

Suburban Friendship League  
**Discussion Topics for Rule and Process Changes for the Fall 2019 Season**  
(as of July 15, 2019 )

**OVERVIEW**

We received a several proposed changes this season to the rules and the Club and Coach Guide. Based on these proposals, the SFL Commissioners reached consensus and are recommending approval on all the proposals. In addition, several clubs have requested a discussion at the Fall 2019 meeting on the desirability of continuing the game termination requirement associated with the mercy rule. Consistent with past practice, a final decision on all the proposed changes will be made at the Fall 2019 preseason meeting.

The proposals received affect the following.

- Elimination of the mandatory division placement requirement.
- Elimination of the leading zero additions to the SFL Team Roster not being considered as a uniform number change.
- Clarification that when an individual receives a 3 game suspension penalty that the individual (1) is suspended for the remainder of the season and (2) any unserved games carry over to the following season.
- Clarification that a game terminations caused by a team results in the team being assessed a forfeit.

To facilitate the discussion of whether to continue the current mercy rule, the following are some statistics comparing the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 seasons.

	<b>Fall 2018 Games Meeting Termination Criteria</b>	<b>Fall 2019 Games Exceeding Termination Criteria</b>	<b>Spring 2019 Games Meeting Termination Criteria</b>	<b>Spring 2019 Games Exceeding Termination Criteria</b>
U11/12	12	19	16	2
U13/19	34	38	33	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>5</b>

Below describes each proposal in detail and provides the rational used when deciding the proposed course of action on a given proposal.

1 **CLUB AND COACH GUIDE**

2  
3 **Section II.D.3. – Division Placement**

4  
5 **Current Wording**

- 6  
7 3. A club must assign the same number of teams to division 1 when registering teams as  
8 those identified by the SFL as division 1 teams unless (1) 75 percent of the players  
9 assigned to a team identified by the SFL as a division 1 team no longer play in the SFL or  
10 (2) the total number of teams changes from the previous season.  
11  
12 a. When the number of teams has a significant change, then the club is responsible for  
13 identifying which teams will be assigned to division 1 so that the ultimate number of  
14 division 1 teams results in the same ratio of division 1 and division 2 teams as the  
15 SFL recommendation. The following examples illustrate how this process is  
16 implemented.  
17

18 **Issue/Proposal** – The SFL should remove the requirement for the clubs to be place a given  
19 number of teams in division 1. The clubs are in a much better position to know which teams  
20 should be placed in division 1. Specifically, team membership changes between seasons  
21 which can unfairly penalize teams using the SFL’s division placement criteria.  
22

23 **Proposed Change**

24  
25 During the Spring 2019 season, the SFL compared the actual team division placement results  
26 to the SFL proposed placement based on the criteria proposed for the Fall 2019 season. This  
27 analysis showed that with the exception of a very few teams, the recommended placement by  
28 the clubs properly placed the teams. Based on this, the SFL Commissioners are  
29 recommending the following.  
30

- 31 • Retain the process of recommending division placement (section II.D.2.). This section is  
32 also changed to clearly say that clubs are make division changes without the SFL’s  
33 approval.  
34  
35 • Eliminate section III.D.3 which discusses allows the SFL to determine division placement  
36 and how mandatory division placement works.  
37

38 **Section IV.B.2. – Ability to Add Leading Zeros to the SFL Team Roster**

39  
40 **Current Wording**

- 41  
42 a. When the player's actual uniform number has a leading zero, e.g., “07” that is permanent,  
43 then this is not considered as a uniform number change. Specifically, the DUNMBC

1 comment is not considered as a limitation on whether the player can play in any regular  
2 season or tournament game when the coach has noted the leading zero in the Actual  
3 Number column of the SFL Team Roster, e.g. “07” and the SFL Team Roster shows the  
4 uniform number as “07”.

5  
6 **Issue/Proposal** – The ability to add leading zeros to the SFL Team Roster is no longer  
7 needed since the SFL now accepts rosters with leading zeros on the Master Player Roster.  
8 Accordingly, the SFL Team Roster will (1) show the leading zero and (2) will no cause a  
9 duplicate uniform number issue, e.g., a player with uniform number of “7” is considered  
10 different from a player with the uniform number of “07”.

