

Suburban Friendship League
Proposed Rule and Process Changes for the Fall 2108 Season
(July 15, 2018)

Note: Minor editorial changes are not shown.

FORMALIZING MAXIMUM TEAM ROSTER SIZES

Issue/Proposal – The SFL does not have a formal limit on the number of players that may be assigned to a team although it does have a requirement for each player in good standing to play at least 50 percent of the game. The rules recommend a roster size of no more than twice the number of players that are allowed on the field, e.g., 22 for teams playing 11 v 11. Last season several teams had far more than 22 players on their roster which (1) made it very difficult to determine whether a team complied with the 50 percent playing rule and (2) put other teams at a disadvantage that did not have that many players but had players unable to play due to school events or other issues. The SFL should formally adopt a rule limiting the number of players on a team to twice the number of players allowed on the field.

Comments – The proposed rules contained the proposed wording to implement this proposal starting in the Spring 2019 season for discussion at the Fall 2018 season. Several teams had well over 22 players on their rosters in the Spring 2018 season. In the past, several clubs have recommended that the SFL not adopt a firm limit especially at the older age groups.

Proposed Change – It was agreed that this should be discussed at the Fall 2018 preseason meeting and that its implementation should not begin until the Spring 2019 season since some clubs may have already begun formulating their Fall 2018 teams. The proposed rules have one possible requirement in Section III.E. of the proposed rules for discussion.

**ALLOWING CLUBS TO APPEAL TEAM SUSPENSIONS
CAUSED BY TEAMS ACCUMULATING A SIGNIFICANT
NUMBER OF TEAM DEMERITS**

Issue/Proposal – Section XII. of the proposed rules (Section IX. of the old rules) contains specific penalties associated with teams that accumulate a significant number of Team Demerits (generally 6 to 8). In the Spring 2018 season 3 teams accumulated a significant number of Team Demerits in one game. Because of these Team Demerits, the rules called for the teams to be suspended for the remainder of the season. The SFL Club Representatives for these teams requested that the rules be modified to allow the club to appeal these suspensions.

Comments – Last season we had 3 games where a team acquired a large number of Team Demerits in one game. These were all for the Under 19 Boys. In each case, the applicable SFL Club Representative requested that they be allowed to appeal the suspension called for in the rules. The SFL Under 19 Boys Commissioner in consultation with the SFL Commissioner

arrived at decisions for each team to come up with appropriate “solutions” for each case based on the general rule that decisions are made for the good of the players. While this approach was an acceptable short term solution, a better approach is to clearly outline the process that should be used for these situations in order to help ensure consistency and fairness.

Proposed Change – Section XII.C.2.c. has been added to the proposed rules to provide a framework to (1) allow appeals when the Team Demerits assessed in one game result in team suspensions and (2) allow the SFL Age Group Commissioner sufficient flexibility to decide the appropriate penalties based on the facts associated with the given game and the club’s proposed actions related to the team.

ASSESSING FORFEITS WHEN TEAMS DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE 50 PERCENT PLAYING RULE

Issue/Proposal – The SFL rules require that all players in good standing be play at least 50 percent of a game. Coaches have noted that some teams, especially during the tournament, do not follow this rule. The SFL should adopt a rule that when all players do not play 50 percent of the game, that the team be assessed a forfeit.

Comments – This complaint has be made periodically and appears to be valid based on at least one tournament game in the Spring 2018 tournament. Generally, these complaints are received from parents and the SFL refers them to the club so that the club can take the necessary actions to address the problem.

Proposed Change – The SFL does not recommend that any change to the rules be made. Specifically, it is unclear how the SFL can properly evaluate a complaint against a team that does not play all of its players at least 50 percent during a given game unless the coach admits it. In the Spring 2018 example, when the club investigated the complaint, they found that it was caused by the coach confusing the guidance provided to the coach by the SFL Club Representative regarding the All Star Tournament. It is unclear how the SFL could have determined the validity of the claim if the coach had disputed the claim.