

INTERTOWN SOCCER LEAGUE

# RECREATIONAL SOCCER REFERENCE GUIDE

U12, U15 and U18 Divisions

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## **Game Specifics**

### **Ball Size**

Ball sizes are to be as followed for each division:

**U12** - Size 4 Ball

**U15** – Size 5 Ball

**U18** – Size 5 Ball

All balls used in game play should be properly inflated. The Home team shall strive to provide an appropriate ball for the duration of the game.

### **Goal Size**

As put forth by New Hampshire Soccer League, regulation goal sizes should be as follows:

**U12** - 6' x 18'

**U15** – 8' x 24'

**U18** – 8' x 24'

## Game Length

All games in each division should be played according to the following time guidelines:

**U12** - Two 30 minute halves with a break of at least 5 minutes but not to exceed 10 minutes between halves.

**U15** – Two 45 minute halves with a break of at least 5 minutes but not to exceed 10 minutes between halves.

**U18** – Two 45 minute halves with a break of at least 5 minutes but not to exceed 10 minutes between halves.

Referees should be equipped to handle accurate timing of halves. With the exception of playoff and championship games, this league does not play past regulation time. Any “regular season” games tied at the end of regulation will be recorded as such. Please refer to the “Playoffs” section of this document for our playoff overtime rules.

## **Team Specifics**

### **Roster Size**

Games are to be played according to the following player format as outlined by New Hampshire Soccer League:

**U12 - 9 v 9**

**U15 – 11 v 11**

**U18 – 11 v 11**

Total number of players on each roster is an individual decision left up to each town's/team's discretion. When developing rosters, however, it is important to consider the number of players on the field at any given time (i.e. game format) and develop rosters in such a way that it provides all players the opportunity for a reasonable amount of game time. Additional forfeit rules apply for borrowed players/double-rostering. Please see the "Forfeit Rules" section of this document for more details.

### **Uniform Requirements**

Inter-Town soccer players shall have shin guards and appropriate footwear. Further, all players on a team shall have similar (not necessarily "identical") colored jerseys to facilitate officiating. Also intended to facilitate officiating, Goalkeepers should have a noticeably different colored jersey to differentiate them from other team members. Goalkeepers may choose to wear appropriate and official 'Goalie Gloves' if they choose.

## **Game Scheduling/Changes**

Game schedules will be developed by a volunteer whose intent is to be fair and consistent to the maximum extent possible. Non-standard “Requests” for schedule accommodations due to unique situations should be limited to the extent possible.

### I. Pre-Season Opening Schedule Accommodation Requests:

Please submit any requests for the season to the Scheduler no less than 2 weeks prior to season start. Examples of reasonable and appropriate requests for a schedule accommodation may include, for example:

- No games for your town’s U15 team(s) (for example) on a certain date due to a function at school that many players will be attending
- No morning games on a certain date for one specific team due to prior, unchangeable commitments of both the Coach and Assistant Coach on that specific day
- Requesting an afternoon game (at or after a designated time) on a certain date because many of your U18 players are taking the SAT
- Requesting either a ‘Home’ or ‘Away’ game on a specific date due to field availability limitations

Every reasonable effort will be made in an attempt to accommodate pre-season requests, however, it is recognized and understood that all “preferences” may not always be possible due to many variable factors such as, but not limited to, field or officiating availability, or conflicts imposed on other teams if a request is not consistent with standard scheduling patterns.

All requests will be noted and every reasonable effort to accommodate requests submitted will be made. As the initial step in a multi-step process, Scheduling Volunteer will create the ‘shell’ of the schedule and will then provide this information to all participating towns. Towns will then individually submit their game times and field assignments for all ‘Home’ games to complete the schedule. Any requests which were not addressed in the initial scheduling step (before schedule ‘shell’ is distributed to

towns) will be noted on the document provided to all towns. It is up to the Home team to assign the game time after taking into consideration any noted request(s), if applicable.

As a courtesy to all others, when the completed schedule is released, coaches/field coordinators/referees/etc. (as applicable) shall promptly review the game schedule. Subsequent changes to individual games should be discussed/coordinated between the two participating teams within the *next 7 days* and once agreed upon, details shall be forwarded to the Scheduler to be updated in the system.

