

# MSA Sponsored Elite Cup Tournament Rules

Approved 9/12/2020

1. **FIFA Laws of the Game** will apply to all competitions except as otherwise provided herein.
2. In addition to current MSA policy, eligible teams must meet the following requirements to participate in any MSA Sponsored Recreational Tournament:
  - a. The member organization must have completed the Annual Membership Application, paid the annual membership fee by the date designated by the MSA Council each season, and designated their teams as participating in this event.
  - b. **Team Levels:**
    - i. Rec-Plus teams
    - ii. Competitive teams – those not participating in the MSA State League (MCSL), MSA Premier Cup, Regional Mid-South Conference or any affiliated league, or National League. **Exception:** if a MCSL team is offered the opportunity to participate in the Elite Cup based on their final standings, that team is eligible.
  - c. All teams must be properly rostered in the MSA online system in accordance with MSA policy & deadlines.
  - d. All team rosters will be frozen fourteen (14) days prior to the start of the appropriate MSA tournament.
  - e. No Rec-Plus or Competitive teams consisting of 50% of U8 players will be allowed to participate in the Elite Cup event.
  - f. Based on the format of play, the maximum of properly executed transfers allowed prior to roster freeze date established is no more than 50% +1 of the maximum field players allowed.
    - i. Any u9-u12 team executing more than 4 transfers/adds during a seasonal year will automatically be placed in the Gold Division, where applicable.
  - g. Only those coaches meeting MSA registration requirements will be rostered to a team. No coaches will be added to a roster within five (5) business days of the event.

Qualification for coaches:

    - i. Current Photo in coach profile
    - ii. Kidsafe Approved
    - iii. SafeSport Training completed
    - iv. Heads Up (Concussion) Training completed (*not required for 20-21 season*)
    - v. Licensure in accordance with MSA standards
3. **Additional Field Markings/Controls**
  - a. **Team/Spectator Boxes:** Outside the field of play; starting 10 yards parallel from the midline on either side and running parallel to the touch line going no closer than 10 yards from a line parallel to the front line of the penalty areas on each end.
    - i. The area between the Team/Spectator boxes are off limits to all participants and spectators. Only tournament personnel may enter this area.
    - ii. If a team/spectator box is not present, the area 10 yards on either side of the mid-line is off limits to all except tournament personnel.
    - iii. This area is intended to create a buffer between opposing tea
  - b. **Team/Spectator Restriction Line (red line):** A single line parallel to each touchline three feet (or one meter) offset of the touchline and shall extend the length of the Team/Spectator boxes. This line shall be painted red and shall provide a lane for the Assistant Referee as well as provide a buffer to keep participants and spectators from

entering/encroaching the field of play. Violations of crossing the “red line” shall be treated as “unsportsmanlike” conduct.

- c. **Seating:** Teams shall sit on one side of the field and spectators shall sit on the opposite side of the field, unless noted otherwise by MSA. The home team has choice of which end to sit on. Teams and their supporters are required to sit across from each other on the field. Spectators/Participants from opposing teams may not intermix and must always remain on their side of the field. Failure to do so could lead to an ejection from the game/tournament or a forfeiture of the game.
  - d. **Mechanical Devices:** The use of any mechanical or artificial noise making devices, such as bullhorns, cowbells, amplifiers, vuvuzelas or megaphones by any participant/spectator is strictly prohibited during a game.
4. **Game Length:** Regulation games will be:
- a. 9U-10U – Two 24-minute halves
  - b. 11U-12U – Two 30-minute halves
  - c. 13U-14U – Two 35-minute halves
  - d. 15U-16U – Two 40-minute halves
  - e. 17U-19U – Two 45-minute halves
5. **Tournament Scoring System:** Each age/gender group game will be scored:
- a. WIN – 3 points plus 1 point for each goal scored (maximum of 3 goals)
  - b. TIE – 1 point
  - c. LOSS – 0 points
  - d. A match that finishes in a 0-0 tie during bracket play shall be scored as 1 point for each team.
6. **Additional Scoring Policies & Tie Breakers:** All ties in bracket play or round robin play will stand.

**Tie Breakers Utilized for Bracket Play advancement:**

- a. Head to Head Competition
- b. Goal Differential: Maximum/Minimum of 4 goals per game\*\*
- c. Least number of goals allowed
- d. Kicks from the Penalty Spot – Each team is responsible for being ready at the scheduled time/place.

**Best-of-Three Series, Quarter-final, Semi-final, Championship Games:** If the score is tied at the end of regulation, overtime periods shall be played. If, at the end of the overtime period a tie still exists, the game shall be determined by the taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game.

**Overtime Periods:**

**9U-12U: Two 5-minute halves**

**14U-older: Two 10-minute halves**

**Round Robin Format:** Champions in this format will be determined through Head to Head competition. In the event of a tie, the tiebreakers listed in Section 6 shall be used to determine a champion.

