

RULES FOR THE 2023 WOLVES SocctoberFest



METRO OMAHA WOLVES

Socctober Fest
Omaha, NE

SOCCKER CLUB

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Overview	3
1.1. TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE	3
1.2. TEAM ACCEPTANCE	3
1.3. TEAM PARTICIPATION	3
1.4. TEAM COMPOSITION	3
1.5. PLAYER PARTICIPATION	3
1.6. TEAM, PLAYERS AND COACHES CREDENTIALS	3
1.7. HOUSING	3
2. Playing Rules and Regulations	4
2.1. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES	4
2.2. HOME TEAM	4
2.3. COMBINED AGE GROUPS	4
2.4. LAWS OF PLAY	4
2.5. PLAY OUT LINE / BUILD OUT LINE (Under-9 and Under-10)	4
2.6. OFFSIDE	4
2.7. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT	4
2.8. POLICY ON HEADING	4
2.9. SUBSTITUTIONS	5
3. Game Play	6
3.1. LENGTH OF GAMES AND BALL SIZE	6
3.2. PLAYING CONDITIONS	6
3.3. DELAYED GAMES	6
3.4. FORFEITED GAMES	6
3.5. RED CARDS AND EJECTIONS	7
3.6. TEAM DISCIPLINE	7
4. Protests and Appeals	8
4.1. CONSIDERATION OF PROTESTS	8
4.2. VALID PROTESTS	8
4.3. VALID APPEALS	8
4.4. ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATION	9
4.5. OTHER FACTORS	9
5. Tournament Organization	10
5.1. CHECK IN / FIRST GAME	10
5.2. COACHING CONFLICTS	10
5.3. CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS	10
5.4. PLAYER OF THE MATCH AWARDS	10
5.5. PUBLICITY	11
APPENDIX I – Scoring Method and Bracket Winners	12
SCORES AND STANDINGS NOT KEPT FOR YOUNGER TEAMS	12
SCORES AND STANDINGS FOR OLDER TEAMS	12
TIEBREAKERS	12
SHOOT-OUTS (PENALTY KICKS)	13
APPENDIX II – Bracketing	14
APPENDIX III – Refund Policy	15

1. Overview

1.1. TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

The tournament committee shall consist of the Tournament Director, Director of Officials or their designated site representative, and designated members of the Host Club. All issues and concerns relating to the tournament shall be directed to the Tournament Committee in accordance with the Protests and Appeals rules herein. The decisions of the Tournament Committee are final.

1.2. TEAM ACCEPTANCE

This is an Invitational Tournament. Timely registration and payment are required to guarantee consideration but do not guarantee acceptance. Several factors may affect acceptance decisions. The Tournament Committee's primary goal is to field competitive brackets to the best extent possible.

1.3. TEAM PARTICIPATION

This is an unrestricted tournament. Teams and Players from USSSA clubs may participate without further proof of membership or insurance. US Club teams may participate with proof of current US Club membership. USYSA teams may participate with valid rosters and permission to travel forms, if applicable. Independent teams should contact the tournament director about insurance and other requirements for participation.

1.4. TEAM COMPOSITION

Team rosters are limited to 14 players for U9 & U10 teams, 18 players for U11 & U12, and 22 players for U13 and older age divisions. For U13 and older, a maximum of 18 players may participate in any game and must be identified to the referee at the beginning of the game. Any additional players may not be in the bench area during the game.

Up to four (4) guest players with proper documentation will be allowed on a team. Rosters may not change once a team has checked in at the beginning of the tournament.

1.5. PLAYER PARTICIPATION

Players may only play for two teams in this tournament due but for only one team in a particular division or bracket. This is a per tournament limit, not a teams/games per day limit. If a player is found to be in violation of this, then all teams the player has played for shall be disqualified, regardless of the number of games actually played. If the tournament is separated into separate boys' and girls' weekends, this applies separately to each weekend.

Girls may play on teams in Boys or Co-Ed brackets if they are properly registered and rostered. Boys may not play on any teams in Girls brackets. A player's gender shall be determined by their birth certificate or other government issued proof of gender. No other forms of gender identification or change shall be accepted.

1.6. TEAM, PLAYERS AND COACHES CREDENTIALS

Player and coach passes will be checked prior to each match. Teams must be properly checked in at the team check-in. All teams must have Players and Coaches Passes with photographs attached. All player and coach passes shall be laminated. ONLY Players or Coaches with valid passes will be allowed on the team's sideline area. Anyone else not on the roster and/or not possessing a valid pass must stay on the spectators' side of the field.

