



CAVERN CITY CHRISTMAS CLASSIC 2025

December 5, 6, 7, 2025 – Bob Forrest Youth Sports Complex

RULES OF COMPETITION

All matches will be played in accordance with the IFAB Laws except as modified and stated in this rules package. Any disputes will be settled by the Tournament Director and/or the Tournament Committee. Tournament rules may be further modified under extraordinary circumstances at the discretion of the Tournament Director and/or the Tournament Committee.

NO PROTESTS WILL BE ACCEPTED OR CONSIDERED

TEAM & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Eligible players are those who are properly registered with USYS, US Club Soccer, ODP/YOP, AYSO, or SAY and whose complete name and date of birth is on the team's roster form at the **CAVERN CITY CHRISTMAS CLASSIC 2025 (CCCC 2025)** Tournament Credentials Check-In. ALL teams must provide a validated team roster, as issued in the manner approved by the team's State Association. No player may play for more than one team; dual registered players must declare in writing which team they will play for if both of their teams have entered the **CCCC 2025**. Coaches must provide USYS, US Club Soccer, ODP/YOP, AYSO, etc. Member photo pass card as approved by the team's State Association for EACH player, guest player, and team official listed on the approved team roster and present with the team. Each player's member photo pass card must have on it the team information, the valid seasonal year (2025-2026), the player's name, and the player's verified birthdate as required by Rule 204 of USYS Policy on Players & Player Rules.

GUEST PLAYER POLICY

Each team may have a maximum of FOUR (4) guest players (for teams of all age groups). Guest players MUST be USYS registered members for ALL USYS member teams. For US Club Soccer, AYSO, etc., their guest players MUST be registered members of their own respective organizations. **Cross-organizational guest playing (such as an AYSO registered player guest**

playing for an USYS team or vice versa WILL NOT be permitted. Coaches must also provide copies of any required permissions for a player or a coach who is listed as a guest.

TRAVEL SANCTIONING DOCUMENTATION

Out-of-state (but NOT from the USYS Region IV) teams will also be required to receive their respective State Association's Travel Sanction Permission. (This applies to ALL teams coming from anywhere in Texas and Oklahoma).

TEAMS USING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS MAY BE REQUIRED TO FORFEIT ALL THEIR MATCHES.

MEDICAL RELEASES

An authorization that is properly executed with original signatures to allow emergency medical treatment of each player must be presented at the Tournament Credentials Check-In.

TEAM CREDENTIALS CHECK-IN DETAILS

Here are the MANDATORY Team Documents for YOUR TEAM to UPLOAD in GOTSPORT -

- > Current Soccer Seasonal Year (2025-2026) Laminated Player & Coach Photo Pass Cards (including for ALL your GUEST PLAYERS), as issued by the team's USSF affiliate member (USYS, US Club Soccer, AYSO, SAY, etc.).
- > Current Soccer Seasonal Year (2025-2026) Membership/Medical Release forms for EACH player and Guest player.
- > Your League/Club approved Official Team Roster, including all Guest players.
- > A completed and signed copy of the Coach & Team Conduct Guidelines form.
- > Guest player authorization (if applicable). Please note that there is NO CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL guest playing permitted. USYS registered players can ONLY play with other USYS teams; US Club Soccer registered players can ONLY play with other US Club Soccer teams, etc.
- > Proof of Permission to Travel for teams coming from outside of USYS Region IV.
- > Any player or coach whose Credentials are incomplete at the Tournament Credentials Check-In WILL NOT be allowed to participate in the **CCCC2025**.
- > Teams that are not properly checked in may be required to FORFEIT all their matches.
- > NO roster changes or any other player additions will be allowed after a team has been checked in.

