

SUBURBAN FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

Rules and Administrative Items for the Fall 2017 Season

(Adopted August 11, 2017)

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I. PURPOSE

- A. The Suburban Friendship League (SFL) was established to coordinate and provide competitive soccer amongst the various house league teams who desire to compete with teams from other clubs. Although limited travel is involved, the teams in the SFL are recreational teams and that players participating in travel or select programs may not participate. These players are commonly referred to as “travel players”. The SFL considers any individual that practices with or plays in a VYSA recognized travel/select program to be a travel player under any and all conditions and circumstances except for the limited exceptions noted in the SFL rules. Coaches should discuss with each player on their team the prohibition of playing on a SFL team and participating in a VYSA recognized travel/select program and make sure that the team realizes that the identification of a “travel player” on that team will result in forfeiture of games and elimination from the SFL tournament.

Examples

Based on previous requests and decisions made by the SFL, an individual participating in the following programs and tournaments would result in the individual being considered as a travel player.

- Any player contained in the VYSA data base of travel players.
- VYSA Olympic Development Program (not the VYSA Developmental – Olympic Development Program).
- State Cup competitions or any other tournaments that may require players to play tournament games on weekends where SFL games are regularly scheduled .

Note: These are only examples and this list is not intended to be all inclusive.

- B. The SFL is set up and run “**For the GOOD of the PLAYERS**” first and foremost in all actions taken.
- C. The SFL recognizes that each soccer club has different operating procedures and that this is healthy for the league. The clubs are expected to adhere to their appropriate state soccer association (such as the Virginia Youth Soccer Association) guidelines and rules; their own operating procedures; and provide guidance, cooperation and, if necessary, discipline in carrying out the SFL’s requirements. The SFL Commissioner and SFL Age Group Commissioners are given authority to adjust to the various operating procedure differences, if it is in the best interest of the organization. A member’s club procedures and rules may be more stringent, but not any less stringent than those imposed by the SFL.
1. The SFL shall be notified in writing if a club does not comply with any rules and regulations issued by their applicable state soccer association.
 2. Payment of the team registration fee signifies that the club (1) is in compliance with applicable state soccer association rules and regulations, (2) has properly registered all players playing in SFL scheduled games with the applicable state association, and (3) agrees to abide by the rules imposed by the SFL.

1
2 **II. PLAYER REGISTRATION, TEAM ROSTERS, AND ROSTER CHALLENGES**
3

- 4 A. A youth league player must be registered with an associated club, who registers them with the
5 appropriate state soccer association (such as the Virginia Youth Soccer Association) and meet
6 their requirements for being a recreational or house player. A player, therefore, cannot be on a
7 select or travel team and participate in the SFL during the same season.
8
- 9 1. If a player played on a travel or select team during the previous season, the player should
10 complete SFL Form 3 (Players No Longer Playing Travel or Select Soccer). This form
11 should also be signed by the Coach and SFL Club Representative. A copy should be mailed
12 to the SFL Age Group Commissioner with the original maintained by the coach. Players
13 appearing on this form and complying with its certifications are not considered travel or
14 select players.
15
 - 16 2. If a question is raised on whether a player should be considered a recreational player the
17 definition used by the United States Youth Soccer Association shall be used.
18
 - 19 3. Some travel leagues may allow recreational players to play on the travel teams as guest
20 players. This is allowed under the following conditions:
21
 - 22 a. The player does not routinely practice with the travel team. This does not exclude one
23 time “try outs” for the team.
24
 - 25 b. **Travel tournaments** – The player is playing for a travel team participating in a
26 tournament that occurs either (1) before the first game of the SFL season, (2) after the
27 last game of the SFL season, or (3) during a week when the SFL does not hold games,
28 e.g., holiday weekends. The SFL must be notified by Email of the player’s name and
29 date of birth along with the game dates that the player is playing for the travel team if
30 the game dates fall between the start and end of the SFL season, e.g., holiday weekends.
31
 - 32 c. **Regular season travel games** – Some travel leagues may allow recreational players to
33 play on a travel team during that team’s regular season travel games. The SFL does not
34 support this policy for many reasons including the potential that a player may end up
35 playing on a travel team and SFL team throughout the season which effectively
36 eliminates the prohibition against travel players playing on SFL teams. Accordingly, if
37 a SFL player participates in a regular season travel game, then (1) the club must notify
38 the SFL of the player’s name and birth date and (2) ensure that the player no longer
39 plays on the SFL team. Subsequent participation of the player in SFL games will result
40 in game forfeits and the team’s elimination from the SFL tournament.
41
- 42 B. As stated in Section I, PURPOSE, the SFL Commissioner and SFL Age Group Commissioners
43 can make adjustments in unique situations to accommodate the various club rules. The ruling
44 must be in the best interest of the *players and the league*.
45

1 C. A player must meet the USSF birth date requirements for their age group.
2

3 1. The SFL encourages the clubs to only assign players whose birth dates comply with their
4 team's age group, e.g., U11 age players are assigned to U11 teams, U15/16 age players are
5 assigned to U16 teams, etc. If a club needs to assign a player to a team that would result in
6 not complying with the applicable SFL policies, then the SFL Club Representative should
7 request a waiver BEFORE the season begins. The approval of this request will be shown on
8 the SFL Team Roster. Until the SFL Team Roster shows this approval, the coach should
9 not use the player.
10

11 a. The club may allow a player to participate on a team in an age group older than the
12 player (commonly referred to as playing up) when the player's age group is one year
13 younger than the team's age group without having to request a waiver from the SFL,
14 e.g., the club may decide to assign U11 age players to U12 teams, U14 age players to
15 U16 teams, etc.
16

17 (1) Clubs must request waivers that allow a player to play up two (2) or more SFL age
18 groups. Such waiver requests must include a signed statement from the club's
19 Board of Directors/Executive Director that they have reviewed the application and
20 believe that the player should be allowed to play up two (2) or more SFL age
21 groups and that the club accepts all the risks associated with allowing players to
22 play in an age group that is older than the player's birth date would dictate. The
23 individual signing this determination must (1) be a Board Member/Executive
24 Director and (2) someone other than the SFL Club Representative or a coach in the
25 SFL.
26

27 (a) If a club has more than one player, then all the players may be submitted on
28 one list. For example, assume that the club is requesting waivers for 3 players
29 that are playing on U11, U14, and U19 teams. All 3 players can be shown on
30 one waiver request.
31

32 (2) Clubs must submit a request each season for age waivers even if a request has been
33 approved in the prior season. The submission requirements are the same as if a
34 request has never been submitted in a prior season.
35

36 (3) All requests for age waivers must be submitted prior to March 31 for the spring
37 season and August 31 for the fall season.
38

39 b. Players cannot play in a younger age group (playing down) unless a medical waiver has
40 been obtained from the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.
41

42 (1) Requests for play down waivers are only granted for medical reasons and the SFL
43 Club Representative must provide the following information:
44

45 (a) Signed statement from the club's Board of Directors/Executive Director that
46 they have reviewed the application and believe that the player should be
47 allowed to play down for medical reasons. The individual signing this
48 determination must (1) be a Board Member/Executive Director and (2)
49 someone other than the SFL Club Representative or a coach in the SFL.
50

51 (b) Signed statement from a doctor explaining the medical condition that requires
52 the player to play down.
53

54 (2) If the request is granted, the waiver shall state that the waiver is a medical waiver
55 but not provide the reason the medical waiver was granted.

- (3) Clubs must submit a request each season for medical waivers even if a request has been approved in the prior season. This request must include a new determination by the applicable club's board that the player should be granted a medical waiver.
- (4) All requests for medical waivers must be submitted prior to March 31 for the spring season and August 31 for the fall season.

D. Player eligibility and roster questions should be directed to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner by the appropriate SFL Club Representative. The Email addresses for the SFL Commissioner and SFL Age Group Commissioners are included in the season package.

E. The SFL has two player roster forms – Master Player Roster (SFL–4E) and SFL Team Roster (SFL–2E). The Master Player Roster is submitted to the SFL and used by the SFL to generate the SFL Team Rosters that are provided to the SFL Club Representatives for distribution to the teams. The paper copy of the SFL Team Roster is the form that is used in the roster exchange process between teams. **The SFL Club Representatives and coaches should not expect the SFL to distribute the SFL Team Rosters directly to the teams.**

1. The Master Player Roster is an Excel spread sheet and the instructions contained in the file and those contained in the Procedures and Processes – Master Player Roster Summary document discuss the data requirements for the Master Player Roster. Both of these documents may be obtained from the SFL web site on the SFL Forms and SFL Documents pages respectively. The following are the general requirements that apply to the Master Player Roster and Team Roster forms.

- a. The SFL Club Representative is responsible for ensuring that (1) the Master Player Roster accurately represents the data on the player contained in the club's registration system which is expected to comply with applicable VYSA requirements, e.g., player birth dates are validated, (2) any problems identified by the SFL with the data submitted is corrected in a timely manner, and (3) the SFL is provided any changes to the Master Player Roster in a timely manner. It is up to the club to address any issues identified by the club or the SFL with the data contained on the Master Player Roster and submit a revised Master Player Roster when required. Otherwise, the club's team may be unduly penalized.
- b. Clubs must submit the Master Player Roster on the SFL provided form. The current SFL Form SFL–4E is the official form used for submitting Master Player Rosters. No substitute forms may be used even if those forms provide the same information or were allowed in previous seasons.
- c. Master Player Rosters are Emailed to the general SFL Email address (sfl@sflsoccer.org). The subject line should contain (1) Master Player Roster and (2) the club's name, e.g., Master Player Roster – Reston. The SFL will make sure that this roster is distributed to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioners.
- d. The Master Player Roster contains the official information used by the SFL to resolve roster issues such as whether a given player has been assigned to a specific team.
- e. **Roster submission dates** – Each club is required to submit at least two Master Player Rosters each season.
 - (1) March 15 for the spring season and August 15 for the fall season. This submission is used by the SFL to validate that the club has a sufficient number of players to

1 support the registered teams. Valid uniform numbers are not required for this
2 submission and the player assignments to a team are not binding, i.e., the clubs are
3 free to reassign players to other teams.
4

5 (2) On the Monday preceding the first game week, the SFL must receive by 6:00 PM
6 the actual Master Player Roster that should be used to generate the SFL Team
7 Rosters. This submission must contain the actual player assignments and the
8 uniform numbers that are expected to be used by the players on a given SFL Team
9 Roster. The SFL Team Roster section discusses the process that should be used
10 when a club cannot provide accurate uniform numbers for this submission.
11

12 (3) Each week after the first game week the SFL Club Representative may submit one
13 (1) Master Player Roster update by Wednesday at 6:00 PM.
14

15 (a) Players may be added to the Master Player Roster until April 25 for the spring
16 season and September 25 for the fall season. No player additions may be
17 made after April 25 for the spring season or September 25 for the fall season
18 without approval of the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.
19

20 f. A player may be listed on only one roster in a given season and each player on a given
21 team must have a unique uniform number that remains constant during a given season.
22 The Process and Procedures – SFL Team Rosters document discusses the process that is
23 used when a player shows up at a game wearing a different uniform number. This
24 document also includes a section discussing how to handle duplicate numbers when
25 teams are authorized to combine teams.
26

