

The Cupid Games

Rules & Laws of the Game

I. TEAM ELIGIBILITY:

- Interstate Soccer Club indoor tournament shall be open to all teams
- All players must be currently registered with their respective US Youth Soccer State Association or other approved association
- Players may only play on one team
- All teams must present an official signed state roster
- Guest players will be allowed provided a guest form is submitted at check-in

II. PLAYER REGISTRATION & TEAM CHECK-IN:

- Registration deadline is January 26, 2026, by 11:59pm
 - Waivers are required for each rostered player
 - Check-in at the registration booth 1 hour before your 1st game

III. TOURNAMENT FORMAT:

- Three game minimum. The following will determine which teams advance after pool play:
 - Divisions with 4 teams- Top two point totals will advance to championship
 - Divisions with 5 teams- round robin group play, champions determined by most overall points
 - Divisions with 6 teams- there will be 2 brackets of 3, the two teams with the most points (REGARDLESS OF BRACKET) will advance to a championship game.
 - Divisions with 8 teams- top point for each bracket (4 teams) will advance to championship game.
 - U9/U10 age groups will play 3 guaranteed games (group play) in a festival style (no finals or semi-finals) as per US Soccer Player Development Initiatives.
- **If enough teams haven't registered for a specific age bracket, the Tournament reserves the right to combine age group brackets.**

IV. TOURNAMENT SCORING:

- 3 points for a win
- 1 point for a tie
- 0 points for a loss
 - Red cards or bench area removal will result in a 1-point deduction (each card/removal)

- Forfeits will result in 3 points being awarded to the opposing team winning 4 - 0
- Teams with a forfeit cannot advance
- The tie breakers for advancement
 - Winner of head-to-head competition (only applies to 2 teams)
 - Goal Differential (max of 4 per game)
 - Fewest goals allowed
 - Coin toss

V. GAME SCHEDULE:

The schedule will be posted on htgsports.net website. It is the responsibility of the team coach and/or manager to double check the schedule one day prior to their first scheduled game.

- Preliminary schedules will be posted by 11:59pm on Friday 2/6
- Final schedules will be posted by 11:59pm on Monday 2/9
 - Home team: listed first and will wear light colored jerseys
 - changes jerseys when teams have a color conflict
 - Away team: listed second and will wear dark colored jerseys

VI. REFUND POLICY:

If enough teams don't sign up within a specific age bracket the Tournament Director shall notify the participants as soon as possible, and the participants will be given the option to play up OR receive a full refund. As we have limited time slots available for games, ISC may have to limit the number of teams accepted. Paid applications will be considered first.

VII. CANCELLATION POLICY:

The tournament committee has the right to shorten and/or cancel matches due to climatic conditions and/or other acts of nature and circumstances beyond the control of the tournament or soccer club.

In the event of total cancellation prior to the start of the first scheduled game, the tournament will refund a percentage of the application fee based on the tournament expenses. In the event the tournament interruption or cancellation after the first scheduled tournament games begin, the tournament will have no obligation to refund any portion of the application fee.

Refund Policy Due to Weather

The Tournament Director, the Director of Referees and/or Tournament Committee shall also have full and final authority concerning the cancellation, delay, change of time, or any other alteration of games that may be required due to the weather or emergencies.

The following is the tournament refund policy due to weather, emergencies as deemed by the tournament officials, rental of facility, or act of God regarding preliminary round games:

- A. No games played = registration fee less \$100.00 returned
- B. 1 game played = 50% of the registration fee returned
- C. 2 games played = 25% of the registration fee returned

Refunds

No refunds will be given once schedules have been posted by 11:59pm on Friday 2/6

- If a tournament withdrawal is requested, by the registered team contact prior to schedule distribution, the team will be refunded their registration fee minus a \$50 admin fee

VIII. DELAY OF START:

Any team, coach, player or substitute delaying the start of a scheduled game without authorization from the tournament director shall forfeit the game to the opponent. Forfeit will be recorded with a score of 4-0.

IX. PROTESTS:

There will be no protests. The Tournament Director will resolve all disputes immediately and any decisions will be final. The Tournament Director reserves the right to amend the rules, if necessary, in the interest of player safety.

X. SPECTATOR AREA:

The spectator viewing area is limited to bleachers for fields 1,3, and 5. For fields 2,4, and 6 spectators will be allowed to sit on the side opposite the team technical area (spectators will sit along the far wall while teams will sit along the middle nets). We encourage players/coaches to place their equipment bags away from any traffic areas.

XI. WARM UP AREA:

Each team will have approx. 5 minutes before each game to warm-up on the designated field. Teams may not warm-up in any lobby area, in areas where spectators will be waiting to enter the courts between games, or any areas closed by ISC.

