



Come Up For Air — 2026 Tournament Rules

CUFA Tahoe Summer Tournament CUFA Tahoe Fall Classic

CATEGORY	RULE
1) JURISDICTION	<p>A. Tournament will be conducted in accordance with the rules stated here. Laws of the Game (USSF) and is sanctioned under US Club Soccer. The following rules are intended specifically for this tournament ONLY!</p> <p>B. All interpretations of the rules and other decisions made by the Referees, Field Marshals and the Tournament officials shall be final. Protests will not be allowed.</p> <p>C. PER USSF MANDATES, NO INTENTIONAL HEADING OF THE BALL in U9-U11 WILL BE ALLOWED. An indirect kick will be awarded against for the opposing team. U12-U19 will be allowed to head the ball. **Please direct any questions about this to US Soccer, not to the tournament.</p> <p>D. Age Divisions are based on the US Soccer mandated age group matrix, to determine the proper age group for your team to apply click here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the 2025/26 Calendar for the Summer Tournament • Use the 2026/27 Calendar for the Fall Classic Tournament
2) ACCEPTANCE	<p>A. Applications will be accepted on several factors: the receipt date of the application, completeness of the application, numbers of teams applied in an age group, and the discretion of the tournament management.</p> <p>B. Teams will be notified by email when accepted. Teams not accepted into the tournament will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. If a team chooses not to be on a waiting list, their application will be inactivated.</p> <p>C. The primary form of communication between the Tournament and applying teams will be email, GotSport, and the Tournament website. Contact: brandon.garinger@southtahoefc.com</p>
3) FEES	<p>A. Fees are: U8-U10: \$945; U11 & U12: \$1,045; U13 and older: \$1,145</p> <p>B. Teams pay online by credit card through GotSport</p> <p>C. Credit cards will not be charged unless your team has been accepted, and will be charged at the time of acceptance.</p>
4) REFUNDS	<p>A. Teams that have been accepted that choose to Withdraw before the refund deadline will receive a full refund from the tournament. There will be no refunds after the deadline.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Tournament - Refund Deadline is May 17th, 2026 • Fall Classic Tournament - Refund Deadline is August 14th, 2026 <p>B. The CUFA Tahoe Tournament does not offer any refund for any weather-related cancellation.</p> <p>C. Teams have the option to purchase Event Cancellation Insurance for weather-related cancellations in their CUFA Gotsport registration with the insurance carrier US Sports Club Insurance. Weather-related cancellations include hurricanes, tornadoes, rain, heat, smoke, lightning, hail, and ice. The USSCI policy is optional and not required, is the sole responsibility of each team to purchase through USSCI for coverage, and is available for purchase up to 15 days before the event through your Team Registration. Cost is 10% of your team's Entry Fee and includes a full refund for any pre-tournament cancellations, and a pro-rated refund if there is a mid-tournament cancellation.</p> <p>D. The CUFA tournament follows state and local guidelines regarding public health precautions and restrictions regarding public gatherings and mask mandates, which may result in an event cancellation.</p> <p>E. AQI Play / No Play decisions will be made by the tournament director based on the Average AQI level within the geographical areas of our playing fields. If the average rises above 150 over a two hour period during or just prior to a game commencement, games will be canceled.</p>
5) PLAYERS/ TEAMS	<p>A. All Players and Coaches on a Team (including Guest Players) must be carded by the same governing organization, i.e. US Club, USYS, or AYSO. NO MIXED CREDENTIALS. Laminated or digital player and coach passes are required to be at hand at all times as well as signed medical release forms.</p> <p>B. All teams must have a Gotsport roster submitted/created for their registration and have a Primary Coach saved for our Event.</p> <p>C. Coaches with 2 teams at our event must be saved as the Primary Coach for both teams in order to be eligible to have schedules not conflict. Coach Conflicts are only considered for Pool-Play and not for Semifinals, or Finals.</p> <p>D. There is NO LIMIT on the number of Guest Players allowed for each team. Coed teams will be accepted; however, they must play in a boys division only. A player can be rostered on two teams in the same age group, but never in the same division. Players can Play Up in birth year, but can never Play Down an age group.</p> <p>E. Teams may roster up to the US Club maximum of 26 players.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U13-U19 will play 11v11; the game roster limit is 18 players per team per game. • U11-U12 teams will play 9v9; the game roster limit is 16 players per team per game. • U8-U10 teams will play 7v7; the game roster limit is 14 players per team per game.
