

UNITED SOCCER LEAGUE – SPRING 2016

RULES OF COMPETITION

A. ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOCCER PROGRAM

1. The Competition Committee of the Executive Board (“Board”) of the United Soccer League (“League”) shall administer the League’s soccer program. The Competition Committee consists of the following Board members:

- The President, who will serve as chairman of the Committee,
- the Vice-President,
- the Registrar,
- the Treasurer,
- the Recording Secretary,
- the Games Chairman,
- the Conduct Chairman,
- the Rules Chairman,
- and the Referee Chairman,
- one vote per committee member.

2. The Competition Committee will act under authority delegated to it by the Board in order to enforce the rules of competition; and it shall rule on all issues thereunder with the exception of the following matters:

- a) Team membership in the League.
- b) Amendment or modification of these rules of competition.
- c) Amendment of fees; fines; penalties, and surcharges (a schedule of fees, fines, penalties, and surcharges shall be adopted by the Board from time to time as the Board deems necessary).
- d) Requests by teams or individuals for a review of rights.
- e) Any matter of League policy dictated either by the League by-laws or by the vote of the Board.
- f) Any situation not clearly covered by these rules of competition.

3. The Competition Committee may solicit the advice and assistance of elected division representatives whenever and wherever the same may be appropriate.

4. Every team is to provide one member to serve on a Committee as assigned to by the League or voted upon by the members at the General Membership meeting as part of the Officer’s elections. Teams

can opt-out of this responsibility by paying a \$500 fee. If the assigned function is not properly executed, a first warning is issued to the team, accompanied by a \$50 fine. The second instance of non-performance will evoke another warning accompanied by a \$100 fine. The third warning will be accompanied by a \$150 fine and the fourth and final notice will be accompanied by a \$200 fine at which time, the team opts-out of the assigned responsibilities.

5. There will be no payment or remuneration of any kind to Officers and/or Board or Committee Members of the League from League funds with the exception of the webmaster who shall be paid stipend for upkeep of the League website.

Commented [DT1]: Should you not add the referee coordinator?

B. ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCCER PROGRAM

1. The soccer program will be organized into divisions as follows:

a) The Over 40 Divisions comprised of male players 40 years of age or older, and female players 25 years of age or older, consisting of:

i) The Premier Division consisting of 10 teams;

ii) The Second Division consisting of 10 teams;

iii) The Third Division consisting of 10 teams;

iv) The Fourth Division consisting of 10 teams.

Commented [DT2]: I think we need to make this general number of teams because currently we only have 3 Over 40 Divisions.

b) The Over 50 Divisions also called the Senior Divisions comprised of male players 50 years of age or older and female players 25 years of age or older, consisting of:

i) The Senior Division consisting of 10 teams, except when the number of Senior Division teams so warrants, the Senior Division will be divided into subdivisions referred to as "Senior I" and "Senior II" which shall consist of such numbers of teams as the Competition Committee determines will provide balanced competition and complete schedules to the greatest extent possible.

2. Within each age bracket, the League's intention is to provide relatively even competition.

3. At the end of a competition year (consisting of a Spring and Fall season), the two highest finishing teams from a less competitive division will be promoted to the next most competitive division for the ensuing competition year, and the two lowest finishing teams in a competitive division will be relegated to the next lower competitive division for the ensuing competition year. If, however, either division consists of fewer than eight teams, then only one team will be promoted and one team relegated. Questions of relative team records will be resolved by using the tie-breaker system established for determining division winners. In the event that new teams enter, or teams resign from the League the Competition Committee may need to adjust the size of the divisions by moving additional teams from one division to another, this will be done after consulting with the affected teams. If a team resigns from a competitive division, that team will be regarded as one of the relegated teams.

Commented [DT3]: Grammar

4. New teams shall, as a general rule, compete in the lowest competitive division within their age brackets within their first competition year.

C. PARTICIPATION IN THE SOCCER PROGRAM

1. ELIGIBILITY AND AGE LIMITATIONS:

A player will be considered as having attained an age if the player will attain that age during the current calendar year for the purposes of determining a player's age under these rules of competition. For example, a player who will turn 40 on December 31, 2016 is eligible to play in the over 40 division during calendar 2016.

a) As applied to the Premier, Second and Third Divisions:

- i) All male field players shall be at least 40 years old;
- ii) All female field players shall be at least 25 years old;
- iii) Male players who play as goalkeepers only may be under 40, but at least 35 years old.

b) As applied to all Senior Divisions:

- i) All male field players shall be at least 50 years old;
- ii) All female field players shall be at least 25 years old;
- iii) Male players who play as goalkeepers only may be under 50, but at least 45 years old;
- iv) The following exceptions have been granted and will be phased out going forward:
 - 1) Some underage players have been grand-fathered onto the teams and are allowed to continue with those teams until they are of proper age;

c) As applied to all Divisions:

- i) Eligibility and age limitation violations are considered extremely serious and include, without limitation:
 - 1) Having an unauthorized, under-aged player either in a game or appearing on a lineup sheet;
 - 2) Having a non-registered player either in a game or appearing on a lineup sheet;
 - 3) Having a suspended player either appearing in a game or on a lineup sheet;
 - 4) Having a player on the field whose name does not appear on the lineup sheet submitted to the referee, even if that player is properly registered with the League;
 - 5) Having a registered player found to have registered with a falsified name and/or date of birth;
 - 6) Having any false or fraudulent signature (player or witness) on an insurance waiver form;
- ii) Any violation as set forth above shall result in a game forfeiture and a fine, as well as suspension of the player and managers involved, or an extension of an existing suspension;
- iii) A second or subsequent violation in a competition year will result in the doubling of all new fines, forfeiture of all games involved, automatic disqualification from any championships, and automatic review by the Competition Committee for suspension or

expulsion from the soccer program. Upon recommendation of the Competition Committee, the Board will meet to consider the suspension or expulsion of any such team from the League;

iv) The League strictly enforces eligibility rules to protect:

- 1) The integrity of the League and preserve the ideal of even and fair competition;
- 2) To comply with insurance requirements.

