

1 Suburban Friendship League

2  
3 **Procedures and Processes – Tournament Scheduling**  
4 (Effective March 9, 2018)

5  
6  
7 **OVERVIEW**  
8

9 The tournament has been part of the SFL since it was founded in the 1990s. While some may view the  
10 top tournament groups as the ones that really benefit from the tournament, a number of compliments are  
11 received from the tournament groups composed of teams that have less than a stellar season. While the  
12 benefits of the tournament are well recognized, the ability to obtain sufficient fields and game officials  
13 for the tournament has grown increasingly more difficult. In 2007, 2011, and 2014 the SFL developed  
14 processes to help address the problems experienced so that the tournament could continue. However,  
15 since that time the difficulties have only increased and the processes were reviewed again after the Fall  
16 2017 season to determine what changes were needed so the tournament can continue.  
17

18 The ability to conduct the tournament is basically a “numbers game” involving teams, fields, and  
19 officials. The decisions made and incorporated in this document were difficult ones and made only after  
20 a great deal of discussion. In evaluating the tournament options, the SFL Commissioners realized that  
21 the two options recommended for adoption starting in the Spring 2018 season to the clubs represented a  
22 substantial change from prior tournament approach and that each had significant advantages and  
23 disadvantages over each other and the prior approach used. The overall guiding principle used to  
24 evaluate and recommend a given option was whether (1) the demand for Saturday game officials and  
25 fields was similar to or less than those required for regular season games and (2) the demand for Sunday  
26 game officials and fields was no greater than those required for the prior tournament approach. This  
27 resulted in two option recommended to the SFL Club Representatives for approval. At the Spring 2018  
28 preseason meeting the SFL Club Representatives decided to adopt the Four Team Single Elimination  
29 approach be adopted as the path forward for the tournament. The Historical Documents page on the web  
30 site ([www.sflsoccer.org/historical-documents-2/](http://www.sflsoccer.org/historical-documents-2/)) contains the paper provided to the clubs that discusses  
31 the options considered along with the implications of each option.  
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 groups
- 40
- 41 • Tournament format
- 42
- 43 • Actions taken when tournament games cannot be played as scheduled
- 44
- 45 • Coaches with two teams
- 46

- 1 • Tournament game times
- 2
- 3 • Financial penalties
- 4

5 The majority of these items are unchanged or slightly changed from the previous version of this  
6 document.

## 7

## 8 **BACKGROUND**

## 9

10 The goal of the SFL is to have each team play 8 to 9 games and to play competitive matches. However,  
11 only 8 or 9 weekends are available during a season to schedule the games. Another problem is that the  
12 SFL does not know the strength of a given team which makes ensuring competitive games difficult.  
13 Because of these two problems, the SFL adopted an end of season tournament when it was founded.  
14 While the tournament benefits are well known and recognized, the difficulties in making it a reality have  
15 only continued to grow. Specifically, the demand for game officials and fields makes the approach used  
16 for the Fall 2017 and prior seasons unsupportable for the long term. Based on these difficulties, prior to  
17 the start of the Spring 2018 season, the SFL solicited comments on alternatives to the tournament format  
18 used for the Fall 2017 and received the following proposals.

- 19
- 20 • **Create four team single elimination tournament groups** – Under this proposal, the SFL would  
21 only have four team tournament groups that play using the current single elimination format.  
22 This proposal would result in about the same number of Saturday games as those supported by  
23 the clubs for the regular season games and would have about the same number of Sunday games  
24 as the approach used for the Fall 2017 tournament.
- 25
- 26 • **A tournament scheduled for two weeks** – Under this proposal, the regular season would be  
27 reduced by one week and the tournament would be expanded to cover two weeks. The  
28 tournament formats would be changed to ensure that virtually all teams participating in the  
29 tournament are scheduled for at least one game for each SFL game week, i.e., if the season is  
30 nine weeks, then each team would be scheduled for nine games. Under this approach, the referee  
31 requirements on a given tournament day are greatly reduced and fall below those that the clubs  
32 are required to support for their regular season games. For example, during the Fall 2017 season,  
33 clubs provided officials for about 255 games on a given regular season weekend. This proposal  
34 reduces the number of games that must be supported on a given tournament day by an average of  
35 23 percent over those required by the current format. Specifically, clubs would have had to  
36 provide about 15 percent fewer officials on the regular season weekend that is being converted to  
37 the tournament and 28 percent fewer officials on the Saturday and Sunday of the actual Fall 2017  
38 tournament weekend.
- 39
- 40 • **Change the tournament to address tournament format concerns expressed over past**  
41 **seasons** – This proposal was designed to address concerns over the current tournament format  
42 that include teams playing an unequal number of games on the same day and teams not playing  
43 the same number of games to win a trophy. The SFL Commissioners did not recommend this  
44 proposal for adoption for several reasons that include (1) it does not address the fundamental  
45 problem of attempting to play so many games on one weekend and (2) while the total number of  
46 games are about the same as the current approach, the number of Sunday game slots increase