1.7. HOUSING

This is a Stay to Play tournament. Teams travelling from outside the area are expected to select their hotel accommodations through the Tournament's official housing provider. Instructions for using the official housing provider will be provided via the registration website and/or through other communications to accepted teams.

2. Playing Rules and Regulations

2.1. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to make temporary modifications if special circumstances dictate for the good of the tournament.

2.2. HOME TEAM

The first team listed on the schedule will be designated the home team. The home team will be responsible for wearing an alternate color jersey, if necessary, as determined by the referee. The home team is also responsible for providing the game ball, if needed.

2.3. COMBINED AGE GROUPS

In most instances teams will be placed in single age divisions. However, depending on applications in various age divisions, some teams may be placed in mixed age groups, e.g. U15 combined with U16.

2.4. LAWS OF PLAY

Play will be governed by the FIFA Laws of the Game, except where amended by USSF or USSSA Rules of Play and/or the Wolves Tournament Rules. These rules may be modified before the beginning of tournament play. The final Tournament Rules will be published at the Tournament or Administrative Headquarters at each facility.

2.5. PLAY OUT LINE / BUILD OUT LINE (Under-9 and Under-10)

THIS IS NOT USED FOR THE TOURNAMENT.

2.6. OFFSIDE

In games where assistant referees are not used only the center referee shall call offside. Club or Parent linesmen, if asked by the center referee to participate, will not call offside in any situation. Offside for all age groups will be per FIFA and USSF.

2.7. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Players should have matching uniforms with numbers on the backs of the shirt. Each player shall have a different number. The goalkeeper need not have a numbered jersey. Referees may allow exceptions to the uniform numbering if they feel it does not affect their ability to manage the game.

Shin guards are mandatory equipment. "Slide Shorts" can be worn if they match the color of the shorts. Knee braces and orthopedic appliances can be worn if hard surfaces, hinges, and edges are appropriately padded.

Hard Casts, Splints and Braces of any type: Players may play with suitably padded hard cast or other medical equipment at the sole discretion of the referee. Referee decisions on the safety of any padded equipment are final and may vary from game to game.

Head Gear: Padded head gear (such as, but not limited to, the equipment sold by Full 90 and Storelli) is allowed for any player.

2.8. POLICY ON HEADING

There will be no intentional heading in any Under-11 or younger games. An intentional header will result in an indirect free kick being awarded to the opponent at the spot of the infraction. If an intentional header occurs within the goal area, an indirect free kick will be awarded on the goal area line parallel to the goal line of the nearest point to where the infraction occurred.

2.9. SUBSTITUTIONS

For Under-9 and Under-10 games, unlimited substitutions may be made at any stoppage other than a Penalty Kick, with the consent of the Referee. Substitutions should be made from the center of the field. Substitutes should not enter the field of play until directed to do so by the Referee. Pausing play in Under-9 and Under-10 games while players move outside the Play Out line prior to a goalkeeper restarting play by means other than a goal kick will not be considered a stoppage of play for substitution purposes.

For Under-11 and Under-12 games, unlimited substitutions may be made at any stoppage other than a Penalty Kick, with the consent of the Referee. Substitutions should be made from the center of the field. Substitutes should not enter the field of play until directed to do so by the Referee.

For Under-13 and Older: With the consent of the Referee unlimited substitutions may be made, from the center of the field, in the following situations:

- Prior to your team's throw-in. If both teams have substitutes ready to enter on a throw-in, both teams may substitute at that time.
- Prior to either team's goal kick.
- After a goal has been scored by either team.
- During a stoppage of play for an injury (unlimited for both teams).
- At the Referee's discretion, at any other stoppage where substitutions are valid in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
- A cautioned player may be substituted for before the restart of play, however, this is not mandatory. If a cautioned player is substituted, the opposing team may also substitute one player.

3. Game Play

3.1. LENGTH OF GAMES AND BALL SIZE

Age Group	Format	Game Time	Ball size
Under 7 - 8	5v5 no GK	4 x 10 min quarters	3
Under 9 - 10	7 v 7	2 x 25 min halves	4
Under 11 - 12	9 v 9	2 x 30 min halves	4
Under 13 & Older	11 v 11	2 x 35 min halves	5

If game balls are not provided by the tournament, the home team shall be responsible for providing a ball deemed suitable for game use by the referee.