27 2. The SFL Team Roster (SFL Form 2E) is generated by the SFL based on the data contained
28 in the Master Player Roster. **The SFL does not deal with coaches on SFL Team Roster**
29 **issues. If a coach needs a SFL Team Roster or needs corrections made to the SFL**
30 **Team Roster, then the coach should contact their SFL Club Representative.** The
31 Process and Procedures – SFL Team Rosters provides additional information relating to the
32 generation and use of the SFL Team Rosters. The SFL Club Representatives and coaches
33 are expected to be familiar with the information contained in this document. It can be
34 obtained from the SFL web site on the SFL Documents page.
35

36 a. The SFL Team Roster produced by the SFL is the only acceptable form that may be
37 used. Modifications to the names, birth dates, SFL provided comments, and SFL form
38 presentation, e.g., fonts, watermark, etc. may not be made to the SFL Team Roster by
39 either the coach or the club. For example, names may not be added or changed, birth
40 dates added or changed, and SFL comments relating to a player or team may not
41 changed or deleted. All such changes are made by the SFL using the Master Player
42 Roster process and a new SFL Team Roster is provided to the club for distribution to
43 the coach. The SFL expects the club and the coach to take the necessary steps to
44 provide accurate uniform numbers on the Master Player Roster and that the uniform
45 numbers worn by the players agree with the SFL Team roster unless a color clash
46 between two teams exists. The Process and Procedures – SFL Team Rosters document
47 discusses exceptions to this rule and the process that is used when a color clash exists.
48 Unauthorized modifications to the SFL Team Roster form or content may result in game
49 forfeitures and team elimination from SFL competition.
50

51 (1) The SFL distributes the SFL Team Rosters in the Portable Document Format
52 (PDF). Should the reproduction of the document, i.e., printing, result in the lost of
53 form data or a change to the form, e.g., the watermark is lost, fonts changed, etc.,
54 then the SFL must be notified immediately.

1
2 b. **Player comments** – The SFL Team Roster may contain comments relating to one or
3 more players on the roster. Depending on the comment, the player may not be able to
4 play even if they are shown on the roster. These comments may include whether the
5 player has been given a waiver to play in a certain age group and whether the player is
6 allowed to play on the team until an identified problem is resolved. The SFL Team
7 Roster contains an explanation of the comments and clearly indicates whether the player
8 is allowed to play. The Process and Procedures – SFL Team Rosters contains additional
9 information in this subject.

10
11 c. **SFL Team Roster preparation dates** – The process of generating SFL Team Rosters is
12 time consuming for the SFL and the clubs. It is critical that the clubs develop adequate
13 internal processes to reduce the burden on both parties. The SFL recognizes that some
14 of the information, such as the uniform number, on the Master Player Roster may need
15 to be provided by the coach and that changes may need to be made to the SFL Team Roster
16 during the season. The SFL also recognizes that sometimes players need to be added
17 just before the season starts or even after the season begins. The SFL is committed to
18 providing reasonable support to processing changes and providing revised SFL Team
19 Rosters to the club. However, do not expect to send an Email to the SFL on Friday and
20 have an updated SFL Team Roster for Saturday’s game. **Also, the SFL will not**
21 **provide SFL Team Rosters directly to the teams.** Electronic SFL Team Roster files
22 are provided to the SFL Club Representative and the coaches may obtain additional
23 copies from their SFL Club Representative. The following describes the expected
24 process and time frames.

25
26 (1) **Initial SFL Team Rosters** – As noted above, the SFL Club Representative is
27 expected to provide a Master Player Roster that can be used to generate the initial
28 SFL Team Rosters by 6:00 PM on the Monday preceding the first game week. By
29 Wednesday at 9:00 PM, the SFL expects to provide the SFL Club Representatives
30 the SFL Team Rosters for distribution to their teams. Once the SFL has generated
31 these rosters, no changes may be requested until the following week. For example,
32 if the SFL generates the SFL Team Roster on Monday after the Master Player
33 Roster has been received, then no changes may be requested later that week.

34
35 (2) **Revised SFL Team Rosters** – Each week the SFL Club Representative may
36 submit one (1) updated Master Player Roster and request revised SFL Team
37 Rosters. These submissions must be received by 6:00 PM on Wednesday. The
38 SFL is expected to process this request and provide the updated SFL Team Rosters
39 back to the SFL Club Representative by 9:00 PM on Friday for distribution to the
40 coaches.

41
42 (3) Master Player Roster submission after the dates and times described above may
43 result in the SFL not generating SFL Team Rosters until the following week.

44
45 3. **Exchanging rosters with the opposing team** – Coaches are required to provide a **paper**
46 **copy** of their approved SFL Team Roster to the opposing team before the start of every
47 game. If a team is unable to provide a paper copy of their approved roster the team is
48 assessed a forfeit. Therefore, it is a good idea to provide copies of the approved roster to
49 more than one individual on your team.

50
51 a. If a SFL Team Roster is requested but not provided and both teams agree to play, then
52 neither team can request a forfeit because a roster was not available. If a forfeit is
53 accepted because of a roster problem, then the teams should leave the field. In other
54 words, the teams **should not** use the game as a scrimmage.

1
2 b. The game official may also request a copy of each team's SFL Team Roster.
3

4 **F. Roster Challenges – If a coach does not have a SFL Team Roster when challenged, they**
5 **will be assessed a forfeit.** Therefore, it is a good idea for coaches to provide copies of the
6 SFL Team Roster to more than one individual on the team. The SFL does not expect that roster
7 challenges will become a common practice and the number of challenges will be monitored. If
8 a coach appears to abuse this policy, then the appropriate SFL Club Representative will be
9 notified and appropriate disciplinary action suggested. Two types of roster challenges may be
10 made – field challenges and roster form challenges.
11

12 1. **Field Challenges** – The Process and Procedures – SFL Team Rosters document discusses
13 how to conduct a roster challenge on the field. As noted in this document, **in almost all**
14 **cases, the SFL will make a decision after the game is played whether a forfeit will be**
15 **awarded when a team has a SFL Team Roster. The referee is only expected to**
16 **perform the roster challenge process and is not expected to make a decision on a**
17 **forfeit since this decision is left to the applicable SFL Commissioner.**
18

19 2. **Roster Form Challenges** – A coach may challenge the accuracy of the Team Roster
20 provided by the opposing team through that coach's SFL Club Representative. A copy of
21 the SFL Team Roster provided by the opposing team must be provided with the challenge
22 along with the reason for the challenge. The SFL will then validate that the information on
23 that form agrees with the latest version of the SFL Team Roster provided to the applicable
24 SFL Club Representative. As noted elsewhere, unauthorized modifications to the SFL
25 Team Roster may result in the forfeiture of games and team elimination from future SFL
26 games.
27

28 G. A club must register all their recreational teams in a given age group.
29

30 **III. SHARING PLAYERS BETWEEN TWO TEAMS AND COMBINING TEAMS** 31

32 A. Sharing players between two teams for regular season games.
33

34 1. Some clubs may allow a player to play on two teams which is not in accordance with the
35 SFL rules that a player may only appear on one roster
36

37 2. A club that has too many players for one team but not enough for two teams is allowed to
38 form two teams and share players to ensure an adequate number are available for a game
39 when the SFL approves the sharing of players between teams.
40

41 a. The applicable SFL Commissioner will consider a request to share players when the
42 following conditions are met:
43

44 (1) The request must normally be submitted before the season begins.
45

46 (2) A club must make a good faith effort not to abuse this exception. For example, if a
47 club has 52 players, they should establish 3 teams to make sure that enough players
48 will be available to play each game. They should not establish 4 teams.
49

50 (3) Each team must have at least 12 players in the Under 11/12 age groups and 14
51 players in the Under 13/19 age groups. Furthermore, if the combined number of
52 players on the two teams sharing players is less than 26 for the Under 11/12 age
53 groups and 30 for the Under 13 and older age groups, then the SFL may require the
54 teams to play their home games on Sunday.

1 **Note:** The SFL makes no efforts to deconflict game schedules for teams
2 authorized to share players.
3

4 b. When the SFL approves a request to share players, the SFL Team Roster will show (1)
5 when a team is authorized to “share players”, (2) the team rosters that are authorized to
6 be used when sharing players, e.g., Team 1 and Team 5 – Under 14 Girls, and any
7 limitations or other comments, e.g., only being allowed to share players during the
8 regular season games.
9

10 (1) The minimum number of players that are assigned to a team must be consistent
11 with section above on the minimum number of players that must be on a team
12 before the sharing of players is authorized, i.e., twelve (12) for U11/12 teams and
13 fourteen (14) for U13/19 teams.
14

15 c. The coach(es) sharing players must (1) provide copies of the SFL Team Rosters for both
16 of the teams authorized to share players to the opposing coach during the roster
17 exchange process and (2) notify the opposing coach and the officials before the game
18 which players will play and which players are being added from the other team.
19

20 **B. Combining teams for the tournament.**
21

22 1. A team is not allowed to share players between teams for tournament play without express
23 written permission of the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.
24

25 2. The SFL Club Representative must prepare a “tournament roster” using a SFL approved
26 team roster form before the tournament and provide it to the coach(es) of the teams showing
27 the players that are eligible to play on each team. A name may only be shown once. For
28 example, if Player A is shown on Team A’s roster, Player A may not be shown on Team
29 B’s roster. A copy of the “tournament roster” shall be submitted to the appropriate SFL Age
30 Group Commissioner at least one week before the first tournament game is scheduled to be
31 played by Email with a copy provide to the coach of each team. The SFL Club
32 Representative should make sure that the coach(es) understand that they are not allowed to
33 share players for tournament play.
34

35 a. If a club decides that it cannot field all the teams that have been allowed to share players
36 during the regular season for tournament play, then the SFL Club Representative is
37 responsible for notifying the SFL prior to the tournament scheduling process the team(s)
38 that should not be scheduled for tournament play. The players on the regular season
39 roster of the team(s) not scheduled to play in tournament may be added to the other
40 team(s) tournament roster.
41

42 (1) Only players on the teams that are allowed to share players during the regular
43 season may be merged onto a single team without the express written permission
44 of the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner. The size of the combined roster
45 may not exceed fourteen (14) players for the U11/12 age groups and sixteen (16)
46 players for the U13/19 age groups.
47

48 **Example 1**
49

50 Teams A and B are allowed to share players during the regular season and Team A
51 decides that it cannot play in the tournament. Players from Team A may be added
52 to Team B's tournament roster as long as the tournament roster does not exceed 14
53 players if the team is in the U11/12 age groups or 16 players if the team is in the
54 U13/19 age groups. However, players from Team A may not be added to any other

1 team's roster without express written permission from the appropriate SFL Age
2 Group Commissioner.