1 significantly. Based on past experience, it was unclear whether the clubs could provide the  
2 necessary Sunday field slots and, most important, the officials to support the increased Sunday  
3 demand. The number of game officials needed to support the current one weekend tournament  
4 was the primary driver for generating a study of an alternative.  
5

- 6 • **Change the tournament format to only play single elimination games and maintain the**  
7 **current system approach to creating tournament groups** – Under this approach, (1) all  
8 tournament groups, except those containing 3 teams, would be scheduled using the single  
9 elimination format, i.e., the top tournament teams would no longer be scheduled using the round  
10 robin format and (2) all tournament groups would be established using the process used for the  
11 Fall 2017 season of pairing teams with comparable records together in a tournament group, i.e, 4,  
12 5, 6, and 7 team single elimination groups would be created to group teams with comparable  
13 records together for the vast majority of tournament groups. An analysis of the Fall 2017  
14 tournament showed that this approach would have reduced the number of Saturday tournament  
15 games from 319 to 301 games. However, these 301 games are still about 119 percent of the  
16 games that clubs would be expected for support on a given regular season week for the same  
17 number of teams.  
18

19 Each option was analyzed using the Fall 2017 tournament teams. While the options identified may  
20 appear to be simple and easy to understand, there are a number of implementation issues that need to be  
21 considered and some of these are complex. A paper that discusses (1) each option, (2) the implications  
22 associated with each option, and (3) how each option would have been applied to the Fall 2017  
23 tournament teams is contained on the web site on the Historical Documents page  
24 ([www.sflsoccer.org/historical-documents-2/](http://www.sflsoccer.org/historical-documents-2/)). At the Spring 2018 preseason meeting, the SFL Club  
25 Representatives voted to adoption the Four Team Single Elimination tournament format.  
26

## 27 **Tournament Philosophy**

28  
29 The end of season tournament is not a traditional tournament at all. Rather, it is an opportunity to play at  
30 least 1 game against teams with similar records. (About 50 percent of the teams play at least 2 games.)  
31 It also accomplishes the SFL's goal of each team scheduled to play at least 8 or 9 games during a season.  
32 In order to schedule the desired games, the SFL schedules 7 or 8 regular season games depending on the  
33 length of the season and then uses the results of the first 5 or 6 games to determine how the tournament  
34 games are scheduled. In other words, if a team loses its first 5 games, it will probably play in the  
35 tournament against other teams that have either lost all of their games or at most won 1 game during the  
36 same time period. History has shown that the groupings are usually very competitive.  
37

38 In order to ensure that a given club does not incur an unreasonable expense in hosting a tournament site  
39 for officials, the SFL reimburses the clubs for the officials provided based on the number of games  
40 covered and the age group. These rates are set at the preseason meeting and come from the registration  
41 fees. A club that hosts about one tournament game for each team registered will receive a  
42 reimbursement for officials that is about equal to the amount of the registration fee that will be used to  
43 pay tournament officials. In effect, it is a wash and, based on the Spring 2010 fees, the club would  
44 receive all but \$85 to \$90 for each team back from the amount of the payment it made to the SFL.  
45

