

United Cup of Champions

Tournament Rules (updated 4-15-22)

Laws of the Game

All games will be played in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game observed by USSF/USYSA with the adjustments outlined below.

Eligibility and Game Duration

The tournament is open to accepted teams composed of the following game roster sizes:

- 7v7 = 14 players
- 9v9 = 16 players
- 11v11 = 22 players (U13 - U19)

There will be a maximum of 3 guest players allowed per team.

Any Tennessee State League match that is being played during our event must follow all TSL rules. TSL rules supersede all Tournament rules for those matches.

A player may play on only one team in the tournament, unless approved by the Tournament Director in writing prior to the first game for each team involved. Every attempt will be made to have separate divisions for each age group.

If there are not a sufficient number of entries in an age group, then it may be combined with an adjacent division. (7v7 age groups would only be combined with 7v7, 9v9 with 9v9 and 11v11 with 11v11.) Every team will be guaranteed at least three games.

Players in the following divisions must be born between the dates shown and will play as follows:

Age	Format	Year Born	Ball	Halftime	Halves
U19	11v11	2002	5	5 minutes	2 x 35 min.
U18	11v11	2003	5	5 minutes	2 x 35 min.
U17	11v11	2004	5	5 minutes	2 x 35 min.
U16	11v11	2005	5	5 minutes	2 x 35 min.
U15	11v11	2006	5	5 minutes	2 x 35 min.
U14	11v11	2007	5	5 minutes	2 x 35 min.
U13	11v11	2008	5	5 minutes	2 x 35 min.
U12	11v11	2009	4	5 minutes	2 x 30 min.
U12	9v9	2009	4	5 minutes	2 x 30 min.
U11	9v9	2010	4	5 minutes	2 x 30 min.
U10	7v7	2011	4	5 minutes	2 x 25 min.
U09	7v7	2012	4	5 minutes	2 x 25 min.
U08	7v7	2013	4	5 minutes	2 x 25 min.

Inclement Weather

For all matches played at DCP and VPA the new lightning detection system (Thorguard) will be the governing system to suspend play in the event of inclement weather.

The Thorguard system of lightning detection will be in place for determining safe playing conditions regarding lightning. Referees will have the ultimate authority when deeming if play is safe. A referee may have more stringent guidelines than the following policy but not lesser.

When the Thorguard system sounds one horn and sensors are flashing all activities will be stopped and everyone will be directed, by tournament staff who are present, to safe spaces which are permanent structures. The side of the field, under trees and standing in the parking lot does not constitute spaces safe from lightning. Inside a building, under a pavilion or inside a car are considered safe while waiting on play to resume.

After the Thorguard system sounds three horns and the flashing lights stop, play may resume regardless of how much time has elapsed. Again, referees may not allow play to resume if they feel more time is needed for a safe environment. This info will be distributed via on site referees and TUSC game day officials. If this happens at a tournament the info will also be disseminated via tournament communication software. For matches played at MWP the referees will still use the old system of hearing thunder or seeing lightning to suspend play and starting a 30-minute timer until play is resumed.

If games are going on at multiple locations the DCP / VPA system will be the governing system and that info will be communicated between each location. If a referee deems play unsafe at MWP before the DCP / VPA system indication is given the referee can stop play at any time.

Registration

Registration **must** be done through Tournament Registration link.

All team players, coaches, and managers must be able to present their TSSA Player/Official Card to validate they have passed the risk management policy of the TSSA to be on the sideline with the team. He/she must be listed on the official roster that has been submitted at check-in. The Coach or Team Manager must have possession of the all player cards, medical release forms and State approved rosters at all games. Failure to do so can result in dismissal of players or the entire team from the tournament.

Player's Uniforms and Equipment

The home team (**first team listed** in match or on **top side** of a bracket) shall wear white/light colored jerseys and socks. The Away team (**second team listed** in match or on **bottom side** of a bracket) shall wear dark colored jerseys and socks.

Field players must wear numbers on the backs of their matching jerseys. Each field player must have a different number, which coincides with the jersey number listed for that player on the roster. The goalkeeper will wear a shirt of a different color than the keeper's teammates, the referees and opponents, and may have any number or no number.

In the event that the referee decides that the two teams' jerseys are the same or similar color, the home team will change colors. Sharp steel spikes are not allowed on shoes. All players' equipment, including casts or splints covered by padding, is subject to the referee's approval. The home team must present a ball to the referee prior to the start of the game for the referee's approval as the game ball.

Referee and Officials

Our tournament will only use certified referees and referee assignors by the TSSA who have passed the state's background and certification process valid through 7/31/2020. Also, all out-of-area referees must show photo identification to verify identity.

Concussion Policy

All TSSA coaches must be able to provide their CDC Heads-Up Concussion Certification. All non-TSSA coach must be able to provide the CDC Heads-Up Concussion certificate or the NFHS Concussion in Sports certificate. Teams must be able to provide the CDC Parent and Athlete Concussion Information Sheet for each player attending the tournament.

Tournament/Game Cancellation

In the event the tournament is canceled due to inclement weather or other pertinent circumstances; the following refund policy will be given.

No Games Played = 100% refund

1 Game Played = 70% refund

2 Games Played = 25% Refund

3 or More Games Played = No Refund

Forfeited Games

A team will be allowed a 10-minute grace period from the scheduled kick-off time before the game will be awarded to the opponent. A team may begin play with a minimum of seven players at 11v11, six at 9v9 and five at 7v7. Addition of late players will take place at regular legal substitution periods. The opposing team will play at full strength. In the event a team forfeits a game, the opponent will be awarded a 4-0 win. Any team forfeiting a game or quitting the field of play before the conclusion of the game is subject to being disqualified from the tournament or being denied advancement to semifinals, finals or placement in a bracket decided by points. Teams causing abandonment will be declared the loser by a 4-0 score. When the situation causing abandonment is such that tournament officials cannot assign responsibility, both teams will forfeit with no goals scored and a double loss declared.

