NORTHWEST IOWA SOCCER CLUB
INDOOR YOUTH SOCCER TOURNAMENT RULES

Tournament Rules and Administrative Procedures

LAWS OF THE GAME

Governing rules. Matches will follow the applicable US Youth Soccer rules and policies, as adapted by these tournament-specific indoor rules. Where these rules do not address an issue, the referee and Tournament Committee will apply the applicable US Youth Soccer/FIFA Laws of the Game and the tournament's approved competition procedures. These rules should be reviewed by the tournament sanctioning authority before publication.

LAW 1 – THE FIELD

- Field dimensions: 35 yards long by 25 yards wide.
- Field markings will include touchlines, goal lines, a halfway line, and a penalty area as designated by the venue. The halfway line is the U10 build-out line.
- Penalty mark (7 yards) and penalty-area dimensions will be identified by the tournament at the venue.
- Team areas are reserved for rostered players, coaches, and substitutes. Spectators must remain in designated viewing areas.

LAW 2 – THE BALL

- Size 4 ball for U10–U12. Size 5 ball for U14 through high-school divisions.

LAW 3 – NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- U10–U12: 6 players per team on the field, including one goalkeeper.
- U14 through high school: 5 players per team on the field, including one goalkeeper.
- Maximum roster size is 10 players per team. All players must be listed on the team roster and approved by the Tournament Committee before participating.
- A team must have at least 3 eligible players, including a goalkeeper, to start or continue a match, subject to referee and tournament safety decisions.
- Unlimited flying substitutions are allowed. Field players must enter and leave at the designated substitution area/halfway line, and the outgoing player must leave the field before the substitute enters. Goalkeeper substitutions may be made only when play is stopped and with the referee's permission.
- Improper substitutions may result in a caution and an indirect free kick, as determined by the referee.
- A player may play for only one team during the tournament unless the Tournament Committee expressly authorizes an exception.

LAW 4 – PLAYER EQUIPMENT

- Players must wear a numbered shirt/jersey, shorts, socks, shin guards fully covered by socks, and footwear suitable for the playing surface.
- Goalkeepers must wear a jersey or pinnie that distinguishes them from all other players.
- Jewelry and any equipment considered dangerous by the referee are prohibited.
- Teams must bring light and dark jerseys. The team listed first is the home team and should wear light colors; the away team should wear dark colors. If colors conflict, the home team changes.

LAW 5 – REFEREES AND TIMEKEEPING

- Referees enforce these tournament rules and the applicable Laws of the Game. Referee decisions on matters of fact during play are final.
- The referee will report scores, misconduct, and other incidents to tournament staff.
- The tournament may assign one or more officials per match based on age group, round, and availability.
- A designated timekeeper or tournament clock will control the running clock. The end-of-half/game signal ends play, except where a penalty kick must be completed under the applicable rules.

LAW 6 – DURATION OF THE MATCH

- Each match consists of two 25-minute halves with a 3-minute halftime.
- The clock runs continuously unless the referee or Tournament Director directs otherwise for an injury, safety issue, or exceptional delay.

- The half or match ends when the time signal sounds, regardless of the ball's location, except that a penalty kick awarded before time expires may be completed.
- Teams should be ready at the field before their scheduled start. Delays may result in disciplinary action or forfeiture under the administrative rules.

LAW 7 – START AND RESTART OF PLAY

- The home team kicks off in the first half; the visiting team kicks off in the second half.
- The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves. The kicker may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it.
- A goal may not be scored directly from kickoff. Opponents must remain the required distance from the ball under the applicable Laws of the Game and referee instructions (4 yards).

LAW 8 – BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- The ball is out when it wholly crosses a touchline or goal line, play is stopped by the referee, or the ball contacts the ceiling, a light fixture, support beam, or other overhead obstruction.
- If the ball contacts an overhead obstruction, play restarts with an indirect free kick for the opposing team at the point directly below the contact, or at the nearest appropriate point at the edge of the penalty area if the contact occurs above that area, as directed by the referee.

LAW 9 – SCORING AND OFFSIDE

- A goal is scored when the whole ball crosses the goal line between the posts and beneath the crossbar, provided no infringement has occurred. The team scoring the most goals wins; equal scores are a draw in round-robin play. There is no offside offense in this indoor tournament.