XII. SIDELINE CONDUCT AND CONTROL:

Players, reserve, managers, coaches, assistant coaches and fans are expected to conduct themselves with the letter and spirit of the "LAWS OF THE GAME". The site directors have the authority and responsibility to remove any person(s) from the premises for any type of abusive language, misconduct in addition to any specific disciplinary action brought about by other authorities. Coaching may only occur on the team's half of the sideline from the centerline.

XIII. AWARDS:

Medals will be given for first (1st) and second (2nd) place teams in all divisions.

CONCUSSION INITIATIVE

Per U.S. Soccer's Concussion Initiative, if a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee is instructed to stop play to allow for treatment/evaluation as needed. If the player leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment. The player with the suspected head injury may not return to the game unless a Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) has cleared the player. Any coach or parent insisting on returning the player to the game without approved clearance will result in the referee ending the game.

LAWS OF THE GAME

FIFA laws of the game will govern play with exception to local rules

LAW 1 - THE PITCH

- Length greater than width
- Penalty spot – 7 yards (21 feet)
- Penalty area – size may vary by venue
- Center circle – 10 feet (may vary by venue)
- Designated team areas for coaches and team subs only

LAW 2 - THE BALL

- 9U-12U: size 4
- 13U+: size 5
- Material – Leather or other suitable material (not dangerous)
- Referee will be provided a suitable game ball from either team

LAW 3 - THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- 9U- 12U: 6 (one of whom is a goalkeeper)
- 13U+: 5 (one of whom is a goalkeeper)
- Minimum number of players to start and finish a match: 3 (one of whom is a goalkeeper)
- Roster size: max of 10
- Substitution Limit: None

Substitution Method “Flying Substitution”: All players, but the goalkeeper, enter and leave at the center line. (Goalkeeper substitutions only made when ball out of play and with referee's consent.) There is to be no advantage gained during simultaneous substitution. Improper substitution shall result in a caution for the player not complying with Law and restart is an Indirect Free Kick (IDFK) from spot of improper substitution.

- Current player passes are required for insurance

- Guest Players: max of 2
 - Will need to be listed on official roster
 - Will need player card

LAW 4 - THE PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

Usual Required Equipment:

- Numbered shirts or jersey
- Socks
- Protective shin guards covered by socks and surface appropriate footwear
- Players are encouraged to change out of street footwear in the facility
- Goalkeepers must wear a different colored jersey to distinguish themselves from the other players
- No jewelry
- Cast/Orthopedic wear may be worn if well-padded and at the discretion of the referee.
- Exposed Velcro and metal hinges will not be allowed.

LAW 5 - THE REFEREE

- Must be a USSF Certified Official (outdoor or futsal)
- Duties – Enforce the Laws of the Game
- Position - The side opposite to the player benches
 - Position of referee can be changed to meet local setup
- Game Report given to competition committee
- Will check player cards before each match

LAW 7 - DURATION OF THE MATCH

- One running clock for all fields
- All games will start on the hour
- Duration - Two equal halves of 20 minutes
- Halftime – 5 minutes
- 5 minutes for previous teams to clear technical area
- All games and halves will be started by a referee whistle
- Games will begin and end on referee's whistle

LAW 8 - THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

- Kickoff - Ball deemed in play once it has been touched and moved
- The kicker shall not touch ball before someone else touches it
- Goal may not be scored direct
- Visiting team kicks off first half and home team kicks off second half

LAW 9 - THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- Ball is out of play:
 - When the ball has wholly crossed the goal line or touchline
 - When game is stopped by a referee
 - When the ball hits the ceiling, netting, a light fixture, a support beam, etc, spot ball closest to point of contact
 - If ball hits object or ceiling in penalty area, move ball to the edge of penalty area
 - *Players from opposing team must be at least 4 yards from point of kick-in*

LAW 10 - THE METHOD OF SCORING

When the whole ball has passed over the goal line, between the goal posts, under the crossbar and provided there is no infringement of the laws committed by the team scoring the goal

The team with the greatest number of goals is winner of match and equal goals results in a draw

The official score will be kept by assigned game referee

LAW 11 - OFFSIDE

There is no offside rule on offense

LAW 12 - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Indirect free kick (IFK) awarded when a player intentionally commits the following offenses (a penalty kick will be awarded when an infringement takes place in the penalty area).

- Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent
- Tripping or attempting to trip an opponent
- Jumping at an opponent
- Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
- Charging an opponent from behind
- Striking or attempting to strike an opponent
- Spitting at an opponent
- Holding an opponent
- Pushing an opponent
- Handling the ball (except goalkeeper in his/her penalty area)
- Dangerous play
- Impedance
- Charging the goalkeeper in the penalty area
- Preventing the goalkeeper from releasing the ball
- Goalkeeper throws ball directly over the halfway line (13U & above only – see Law 16)
- Goalkeeper picks up or touches the ball with his hands after a pass from a teammate

- Goalkeeper picks up or touches the ball with his hands after a kick-in from a teammate
- Goalkeeper controls the ball with hands for more than 4 seconds
- Any type of slide tackle is prohibited, except goalkeeper in the penalty area PLEASE STAY ON YOUR FEET!

Players shall be cautioned (shown a yellow card) and punishable by an indirect free kick (IFK) from point of infringement. Cautioned player may be substituted

- Substituting player enters the pitch from an incorrect position or before the player being substituted has entirely left the pitch.
- Persistently infringing the Laws of the Game
- Shows dissent toward a decision of a referee
- Guilty of unsporting behavior

Players shall be sent off (shown a red card) and punishable by an Indirect free kick (IFK) from point of infringement

- Serious foul play
- Violent conduct
- Deliberately impeding a clear goal scoring opportunity
- Deliberately impeding a clear goal scoring opportunity in the penalty area by handling the ball
- Foul or abusive language
- Second instance of a cautionable (yellow card) offense

Rules of expulsion (red card)

- Players sent off are out for the rest of the game and must leave the game premise
- No substitute for a sent off player. The player receiving the red card cannot be replaced
- Any Player/Coach sent off and will be ineligible to play/coach in the team's next match

LAW 13 - THE FREE KICK

- Indirect free kicks (IFK) for any of the IFK infringements or any other undefined stoppage
 - Team cannot score directly from an IFK
- Opponents must stay clear at a minimum of 4 yards until ball is in play
- Ball in play after it has been deliberately touched
- Kick must be taken with 4 seconds
- Kicker cannot touch the ball a second time until the ball has been touched by another player

ACCUMULATED FOULS

- Accumulated fouls refer only to the fouls mentioned in Law 12.
- Referee will keep track of accumulating fouls
- Once a team has accumulated 5 fouls during a half, starting with the 6th foul and on for that half, infringements shall be punished with a direct free kick from the penalty spot

Procedure:

- Until ball in play all players other than the goalkeeper and kicker shall remain behind an imaginary line that is in line with the ball and parallel to the goal line
- Goalkeeper shall remain on the goal line at least 21 feet (7 yards) from the ball
- Kicker must aim at the goal with the intention of scoring
- No other player may touch the ball until it has been touched by the goalkeeper, rebounded from the goal post or crossbar, or has left the pitch.

LAW 14 - THE PENALTY KICK

- To be taken from the penalty mark by a properly identified kicker 21 feet from goal line
- The kicker is to aim at the goal with the intention of scoring
- All players must be out of the penalty area and the players of the opposing team must be 6 feet from penalty spot
- The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until the ball has been touched by another player

LAW 15 - THE KICK-IN

- To be taken in place of the throw-in
- The ball is placed on the touchline before kicking
- The kick-in must be taken within 4 seconds
- The kick-in player cannot play the ball a second time until the ball has been touched by another player
- Players from opposing team must be at least 4 yards from point of kick-in
- Cannot score directly from a kick-in

LAW 16 - THE GOAL CLEARANCE

- Taken from inside the penalty area, the goalkeeper throws the ball into play
 - The goal clearance is to be taken in place of goal kick
- The ball is not in play until it has passed outside of the penalty area
- The throw in must be taken within 4 seconds
- The goalkeeper may only handle the ball in the penalty area
- 13U+: The Goal Clearance may NOT be thrown over the half line
 - This violation results in an IFK for the opposing team closest to where the ball crossed the halfway line

LAW 17 - THE CORNER KICK

- Ball placed on the corner
- Must be taken with 4 seconds, failure to do so results in an indirect free kick to the opposing team from the corner
- The kicker cannot play the ball a second time until the ball has been played by another player
- Players of the opposing team must be at least 4 yards from the corner
- A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick

LAW 18 - PENALTY KICK SHOOT-OUT (SEMI-FINALS OR CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES ENDING IN A TIE ONLY)

- Main referee decides goal to be used
- Coin toss to decide which team shall shoot first
- Three kicks taken by 3 different players selected among eligible players with names given to main referee
- After 3 kicks and still tied, additional kicks will be taken by the remaining eligible players on a sudden death basis
- Any eligible player may change places with goalkeeper
- All Players will remain on opposite half of pitch