Half time of all games shall last no longer than 10 minutes. Quarter breaks in Under 7 & 8 games (if such divisions are offered by the tournament) shall last no longer than 5 minutes.

Tie scores shall stand as is at the end of regulation in any preliminary or round robin game. **Any Semi-Finals or Finals games that end in a tie in regulation will go directly to a “kicks from the mark” shoot-out.** There will be no Overtime periods in any games. The shoot-out will be done in accordance with USSF Rules.

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to shorten game times in order to keep the tournament on schedule. If the event of inclement weather, the Tournament Committee shall have the authority to change the above format as follows:

- (1) Relocate and/or reschedule any games,
- (2) Shorten game times,
- (3) Cancel games in preliminary rounds which have no bearing on group winners
- (4) Modify rules for tiebreakers in cases where all games are not played in full.

If games are stopped because of inclement weather after the preliminary rounds, the two top point teams in each division will be declared winners.

3.2. PLAYING CONDITIONS

Teams will be expected to play according to the schedule of games regardless of weather. Only the Tournament Director(s) may reschedule games or alter the competitive format because of inclement weather or other just cause. Games shall be considered complete if one half has been completed and play is stopped by the Field Marshall or Referee, Director of Referees or the Tournament Director(s). When necessitated by playing conditions or just cause, the game format may be altered to include shortening of games, penalty kicks or coin tosses.

At the discretion of the referees, brief water breaks may be taken during either half of play if conditions warrant. The clock shall remain running during such breaks.

3.3. DELAYED GAMES

If a game is delayed for any reason, coaches are responsible for obtaining the new start times from Tournament Headquarters. Failure to comply and be present at the new start time will result in a forfeiture of that game.

3.4. FORFEITED GAMES

A forfeiture will be called if any of the following actions take place.

1. Any team quitting and/or leaving the field of play before the conclusion of a game shall forfeit the game.
2. Either or both teams in the case of a match abandoned by the referee. The tournament committee shall decide which team(s) based on the referee's report.
3. Teams will be allowed a ten (10) minute grace period from their scheduled kickoff time. If the team does not arrive in those ten (10) minutes, the referee will call the game a forfeiture.
4. If either team does not have enough players to field a team (i.e., U9-10 needs 4 players, U11-12 needs 5 players, or U13 & older need 7 players) to play in their respective age division, after the ten (10) minute grace period, the referee will call the game a forfeiture.
5. If a team is found to be using an ineligible player (before/during/after) the game, the Tournament Committee can call the game a forfeiture. This includes players legally on a roster for the tournament but not eligible for a specific game, such as in the case of more than 18 on the roster.
6. In cases of repeated ejections of fans or coaches, the referee will call the game as a forfeiture.

Any team that forfeits a game is not eligible to advance out of pool play, or to receive any awards based on total points out of round robin play, or receive any refund for game(s) not played for whatever reason. In case of a forfeiture, the game will be recorded as a 3-0 for the winner.

3.5. RED CARDS AND EJECTIONS

Any player, coach or fan dismissed from a game shall be ineligible to participate in the team's next game. At the discretion of the Tournament Committee the suspension may be increased and could result in ineligibility for more than one game.

No substitution shall be permitted for a player who has been sent off during a particular game.

A red carded player and his/her coach must report to tournament headquarters immediately after the game in which the card was given to determine the player's status for subsequent games. Decisions will be based upon the rules of the sanctioning body, in coordination with the referee, the assignor or site supervisor.

The Tournament Committee shall retain possession of a suspended player or coach's pass until the suspension has been served. If the suspension is not fully served during the tournament the pass or other credentials shall be returned to the appropriate state soccer association.

Note: the referee assignor and / or the tournament director will report all red cards, coach and fan ejections from the tournament to the appropriate state soccer association. Dismissals that occur in a team's last game of the tournament may carry over to their next sanctioned event.

Referee authority starts when they arrive at the field before the game and continues for as long as the referee is at the tournament site. Abusive behavior from a player or coach after a game ends may result in penalties up to and including ejections, game forfeiture or team expulsion from the tournament.

3.6. TEAM DISCIPLINE

Coaches are responsible for the words and actions of their players and fans. Verbal abuse of the opponents or referees by players, coaches or spectators will not be tolerated. Violations may result in forfeiture of the game and/or expulsion from the tournament.