LAW 10 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- Direct and indirect free kicks, penalty kicks, cautions, and send-offs will be administered under the applicable Laws of the Game, as adapted for the indoor format and these tournament rules.
- Slide tackling is prohibited. The referee may award the appropriate free kick and apply disciplinary action where warranted.
- Dangerous play, holding, pushing, tripping, kicking, striking, deliberate handball, and other offenses will be penalized as appropriate under the Laws of the Game.
- A goalkeeper may not handle a deliberate kick from a teammate or a teammate's kick-in, where prohibited by the applicable Laws.
- A player shown a red card is sent off for the remainder of the match and may not be replaced unless the applicable rules or referee permit otherwise. The player is suspended for at least the team's next played match; the Tournament Committee may impose additional discipline.
- A sent-off coach must leave the technical/team area and comply with the referee's and Tournament Director's instructions. Failure to leave may result in abandonment or forfeiture.

LAW 11 – FREE KICKS

- Free kicks may be direct or indirect as indicated by the referee and the applicable Laws of the Game.
- Opponents must remain at least 4 yards from the ball where space permits, unless the referee specifies a different distance under the applicable Laws.
- The ball is in play once it is kicked and clearly moves. The kicker may not touch it again until another player has touched it.
- The referee may use a 4-second count for restarts where required by the indoor rules.

LAW 12 – KICK-INS AND CORNER KICKS

- A kick-in replaces a throw-in. The ball must be stationary on or behind the touchline. Opponents must remain at least 4 yards away where space permits.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a kick-in. The kicker may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it.
- Corner kicks are taken from the corner area. Opponents must remain at least 4 yards away where space permits. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.
- The referee may apply a 4-second count to kick-ins and corner kicks. Players must not move or adjust the goals/nets.

LAW 13 – GOAL CLEARANCES AND GOALKEEPER RESTRICTIONS

- Goal clearances are taken by the goalkeeper from within the designated penalty area.

- Punting and drop-kicking are prohibited at all age levels. Goalkeepers may distribute the ball by throwing, rolling, or playing it from the ground.
- U10 build-out line: the halfway line is the build-out line. When the U10 goalkeeper has possession in their hands or a goal clearance is awarded, the opposing team must retreat behind the halfway line. The goalkeeper may release the ball by throwing, rolling, or passing from the ground. Opponents may cross the line once the ball is released into play, consistent with the referee's direction.
- For U10–U12, a goalkeeper's throw or release must touch the floor on the goalkeeper's own side of the halfway line or touch another player before crossing the halfway line. An infringement results in an indirect free kick at the point the ball crossed the halfway line, subject to referee interpretation.
- A goalkeeper may not hold the ball for more than 4 seconds when the indoor rules require a timed release. The goalkeeper may not handle a deliberate kick-in or deliberate kick from a teammate where prohibited by the applicable Laws.

LAW 14 – PENALTY KICKS

- Penalty kicks are taken from the designated penalty mark. The referee identifies the kicker.
- All players other than the kicker and goalkeeper must remain outside the penalty area, behind the ball, and at least 4 yards from the ball, subject to the applicable Laws.
- The goalkeeper must comply with the applicable goal-line requirements. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until another player has touched it.

LAW 15 – ROUND-ROBIN STANDINGS AND TIEBREAKERS

Points: 3 points for a win; 1 point for a tie; 0 points for a loss.

If two or more teams have the same point total, apply the following tiebreakers in order:

Head-to-head result (not used when more than two teams are tied).
Goal difference, capped at a maximum differential of 4 goals per match. Example: a 7–1 result is recorded as 5–1 for tiebreak purposes.
Goals against, capped at 4 per match.
Goals for, capped at 4 per match.
Most shutouts.
Penalty kicks, as administered by the Tournament Director, when two teams remain tied.

When three or more teams are tied and two or one team(s) must advance, head-to-head is not used; apply tiebreakers 2–6 in order. If three teams remain identical in record, goals allowed, and goals scored, the Tournament Director or designee will draw team names: the first team drawn receives a bye, and the other two play a penalty-kick contest. The winner then plays the bye team in penalty kicks; the bye team is treated as the home team.