## II. Mid-Season Schedule Accommodation Requests:

Once the official schedule is released prior to the commencement of season play, it is considered “final”. However, it is recognized that additional changes may be necessary due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the reasonable control of league coordinators (e.g. field conditions, extreme adverse weather, local emergencies, safety concerns, etc.). These situations shall be addressed in the most time-sensitive manner possible.

All other mid-season schedule change requests shall be coordinated and mutually agreed upon by the two participating teams’ coaches and communicated to the Directors at [snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org](mailto:snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org) for documentation and updating in the system. In these cases, please contact the other team’s coach **as soon as possible**, ideally **no later than 7 days prior** to scheduled game. The “7-day prior” window is to help ensure minimal inconvenience to all potentially affected team players and their parents and to provide sufficient time for league coordinators to secure/confirm availability of a suitable field and arrange/verify availability of officials.

Every effort should be put forth to make any game changes **at least 2 weeks or more** prior to the date of the game. At the non-requesting coach’s discretion, game change requests do not have to be considered if presented **within 5 days** of game date. In the event a change request by one team cannot be reasonably accommodated/agreed upon by the “other” team, the existing pre-season schedule shall remain unchanged (resulting in the forfeit of a game if the requesting team cannot honor/support the pre-season or currently existing/latest published schedule). Additional information may be found under the “Forfeit Rules” section of this document.

## **Score Reporting**

Results of each game should be called in to the Score Reporting Line or entered via the web at <http://maysa.demosphere.com/PhoneIn/> in a timely manner. Typically, the score should be entered by the hosting town. The scores will be used to determine team ranking for the purpose of the Playoffs.

Any “regular season” scores not entered by Thursday morning following Saturday/Sunday games will default to 0-0, be considered a tie for both teams and be assigned the respective value in the point system. Any mid-week games must be reported by the morning following game day, i.e. Wednesday morning for a Tuesday game. Failure to report mid-week games by the next morning will also result in a 0-0 tie during regular season play. See the “Playoffs” and “Forfeit Rules” sections for additional details.

## **Ranking Calculations**

All participating teams shall be ranked using a point system as follows:

3 points for a win

1 point for a tie

0 points for a loss

In the case of a forfeited game, the forfeiting team will receive 0 points; the opposing team will receive 3 points.

The totals, after the final week of “regular season” play in both the Fall and Spring seasons, will be used for determining placement in the playoffs when a minimum of 5 teams exist in the group. DemoSphere will automatically maintain and update the rankings as weekly game scores are entered into the system.

In the case of ties within the rankings, tie breakers shall be decided in accordance with the generally accepted rules of professional sports as follows:

- First tie breaker: Head-to-Head winner during regular season play.
- Second tie breaker: Fewest goals allowed during regular season play.
- Third tie breaker: Most goals scored during regular season play.

## **Playoffs**

*Please remember this is a recreational league!*

### **Scheduling and Location**

Playoffs will be held the final weekend of the regularly scheduled season for any grouping consisting of five (5) or more teams. The 4 teams with the highest total of accumulated points throughout the preceding “regular season” weeks of play will advance to the Playoff games. **All other teams will have consolation games scheduled that weekend.** Consolation game teams and locations may vary based on the number of teams in a grouping. All teams are guaranteed at least one game on the final weekend of play.

The Playoff format will be as follows:

- Saturday- 1<sup>st</sup> place team to host 4<sup>th</sup> place team.
- Saturday- 2<sup>nd</sup> place team to host 3<sup>rd</sup> place team.
- Sunday- Winner of 1<sup>st</sup> vs. 4<sup>th</sup> plays winner of 2<sup>nd</sup> vs. 3<sup>rd</sup>. Game will be hosted at the field of the team entering playoffs in 1<sup>st</sup> place.

Scores for playoff games must be entered within 2 hours of the end of game play or forfeit rules will apply. Teams may not borrow or double-roster ANY players for ANY playoff games. The result will be a forfeit and elimination from the playoffs for the team borrowing or double-rostering. Players may be borrowed in order to play the game as a scrimmage, again, with the win being given to the team lending players, regardless of score. No exceptions.