Violations of these player eligibility rules can jeopardize the existence of the League and will not be condoned.

2. INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION:

a) Players must be registered or reregistered by the end of the Fall Season but not later than December 31st for the next competition year. Each team shall submit a recent team roster indicating which players will continue in the following year and which players should be removed from the team. This should be accompanied by the return of all player passes. Player passes must also be returned to the League Registrar following the Spring competition season. Passes are to be returned not later than two weeks following the last scheduled make-up date in the League schedule for any division. Late submission of player passes at the end of each competition season (Spring or Fall) will result in a \$50 fine. Player passes returned to the League in the Fall must be accompanied by a list of players returning for the next year and those who should be deleted from the active team roster.

b) Individual player registrations on approved United Soccer League forms must be filled out completely, signed by both the applicant and the team manager, and submitted to the League Registrar with two recent, clear, passport-sized photos of the applicant, together with a legible photocopy of a valid, current New Jersey or New York driver's license, passport, or any other legally-approved document, together with appropriate fees.

c) Individual players are responsible for completing the registration form and submitting it to the Registrar. When issued, the Registrar will transmit the player pass directly to the player's team manager. Registration of new players must initially be completed on-line through the League website (www.USLNJ.com). The player registration form can be found under the "Forms & Rules" tab on the League homepage under the heading "Player Registration." Detailed instructions for player registration are on the website. All player registrations forms must be completed on-line. Original signatures on hard copies of the registration forms are still required. Additionally, all players are required to submit signed and witnessed insurance waiver forms as part of the registration process. Those forms are also located on the League website under the "Forms & Rules" tab of the homepage under the heading "USL Waiver and Release." No player pass will be issued without a valid player registration, with supporting documentation and the appropriate fee, and a signed and witnessed insurance waiver. Individual player registrations will be accepted by the registrar only at League meetings and by Registered or Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, addressed to the Registrar, or by dropping materials off at the Registrar's mail box.

d) Player pass registrations fees are payable to the Registrar and are structured as follows:

- i) Passes 1-25 - \$20 per pass;
- ii) Passes 26-30 - \$30 per pass;
- iii) Teams cannot sign up more than 30 active players.

e) No player currently suspended in any other soccer league shall be eligible for registration,

re-registration, or any participation in the League.

f) Under no circumstances may a participant be registered with, play for, or represent in any official capacity, more than one team in the League at any time.

g) Usual and customary processing time for production of a player pass is not less than seven (7) days from receipt of complete, accurate registration materials and the appropriate fee by the Registrar.

h) Player passes may be processed on an expedited basis requiring not more than seven (7) days, but not less than two (2) days by payment of an additional processing charge of \$10 per pass for which expedited processing is requested.

i) The Registrar may, in his sole discretion, elect to process player passes on a twenty-four hour turnaround upon payment of a rush processing fee of \$20 per player pass in addition to the base fee for the requested pass. For example, a team requesting 24 hour processing of pass number 26 will be charged a base fee of \$30 for pass number 26 and an additional rush processing charge of \$20 for a total of \$50 for that single pass. Production of passes with same-day turnaround will require coordination between the manager requesting such treatment and the Registrar, and is subject to the Registrar's availability. In other words, there is no guarantee of 24 hour turnaround for pass processing. Proper planning for player registration will avoid the imposition of expedited processing surcharges for player passes.

3. TEAM REGISTRATION

a) All teams shall register all players with the League Registrar annually; such team registration shall be completed prior to the 31st day of December of the calendar year next preceding the competition year; each team shall comply with the documentary and photographic requirements adopted by the League and enforced by the Registrar.

b) Player passes shall be issued for the individual team members who have been properly registered; all such passes shall, at all times, be and remain League property; AND

ALL SUCH PASSES SHALL BE RETURNED TO THE REGISTRAR AT THE END OF THE SPRING AND FALL SEASONS. Spring pass return shall be completed not later than one week following the last make-up date in the Spring schedule. Fall pass return shall be completed not later than December 31st. BUT (see Schedule of Fees, Fines,

Penalties and Surcharges for failure to return passes timely at the end of each season).

c) All teams shall, within the specified time limits, pay the League the registration fee, fines, penalties, and surcharges established, adopted or amended by the League from time to time. A schedule of all such fees, fines, penalties, and surcharges shall be reviewed and republished by the League prior to the registration deadline in each year.

d) No team shall register for League play in the without a team roster with at least 14 bona fide players eligible to play in the division to which the team has applied for assignment.

e) All teams must demonstrate access to a soccer field approved for League use, and for which appropriate permits have been obtained, as a condition of being allowed to register in the League.

f) Each team shall register its uniform colors with the League; a primary shirt/jersey and a secondary shirt/jersey color are both required; any changes to either the primary or the secondary colors shall be reported to the Registrar prior to officially-sanctioned use of changed team colors.

g) Each team shall provide to the League for inclusion on the League website a map of its regular field location, together with travel instructions.

- h) Each team shall pay annually the premium required to participate in medical coverage as negotiated by the League for the benefit of its teams.
- i) Each team must specify a manager and a League representative and may also specify an alternate League representative who may hold another title. All persons designated for these positions must be properly registered with the League, must be acceptable to the Competition Committee for the specified position, and must be prepared to demonstrate proper selection or election by the registering team.
- j) Team managers are responsible for furnishing promptly any changes of address and telephone number of registered players to the Registrar, the return of mail to the League as undeliverable for lack of proper and current addresses of players will result in the imposition of a fine upon the players' teams.
- k) Team rosters shall be frozen immediately prior to the last four games of the Fall competition season.
- l) Dues are to be paid in full when due. Penalties are to be paid on a timely basis. Teams have the right to appeal penalties. However, once the Board has confirmed the extent/amount of penalties, penalties are due immediately. Should a team refuse to pay dues and/or penalties when due, that team shall be excluded from further competition and expelled from the League.