Abusive language and/or actions by players, coaches, and/or spectators will not be tolerated. The referee has the authority to verbally warn, caution, or send off the team coach for the conduct of the spectators.

Referee authority starts when they arrive at the field before the game and continues for as long as the referee is at the tournament site. Abusive behavior from spectators after a game ends may result in penalties up to and including ejections, game forfeiture or team expulsion from the tournament.

4. Protests and Appeals

4.1. CONSIDERATION OF PROTESTS

(a). Protests based on decisions or judgment calls by referees will not be considered valid. All referee decisions are final.

(b). All protests, either in person or in writing to referees or to the Tournament Committee, must be in English. Translators are allowed in protest or appeals hearings per section 4.4, but it is not the responsibility of the Tournament Committee to supply any translation services needed.

(c). All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors, interpretation of tournament rules, or any dispute or protest concerning the competition other than covered in section 1(a) shall be considered by the tournament committee subject to the following conditions being met:

4.2. VALID PROTESTS

(a). To be valid and eligible for consideration by the tournament committee, each protest must be:

(1) orally lodged by a team official listed on the official team roster involved in the game with the referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play or before leaving the game site, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, and

(2) must be filed with the tournament committee or the tournament site representative within one (1) hour after the completion of the game being protested, accompanied by:

- A protest fee of \$75. This fee will be returned if the protest is upheld.
- Two written copies of the protest, which must include full details and particulars of the grounds on which the protest is lodged
- Two written copies of any information to be presented by witnesses

(b). Any protest relating to the grounds, goal posts, bars, or other equipment and appurtenances of the game shall be entertained only if a written objection was lodged with the referee and the opposing coach prior to the start of the game, in addition to the formal protest being submitted per Section 4.2(a).

(c). The tournament director or her or his site representative shall immediately on receipt of the protest notify the team against which the protest has been made and shall provide a copy of the protest and all particulars to that team, which will have the right to defend its case, with or without witnesses.

(d). The tournament committee will make their decision on any protest, in conjunction with any referees, referee assignors or their representatives, or any other parties they deem relevant to the decision in a timely manner as dictated by other events at the tournament, and shall inform both the protesting team and the team subject to the protest in writing. Oral notifications may be made to facilitate the notification process but timing of any appeal submission will start with delivery of the written decision.

(e). Electronic notification of any decision will be considered a valid written notification by the tournament committee, to any e-mail address or text messaging number provided by each team when they registered for the tournament.

4.3. VALID APPEALS

(a). A decision may be appealed as provided below. Any such appeal must be filed with the tournament committee or the tournament site representative within one (1) hour of receiving the written decision.

(b). Each appeal filed under subsection (a) of this section must be accompanied by:

- An appeal fee of \$75. This fee will be returned if the appeal is successful.
- Two written copies of the appeal, fully stating the grounds for such an appeal.
- Two written copies of any other information the appealing team wishes to present.

4.4. ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATION

(a). Any party to a protest or appeal shall be accorded the right to be assisted in the presentation of the party's case at the protest or appeal proceeding.

(b). Protest and Appeal timelines will not be delayed because a party wants additional representation. It is sole the responsibility of any party to a protest or appeal to obtain additional representation in a timely manner.

4.5. OTHER FACTORS

(a). A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the Tournament is not sufficient grounds for a protest or an appeal.

(b). If applicable, in addition to any tournament sanctions due to roster violations or other infractions, violators may expect appropriate action by our sanctioning body or their home state association.

5. Tournament Organization

5.1. CHECK IN / FIRST GAME

Online Check-in will be available ahead of time in a method communicated to accepted teams. All teams should check in prior to the scheduled start of their first game at the Tournament Headquarters or other designated location to pick up tournament information and Player of the Match pins even if online check in is complete. If not checking in online, please allow ample time before your first game for staff to check rosters and passes. Friday night or other early check in opportunities for other teams will be available at a location to be communicated to accepted teams.

