



100 General Rules

101 Team Eligibility

101.1 – This Tournament is open to United States based teams registered through US Youth Soccer, US Club, USSSA, MLS Next.

101.2 – The NCFC Tournament Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any team application. No team is deemed accepted into the event until written notification has been sent from the Tournament Director. Emails confirming an application has been submitted are not considered notification of acceptance.

101.3 – The payment of Tournament Fees is required prior to being accepted into this Tournament. Tournament fees which are returned from any bank for any reason will NOT be re-deposited. The amount of the check plus a \$25.00 fee (cashier's check or money order) must be received in the NCFC office within 7 days.

101.4 – All teams participating in this Tournament are required to make housing reservations through our official tournament housing agent. Any team who refuses to follow this rule will be disqualified from the event, may be excluded from participating in future NCFC events and will not receive a refund.

102 Rosters and Player Eligibility

102.1 – It is the club's responsibility to ensure that all teams have proper documentation for players and coaches for this event. Documentation may be inspected at any time by referees and Tournament Officials.

102.2 - All players must be born in the year of their age group classification, or in a later group. A player may only participate with one team throughout the tournament. Each player and coach shall possess a laminated, current, validated player pass or proper pass from their national association and a current medical release form.

102.3 - Each team is allowed to use the number of guest players found in **302.1**. In order to be eligible to participate, guest players must meet all requirements for individual team players.

102.4 – Teams must be properly registered and in good standing with their state, national and regional associations. Teams are required to participate with a Tournament Approved roster from their sanctioning body that is applicable to the current seasonal year. Roster Limits and Active Player Limits can be found in **302.1**. All documentation required to confirm the eligibility of each team, coach and players must apply to the current seasonal year.

102.5 – Teams may not use documentation from multiple sanctioning bodies in order to complete registration and check-in requirements for each player. All rosters, player passes, coach passes, medical release forms, and guest player documentation to include passes and medical release forms must originate from the same sanctioning body. Teams may not use background checks completed by one sanctioning body to satisfy the lack of a completed background check from another sanctioning body.

102.6 – Failure to provide proper documentation for any individuals will result in that individual being considered ineligible to participate in the event until cleared by a Tournament Official.



102.7 – Teams found to have used ineligible players or coaches in previously completed matches may be excluded from the event, and the results of those games will be counted as forfeit losses.

103 Check-In

103.1 - It is required that all teams complete check-in online through the tournament website. Online Check-In through the GotSport platform in accordance with the deadlines set by the Tournament Committee. NCFC Youth covers the non-refundable fee of \$20 to be paid to GotSport for this service.

200 Structure and Schedules

201 Brackets and Schedule

201.1 – The tournament shall determine the number of teams needed in each bracket based on the number of participating teams in an age group and division.

201.2 – All teams will play at least three games across Saturday and Sunday. Games will be scheduled as early as 8:00AM on Saturday and as late as 4:00PM on Sunday.

201.3 – All divisions will have an additional Championship game (bracket permitting) and medal ceremony.

202 Determination of Division Placement

202.1 – Three points will be earned for a win, one point for a tie and no points are earned for a loss. Any forfeiture will be scored as a 4-0 win with three points awarded to the winner.

202.2 - Where it is required to break a tie for standings within a division or for purposes of determining placement, the following order will be used to determine the winner:

- A)** Head-to-head competition – head-to-head competition will not be used if more than two teams are tied and using head to head cannot fairly determine a winner.
- B)** Goal Differential (Maximum of 4 goals per game)
- C)** Least number of goals allowed. (No Limits)
- D)** Most goals scored. (Maximum of 4 goals per game)
- E)** Penalty Kicks in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game

202.3 - If more than two (2) teams are tied, the sequence above will be followed until a team is eliminated or selected over one of the tied teams. The remaining teams will then restart the sequence at letter A above until the tie is broken.

202.4 – In the event three teams are still tied after the fourth tiebreaker, the teams that applied to the event second and third will take kicks from the mark to establish a winner. The winner will advance to a second kicks from the mark event against the team that applied to the event first.

202.5 – In the event four teams are still tied after the fourth tiebreaker, the teams that applied to the event first and second will take kicks from the mark to establish a winner. The teams that applied third and fourth will take kicks from the mark to establish a winner. The two winners will then take kicks from the mark to establish the winner of the tiebreaker.



203 Division Advancement

203.1 – Division with FOUR teams

- A. Each team will play three preliminary round matches.
- B. At the conclusion of all preliminary round matches, the top 2 teams will play a championship match.

203.2 – Division with FIVE teams

- A. Each team will play four preliminary round matches.
- B. At the conclusion of all preliminary round matches, a Champion and a Finalist will be determined based on points.

203.3 – Division with SIX teams (one bracket of six teams; separated into two sets of three)

- A. Each team will play three preliminary round matches, 2 against the two opponents in their group and 1 crossover with a team on the other side.
- B. At the conclusion of the preliminary round matches, with the top team from group A and top team from group B advancing to play a Championship match.