4. PLAYER TRANSFER

So the League may function with minimum disruption, all players who wish to leave their current team and register with another team must notify the managers of their current team and the League Registrar in writing at least two months prior to the proposed effective date of the transfer. The manager of the proposed transferee's current team may waive the waiting period if, in his opinion, the proposed transfer would not be disruptive to the team. The advance notice period is intended to provide sufficient time for the player's current team to recruit replacements. All outstanding obligations of any proposed transferee to his or her current team shall be satisfied prior to the Registrar's approval of the proposed transfer. In the event that consent to a proposed player transfer is not forthcoming and the proposed transferee has satisfied all of his or her outstanding obligations to his or her current team, or possess a good faith argument that all of his or her outstanding obligations to his or her current team have in fact been satisfied, notwithstanding the contrary opinion of his or her current team's manager, the proposed transferee may appeal to the Executive Board of the United Soccer League for a final decision for good cause shown in writing setting forth all reasons for the proposed transfer, and why the withholding of consent of his or her current team's manager is arbitrary, capricious, unreasonable, or unfair under the facts and circumstances.

Player transfers during the competition year will be treated as new-player registration for the transferring player requiring submission of a properly completed player registration form, new photographs, the appropriate fee or surcharge, and a properly signed release from the team releasing the player, as well as a new, executed insurance waiver. The use of invalid, forged, altered, or lapsed player passes will result in the assessment of a substantial fine, and the forfeiture of any and all games in which the offending player either participated or appeared on the lineup sheet (Note that each team captain has the right to request inspection of player passes tendered by the opposing team. Any suspected pass violations noted must be brought to the attention of the referee for inclusion in his game report; and written notice must be given to the Conduct Committee with all available details.).

D. THE COMPETITION YEAR

1. THE SOCCER SEASON:

The regular competition year is divided into two seasons: Spring (April through June) and Fall (September through November). The Competition Committee may adjust the seasons if necessary..

2. THE POINT SYSTEM:

a) Points will be scored as follows to each participating team for each game:

- i) Three points for a win;
- ii) One point for a tie;
- iii) Zero points for a loss.

b) At the end of the competition year, the team with the most points wins its respective division.

c) In the case of a tie in points, the first of the tie-breakers

to provide a difference applied in the following order determines the division winner:

- i) The team with the most points in head-to-head competition;
- ii) The difference in combined goals of all head-to-head games.

Teams still even on points after the before-mentioned tie-breakers, are co-winners. Playoff games are not conducted. (While this tie-breaker system is not traditional, it is intended to advance the

objective of the League in providing competitive opportunities for the greatest number of players and to discourage superior teams from running up scores, which tends to keep secondary players off the fields and leads to frustration and hostility).

d) In case of a forfeited game, the non-forfeiting team is the winner, receiving three points and a 1-0 score in its favor.

e) If a team fails to complete a season, all games played by that team during that season shall be nullified and no points or goals shall be given to any team. If such a team has completed a season but fails to complete a competition year, points and goals will be credited to its opposing teams, provided that the following conditions are met:

- i) The dissolved team played every other team in its division an equal number of times (including forfeits) and,
- ii) Every one of those games was actually played (or legitimately forfeited).

E. SCHEDULING OF GAMES

1. The schedules of games for the competition year will be issued six (6) weeks prior to the start of the Spring Season by the Games Chairman; the official schedules will indicate the dates and participants in each game and will specify the home team. Where possible and practicable, the schedule shall take into account problems regarding field availability, provided that reasonable notice of same has been given to the Games Chairman by the affected teams. The official schedules will be developed with due regard for significant national and religious holidays.

2. Each team may postpone one (1) game per year to participate in a tournament not sponsored by the United Soccer League or for any other approved reason. This opportunity is only granted to teams requesting postponement prior to scheduling for the new competition year (January 30th) for which approval has been granted by the Board. No permission for postponement shall be granted to any team once the season is in progress.

3. No changes to the official schedules shall be made without the approval of the Games Chairman and

the Games Chairman reserves the right to make changes in the scheduling of games if, as, and when the need arises.

4. All games shall be scheduled to be played on Sundays at 10:00am. Due to field restrictions only, some teams may have their games scheduled to be played at an earlier time but not earlier than 8:00am and only upon the prior approval of the Games Chairman. Official starting times for all games shall be published in League schedule posted on the League's website. Prior to the start of every season it is the responsibility of the team manager to check the game starting times published in the League schedule and promptly advise the Games Chairman if a scheduled starting time appears to have been misprinted so that the webmaster may take appropriate corrective action. Moreover, the team manager is also responsible for checking the starting time of games and advising team members of the same in advance of a particular game so as to minimize forfeits.

5. All games not completed as scheduled must be completed no later than 30 days after the last scheduled game of the season in which they are originally scheduled. Exceptions to this rule shall only be made with the approval of the Games Chairman in order to encourage teams to complete unplayed games as soon as possible.

a) If, in the judgement of the Games Chairman, both teams have not made a strong enough effort to play a postponed game as soon as possible, the Games Chairman shall declare that both teams have forfeited; the game score shall be listed as 0-0, and no points shall be awarded to either team.

b) If, in the judgement of the Games Chairman, both teams have made strong enough efforts to play a postponed game as soon as possible but weather or other factors beyond the control of the teams prevented the game from being played during the competition year, the Games Chairman will declare the game to have been played to a 1-1 tie and each team shall be awarded one point.