**Best-of-Three Series:** In a two-team division, the typical format will be a best of three series. Each scheduled game will be played with appropriate overtime periods and Kicks

from the Penalty Mark, if necessary, to determine a winner. Tie games are not allowed in this format.

#### **7. Forfeits:**

- a. Any team forfeiting one game, forfeits all games. All forfeited games will be scored as a 4-0 victory for the opposing team.
  - i. A game is forfeited when a team:
    1. Leaves the field of play without the referee's permission
    2. Is not ready to play at the scheduled game time
    3. Does not wear an alternate jersey upon the referee's request
    4. Does not meet the player participation rule for every tournament rostered player
    5. Is disqualified due to unsportsmanlike conduct
    6. Does not field the minimum number of field players
- b. The forfeiting team is subject to a fine assessed by MSA to the team's home organization as well as further penalties.
- c. The forfeiting coach, organization, and team will be assessed these automatic penalties:
  - i. **Coach/Team Manager:** suspension for one calendar year, effective the Monday after the completion of the tournament.
  - ii. **Organization:** a fine of a minimum of \$500, at the discretion of the tournament committee, payable within fifteen (15) days of the tournament completion date.
  - iii. **Application of Rule:** if the application of this rule causes two or more teams to change positions for first and/or second place in the final preliminary round-robin bracket play standings, the tie breakers in Section 6 shall be applied to the affected teams to determine qualification for semifinals and/or championship games.
  - iv. Should any team lose the opportunity to finish as Overall Best Second in group play for advancement out of bracket play because a team forfeits, they shall face the Second Overall best Second team in Kicks from the Penalty Spot to determine which team advances.

#### **8. Tournament Responsibilities of each Coach and their Team:**

- a. Comply with all published Tournament Rules and Codes of Conduct.
- b. As the home team, to wear an alternate jersey if color conflicts exist and requested by the referee. The home team is always listed first in the schedule.
- c. To remain in an area 10 yards on either side of the midfield line, regardless of the existence of a marked technical area. This is for the duration of the game.
- d. To select the home team's bench area for the game.
- e. To provide a game ball if requested. The game ball will be selected by the referee.
  - i. 9U-12U - Size 4 ball
  - ii. 14U-older – Size 5 ball
- f. To be fully responsible for the team's players, parents, and spectators in their behavior. There should be no tolerance of foul and abusive language.
- g. To ensure no team member, parent, or spectator uses any mechanical or artificial noise making device such as bullhorns, cowbells, amplifiers, vuvuzelas, or megaphones during the game.
- h. To review the game card provided by the game official and confirm all information is correct prior to signing.

## 9. Substitution and Game Restart

- a. **Substitutions:** Unlimited made at the following times:
  - i. Prior to team throw-in
  - ii. Any goal kick
  - iii. After any goal
  - iv. Player injury for either team
  - v. Cautioned (yellow-carded) player
  - vi. Halftime
- b. An ejected player shall not be replaced on the field for the remainder of the game.
  - i. The ejected player must sit out the next game/games depending on the nature of the foul.
  - ii. The ejected player must sit on the team bench in street clothes while serving the suspension(s).
  - iii. The ejected player is the responsibility of the coach and will be treated as any active player by the game official.
  - iv. The ejected player(s) pass will be turned in to tournament headquarters along with the proper paperwork completed by the game official. If the suspension is served during the event, the registered team official may pick up the pass upon the completion of the game and the official has turned in the game card noting the suspension served.
  - v. In the event a player is ejected from a final match, that suspension will carry over to the next USYS event in which the player participates.
- c. An ejected coach must leave the game premises immediately. Failure to do so could result in a forfeiture of the game.
  - i. The coach may not coach during the next game but may be present at the field, sitting with the parents/spectators.
  - ii. At no time, should the ejected coach offer comments to the players on the field.
  - iii. The ejected coach may not interact with the players during the pre-game or halftime periods nor may h/she have any contact during the game with the designated coach of the game.

## 10. Protests

- a. No team nor its representative may protest any matter associated with the tournament or its games.
- b. The Tournament Committee has the authority to resolve clearly substantiated violation of the tournament rules or Laws of the Game which must be reported to the Tournament Director, in written documentation, within 2 hours of the completion of the game in question.
- c. The Tournament Committee may take the following actions toward resolving a valid violation:
  - i. Replay a game in its entirety
  - ii. Forfeit a game in which a team plays an unauthorized player
  - iii. Disqualify a team from further participation due to unsportsmanlike conduct
  - iv. Disqualify individual team members, coach, or manager from further or selected tournament participation due to unsportsmanlike conduct.
- d. Unsportsmanlike acts are not in accordance with the Rules of Fair Play or Reasonable Conduct. Such acts include, but are not limited to, starting or participating in a fight of any kind or team brawl; damaging, destroying, or stealing another team's property;

harassing, taunting, physically abusing, verbally abusing, referees, tournament officials, opposing players, or team officials.

