

SOUTHWESTERN YOUTH ASSOCIATION (SYA) SOCCER
FALL 2023 END-OF-SEASON RECREATIONAL TOURNAMENT (U9-U12) – NOVEMBER 4-5, 2023
RULES OF COMPETITION

1. REFEREE POINTS OF CONTACT

Alan Liotta (Referee Assignor):

Cell/Hotline: (703) 582-0789

Email: cyasocref@aol.com

Dave Kwieraga (Referee Commissioner):

Cell/Text: (571) 926-4448 (text preferred)

Email: refcommissioner@syasoccer.org

Email: futbolkarch62@gmail.com

2. PARTICIPATION

- a. Only SYA recreational league players may participate in the end-of-season tournament. No travel players, guest players, or players from any other team are permitted.
- b. Head coaches must ensure all eligible players play at least 50% of the game. Goalkeepers may play more than 50%.
- c. All regular season suspensions or sit-outs for any player, coach, team official, or spectator carry forward into the tournament and must be served before that individual can participate in the tournament. All exceptions must be approved by the appropriate SYA Soccer authority before the game.
- d. Except for documented suspensions and sit-outs, referees do not enforce eligibility or participation rules. If a coach questions a player's eligibility, the game shall be played in its entirety and the head coach will inform the appropriate SYA Soccer Age Group Coordinator immediately after the game.
- e. If an ineligible player or coach participates in a game, or a suspended individual is present at the field, SYA Soccer will decide whether to award a forfeit to the opposing team. Referees do not declare forfeits.

3. FIELDS AND EQUIPMENT

SYA Field/Weather Hotline: (703) 644-8046

- a. Coaches will ensure fields are properly set up before the game (goals/nets, corner flags, etc.). Any delays due to a field not being ready by kickoff will be deducted from the game duration. Referees will reduce each half to play two equal length halves.
- b. If the field and goals are safe, the game will be played even if there are no corner flags or improper field markings (no build out lines, incorrect goal area or penalty area sizes, etc.).
- c. Players and coaches will occupy one side of the field and spectators will take the other side. Only coaches and team officials are permitted to be in their respective team areas (no spectators or non-team officials). Referees have the authority to ask spectators or non-team officials to move to the spectator side of the field.
- d. No one should be behind either goal line without the referee's consent. This is to ensure players are not adversely affected by individuals behind the goals. At some fields this may be unavoidable so referees may adjust this guidance based on weather, heat/sun, field conditions, safety, or other considerations.
- e. Unless otherwise specified by the competition authority (SYA Soccer), the home team is listed first and will wear red. In the event of a color conflict, the home team will change jerseys (or wear "pinnies" that do not conflict with away team's colors). Uniform numbers are not required.
- f. The home team will provide an appropriate number of game balls to the match officials.
- g. Any time thunder is heard or lightning is seen, the referee shall immediately suspend the game and direct all people to leave the field and proceed with haste to the nearest shelter. There are no exceptions to this policy. All people should remain in a sheltered location for thirty (30) minutes after the last incidence of thunder or lightning before resuming a game. SYA Soccer will determine the winner of any game that cannot be resumed if its completion interferes with the next game on that field.

4. LAWS OF THE GAME

- a. All games are single-elimination, played in accordance with the [IFAB 2023/24 Laws of the Game](#) as modified by the respective [SYA Age Group Rules](#) and for tournament play as described in this document.
- b. Goal differential rules and goalkeeper playing time restrictions do not apply for end-of-season tournament games.
- c. All eligible players (except the goalkeeper and injured players) must play at least 50% of any tournament game. Coaches (not referees) are responsible for complying with playing time requirements.
- d. All games will be played with a running clock with no time added to any half. The referee is the official timekeeper and all decisions regarding game duration are solely at the referee’s discretion.
- e. Every game must have a winner. Any game that is tied at the end of full time will use penalties (penalty shoot-out) to determine a winner ([Law 10.3](#)). There are NO overtime periods for any game.
- f. Any ELIGIBLE player may participate in a penalty shoot-out. Players do not have to be on the field at the end of full time. Coaches and non-kicking players may stay with their teams (near the center circle) during a shoot-out at the referee’s discretion.
- g. Referees may, at their discretion, shorten any game due to darkness, delayed start times, weather, or other factors.
- h. Any game that is terminated due to weather, darkness, unsafe or non-playable field, or other factors will be considered played and the score official at the time of termination. SYA Soccer has the authority to determine the outcome of a terminated game.