F. GAMES CONDUCT

1. CONDUCT OF INDIVIDUALS

a) A player who receives a yellow card must serve an immediate (in game) 10-minute suspension. Substitution for the penalized player is allowed unless the team with the penalized player has only 11 players available at the time of the yellow card suspension, in which case, the team shall play with 10 men during the 10-minute suspension period. Should a goalkeeper receive a yellow card, that goalkeeper must leave the field to serve the 10-minute suspension period (designating another player to serve the goalkeeper's 10-minute yellow card suspension is not permitted). If a team member of a team playing with seven players receives a yellow card the game must be abandoned and the official result will be recorded as a 1-0 forfeit win for the team fielding more than seven players.

b) A player who receives a yellow card in two (2) consecutive games shall be suspended for one (1) game.

c) A player who receives four (4) yellow cards in a competition year, shall be suspended for one (1) game.

d) Records for yellow cards do not carry over from one year to the next year but instead, start anew at the beginning of each competition year.

e) Records for red cards and suspensions carry over from one season to the next season (Spring Season to Fall Season and end of previous competition year to beginning of the next competition year).

f) A player who receives a red card will be suspended for a minimum of one game or, as per penalty chart guidelines. Any further suspensions will be considered at the next scheduled Conduct

Committee meeting.

g) If a player wishes to present his views as to the receipt of a red card, or to the fairness of the sanctions to be taken, if any, he or she may at his or her discretion appear before the Conduct Committee. At the hearing the Committee will consider the evidence before it to make its final decision.

h) If the red card was issued for either participating in or inciting violence, or for threatening or assaulting a referee or duly assigned linesman, the player will be suspended indefinitely until the next scheduled Conduct Committee meeting when exact sanctions shall be determined. The player may, at his or her discretion, appear before the Conduct Committee to explain the incident. Failure to appear shall be deemed a waiver of such right and bar the player from any appeal as to the sanctions or for seeking a consideration on the part of the League or the Committee. At the hearing, the Committee will consider the material evidence before it and render a conclusive determination accordingly.

i) A player who refuses to leave the field of play and surrounding environs immediately and quietly, without incident, following the issuance of either a straight red card or second yellow/red card and/or who approaches or follows a referee after said player's expulsion from a game shall be fined \$100 and receive an additional one game suspension in addition to any period of suspension imposed for receipt of the red card. A player serving a suspension may not attend a game for which he is serving a suspension, including as a manager, assistant manager, captain, coach, referee or spectator.

j) A player who receives a red card for either serious foul play or violent conduct shall be fined \$100. Regardless of the length of any suspension imposed, a player who is assessed a monetary fine for serious foul play or violent conduct shall not be permitted to return to play until such fine has been paid.

k) A record will be kept for players who receive either yellow or red cards; four (4) yellow cards per competition year, will result in a one-game suspension; multiple red cards or more than three yellow cards for a player will require an automatic review by the Conduct Committee; if the Committee determines that the record justifies it, additional penalties will be imposed.

l) Penalties and suspensions imposed for any of the situations described above or as imposed by the Board will, if not satisfied during the current competition year, be carried over to the next competition year.

m) The Conduct Committee will make its report to the Competition Committee for immediate review.

n) In the event that a player pass has been retained by the referee following a game and forwarded to the Conduct Committee Chair as part of any disciplinary or other suspension, and the period of any suspension imposed shall have lapsed without the affected player's team manager having received the affected player's pass from the League prior to that player's next scheduled game, and said fact is brought to the attention of the Conduct Committee Chair, then the Conduct Committee Chair shall acknowledge that player's eligibility to play in the next scheduled game via email containing said player's name, resumption of eligibility date, and player pass number. Upon presentation to the referee by the affected player's team manager of said e-mail together with the driver's license, or other acceptable identity documentation bearing the photograph and date of birth of the affected player, the affected player may participate in the current game notwithstanding the lack of a player pass.

o) Unacceptable conduct of any player shall be subject to the imposition of probation on said participant as set forth in section F. 3, below.

2. CONDUCT OF TEAMS AND TEAM MANAGEMENT

a) Team management is responsible for its own conduct, and also for the conduct of its team and its

fans. This responsibility also extends to all involvement with the League and with its Soccer Program; it also includes conduct before, during and after any game or tournament played under League auspices; it also includes cooperation with all League resolutions and proceedings, its soccer program, and all of its properly elected or appointed committees, officers, and other League officials. If a team's management is not prepared to accept this responsibility, that team is not prepared to enjoy the privilege of participating in any League proceedings or activities.

b) The League relies on the management of the individual teams to communicate between the League and all participants of its teams. The League also relies on team management to ensure that all League policies, rules and regulations are adhered to and respected.

c) When any question arises about the willingness or the ability of any team's management to meet the responsibilities outlined above, the Board must review the situation and take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the objectives of the League or any of its programs are met, including, without limitation, the rejection of any individual from serving in any capacity for which that individual is deemed to be unacceptable, and/or the imposition of any fines or penalties which are appropriate to the problem being addressed, which shall be within the sole discretion of the Board whose decisions shall be final and binding.

d) All proceedings of the Conduct Committee in which the conduct of teams and team management are reported, considered, or subjected to sanctions shall be reported to the Board.

e) All League referees and team managers have been issued a laminated card, which provides a synopsis/reference/guide to the League's Rules of Competition. The laminated card is intended as a handy reference and it is to be used in conjunction with the official Rules of Competition. Any incidents, actions, or situations not addressed hereby shall be dealt with by the Board.