6) COACHES	<p>A. Each team is limited to (2) coaches & (1) team manager. Coaches must be listed on the Tournament Roster and have a laminated card or a digital card.</p> <p>B. Coaches shall be responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators. Coaches are expected to remain in the technical area during games and only enter the field of play as requested by the referee.</p> <p>C. A Carded Staff member is required to serve as Coach for each match played. In the event a Primary Coach is unable to coach, any Carded Staff of the team's same credential would be required to coach and finish the game. Teams left without a Carded Staff of any kind will result in the forfeit of the game. Thus, teams should have a 2nd Carded Staff besides their Primary Coach (in case of a red-card).</p>
7) REFEREES	<p>A. Referees will be provided by the tournament, managed by the Assignor – Moe Shafai.</p> <p>B. Teams desiring to bring referees, must contact Moe Shafai at 916-205-9687 or via email moe@theassignor.com</p> <p>C. All referees must be approved by Moe Shafai and are required to have the appropriate certification and experience. Approved referees will be paid for their services.</p>

8) FIELDS	<p>A. All fields will be set up and taken down by the tournament staff. No tents or benches provided.</p> <p>B. Trash cans will be provided at each field. Teams will be expected to clean up all trash in their area before leaving.</p> <p>C. No Pets are allowed at the fields.</p>
9) FORMAT	<p>A. All teams are guaranteed a minimum of 3 games and are initially separated by age group and gender.</p> <p>B. Each age/gender has at least one division, and where there are sufficient teams, divisions will be added in the age/gender by competitive level or tier. Divisions are further broken down into one or two brackets within the division.</p> <p>C. Four (4) team Division – Each team plays all other teams in a single 4-team bracket for a total of three games each. The two teams with highest points will play a fourth, Championship match.</p> <p>D. Five (5) team Division - Each team plays all of the others in a single 5-team bracket, two Saturday, two Sunday. The teams are ranked based on points position after all four games are played. No “final”.</p> <p>E. Six (6) team Division - Each team is split into one of two brackets of (3) teams. Each team plays each other in their bracket on Saturday. Sunday's games are determined after Saturday's games are played. Top two teams in each bracket make a semifinal against the opposite bracket as their 3rd game Sunday morning. A1vB2, B1vA2. Winners of the semifinals play a fourth, the Championship match. The two third place finishing teams in each bracket after Saturday's results square off Sunday morning in the Consolation game.</p> <p>F. Eight (8) team Division - Eight teams are split into two brackets of four (4) teams each. All teams in each bracket play each of the other teams in the same bracket for a total of three games. The top two teams with the highest points from each bracket play each other in a fourth, Championship match.</p>
10) CHECK-IN	<p>A. Check-In for Saturday happens once, before each team's first game at the Field Marshal Tent located at each field site. Teams provide their laminated or digital Cards to the Field Marshal who will cross-reference the team's tournament roster. Players and Coaches will not be allowed to participate without their laminated or digital ID cards. Match Cards for each game are provided by the Tournament.</p> <p>B. An additional Check-In is required on Sunday for teams that play in a Championship match.</p> <p>C. Any Player added after Match Cards were printed will need to check-in each game and get their name and jersey number on each Match Card.</p>
11) FIELD MARSHALS	<p>A. There will be a tournament Field Marshal assigned to each field that will report to the Tournament Director. Field Marshals will present the verified match cards to the match referees and record the score at the conclusion of each match.</p> <p>B. Tournament participants are encouraged to report any concerns immediately to the Field Marshal, and also to respectfully follow any instructions given by the Field Marshal.</p>
12) MEDICAL/ FIRST AID	<p>A. There will be a First Aid kit at the Field Marshal Tent at each venue.</p> <p>B. If an injury is serious, the Field Marshal will call 911 for emergency response.</p> <p>C. Directions to the nearest hospital/urgent care center will be available at the Field Marshal Tent.</p> <p>D. At least (2) medical trainers/staff at every CUFA Tahoe event; Lake Tahoe Community College and South Tahoe High School Turf Stadium</p>

13) UNIFORMS/ SAFETY	<p>A. Appropriate shin guards are mandatory, as are socks, shorts and matching jerseys with each player's uniform marked with a unique number that matches the uniform number on the Match Card. Players may not exchange numbered jerseys with any other player during the game, including the goalkeeper.</p> <p>B. Garments may be worn under the uniform (i.e. long sleeves, etc.) during inclement weather, however the match referee will be the judge of what should be allowed or not.</p> <p>C. Not allowed: jewelry, hard metal or plastic clips on clothing or hair. Hard casts of any sort are NOT ALLOWED even if they have bubble tape! No Exceptions.</p> <p>D. Adequately covered and padded knee braces shall be permitted only if in the judgment of the referee; there must be no possibility of it causing injury to the other players on the field.</p> <p>E. Players with blood on any part of their uniform will not be allowed to participate in the game. It is advised to have additional uniforms on hand for this purpose.</p>												