3 **Example 2**

4
5 Teams A and B are allowed to share players during the regular season and Team C
6 decides that it cannot play in the tournament. Players from Team C MAY NOT be
7 added to either Team A's or Team B's tournament roster without express written
8 permission from the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner.
9

- 10
11 C. The Process and Procedures – SFL Team Rosters document discusses other requirements that
12 apply to sharing players and including (1) a limitation on the number of players that may play
13 on the shared teams and (2) how to address the duplicate uniform issues that may arise.
14

15 **IV. GAME REQUIREMENTS**

- 16
17 A. All games will be played in accordance with “FIFA Laws of the Game” as modified by the
18 USSF for youth play and as clarified in these operating instructions.
19
20 B. Nothing in these rules precludes a club from imposing more stringent rules on their own teams.
21
22 C. All players in good standing must play at least 50 percent of the game. The applicable club is
23 responsible for defining what is considered good standing.
24

25 **D. Regular Season Game Times and Time Slots**

- 26
27 1. The following are the regular season game times that were approved at the preseason
28 meeting for each age group.
29
30 a. Under 11/12 Boys and Girls – two 30 minute halves.
31 b. Under 13/14 Boys and Girls – two 35 minute halves.
32 c. Under 16 Boys and Girls – two 40 minute halves.
33 d. Under 19 Boys and Girls – two 40 minute halves. However, if time is available and
34 both teams agree, then the Under 19 age groups may play 45 minute halves.
35
36 2. The following are the minimum regular season game slots that were approved at the
37 preseason meeting for each age group.
38
39 a. Under 11/12 Boys and Girls – 75 minutes
40 b. Under 13/14 Boys and Girls – 90 minutes
41 c. Under 16 Boys and Girls – 90 minutes
42 d. Under 19 Boys and Girls – 90 minutes
43

44 **E. Tournament Game Times** – The following game times were approved at the preseason 45 meeting:

- 46
47 1. Under 11/12 Boys and Girls: two 30 minute halves.
48 2. Under 13 through Under 19 Boys and Girls: two 35 minute halves.
49

50 **Note:** The minimum time slot for tournament games is one hour and 45 minutes (105 minutes)
51 to allow for the required roster checks and, if required penalty kicks. In addition, these
52 game times are subject to change depending on the tournament format that is selected
53 for a given site. See the section on tournament schedules for additional information.
54

1 F. **Substitutions** – Substitutions may be made in accordance with the current Laws of the Game
2 as defined by US Soccer, US Youth Soccer, and VYSA. **Note:** US Youth Soccer currently
3 allows substitutions during any stoppage in play.
4

5 G. **Team Size** – The Laws of the Game as defined by US Soccer, US Youth Soccer, and VYSA
6 define the minimum and maximum team size that is appropriate for a given age group, e.g., 11
7 v 11 is the maximum team size for the Under 19s. Although the SFL does not have a
8 maximum roster size, the SFL suggests no more than twice the number of players allowed on
9 the field are assigned to a team because of the 50 percent playing rule discussed elsewhere.
10

11 H. **Team Colors** – Teams must have matching colored jerseys with a unique number assigned to
12 each player. If a color clash between two teams exists, it is the responsibility of the home team
13 to change colors by using an alternate colored jersey. Required numbers will be waived.
14

15 I. **Equipment** – Shin-guards are mandatory and each player must wear FIFA acceptable sport
16 shoes or sneakers are required. Metal cleats shall not be worn.
17

18 J. **Play Down Rule** – If one team has less than the maximum number of players allowed the
19 following rules shall be used:
20

- 21 1. A team must have at least 4 fewer players than the maximum number allowed, e.g., if the
22 game format is 11 v 11, then seven (7) players are needed to play a game.
23
- 24 2. If one team has does not have the maximum number of players, then the opposing team may
25 only play no more than two (2) players.
26

27 **Example – Team Playing 11 v 11**

- 28 • If one team has seven (7) players, then the opposing team is required to play no more
29 than nine (9) players.
30
- 31 • If one team has eight (8) players, then the opposing team is required to play no more
32 than ten (10) players.
33
- 34 • If one team has nine (9) or ten (10) players, the other team may play all eleven (11)
35 players.
36

37 3. The above play down rules also apply when players from the team with the lesser number of
38 players leave a game due to injury or illness. In these circumstances, the opposing team
39 should not continue play with more than two players over the number that the other team
40 has on the field of play.
41

42 4. Red carded players on the short sided team do not cause the team with more players to play
43 down. For example if Team A has 11 players and Team B has 9 players and Team B
44 receives a red card, Team A is not required to play down.
45

46 K. Coaches are required to reduce the number of players on the field once a team has scored 5
47 goals more than the other team until the minimum number of players for a game is reached
48 (e.g., 7 for 11 v 11 games). For example, if a team is winning the game 5 – 1 and scores
49 another goal, they must reduce the number of players on the field down by at least one player,
50 if it scores another goal, then another player must be removed, etc. Should the goal differential
51 be reduced after a player is removed, then the team with the higher score may add back a
52 player. For example, if the goal score differential is 6 the team with the higher score will have
53
54

1 removed 2 players. If the other team scores a goal, then the team with the higher score may
2 add back one player, i.e., they will still be playing one player down. A game score of 10 – 0
3 provides no more benefits than a game score of 3 – 0 since goals scored is not used in any of
4 the ranking factors.
5

- 6 1. Mercy rule – The losing coach has the option to terminate a game without penalty when the
7 winning team has a 6 or more goal lead. The game is terminated once the referee has been
8 notified by the losing coach or the captain of the losing team that the mercy rule is being
9 invoked. The losing coach has the sole discretion when to implement the mercy rule. The
10 score reports filed for the game should also include a statement that the game was
11 terminated early because of the mercy rule.
12

13 **L. Home Team Responsibilities – Regular Season Play**

- 14 1. Providing a suitable game field for the given age group (for example, for the Under 14 age
15 group the field shall be a minimum of 50 yards X 100 yards), goals with nets, lines, corner
16 flags, and game ball.
17
18 a. Clubs are expected to provide fields in accordance with the guidelines establish by US
19 Soccer, US Youth Soccer, and VYSA.
20
21 (1) If a team does not believe that a game is being played on a field that is not
22 compliant with the applicable field guidelines, the coach should play the game and
23 then notify the appropriate SFL Club Representative of the problems. The SFL
24 Club Representative may then request the SFL to review the matter and make a
25 decision on whether a forfeit should be awarded.
26
27 (a) Forfeits will normally not be awarded for the following conditions:
28
29 (i.) Fields that are properly sized but the markings are not entirely compliant
30 with the applicable guidelines.
31
32 (ii.) Corner flags not being present.
33
34 2. Providing either three USSF certified referees (one Center Referee and two Assistant
35 Referees) using the Diagonal System of Control (DSC); or two USSF certified referees
36 using the DSC with one “club” Assistant Referee provided by one of the two teams; or, in
37 an emergency, a single USSF certified referee. If the proper number of officials are not
38 present by game time plus 15 minutes, the game will be forfeited by the home team.
39
40 a. Referees should not be immediate family members to team officials except in an
41 emergency.
42
43

44 Discussion

45 It is recognized that, in most cases, the coach of the home team has very little, if any,
46 control over whether officials will be present for a game. Therefore, should a situation
47 arise in which at least one USSF certified official is not present by game time plus 15
48 minutes, the visiting team is encouraged to select one of the following options rather
49 than accepting the forfeit and leaving the field of play. One option is to reschedule the
50 game for a later date. (In this situation, the home team may want to consider offering to
51 play at the visiting team’s home field.) A second option is to play the game and use
52 team officials and consider the results binding.
53
54

1 If the two coaches believe that a safe and effective match can be played, then they
2 should play as long as the safety and the rules of the sport are not sacrificed. If either
3 coach believes that the match cannot be safely and effectively played, then the coaches
4 should consider a rematch. However, the visiting coach does have the right to accept a
5 forfeit. If a forfeit is accepted because either coach does not believe that a safe and
6 effective game can be played, then the teams should leave the field. In other words, the
7 teams **should not** use the game as a scrimmage.
8

- 9 b. Center referees shall be at least two (2) years older than the age group they are
10 officiating except as noted in section (1) below. For example, the referee shall meet at
11 least the Under 14 age criteria to officiate Under 12 games or meet the Under 16 age
12 criteria to officiate Under 14 games. Therefore, individuals meeting the Under 13 age
13 criteria or lower may not act as a center referee for Under 12 games.
14
- 15 (1) It is recognized that some clubs have a referee training program that allows
16 referees that do not meet the two (2) years or older requirement to officiate games
17 to facilitate their training. This practice is acceptable when (1) the referee is at
18 least the age of the game they are officiating, e.g., an Under 16 game must be
19 officiated by a referee who meets at least the Under 16 age criteria and (2) at least
20 one adult of 21 years or older and is a qualified referee serves as an assistant
21 referee.
22
- 23 (2) Clubs are expected to provide adequate officials for the games. If adequate
24 officials cannot be provided, then (1) the visiting team should be notified by Friday
25 night that the game cannot be played and (2) a forfeit will be assessed to the home
26 team.
27
- 28 (a) If a question on whether the center referee is of the appropriate age arises on
29 game day, then the game should be played unless the home team coach has
30 positive knowledge that the center referee does not meet the age requirements.
31
- 32 (i.) If the home team coach has positive knowledge that the center referee
33 does not meet the age requirements, then the game should not be played
34 and the home team is assessed a forfeit upon verification of the referee's
35 age.
36
- 37 (ii.) If the home team coach does not have positive knowledge of the center
38 referee's age, then the visiting coach may then file a protest through their
39 SFL Club Representative and request the SFL to determine whether the
40 center referee for the subject game was of the appropriate age. Once the
41 SFL receives this request, it will request the home team's club to
42 confirm that the center referee was of the appropriate age. If the referee
43 was not of the appropriate age, then the home team will be assessed a
44 forfeit.
45
- 46 (iii.) Under no circumstances may a coach, team official, or other individual
47 request the referee to provide evidence of their age.
48
- 49 (b) Clubs that are unable to provide center referees of an appropriate age will be
50 penalized if the SFL determines that two (2) or more games actually played
51 are officiated by center referees that do not meet the age requirements.
52 Specifically, all home games for the given age group and above will be
53 cancelled and the home team(s) assessed forfeits for those games. For
54 example, if Club A does not provide appropriately aged center referees for two

1 of the Under 16 games actually played, then all Under 16 and Under 19 home
2 games for teams associated with Club A will be cancelled and those home
3 teams will be assessed forfeits.
4

- 5 (3) Forfeits assessed for referee problems may be removed if the both teams agree to
6 play the game at a later date.
7

8 Example
9

10 Team A notifies Team B that its club cannot provide proper officials on Friday
11 night for Saturday's game. Team A is assessed a forfeit. Team A and Team B
12 then agree to play the game at a later date. Once this game is played, the forfeit
13 against Team is removed and the actual game result is used.
14

