



Stafford Soccer
30th Annual St. Patrick's Day
Tournament

March 9th-10th, 2024 (U13-U15)

March 16th-17th, 2024 (U9-U12)



Rules and Procedures

Headquarters:

The Tournament Headquarters will be located at the Stafford Soccer office located at the following address:

235 Garrisonville Road, Suite 101, Stafford, VA 22554

Tournament Contact:

Barry Hill

Tournament Director

tournamentdirector@staffordsoccer.com

540-657-0734

IMPORTANT – COMPLETE YOUR ONLINE APPLICATION IN ITS ENTIRETY. RESULTS OF TEAMS PLAYED IN YOUR STATE AND PAST TOURNAMENT RESULTS ARE ENCOURAGED. USE THE REQUESTED COMPETITIVE LEVEL FIELD FOR THE TOURNAMENT'S INFORMATION.

1. **Laws of the Game:** All tournament matches will be played in accordance with FIFA laws of the game except as specifically modified as follows in the Tournament Rules.
 - a. **HEADING RULE AT AGE GROUP DIVISIONS U11 AND YOUNGER**
 - i. Whenever the ball strikes a player in the head, play is stopped. The proper restart depends upon whether the player deliberately played the ball with his or her head. If deliberate, the proper restart is an indirect free kick to the opposing team. If this occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If the play by the head is deemed inadvertent, then the proper restart is a dropped ball.
 - b. **U9 AND U10 TEAMS PLEASE READ - 7v7 (U9 and U10) BUILD OUT LINE**
 - i. When the goalkeeper has the ball, either during play (from the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punting is not allowed). After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal. If a goalkeeper punts the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt occurs within the goal area, 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.
 - ii. **OFFSIDES** – the buildout line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called. Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line. Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line.

2. Team Acceptance/Check-in Procedures:

- a. **The tournament committee reserves the right to accept or reject any team application.**
- b. ***Any incomplete application will not be processed. An application is not considered complete until the entry fee is received in full. All applications must be done on-line and no paper applications accepted. PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED PRIOR TO DUE DATE POSTED ON WEBSITE. ONCE ACCEPTED, YOUR FEE IS NON-RETURNABLE***
- c. No team shall be deemed accepted unless written notification has been sent from the Tournament Director. This will be done via either E-mail through the registration site or directly from the Tournament Director.
- d. **If your team is accepted and later withdraws the non-refundable entry fee will be applied.** If your request to withdraw is received prior to acceptance (if paid) a full refund may be given.
- e. Accepted teams are required to have current valid player passes and current medical release forms. The medical release form does not have to be notarized and may be the form you use for league play.
- f. All Foreign Teams must present passports at registration. Teams are required to have and present player picture identification cards. Foreign teams must have a completed form from its Provincial or National Association approving the team's participation in the tournament.
- g. Teams that are members of organizations of the United States Soccer Federation but not members of US Youth Soccer (such as AYSO, SAY, US Club Soccer or Super Y Leagues) DO NOT have to have a US Youth Soccer Application to Travel form (although that team's organization may require that the team have permission). An approved team roster does need to be provided to tournament officials, along with current player passes from its organization.
- h. A check for the entry fee that is returned from the bank will not be re-deposited. The amount of the check plus \$50.00 (cashier's check, money order, or credit card) must be received by the tournament committee within seven days after the team representative is notified of the returned check. If new funds are not received the team will be disqualified from the tournament.
- i. Communication during the tournament will **ONLY** be with the Team's Coaching staff and/or Manager. This is to eliminate any confusion that may occur.

3. Official Documentation:

- a. You must participate with your official 2023/2024 roster
- b. **A participating player may only play for one team. Any team who violates this will forfeit their games and may not advance to a semi-final or final game.**
- c. **Roster limits - Up to 5 Guest players are allowed - up to the roster limits defined by age group below:**
 - i. 2015 & 2014 (U9/U10) 7v7, maximum roster size = 14
 - ii. 2013 & 2012 (U11/U12) 9v9, maximum roster size = 16
 - iii. 2011, (U13) 11v11, maximum roster size = 18
 - iv. 2010 & 2011 (U14/U15) 11v11, maximum roster size = 22
 - v. **Can only dress/play 18 players in each game**
 - vi. **Guest players:** Guest players are to be written on a copy of the official roster (not the original) to be provided at registration. Guest players must have valid player passes from same sanctioning body (USYS or US Club Soccer) as the team they will be guest playing for, and a medical release forms.
- d. Valid player passes are required for all players, rostered and guest players (laminated passes only if your association requires such). A current official medical release form is required for all players.
- e. Any exceptions are subject to review by the tournament committee for a final ruling.