LAW 16 – OVERTIME AND PENALTY-KICK SHOOTOUTS

- Round-robin matches may end in a draw.
- If a bracket, semifinal, or championship match must produce a winner and is tied at the end of regulation, play one 6-minute golden-goal overtime period. The first goal wins.
- At the start of golden-goal overtime, each team begins with one fewer player than it had on the field at the end of regulation. If no goal is scored after 2 minutes, each team removes one additional player at the next stoppage; if no goal is scored after 4 minutes, each team removes one additional player at the next stoppage. If still tied after 6 minutes, use a penalty-kick shootout.
- No substitutions during golden-goal overtime except for injury or a red-card situation, as determined by the referee. Overtime must never reduce a team below the minimum number of players required for safety and competition.
- Penalty-kick shootout: the referee chooses the goal and a coin toss determines order. Each team takes 3 kicks by 3 different eligible players. If tied, kicks continue in sudden-death pairs using eligible players under the applicable Laws. Eligible players may change places with the goalkeeper as permitted by the Laws.

NORTHWEST IOWA SOCCER CLUB – ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

1. Team Eligibility and Rosters

- Teams must submit all required registration and check-in paperwork before playing.
- All players must be rostered and approved by the Tournament Committee before participating. The maximum roster size is 10 players. The Tournament Committee may request proof of age, registration, or player eligibility.

- Players may represent only one team during the tournament unless the Tournament Committee gives prior written approval.
- The Tournament Committee may review roster or eligibility concerns and may impose appropriate remedies, including removal of an ineligible player, match forfeiture, or disqualification.
- Recruiting players from other participating teams or clubs at the event is prohibited. Report concerns to tournament staff; the Tournament Committee may impose discipline.
- Maximum of 3 guest players per team.

2. Tournament Format

U10: round-robin/festival-style play with no championship final. Standings may be used for scheduling or recognition, but teams do not advance to a final. 3 game guarantee.
U12 through high school: bracket play culminating in a championship match. The Tournament Director will publish the bracket and advancement format based on the number of registered teams.
The tournament will make reasonable efforts to provide multiple games per team; the guaranteed number of games will be 3.
If too few teams register in an age division, the Tournament Committee may combine divisions where appropriate for player safety and competitive balance.
Any team that forfeits a match is ineligible for subsequent semifinal, final, or other playoff matches unless the Tournament Committee determines otherwise.

3. Casts and Orthopedic Braces

Casts and orthopedic braces may be worn only if approved by the referee and deemed safe for all players. Exposed metal hinges and exposed Velcro are not permitted.

4. Schedule and Check-In

The schedule and any changes will be communicated through the event's designated website or tournament communication channel. Coaches/managers are responsible for confirming schedules and ensuring their teams are ready before each match.

5. Protests and Disputes

There are no formal protests. The Tournament Director or Tournament Committee will resolve disputes promptly, and its tournament-administration decisions are final. Referee decisions on in-game judgment calls are final.

6. Spectator and Team Areas

Spectators must remain in designated viewing areas and off the playing surface. Team equipment must be kept clear of walkways, entrances, and emergency routes. Only teams scheduled to play may enter the field area between games. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, team staff, and spectators.

7. Scorekeeping

The assigned referee or tournament scorekeeper will record the official score. Coaches should verify the reported score promptly after the match.

8. Forfeits and Delays

A team that is not ready to play at the scheduled start may be subject to forfeiture at the Tournament Director's discretion. Unless otherwise announced, a forfeit will be recorded as 4–0. A forfeiting team may be excluded from playoff eligibility.

9. Game Administration

- Games use a running clock. Tournament staff will signal the start and end of each half and match.
- Teams must promptly clear the field at the end of their match. No spectators or unscheduled teams may enter the playing area during halftime or between matches.
- The Tournament Director may adjust game times, field assignments, or formats to address schedule, safety, facility, or emergency needs.

10. Awards

Awards, medals, or participation recognition will be announced in the event information. U10 teams will receive participation recognition unless the Tournament Director publishes a different plan.

11. Weather, Emergencies, Cancellations, and Refunds

The Tournament Director and Tournament Committee have final authority to delay, reschedule, shorten, suspend, or cancel matches due to weather, facility conditions, emergencies, or other circumstances affecting safety or tournament operations.

Refund terms must be published in the event registration materials. If a semifinal or championship cannot be played, placement will be determined by the published tournament policy and available standings/results.

Refund policy:

- Withdrawal before registration deadline – full refund (100%)
- No games played due to weather related tournament cancellation – full refund (100%)
- 1 game played – 50% refund
- 2 games played – 25% refund

12. Tournament Authority and Rule Interpretation

The Tournament Director and Tournament Committee may interpret these rules, address unforeseen circumstances, and impose discipline consistent with the event's sanctioning requirements. These rules are tournament-specific adaptations and do not replace any mandatory US Youth Soccer, state association, facility, or sanctioning requirements.