- 15 3. **The home team is required to call the visiting team by the Wednesday preceding the**
16 **game to confirm the game time, team colors, location, directions, and any other**
17 **information they may need.** In addition, both teams should discuss how the team roster
18 exchange process will be handled. If a coach does not have the information needed to place
19 this call, then the Club Age Group Commissioner or SFL Club Representative should be
20 called.
21
- 22 a. If you have not been contacted by a coach and do not know the name or phone number,
23 then you should call either the Club Age Group Commissioner or the SFL Club
24 Representative that applies for that age group. For example, if you are scheduled to play
25 Reston 1 and you are in the Under 14 Girls age group and you do not know the coach's
26 phone number, then you would first call the Reston Under 14 Girls Age Group
27 Commissioner. If you cannot reach the appropriate Club Age Group Commissioner,
28 then you should call the SFL Club Representative. A listing of Club Age Group
29 Representatives and SFL Club Representatives is provided in the regular season
30 mailing.
31
- 32 4. Determining if a color clash exists. In case of a color clash, the home team must change
33 colors. The requirement for unique uniform numbers is waived for the team required to
34 change colors.
35
- 36 5. Notifying the visiting team if a game is postponed due to weather. The home team should
37 call the visiting team at least 3 hours before the scheduled start time. The home team
38 should then call the Age Group Commissioner and notify them that the game has been
39 postponed and, if possible, the makeup date. Games will not be played if the field has been
40 closed by either the Department of Recreation, the local club, or referee. (See section on
41 Game Rescheduling for additional information on how games are rescheduled.)
42

43 **M. Other**
44

- 45 1. Slide tackling is permitted unless otherwise stated, however, the referee will have the final
46 decision as to whether the tackle was properly executed. Coaches are directed to instruct
47 their players on proper technique and the potential of injury to other players and themselves
48 when improperly done.
49
- 50 2. Under 12, Under 14, Under 16, and Under 19 girls are allowed to place their arms across
51 their chest for protection. The referee has the final decision as to whether the action was
52 legally executed.
53

1 3. A team must be ready to play the game within 15 minutes of the scheduled game time. If a
2 team is not ready to play, then the opposing team has the right to request a forfeit or have
3 the game rescheduled. If a forfeit is accepted because a team is not ready to play, then the
4 teams should leave the field. In other words, the teams **should not** use the game as a
5 scrimmage.
6

7 4. Teams are required to check the web site after Friday at 8:00 PM to ensure that no changes
8 have been made to their Saturday (or Sunday) game schedule for that week.
9

10 V. GAME CONDITIONS AND WEATHER RELATED CANCELLATIONS

11
12 A. The home team should call the visiting team as soon as possible that a game has been canceled
13 because of weather. This notice should be at least 3 hours before the game time. In the case of
14 inclement weather, the home team should also notify the visiting team that a game will be
15 played. Unless otherwise shown below, the decision of Fairfax County Parks Authority will
16 apply to all game fields regardless of whether the field is actually managed by the Fairfax
17 County Parks Authority. The following phone numbers can be used to check field conditions:
18

- 19 • Fairfax County Parks Authority – (703) 324-5264
- 20
- 21 • Games played at Alexandria – (703) 746-5597
- 22
- 23 • Games played at Arlington – (703) 228-4715 and Press 1
- 24
- 25 • Games played at Bles Park (Ashburn) – (703) 729-7050 or www.ashburnsoccer.org
- 26
- 27 • Games played at Ashburn – use Loudoun – (703) 777-5897
- 28
- 29 • Games played at Braddock Road – (703) 354-7101 or www.brycsoccer.org.
- 30
- 31 • Games played at Burke Athletic – 1-866-855-4BAC (1-866-855-4222) (Sat./Sun.)
- 32
- 33 • Games played at Chantilly – (703) 830-1272 or www.cyaweather.com
- 34
- 35 • Games played at Clarke County – (540) 955-9002 or www.clarkesoccer.org
- 36
- 37 • Games played at Fairfax – (703) 385-7976) (This is a Fairfax City recording)
- 38
- 39 • Games played at Falls Church – (703) 248-5125
- 40
- 41 • Games played at Fauquier – (540) 349-8722 and go to mailbox #94
- 42
- 43 • Games played at Gunston – (703)360-7013
- 44
- 45 • Games played at Haymarket – www.vsa-heat.org
- 46
- 47 • Games played at Herndon – (703) 318-8552
- 48
- 49 • Games played at Lee-Mt. Vernon – (703) 799-1112
- 50
- 51 • Games played at Loudoun – www.loudounsoccer.com
- 52
- 53 • Games played at McLean – www.mcleansoccer.org/page/show/38975
- 54

- 1 • Games played at Northern Virginia – Ben Lomond – (703) 792-3281, Hellwig – (703)
2 792-3283, Nokesville (703) 792-3294
- 3
- 4 • Games played at Prince William – Tyrell – (703) 792-3285, Chinn (703) 792-3291
- 5
- 6 • Games played at Reston – <http://www.restonsoccer.com/>
- 7
- 8 • Games played at Nottoway – (703) 938-7532
- 9
- 10 • Games played at Southwestern – (703) 644-8046
- 11
- 12 • Games played at Sterling – <http://www.sysa.net/>
- 13

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

17
18 Example 1

19
20 You are scheduled to play on a field that is not controlled by Fairfax County Parks Authority
21 and the field is not listed above, if the Fairfax County Parks Authority closes its fields, then the
22 field you are scheduled to play on is also considered closed.

23
24 Example 2

25
26 You are scheduled to play on a field which is not controlled by Fairfax County Parks Authority
27 and the field is not listed above. When you call the Fairfax County Parks Authority you find
28 out that it has closed some of its fields while others are open. In this case, then the field you
29 are scheduled to play on is also considered closed unless you are contacted by the home team
30 or your club and notified that the game is still scheduled to be played. Both teams must be
31 notified at least 3 hours before the scheduled game time of this decision.

- 32
- 33 A. If either coach does not believe that a game should be played because of the game conditions,
34 they have the right to request a forfeit from the other team. This request must be in writing and
35 mailed to the SFL within 12 hours of the scheduled game time. The appropriate SFL Age
36 Group Commissioner will make a ruling on which team will be assessed a forfeit and notify
37 the SFL Commissioner and Administrator. If a game is played, neither team can protest the
38 game conditions unless both coaches agree before the game begins to play the game under
39 protest. If a game is agreed to be played under protest, then both coaches must document the
40 reason for the protest and signify their agreement by printing and signing their names.
41 Examples of items that would normally result in a forfeit being charged to the protesting team
42 include:
- 43
 - 44 1. only having a properly qualified center referee,
 - 45
 - 46 2. poorly lined fields, and
 - 47
 - 48 3. field conditions when the referee has made a determination that the field is playable.
 - 49
- 50 B. **Games Halted** – A game halted at half time or later due to unsafe playing conditions will
51 stand as indicated by the score when the game was halted.
- 52
 - 53 1. If due to unsafe playing conditions a regular season game is halted prior to half-time, it will
54 be replayed unless waived by the SFL Age Group Commissioner.

- 1
2 2. If a tournament game is halted due to unsafe playing conditions after being started, the game
3 result at the time of termination will be used as the final game result unless waived by the
4 SFL Age Group Commissioner.
5

6 Example
7

8 A regular season game is terminated 30 minutes into the first half due to weather
9 conditions. The game is rescheduled to be played at a later date unless waived by the
10 appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner. On the other hand, a tournament game
11 terminated 5 minutes into the first half because of weather conditions would use the game
12 results at the time of termination. The SFL will decide how to handle tournament games
13 ending in a tie that are scheduled using the in single elimination format.
14

15 **VI. REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE**
16

- 17 A. The regular season play will consist of 7 or 8 games with a post season tournament.
18
19 B. Game points will be awarded for each game played. Game points are awarded as follows: 4
20 points for a win, 2 points for a tie, 1 point for a loss, and 0 points for a forfeit. The game score
21 for a forfeited game is 1 – 0 unless both teams are assessed a forfeit. When both teams are
22 assessed a forfeit, then the game score is 0 – 0. Bonus points will also be awarded based on
23 the goal differential up to a maximum of 3 points per game. For example, a game score of 5 –
24 1 would result in 3 bonus points.
25
26 C. The SFL web site displays team rankings in the following order: game point percentage, game
27 points, bonus points, and goals allowed.
28
29 1. The game point percentage is calculated as follows: game points earned divided by total
30 games played times maximum number of points that can be earned for a game. For
31 example, if a team plays 4 games, wins 2 games, ties 1 game, and loses the remaining game,
32 its game point percentage would be calculated as follows: (11 game points earned (4 + 4 + 2
33 + 1) / 16 game points (4 games X 4 points per game)) = 68.8 percent.
34

35 **VII. REPORTING GAME RESULTS AND RESCHEDULING GAMES**
36

- 37 A. The following three methods are acceptable for reporting scores: Email (sfl@sflsoccer.org),
38 voice mail (703-476-6610), and through the Web site (www.sflsoccer.org). **The preferred**
39 **method of reporting game results is Email.** Both teams are responsible for reporting the
40 game score, regardless of the outcome, by 6:00 PM on the Monday following the game.
41
42 1. If a score is not received by 6:00 PM on Monday, both teams will be assessed a 1 game
43 point penalty. Therefore, failure to promptly report a score will effect game points and may
44 affect a team's standing.
45
46 2. Teams are required to provide the following information when reporting scores: name of
47 individual reporting the score, team name, game number, score for each team, and
48 **information on any yellow or red cards awarded.** For example, Sam Jones, Reston 1,
49 Game 4421, Reston 1 – 2, Reston 2 – 0, no red or yellow cards. In addition, if the opposing
50 team did not provide a roster when requested, this should also be included with the game
51 report. **When reporting scores by Email, please put the game number in the "Subject"**
52 **field. It makes filing the scores easier for us.**
53
54 a. When a report is received that a team did not have a roster, then this report shall be sent

1 to the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner, SFL Club Representative, and other
2 individuals that are considered appropriate by the SFL for their information. The
3 individuals receiving these reports are not required to respond to the SFL on whether
4 any actions were taken or the actions that were taken. Repeated offenses may result in a
5 team being suspended from the tournament by the appropriate SFL Age Group
6 Commissioner.

7
8 Instructions for Using
9 the Voice Mail System

10
11 Call (703) 476-6610 and you will hear the following greeting:

12
13 Hello, this is the SFL. Press 1 to leave scores for boys games, 2 to leave scores for girls
14 games, 3 for general messages, and 4 to leave a message for a SFL Commissioner. You
15 may press your selection at any time. When leaving scores, please speak slowly and state
16 your name, age group, team name, game number, and score for each team. For example,
17 Joe Smith, Under 14 Girls, Reston 1, Game 4421, Reston 1 – 2, Reston 2 – 0. Thank
18 you.

19
20 Press the proper number and leave your message.

- 21
22 B. The process and procedures used to reschedule regular season games are discussed in the
23 **Process and Procedures – Rescheduling Regular Season Games**. This document may be
24 obtained from the web site under SFL Documents.

25
26 **VIII. TOURNAMENT GAMES**

- 27
28 A. The **Process and Procedures – Tournament Scheduling** document discusses the following
29 topics:

- 30
31 • General tournament requirements
32
33 • Teams eligible to participate in the tournament
34
35 • Placement of teams in tournament divisions
36
37 • Tournament format
38
39 • Actions taken when tournament games cannot be played as scheduled

40
41 This document may be obtained from the web site under SFL Documents.

- 42
43 B. **Tournament Ranking** – The following methods will be used to rank teams unless otherwise
44 stated the **Process and Procedures – Tournament Scheduling** document which discusses
45 how tournament game cancellations and handled.

