

1 Suburban Friendship League

2
3 **Procedures and Processes – Tournament Scheduling**
4 (Effective July 12, 2014)

5
6
7 **OVERVIEW**
8

9 One significant benefit of the SFL’s approach to scheduling games is the Wayne Gilbert Memorial
10 Tournament since it gives an opportunity for teams with comparable abilities to play games against each
11 other. The tournament has been part of the SFL since it was founded in the 1990s. While some may
12 view the top divisions as the ones that really benefit from the tournament, a number of compliments are
13 received from the divisions composed of teams that have less than a stellar season. While the benefits of
14 the tournament are well recognized, the ability to obtain sufficient fields and officials for the tournament
15 has grown increasingly more difficult. In 2007 and 2011 the SFL developed processes to help address
16 the problems experienced so that the tournament could continue. However, since that time the
17 difficulties have only increased and the processes were reviewed again in June 2014 to determine what
18 changes were needed so the tournament can continue.
19

20 In June 2014 the SFL Commissioners met to discuss the future of the tournament and what changes were
21 needed so that it could continue. The ability to conduct the tournament is basically a “numbers game”
22 involving teams, fields, and officials. The decisions made and incorporated in this document were
23 difficult ones and made only after a great deal of discussion. In developing these procedures and
24 processes the SFL Commissioners realize that the changes adopted reduce the flexibility offered to the
25 clubs in the past and some of the changes may be viewed as draconian. However, the SFL has little
26 choice but to change so that the tournament can continue. These changes include (1) all tournament
27 divisions, except 3 team divisions, are now only required to be scheduled using the single elimination
28 tournament format unless sufficient fields exist to support round robin divisions, (2) clubs are now
29 required to provide final tournament field and referee information earlier than in past, (3) clubs are no
30 longer allowed to wait and see if teams will be eliminated before providing their final field slots, and (4)
31 when teams are eliminated, all the teams in a given age group are eliminated regardless of standing.
32

33 This document discusses the following topics:

- 34
- 35 • General tournament requirements
- 36
- 37 • Teams eligible to participate in the tournament
- 38
- 39 • Placement of teams in tournament divisions
- 40
- 41 • Tournament format
- 42
- 43 • Actions taken when tournament games cannot be played as scheduled
- 44
- 45 • Coaches with two teams
- 46

- Tournament game times
- Financial penalties

BACKGROUND

The goal of the SFL is to have each team play 8 to 9 games and to play competitive matches. However, only 8 or 9 weekends are available during a season to schedule the games. Another problem is that the SFL does not know the strength of a given team which makes ensuring competitive games difficult. Because of these two problems, the SFL adopted an end of season tournament when it was founded. While the tournament benefits are well known and recognized, the difficulties in making it a reality have only continued to grow. Based on these difficulties, the SFL Commissioners met in June 2014 to discuss the changes needed to maintain the tournament as a viable SFL activity.

Tournament Philosophy

The end of season tournament is not a traditional tournament at all. Rather, it is an opportunity to play at least 1 to 3 games against teams with similar records. (Over 40 percent of the teams play at least 2 games.) It also accomplishes the SFL's goal of each team scheduled to play at least 8 or 9 games during a season. In order to schedule the desired games, the SFL schedules 7 or 8 regular season games depending on the length of the season and then uses the results of the first 5 or 6 games to determine how the tournament games are scheduled. In other words, if a team loses its first 5 games, it will play in the tournament against other teams that have either lost all of their games or at most won 1 game during the same time period. History has shown that the division groupings are usually very competitive.

In order to ensure that a given club does not incur an unreasonable expense in hosting a tournament site for officials, the SFL reimburses the clubs for the officials provided based on the number of games covered and the age group. These rates are set at the preseason meeting and come from the registration fees. A club that hosts about one tournament game for each team registered will receive a reimbursement for officials that is about equal to the amount of the registration fee that will be used to pay tournament officials. In effect, it is a wash and, based on the Spring 2010 fees, the club would receive all but \$85 to \$90 for each team back from the amount of the payment it made to the SFL.

Problems with Scheduling the Tournament

The logistics associated with the tournament have become much greater and more taxing on everyone involved. Each season the SFL finds that essentially all of the available field slots and then some are used to schedule the tournament. Specifically, a few clubs end up providing more fields that required to support their teams and this is the only reason why all the teams that want to play can play in the tournament. Otherwise, the SFL would have dropped teams. Even with these additional fields and officials, several clubs each season have to be threatened with the penalty of dropping teams prior to providing the necessary fields and officials. The club names do not matter since this is a constant problem, i.e., the problem remains the same, only the names change. At least 3 issues cause the primary problems experienced with the tournament scheduling efforts – field availability, referee availability, and competing club demands. The following is a brief overview of each problem area.