It is up to the participating town’s discretion if there is any acknowledgement for participating in and/or winning the Playoffs. The Intertown League does not provide any awards or trophies but does not prohibit participating towns from doing so.

## Additional Game Play Regulations for Playoff Games

The games designated as ‘Playoffs’ shall be played according to the same rules and time parameters as all other regular season games. There are, however, situations that can arise in a Playoff situation as the games cannot end in a tie.

In the case of a tie at the end of the second half of game play, the game shall proceed as follows:

1. Two 10 minute Overtime Periods – regular play continues for the entirety of two 10 minute periods and the score is increased by one each time either team scores. There shall be a 5 minute break between periods. Any goals scored are added to the score of the game and the team with the highest score at the end of the second period shall be deemed the winner.

If a tie still remains after Overtime, then play advances to:

2. Two 5 minute Sudden Death Overtime Periods – Game play shall continue for 5 minutes with the first team to score a goal earning 1 additional point and being deemed the winner. There shall be a 5 minute break between periods if going into the second period.

If at the end of the Overtime periods, neither team has scored, then play advances to:

3. Penalty Shootout – Each team selects 5 players to shoot direct kicks on goal. A goalkeeper may be included in the selected players. Each team selects a Goalie/player from their team to defend against the opposing team’s shots on goal. Shots shall be taken from the Penalty Line. A coin toss determines which team shoots first. The team winning the coin toss can choose whether to shoot first or second. Teams alternate kickers, each team having one player take one kick (and then returning to the team area/sideline) until all 5 players from each team have shot on goal. Each goal is worth one point and the team with the highest total at the end of the Shootout is deemed the winner. If there is still a tie after all 10 shots have been taken, each team will continue to select 1 additional shooter until a winner is determined. Repeat shooters will not be allowed until all players from a team have attempted a shot.

## **Forfeit Rules**

The Intertown League is designed as a recreational league for players of all ability levels. In order to keep play consistent and fair, the Directors have established the following forfeit rules. Any game forfeits must be communicated via email to [snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org](mailto:snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org) in a timely manner.

**Borrowed Players**- In an effort to promote sharing of players and maintaining a fun game environment with full-sided teams, any team borrowing 3 or more players from their opponent will earn a 0-1 forfeit if agreed upon between coaches prior to the start of the game and reported in a timely manner. Playing short-sided or reducing both sides by up to 2 players (ex. 9v9 instead of 11v11) is also at the coaches' discretion.

**Double-Rostering**- Double-rostering of teams is not allowed. Any town who shares players between teams to increase roster sizes will earn a 0-2 forfeit for games won when utilizing shared players. (ex. Team1 loans players to Team2 for their game against Team3). This may be imposed at any time after being reported to the Directors.

**Unregistered Players**- Any team who allows an unregistered player to participate in any game will earn a 0-4 forfeit for that game. This may be imposed at any time after being reported to the Directors.

**Game Cancellations**- Teams must decide within 1 week following the cancellation notice if/when a game is to be made up. Final say on rescheduling games is at the discretion of the Directors. We hope to have all games played as scheduled, but it is possible that some cancelled games may not be made up.

- If a team does not respond within 1 week to a request to reschedule, the result is a 0-4 loss for the nonresponsive team.
- If both teams agree to not reschedule a game, the result is a 0-0 tie.

**Failure to Report Scores**- Score reporting is primarily the responsibility of the Home team, but may be completed by the Away team if necessary. Failure by both teams to report scores within the documented timeframe for "regular season" games will result in a 0-0 tie. Failure to report scores of "playoff" games within the documented timeframe will result in a 0-1 forfeit for the Home team and will result in elimination from the playoffs. The documented timeframes are as follows:

- Sat/Sun, regular season- must be reported by Thursday morning of that week
- Mid-week, regular season- must be reported by the morning following gameplay
- Playoff games- must be reported within 2 hours of game completion

## **Sportsmanship Guide and Code of Conduct**

Our Intertown League is designed as a co-ed recreational league with the ultimate objective of creating a safe, fun experience for all players from all towns. This guide is designed for Coaches and Directors and consists of best practices to be considered during recreational game play, as well as the process for reporting inconsistencies that may arise throughout the season. It is the responsibility of the Directors to review this Sportsmanship Guide and Code of Conduct on a regular basis to ensure that it is updated and inclusive of any and all opportunities to create a positive experience for all players from all participating towns. It is the duty of each town's Director to share this guidance with all coaches prior to each season and immediately following any version updates.