203.4 – Division with SEVEN teams (one bracket of seven teams)

- A. Each team will play 2 preliminary round matchups
- B. At the conclusion of the preliminary round matches, the top 4 seeds will advance to semi-finals where WC 1 plays WC 4 and WC 2 plays WC 3. The winner of each semi-final will advance to the final.
- C. At the conclusion of the preliminary round matches, wild card 6 & 7 will play an elimination game and will advance to play wild card 5 in a 5th place game.

203.5 – Divisions with EIGHT teams (two brackets times four teams)

- A. Each team will play three preliminary round matches.
- B. At the conclusion of all preliminary round matches, the top team in each bracket will play a championship match.

203.6 – Divisions with NINE teams (three brackets of 3 teams)

- A. Each team will play 2 preliminary games against the other teams in their group of three.
- B. At the conclusion of the preliminary round matches, the top 4 seeds will advance to semi-finals where Wild card 1 plays wild card 4 and wild card 2 plays wild card 3. The winner of each semi-final will advance to the final.
- C. At the conclusion of the preliminary round matches, wild card 6 and 7 will play a play-in game to play wild card 5 in a 5th place game.
- D. At the conclusion of the preliminary round matches, wild card 8 and 9 will play in a consolation match.

The tournament committee reserves the right to make an adjustment to the bracket, scheduling and advancement structure for all brackets, regardless of amount of teams per bracket



300 PLAYING RULES

301 Laws

301.1 – This Tournament will be played in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game observed by USSF and USYS with the adjustments outlined in this document. In the event of any rules dispute during the event, the USYSA/NCYSA rules of the game will be the rules of record during the tournament.

302 Age Format

302.1 - Age groups will play as follows:

AGE	BIRTH YEAR	FORMAT	ROSTER LIMIT	ACTIVE PLAYER LIMIT	GUEST PLAYER LIMIT	BALL SIZE	HALFTIME	GAME LENGTH	SUBSTITUTIONS
10U	8/1/16-7/31/17	7v7	12	12	6	4	5 min.	2x25 min.	Unlimited
11U	8/1/15-7/31/16	9v9	16	16	6	4	5 min.	2x30 min.	Unlimited
12U	8/1/14-7/31/15	9v9	16	16	6	4	5 min.	2x30 min.	Unlimited
12U	8/1/14-7/31/15	11v11	18	18	6	5	5 min.	2x35 min.	Unlimited
13U	8/1/13-7/31/14	11v11	22	18	6	5	5 min.	2x35 min.	Unlimited
14U	8/1/12-7/31/13	11v11	22	18	6	5	5 min.	2x35 min.	Unlimited

302.2 - The Active Player Limit refers to the number of players eligible to be dressed out to play in any one match. The roster presented to the Referee at the beginning of the match shall indicate the players that will be used to play in that match, and no changes can be made after the match has started. Rostered Players not included as an Active Player for the match are permitted to sit in the bench area but must be dressed to differentiate themselves from Active Players.

302.3 - The tournament does not require the referee to add time for substitutions. The official clock will not stop for any reason unless in the judgment of the referee: Removing an injured player from the field would endanger the physical well-being of the player or other conditions so warrant in the judgment of the referee.

303 Minimum Number of Players

303.1 – 9v9/11v11 Teams may begin play with a minimum of seven players and at no time may be the number of players on the field drop below 7 players per team. The addition of late arriving players who are on the official roster, will take place with the permission of the Referee and at regular legal substitution periods. The opposing team may play at full strength.

303.2 – 7v7 Teams may begin play with a minimum of seven players and at no time may be the number of players on the field drop below 5 players per team. The addition of late arriving players who are on the official roster, will take place with the permission of the Referee and at regular legal substitution periods. The opposing team may play at full strength.



304 Uniforms and Equipment

304.1 - Each player shall have a number on the player's jersey. The number shall be affixed to the back of the jersey and shall be clearly visible. Duplicate numbers are not permitted. Numbers are not required for goalkeepers.

304.2 - In the event of a uniform color conflict, the team designated as the home team will wear change jerseys.

304.3 - Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players and game officials.

304.4 - Players wearing casts are permitted to play with the approval of the match referee. Casts should be covered with bubble wrap or foam wrap.

304.5 - The Referee is the sole judge of allowed player equipment as prescribed by FIFA Laws of the Game

305 Substitutions

305.1 - There is no limit to the number of substitutions that can be made during the game.

305.2 - A substitution may occur during a goal kick, after a goal, at halftime, at the beginning of an overtime period if applicable, throw-in **by team in possession and by team NOT in possession when the team in possession has a substitution**, after a yellow card - for carded player

305.3 - An injured player may be substituted for at the discretion of the referee. If a substitution is made for the injured player, the opposing team may also make one substitution (with the referee's acknowledgment).