1 **GENERAL TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS**

2

3 The tournament is normally held on the last weekend of the season. However, the tournament will only  
4 be scheduled if a majority of the regular season games can be played before the tournament scheduling  
5 process is expected to begin. If weather or other circumstances do not allow a majority of games to be  
6 played by the time that the tournament scheduling process normally begins, the tournament will not be  
7 scheduled and the tournament weekend will be used to make up games. If the tournament is cancelled  
8 under these circumstances, then no trophies or other awards will be provided to the teams. A majority of  
9 regular season games will be considered played if scores have been received for 80 percent of the games  
10 that were originally expected to be played at the start of the season by the tournament scheduling date.  
11 For example, assume the SFL has 500 registered teams. Accordingly, about 250 games can be expected  
12 to be played each game week. If, on average, less than 200 games are played each week, then the  
13 tournament will not be scheduled and the weekend reserved for the tournament will be used to make up  
14 games.

15

16 In determining whether the majority of games have been played, the SFL reviews the forfeits that have  
17 been assigned to determine whether those games should be counted as games played. Two types of  
18 forfeits are assessed by the SFL – forfeits assessed for scheduling or roster problems (commonly referred  
19 to as scheduling forfeits) and forfeits assessed for game related reasons, e.g., using an illegal player.  
20 Scheduling forfeits are not considered games played for the purpose of determining whether the  
21 tournament will be scheduled. For example, if Team A was awarded a forfeit because a game was  
22 cancelled due to weather and an adequate slot was not available to make up the game (see **Procedures**  
23 **and Processes – Rescheduling Regular Season Games**), then the game will not be considered played  
24 for purposes of determining the number of games that have been played. On the other hand, if Team B  
25 was assessed a forfeit because the team used a red carded player not eligible to play, then Team A and  
26 Team B would be given credit for a game played.

27

28 **TEAMS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE**  
29 **IN THE TOURNAMENT**

30

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

33

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

35

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

40

41 A team is considered in good standing if (1) it has properly reported its red cards and (2) has not been  
42 assessed more than one forfeit for any reason. A team will be considered to have played an adequate  
43 number of games, if that team has played 3 games in a 7 game regular season and 4 games in an 8 game  
44 regular season when the tournament scheduling process begins. This is normally after week 5 in a  
45 season with 7 regular season games and after week 6 in a season with 8 regular season games. Teams  
46 that (1) have received 2 or more forfeits for any reason, (2) have not played the required number of

1 games, or (3) have not properly reported their red cards by the time the tournament process begins are  
2 automatically eliminated from the tournament without appeal.

3  
4 Games where a team is assessed a scheduling forfeit are not considered games played for the purposes of  
5 this computation. For example, assume that Team A is assessed a scheduling forfeit in a game against  
6 Team B because it did not have a roster. This game does not count as a game played by Team A and as  
7 a game played by Team B since Team B was not assessed a scheduling forfeit. On the other hand, if  
8 Team A and Team B were both assessed a scheduling forfeit because neither team reported a game  
9 score, then the game would not be considered as a game played by either team.

### 10 11 **Clubs Are Required to Provide Adequate** 12 **Fields and Officials to Support Their Teams**

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

22  
23 The determination of tournament fields is done in two stages. The first stage is a requirement that clubs  
24 provide the tournament fields they expect to be available by April 1 for the spring season and September  
25 1 for the fall season. No later than five weeks after the season starts, the SFL Club Representatives will  
26 be requested to confirm the field and referee availability information for the tournament weekend. This  
27 notification will include the number of fields by age group that are required to adequately support a  
28 club's teams. The information received by this dead line is the only information that the SFL will use in  
29 determining the tournament size and teams that can be supported. Specifically, the SFL will use this  
30 information to determine the maximum number of tournament time slots that are available for each club.  
31 The number of time slots will then be translated into number of teams supported. For the purposes of  
32 this computation, a field available all day on Saturday and Sunday afternoon translates into 9 time slots  
33 in the spring (6 on Saturday and 3 on Sunday) and 7 time slots in the fall (5 on Saturday and 2 on  
34 Sunday). These time slots can support about 9 or 10 teams.