OFFICIAL MATCH SCHEDULES

The **CCCC2025** will publish/post the official match schedules FIVE (5) days prior to the tournament weekend. (Please check back for any schedule changes). Each team will be scheduled to play a minimum of THREE (3) matches (weather permitting). The format and the type of schedule will depend on the number of teams in each age/gender bracket. Here are the Specific Bracket Sizes & the Corresponding Number of Matches' explanation -

Bracket/Group Size (Number of Teams)	Corresponding Number of Matches Explanation
3	Each team will play the other (2) teams TWICE in a Double Round Robin format. The Champions & the Runners-Up will be determined on TOTAL NET POINTS. (Tiebreakers will be applied if and as necessary).
4	Each team will play the other (3) teams ONCE in a Single Round Robin format. The Top Two teams (on TOTAL NET POINTS) will play in the Championship Final.
5 (or 7)	Each team will play the other (4) teams (or 6 teams) ONCE in a Single Round Robin format. The Champions and the Runners-Up will be determined on TOTAL NET POINTS. (Tiebreakers will be applied if and as necessary).
6	Will be subdivided into two groups (A & B) of (3) teams each, where each team within a group will play the other (2) teams ONCE. Then, 3A will play 3B (for their guaranteed third match), 1A vs. 2B and 2A vs. 1B will be the cross-semifinals. The winners of SF1 & SF2 will play in the Championship Final.

AGE SPECIFIC RULES – U5/6 and U7/8 WELCOME FESTIVALS

All the U5/6 and U7/8 teams entered in the WELCOME FESTIVALS will receive THREE (3) matches each – group size permitting. Boys'/Girls'/Co-Ed teams will be grouped together as necessary. There will be NO scores kept, NO match points awarded, NO group standings kept, and NO advancement to any playoff matches. Each player (and TWO coaches per team) will receive the same PARTICIPATION AWARD (NOT a placement award).

(NMYSA - [USSF-Statement-on-Heading-9_2016.pdf](#))

AGE SPECIFIC RULES – U9/10 IMPLEMENTING THE BUILD OUT LINE

The USYS has mandated the use of the Build Out Line (BOL) in ALL 7v7 matches as played in the U9/10 age groups.

(NMYSA - [Build-Out-Line-2.pdf](#))

(NMYSA - [USSF-Statement-on-Heading-9_2016.pdf](#))

AGE SPECIFIC RULES – U11 and Under Heading Rules

The USYS has mandated that ALL players on U11 and younger teams shall not engage in heading the ball, either in training or in matches. In the **CCCC2025**, the following rule shall apply – When a player deliberately heads the ball in a match, an Indirect Free Kick (IFK) shall be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs in the goal area, the IFK shall be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. Referees shall enforce these rules. Referees will not be assessing the age of the individual players on the field; they will enforce the rules for the age group that they are in charge of officiating. If any U11 and under players are competing on or against a U12 team (or in a U11/12 age group bracket), it is the COACHES' RESPONSIBILITY to instruct their players to receive/pass/shoot the ball without heading it.

(NMYSA - [USSF-Statement-on-Heading-9_2016.pdf](#))

PRE-MATCH TEAM CHECK-IN

Teams must check in before each of their scheduled matches in the **CCCC2025**. The assigned Referee Crew for the match will conduct a pre-match equipment check-in. Coaches will be

required to present their players (with their Player & Coach Photo Pass Cards) and a COPY of their team roster.

MATCH FORFEITS

Teams failing to check in properly within TEN (10) minutes after their scheduled kick-off time MAY forfeit that match. To start and finish a match, U5/6 teams must have at least (2) players present, U7/8 teams must have at least (3) players present, U9/10 teams must have at least (5) players present, U11/12 teams must have at least (6) players present, and U13/14 and older teams must have at least (7) players present. To be awarded a forfeit win, your team must show up even if you know that your opponent may not show up.