- 1 • **Field Availability** – A club initially commits a field for the tournament. Some event happens
2 outside of their control and another program claims priority for the field and refuses to (1) move
3 the game to another field and/or (2) move the time of the game to support a dual use.
4 Accordingly, the field is not available or the club is only willing to commit to Saturday games
5 since they cannot provide assurance that Sunday slots will be available. One example of this
6 problem is blanket program commitments to travel soccer or other sports, that have access to the
7 field.

8
9 **Note:** Some clubs have addressed this problem by planning for the SFL tournament in advance.
10 For example, a club uses Field A on Saturday for the SFL games and on Sunday for travel
11 games. Since the club knows that it will need 2 Sunday time slots for the tournament, it
12 tells the travel program when providing the field to support its travel teams that Field A is
13 available all day on Sundays except for the tournament weekend when it is available all
14 day except from 2:30 PM to 6 PM. Accordingly, the club has no problem providing the
15 necessary field slots to support its teams.

- 16
17 • **Referee availability** – It is no great surprise that many of the referees for the younger age groups
18 come from the players in the older age groups. This works well during the regular season.
19 However, the tournament makes some of these resources unavailable since they are not playing
20 even close to their home field and their game schedules are not known until the last minute since
21 the SFL does not release the tournament schedules until about a week before the tournament
22 starts.

- 23
24 • **Competing club demands** – Many of the clubs have internal tournaments for their house teams
25 that are not part of the SFL. Accordingly, while these may not affect the fields the SFL needs,
26 they do place increased demands for referees.

27
28 The fall seasons are especially challenging. Because of daylight concerns, most fields can realistically
29 only support 5 Saturday game slots rather than the 6 slots used in the spring. This translates into a
30 significant loss of fields. For example, assume that 50 fields are used support the tournament in the
31 spring. This translates into about 425 to 450 useable game slots. Supporting the same number of slots
32 in the fall requires about 60 fields – a 20 percent increase.

33
34 Because of the inability to assure field availability the SFL also experiences changes to the tournament
35 schedule after it is developed. The tournament scheduling process takes a great deal of time and the time
36 frames are tight – the initial draft field schedules are done about 1 week after the games used to
37 determine the tournament divisions are completed with the schedules posted to the web site about 3 to 5
38 days later. This does not allow for much manual rework. However, each season significant changes are
39 made. These are caused by several reasons – teams dropping out after the schedule has been developed
40 or clubs wanting to change fields. The manual rework is error prone and time consuming. When this
41 happens before the schedules are posted, the effort is less, however, each season always has several cases
42 where this happens after the schedules were posted.

43
44 Another factor adversely impacting the ability to schedule the tournament is the decision to increase the
45 number of age groups supported by the SFL. Specifically, in the Fall 2013 season, the clubs requested
46 that the SFL break the Under 12 and Under 14 age groups into the Under 11, Under 12, Under 13, and

1 Under 14 age groups. Because the SFL had a scheduling policy of scheduling the top teams in each
2 regular season division of an age group using a round robin tournament format, the number of
3 tournament games required exploded. For simplicity, assume each tournament division consists of 4
4 teams. A four team division requires 4 Saturday and 2 Sunday time slots. Under the old age group
5 format, 96 field slots were required to support round robin tournament divisions. Under the new age
6 group format 24 additional field slots are required.¹ These 24 slots translate into 4 additional fields
7 because, in effect, a round robin division requires a dedicated field. The only reason that the Spring
8 2014 tournament could be supported using the round robin format was that at least 8 of the round robin
9 tournament divisions consisted of 3 teams. Accordingly, (1) only 3 field slots were needed for each of
10 these divisions and (2) only 6 additional field slots were needed for the “missing” fourth team in each
11 division. In other words, instead of the 30 field slots required to support the actual 48 top teams in these
12 8 divisions, 48 field slots would have been required if each of these divisions had consisted of 4 teams.
13 This translates into about 3 additional fields that would have been required but were not available.
14