- f. USYS Teams from outside of Region 1 must provide proof of Permission to travel.

USYS Region I Policy Regarding Application To Host A Tournament:

Region I has established the following policy concerning permission to travel when attending USYS sanctioned tournaments in Region I. The purpose of this policy is to make it as simple as possible for the US Youth Soccer Region I teams to travel to tournaments within Region I.

National State Associations in Region I:

Connecticut Jr Soccer Assn, Delaware Youth Soccer Assn, Eastern New York Youth Soccer Assn, Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Assn, Soccer Maine, Maryland Youth Soccer Assn, Massachusetts Youth Soccer Assn, New Hampshire Soccer Assn, New Jersey Youth Soccer Assn, New York State West Youth Soccer Assn, Pennsylvania West State Soccer Assn, Soccer Rhode Island, Vermont Soccer Assn, Virginia Youth Soccer Assn, West Virginia Soccer Assn

US Club Soccer teams are not required to have USYS permission to travel forms, but must be in good standing with their association.

4. Player Equipment:

- Teams should bring a primary and alternate jersey of different colors. Where the color of the jersey is similar or identical, the designated home team (the team listed first in the schedule) will change jerseys.
- All players must have uniforms with individual numbers on the jersey.
- No jewelry may be worn by any player (earrings, watches, necklaces, etc.)
- Players wearing casts are allowed to play only with the approval of the Referee. **Casts should be reviewed by the Referee prior to each game.**
- Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn at all times by all players.
- All referee decisions are final regarding player equipment.

5. Substitutions: Substitutions are unlimited, but made only at the following times:

- Goal Kick
- After a goal
- Halftime
- At the beginning of the overtime period.
- Throw in – if possession team initiates substitution, both team subs can enter
- After a yellow card - for carded player
- An injured player may be substituted 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 acknowledgement)
- Under no circumstances may substitutions be made (1) on corner kicks or (2) after the game has ended in a tie and FIFA penalty kicks will be required to determine a winner.

- 6. Home/Team Field Positions:** The Home team is listed first in the schedule. The Home team will change jerseys if there is a conflict. Each team's players will take a position on one side of the field opposite the spectators. It is requested that all sideline player trash be picked up after the game.

7. Ball size / Game Duration / Referees:

| Age Group | Ball Size | # Refs | Prelim Games | Final Games (as applicable) |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2015 & 2014 (U9/U10) | 4 | 1 | 25 minute halves (50 minutes) | 30 minute halves (60 minutes) |
| 2013 & 2012 (U11/U12) | 4 | 3 | 30 minute halves (60 minutes) | 35 minute halves (70 minutes) |
| 2011, 2010 & 2009 (U13/U14/U15) | 5 | 3 | 30 minute halves (60 minutes) | 35 minute halves (70 minutes) |

Halftime = 5 minutes for all games

Note: 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.

- 8. Tournament Format.** All divisions will play a round robin during the first round. The following scenarios occur

after the first round based on the number of teams in each division. Most likely division structures are detailed below, but the Tournament reserves the right to alter division structures as needed depending on applications received:

- a. Four (4) teams. At the conclusion of the round robin, the team with the most points is named Champion, and second most points is named Finalist.
 - i. Alternative 1) in some age groups, the teams finishing first and second qualify for a Championship match.
 - b. Five (5) teams. At the conclusion of the round robin, the team with the most points is named Champion, and second most points is named Finalist.
 - c. Six (6) teams. Two three-team flights are formed. The third-place teams in each flight play in a consolation game. The top team from Flight A will play the second-place team from Flight B in one semifinal. The top team from Flight B will play the second-place team from Flight A in the other semifinal. The winners of the semifinals qualify for the Championship.
 - i. Alternative 1) in some age groups, the top team from Flight A will play the top team in Flight B for the Championship. The second-place teams and third-place teams in each flight will play each other, respectively, in consolation games.
 - d. Eight (8) teams. Two four-team flights are formed. The winner of Flight A and the winner of Flight B qualifies for the Championship.
9. **Match Schedules.** Each team in each division will play two matches on the Saturday of the event (March 9th or 16th respectively). Each team in each division will play either one or two matches on the Sunday of the event (March 10th or 17th respectively) based on qualification for championship games, as applicable.
10. **Determination of Division Winners.**
- a. **Teams will be awarded points on the following basis:**
 - i. Six (6) points will be earned for a win
 - ii. Three (3) points will be earned for a tie
 - iii. Zero (0) points are earned for a loss.
 - iv. One (1) point for each goal scored up to a maximum of three (3) points per game.
 1. Points for goals scored to the losing team also.
 - v. One (1) point for a shutout.
 - vi. Examples:
 1. A 0-0 tie will be scored as four (4) points for each team (3 points for the tie, and 1 point for the shutout).
 2. A 5-1 game will be scored as 9 points for the winning team (6 points for the win, 3 points for goals scored) and 1 point for the losing team (1 point for the goal scored).
 - b. Where required to break a tie for standings within a division, or for purposes of determining a "wild-card" team, the following order will be used to determine the winner: (Note: If a wild card team **MUST** be selected for the playoff rounds, that team will not be assigned to play against the winner of its own group in the first playoff round)
 - i. **Head to head competition – Except where three teams are tied, in which case head-to-head competition will not be used. In the case where three teams are tied, begin with tiebreaker number (10.b.ii.).**
 - ii. **Goal differential - Net score of each game = total goals scored minus the total goals scored against, with a maximum differential of 4 goals per game**
 - iii. **Goals against**
 - iv. **Goals for**
 - v. **Penalty kicks or coin flip (to be determined by Tournament Director)**

Tie games after a semi-final match will immediately proceed to FIFA penalty kicks to determine a winner (no overtime). Final matches resulting in a tie will proceed to two, full five minute overtimes – not sudden death. If at the end of both overtimes the game is still tied, FIFA penalty kicks will be taken to determine a winner.

11. **Forfeits:** A forfeit shall be awarded if a team is not present and prepared to play within ten minutes of the scheduled commencement time. Ten-minute allowance shall be made for semi-final and championship matches. **Any team forfeiting a match will not be allowed to play in a semi-final or championship match.** 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. Seven players constitute a team for full 18 player rosters, and five for U9-U12 rosters. A forfeit will be scored as a 1-0 loss to the forfeiting team.
12. **Inclement Weather: Once the Tournament has started**—Regardless of weather conditions, coaches and their teams must appear at their 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 prior to the start of the game. Referees may suspend a match only. In case of severe weather, the Tournament Director(s) may cancel any and all games. In case of severe weather that occurs after the beginning of play, the Tournament Director, or tournament representative on site (site coordinator), 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 marshals will not consider beginning or continuing matches when a lightning storm exists. **There will be no-refunds on partially played games or games not played once the tournament has commenced.**
13. **TOURNAMENT CANCELLATION BECAUSE OF WEATHER or other cause outside of the club's control: Stafford Soccer will offer a refund after all FIXED Tournament expenses are paid. The Tournament committee will then decide a cash value refund or voucher for all paid teams. Stafford Soccer will require a minimum of 90 days for a final decision on refund/voucher value.**
 - a. **Disclaimer:** Neither Stafford Soccer or HBC Event Travel Services (*see separate Hotel cancellation policy on HBC link on website*), are responsible for any expenses incurred by any team should the tournament be cancelled in whole or part, or in the event games are discontinued or cancelled due to inclement weather or adverse field conditions. 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.
14. **Team Contact Information:** Each team must sign a contact sheet giving the cell phone number for the team's coach, team manager, or the team's assistant coach so that these individuals may be contacted in the event that circumstances require such. Be sure your team contact is someone who can be reached at any hour and has a cell phone. All questions about the Tournament should be from the Team Contact/Coach and not from parents.
15. **Hotel Services:** To ensure the quality of service provided at the 2024 Stafford Soccer St. Patrick's Day tournament, Stafford Soccer has partnered with HBC Event Services as the official Hospitality Service of the tournament. All teams that are from outside the local area are required to book any hotel reservations through HBC Event Services to ensure their place in the 2024 St. Patrick's Day Tournament. Any teams that do not comply will be at risk of forfeiting their acceptance.
 - a. Local Northern Virginia teams, or teams "commuting" to the Stafford area for the weekend do not have to stay in hotels. However, in the event they choose to stay local, they are required to contact HBC Event Services to book their rooms.
 - b. Please call or email HBC Event Services (505) 346-0522 support@hbceventservices.com with any questions.
 - c. By using HBC Event Services as our booking service, HBC Event Services guarantees that if the tournament is cancelled due to weather, you will not be charged for any cancellation penalties that you may otherwise have been subject to if you made your reservation elsewhere.
16. **Important Notes:**
 - a. Have all player passes, official roster, and medical release forms with you at the fields during the tournament. The tournament committee reserves the right to check credentials during the event, and may check rosters and player passes prior to any game. USYS and US Club Soccer teams must