14) GAMES	<p>A. Games will consist of 25 to 30-minute halves depending on the age division (see chart below) with a 5-minute half time. There will be a running clock during the match including substitutions. The referee may add time to the match only if PROFESSIONAL medical assistance is brought to the field. Even if time is added for serious injury attended by medical personnel, all games will be terminated no less than 5 minutes before the next scheduled game is to start. Pool-Play games may end in a tie.</p> <p>B. Semifinal games are matches whose winner will advance to the Final match. In the case of a tie at the end of regulation, the winner of a semifinal match will be determined by going straight to penalty kicks conducted in accordance with the Laws of the Game. No overtime.</p> <p>C. Final (Championship) games will be played until there is a winner. A Final tied at the end of regulation will be extended to two 5-minute overtime periods, (without Golden Goal rule). If the score is tied at the end of 10 minutes of overtime play, then the winner will be decided by penalty kicks, in accordance with the Laws of the Game.</p> <p>D. Game duration shall be as follows:</p> <table><tr><th>Division</th><th>Pool Play</th><th>Semi, Final Rounds</th></tr><tr><td>U8-U10:</td><td>25 minute half</td><td>25 minute half</td></tr><tr><td>U11-U12:</td><td>25 minute half</td><td>25 minute half</td></tr><tr><td>U13-U19:</td><td>30 minute half</td><td>30 minute half</td></tr></table> <p>E. The “home” team will be the first team or top team listed on the game schedule and will be responsible for providing the three (3) game balls subject to referee approval. The home team should wear their “dark” colored jersey but will change jersey or don pinnies in the event of a color conflict with the visitor team. If any questions, the referee will determine whether this is necessary.</p> <p>F. FORFEITS: Games not played will be classified as a forfeit. All teams that forfeit will have the game scored 0-1 loss. The winner will be awarded maximum tournament points for a win, one goal and a shutout (8). For U8-U10 division teams, there is a minimum of 5 players on the field to continue a game. For all other divisions, there must be a minimum of 7 players to continue a game. If a team cannot field the minimum number of players, the game will be declared a forfeit.</p> <p>G. SUSPENDED GAMES: The Tournament Committee may determine to end matches early if the field schedule is behind due to game delays, interference, or if weather provides unsafe conditions; and may distribute awards according to games played and points. The Tournament Committee will determine the outcome of any single game which is terminated prematurely (due to inclement weather, participant injury, or interference by outside party, etc.).</p> <p>H. UNPLAYED GAMES: if any pool play games cannot be played due to circumstances beyond the control of the tournament, the final standings of the pool will be determined by applying the Winning Percentage formula (Total Points Earned in all Games Played divided by Total Points Possible for the Number of Games Played) to each team in the pool. Note: this does not apply to games shortened due to a late start. Only the Tournament Director or designee can declare a game to be Unplayed.</p>	Division	Pool Play	Semi, Final Rounds	U8-U10:	25 minute half	25 minute half	U11-U12:	25 minute half	25 minute half	U13-U19:	30 minute half	30 minute half
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15) SUBSTITUTIONS	<p>A. Open Substitution Procedure: Teams are allowed unlimited substitutions, but only with the referee's permission.</p> <p>B. All substitutions must be approved and recognized by the referee. Substitutes must wait on the sideline (off of the field of play) until the field player has left the field of play and/or the referee has indicated the substitute may enter the field of play. An injured player may be substituted at any time.</p> <p>C. Substitutions may occur during any stoppage of play.</p> <p>D. Referees will be instructed not to allow substitutions that are deemed "excessive" or of a "time wasting" nature. Please be respectful of the integrity of the game and do not use the free substitution as a means to disrupt the match.</p>
