
20
 - 21 ▶ Team D has one win and three losses with one of the losses being a forfeit. It has 3
22 bonus points and 2 goals allowed (1 – 3 – 0).
23

24 The web site would currently rank these teams in the order shown above based on game
25 point percentage, game points, bonus points, goals allowed. However, some may
26 question why Team D is not placed ahead of Teams B and C since it has more wins than
27 them. Others may question why Team B was not placed ahead of Team A since (1) it had
28 played more games, (2) had more game points, and (3) gave up fewer goals. If this
29 change is made, it may be useful to retain the game point percentage.
30

31 One other potential concern is the “size of the page”. This proposal would be adding 3
32 additional columns to current page. It is unclear at this point what that would do to the
33 display of the page on various devices.
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