have player cards and official roster and be in good standing.

- b. The tournament is dedicated to the development of all the players participating, good sportsmanship, and the “good of the game”. The Tournament Director may suspend, without recourse or appeal, any players, coaches, or spectators who demonstrate anything less.

17. Match and Score Reporting:

- a. All match results, cautions, and ejections are reported by the Field Marshal to the Site Coordinator. The Site Coordinator is responsible for reporting to Tournament Headquarters. Scores and standings will be online.
- b. At the conclusion of each match, both coaches must sign the match scorecard. The Field Marshal will take this scorecard immediately to the Site-Coordinator.

18. Protests & Disputes

- a. Protests – All decisions of the referees are final and binding. No protests are allowed.
- b. Disputes – The Tournament Rules Committee reserves the right to decide on all matters relative to the tournament and its decisions are final. Any non-referee decisions can be brought to the Site-Coordinator for consideration by the Tournament Rules Committee.
- c. The Tournament Rules Committee is comprised of the Tournament Director, Travel Director & Club President.
- d. Disputes are to be documented with the Site-Coordinator. The Site-Coordinator will relay the dispute to the Tournament Rules Committee who will decide on the issue and report back on the same day the dispute is made.

19. Conduct & Discipline

- a. Players, coaches, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves within the letter and the spirit of the Laws of the Game. Coaches are responsible for their players, parents, and guests on the sideline. No team or club official may enter the field of play regardless of circumstances, unless that person has been given permission to enter the field by the referee.
- b. There will be no smoking or alcohol in the vicinity of any field of play. No verbal abuse of anyone will be tolerated. Any case of referee assault will be reported and filed with local law enforcement and will also be reported to the appropriate state association.
- c. If a player is ejected from a match, that player must sit out the remainder of that match, plus his/her team’s next match. The player may sit with the team but may not be in uniform. No substitution may be made for the ejected player during the match in which the red card was issued.
- d. If a coach is ejected, they will be expected to leave the vicinity of the playing area, at least 300 yards away and is prohibited from further contact for the remainder of the game. They must also remain away from the field during the team’s next match.
- e. Because of the seriousness of such instances, red cards issued after the end of regulation play, or as a result of physical assault, are subject to review by the Tournament Rules Committee and a more strenuous penalty, which is not subject to appeal, may be employed.
- f. Two yellow cards to the same player or coach in the same match will equal a red card and will result in the penalties outlined above. Yellow cards will not carry over match to match.
- g. Report of Disciplinary Action:
 - i. For United States teams, the respective state association will be notified of the disciplinary action taken or required by the Tournament Committee.
 - ii. For CONCACAF teams, the Tournament Committee will notify the U.S. Soccer Federation of the disciplinary action taken and the Federation will transmit the disciplinary action taken or required to that team’s provincial or national association.