Since the purpose of the tournament is to play matches and the tournament has a quite a few of out-of-town/state teams that may be unfamiliar with the venue or because there may have been last minute changes that were not properly communicated, the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee will consider the reasons for the team's tardiness before declaring a forfeit. **If a team forfeits a match without a justifiable cause, it will be disqualified from the Semifinal and Championship matches. ANY TEAM USING AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER (or players) WILL FORFEIT THAT MATCH. ALSO, ANY TEAM USING AN INELIGIBLE COACH (or coaches) WILL FORFEIT THAT MATCH, AND THOSE COACHES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO COACH IN THE REST OF THE TOURNAMENT.** In the event of a forfeit, THREE (3) match points shall be awarded to the team with the forfeit win, and NEGATIVE ONE (-1) match points shall be assessed to the team with the forfeit loss.

RED & YELLOW CARDS

Any player receiving a red card shall be expelled from that match and must leave the playing field, remove his/her uniform jersey, put a conspicuously different shirt on, and stay sitting on the team bench (to the satisfaction of the Match Referee and the Field Marshal), may not be substituted for, and shall be automatically disqualified from participating in his/her team's next scheduled match in the **CCCC2025**. Players receiving a red card for fighting will not be permitted to participate in ANY of their team's remaining matches in the **CCCC2025**. Any coach receiving a red card shall be expelled from that match and must leave the immediate vicinity of the playing field (to the satisfaction of the Match Referee and the Field Marshall) and shall be automatically disqualified from coaching his/her team's next scheduled match in the **CCCC2025**. If an expelled player and/or coach fails to serve a suspension and plays in or coaches in their team's next scheduled match in the **CCCC2025**, that team shall automatically forfeit that match, and it will be scored as an abandonment. Referees will provide Misconduct Reports, documenting red cards and expulsions to the Tournament HQ. **Red cards MUST be documented and CANNOT be rescinded.**

PLAYER SUBSTITUTIONS

With the Referee's permission, players may be substituted from the mid-field line at ANY STOPPAGE IN PLAY. Substituted players must remain on the sideline until the players they are replacing have left the field.

HOME TEAM

- > Is the first team listed in the match schedules.
- > Shall their wear light colored jersey and change in case of a color conflict.
- > Is required to supply a properly inflated match ball of appropriate size.
- > May request a match ball that is solid white or black & white (IF available).

VISITOR TEAM

- > Is the second team listed in the match schedules.
- > Should be prepared to supply a properly inflated match ball of appropriate size.
- > May request a match ball that is solid white or black & white in color (IF available).

Teams (coaches and players) shall occupy the same side of the field (the HOME Team in the E/N half of that touchline and the VISITOR Team in the W/S half of that touchline). ALL spectators MUST BE on the opposite side of the field from their respective teams.

MATCH MATRIX BY AGE GROUPS

Age Group (B/G)	Maximum Roster Size	Guest Players Allowed	Match Length (Min.)	Player on Field (w/GK)	Offside Rule Applies	Build Out Line Applies	Heading Rule Applies
U 5/6	6	4	4x10	3 (NO GK)	NO	NO	YES
U 7/8	8	4	4x10	4 (NO GK)	NO	NO	YES
U 9/10	12	4	2x20	6+GK	YES	YES	YES
U 11/12	16	4	2x25	8+GK	YES	NO	YES (U11s)
U 13/14	22	4	2x30	10+GK	YES	NO	NO
U 15/16/17	22	4	2x35	10+GK	YES	NO	NO

MATCH POINTS SCORING SYSTEM

- > THREE (3) points for a win.
- > ONE (1) point for a tie.
- > ONE (1) point for a NO RESULT (a match ended in the first half due to weather).
- > ZERO (0) points for a loss.
- > THREE (3) points for a forfeit win (scored as a 4-0 win for tiebreaking purposes).
- > NEGATIVE ONE (-1) point for a forfeit or an abandonment loss.
- > NEGATIVE ONE (-1) point for EACH Red Card issued to a team (Coach, Player, or Team).