15 **GENERAL TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS**

16

17 The tournament is normally held on the last weekend of the season. However, the tournament will only
18 be scheduled if a majority of the regular season games can be played before the tournament scheduling
19 process is expected to begin. If weather or other circumstances do not allow a majority of games to be
20 played by the time that the tournament scheduling process normally begins, the tournament will not be
21 scheduled and the tournament weekend will be used to make up games. If the tournament is cancelled
22 under these circumstances, then no trophies or other awards will be provided to the teams. A majority of
23 regular season games will be considered played if scores have been received for 80 percent of the games
24 that were originally expected to be played at the start of the season by the tournament scheduling date.
25 For example, assume the SFL has 500 registered teams. Accordingly, about 250 games can be expected
26 to be played each game week. If, on average, less than 200 games are played each week, then the
27 tournament will not be scheduled and the weekend reserved for the tournament will be used to make up
28 games.
29

30 In determining whether the majority of games have been played, the SFL reviews the forfeits that have
31 been assigned to determine whether those games should be counted as games played. Two types of
32 forfeits are assessed by the SFL – forfeits assessed for scheduling or roster problems (commonly referred
33 to as scheduling forfeits) and forfeits assessed for game related reasons, e.g., using an illegal player.
34 Scheduling forfeits are not considered games played for the purpose of determining whether the
35 tournament will be scheduled. For example, if Team A was awarded a forfeit because a game was
36 cancelled due to weather and an adequate slot was not available to make up the game (see **Procedures
37 and Processes – Rescheduling Regular Season Games**), then the game will not be considered played
38 for purposes of determining the number of games that have been played. On the other hand, if Team B

¹ The field slot computation under the old age group format assuming 4 team divisions is – 8 age groups times 2 divisions per age group times 6 slots per division. The field slot computation for the current age group format assuming 4 team divisions is – 12 age groups times 2 divisions per age group times 6 slots per division less the field slots (24) required to support single elimination divisions that would have been required to support the 8 extra round robin tournament divisions under the old format.

1 was assessed a forfeit because the team used a red carded player not eligible to play, then Team A and
2 Team B would be given credit for a game played.

3

4 **TEAMS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE** 5 **IN THE TOURNAMENT**

6

7 Two factors determine whether teams in good standing are allowed to participate in the tournament –
8 regular season games played and available fields and officials provided by a club to support its teams.

9

10 **Teams Must Play A Sufficient Number of Games**

11

12 Teams must be in good standing and play an adequate number of games in order to be scheduled for the
13 tournament. In other words, teams that are in good standing and play an adequate number of games do
14 not have to register to play in the tournament and can be expected to be scheduled for the tournament if
15 their club has provided adequate fields and referees to support the teams associated with their club.

16

17 A team is considered in good standing if (1) it has properly reported its red cards and (2) has not been
18 assessed more than one forfeit for any reason. A team will be considered to have played an adequate
19 number of games, if that team has played 3 games in a 7 game regular season and 4 games in an 8 game
20 regular season when the tournament scheduling process begins. This is normally after week 5 in a
21 season with 7 regular season games and after week 6 in a season with 8 regular season games. Teams
22 that (1) have received 2 or more forfeits for any reason, (2) have not played the required number of
23 games, or (3) have not properly reported their red cards by the time the tournament process begins are
24 automatically eliminated from the tournament without appeal.

25

26 Games where a team is assessed a scheduling forfeit are not considered games played for the purposes of
27 this computation. For example, assume that Team A is assessed a scheduling forfeit in a game against
28 Team B because it did not have a roster. This game does not count as a game played by Team A and as
29 a game played by Team B since Team B was not assessed a scheduling forfeit. On the other hand, if
30 Team A and Team B were both assessed a scheduling forfeit because neither team reported a game
31 score, then the game would not be considered as a game played by either team.

32

33 **Clubs Are Required to Provide Adequate** 34 **Fields and Officials to Support Their Teams**

35

36 Clubs are required to provide an adequate number of field slots and referees to support their teams. If a
37 club has more teams than it can support in a given age group and adequate field slots are not available
38 elsewhere, then the SFL will drop all teams from that age group from the tournament. The SFL uses the
39 following three age groups for this determination – Under 11/12, Under 13/14, and Under 16/19. The
40 club may not (1) appeal a decision by the SFL to drop teams because it did not provide sufficient field
41 slots or (2) provide additional slots after the SFL dead line for the final field slot submission, i.e., it may
42 not submit additional field slots after it finds out that teams have been dropped to prevent those teams
43 from being dropped.