3. PROBATION

a) Regrettably, from time-to-time, the League is confronted by situations which represent egregious violations of League Rules of Competition and/or Rules of Conduct, or implicate gross deviations from acceptable conduct, or which demonstrate that the affected individual/team has demonstrated a gross disregard for League standards of conduct or procedure. In such instances, the League is empowered to place the affected individuals or teams "on probation" in accordance with the standards set forth below as an additional sanction to the specific sanctions set forth in the Rules of Competition and Rules of Conduct. In all instances in which probation is imposed upon individuals or teams, a term of probation shall be in addition to any regular disciplinary sanction and not in lieu of such customary disciplinary sanction. Thus, probation is a very significant sanction, and one which should provide for self-reflection by the individuals or teams so as to improve their respective conduct to more closely conform to League expectations. Imposition of probation on individuals or teams should serve as a warning and may be a precursor to additional disciplinary sanctions including, but not limited to, lengthy suspensions from participation in League activities or permanent dismissal from the League. ACCORDINGLY, DO NOT TAKE PROBATION LIGHTLY.

b) No team on probation shall be eligible to be declared a division winner at the end of a competition year. Should a team on probation be at the top of the standings in its particular division at the end of a given competition year, the team with the next highest position in the standings that is not also on probation shall be the division winner.

c) Probation shall only be imposed on an individual or team upon a majority vote of the Board. The length of any term of probation will be determined by the Board and such

full term shall not be shortened for any reason. Probation is imposed on a calendar basis. Thus, for example, if a term of one year's probation is imposed upon a team on May 15th of a given year, the term of probation shall not expire until May 16th of the next succeeding year. Terms of probation imposed on an individual or team may be extended, and bond amounts increased, if the conduct of the team or individual so warrants in the sole discretion of the Board.

Repeat violations during a term of probation will likely trigger such extension and increased bond. Imposition of probation does not foreclose the League's ability to implement additional sanctions up to and including permanent expulsion from the League.

d) As a consequence of being determined to be on probation, a team will be required to immediately post a cash bond with the League (before its next regularly scheduled game) in the minimum amount of \$250.00. Individual participants placed on probation will be required to immediately post a cash bond in the minimum amount of \$100.00. The League reserves the right to impose higher bond amounts when warranted in the sole, un-appealable judgment of the Board.

e) With respect to a team on probation, the entirety of all bond amounts shall be forfeited to the League in the event that more than a single individual on such team is summoned to appear before the Conduct Committee (in a role other than as a witness) as a result of conduct occurring at any League-sponsored activity, including, without limitation, games, involving that team, i.e., a group melee, following a referee into the parking lot after a game, police being summoned to a game, etc. Partial bond forfeiture may also be directed by the Board in its sole, unappealable discretion. Multiple bonds may be required of teams, and individuals, within a given season or competition year if their respective conduct so warrants in the Board's sole, un-appealable discretion.

f) With respect to an individual participant on probation, the entirety of all bond amounts shall be forfeited to the League in the event that said individual is summoned to appear before the Conduct Committee (in a role other than as a witness) as a result of conduct occurring at any League-sponsored activity, including, without limitation, games, involving that individual. The Board may direct partial bond forfeiture in its sole, un-appealable discretion.

g) Failure of a team or individual to post any required bond or bonds shall result in the immediate and automatic suspension from participation in the League's Soccer Program as well as other League activities as well as possible expulsion from the League.

h) All monetary fines assessed against a team on probation, or any individual member of said team regardless of whether said player is also individually on probation, or an individual on probation whose team is not also on probation as a result of violations of USL Rules are automatically doubled.

G. THE GAME

1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

All laws referred to within these rules refer to the laws of the game as currently adopted and published by the Federation Internationale de Football Associations ("FIFA") and the United States Soccer Federation ("USSF"), except as modified herein, FIFA laws of the game shall be applied to all questions arising out of the actual playing of the game, except as modified by the United Soccer League (USL) Rules of Competition.

2. FIELD OF PLAY

The field of play shall comply in all respects with the FIFA laws of the game.

- a) The field should be safe to play, with no objects or conditions to slow the game, or put in jeopardy the safety of players. Fields must meet approval conditions of the League.
- b) Corner flags shall be provided.
- c) The field of play shall be marked with distinctive lines not more than five inches in width.

3. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- a) A game shall be played by two teams, each consisting of no more than eleven (11) players, one of whom shall be the goal-keeper; no team shall be allowed to start a game with fewer than (7) players, if the number of players falls below seven (7) for any reason, the referee shall terminate the game, the score at the time of the discontinuance will stand as the final game result, except in the case where a player playing for a team that has fielded only seven (7) players receives a yellow card, in which case the game shall be abandoned and the result recorded as a 1-0 victory for the team with more than seven (7) players.
- b) If neither team can field seven (7) players, both teams shall forfeit the game and the score of the game shall be recorded as 0-0, with no points being awarded to either team.
- c) Prior to the start of each game, each team shall present to the referee a written list of players, on the currently approved player roster form showing names and unique jersey numbers of each player and bearing an original signature of each player and participant, which may not exceed 30 players, including all substitutes. Should a team not have a roster to submit to the referee, the game shall not be played and the team without the roster shall forfeit the game.
- d) Prior to the start of each game, each player shall also present to the referee a current, valid player pass. Should a team not have player passes to submit to the referee, the game shall not be played and the team without the passes shall forfeit the game. No individual player without a pass shall be allowed to play in a game for which he or she lacks a pass except in the event of an untimely pass return following a red card suspension, in which case, the procedures set forth in Rule F. 1. n., shall apply.

