

Suburban Friendship League  
2416 Rosedown Drive  
Reston, VA 20191-1620  
January 20, 2020

Dear Club Representative:

First, thank you for all of your hard work in providing a safe, enjoyable soccer environment for our players. Please remind everyone involved that this is a recreation league and no one gets a college scholarship or a shoe contract based on these games. Play on!

As noted in our December 2019 Emails the SFL and its membership need to make some decisions on the future of the SFL. Accordingly, we scheduled the preseason meeting earlier than normal in order to (1) discuss the needed changes and (2) give the clubs adequate time to make the necessary changes based on the decisions reached at our January 31, 2020, meeting. This meeting will be held at the normal meeting place (the North County Governmental Center) beginning at 7 P.M.. Also, as noted in the Emails, if you are not part of “club management” we would like you to bring someone from your club’s management so that they can better understand the SFL’s operations and resource needs along with the discussions that relate to decisions that will be made.

Enclosed in your package are the following items along with this letter:

- Proposed rule changes for the Fall 2020 season.
- Options considered for regular season scheduling.
- Talking points that are expected to be used for the meeting. This document provides additional information on the resource issues the SFL faces in conducting its operations and alternatives for meeting the needs the SFL currently attempts to address.
- Proposed budget for the Spring 2020 season.
- Financial statements as of December 31, 2019

We have also adopted the following agenda for our meeting:

- Opening statement by the SFL Commissioner
- Discussion of the regular season scheduling options and approval of the scheduling approach that should be used for regular season games. The SFL Commissioners are recommending that the existing process be retained and based on the initial comments received to the paper we sent out earlier, it appears that the current approach will be retained. However, should the clubs decide to change to one of the four options presented in the paper, the necessary changes will be implemented in accordance with the option selected.

- Establishment of registration and tournament fees assuming that the status quo is maintained. Should any changes be adopted based on the discussions relating to the resources available to support the SFL's operations, then the necessary adjustments will be made to the fees.
- Discussion of proposed rule changes.
- Discussion of the club resources needed to support the SFL's regular season operations and alternatives to fulfilling the needs that the SFL currently attempts to address.
- Discussion of club resources needed to support the SFL's tournament operations.
- Other matters

## KEY DATES

The following are the key dates assuming that status quo is maintained for the key SFL activities.

Date	Event
March 1	Deadline to provide club contacts, field information, and team numbers (including age group and division) and fields that should be used by each team. Accurate team contact information is not required at this time. If a team is dropped after this date, then the club will be assessed the registration fee for this team.
March 10	Deadline for making any additions, deletions, or changes to division information for to the teams submitted on March 1. Although at this point, the team registration process is closed, the actual team contact information is not required at this point since the SFL does not require this information until later. In addition, this is the deadline for submitting the initial Master Player Roster that contains all registered players and team assignments for all the teams registered with the SFL. <b>Accurate uniform numbers are not required for this submission.</b> Any teams that do not have sufficient players, as defined by the SFL, will be dropped and may not be added back into the scheduling process.
March 22	Expected deadline for changes to team contact information. The SFL Club Representatives will be notified of the actual date as the actual date for the team contact information is better known.
March 30/April 6	Game schedules finalized and packages sent to the contractor for mailing. This date will be established once the clubs decide the first game weekend, i.e., April 4 or 18.
April 1/15	Deadline for providing the Master Player Roster that will be used by the SFL to generate the SFL Team Rosters. This date will be the Wednesday preceding the first game weekend. The actual SFL Team Rosters will be distributed to the clubs for distribution on Thursday.

- April 4/18 First game weekend – This will be the game date approved by the majority of the SFL Club Representatives.
- April 29/May 6 Last day to submit changes on the Master Player Roster – SFL Team Rosters are considered final. The actual date will depend on the initial game date selected by the clubs for the first game weekend.

## **PROCESS AND RULE CHANGES**

The attached paper discusses the proposed rule changes in detail. The changes involve the following changes.

- Assessing financial penalties for excessive game rescheduling.
- Clarification on what is considered adequate referee coverage and what happens when referees are not present for a game.
- Adding hate speech and taunting to the current rule regarding the use of racial slurs as offenses warranting a two (2) game suspension.
- Allowing the appropriate SFL Age Group Commissioner to suspend all but two (2) non players to attend a game when general sideline behavior by non players warrants such a suspension. This does not change the current suspensions for specific individuals whose conduct warrants the current two or more game suspensions or team suspensions when a team receives more than the allowed Team Demerits.
- Clarification on the minimum number of games an individual must serve when the individual receives a season suspension. Specifically, an individual receiving three (3) Individual Demerits must serve at least a 6-game suspension and the suspension carries over to the following season.

## **AGE GROUPS AND DIVISION ASSIGNMENTS**

In the registration Email, we will provide a file that shows (1) the Fall 2019 teams and (2) the proposed age group and division placement for those teams for the Spring 2020 season. The process used in previous seasons will be used to make these initial recommendations. However, the clubs are responsible for making the final division placement.

## **PROPOSED BUDGET**

The SFL designs its budget to recover its costs and this season the SFL has maintained the registration fee structure that was adopted last season under the assumption that no significant changes to the status quo would be made, i.e., the clubs are able to provide the resources needed for the SFL to continue providing the services it has in the past. This budget also assumes no increase in the referee reimbursement. Should the discussion on tournament referee reimbursement rates also increase to one or more age groups, then those registration fees will also increase.

## **PROPOSED TOURNAMENT REIMBURSEMENT RATES**

Assuming the clubs can provide the necessary resources to support the SFL tournament and the clubs agree that the tournament should continue, the proposed per game tournament reimbursement rates for the current season are as follows:

- Under 11/12 (9 v 9) – \$75
- Under 13/14 – \$95
- Under 16/19 – \$125

These are the same fees that were paid last season. We want to establish rates that fairly compensate the officials for their time and attract the quality and number of officials that we need. If these rates are inadequate to reimburse your club for their officiating costs, please let us know the amounts that are adequate to cover your costs.

## **MAILING PROCESS**

We perform three mailings each season – preseason mailing (this package), season package, and a tournament package. All the mailings are handled by our contractor. An electronic version of this package is also distributed to the SFL Club Representatives by Email.

## **PRIVACY STATEMENT AND PUBLIC EMAIL ADDRESSES**

The SFL Club Representatives decided several seasons ago that Email addresses should be provided to improve communication between the team contacts when those individuals agreed to have their Email addresses published. This is commonly referred to as an “opt in” policy. The procedures adopted to implement this policy were for the SFL Club Representatives to contact each of their teams and provide the Email address(es) that the team contacts desired the SFL to publish in the enclosed listing. We do not provide this information on the web site. Because of this change, the SFL updated its privacy policy and developed the process that would be used to manage it. Both of these documents are available on the web site on the SFL Documents page (<http://www.sflsoccer.org/sfldocs.htm>) and we suggest you take some time to review these documents. Please remember that you must have the team contact’s explicit permission to publish their Email address before you place that address in the public Email column of the spread sheet. This permission must be obtained each season.

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The SFL is expecting more than 500 teams this season. We appreciate the confidence in our program and look forward to working with you this season. In developing the registration procedures, we attempted to maximize the flexibility in the registration and scheduling process that we have enjoyed in past seasons while reducing the impact of late additions and deletions.

If you have any questions or comments, you may call either Chris Martin (703-476-6611) or myself (703-471-7407). You may also email the SFL at [sfl@sflsoccer.org](mailto:sfl@sflsoccer.org).

Thank you for your continued support and I hope to see you at the meeting.

John Paladino  
SFL Commissioner