44

45 The determination of tournament fields is done in two stages. The first stage is a requirement that clubs
46 provide the tournament fields they expect to be available by April 1 for the spring season and September

1 1 for the fall season. No later than five weeks after the season starts, the SFL Club Representatives will
2 be requested to confirm the field and referee availability information for the tournament weekend. This
3 notification will include the number of fields by age group that are required to adequately support a
4 club's teams. The information received by this dead line is the only information that the SFL will use in
5 determining the tournament size and teams that can be supported. Specifically, the SFL will use this
6 information to determine the maximum number of tournament time slots that are available for each club.
7 The number of time slots will then be translated into number of teams supported. For the purposes of
8 this computation, a field available all day on Saturday and Sunday afternoon translates into 9 time slots
9 in the spring (6 on Saturday and 3 on Sunday) and 7 time slots in the fall (5 on Saturday and 2 on
10 Sunday). These time slots can support about 9 or 10 teams.

11
12 **Note:** The final field submission must specifically name the field and provide the field slots.
13 Information such as "To Be Determined" is inadequate and will be considered as the club
14 not having an available field. Accordingly, this type of submission may result in teams
15 being dropped. For example, assume a club is required to provide one field suitable for
16 Under 13/14 games. The club states on its final field submission that it will provide one
17 field with the field name as "To Be Provided". The SFL will treat this submission as a
18 club that does not have a field available to support its teams. If field slots cannot be
19 found elsewhere, then that club's Under 13/14 teams will be dropped from the
20 tournament.

21
22 **Example**

23
24 The SFL sends an Email to the SFL Club Representatives and Club Field Coordinators on the
25 Thursday before the week 5 games are going to be played requesting/confirming final field
26 availability by 6 PM on the following Monday. The field information provided by the club by
27 the 6 PM Monday deadline is the final field information that will be used by the SFL to
28 determine whether a club has provided adequate fields to support its teams. If the club does not
29 provide the fields requested by 6 PM on Monday, then it may find out later that teams from that
30 club have been dropped and has no ability to provide additional slots so that those teams can be
31 scheduled.

32
33 Since the SFL identifies the number of fields required to adequately support its teams, a club has the
34 necessary information to understand whether it can provide the necessary fields. When a club realizes
35 that it does not have adequate fields to support its teams and may have teams dropped, then it may
36 request that the SFL dedicate the available slots to a specific age group, e.g., Under 19 Boys, as long as
37 that decision is conveyed to the SFL prior to the dead line for providing the tournament field
38 information. However, the SFL is not required to honor this request and may decide to drop these teams
39 anyway because they cannot be efficiently scheduled into the slots provided. For example, the club may
40 provide two Saturday and one Sunday time slot and want those slots used for its Under 19 Boys team.
41 However, that club's Under 19 Boys team may be assigned to a 5 team tournament division which needs
42 more field slots. Accordingly, the Under 19 Boys team may be dropped.

43
44 The following are examples of how this may work using the following assumptions for Club A.

45
46

1
2
3
4
5 **Assumptions**
6

Age Group	Teams	Age Group	Teams	Total
Under 11 Boys	2	Under 11 Girls	0	2
Under 12 Boys	3	Under 12 Girls	3	6
Under 13 Boys	2	Under 13 Girls	1	3
Under 14 Boys	1	Under 14 Girls	2	3
Under 16 Boys	1	Under 16 Girls	1	2
Under 19 Boys	1	Under 16 Girls	1	2

14
15 Based on this team distribution, the SFL would probably request the club to provide one field that would
16 support Under 11/12 games and one field that would support U13/19 games.

17
18 **Examples**
19

Fields Provided By Club	Teams the SFL Can Be Expected to Schedule/Drop
Club A only provides one field suitable for Under 11/12 games. Space on fields provided by other clubs is inadequate to meet the scheduling needs for the Under 13/19 teams.	The SFL would drop all teams for Club A in the Under 13/19 age groups from the tournament since no field was provided to support the teams in those age groups. The Under 11/12 teams would be scheduled.
Club A provides one field suitable for Under 11/12 games and 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday time slot on a field suitable for Under 13/14 games. Space on fields provided by other clubs is inadequate to meet the scheduling needs for the remaining Under 13/19 teams.	The SFL would drop the Under 16/19 teams for Club A. In addition, it may also drop the Under 13/14 teams because the field slots provided only support a 4 or 5 team scheduling group and the club has 6 teams in the U13/14 age group.
Club A provides one field suitable for Under 11/12 games that has 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday time slot and a field suitable for Under 13/19 games that has 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday time slot. Space on fields provided by other clubs is inadequate to meet the scheduling needs for the remaining Under 11/19 teams.	The SFL would probably drop all the teams from the club since adequate fields had not been provided to support Club A's teams.