35  
36 **Note:** The final field submission must specifically name the field and provide the field slots.  
37 Information such as "To Be Determined" is inadequate and will be considered as the club  
38 not having an available field. Accordingly, this type of submission may result in teams  
39 being dropped. For example, assume a club is required to provide one field suitable for  
40 Under 13/14 games. The club states on its final field submission that it will provide one  
41 field with the field name as "To Be Provided". The SFL will treat this submission as a  
42 club that does not have a field available to support its teams. If field slots cannot be  
43 found elsewhere, then that club's Under 13/14 teams will be dropped from the  
44 tournament.  
45

1       **Example**

2  
3       The SFL sends an Email to the SFL Club Representatives and Club Field Coordinators on the  
4       Thursday before the week 5 games are going to be played requesting/confirming final field  
5       availability by 6 PM on the following Monday. The field information provided by the club by  
6       the 6 PM Monday deadline is the final field information that will be used by the SFL to  
7       determine whether a club has provided adequate fields to support its teams. If the club does not  
8       provide the fields requested by 6 PM on Monday, then it may find out later that teams from that  
9       club have been dropped and has no ability to provide additional slots so that those teams can be  
10      scheduled.

11  
12     Since the SFL identifies the number of fields required to adequately support its teams, a club has the  
13     necessary information to understand whether it can provide the necessary fields. When a club realizes  
14     that it does not have adequate fields to support its teams and may have teams dropped, then it may  
15     request that the SFL dedicate the available slots to a specific age group, e.g., Under 19 Boys, as long as  
16     that decision is conveyed to the SFL prior to the dead line for providing the tournament field  
17     information. However, the SFL is not required to honor this request and may decide to drop these teams  
18     anyway because they cannot be efficiently scheduled into the slots provided. For example, the club may  
19     provide two Saturday and one Sunday time slot and want those slots used for its Under 19 Boys team.  
20     However, that club’s Under 19 Boys team may be assigned to a 5 team tournament group which needs  
21     more field slots. Accordingly, the Under 19 Boys team may be dropped.

22  
23     The following are examples of how this may work using the following assumptions for Club A.

24  
25       **Assumptions**

26

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 19 Girls	1	2

27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35     Based on this team distribution, the SFL would probably request the club to provide one field that would  
36     support Under 11/12 games, one field that would support U13/19 games.

**Examples**

Fields Provided By Club	Teams the SFL Can Be Expected to Schedule/Drop
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The SFL would probably drop all the teams from the club since adequate fields had not been provided to support Club A's teams.</p>
<p>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 adequate to support the scheduling needs for the remaining Under 11/12 teams. However, space on other fields is inadequate to meet the scheduling needs for the remaining Under 13/19 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>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 13/19 games. The club realizes that the slots are inadequate to support all its U13/19 teams and requests that the slots be used for the Under 19 teams prior to the field submission deadline. Space on fields provided by other clubs is inadequate to meet the scheduling needs for the remaining Under 13/19 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 groups assigned to those teams are 6 or 7 team groups or the tournament groups 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>

<b>Fields Provided By Club</b>	<b>Teams the SFL Can Be Expected to Schedule/Drop</b>
<p>1 Club A provides one field suitable for Under  2 11/12 games and 4 Saturday and 1 Sunday time  3 slot on a field suitable for Under 13/19 games.  4 The SFL notifies the club that its Under 13/19  5 teams are being dropped since space on fields  6 provided by other clubs is inadequate to meet the  7 scheduling needs for the remaining Under 13/19  8 teams. Club A then asks the SFL to schedule at  9 least some U13/19 teams using the slots  10 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 group, 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>

11  
12 The following are the key points relating to providing fields and dropping teams.

- 13
- 14 • Clubs must provide specific field information in their final submission, i.e., specific field name  
15 and actual time the field can be used.
  - 16
  - 17 • When a club is unable to provide the field slots requested by the deadline specified by the SFL,  
18 then the club may have teams dropped from the tournament without the ability to appeal that  
19 decision or attempt to come up with additional slots so that those teams can play.
  - 20
  - 21 • The SFL will not pick “winners and losers”. If a club does not provide the fields to support all  
22 the teams in a given age group, then all teams in that age group may be eliminated. In other  
23 words, the SFL will make no attempt to “find a place” where teams within an age group, e.g.,  
24 Under 19 Boys, can play but the teams in the other age groups, e.g., Under 16 Boys and Girls and  
25 Under 19 Girls are eliminated.
  - 26
  - 27 • A club may pick “winners and losers”, e.g., a club may request the SFL to use the available slots  
28 to support the teams in a given age group, e.g., Under 19 Boys. However, this does not assure  
29 that the SFL will honor that request and those teams may still be dropped.
  - 30