TIE-BREAKERS FOR ADVANCEMENT

1. Head-to-head result.
2. Highest TOTAL Goal Differential (limit a maximum of (4) per match) in ALL bracket matches.
3. Most TOTAL number of goals scored (limit a maximum of (4) per match) in ALL bracket matches.
4. Least TOTAL number of goals allowed in ALL bracket matches.
5. Kicks From Penalty Mark (KFPM).
6. Coin Toss.

Tiebreakers will be applied in this manner – If three (or more) teams are tied, and a tie-breaker results in one (or more) team(s) to be eliminated from the tie, then the tiebreakers are applied again starting with

1. Head-to-head result above.

CHAMPIONSHIP MATCHES

If tied at the end of regulation, Kicks From Penalty Mark (KFPM) as per FIFA Laws, will be taken to determine the winner. There will be NO overtime periods played.

REPORTING OF INDIVIDUAL MATCH SCORES

The Match Report including the scores, cautions, and ejections will be filled out and signed by the Center Referee and turned into the Tournament HQ, where it will be compiled and reported in GotSport. ALL match scores will be reconciled with the official Referee Match Report before the FINAL Match Points are awarded. **If YOUR team's posted Match Score is incorrect (in your opinion), your team's Head Coach MUST contact the Tournament HQ as soon as your team has discovered the error.**

CONDUCT, SPORTSMANSHIP, & VERBAL ABUSE

Coaches are responsible for proper conduct and good sportsmanship of/from their players and spectators. Referees have complete authority during all matches and will not allow abusive or profane language or any threats. If, in the opinion of the Center Referee, a match must be terminated due to serious or persistent misconduct, the match will be abandoned. The team (or teams) at fault may be suspended from any further play and/or required to forfeit all Match Points accrued, as per the judgment of the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee. Tournament Representatives, Referees, and Volunteers are not expected to accept verbal abuse from anyone at the event. If the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee determine that there has been excessive verbal abuse, they may decide to expel a team from the tournament. **An expelled team has no right to any refunds, awards, or any other considerations whatsoever.**

COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN A TEAM AND THE TOURNAMENT

All Tournament related communications between a participating team and the Tournament Management **MUST** be conducted by the Team's Head Coach and/or the Assistant Coach and/or the Team Manager **AND** the Tournament Director and/or the Tournament Committee, and **NOT** by any individual parents and/or other spectators affiliated with the team.

MATCH ABANDONMENT

Tournament scoring for abandonments will be determined by the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee, after consultation with the Referee Crew and the Field

Marshall. Scoring for matches terminated by abandonment is ordinarily based on the score at the time of abandonment; however, depending on the circumstances, the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee may award or subtract match points from the team's account, regardless of the actual match score. **Referees will determine the match abandonment; the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee will determine its effect on the Tournament results.**

ANY PLAYER / COACH / SPECTATOR WHO ASSAULTS A REFEREE AND/OR ANY TOURNAMENT STAFF WILL BE PERMANENTLY EXPELLED FROM THE TOURNAMENT AND WILL BE REPORTED TO ALL THE PROPER AUTHORITIES.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY & PROCEDURES

In case of any inclement weather (rain, snow, lightning, etc.) affecting the Tournament, the Tournament Director and Tournament Committee shall reserve the right to modify any and all the Tournament Rules to conclude the event as safely and as fairly as possible. The Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee shall consult the Bob Forrest Youth Sports Complex management and the City of Carlsbad in reaching any decision about the playability of the fields. Teams, Coaches, Spectators, Players, and Referees CANNOT override this decision, and they **MUST** abide by it without any protests whatsoever.

SUSPENSION OF PLAY

If play is suspended due to inclement weather, prevailing field conditions, or any other circumstances beyond the Tournament's immediate control, after the completion of the first half, that match shall be considered complete and official. If a match is suspended prior to completing the first half, the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee shall decide how best to complete that match (a shorter match or a PK Shootout, etc.).

THERE WILL BE ABSOLUTELY NO REFUNDS ISSUED FOR ANY SUSPENDED, SHORTENED, OR CANCELLED MATCHES.