	Teams the SFL Can Be Expected to Schedule/Drop
<p>1 Club A provides one field suitable for Under 2 11/12 games that has 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday 3 time slot and a field suitable for Under 13/19 4 games that has 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday time 5 slot. Space on fields provided by other clubs is 6 adequate to support the scheduling needs for the 7 remaining Under 11/12 teams. However, space 8 on other fields is inadequate to meet the 9 scheduling needs for the remaining Under 13/19 10 teams.</p>	<p>The SFL would probably schedule the Under 11/12 teams and drop all the teams from the Under 13/19 teams since the club did not provide adequate slots to support the teams in those age groups.</p>
<p>11 Club A provides one field suitable for Under 12 11/12 games and 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday time 13 slot on a field suitable for Under 13/19 games. 14 The club realizes that the slots are inadequate to 15 support all its U13/19 teams and requests that the 16 slots be used for the Under 19 teams prior to the 17 field submission deadline. Space on fields 18 provided by other clubs is inadequate to meet the 19 scheduling needs for the remaining Under 13/19 20 teams.</p>	<p>The SFL would schedule the Under 11/12 teams and drop the Under 13/16 teams. It may also drop the Under 19 teams if the Under 19 teams from that club cannot be efficiently scheduled on that field. For example, the tournament divisions assigned to those teams are 6 or 7 team divisions or the tournament divisions with the teams from that club should be placed at another site because that site has 2 or more teams from the same club.</p>
<p>21 Club A provides one field suitable for Under 22 11/12 games and 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday time 23 slot on a field suitable for Under 13/19 games. 24 The SFL notifies the club that its Under 13/19 25 teams are being dropped since space on fields 26 provided by other clubs is inadequate to meet the 27 scheduling needs for the remaining Under 13/19 28 teams. Club A then asks the SFL to schedule at 29 least some U13/19 teams using the slots 30 provided.</p>	<p>The SFL would not “add teams back” to the tournament since the special request was received after the final field submission dead line. While the field slots provided would support a 4 or 5 team tournament division, the SFL does not pick “winners and losers” when deciding on the teams that should be dropped. Specifically, the club (1) had sufficient information to understand that it was not providing enough field slots to support its teams and (2) did not make the special request to attempt to schedule a given age group to use those field slots prior to the deadline for providing final field slot information. In other words, while the club is allowed to pick “winners and losers” when dropping teams, this must be done prior the deadline for providing final field slot information.</p>

31
32 The following are the key points relating to providing fields and dropping teams.
33

- 1 • Clubs must provide specific field information in their final submission, i.e., specific field name
2 and actual time the field can be used.
3
- 4 • When a club is unable to provide the field slots requested by the deadline specified by the SFL,
5 then the club may have teams dropped from the tournament without the ability to appeal that
6 decision or attempt to come up with additional slots so that those teams can play.
7
- 8 • The SFL will not pick “winners and losers”. If a club does not provide the fields to support all
9 the teams in a given age group, then all teams in that age group may be eliminated. In other
10 words, the SFL will make no attempt to “find a place” where teams within an age group, e.g.,
11 Under 19 Boys, can play but the teams in the other age groups, e.g., Under 16 Boys and Girls and
12 Under 19 Girls are eliminated.
13
- 14 • A club may pick “winners and losers”, e.g., a club may request the SFL to use the available slots
15 to support the teams in a given age group, e.g., Under 19 Boys. However, this does not assure
16 that the SFL will honor that request and those teams may still be dropped.
17

18 It is important to remember that the examples provided are not all the possible examples and that other
19 situations may also result in teams being eliminated from the tournament. .
20

21 **PLACEMENT OF TEAMS IN TOURNAMENT DIVISIONS**

22

23 Eligible teams are broken down into two broad groups – teams that have played the majority of their
24 regular season games and teams that have not played the majority of their regular season games. Teams
25 that have played a majority of their games will be ranked for tournament play based on their game point
26 percentage (game points earned divided by total games played times maximum number of points that can
27 be earned for a game), game points, bonus points, and least goals allowed.² Games where a team is
28 assessed a scheduling forfeit and points lost due to reporting scores late do not count in this calculation
29 since the goal of the tournament is to place teams with comparable abilities against each other.
30 Therefore the actual game results associated with games played are used to determine the rankings that
31 are used for creating tournament divisions. As noted elsewhere, the tournament ranking will normally
32 be based on the results through the fifth or sixth game.
33

34 **Note:** Using the game point percentage for ranking the teams addresses the potential problem of
35 teams that may not have played the same number of games. See the **Frequently Asked**
36 **Questions – Team Ranking** document for additional information. This document can be
37 found on the web site under Frequently Asked Questions
38 (<http://www.sflsoccer.org/faqteamrank.pdf>).
39

40 Only teams that have played a majority of their games are eligible for the top and bottom tournament
41 divisions unless the applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner determines otherwise. A team will be
42 considered for tournament division placement purposes to have played a majority of games if that team
43 has played all but one of the games expected to be played when the tournament scheduling process

² Normally only the game point percentage and game points are used.