At check-in coaches must have:

- (1) Provide a copy of their **Official** State Soccer Association roster (to be kept by the tournament).
 - (2) Guest player form(s) if applicable (copy to be kept by tournament). A copy of another team's roster is NOT ACCEPTABLE for guest player participation.
 - (3a) Travel papers required for out of state US Youth Soccer teams (copy to be kept by tournament).
 - or (3b) Proof of US Club or USSSA membership in lieu of travel papers for US Club / USSSA teams. (copy to be kept by tournament). Other associations please contact us before coming to ensure compliance.
 - (4) Medical release forms for each player. (verified and returned to coach or team manager)
 - (5) Current player passes complete with signature, pictures, and laminated. (verified and returned)
- Electronic Player Passes are allowed, but the tournament is not responsible for any inability of a coach to access these passes during the tournament.*

Player passes will be validated at check in and returned to coaches. Referees will check player passes throughout the tournament. Rosters cannot be modified after registration occurs.

All teams must be ready to play by the scheduled start of their first game. Please allow sufficient time to check in before your first game.

5.2. COACHING CONFLICTS

Please note in the comments on your application if you are coaching more than one team in the tournament. The tournament committee shall make every effort to avoid conflicts and/or put your games near each other for logistical convenience if you are coaching two teams. **If you are coaching more than two teams then no guarantees can be made that there won't be some conflicts** - be prepared to have an assistant coach take over for some games, and please note in the comments which team(s) have assistant coaches to help us in scheduling all your teams. Special scheduling requests WILL NOT be considered for anyone coaching more than two teams, or anyone with outside games scheduled or other conflicts during the tournament.

5.3. CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

Player awards will be given to the players on the teams finishing first or second in Under-9 or older divisions. Team awards (such as coach's plaques or trophies) may also be given to winning teams. Report to the field HQ at your site after the championship game to receive your awards. Note: Any team that has forfeited a game or that has been disqualified is ineligible for any player or team awards.

5.4. PLAYER OF THE MATCH AWARDS

To help promote good sportsmanship and recognize fair play, at the conclusion of all preliminary games each team shall pick a player from the opposing team to award a Player of the Match award. Player of the Match awards will be given to all teams at check in. The selection criteria are up to each team, and can be

based on sportsmanship, effort, offensive or defensive performance, or any combination thereof. To increase the number of players recognized, coaches may choose to remove from consideration players who have received Player of the Match awards in previous games, but this is not required. Teams refusing to participate after any preliminary match may be assessed a coach ejection by the referee, which will count against their point total in the standings.

5.5. PUBLICITY

Participation in the tournament constitutes the approval by coaches, players and fans for the use of pictures, club & team names, and general addresses (hometown of team, for example) in the publicity and the promotion of this tournament.

APPENDIX I – Scoring Method and Bracket Winners

SCORES AND STANDINGS NOT KEPT FOR YOUNGER TEAMS

In accordance with USSF Guidelines, there will be no standings kept in Under-8 and younger divisions, and no semi-finals or finals games. All Under-8 and younger teams will play 4 games in an open seeding format, unless a team is disqualified or cannot continue for any reason. These games will be entered as ties online regardless of score, or division scores and standings may not be shown at all.

SCORES AND STANDINGS FOR OLDER TEAMS

Under-9 and older teams will play 3 preliminary games, with bracket winners (and wild-card teams, if applicable) advancing to semi-finals or finals games. Teams not advancing will not get additional games.

Bracket winners will be determined by the following point system:

Win -----3 (THREE) points

Tie -----1 (ONE) points

Loss -----0 (ZERO) points

Red Card (for a player) or a Coach ejection will be minus one (-1) Point per infraction.

TIEBREAKERS

If at the conclusion of bracket play, two or more teams that are eligible to advance have the same point total, advancement to the semifinals or finals will be determined using the following tiebreakers in the order listed until a team is eliminated.

If Two and only Two teams are tied:

1. Winner of Head to Head match.
2. Winner of most games.
3. Fewest Red Cards / Coach Ejections during preliminary play
4. Goal Differential (goals scored minus goals against) with a maximum goal differential of 3 per game.
5. Fewest goals allowed.
6. Kicks from the penalty mark.

If more than Two teams are tied:

In cases where more than two eligible teams are tied, each application of the tie-breaker formulae will be used to eliminate one team only. The tie-breakers will then be applied again from the beginning to the remaining teams based on the number of teams still tied.

1. Winner of most games.
2. Fewest Red Cards / Coach Ejections during preliminary play
3. Goal Differential (goals scored minus goals against) with a maximum goal differential of 3 per game.
4. Fewest goals allowed.
5. Coin Toss or other random selection method at the tournament committee's discretion.