4. SUBSTITUTIONS

- a) Substitutions by both teams may be made when the ball is out of play, but only under the referee's authorization, except on corner kicks and fouls. Substitutions may be made when:
 - i) The ball is out of play:
 - 1) When it entirely crosses the sideline boundary or goal line by any means;
 - 2) When the referee stops play.
 - ii) At all other times, the ball is in play, including the following examples:
 - 1) When the ball continues to bounce within the playing field after striking the goal posts or crossbar or any of the corner flags;
 - 2) When the ball continues within the playing field after touching the referee or linesman, while inside the field area;
 - 3) When players momentarily stop play on their own, expecting a call by the referee, but when no foul is called.
- b) When a goalkeeper or any other player is to be replaced by a substitute, the following conditions shall be observed:

- i) The referee shall be informed of the proposed substitution, before it is made;
- ii) The substitute shall not enter the field of play until the player he is replacing has left, and then only after having received a signal from the referee;
- iii) He or she shall enter the field at the middle line.

6. PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

- a) Players of the same team shall wear identical shirts or jerseys; shoes and studs must be made from leather, rubber, or other approved material. For purposes of this rule "identical" means the same color, regardless of style, trim, ornamentation, etc.
- b) Each player must have a different number on the back of his jersey.
- c) Goalkeepers, referees, and linesmen must wear uniforms distinctly different from the players on both teams.
- d) Team captains must wear an armband for easy identification by the referee on the field.
- e) Players shall not change or transfer jerseys during the game without the referee's approval.
- f) Shin guards must be worn.

7. RESTRICTIONS

- a) A player shall not wear anything that is dangerous to another player or to himself, such as:
 - i) Metal cleats, sharp or badly worn cleats;
 - ii) Rings, watches, bracelets, metal clips on sweatbands, medallions, necklaces, splints, and plaster or any other casts;
 - iii) Headgear other than sweatbands may not be worn by any player other than the goalkeeper, with the exception of approved, padded headgear to guard against concussion; goalkeeper's caps may not have any sharp peaks;
 - iv) Except for the goalkeeper, long pants or warm-ups may be worn only with the referee's approval; pants must be tightly fitted.

8. DURATION OF GAME

- a) The duration of the game shall be two equal periods of 45 minutes, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, subject to the following:
 - i) Allowance shall be made at the end of either period for all time lost through accident or other cause, the amount which shall be a matter of discretion of the referee;
 - ii) Time shall be extended to permit a penalty kick being taken at or after the expiration of the normal period in either half.
- b) At half-time, the interval shall not exceed ten minutes, except with the referee's approval.

9. GAME TIME

- a) All games are to be played at 10:00 a.m. on the scheduled Sunday, unless prior approval has been obtained from the League for a start time not earlier than 8:00 a.m. and due only to field restrictions.
- b) The home team manager, or his designee, must contact the opposing team's manager by 8:00 p.m. of the Wednesday immediately prior to the scheduled game date to confirm field, referee and kick-off time. Failure to

notify the opposing team's manager of a change in the officially-scheduled start time or field location could be grounds for forfeiture of the affected game if the opposing team either arrives late or fails to appear for the game.

10. LATE ARRIVALS

- a) Games must start at 10:00am, or the pre-scheduled/pre-approved time if other than 10:00am.
- b) The home team must be ready for the kick-off at the scheduled time. The visiting team only will be allowed 15 minutes grace for lateness from scheduled kick off time. As soon as 7 players arrive, the game must begin.
- c) Both teams, as well as the field must be ready and inspected, and kick off must be no later than 10:00am, or the scheduled game time.
- d) After the expiration of the 15 minute grace period, the referee must blow the whistle to start the game. If the away team has seven players present, but not dressed and on the field, if they are not on the field within five (5) minutes of the referee's initial signal to start the game, the referee shall blow the whistle again at the end of five (5) minutes and the game will be declared a forfeit in the home team's favor.

11. CANCELLATION OF GAMES

- a) Team Managers may not postpone any games on their own. Any schedule changes must be preapproved and sanctioned by the Games Chairman.
- b) Notification of a cancellation must be made to the opposing team manager promptly; baring notification, both teams must show up at the field or suffer forfeiture.
- c) Only the referee shall decide if the conditions preclude the start or continuance of play. He will take into account the home team's concern for preservation of good field conditions for future use.
- d) If a game is abandoned due to climatic conditions BEFORE the first half is completed, the game shall be rescheduled in its entirety; however, any yellow or red cards issued during the aborted game will be handled as though the game was completed.
- e) If a game is abandoned due to climatic conditions AFTER the first half is completed, the game shall be considered completed, and the score will stand.
- f) If a referee is not notified properly of unplayable conditions, the home team must pay the referee. If a referee shows up at the field and sudden conditions do not permit the playing of the game, the referee shall be paid half fees by both teams. If the game is in progress and is called, the referee shall be paid full fees.
- g) No games are to be postponed even with the mutual consent of both team's managers. Games may only be postponed due to inclement weather and/or concerns about damage to the field and must be sanctioned by the referee at the field and/or the field's owner. Additionally, any and all postponements must have the approval of the Games Committee Chairman before the game is postponed.

12. FIELD SWAPPING

This rule is intended to make sure that each team plays each opponent in its division in a home-and-away series in the course of a competition year.

- a) Should a scheduled Spring season game be played on the opposing team's field instead of the

scheduled field (i.e., if teams exchanged home and away dates) the Fall season game must also be played on the opposing team's field (i.e., the opposite field to the one on which the Spring season game was played). In all cases, approval for the field swap must be obtained from the Games Committee Chairman prior to the playing of both games.

13. TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

a) At the field before the game:

i) The home team shall mark the field, install the nets and corner flags and shall also provide the referee with two approved game balls. The home team will also have available a whistle, two linesmen's jackets, and

a distinctive shirt, vest, or jacket for a substitute referee;

ii) Each team shall pay the referee, and where appropriate, the assistant referees before the game starts; failure to pay the referees the entire amount may result in a fine;

iii) Each team shall enter the first and last names, jersey numbers, player's signatures and registration number of their players on its lineup sheet; players shall sign next to their own name; the team captain shall sign the lineup sheet and submit it to the referee early enough to allow the referee to conduct a complete player check prior to scheduled game time. If a fully-executed, complete lineup is not presented to the referee, the game cannot be played and the team without the fully-executed lineup will forfeit the game;

iv) Each player shall personally hand his registration card to the referee and submit to a complete inspection of his uniform and equipment. Player passes must be present to the referee before kick-off. If a team does not have player passes at kick-off time, the game cannot be played and the team without player passes must forfeit the game;

v) The Premier, Second and Third divisions all employ a three-man referee system with an assigned center referee, an AR1 and an AR2. In the event the center referee fails to appear as scheduled, the ARs shall employ a two-man system (ie. the high school system). Should the center referee and an AR fail to appear, the game shall be played with a single referee. Should no referees appear, the provision of subsection vii will become applicable;

vi) For the Senior division only, both teams shall provide one capable linesman. The linesman is responsible to the referee. He must wear apparel to distinguish him from players of both teams and spectators;

vii) In the event that the assigned referee(s) fails to appear (three in the over-40 division and one in the over-50 division), the team captains must present a player from each team to referee one half each of the game or, must agree on a non-player referee; when both captains agree on a referee, the game must be played and will be considered valid. The agreed-on referee has all the authority and responsibility of a regularly assigned referee;

viii) The home team is responsible for playing in alternate colors if there is a uniform color clash. However, if a visiting team has changed uniform colors so recently that the League and all other teams have not been notified in time to adjust to the change, that team shall be responsible for playing in alternate colors, whether it is the home team or not;

ix) Opposing team captains shall have the right to check players' registration cards; this right may be exercised only while the cards are in the possession of the referee;

x) Each team shall have its own first aid kit available at its own sideline area.

b) The game itself:

i) Member teams shall be responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators on and off the field, it is required that teams take all necessary precautions to prevent players and spectators from using offensive language, threatening referees or opposing players or spectators, causing damage to public or private property, and to prevent spectators from approaching the field whether just before, during, or immediately after the game;

ii) In the event that a referee becomes sick or injured during a game, the procedure outlined in v, vi or vii (above) should be followed as appropriate to the particular division;

iii) Slide tackles are not permitted in the Senior Division. To the extent a player in the Senior Division performs a slide tackle, the sanction for same shall be an indirect free kick from the site of the infraction, unless, in executing the slide tackle, the player has also committed a foul punishable under the then-current Laws of the Game as promulgated by FIFA, in which case the referee is empowered to impose an appropriate sanction, including, without limitation, the issuance of a yellow or red card and the awarding of a direct free kick or penalty kick, as the circumstances warrant. A sliding maneuver to, for example, keep the ball from leaving the field of play, shall not be deemed to be a "slide tackle" by the Referee for purposes of this Rule provided that, in the Referee's sole judgment, no player of the opposing team is within playing distance of the ball when the sliding maneuver is initiated.

c) After the game:

i) Both teams (home and away) should report their game score and complete a referee evaluation via the League website the same game day. The game score is reported via the "Forms and Rules" tab on the League website homepage using the "Referee Evaluation" form, which is the first form to appear at the top of the "Forms and Rules" webpage.

ii) If a team forfeits a game for failure to appear, a team representative must appear before the Competition Committee at its next scheduled meeting to explain the circumstances. The League considers a forfeit to be a serious problem. The prime responsibility that a team accepts when it registers for the Soccer Program is to provide competition for opposing teams as scheduled. If a team is incapable of meeting that obligation, there is an automatic question raised about its fitness to continue participating in the Soccer Program. At the very least, there will be a significant fine assessed (see Schedule of Fees, Fines, Penalties and Surcharges).

iii) Teams should engage in a traditional post-game handshake.

14. PROTESTS

a) Any protests arising out of games played under the League's jurisdiction must be submitted in writing postmarked no later than 48 hours after the game is concluded (Sundays excepted), to the Games Chairman. All protests must be submitted with a check for \$75 which will be refunded if the protest is upheld.

b) Complaints based on late starts and/or field or play shall be filed with the referee prior to the start of the game. Such complaints may only be filed by the team captain. The referee must note the protest on the lineup sheet; and the note must be signed by the team captain filing it.

c) A judgement call and a decision by the referee may not be protested as long as it was within the laws of the game and as governed by these Rules of Competition.

d) A protest need not necessarily be on the outcome of the game; it may be over the referee's conduct, Rules of Competition, or the laws of the game.

- e) Protests will be resolved by the Conduct Committee Chairman no later than the next meeting of the Committee.
- f) Interested parties involved in a protest may be represented by an officer of the club or team; however, the Conduct Committee Chairman may make a decision on a case in the event of a nonappearance by either or all parties on a hearing date and at a location prescribed by the Conduct Committee Chairman.
- g) The opposing team manager or League Representative must be notified by the Conduct Committee Chairman of all protests involving his team as soon as the formal protest is received; this may be done in writing or by telephone.
- h) Refer also to the rules governing games conduct.