1 begins. This is normally 4 games in a season with 7 regular season games and 5 games in a season with
2 8 regular season games.

3

4 **Note:** Scheduling forfeits assessed may not considered games played by the SFL Age Group
5 Commissioner for this purpose. For example, if either Team A and Team B were awarded
6 forfeits because a game was cancelled due to weather and the game could not be made up
7 (see **Procedures and Processes – Rescheduling Regular Season Games**), then the game
8 may not be considered not played for purposes of determining whether a team has played the
9 majority of its games. Similarly, if Team B was awarded a forfeit because Team A did not
10 have a roster, then neither team may be given credit for a game played.

11

12 **TOURNAMENT FORMAT**

13

14 The teams selected for the tournament will be divided into divisions (generally 4 or 5 teams each) and
15 scheduled using a single elimination tournament format except for 3 team divisions which use the round
16 robin format. Depending of the availability of fields and officials, some divisions may converted to use
17 a round robin format. Due to the limited availability of fields and officials during the tournament
18 weekend, the SFL has been forced to adopt a single elimination tournament format for most tournament
19 divisions including the top tournament divisions in each age group which were normally scheduled using
20 a round robin tournament format in past seasons.

21

22 **Single Elimination Format**

23

24 Teams playing in tournament divisions scheduled using the single elimination format will play games
25 with the winners of each game advancing to the next game or the championship game. These games
26 may not end in a tie. In some cases, a 6 or 7 team division may be scheduled. In 6 and 7 team divisions,
27 the two teams winning the second round games, will play in the championship game. Fields and
28 officials permitting, another game to decide the winner of third place trophies will also be played. The
29 teams playing in this game are the losers of the second round game. This game determines who wins the
30 third place trophies.

31

32 **Round Robin Format**

33

34 Teams playing in tournament divisions scheduled using the round robin format will play at least 2, and
35 in most cases, 3 other teams in their division. Unlike the single elimination format, games scheduled
36 using this format generally may end in a tie. The rules discusses how to rank teams in these divisions
37 and the special process used in a 6 team round robin division with mini groups.

38

39 **ACTIONS TAKEN WHEN TOURNAMENT** 40 **GAMES CANNOT BE PLAYED AS SCHEDULED**

41

42 Coaches should assume, regardless of the weather, that tournament games will be played unless they are
43 notified by their tournament division commissioner (or site coordinator) that the games have been
44 canceled. Therefore, in the case of inclement weather, if a coach has a question on whether a game will
45 be played, they should contact their tournament division commissioner. If this individual cannot be
46 reached, then they should contact the appropriate site coordinator. While the division commissioner or

1 site coordinator should contact coaches and notify them of any game cancellations and schedule changes,
2 the coaches are also responsible for checking to see if the games are canceled or if their games have been
3 moved by contacting these individuals if they have a question on whether the games will be played.
4

5 A cancelled game is a case where both teams are available for play, however, due to weather, field
6 conditions, or some other reason, a scheduled game cannot be played. The following are examples of
7 games that are not completed under normal circumstances and whether a given condition is considered
8 as a cancelled game for purposes of this section.
9

- 10 • Games where a team has received a forfeit are considered games played as scheduled regardless
11 of the reason for the forfeit.
12
- 13 • As noted in the rules, when tournament games are halted due to unsafe playing conditions, the
14 game result at the time of termination will be used as the final game result unless waived by the
15 SFL Age Group Commissioner regardless of when the game is terminated. Accordingly, these
16 games are considered as games played as scheduled.
17
- 18 • The tournament is designed so that the clubs ensure that adequate officials have been assigned to
19 cover the scheduled tournament games. In the past, due to circumstances beyond the control of
20 the club, the assigned referees may not appear at the game. When referees are not available at the
21 scheduled start time, the teams should wait a reasonable period to determine if officials will be
22 present. After waiting a reasonable period and the referees do not appear, then the game is
23 considered a cancelled game. In the past, some teams have agreed to play the game using
24 someone other than the assigned referees. The SFL has consistently maintained that should the
25 teams agree to play the game using someone other than the tournament site assigned referees,
26 then (1) the game is considered as a game played and (2) no protests are allowed due to referee
27 issues. If the game is not played, then all remaining games for that tournament division are
28 cancelled and the trophies are returned to the SFL.
29