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

33

1 **PLACEMENT OF TEAMS IN TOURNAMENT GROUPS**

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

13  
14 **Note:** Using the game point percentage for ranking the teams addresses the potential problem of  
15 teams that may not have played the same number of games. See the **Frequently Asked**  
16 **Questions – Team Ranking** document for additional information. This document can be  
17 found on the web site under Frequently Asked Questions  
18 (<http://www.sflsoccer.org/faqteamrank.pdf>).

19  
20 Only teams that have played a majority of their games are eligible for the top and bottom tournament  
21 groups unless the applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner determines otherwise. A team will be  
22 considered for tournament group placement purposes to have played a majority of games if that team has  
23 played all but one of the games expected to be played when the tournament scheduling process begins.  
24 This is normally 4 games in a season with 7 regular season games and 5 games in a season with 8 regular  
25 season games.

26  
27 **Note:** Scheduling forfeits assessed may not be considered games played by the SFL Age Group  
28 Commissioner for this purpose. For example, if either Team A and Team B were awarded  
29 forfeits because a game was cancelled due to weather and the game could not be made up  
30 (see **Procedures and Processes – Rescheduling Regular Season Games**), then the game  
31 may not be considered not played for purposes of determining whether a team has played the  
32 majority of its games. Similarly, if Team B was awarded a forfeit because Team A did not  
33 have a roster, then neither team may be given credit for a game played.

34  
35 **TOURNAMENT FORMAT**

36  
37 The teams selected for the tournament will be divided into tournament groups. In the Spring 2018  
38 season, the SFL Club Representatives elected to adopt the Four Team Single Elimination format as the  
39 preferred tournament scheduling approach. The following business rules are used for creating the  
40 tournament groups using the four team single elimination tournament format option.

- 41  
42
- 43 • Teams are ranked based on game point percentage, bonus points, and goals allowed after  
44 eliminating the impacts of forfeits and penalties relating to reporting scores late.
  - 45 • When the number of teams in a regular season age group and division is evenly divisible by 4,  
46 then 4 team groups are used.

- 1  
2 • Normally, the bottom tournament group is used to handle “odd team” tournament groups. For  
3 example, if an age group has 25 teams, then the last tournament group would have 5 teams.  
4 However, two exceptions apply. First, the bottom tournament group must have at least 4 teams  
5 since history has shown that the bottom teams drop out more often after the schedules are  
6 developed so that the games are actually played, i.e., the “odd team” tournament group would be  
7 moved up. Second, some exceptions may be made to better pair teams, e.g., another group of “5  
8 teams” may better pair teams with comparable records or moving teams with comparable records  
9 between groups would eliminate teams from playing teams that they had already played during  
10 the regular season.

11  
12 The discussion of each age group below shows how these criteria would have been implemented for the  
13 Fall 2017 tournament teams.

- 14  
15 • **Under 11 Boys** – Standard methodology would have been used.  
16  
17 • **Under 11 Girls** – Rather than have a 4 and 6 team group, two five team groups would have been  
18 created to better pair teams. This would have no impact on the Saturday game slots needed and  
19 reduced the Sunday game slot requirements by one.  
20  
21 • **Under 12 Boys** – For the regular season division 1 teams, rather than have a 4 and 6 team  
22 tournament group, two five team tournament groups would have been created to better pair  
23 teams. This has no impact on the Saturday game slots needed and reduces the Sunday game slot  
24 requirements by one. The standard methodology would have been used for the regular season  
25 division 2 teams.  
26  
27 • **Under 12 Girls** – Standard methodology would have been used.  
28  
29 • **Under 13 Boys** – The regular season division 1 teams would have been broken down into 2 five  
30 team single elimination tournament groups. Two things would have been done with the “odd  
31 team” tournament group for the regular season division 2 teams. First, a 5 team tournament  
32 group would have been created in the third from the bottom group and a 5 team group used for  
33 the last tournament group. This would have been done to better pair teams with comparable  
34 records.  
35  
36 • **Under 13 Girls** – An “odd team” tournament group would have been created in the third from  
37 the bottom group to better pair teams with comparable records.  
38  
39 • **Under 14 Boys** – The bottom tournament group would have been created with 7 teams since (1)  
40 all the teams had comparable records and (2) a 3 team tournament group is not considered  
41 desirable for the lowest ranked teams.  
42  
43 • **Under 14 Girls** – The “odd team” tournament group would have been moved up one tournament  
44 group to better pair teams with comparable records.  
45