Official standings will be posted at the Tournament Headquarters and online through the tournament web site. It is the coach's responsibility to check these standings to determine final qualifiers. Not all tiebreakers may automatically be calculated online. If there are any discrepancies in the posted order of finish on the web-site or other on-line applications, the standings as posted at the Tournament HQ will be considered official.

SHOOT-OUTS (PENALTY KICKS)

Penalty kicks used to determine a winner of tie breakers, semi-final or final matches will be run in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game.

The referee will choose the goal at which the kicks will be taken. The referee tosses a coin and the team who wins the toss will take the first kick. The home team will call the coin toss. Both teams take five kicks; kicks are taken alternately by the teams.

If before both teams have taken five kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks are taken. If after five kicks the score is tied, kicks continue until one team has scored a goal more than the other (sudden death) from the same number of kicks.

Only the players on the field at the end of the match are allowed to take kicks. A different player must take each kick and all eligible players must take a kick before any player can take a second kick. On tiebreakers the coach from each shall declare the 11 players from their roster that they will use to take their kicks. If the player is under suspension they may not participate in the kicks.

APPENDIX II – Bracketing

For all age divisions where championships are held and awards are given the bracketing will be implemented as follows, though the tournament committee reserves the right to alter brackets if special circumstances occur.

4-TEAM BRACKETS (one four-team bracket): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket. The two high point teams advance to the Championship match. High point team will be the home team for the Championship.

5-TEAM BRACKETS (one five-team bracket): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket (each team gets four games). At the end of round robin play the team with highest point total will be declared the Champion, and the team with the second highest point total shall be declared the runner-up.

6-TEAM BRACKETS (two three-team brackets): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket and one crossover game. First place teams of each bracket will play for the championship.

7-TEAM BRACKETS (one four-team and one three-team bracket): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket (the teams in the three-team bracket will get two round robin games). First place teams of each bracket will play for the championship. High point team will be the home team for the Championship.

8-TEAM BRACKETS (two four-team brackets): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket. First place teams of each bracket will play for the championship. High point team will be the home team for the Championship.

10-TEAM BRACKETS (one four-team bracket and two three-team brackets): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket. Teams in three-team brackets will play one cross-over game. First place teams of each bracket, and one wild-card team (highest points of non-bracket winners) will advance to semi-final games. The semi-final winners will play for the championship. Home teams for semi-finals and championship games will be determined as posted on the schedule.

12-TEAM BRACKETS (three four-team brackets): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket. First place teams of each bracket, and one wild-card team (highest points of non-bracket winners) will advance to semi-final games. The semi-final winners will play for the championship. Home teams for semi-finals and championship games will be determined as posted on the schedule.

In any bracket where a team that has forfeited a game would qualify to advance to a semi-final or Championship match, that team will be replaced by the next highest qualifying team.

APPENDIX III – Refund Policy

Should all or a portion of the tournament be canceled due to just cause or teams do not play all their games refunds (rounded to the nearest dollar) of the application fee shall be issued as follows:

	No Games Played	One Game Played	Two Games Played	Three Games Played	4 or more Games Played	Any Team that forfeits a game
Teams with a 4 game guarantee	85%	65%	40%	15%	\$0	\$ 0
Teams with a 3 game guarantee	85%	60%	25%	\$ 0	\$0	\$ 0

- Games shall be considered played when the stoppage occurs after the completion of the first half of play.
- Any fees above and beyond the normal application fee (including, but not limited to: late fees, online check-in fees, returned check fees) will not be part of any refund calculation.
- No refund shall be issued to any accepted team that withdraws more than one week after being notified of their acceptance to the tournament, or less than two weeks before the start of the tournament.
- No refund shall be issued to any team that forfeits a game or is disqualified for any reason.
- If an accepted team withdraws less than one week after acceptance, a \$25 administrative fee will be deducted from their refund.

The tournament shall make every effort to ensure a full referee crew is assigned to all games. However, lack of a full referee crew will not be grounds for any refund or other protest.

Late withdrawals under extenuating circumstances where teams ask for a refund will be considered by the tournament committee on a case by case basis and generally refunds will not be granted. Reasons that will not be considered include, but are not limited to: Acceptance into another tournament; dissatisfaction with the tournament bracket or scheduling, coach or player conflicts with another sporting event, coach or player suspensions from other sanctioned league or tournament play that carry over into this tournament, and loss of state sanctioning or team put in bad standing by their state association.