30 If one or more tournament games in a tournament division are cancelled, then (1) the remaining
31 tournament games in that tournament division are cancelled and (2) the trophies will be returned to the
32 SFL unless one of the following exceptions are met.
33

- 34 • **Last tournament game in a single elimination tournament division is cancelled before**
35 **completion due to weather or some other reason** – Trophies will be awarded if a tournament
36 game played in the single elimination division format is cancelled when the game (1) has started
37 but is terminated due to weather and (2) would have directly resulted in the awarding of trophies,
38 i.e., the championship game or the game to decide third place trophies. As noted elsewhere, the
39 score at time of game termination will be used to determine the winner. If the teams are tied
40 when it is terminated, then the following process is used.
41

42 If the teams did not play the same number of tournament games, then the team results for the
43 team with the most tournament games played will be adjusted by eliminating the results of the
44 first tournament game for that team. For example, if Team A and Team B are playing in the
45 cancelled game and Team A had played two tournament games and Team B had played one
46 tournament game, then the results from Team A's first game would be eliminated from the

1 ranking process. The teams are then ranked using the same ranking factors as used for round
2 robin divisions with the exception of tournament game points³ and penalty kicks. If the teams
3 are still tied after applying these ranking factors, then the second place trophies are returned to
4 the SFL and the SFL will provide first place trophies to both teams. If the game is being used to
5 settle third place, then the SFL will provide third place trophies to both teams.
6

- 7 • **All Saturday games are played in a 3 team round robin division and one team wins both**
8 **games, however, the Sunday game is cancelled.** In a 3 team round robin division, one team
9 normally plays two games on Saturday. If that team wins both of its games on Saturday and
10 Sunday's game is cancelled, then the first place trophies would be awarded to the team winning
11 both of its Saturday games since that team would have received the first place trophies regardless
12 of the outcome of the Sunday game. The second place trophies will be returned to the SFL. On
13 the other hand, if the team playing two games on Saturday did not win both games, then it is
14 impossible to determine which of the 3 teams should be awarded first place trophies and no
15 trophies will be awarded.
16
- 17 • **A tournament division is scheduled using a 6 team round robin division with mini groups**
18 **or a 6 (or 7) team single elimination format and all Saturday games are played, however,**
19 **only one Sunday tournament game can be played since the field is unavailable for the other**
20 **game normally scheduled using this format.** In these three game formats, the Saturday results
21 clearly show the two teams eligible for first and second place trophies and the two teams eligible
22 for third place trophies. When only one of the expected two games can be played because of
23 field conditions, then (1) if possible, the field slot available for play will be used by the teams
24 eligible for first and second place trophies, (2) the first and second place trophies will be awarded
25 based on the results of the game played, (3) the game for third place trophies will be cancelled
26 with the SFL Club Representative returning the third place trophies to the SFL. It should be
27 noted that this situation is only expected to occur when two fields are used for playing the
28 Sunday games. If the game for first and second place trophies cannot be moved, then (1) the
29 game for third place trophies will be played as scheduled and (2) the first and second place
30 trophies will be returned to the SFL.
31

32 The following are examples of how these rules apply to a tournament division.
33

³ Tournament game points are not used since both teams should have the same number of game points if this process is required.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

10
11
12
13

14
15
16

17
18
19
20
21

Condition	Impact on Game Schedule and Trophy Awards
<p>Team A is assessed a forfeit since it does not show up to play its scheduled tournament game with Team B or fails to have a roster.</p>	<p>The tournament game is shown as a game played with Team B being declared the winner with a 1 – 0 score. Assuming the remaining games in that tournament division are played, the trophies will be awarded in accordance with the process applicable for that type of tournament division, i.e., (1) teams will be ranked using the processes outlined in the rules if the tournament division is scheduled as a round robin division or (2) the team will play in the next applicable game or awarded first (or third) place trophies if this game is the final tournament game for that team when it is associated with the single elimination division.</p>
<p>One or more Saturday tournament games are cancelled</p>	<p>All remaining Saturday games are cancelled and all Sunday tournament games are cancelled. No attempt is made to reschedule any tournament games and no trophies are awarded. The SFL Club Representative returns the trophies to the SFL.</p>
<p>Sunday tournament games are cancelled</p>	<p>No trophies are awarded and the SFL Club Representative returns the trophies to the SFL unless (1) the tournament division is a 3 team division playing a round robin format and (2) one team has won both of the Saturday games. In this specific case, first place trophies are awarded the team that won both of its Saturday games while the second place trophies are returned to the SFL by the SFL Club Representative.</p>
<p>Teams A and B are playing and the game has to be terminated early because of weather</p>	<p>The game results at the time of termination are used to determine the winner of the game. If the game is tied when the game is terminated and the teams are playing in a round robin format tournament division, the tie stands. On the other hand, if the teams are playing in a single elimination tournament division, they should call the SFL to determine how the tie is handled – essentially, regular season results are used to break the tie.</p>

