BEST FC – Veterans Day Classic

5v5 Tournament Rules

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2026
Location: NEBC Complex, Northborough, MA (333 SW Cutoff)
Format: 5v5 (4 field players + goalkeeper)
Roster Size: Maximum of 9 players per team
Game Length: One 25-minute half
Age Divisions: U8-U14
Games Guaranteed: 3 minimum + playoffs

1. Game Duration & Timing

- Each match consists of one 25-minute game, played on a running clock.
- The referee is the official timekeeper. Games will not be extended for injuries, substitutions, or delays unless deemed necessary for player safety.
- Games must start on time. Teams arriving late may forfeit.

2. Field & Equipment

- Teams check in 30 minutes prior at the check-in table located between fields 2 and 3 at NEBC, under the BEST FC tent.
- All players must wear shin guards under socks.
- Uniform colors: Home team (listed first on schedule) wears light; away wears dark. If there is a conflict, the home team changes.
- Only coaches/players are allowed on the bench side; all parents/spectators must remain opposite.
- No spectators behind goals.
- Casts may be worn if properly padded and approved by the referee.

3. Substitutions

- Unlimited substitutions permitted.
- May occur on any stoppage of play with referee approval.
- Substituted players must enter/exit at midfield.

4. Coaching & Sideline Conduct

- Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players, staff, and spectators.
- Permitted: positive instruction from the sideline.
- Not permitted: derogatory remarks, loud arguing with referees, profanity, or negative comments toward players.
- Referees have the authority to issue warnings or remove coaches/spectators for misconduct.

5. Discipline

- Yellow Card: Official caution. Two yellows in a match = Red Card.
- Red Card: Immediate ejection; player or coach must leave sight and sound of the field.
- Player red = suspension for the next game.
- Violent conduct/serious foul play = possible tournament expulsion.
- Zero tolerance for referee abuse. Physical contact or verbal assault toward referees/staff = immediate expulsion.

6. Rules of Play – 5v5 Modifications

- Throw-ins: When the ball crosses the sideline, restart with a kick-in from the ground.
- Goal kicks: Taken from anywhere inside the penalty area. Opponent must retreat to the midfield line.
- Goalkeeper distribution: No punts or drop-kicks. Must throw, roll, or pass with feet. Nothing can go over midfield.
- Goalkeeper possession: 6-second limit with ball in hands.
- Offside: Not enforced in 5v5.
- Heading: Prohibited in U11 and younger. Intentional headers = indirect free kick for opponent.
- Distance on Free Kicks & Kick-ins: Opponents must stand at least 5 yards away.

7. Standings & Points

- 3 points = Win, 1 point = Draw, 0 points = Loss.
- Tiebreakers (in order): Head-to-head result, Most Wins, Goal Differential (max ±5 per game), Goals Scored (max 5 per game), Goals Allowed, Penalty Kicks.

8. Playoffs & Finals

- Tied playoff games → best of 3 penalty kicks, then sudden death if needed.
- Only players on the field at the end of regulation may take penalties until all have kicked.

9. Forfeits

- 5-minute grace period is allowed.
- If a team cannot field 4 players, they forfeit.
- Forfeit scores are recorded as a 3–0 win for the opponent.

10. Weather Policy

- Tournament Director reserves the right to shorten games, reschedule, or cancel due to unsafe conditions.
- If a game reaches halftime and is stopped due to weather, the score stands as final.
- Lightning = 30-minute delay from last strike.

11. Facility Rules

- No smoking, alcohol, pets, gum, sunflower seeds, or glass bottles.
- No open flames or grills.
- Only water/gatorade permitted on turf surfaces.
- Respect venue property and staff at all times.

12. Refund Policy

- Tournament entry fees are non-refundable once accepted.
- Weather-related adjustments/cancellations will not result in refunds.
- BEST FC reserves the right to make necessary adjustments to brackets, schedules, and rules.