KEY RULE MODIFICATIONS	U9	U10 GIRLS	U10 BOYS	U11 AND U12
Number of Players	6 v 6 (min. 4 players to start/continue game)	7 v 7 (min. 5 players to start/continue game)	8 v 8 (min. 5 players to start/continue game)	9 v 9 (min. 6 players to start/continue game)
Game Duration (Full Time)	50 minutes (2 x 25-minute halves)	50 minutes (2 x 25-minute halves)	50 minutes (2 x 25-minute halves)	60 minutes (2 x 30-minute halves)
Halftime	5 minutes			
Hydration/Cooling Breaks	If authorized by the referee, no more than 3 minutes per break			
Determining the Outcome of a Match	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <u>All games must have a winner</u>. If tied at the end of full time use penalty shoot-out to determine a winner. <u>NO overtime</u> – <u>Any eligible player may participate in a penalty shoot-out</u> (not just players on the field at the end of full time). Players sent off during a game (red card) are not eligible to participate in a shoot-out 			
Substitutions	Unlimited (any stoppage in play, at referee’s discretion)			
Heading the Ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No heading the ball. <u>Play must be stopped whenever the ball contacts a player’s head, face, or neck</u> – <u>If unintentional</u>, restart is a dropped ball to team that touched the ball prior to head contact (if in penalty area, drop to goalkeeper (GK) regardless of which team last touched the ball) – <u>If intentional</u>, restart is an indirect free kick to team that did NOT head the ball 			
Sliding or Slide Tackling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No sliding or slide tackling for U9 or U10 field players – GK may slide in their own penalty area to make a save or prevent a ball from leaving the field as long as the action does not endanger any player 			Sliding and slide tackling are permitted for U11 and U12
Goalkeeper Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No GK punts or drop kicks for U9 or U10 – GK must kick, roll or throw ball into play 			No GK restrictions for U11 and U12

KEY RULE MODIFICATIONS	U9	U10 GIRLS	U10 BOYS	U11-U12
Build Out Lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For U9, the halfway line is the build out line – Opposing players must retreat behind the halfway line on goal kicks and when GK has possession of the ball – Offside judged between the halfway line and goal line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For U10, build out lines are equidistant from the halfway line and the top of each penalty area – Opposing players must retreat behind the build out line on goal kicks and when GK has possession of the ball – Offside only judged between the build out line and goal line 		No build out lines for U11-U12

5. FAILURE TO SHOW

- a. A 10-minute grace period after the scheduled kickoff time is provided for each team to have the minimum number of players ready to play. Within the grace period, any start time delay will be deducted from the total game duration. Referees will reduce each half to play two equal length halves. For example, a game that starts 6 minutes late will shorten each half by 3 minutes.
- b. If one or both teams cannot field a team within the grace period, the game shall not be played and the outcome (winner) shall be decided by SYA Soccer. Referees will not declare forfeits nor will they officiate any tournament game as a “friendly” match.

6. GAME AND SCORE REPORTING

- a. Home and away team coaches are jointly responsible for reporting scores, as well as any red cards/ejections and/or dismissals, to the applicable SYA Soccer Age Group Coordinator immediately after the game. Referees do not report scores.
- b. Referees must report all red cards/ejections, spectator dismissals, or irresponsible behavior immediately after the game to:
 - SYA Referee Assignor: cyasocref@aol.com, (703) 582-0789
 - SYA Referee Commissioner: futbolkarch62@gmail.com, (571) 926-4448 (text preferred)

7. MATCH OFFICIALS

- a. All tournament games will be assigned a 3-person team of match officials.
- b. Two-person system of control will not be used for any tournament game.
- c. Club linesmen will not be used unless there are fewer than 3 match officials for a game and ONLY if requested by the referee. The use of club linesmen must be agreed to by both teams’ coaches. Club linesmen duties are defined solely by the referee.
- d. All referee decisions are final. There will be no protests.