- 46
47 1. **Round Robin Divisions** – When the tournament schedule is played as expected and teams
48 within a tournament division are scheduled using the round robin format, they will be ranked
49 in the following order: (1) tournament game points, (2) head to head competition during the
50 tournament, (3) tournament bonus points, (4) least goals allowed during the tournament, (5)
51 whether the team received a regular season award (if applicable), (6) head to head
52 competition during the regular season games if they have played each other, (7) least average
53 goals allowed during the regular season, and (8) shoot out. A 3 or 4-way tie is broken in the
54 following order: (1) tournament bonus points, (2) least goals allowed during the tournament,

1 (3) whether the team received a regular season award (if applicable), (4) least average goals
2 per game allowed during the regular season, (4) regular season game point percentage, and
3 (5) coin flip. After one team is eliminated, then the remaining teams will be ranked by
4 starting at the top of the appropriate tie breakers. Note: Normally head to head results are
5 not used in breaking 3 or 4-way ties since one team will not have defeated all the other teams
6 during the tournament. However, if one team has beaten all the other teams that are tied in
7 the tournament, then that team will be placed ahead of all the other teams that it is tied with
8 based on game points.
9

10 **Notes:** Normally, the results of the first 2 games a team plays in a 6 team round robin
11 division with mini groups are used to determine (1) the two teams that play for first
12 and second trophies and (2) the two teams that play for third place trophies. If
13 either of the two games used to determine the trophies end in a tie, then a shoot-out
14 will be conducted to determine the winner of the game. The games used to
15 determine which teams may play for trophies can end in ties.
16

17 Normally only the Under 19s are provided regular season awards. Furthermore,
18 coaches should ensure that a shoot out is not required before dismissing their
19 players.
20

21 2. **Single Elimination Tournament Divisions** – When the tournament schedule is played
22 using the single elimination format, the teams will be ranked as follows:
23

24 a. **Three, Four, Five Team Divisions** – The winner of the final game receives the first
25 place trophies while the loser receives the second place trophies.
26

27 b. **Six Team Divisions** – Teams scheduled for 6 team divisions are ranked as follows:
28

29 (1) **Original tournament game schedule played** – In 6 team divisions, the two teams
30 winning the second round games, play for first and second place trophies with the
31 winner of this game receiving the first place trophies and the loser receiving the
32 second place trophies. Fields and officials permitting, another game to decide the
33 winner of third place trophies will also be played. The teams playing in the game to
34 determine who wins the third place trophies are the losers of the second round
35 game.
36

37 3. Should a game be tied at the end of regulation play **AND** the tournament division is
38 scheduled as a single elimination tournament, then a shoot-out will be conducted. Therefore,
39 games in divisions scheduled using the round robin format may end in a tie. The winner of a
40 shoot out will be awarded one goal to their game score regardless of the number of goals
41 scored in the shoot out. For example, if the game score is tied 2 – 2, and one team scored 5
42 goals during the shoot out while the other team scored 3 goals, then the final game score will
43 be 3 – 2 with the team winning the shootout having the 3 goals.
44

45 a. **Shoot Outs** – If a shoot out is required, the FIFA Procedures to Determine the Winner of
46 A Match – Kicks from the Penalty Mark will apply, in accordance with applicable USSF
47 guidance, except as noted below.
48

49 (1) Players who participate in the shoot out:
50

51 (a) If the tournament is scheduled as a single elimination tournament, then only the
52 players on the field at the end of the game may participate in the shoot out.
53 This is consistent with the FIFA rules.
54

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

7
8 (2) Coaches may stay with the players in the midfield circle.
9

10 C. **Tournament Responsibilities** – A coach may be assigned to be a Site Coordinator, Division
11 Commissioner, and/or Trophy pickup person.
12

- 13 1. The SFL Club Representative must provide **positive** confirmation by Email that a team
14 eligible to play in the tournament is willing to participate in the tournament and that the club,
15 if 4 or more teams are registered, can provide game field(s) and referees. This includes
16 confirmation that the coach is willing to serve as a tournament division commissioner and/or
17 pick up trophies. (As discussed elsewhere, if a club cannot provide adequate fields and
18 officials, then its teams may be excluded from the tournament.) In addition, if a coach is
19 unable to serve as a division commissioner or pick up trophies, then that team may be
20 eliminated from the tournament.
21
- 22 a. Since the tournament format for most groups is a single elimination tournament, it is
23 possible that the original division commissioner assigned to a given division may not
24 play in a subsequent tournament game. If this happens, the coach of the team beating the
25 division commissioner’s team becomes the division commissioner for trophy purposes.
26 However, other division commissioner responsibilities, such as phoning the other teams
27 in case of weather cancellations, remain with the originally assigned division
28 commissioner unless the tournament site coordinator decides otherwise.
29
- 30 2. The Site Coordinator is responsible for (1) providing the fields and nets (2) ensuring that the
31 field(s) are properly lined, (2) ensuring that adequate officials have been assigned for the
32 fields provided, (3) notifying the League Commissioner (703-406-8550) or the SFL
33 Administrator (703-476-6611), and the Division Commissioners for their site in case of
34 game cancellations due to the weather. Generally, the site coordinator is the SFL Club
35 Representative for the club hosting a given tournament site.
36
- 37 3. The Division Commissioner is approved by the applicable SFL Club Representative and is
38 responsible for the following.
39
- 40 a. Preparing a game board (round robin tournament divisions only) for their division and
41 ensuring that the scores are posted. (The SFL Web site has a sample game board on the
42 SFL Documents page.) If the division commissioner’s team loses, then the board is
43 given to the new division commissioner who assumes this responsibility. In some cases,
44 the division commissioner’s team may not play until later in the day. Therefore, the
45 game board may not be available until the division commissioner’s team plays its game.
46
- 47 b. Notifying the teams in their division of game cancellations. In the case of inclement
48 weather, the division commissioner should also notify the teams in their division if
49 games are going to be played and of any schedule changes. This responsibility remains
50 with assigned division commissioner even if the division commissioner’s team loses
51 before the final tournament division game unless the site coordinator performs these
52 duties.
53

- 1 c. Distributing the trophies for their division. Generally the site coordinator is assigned the
2 responsibility for picking up trophies. However, in some cases, in order to reduce the
3 travel requirements, other individuals are assigned this responsibility.
4
- 5 d. The division commissioner is **NOT RESPONSIBLE** for collecting rosters. However, as
6 noted elsewhere, each team is required to present their roster to the other team **BEFORE**
7 the start of their game. **IF A TEAM DOES NOT HAVE A ROSTER, THAT TEAM**
8 **FORFEITS THE GAME**, the referee is notified that the game will not be played, and
9 both teams leave the field of play.
10
- 11 e. In the case of teams playing the “round robin” tournament format, determines the final
12 team rankings for the division.
13
- 14 4. The individuals assigned for Trophy Pickup are also approved by the SFL Club
15 Representative. The SFL sends these individuals an Email on how to pick up the trophies
16 and when they are ready for pickup. All trophies should be picked up by the Friday night
17 preceding the first tournament game. All trophies should be taken to the first tournament
18 game.
19
- 20 a. When the SFL Rules call for the trophies to not be distributed because of cancellation of
21 one or more tournament division games (see section on tournament game cancellations),
22 then the SFL Club Representative responsible for the trophies assigned to that
23 tournament division must return those trophies to the SFL in accordance with the
24 guidance received from the SFL.
25

26 D. Other 27

- 28 1. In order to keep the tournament games on schedule, the referee will normally keep a running
29 clock, i.e., the clock is not stopped for injuries, substitutions, etc. However, the referee may
30 decide to stop the clock if the referee believes that it will not adversely affect the overall
31 tournament game schedule. This is a decision made by the referee and may not be protested.
32
- 33 2. The referee is allowed to use their discretion on when it is too dark to play safely. Therefore,
34 the last games of the day may be shortened because of darkness. This is a decision made by
35 the referee and may not be protested.
36

37 IX. DISCIPLINE, PROTESTS, AND APPEALS 38

- 39 A. It should be remembered that the SFL is governed by the principle that all actions are *For the*
40 *Good of the Player* and unsporting behavior or violation of the Laws of the Game cannot be
41 tolerated. It should also be noted that the SFL is primarily a scheduling organization and that
42 the resolution of complaints, disciplinary actions, and protests is primarily the responsibility of
43 the affected clubs. The role of the SFL is to help facilitate the resolution of complaints,
44 disciplinary problems, and protests.
45
- 46 1. **Quality of Officials** – The SFL has no role in assigning the officials to a game since this is a
47 club responsibility. However, the SFL provides a mechanism for coaches to report on the
48 quality of the officials provided for their games. Comments can be sent directly to the home
49 team’s SFL Club Representative using the standard Email address that is contained in the
50 season package. When you report on the officiating, please provide the game number,
51 teams, game field, and game time. For those that would like a form, the web site has one
52 suggested form that can be used. (The form is on the SFL Documents page.)
53

1 2. As noted by FIFA, the decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including
2 whether or not a goal is scored and the result of the match, are final. Accordingly, (1) game
3 results will not be changed because of referee errors and (2) teams will not be compensated
4 for referee errors. The mechanism available to address such matters is to notify the club
5 providing the officials of the errors so that they can consider such cases when evaluating
6 their referees' performance and guidance that may be needed on how to implement a given rule
7 or set of rules so that these errors do not happen in future games.
8

9 B. At the older age levels, the coach assumes an increased level of responsibility regarding team
10 leadership and maintenance of order and discipline of the team members and team spectators.
11 The SFL expects each of its coaches to set a positive example for their players and spectators in
12 promoting good sportsmanship and self-control. Accordingly, coaches are expected to be
13 present at every game with their team or to ensure that responsible adult leadership is present
14 for the team in their absence. A history of disciplinary infractions by one team can be grounds
15 for team, coach, and/or player dismissal from the league. Such decisions will not be made
16 lightly or hastily and will only be made after a careful review of the facts by a Disciplinary
17 Panel to resolve disputes.
18

19 C. **Misconduct** – Individual Demerits and Team Demerits are used to identify individuals and
20 teams that have a history of infractions related to misconduct and administrative issues while
21 game suspensions are used to penalize specific individuals for the infractions.
22

23 1. **Penalties for Misconduct** – The SFL has three types of penalties relating to misconduct –
24 game suspensions, Individual Demerits, and Team Demerits. Game suspensions and
25 Individual Demerits apply to an individual based on the infraction while Team Demerits
26 apply to a team. Although in many cases the number of Individual Demerits assigned to the
27 individual and the team may be the same, this is not always the case as shown below. The
28 following shows the game suspensions, Individual Demerits, and Team Demerits assigned
29 for given types of misconduct.
30

31 a. Player infractions resulting in one (1) game suspension, one (1) Individual Demerit, and
32 one (1) Team Demerit.
33

- 34 (1) Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the
35 player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.
36
- 37 (2) Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity by
38 deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own
39 penalty area).
40
- 41 (3) Receiving a second caution in the same match.
42