Start of Play

Each field will have an assigned field marshal. Teams must check in with the field marshal at least 15 minutes prior to their scheduled kickoff time. Field Marshals will inspect and retain the stamped, approved rosters. In the event the appointed linesmen are not present for the game, each team will appoint a club linesman for its side. Both teams will be on the same side of the field and each team will locate no closer than five yards away from the halfway line. Field marshals and referees will have the authority to determine team location during the game. No team will be allowed more than three non players (coaches, trainers, managers, etc.) on the team's side of the field during the game. Each team will have a coach at the field for the duration of the game. A team not so represented will forfeit the game.

Spectators will be located on the opposite side of the field. Except in games where a winner must be declared (semis and finals) there will not be a coin toss. The home team shall occupy the bench area to the right of the halfway line facing the field. The home team will kick off and defend the goal in front of their bench to begin the match. Visiting team will kick off to begin the second half and attack the goal in front of their bench area. The game clock will not be stopped because of an injury to any player except at the discretion of the referee and if the injured player is removed from the field by medical personnel. Stoppage time may be added if, in the opinion of the referee, a team is delaying the game to their benefit. Games that start late will be shortened as needed to ensure that the next game on that field may begin on time.

Completed Games

If a game is called due to inclement weather or any other safety reasons, the game will be considered completed, if it reaches halftime. If a game is called during any time in the second half, it will also be considered a completed game. If the game is required to have a winner and when the game is called (not just delayed) and it is a tied score, the winner will be determined by a coin flip.

Conduct

Coaches are responsible for the conduct of the spectators, team staff and players of their team. Referees are authorized to take appropriate action to maintain proper control of games. Abuse from players, coaches and spectators will not be tolerated. If the referee terminates play due to unruly behavior, the Tournament Director/Committee will determine if the game is to be replayed, continued or forfeited by the offending team.

Players ejected (Red Card) from the game are automatically banned from their team's next tournament game. Violations that are deemed of a serious nature (i.e. fighting) might require further disciplinary action such as banning further tournament play. The player card of the ejected player will be collected by the field marshal, attached to the game report, and delivered to the Tournament Headquarters. The decision of the Tournament Director or Committee on red card violations is final.

Punting the Ball

At what age are players allowed to punt a ball in a game?

- Players on teams U10 and younger **may not punt a ball** in a game in the 4v4 or 7v7 or 9v9 format. (This includes U10, U9, and U8)
- Players on teams U11 and older may punt a ball in a game

*** Please note a goalkeeper "drop kicking" a ball is considered punting***

What occurs if the goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball?

- If the goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball the referee will stop the game and award an indirect free kick to the opposition at the spot of the infringement.
- If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

No Heading Policy (U8 - U11 age groups)

Our age brackets U8 - U11 competitive tournament games will not allow for heading of the ball in any format. When and if a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) will be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the IFK should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. A “deliberate” heading action of the ball is deemed solely by the referee or the referee crew and shall not be disputed.

Substitutions During Play

There is no limit to the number of substitutions during the game. However, substitutions can only be made immediately prior to a kickoff and, with the permission of the referee, on a throw-in by the team in possession, a goal kick by either team or by either team in the event of an injury. A cautioned/yellow carded player may be substituted by the coach, as well as a player from the other team if the cautioned player is substituted. An ejected/red carded player may not be substituted. The team of the ejected player must play short for the remainder of the game.

Points Calculation

Points will be calculated to determine which teams advance to semifinals or finals or, in some brackets, the seeding for the next round of play or, in “round robin” brackets, first and second place.

3 points for each win

1 points for each tie

0 points for each loss

Ties in points will be broken in the following order:

1. Winner of head-to-head competition.
2. Goal differential (max. of 4 per game; eg. 6-1 win, 2-1 loss=+3).
3. Fewest goals allowed.
4. Most goals scored
5. FIFA kicks from the penalty mark.

Should three or more teams tie, tie breakers will be applied until one team is eliminated; then tie breakers will be applied, starting over at number 1, to the remaining teams.

Overtime

Games which are tied at the end of regulation time and must result in a winner (i.e. semifinals, finals, etc.) will be decided by FIFA kicks from the penalty mark.

Game Reports

Game reports will be handled by the referee or a field marshal. Each coach will verify the game results before initialing the report. Reports will periodically be delivered to the official scorer by the field marshals.

Awards

Awards will be given to each player on the first- and second-place teams in each division.

Protests

Protests will not be allowed. Decisions of the Tournament Director/Committee and/or Referees will be final.

Tournament Director/Committee

The Tournament Director/Committee will make every effort to ensure this tournament is an enjoyable experience for the players, coaches and fans. Any fan, coach or player who distracts from the competition by abusive, derogatory, vulgar or profane language or actions will be ordered to leave the game site for the remainder of the game. Refusing an order to leave by a referee, field marshal or tournament official will result in the termination of the game and forfeiture by the team with which the offender is affiliated. Neither the Tournament Director/Committee, nor anyone connected with the tournament, assumes any responsibility or liability if the tournament is canceled in whole or in part for any reason. The Tournament Director's/Committee's interpretation of application information, procedures, rules, regulations and all matters pertaining to the tournament is final.

Subject to Change

These rules, in whole or in part, may be changed up until the time the first game of the tournament begins.