15. THE REFEREE

- a) The referee controls all soccer activity, and all his decisions within the game are FINAL; he is in command from the time he enters the vicinity of the field throughout the contest, even when play is temporarily stopped or when the ball is off the field; conduct before, during, and after the contest is subject to the referee's jurisdiction.
- b) The referee not only enforces all Laws of the Game and all Leaguerules, but he is also responsible for all judgement calls on questionable plays.
- c) The referee has unlimited authority to stop the game for any abridgment of the Laws of the Game and/or League Rules or for unruly disturbance by the spectators or the players themselves.
- d) Prior to the commencement of play, the referee will inspect the field and equipment to see that they meet applicable standards.
- e) The referee shall inspect all players and substitutes for correct apparel and receive the player pass from each individual player and must retain all passes in his possession during the game.
- f) The referee is empowered to call an injury time-out for whatever time is necessary for proper treatment on the field of the injured player, if the injured player can safely be removed from the field of play, that should be done as soon as possible so that play can resume; the potential for additional or aggravated injury is to be considered more important than immediate continuation of the game.
- g) The referee has the right to eject any player from the game, WITHOUT WARNING, for breaking rules pertaining to player conduct and especially laws applicable to violent conduct.
- h) The referee must signal the time back in after any and all interruptions in play.
- i) The referee shall attempt to obtain the signature on a team lineup sheet of any player whose pass is called in question by an opposing team captain, if the signature is refused, that fact shall be noted on the lineup sheet; and the questioned player's pass shall be retained by the referee for return to the Conduct Committee.
- j) The referee MUST return all player passes to each team's captain after the completion or suspension of the game, with the exception of those passes retained by him by reason of a player ejection or the question of a player's credentials; such retained passes shall be mailed to the division conduct coordinators as indicated on the official line-up sheet within 24 hours of the completion or suspension of the game.
- k) The referee shall note any in-game injuries to players or officials by name and jersey number on his game report.

REFEREE CHECK LIST

One of the basic concepts of the League is that the referee should work with the managers of the teams to ensure that good conduct and good sportsmanship are maintained and that any unforeseen circumstances are handled in the best manner possible; although the League prefers that only the team captains communicate with the referee during the game, we urge our referees to meet with the team managers prior to the games and at any time when he feels that they can be of assistance; the League is very interested in any comments that our referees make, good, or bad, about the cooperation that they receive from our team managers.

1) Before going to the game:

- a) Call home team managers prior to the scheduled game; but no later than 8:00pm on Wednesday night.
- b) Make certain that your equipment includes two linesman's flags.

2) At the field before the game:

- a) At the Over 40 Divisions games (Premier, Second and Third Divisions), introduce yourself to the USL assigned linesmen and have them fill-out their respective section in the line-up sheet).
- b) Determine that the field is properly marked and in playable condition.
- c) Check the game balls.
- d) Determine who the team captains are and that they are wearing proper identification.
- e) Check the player passes and team lineup sheets.
- f) Check the players for proper equipment, check for anything that might be dangerous during the game.
- g) Talk with both teams about good sportsmanship and game conduct.
- h) Make certain that both teams have paid the entire referee fee amounts prior to the game.

3) The game itself:

- a) Game should start at 10:00am or at such other official designated starting time as accurately reflected on the published League Schedule; visiting teams only, have a 15 minute maximum grace period to field a minimum seven (7) players at which time the game must start; referee to blow the whistle once to allow the minimum 7 players five (5) minutes to occupy the field; at the end of the 5 minutes blow the whistle one more time to indicate a forfeit should the minimum 7 players fail to start the game.
- b) Team captains shall be the only players to speak with the referee; the referee has the authority to suspend this privilege; it is recommended that the referee use this authority only in extreme situations.
- c) Teams are allowed unlimited substitutions when the ball is out of play, but only with the referee's authorization, except on corner kicks and fouls.

4) After the game:

- a) Indicate all yellow or red cards issued on the lineup sheet; referees are required to make comments about all cards issued. Use appropriate 7 + 7 codes to describe the infractions.
- b) When a red card is issued, send the registration card of the ejected player to the division

conduct coordinators as indicated on the official line-up sheet within 24 hours of the completion of the game for an automatic one-game suspension or, as determined by the Conduct Committee.

c) When a player's credentials are questioned and that player refuses to place his signature on the lineup sheet, retain the registration card for return to the Division Conduct Coordinator and Conduct Committee.

d) On the home team's lineup sheet, enter any comments about the condition of the field and its preparedness for the game; also, make note of any problems with spectators.

e) On both lineup sheets, enter the scores and any comments about team conduct, sign both lineup sheets.

f) Record the details of any protest upon the lineup sheet of the team entering the protest.

g) Provide each team captain with a signed record of the game score; this game record should be in the upper, detachable, portion of the lineup sheet.

h) Mail both lineup sheets to the Division Conduct Coordinator as indicated on the lineup sheet within 24 hours.

SCHEDULE OF FEES, FINES, PENALTIES AND SURCHARGES

ITEM CHARGE

Team Registration \$ 125.00 per season

Insurance as directed by Insurance

Failure to notify league of

a) Change in player's telephone number \$ 10.00

b) Change in player's mailing address \$ 10.00

Failure to return registration cards by the deadline applicable to each season -- \$50

Receipt of a red card for serious foul play or violent conduct – individual player fine of \$100 per offense to be paid before the player will be permitted to play again

Failure to provide corner flags at game \$ 10.00

Field not marked clearly or appropriately \$ 10.00

Failure to report game score by 3:00pm on game day \$ 25.00

Failure to abandon field upon issuance of red card \$ 100.00

No team representation at general membership meeting \$ 20.00 first offense *

Forfeit of a game \$ 100.00 first offense **

Non-performance of assigned League responsibility \$ 50.00 first offense ***

Other fees, fines, penalties and surcharges will be assessed by the Executive Board based on the recommendation of the Leagues' committees when rules and procedures have been violated. Charges will

be established on a case by case basis, but in no case shall the charge be less than \$ 20.00.

* Each subsequent offense increments by \$ 10.00 (i.e., second \$ 30.00, third \$ 40.00, etc.).

** Each subsequent offense increments by \$100.00 (i.e., second \$200.00, third \$300.00, etc).

*** Each subsequent offense increments by \$50.00 (i.e., second \$100.00, third \$150.00, etc).