16) STANDINGS	<p>A. Standings for pool play games will be determined on the standard scoring system as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">WIN = 6 points TIE = 3 points LOSS = 0 points POINTS PER GOAL = 1 point (maximum 3) POINTS PER LOSS = 0 POINTS PER GOAL LIMIT = not to exceed 3 points POINTS PER SHUTOUT = 1 point FORFEIT WIN = 8 points (scored as a 1-0 win)</p> <p>B. Winners of Ties in standings will be determined as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head to head competition. 2. The team with the best goal differential (goals for minus goals against; maximum of 5 goals per game.) 3. Fewest Goals AGAINST the team. 4. Most Goals FOR (no more than 5 goals per game) 5. Most Wins. <p>*** The Tournament Director will arrange for FIFA Penalty Kicks to break the tie for seeding if possible, usually 15 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled Semi-final or Final Game.</p> <p>*** A coin toss may be substituted without representation of the teams in lieu of FIFA Penalty Kicks if it is in the best interest of keeping the tournament running smoothly.</p> <p>*** If a Three-way tie exists within a bracket after steps 1-5, a 3-way coin flip will be conducted. 1 coach from each of the 3 teams flip a coin at the same time. The team with the one coin different from the other two is eliminated. If all three coins land the same, a reflip ensues. The two surviving teams then proceed to a FIFA shoot-out.</p>
17) AWARDS	<p>A. A Championship Cup trophy will be presented to the winning coach.</p> <p>B. Medals will be awarded to the players of the 1st and 2nd place teams.</p>

18) CONDUCT	<p>A. ALCOHOL is strictly forbidden.</p> <p>B. A Team will Forfeit a game if at the discretion of the Center Referee it is determined a Team's Coach, Spectators or Players are at fault for causing a mass confrontation incident, gross spectator misconduct, or being verbally or physically abusive to any referee.</p> <p>C. Coaches will be expected to set a positive example for the team and be held responsible for the actions of their team including spectators. Spectators should sit across from their own team on their own half and not intermix seating with the opposing team, nor taunt or confront opposing team spectators.</p> <p>D. At the conclusion of each match, the referees will indicate on the reverse of the game cards any Sendoffs or expulsions (Player or Coach). Referees will be required to complete a game misconduct report for <u>all</u> misconducts during the game, as well as any incidents of interference by spectators.</p> <p>E. Any player accumulating two yellow cards in the same game shall be sent-off and suspended from play in the team's next game. Two yellow cards in one game is equivalent to a red card (i.e., a send-off).</p> <p>F. Any coach or spectator ejected must immediately leave the vicinity of the playing field (out of sight and sound) and will be prohibited from attending the next scheduled game. Any player sent off (red carded) must immediately leave the vicinity of the game (under supervision of his/her parent or Safe Sport-certified adult) and may not return to the field of play during the current game, including for the post-game handshake, and may not be substituted for, and is suspended from participation in the next game. In the alternative, the player may stay on the sideline under the supervision of the coach.</p> <p>G. Ejections will be reviewed by the Tournament Director and Ref Assignor and may result in a more severe penalty, including additional game suspensions in the tournament and potentially contacting the club, league, and playing association for additional penalties. The Ref Assignor and Tournament Director have the discretion to expel any player or coach from the tournament for misconduct.</p> <p>H. If it is determined that an ineligible player (suspended, too old) has participated in a game, all games in which that player participated illegally are subject to forfeit. If it is determined that the coach knowingly played a player illegally, that coach will be barred from further participation in the tournament.</p> <p>I. It is mandatory to play a scheduled game. If it is determined that a coach willfully fails to have his team participate in a scheduled game, the coach will be dismissed from the tournament.</p>
19) PROTESTS	<p>A. PROTESTS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED OR ALLOWED.</p>
20) INCLEMENT WEATHER	<p>A. Matches will be played in all weather conditions, unless the Center Referee, Ref Assignor, Head Athletic Trainer, or Tournament Director determines the conditions are dangerous and/or life threatening as per FIFA/USYS regulations. The tournament standings at that time will be final. No refunds will be given for weather-related cancellations. Comprehensive event insurance protection is the responsibility of each team to purchase through the carrier USSCI, accessed through your gotSPORT CUFA registration.</p> <p>B. Contingency Plan for inclement weather or weather delays:</p> <p>Plan A: All matches will be played as scheduled</p> <p>Plan B: Shorten all first round matches to half the normal game length</p> <p>Plan C: Plan B, plus shorten all second round matches the same</p> <p>Plan D: Plan C, plus shorten all third round matches the same</p> <p>Plan E: In the event the fields become totally unplayable or the weather becomes a hazardous condition, it may be necessary to decide some matches with FIFA penalty kicks.</p>
21) RULES INTERPRETATION	<p>A. The Tournament Director retains the right to interpret and apply the tournament rules to the optimum benefit of all tournament participants.</p>