- 1 • **Under 16 Boys** – The regular season division 1 teams would have used the standard  
2 methodology. The bottom tournament group for the regular season division 2 teams would have  
3 been created with 6 teams as called for by the methodology. However, another option that may  
4 have been adopted is to use a 7 team tournament group for this group and then create another 7  
5 team tournament group above it since this would better pair teams with comparable abilities.  
6 This change would have required two additional Saturday slots and no additional Sunday slots.  
7
- 8 • **Under 16 Girls** – The standard methodology would have been used for the regular season  
9 division 1 teams and the division 2 teams that were considered division 1 for tournament  
10 purposes. The “odd team” tournament group would have been moved up one tournament group  
11 to better pair teams with comparable abilities.  
12
- 13 • **Under 19 Boys** – Standard methodology would have been used.  
14
- 15 • **Under 19 Girls** – Standard methodology would have been used.  
16

### 17 **Single Elimination Format**

18

19 As noted elsewhere, almost all tournament groups will be scheduled using the single elimination format.  
20 These tournament groups will play games with the winners of each game advancing to the next game or  
21 the championship game. These games may not end in a tie. In some cases, a 6 or 7 team tournament  
22 group may be scheduled. In 6 and 7 team tournament groups, the two teams winning the second round  
23 games, will play in the championship game. Fields and officials permitting, another game to decide the  
24 winner of third place trophies will also be played. The teams playing in this game are the losers of the  
25 second round game. This game determines who wins the third place trophies.  
26

### 27 **Round Robin Format**

28

29 In some cases, some cases a tournament group may be scheduled using a round robin format. Generally  
30 this is used for three team tournament groups. Unlike the single elimination format, games scheduled  
31 using this format generally may end in a tie. The rules discuss how to rank teams in these tournament  
32 groups.  
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### 34 **ACTIONS TAKEN WHEN TOURNAMENT** 35 **GAMES CANNOT BE PLAYED AS SCHEDULED**

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37 Coaches should assume, regardless of the weather, that tournament games will be played unless they are  
38 notified by the commissioner for their tournament group (or site coordinator) that the games have been  
39 canceled. Therefore, in the case of inclement weather, if a coach has a question on whether a game will  
40 be played, they should contact the commissioner for their tournament group. If this individual cannot be  
41 reached, then they should contact the appropriate site coordinator. While the commissioner for their  
42 tournament group or the site coordinator should contact coaches and notify them of any game  
43 cancellations and schedule changes, the coaches are also responsible for checking to see if the games are  
44 canceled or if their games have been moved by contacting these individuals if they have a question on  
45 whether the games will be played.  
46

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

- 5
- 6 • Games where a team has received a forfeit are considered games played as scheduled regardless  
7 of the reason for the forfeit.
- 8
- 9 • As noted in the rules, when tournament games are halted due to unsafe playing conditions, the  
10 game result at the time of termination will be used as the final game result unless waived by the  
11 SFL Age Group Commissioner regardless of when the game is terminated. Accordingly, these  
12 games are considered as games played as scheduled.
- 13
- 14 • The tournament is designed so that the clubs ensure that adequate officials have been assigned to  
15 cover the scheduled tournament games. In the past, due to circumstances beyond the control of  
16 the club, the assigned referees may not appear at the game. When referees are not available at the  
17 scheduled start time, the teams should wait a reasonable period to determine if officials will be  
18 present. After waiting a reasonable period and the referees do not appear, then the game is  
19 considered a cancelled game. In the past, some teams have agreed to play the game using  
20 someone other than the assigned referees. The SFL has consistently maintained that should the  
21 teams agree to play the game using someone other than the tournament site assigned referees,  
22 then (1) the game is considered as a game played and (2) no protests are allowed due to referee  
23 issues. If the game is not played, then all remaining games for that tournament group are  
24 cancelled and the trophies are returned to the SFL.
- 25