Condition	Impact on Game Schedule and Trophy Awards
<p>1 All Saturday games 2 are played and one 3 Sunday game can 4 be played in a 6/7 5 team single 6 elimination 7 division or 6 team 8 round robin 9 division using mini 10 groups.</p>	<p>In these two game formats, the Saturday results clearly show the two teams eligible for first and second place trophies and the two teams eligible for third place trophies. For example, all tournament games are played on Saturday and based on Saturday's results (1) Team A and Team B were scheduled to play for first and second place trophies on Field 1 and (2) Team C and Team D were scheduled to play for third place trophies on Field 2. However, due to weather or other conditions, Field 1 cannot be used on Sunday while Field 2 is available. Accordingly, if possible, (1) the game between Team A and Team B is moved to Field 2 with the results of that game used to determine who receives first and second place trophies and (2) the game for third place trophies is cancelled and the third place trophies are returned to the SFL by the SFL Club Representative. If the game cannot be moved, then the game for third place trophies is played and the first and second place trophies are returned to the SFL.</p>

11

12 **COACHES WITH TWO TEAMS**

13

14 Clubs are required to determine whether a coach with 2 teams has someone who can handle conflicting
15 games. If the coach does not have someone, then the club is required to notify the SFL which team
16 should be dropped. The SFL will take very limited actions to eliminate schedule conflicts.

17

18 **Discussion**

19

20 Over the years the number of individuals who coach 2 or more SFL teams has grown. During the Spring
21 2014 season over 25 individuals coached two or more teams. This causes numerous scheduling
22 problems since the coaches want to avoid scheduling conflicts and the SFL receives numerous requests
23 to eliminate schedule conflicts where possible. However, it is hard to deconflict schedules during the
24 tournament since (1) the teams associated with one individual may be playing as many as 4 games on
25 Saturday and potentially playing 2 games on Sunday, (2) the games for an individual's teams may need to
26 be scheduled on fields that are not close to each other, and (3) a tournament division may contain more
27 than one team whose coach has more than one team. For example, in the Spring 2014 tournament, the
28 Under 16 Girls Division 3 tournament division had 5 teams with 3 of those teams (all from different
29 clubs) coached by individuals who had 2 teams and several other tournament divisions had two teams
30 coached by an individuals with 2 teams.

31

32 **TOURNAMENT GAME TIMES**

33

34 Tournament games are normally scheduled using 90 minute time slots for the Under 11/12 age groups
35 and 105 minute time slots for the Under 13/19 age groups with teams that play two games on Saturday
36 having at least 90/105 minutes (one slot) between the end of one game and the start of their second
37 game. The game length (90 minutes for U11/12 games and 105 minutes for U13/19 games) is designed
38 to allow sufficient time for the game officials to perform the mandatory roster checks required for

1 tournament games. Games are normally not scheduled prior to 8:30 AM on Saturday and 10:30 AM on
2 Sunday with the preferred Sunday time of 12:30 PM or later when the time slots allow. Games are not
3 normally scheduled to start later than 7:30 PM.

4

5 **PENALTIES**

6

7 Each season the SFL experiences problems with teams being dropped during the tournament scheduling
8 process and after the schedules are published. In addition, some teams do not show up for their assigned
9 tournament games. In the Spring 2014 season, the SFL spent over \$1,000 to reimburse clubs for
10 officials that were scheduled for games not played. Furthermore, some clubs make extensive changes to
11 the game fields after the schedules are developed which causes additional problems. The SFL has
12 developed the following fee schedule for these types of events:

13

14

15 • Dropping a team during the schedule generation process – \$125

16

17 • Dropping a team after schedules are posted or teams not showing up for their assigned games –
18 \$250

19

20 • Game field changes after the schedules are finalized – \$20 per game

21

22 These charges will be deducted from the applicable club's referee reimbursement or added to the next
23 season's assessment.

24