43 **Note:** If a player receives a red card after receiving a second caution a decision is
44 made on whether the red card was received based on the player committing a red
45 card offense or receiving a second caution. For example, assume that a player
46 receives a caution for dissent and then receives a red card for using offensive/
47 insulting/abusive language/ gestures. This is treated as a red card for using
48 offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures rather than a second yellow
49 card for dissent.
50

- 51 (4) Serious foul play.
52
- 53 (5) Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures.
54

1 (6) Individual Conduct Detrimental to the League – Conduct that warrants a one game
2 suspension that is not specifically covered by other suspension offenses. Examples
3 include failing to serve a game suspension by a player. When an individual does not
4 properly serve suspension period, this penalty is in addition to the original penalty.
5 For example, assume a player is suspended for one game and does not serve the one
6 game suspension. The player would be suspended for one additional game.
7

8 b. Infractions incurred by players, coaches, and others resulting in two (2) game
9 suspensions, two (2) Individual Demerits, and two (2) Team Demerits.
10

11 (1) Violent conduct and fighting as defined by the SFL regardless of whether a red card
12 is shown. Conduct which will be treated as fighting, regardless of whether a red
13 card is shown, includes but is not limited to (1) fighting in the opinion of the
14 referee, (2) shoving another player or any other aggressive action outside of the
15 ordinary play of the game, (3) kicking/striking or attempting to kick/strike a player,
16 or spitting. A player “defending himself/herself” is not exempt from this penalty.
17

18 (2) Individual Conduct Detrimental to the League – Conduct that warrants a two game
19 suspension rather than the standard one game suspension or not specifically covered
20 by other infractions. Examples, include racial slurs, non-players (such as coaching
21 staff or spectators) being asked to leave the field or showed a red card, inappropriate
22 behavior towards a game official, etc. Inappropriate conduct towards a game
23 official includes persistent inappropriate comments, verbal threats, being followed
24 to the parking lot in an inappropriate manner, or other actions that would make a
25 referee fear for his/her safety.
26

27 **Discussion**

28
29 The SFL has a zero tolerance policy towards the use of racial slurs. Unfortunately,
30 we have seen an increasing number of complaints of racial slurs being used. In
31 some of the reports the coaches noted that this was "trash talk", "players say this a
32 lot to each other", etc. In effect, the inference was that this behavior was not
33 considered to be harmful or offensive. Unfortunately this is a subjective judgement
34 and what is not offensive to one person may be offensive to another. History has
35 shown where such statements have resulted in very unpleasant situations on the
36 field. Club Referee Coordinators are requested to (1) remind the referees that racial
37 slurs are unacceptable, (2) that such occurrences should be included in their game
38 reports when they can identify the offending player(s) number(s), and (3) like the
39 reports on red cards, we would like those referee reports automatically forwarded to
40 us.
41

42 c. Infractions incurred by players, coaches, and others resulting in season suspensions and
43 three (3) Team Demerits.
44

45 (1) Head Coach – Illegal players used.
46

47 (2) Individual Conduct Detrimental to the League – Offenses that warrant a three game
48 suspension rather than the standard one or two game suspension. Offenses that
49 would normally warrant this type of suspension include referee assault incidents or
50 other behavior that should be referred to VYSA for review.
51

52 d. Administrative penalties assessed to individuals and teams.
53

1 (1) **Illegal players used** – One (1) Team Demerit per illegal player per game. Illegal
2 players include (1) travel players regardless of whether they are shown on the SFL
3 Team Roster, (2) players shown on the SFL Team Roster but declared ineligible
4 during a roster check or roster challenge, and (3) players not shown on the SFL
5 Team Roster. As noted elsewhere, a team using illegal players will be assessed
6 forfeits for the games where illegal players are used and may be excluded from the
7 SFL tournament.
8

9 **Note:** If the coach is assessed a penalty for using illegal players, then this penalty is
10 not assessed unless more than three (3) illegal players are used.
11

12 (2) **Team Conduct Detrimental to the League – One Team Demerit.** Conduct by
13 members of the team or its supporters that is not specifically covered by other
14 suspension or team offenses and warrants one Team Demerit. Examples include
15 failing to ensure a suspended player does not play (this is in addition to the penalty
16 assessed to the individual), etc.
17

18 (3) **Team Conduct Detrimental to the League – Two Team Demerits.** Conduct by
19 members of the team or its supporters that is not specifically covered by other
20 suspension or team offenses and warrants two Team Demerits. Examples include
21 actions that cause a game to be terminated early and failing to properly report red
22 cards or individuals (including the Head Coach) being asked to leave the field.
23 When suspension offenses are not properly reported, the team is also assessed
24 additional Team Demerits and game forfeits until the information is properly
25 received.
26

27 (4) **Team Conduct Detrimental to the League – Three Team Demerits.** Conduct by
28 members of the team or its supporters that are not specifically covered by other
29 suspension or team offenses and warrant three Team Demerits. Examples include
30 actions that warrant review by VYSA.
31

32 2. Individual and Team Demerits 33

34 a. **Individual suspensions** – An individual that receives three (3) Individual Demerits
35 during a season, including post season tournament play, is automatically suspended for
36 the remainder of the season including tournament play.
37

38 b. **Team suspensions** – Two types of team suspensions may result from the accumulation
39 of Team Demerits – suspension from the tournament scheduling process and suspension
40 from regular season and tournament games.
41

42 (1) **Suspension from the tournament scheduling process** – A team that averages one
43 (1) Team Demerit per game played when the tournament schedules are prepared
44 will be excluded from the tournament but will be allowed to continue playing
45 regular season games until the Maximum Team Demerits Allowed limit is reached.
46 For example, if a team has played four (4) games when the tournament scheduling
47 process is started and has been assessed four (4) or more Team Demerits, then that
48 team will not be scheduled for the tournament although it may continue playing its
49 regular season games until the Maximum Team Demerits Allowed limit is reached.
50

51 (2) **Suspension from regular season and tournament games** – A team that
52 accumulates Team Demerits that equals or exceeds the Maximum Team Demerits
53 Allowed will be (1) suspended for any remaining regular season games, (2)

1 excluded from the tournament if scheduled for any tournament games, and (3)
2 placed on probation for the following season.

- 3
4 (a) **Maximum Team Demerits Allowed** – the lesser of (1) the number of regular
5 season games scheduled or (2) the actual games played.

6
7 **Example**

8
9 Team A is originally scheduled for 8 regular season games. However, a team
10 drops out and one of Team A's games is cancelled. In addition, the last game
11 of the season is also cancelled and cannot be rescheduled. Team A plays all 6
12 remaining games. The Maximum Team Demerits Allowed for Team A is six
13 since (1) its regular season game schedule was reduced to 7 games when the
14 team dropped out even though other teams may have played eight regular
15 season games and (2) one game was not played for other reasons.

- 16
17 (i.) **Games Played** – A game where a team is assessed a forfeit for any
18 reason is not considered as a game played. In addition, if the game is
19 unscheduled and neither team has been assessed a forfeit, then that game
20 is also not considered as a game played. For example, Team A is
21 scheduled for eight (8) regular season games and the web site shows that
22 all eight (8) games are considered played. However, Team A is assessed
23 a forfeit for some reason for one game. Team A is considered to have
24 played seven (7) games.

- 25
26 c. **Team Probations** – Teams are placed on probation when the number of Team Demerits
27 received in a season equal or exceed the number of games played that season. For
28 example, if a team plays seven (7) regular season and two (2) tournament games, then the
29 team would be placed on probation if its Team Demerits for the season equal or exceed
30 nine (9) Team Demerits.

- 31
32 (1) The SFL Club Representative is responsible for ensuring that a team is notified that
33 it is considered on probation and aware of the rules that can affect their continued
34 participation in the SFL.

- 35
36 (a) If a team on probation has any of the following conditions, the remainder of its
37 regular season games shall be forfeited and team considered ineligible for
38 tournament play:

39
40 (i.) Accumulation of four (4) team demerits.

41
42 (ii.) A game terminated because of the team's conduct.

43
44 (iii.) Any other disciplinary reason that the SFL Age Group Commissioner
45 deems significant to warrant suspension from the SFL.

- 46
47 (2) Any team on probation that is suspended is considered ineligible to return to the
48 SFL for at least two (2) seasons.

- 49
50 (a) The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner is responsible for determining
51 whether the members associated with a team constitute the team ineligible to
52 participate.

- 1 (i.) It is up to the SFL Club Representative to notify the appropriate SFL Age
2 Group Commissioner when any members of the suspended team or
3 coaches associated with the suspended team are placed on team(s) that
4 will be registered. The SFL Age Group Commissioner must approve of
5 each of these player(s) or coach(es) returning to the SFL before the 2
6 (two) season suspension is served.
7

8 3. Suspensions 9

- 10 a. Unserved suspensions carry over to the next season while the associated Individual
11 Demerits and Team Demerits do not.
12
- 13 b. Suspended players, coaches, and other individuals serving their suspension period are
14 encouraged not to attend the game at all. If the individual desires to attend the team's
15 game during a suspension period, the individual must receive the applicable SFL Club
16 Representative's permission to attend any games where that individual is serving a
17 suspension by 6:00 PM at least two (2) days before the game is scheduled to be played.
18 For example, if an individual is suspended for a game being played on Saturday and the
19 SFL Club Representative decides to permit the individual to attend the game, then this
20 decision must be made by 6:00 PM on Thursday night.
21
- 22 (1) The SFL Club Representative must also notify the SFL when this permission has
23 been granted at the same time the individual is notified.
24
- 25 (2) If the individual receives the SFL Club Representative's permission and does attend
26 the game, the following applies.
27
- 28 (a) The individual should not be closer to the playing field than 100 yards
29 beginning 30 minutes before game time until the game is over. The fact that a
30 game can be seen from a public street or sidewalk which may be closer than
31 100 yards does not relieve the coach, team official, parent, or spectator from
32 complying with this 100-yard rule.
33
- 34 (b) If a player is granted permission to attend the game, then that player may be
35 granted permission by the SFL Club Representative to sit on the bench with the
36 other players as long as the player does not wear a uniform and it is clear to
37 outsiders that the player is not eligible to participate in the game.
38
- 39 (c) The suspended individual will not be involved in any way with administration
40 of the team during the game.
41
- 42 (3) Since the tournament is only conducted during one weekend, any coach or other
43 individual that is not a player who is asked to leave the field may not attend any of
44 that team's remaining tournament games since these suspensions carry at least a two
45 (2) game suspension and a team will not play more than two (2) games after the
46 game in which the offense generating the suspension occurred.
47
- 48 (4) A player receiving a red card that warrants a one game suspension, may attend and
49 participate in that team's third tournament game assuming that (1) the team plays
50 three tournament games and (2) the red card was received in the first game. The
51 player may also attend the team's second tournament game without the SFL Club
52 Representative's approval when (1) the player does not wear a uniform and (2) it is
53 clear to outsiders that the player is not eligible to participate in the game. In
54 addition, the coach should highlight on the roster provided to the opposing coach

1 and referee the player that is not able to play because of a suspension to avoid any
2 confusion on whether a player with that number is allowed on the field of play.

3
4 c. **Suspensions involving individuals who have more than one role** – An individual
5 receiving a suspension may serve in more than one role. For example, the individual
6 may be playing on a combined team, coach more than one SFL Team, or play for a team
7 and coach a SFL team. The following governs what is considered serving the red card
8 suspension.