Team Size- It is anticipated that teams may occasionally arrive at games with a fewer-than-ideal number of players. In this event, it is the responsibility of both teams to determine the terms of gameplay. Below are a few examples of acceptable solutions:

- Teams share players to allow for full-fielded teams and maximized play time for all players
- Both teams play short on field to maintain an even match, ex., 8v8, 9v9, 10v10...
- Games are played in different segments, i.e. quarters vs. halves to allow for additional water breaks and rest periods for teams with limited/no substitutes
- Refusing to share players or refusing to alter gameplay in a way which is fair and beneficial to all players IS NOT an option

Excessive Goals- There may be times when a particular game becomes single-sided. In this case, running up scores is not appropriate. The Intertown League has a set goal differential of +4. Teams should make a legitimate effort to limit scores to less than double the maximum allowed differential. Though it is sometimes difficult to control, below are some alternative play suggestions to help limit games from having goal differentials of greater than +8:

- Play offense as defense and/or put top scorers in goal
- Forbid top scorers from shooting
- Require X number of passes before shooting
- Limit shots to outside of the penalty box/goalie box
- Limit/require a certain number of touches before passing/shooting
- Play short a player
- Offer to mix teams and share top players to equalize gameplay

Double-Rosters & Ringers- This Intertown League participates in a playoff event in some seasons. This playoff event is meant to be fun and exciting for the teams, and also to acknowledge all teams for a well-played season. The objective of the season should not be winning recreational soccer games. If this is the sole focus of your team, then you are likely playing in the wrong league and should be seeking out competitive play. As previously stated, this is a recreational league designed for the purpose of creating a safe and fun experience for

all players. In order to allow the most rewarding experience for the players who have worked hard all season, please refrain from the following:

- Double-Rostering teams is not allowed and will result in a forfeit
  - o Ex., Somewhereville has 2 teams registered. Team 1 and Team 2 share players to maximize rosters or increase their potential of making/winning the playoffs.
- Addition of "Ringers" to rosters is strongly discouraged
  - o Adding players from competitive leagues late in the season with the objective of winning games is highly frowned upon. Again, this is a recreational league where the focus is on fun and player development. Allowing play from unregistered players will result in a forfeit.

Equal Play- All coaches will make an effort to allow equal minutes for their players, regardless of age, sex, or skill level. Again, this is a recreational league and the focus should not be on winning games. Though it is ultimately at the coach's discretion, below is an example that would be frowned upon by the league, as well as examples of reasoning as to the unfairness of this tactic:

Referees- This league has a zero tolerance policy for misconduct towards game officials. Referees and their game decisions are to be respected. In the event that a referee concern arises, please contact the Assignor for that game immediately and provide complete details of your concern. If you do not know who the Assignor is, you should notify [snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org](mailto:snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org) and the Directors will help connect you to the appropriate person. Under no circumstances are players, coaches, or fans to interact with referees other than when asking appropriate gameplay questions, discussing league rules, or thanking them after a game.

Game Cautions- Issuance of yellow cards as cautions in games will be reported by referees and are to be taken seriously. Earning two (2) yellow cards in a single game will result in a red card and the player or coach being sent off.

Send-offs- Red cards will be reported by the referee and are to be followed up with a notification to the Directors at [snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org](mailto:snhrec@derrysoccerclub.org). Earning a red card results in immediate removal of that player, coach, or fan from the field and will be followed by a 2-game suspension.

Spectators- All spectators are expected to do their part in maintaining a fun and friendly environment. Any spectator who is creating a hostile situation for any player, coach, referee, or other spectator will be issued a red card by the referee and sent off from the game. This carries the same 2-game suspension as a player or coach red card and that spectator will not be allowed back at the field for a minimum of 2 weeks, but potentially longer at the discretion of the Directors.

Players & Coaches- All players and coaches are expected to maintain a safe and friendly playing environment and to abide by all rules of the game, as well as those set forth in this Intertown Reference Guide.