306 Punting & Heading

306.1 - No heading is allowed in any **small-sided** match (12U and younger).

306.2 - If a player deliberately heads the ball in a small-sided match, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.

306.3 - If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area during the course of a small-sided match, 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.

306.4 - Punting not permitted at the U10 age groups. Punting without restriction at U11 and U12 age groups.

307 Technical and Spectator Areas

307.1 - Teams will occupy one side of the field with each team between the 18-yard and center lines. Referees will have the authority to determine team location during the match.

307.2 - All spectators will occupy the opposite side of the field, opposite their team, between the 18-yard and center lines. Artificial noisemaker devices are prohibited.

307.3 - Alcoholic beverages, pets, recreational vehicles, and use of tobacco products are not permitted at game sites.



308 Conduct

308.1 - Coaches are responsible for their behavior, for the conduct of the players, team staff, and spectators of their respective team. Coaches not taking responsibility for their sideline's conduct may be cautioned and/or ejected.

308.2 - Any player ejected from a match will miss the remainder of that match and will not be allowed to participate in his team's immediate next match. The ejected player may not be replaced.

308.3 - Ejection for fighting by players and coaches may result in the player or coach not being allowed to participate in any remaining tournament matches upon review of the situation by the Tournament Committee. Any coach ejected for a match will not be allowed to coach his/her team in its immediate next match (if a coach is ejected, an adult team representative, 21 or over, must occupy the team sideline for the remainder of the match).

308.4 - Coaches and spectators ejected must not be within "sight or sound" of the playing field. Players ejected may remain on the bench or be released into the care of a guardian or risk management-approved personnel. A player released from the bench area must not be within "sight or sound" of the playing field.

309 Overtime

309.1 - For all group play and consolation matches, ties will stand at the end of regular play.

309.2 - For both semi-final and championship matches, in the event of a tie, teams will be given a five-minute rest and then immediately proceed with the FIFA penalty kick method. Prior to starting the FIFA Penalty Kick shootout, the referee will ensure each team has the same number of eligible players in the center circle. If one team finishes the game with fewer players than the other, the other team must reduce the number of players eligible to participate in the shootout so that both teams have the same number of players.

310 Weather

310.1 - Regardless of weather conditions, coaches and their teams must appear at the respective field site, ready to play as scheduled. Failure to appear will result in forfeiture of the match. Only the Tournament Director may cancel or postpone a match. Referees may suspend a match. In the case of severe weather, in his/her discretion, the Tournament Director may cancel any and all games. In case of severe weather that occurs after the beginning of play, the Tournament Director may reduce the length of the match and may discontinue or cancel the game. Should a match be terminated due to weather conditions after 20 minutes of play, the match will be considered official and the score at the time will stand. If a match is terminated prior to 20 minutes of play every attempt will be made to complete the match. However, if necessary other means, determined by the tournament committee, may be used to determine a winner. Referees and field managers will not consider beginning or continuing matches when a lightning storm exists. No refunds will be given in the event of cancellations.

311 Forfeited and Terminated Matches

311.1 - A forfeit shall be awarded if a team is not present and prepared to play within five minutes of the scheduled commencement time. It is requested that teams be present 30 minutes in advance of the scheduled commencement of a match to aid in the timely start of play. A forfeit will be scored according to Rule **202.1**.

311.2 - Any game shortened due to injury or weather will be continued or made up at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director.

311.3 - Neither the Tournament Committee, North Carolina FC Youth nor the Tournament Sponsors are responsible for any expenses incurred by any team in the event the tournament is canceled in whole or part or in the event games are discontinued or canceled due to inclement weather or adverse field conditions, nor will any refunds be made.



311.4 – Teams that purchase tournament insurance will receive their refund directly through the insurance company and will not be connecting with the tournament directly.

312 Build Out Line – 7v7 Matches Only

312.1 – In 7v7 matches, a build-out line will be included in the field of play.

312.2 - Prior to Goal Kicks taking place, all opposition players must retreat behind the build-out line. They can only cross the build-out line after the goal kick has been played and received, or after the ball crosses the build-out line. Play then resumes as normal.

312.3 - All opposition players must be behind the build-out line when the goalkeeper has the ball in their hands. They can only cross the build-out line after the goalkeeper has released the ball from their hands. The goalkeeper may decide to release the ball from their hands before the opposing team has retreated beyond the build-out line. Play then resumes as normal.

400 Tournament Management

401 Authority

401.1 - The Tournament Committee reserves the right to decide all matters pertaining to the tournament. The judgment of the Tournament Committee is final. The Tournament Director has authority to make all decisions and these decisions will be final. All referee decisions are final and binding.

401.2 - The tournament committee will respond to inquiries from team coaches and managers only. Requests regarding behavior, game outcomes, incorrect scores, or other incidents sent by anyone other than the coach or team manager will not receive a response. Please ensure all requests come only through authorized team officials.

401.3 - There will be no protests. All referee decisions are final and binding.