9
10 (1) **Player receives a red card while playing on a combined team** – Section III.
11 discusses combining teams. If (1) a player receives a red card and (2) the player’s
12 team is considered a playing under the combined team rules, the player must not
13 play in the team’s next scheduled game. If the player receives a red card during the
14 game as a substitute player, then they may not play in the next game that their
15 regular team is scheduled to play. In addition, they may not play with the other
16 team as a substitute player until they are eligible to play for their regular team.

17
18 (2) **Coach receives a suspension and coaches more than one SFL team** – If a coach
19 is suspended for an infraction while coaching one SFL Team then the suspension
20 period will be considered served when that team has played the number of games
21 called for by the suspension. For example, assume that a coach receives a two (2)
22 game suspension as a result of a misconduct incident while coaching Team A. The
23 coach is also considered suspended from coaching any other SFL teams until Team
24 A has played two games.

25
26 (3) **Coach receives a suspension and plays on a SFL team** – If a coach is suspended
27 for an infraction while coaching one SFL Team and plays on another SFL team,
28 then the suspension period will be considered served when the team that the player
29 coached has played the number of games called for by the suspension. For example,
30 assume that the player receives a two (2) game suspension as a result of a
31 misconduct incident while coaching Team A. The coach cannot participate as a
32 player in any SFL games until Team A has played two games.

33
34 (a) The individual’s SFL Club Representative is responsible for notifying the SFL
35 if the individual also plays for a SFL Team.

36
37 (4) **Player receives a suspension and coaches a SFL team** – If a player is suspended
38 for an infraction while playing on a SFL Team and coaches a SFL team, then the
39 suspension period will be considered served when the team that the player is
40 assigned to has played the number of games called for by the suspension. For
41 example, assume that the player receives a two (2) game suspension as a result of a
42 misconduct incident while playing for Team A. The player cannot participate as a
43 coach for any SFL teams until Team A has played two games.

44
45 (a) The individual’s SFL Club Representative is responsible for notifying the SFL
46 if the individual also coaches a SFL Team.

47
48 d. **Failure to serve a game suspension** – A player will be considered as not serving the
49 suspension period if (1) any player wears the same jersey number of the player who
50 received the suspension, unless approval has been given by the appropriate SFL Age
51 Group Commissioner, (2) the player who received the suspension plays in the game
52 regardless of the jersey number, or (3) the suspended individual attends a game during
53 the suspension period without obtaining the required approval from the SFL Club
54 Representative. The team will also be assessed a forfeit.

- 1
2 e. Games cancelled or games where the team receives a forfeit for any reason are not
3 considered as games played when determining whether a player has served a game
4 suspension.
5

6 **Example A**

7
8 Player A receives a red card in week 5 and Player A's next scheduled game in week 6 is
9 cancelled due to weather and team's next game is during week 7. Player A would be
10 required to serve the suspension during the game scheduled for week 7.
11

12 **Example B**

13
14 Player A receives a red card in week 5. During the next game that Player A's team plays
15 (week 6), Player A's team is assessed a forfeit because it did not have a proper roster.
16 Player A would be required to sit out the next game that Player A's team plays, e.g, the
17 week 7 game.
18

- 19 f. **Suspension notices** – Unless the team is expected to play its next game within two (2)
20 days of game in which the suspension offense was incurred, the SFL will normally send
21 the suspension notices applicable the the following week's games on Wednesday or
22 Thursday. This allows the impacts of game rescheduling and forfeits to be determined
23 prior to the notice being sent. The following governs the suspension notices.
24

- 25 (1) **Effects of scores not being reported** – As noted elsewhere, game scores that are
26 not reported by 6:00 PM on Monday result in both teams being assessed scheduling
27 forfeits. As noted elsewhere, games where a team has been assessed a forfeit for
28 any reason are not considered games where an individual has served their
29 suspension and the required suspension will become applicable to the upcoming
30 week. It does not matter if subsequent to the notice that the SFL is notified that the
31 game was played and the suspension was served. The individual must still not
32 participate in the upcoming game.
33

34 **Example**

35
36 Assume that Player A was expected to serve the final suspension for an infraction in
37 week 5. However, no score was reported for the game by Wednesday when the
38 suspension notices for week 6 are prepared. Accordingly, both teams were assessed
39 scheduling forfeits. Since the team was assessed a scheduling forfeit, Player A is
40 considered not to have served the required suspension and a suspension notice for
41 week 6 is prepared for Player A. After receiving the week 6 notice, Player A's team
42 notifies the SFL of the week 5 game score and states that Player A served the
43 suspension during that game. Since the suspension notice has already been sent,
44 Player A is also suspended for the week 6 game since (1) the team had adequate
45 time to report the game score for the week 5 game, (2) could easily determine from
46 the web site that the score had not been received by the SFL, and (3) only one team
47 has to report the score to avoid this penalty even if it is not Player A's team.
48

- 49 (2) **Player's name and uniform number issues** – The information reported on player
50 infractions that result in game suspensions is compared to the information contained
51 on the Master Player submitted by the player's club. When significant differences
52 arise, the coach is contacted to confirm the information reported, e.g., the game
53 report says John Smith was wearing 22 while the Master Player Roster shows Sam
54 Jones wears that number. If significant differences still exist when the suspension

1 notices are prepared, then the suspension notification will contain those
2 difference(s) and no player may play whose name or uniform number(s) appear on
3 that notice.
4

5 **Example A**
6

7 A game report is received which states that Johnnie Smith wearing uniform number
8 22 committed an offense that warranted a game suspension. The Master Player
9 Roster shows that uniform number 22 was assigned to John Smith. Since this is not
10 considered a significant difference, the coach is not contacted and the suspension
11 notice will show both names.
12

13 **Example B**
14

15 A game report is received which states that John Smith wearing uniform number 22
16 committed an offense that warranted a game suspension. The Master Player Roster
17 shows that uniform number 22 was assigned to Sam Jones. The coach (1) does not
18 respond to the request for clarification when the suspension notice is prepared, (2)
19 confirms that the reported name and uniform number was correct, or (3) states that
20 the Master Player Roster contains the incorrect uniform number for Sam Jones.
21 However, in the later case, the necessary change to correct the uniform number of
22 Sam Jones is not submitted by the club by the Wednesday deadline for making
23 changes to the Master Player Roster and is not available for the preparation of the
24 game suspension notices. The suspension notice will contain both John Smith and
25 Sam Jones as the players being suspended and that no player wearing the uniform
26 number of 3 may play. The penalty for both players is imposed since (1) the coach
27 had a opportunity to correct the actual name and (2) if the problem was caused by a
28 Master Player Roster issue, the club had time to make the necessary corrections
29 prior to the suspension notice being prepared.
30

31 **Example C**
32

33 A game report is received which states that John Smith wearing uniform number 22
34 committed an offense that warranted a game suspension. The Master Player Roster
35 shows that uniform number 25 was assigned to John Smith. The coach (1) does not
36 respond to the request for clarification when the suspension notice is prepared, (2)
37 confirms that the reported name and uniform number was correct, or (3) states that
38 the Master Player Roster contains the incorrect uniform number for John Smith.
39 However, in the later case, the necessary change to correct the uniform number of
40 John Smith is not submitted by the club by the Wednesday deadline for making
41 changes to the Master Player Roster and is not available for the preparation of the
42 game suspension notices. The suspension notice will state that John Smith is being
43 suspended and that the uniform numbers 22 and 25 are not eligible to play.
44 Accordingly, no players on the team wearing uniform numbers 22 or 25 may
45 participate in the game since the rules state that no one may wear the uniform
46 number of a suspended player. Assuming that another player on the team is wearing
47 the number 22, then that player is also not eligible to play. The penalty for both
48 players is imposed since (1) the coach had a opportunity to correct the actual name
49 and uniform number combination and (2) if the problem was caused by a Master
50 Player Roster issue, the club had time to make the necessary corrections prior to the
51 suspension notice being prepared.
52

- 53 4. **Reporting Misconduct** – Yellow cards, red cards, and individuals asked to leave the field
54 must be reported to the SFL by both teams in a timely manner. Red cards and instances

1 where individuals have been asked to leave the field must also be reported by the club who
2 provided the officials for the game. The SFL will notify the teams in advance where players
3 and coaches are suspended and are not eligible to participate in the subject game. It is up to
4 the applicable SFL Club Representative to ensure that any other individuals suspended from
5 a game do not appear at the game. Email is the preferred method of reporting the
6 information relating to red cards and individuals that have been asked to leave the field.

- 7
- 8 a. A proper red card report for a player includes the following information (1) player's
9 name, (2) player's jersey number, (3) nature of the infraction, and (4) recommended
10 suspension period.
 - 11
 - 12 b. A proper report for a coach or spectator who has received a red card or been asked to
13 leave the field of play is the name.
 - 14
 - 15 c. Information on red cards and individuals asked to leave the field are required to be
16 reported no later than 6 PM on Monday following the game where the red card was
17 assessed or the individual was asked to leave the field unless the team is expected to play
18 a game during the next two days. If the team is expected to play a game the following
19 two days, then the required information must be reported no later than 8 PM on the game
20 day.

21
22 **Example A**

23
24 Team A plays a game on Saturday and one of its players receives a red card. The next
25 game that Team A plays is the following Saturday. This red card must be properly
26 reported no later than 6 PM on the Monday following the game.

27
28 **Example B**

29
30 Team A plays a game on Saturday and one of its players receives a red card. The next
31 game that Team A plays is the next day (Sunday) or on Monday. This red card must be
32 properly reported no later than 8 PM on the day the game is played (Saturday).

- 33
- 34 d. A referee may request from the coach, player, or other team official the name of any
35 coach, player, or team official that the referee considers needed to perform their reporting
36 responsibilities. If this information is not provided or incorrect information is provided
37 to the referee, the team will be assessed two (2) Team Demerits in addition to any other
38 Team Demerits that may be assessed during the game.

39
40 **D. Club Review of Disciplinary Issues** – The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner or SFL
41 Commissioner may request a club to formally review any incident that involves an Individual or
42 Team Demerit. If the SFL Age Group Commissioner or SFL Commissioner decides that formal
43 review is necessary, the club is expected to have its Rules and Disciplinary Committee or
44 similar organization (e.g., Rules Committee, etc.) formally review the requested incident and
45 provide a written report to the SFL that contains (1) names and titles of the officials on the
46 panel, (2) the approach taken to review the matter that was referred for review, (3) the pertinent
47 facts disclosed during their review, and (4) the actions that the club believe are appropriate. It is
48 expected that this Committee will comply with the VYSA rules for such groups. The club is
49 encouraged to include the club's SFL Club Representative in this process.

- 50
- 51 1. If the SFL decides that a formal review is necessary, the individual(s) that should be subject
52 to the review will normally be identified, if possible, by the SFL.
- 53

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

5
6 (1) If a club is unable to provide the necessary information, then the team will be
7 suspended from SFL play until the necessary information is provided.
8

9 b. Any individual (player, coach, spectator, etc.) whose actions are being reviewed by the
10 club's Rules Committee is ineligible to participate in SFL games until the SFL receives
11 the written report from the club unless this penalty is waived by the SFL. The SFL shall
12 identify the individual(s) subject to this penalty.