#### **11. Game Conduct**

- a. The game referee will enforce MSA policy regarding the use of directed or non-directed foul play and/or abusive language on the field of play.
- b. All team officials must wear an identification tag as provided during team check-in. This must always be worn pre/post and during a match. A maximum of three team personnel are allowed on the sidelines at any time during the game. All sideline personnel must be properly registered/rostered on the team's official roster and shall not share identification tags with anyone for any reason.

#### **12. Uniforms**

- a. All participating players must meet the following uniform standards of play to participate.
  - i. All players must wear the same uniform including shirts, shorts, and socks. The only exception is the goalkeeper. Some minor exceptions can apply to alternate jerseys. Any hardship exceptions to this rule must be requested in writing and approved by the Tournament Director prior to the first tournament game.
  - ii. All players must wear commercially manufactured shin guards, in accordance with their age division, under their pulled-up socks.
  - iii. Shirts/Jerseys must be tucked in.
  - iv. Warm-ups will be allowed under shorts in adverse weather conditions or on fields of play rendering them necessary.
  - v. Sliding/Bicycle shorts may be worn under shorts if they are the same color as the predominant color of the team shorts and do not extend further than the top of the knee.
  - vi. The Game Referee will determine if the player's uniform complies.

#### **13. Other Tournament Rules:**

- a. The Tournament Committee has the sole discretion and authority to deal with any matter not covered in these rules.
- b. Only credentialed team members are allowed to discuss any team issues with the Tournament Director.
- c. MSA Tournaments will utilize a standard playing format for all age/gender groups unless the number of accepted teams requires a different format.
- d. The USYS small-sided game rules, as amended by MSA, will apply to all respective age groups.
- e. The game referee will report all game ejections to Tournament Headquarters, noted on their completed game card along with a properly completed supplemental report.
- f. For the Champion/Finalist of each age/gender group, individual awards will be presented to a maximum of the roster size and 3 coaches of each team.
- g. The consumption of alcoholic beverage is not allowed on or near the playing fields.
- h. Firearms are prohibited within the confines of the complex during the tournament.
- i. The game referee may suspend a game due to adverse weather conditions or to protect players when game play or the crowd becomes uncontrollable. If after suspending play, the situation does not improve, the referee shall report the suspended nature of the game to Tournament Headquarters and submit their game card.

- j. Only properly identified personnel of a suspended game shall meet with the Tournament Director to ascertain a restart status. The meeting location shall be determined by the Tournament Director. No additional parents/players are allowed into this area.
  - k. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to reach an outcome in a suspended game necessary to determine a proper bracket or round robin finish. The Tournament Committee will decide if a game is to be terminate if the referee stopped due to weather and/or safety considerations. If the game cannot be restarted within sixty (60) minutes from the stoppage time, the following termination policies shall apply:
    - i. If one-half (1/2) of the match has been completed prior to the stoppage, the score at the time of the stoppage shall stand. The game will not be replayed in the tournament.
    - ii. If less than one-half (1/2) of the match has been completed at the time of stoppage, the match will be replayed in its entirety on either the same day or the next available playing date.
    - iii. A second stoppage of play due to weather conditions shall result in the termination of the game on that day. The two (2) preceding policies will be applied to this game.
  - l. **Inclement Weather/Unsafe Field Conditions:** The Tournament Committee (TC) may use the following options with the remaining games:
    - i. Game times may be reduced. This will be communicated to all teams prior to the beginning of their match. All such matches will be considered official.
    - ii. Matches may be rescheduled at later times/location determined by TC
    - iii. Complete games by using the “mini-game” format of Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark. Time/Location determined by TC.
    - iv. Cancel all remaining games if no chance for advancement is present.
  - m. **Mini-Game Rules (Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark):** during preliminary round games, the following rules apply:
    - i. Each team will take a maximum of five (5) penalty kicks
    - ii. At the end of the five (5) kicks, the game will be scored as a complete game. Each goal scored will count as a goal and games may end in a tie.
    - iii. The games will be scored as:
      - 1. WIN – 3 points
      - 2. TIE – 1 point
      - 3. LOSS – 0 points
- 14. Pets:** No pets shall be allowed on or near the tournament premises. The only exception are certified service animals. Certification must be presented upon request. Spectators/participants bringing non-documented pets to the event will be required to remove the animal from the premises immediately.
- 15. Saving Clause. Any instance or situation not covered by these rules shall be at the sole discretion of the Tournament Committee.**