8. REFEREE POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- a. **Player Safety**
 - Remember that player safety is of utmost importance—we want a safe, fair, and enjoyable game for everyone.
 - Ensure players are properly and safely equipped. This includes proper footwear and shinguards.
 - No jewelry may be worn unless approved by SYA Soccer for medical or religious reasons. In such instances the item(s) must be secured to the body and deemed to be safe by the referee. Jewelry shall not be covered or concealed to circumvent this rule. This includes watches, fitness trackers, and anything worn on the wrist.

- Be vigilant of players who may be injured or show signs of concussion. Stop a game immediately if you think a player is injured.
- Unless cleared by a medical professional specifically designated by SYA Soccer for the tournament, match officials should not allow a player to reenter a game if they suspect a player has a head injury or other serious injury.
- Watch out for rough, aggressive, or reckless play, especially unsafe challenges for the ball. Deal with rough play early in the game. Although some contact may appear trifling or inconsequential to the outcome of a play, blowing your whistle early in the game sets the tone for the rest of the match. Players and coaches will adjust to the level of contact you allow. Trust your instincts—if something seems unfair, it probably is.

b. Sportsmanship

- Coaches are responsible for managing the behavior of their players, team officials, and spectators. Match officials must not ignore or tolerate irresponsible behavior. Address it firmly and early in a game. Remember, you CAN show yellow/red cards to coaches and team officials but you CANNOT show cards to spectators.
- Match officials should NOT deal with disruptive spectators directly. Stop the game and respectfully ask the head coach to take care of any problems. If necessary, ask the head coach for help getting a dismissed spectator to leave the vicinity of the field. If the coach does not address any problem such that the game is fair, safe, and fun for all, use your cards to send a clear message. Terminate any game that no longer has a safe environment.
- Email the Referee Commissioner and Referee Assignor, by the end of the day, a brief description of any misconduct or irresponsible behavior by players, coaches, team officials, or spectators (red cards/ejections, dismissals from the field, etc.).

c. Professionalism

- Know the rules. If you're unsure about something, ask the Referee Commissioner, a fellow official, or coach for clarification.
- Honor your assignments. We understand that unforeseen circumstances may cause you to turn back games. The sooner you contact Alan, the more time he'll have to find other referees.
- Arrive on time. On time is twenty (20) minutes before kickoff.
- Arrive dressed in proper uniform. Referee shirt tucked in, black socks pulled up, black shorts and black shoes.
- Late arrivals or no-shows. ALWAYS contact Alan if you're running late, or having an emergency, injury, or sickness that prevents you from being at your games. NEVER fail to show up for your assigned games unless you have contacted Alan and he has taken you off the game. Failure to show may result in lost pay and/or sanctions.

d. Fields/Goals

- Do not start or continue a game if the field or goals are not safe. Address any safety issues with both coaches. Improper field markings or no corner flags? Play the game and note them in your game report.
- Ensure goals and nets are properly secured and safe for play. Portable/movable goals must be staked to the ground and/or weighted down with sandbags so they cannot tip over. Check goals before every game. Check them again before starting the second half. Do not let anyone play on or hang on goal frames.
- Call or text the Referee Assignor IMMEDIATELY if you close a field due to weather or unsafe playing conditions.

e. Communication and Teamwork

- Positive communication begins when you arrive at the field. Be friendly, courteous, and approachable.
- Address any game-related issues or concerns in your pre-game activities—rule questions, field conditions, weather, spectators, hydration breaks, or any other items.
- Have a pre-game discussion with your crew. Talk about communication and teamwork during the game. Be sure to address what to do during game-critical situations like penalties, goal/no goal decisions, player and/or bench misconduct, etc.
- Use halftime to talk about what's going well and what might need improvement. Revisit these items in your post-game conference.