26 If one or more tournament games in a tournament group are cancelled, then (1) the remaining  
27 tournament games in that tournament group are cancelled and (2) the trophies will be returned to the  
28 SFL unless one of the following exceptions are met.

- 29
- 30 • **Last tournament game in a single elimination tournament group is cancelled before**  
31 **completion due to weather or some other reason** – Trophies will be awarded if a tournament  
32 game played in the single elimination format is cancelled when the game (1) has started but is  
33 terminated due to weather and (2) would have directly resulted in the awarding of trophies, i.e.,  
34 the championship game or the game to decide third place trophies. As noted elsewhere, the score  
35 at time of game termination will be used to determine the winner. If the teams are tied when it is  
36 terminated, then the following process is used.
- 37
- 38 ▶ If the teams did not play the same number of tournament games, then the team results for the  
39 team with the most tournament games played will be adjusted by eliminating the results of  
40 the first tournament game for that team. For example, if Team A and Team B are playing in  
41 the cancelled game and Team A had played two tournament games and Team B had played  
42 one tournament game, then the results from Team A's first game would be eliminated from  
43 the ranking process. The teams are then ranked using the same ranking factors as used for

1 round robin tournament groups with the exception of tournament game points<sup>1</sup> and penalty  
2 kicks. If the teams are still tied after applying these ranking factors, then the second place  
3 trophies are returned to the SFL and the SFL will provide first place trophies to both teams.  
4 If the game is being used to settle third place, then the SFL will provide third place trophies  
5 to both teams.  
6

- 7 • **All Saturday games are played in a 3 team round robin tournament group and one team**  
8 **wins both games, however, the Sunday game is cancelled.** In a 3 team round robin  
9 tournament group, one team normally plays two games on Saturday. If that team wins both of its  
10 games on Saturday and Sunday's game is cancelled, then the first place trophies would be  
11 awarded to the team winning both of its Saturday games since that team would have received the  
12 first place trophies regardless of the outcome of the Sunday game. The second place trophies  
13 will be returned to the SFL. On the other hand, if the team playing two games on Saturday did  
14 not win both games, then it is impossible to determine which of the 3 teams should be awarded  
15 first place trophies and no trophies will be awarded.  
16
- 17 • **A tournament group is scheduled using a 6 team round robin format with mini groups or a**  
18 **6 (or 7) team single elimination format and all Saturday games are played, however, only**  
19 **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.  
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32 The following are examples of how these rules apply to a tournament group.  
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<sup>1</sup> Tournament game points are not used since both teams should have the same number of game points if this process is required.

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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 group are played, the trophies will be awarded in accordance with the process applicable for that type of tournament group, i.e., (1) teams will be ranked using the processes outlined in the rules if the tournament group is scheduled as a round robin group 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 group.</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 group is a 3 team group 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 group, the tie stands. On the other hand, if the teams are playing in a single elimination tournament group, 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 group 7 or 6 team round 8 robin group using 9 mini 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>

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11 **COACHES WITH TWO TEAMS**

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

16

17 **TOURNAMENT GAME TIMES**

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19 Tournament games are normally scheduled using 105 minute time slots to allow adequate time for the  
20 required SFL Team Roster checks and potential penalty kicks. Teams that play two games on Saturday  
21 are scheduled so that they have at least one game slot between the end of one game and the start of their  
22 second game. Games are normally not scheduled prior to 8:30 AM on Saturday and 10:30 AM on  
23 Sunday with the preferred Sunday time of 12:30 PM or later when the time slots allow. Games are not  
24 normally scheduled to start later than 7:30 PM.

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26 **PENALTIES**

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

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

36

1 • Dropping a team after schedules are posted or teams not showing up for their assigned games –  
2 \$250

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

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

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