11  
12 **Proposed Change**

13  
14 Since leading zeros will now be printed on the SFL Team Roster, the need to allow coaches  
15 to enter leading zeros to eliminate duplicate uniform numbers is no longer needed.

16  
17 **PROPOSED RULES**

18  
19 **Section XII.B.1.c. – Individual Conduct – Three Individual Demerits**

20  
21 **Current Wording**

22  
23 c. Infractions incurred by players, coaches and others resulting in season suspensions and  
24 three (3) Team Demerits.

25  
26 (1) Head Coach – Illegal players used.

27  
28 (2) Individual Conduct Detrimental to the League – Offenses that warrant a three-game  
29 suspension rather than the standard one or two game suspensions. Offenses that  
30 would normally warrant this type of suspension include referee assault incidents or  
31 other behavior that should be referred to VYSA for review.

32  
33 **Issue/Proposal** – The current wording is unclear on how these suspensions impact  
34 subsequent seasons and automatically result in a current season suspension.

35  
36 **Proposed Change**

37  
38 c. Infractions incurred by players, coaches and others resulting in three (3) Individual  
39 Demerits and three (3) Team Demerits.

40  
41 (1) Head Coach – Illegal players used.

42  
43 (2) Individual Conduct Detrimental to the League – Offenses that warrant a three-game

1 suspension rather than the standard one or two game suspensions. Offenses that  
2 would normally warrant this type of suspension include referee assault incidents or  
3 other behavior that should be referred to VYSA for review.  
4

5 **Note:** As discussed elsewhere, individuals that accumulate three (3) Individual Demerits  
6 during a season are suspended for the remainder of the season. Accordingly,  
7 individuals committing these infractions are automatically suspended for the  
8 remainder of the season. In determining whether the suspension carries over to  
9 the following season the number of games played by the team after the suspension  
10 is used. The following are examples of how this is implemented.  
11

#### 12 **Example A**

13  
14 A coach is found to have knowingly used an illegal player in the last game of the  
15 season. Should the coach be allowed to return in the subsequent season, that coach  
16 is suspended for the first three (3) games of the subsequent season. On the other  
17 hand, if this offense had occurred in the next to last game of the season and the  
18 coach was suspended for the final game the team played, then the coach would be  
19 suspended for the first 2 games of the subsequent season.  
20

#### 21 **Example B**

22  
23 A player commits an offense that is considered worthy of a 3 game suspension in  
24 week 1. The player is suspended for the remaining games the team plays that  
25 season. Should the player be allowed to return in the subsequent season, then the  
26 player may play in that team's first game. On the other hand, if the offense had  
27 been incurred in the team's last game, the player would be suspended for the  
28 team's first three (3) games of the subsequent season.  
29

### 30 **Section XII.B.2.c. – Team Conduct – Two Team Demerits**

#### 31 **Current Wording**

- 32  
33  
34 c. Team Conduct Detrimental to the League – Two Team Demerits. Conduct by members  
35 of the team or its supporters that are not specifically covered by other suspension or team  
36 offenses and warrants two Team Demerits. Examples include actions that cause a game  
37 to be terminated early and failing to properly report red cards or individuals (including the  
38 Head Coach) being asked to leave the field. When suspension offenses are not properly  
39 reported, the team is also assessed additional Team Demerits and game forfeits until the  
40 information is properly received.  
41

1 **Issue/Proposal** – When the rules were reworked for the Spring 2019 season, the previous  
2 penalty of assessing a team a forfeit when the game is terminated early was inadvertently  
3 deleted. This needs to be included.  
4

5 **Proposed Wording**  
6

7 c. Team Conduct Detrimental to the League – Two Team Demerits. Conduct by members  
8 of the team or its supporters that are not specifically covered by other suspension or team  
9 offenses and warrants two Team Demerits. Examples include actions that cause a game  
10 to be terminated early and failing to properly report red cards or individuals (including the  
11 Head Coach) being asked to leave the field.  
12

13 (1) When the game is terminated early, a forfeit is also assessed to the team causing the  
14 game to be terminated early. The applicable SFL Age Group Commissioner may  
15 assess both teams this forfeit depending on the reasons for the game termination.  
16

17 (2) When suspension offenses are not properly reported, the team is also assessed  
18 additional Team Demerits and game forfeits until the information is properly  
19 received.  
20  
21