13
14 (1) This requirement does not apply to individuals that the Rules Committee may
15 request to appear before it for information gathering purposes only.
16

17 (2) It is recognized that the Rules Committee may later identify other individuals that
18 should be penalized.
19

20 E. **Conduct Detrimental to the League** – A team may be placed on probation during the current
21 and/or subsequent season, regardless of whether any Team Demerits are assigned, because the
22 conduct of the coach, player(s), and/or other individuals is considered to be detrimental to the
23 league.
24

25 1. The appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner or SFL Commissioner will document the
26 reason(s) that a team should be considered being placed on probation for conduct detrimental
27 to the league. A SFL Club Representative may also petition the SFL through the appropriate
28 SFL Age Group Commissioner to place a team on probation by documenting the reason(s).
29 If the request to place a team on probation for conduct detrimental to the league comes from
30 a SFL Club Representative, the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner should opine on
31 the request when distributing it to the other SFL Commissioners.
32

33 2. Once the documentation is prepared, it is submitted to the remaining SFL Commissioners for
34 review. If a majority of the SFL Commissioners agree that the team should be placed on
35 probation, then the applicable SFL Club Representative is formally contacted to obtain
36 his/her views on the proposed probation. The SFL Club Representative will have one week
37 in which to provide a formal response. If no response is received within that time, the SFL
38 will consider that the SFL Club Representative agrees with the proposed probation.
39

40 a. Each SFL Age Group Commissioner will have one vote and a tie is broken by the SFL
41 Commissioner. If a person holds more than one SFL Age Group Commissioner position,
42 then that individual is allowed one vote. If the SFL Commissioner also holds an SFL
43 Age Group Commissioner position and the vote is tied, then the SFL Commissioner may
44 not break the tie and the team will not be placed on probation for conduct detrimental to
45 the league.
46

47 b. If the original request to place a team on probation for conduct detrimental to the league
48 was received from a SFL Club Representative and the majority of SFL Commissioners
49 do not concur, then the SFL Club Representative submitting the request will be notified
50 of the SFL's decision and no appeal is allowed.
51

52 3. Once the SFL Club Representative has provided a formal response to the proposal to place a
53 team on probation, the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner will review the response
54 and opine on whether the proposed probation should be enforced. The SFL Commissioners

1 shall then vote on whether the proposed probation should be finalized using the same voting
2 process that is used for proposing a team for probation. The applicable SFL Club
3 Representative shall then be notified of the final decision. If the original request was
4 received from another SFL Club Representative, then that SFL Club Representative shall
5 also be notified of the final decision. No appeal of this decision is available.
6

- 7
8 4. Teams placed on probation during the season will automatically placed on probation for the
9 following season. Furthermore, any team placed on probation will be suspended from the
10 remaining games of the season when (1) the team accumulates four (4) Team Demerits for
11 any reason during the season or (2) is considered to have conducted another offense that
12 warrants another decision that the team has demonstrated conduct detrimental to the league.
13 If a team has already accumulated four(4) Team Demerits prior to the decision that it has
14 demonstrated conduct detrimental to the league, then (1) the team is automatically suspended
15 for the remainder of the season and (2) automatically place on probation for the following
16 season.

17 **F. Complaints and Protests** – Only a SFL Club Representative or the President (or equivalent) of
18 a club’s governing body are allowed to submit formal complaints or protest a game. SFL Club
19 Representatives or Club Presidents who wish to protest a game or provide a formal complaint,
20 must notify the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner in writing within 48 hours after the
21 match with a copy to the SFL Commissioner. Coaches and any other club officials are not
22 allowed to file formal complaints or protests directly with the SFL. Although the SFL Club
23 Representative or Club President may request other individuals to help the SFL Club
24 Representative or Club President file a complaint or protest, the applicable SFL Age Group
25 Commissioner is only responsible for accepting information from and discussing the complaint
26 or protest with the SFL Club Representative or Club President who is acting on behalf of the
27 club. Only one individual may act on behalf of the club during the complaint or protest process.
28

- 29 1. The formal complaint or protest must include:
30
31 a. the time and location of the match;
32
33 b. the team names and age group;
34
35 c. the nature of the complaint or protest (referee judgment is not considered an item for
36 protest);
37
38 d. the referee’s name, address, and phone number (if known); and
39
40 e. the opposing team coach’s name and other significant witnesses.
41
42 2. During tournament play, a phone report may be made by the SFL Club Representative but
43 must include the above information. The protest will be handled by the applicable SFL Age
44 Group Commissioner.
45
46 3. The SFL Age Group Commissioner is responsible for making the initial decision on an
47 appeal unless that individual is affiliated with a club involved in the protest. The appropriate
48 person making the protest may appeal the SFL Age Group Commissioner’s decision to the
49 SFL Commissioner whose decision is final.
50
51 a. If the SFL Age Group Commissioner is affiliated with a club involved in the protest, then
52 the protest shall be heard by the SFL Commissioner, unless the SFL Commissioner is
53 affiliated with a club involved in the protest, whose decision is final.
54

- 1 b. If the SFL Commissioner is affiliated with a club involved in the protest, then the SFL
2 Age Group Commissioner’s decision is considered final and cannot be appealed.
3
4 c. If both the SFL Age Group Commissioner and SFL Commissioner are affiliated with a
5 club involved in the protest, then the protest shall be heard by an SFL Age Group
6 Commissioner that is not affiliated with any of the clubs involved in the protest. The
7 SFL Administrator shall determine which SFL Age Group Commissioner should hear the
8 protest. The decision of this SFL Age Group Commissioner is considered final and may
9 not be appealed.
10

11 **Discussion**

12
13 In the past, the SFL has received a number of protests which should not have not been filed
14 or requested to review actions which are the responsibility of a given club. For example,
15 games were protested because of referee decisions. The SFL recognizes that protest or
16 formal complaint is not appropriate for many conditions that a coach or club believes
17 warrants additional review by a club. Therefore, the SFL will accept informal complaints
18 and forward them to the appropriate club for informational purposes. The SFL is not
19 responsible for following up to determine what actions were taken by a given club on
20 informal complaints.
21

22 As noted elsewhere, the SFL rules contain a variety of standard penalties for offenses
23 covered by the Laws of the Game or SFL specific infractions such as violent conduct,
24 fighting, using illegal players, etc. While these cover a large number of disciplinary
25 situations, the SFL also receives requests for the SFL to undertake reviews and impose
26 penalties that are well outside the scope of its operations. Specifically, it must be
27 remembered that the SFL's primary purpose to provide a scheduling service so that clubs can
28 have a robust recreational program. When situations arise that are outside its scope of
29 operations, the SFL has adopted a policy recommending that the complaint be addressed
30 through more appropriate means such as referring the matter to VYSA and/or the appropriate
31 law enforcement agency. These organizations have the administrative policies, procedures,
32 and authority to address the concerns that are outside the scope of the SFL's operations.
33

34 **G. Video Evidence** – The SFL is willing to accept video evidence to support a given disciplinary
35 issue. However, it is up to the appropriate SFL Commissioner to the extent that the information
36 is used in arriving at a decision. The following guidelines have been adopted by the SFL
37 Commissioners in guiding the decision on the extent that video evidence will be used.
38

- 39 1. Video evidence will normally be considered in reviewing such matters as (1) deciding
40 whether a team used illegal players that was not able to be detected through the roster
41 checking or roster challenge process and (2) whether physical altercations that would warrant
42 a two game suspension may have occurred on or off the field of play that were not detected
43 by the officiating crew.
44
45 2. Video evidence will not be considered in requests to overturn referee decisions such as
46 whether (1) goal was or was not scored, (2) a red card should be reduced to a yellow card,
47 etc. In addition, it will not be used to evaluate subjective items such as whether a player or
48 team is “too physical”. Such issues should be addressed with the team’s SFL Club
49 Representative. As noted elsewhere, when a club is concerned about a team’s “level of
50 play”, the club may request the SFL to review the matter as conduct that is detrimental to the
51 league. In such cases, video evidence may be allowed by the SFL.
52

Glossary of Terms

1
2
3
4 **Adult League** – Normally consist of players who meet the age criteria for Under 18s and above. Teams
5 will be broken into three broad groups – Coed, Men, and Women. Members of either gender may play on
6 a Coed or Men’s team. Only members of the female gender may play on a Women’s team.

7
8 **Club Age Group Representative** – Each club may appoint one individual to represent the teams of a
9 given age group. This individual may assist the SFL Club Representative but is not allowed to vote on
10 SFL matters or act as an official representative of the club unless the club has also appointed this
11 individual as the SFL Club Representative. Examples of duties perform by Club Age Group
12 Representatives include providing information on the teams in their assigned age group and acting as a
13 point of contact when another team has a problem contacting a coach.

14
15 **Game week** – A game week starts on a Friday and normally lasts 7 days. However, if no games are
16 scheduled for a period of 14 days, such as a holiday weekend, then the game week will consist of 14 days.

17
18 **SFL Age Group Commissioners** – Each age group will have a SFL Age Group Commissioner who is
19 responsible to the SFL Commissioner. The SFL Age Group Commissioners are responsible for
20 monitoring the operation of the teams in their age group and will coordinate with the SFL Club
21 Representatives and, if necessary, notify the SFL Commissioner when problems arise or disciplinary
22 action is required.

23
24 **SFL Club Representatives** – Each club is required to appoint one individual as the SFL Club
25 Representative. This individual is the official representative of the club and is responsible for ensuring
26 that all rules and regulations of their club and that of the SFL are being followed. This individual also
27 acts as liaison between the club and the SFL over disputes and rule infractions. **The SFL is not required**
28 **to act upon any issues raised by someone other than the SFL Club Representative or the President**
29 **(or equivalent) of the Club’s governing body.** The SFL Club Representative must also be able to
30 communicate with the SFL using an Email service that is acceptable to the SFL unless a written waiver is
31 granted by the SFL Commissioner. The season package contains the name of the individual who has
32 been designated by the each club as their SFL Club Representative.

33
34 **SFL Commissioner** – Monitors the seasonal and daily operations of the league. This is done with the
35 assistance of the SFL Age Group Commissioners and the SFL Club Representatives. The SFL
36 Commissioner also hears all appeals of decisions made by a SFL Age Group Commissioner or the SFL
37 Disciplinary Panel. The SFL Commissioner’s decision is final and no other appeal is available.

38
39 **SFL Disciplinary Panel** – The SFL Commissioner or a SFL Age Group Commissioner may also
40 convene a Disciplinary Panel to investigate a complaint or protest submitted by a SFL Club
41 Representative. The structure and role of this panel are discussed in Section IX.

42
43 **Weather cancellation** – Games cannot be played for weather related reasons or conditions that are that
44 are beyond the SFL’s control, e.g., regional and national emergencies.

45
46 **Youth League** – Consists of teams who have players who meet the age criteria for Under 19s or younger.
47 Normally teams will be broken into two broad groups – boys (or mixed) and girls. Only members of the
48 female gender may play on a girl’s team while members of either gender may play on a “boy’s” team.

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