

The EPIC Cup

Tournament Rules, 2021

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:

Players must be born within birth year time frame established by the USSF for the division in which they would participate. Player passes with photograph, duly authorized by an appropriate USSF State Registrar, must be presented at pre-game check-in.

ROSTER LIMIT:

- Team rosters will be limited to 22 players for teams playing the 11v11 format (other than allowed by USYSA).
- Team rosters will be limited to 16 players for teams playing the 9v9 format.
- Team rosters will be limited to 14 players for teams playing the 7v7 format.
- Team rosters will be limited to 10 players for teams playing the 5v5 format.
- The Team Roster and Guest Player Roster submitted online for Tournament Documentation will be the official Roster for the Tournament and may not be altered.
- A player may only play for one team.

AGE GROUPS:

Teams and players can play up one or two age groups. The Tournament reserves the right to consolidate age groups if necessary to create the proper competitive environment.

GUEST PLAYERS:

Five (5) guest players will be allowed per team. Prior to the start of each game, the Field Marshal or Referee shall check that each team have the following: current passes for players and coaches, approved roster, and approved guest roster (if applicable).

TOURNAMENT DOCUMENTATION:

Each team must provide the following documentation via an online submission process (via GotSoccer) a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the tournament. Teams that fail to provide required documentation may be removed from the tournament at the discretion of the tournament committee.

- A. Official Team Roster
- B. Liability Release and Acknowledgement "Signature" Form (download form, collect signatures, and upload a scan or photo)
- C. Guest Player Roster (if using guest players, download form, complete, upload a scan or photo)
- D. Travel Permit (*non OSYSA teams only*, see Permission to Travel details below, upload or scan a photo)
- E. Concussion Awareness Info Sheet (*share with your team's parents, but don't need to upload*)

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- F. Sudden Cardiac Arrest (“Lindsay’s Law) Info Sheet (*share with your team’s parents, but don’t need to upload*)
- G. Permission to Travel: The EPIC Cup’s sanctioning body, OSYSA, requires a ‘travel permit’ form for out of state teams.

LAWS OF THE GAME:

International Rules (FIFA/USSF) apply unless superseded by an official tournament rule.

OFFSIDE

Offside may or may not be called for U8, U9 and U10 games if using a single referee system. However, referees are asked to make every effort to ensure no intentional or blatant offside takes place under this format. When played on a field with a build-out-line, a player is onside if he/she is behind the build-out-line.

USE OF NON-CERTIFIED REFEREES

The EPIC Cup makes every effort to ensure all games are properly staffed with three referees (except 5v5 matches, which only have one referee). However, in our current climate where league games are being canceled due to lack of referees, we sometimes make pragmatic choices. In cases when a fully certified referee is not available, we will attempt to find a non-certified referee instead.

If non-certified referees are used, these referees will likely be young-adult soccer players and will normally be assigned as Assistant Referees (linespersons), and to our youngest age groups. Certified Center Referees can use their judgement as to whether non-certified ARs can signal for offside or only for out of bounds. As always, it is ultimately the Center Referee’s decision.

SUBSTITUTIONS:

Unlimited substitutions are permitted by either team prior to a goal kick, after a goal, after the half break, during hydration breaks, and on a team’s own throw-ins (and on opponent throw-ins when the opponent is also substituting). A one-for-one substitution is permitted by either team at a stoppage of play for injury, caution, or ejection. A player who is bleeding or has blood on his/her uniform shall be removed from the field and cannot return until the bleeding is stopped and the uniform is cleaned or changed.

MATCH FORMAT:

U8 – 5v5

- Preliminary games: 2 - 25 min halves
- Championship games 2 - 25 min halves
- Ball size 4
- Will use build out lines (see Build Out Lines section)

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- Will use kick-ins instead of throw-ins

U9/10 – 7v7

- Preliminary games: 2 - 25 min halves
- Championship games 2 - 25 min halves
- Ball size 4
- Will use build out lines

U11/12 – 9v9

- Preliminary games 2 - 30 min halves
- Championship games 2 - 30 min halves
- Ball size 4

U13 thru U19 - 11v11

- Preliminary games 2- 35 min halves
- Championship games 2- 35 min halves
- Ball size 5

HEADING

Heading is permitted for U12 and older players. Heading in the U11 or younger game will result in an indirect kick. Coaches are responsible for enforcing heading restrictions for any players playing up.

BUILD-OUT LINES

The EPIC Cup will follow US Soccer's rule on build-out lines. Opposing players must retreat to behind the build-out-line for goal kicks and when the keeper has the ball in his/her hands. The keeper doesn't have to wait for the opposing players to retreat and can distribute the ball quickly, accepting the fact that opponents can then challenge for the ball. The keeper can also put the ball down to dribble or pass with their feet.

For the purposes of calling offside, players can only be offside if they are inside their attacking build-out area.

HALFTIME & RUNNING CLOCK

Half-time length is planned for 5 minutes, but may be shortened, if needed, at the referee's discretion.

There is no overtime for any match. Preliminary matches may end in a tie. See "Penalty Kick Shootout" for tiebreaking process in semi-final and final matches.

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The Committee reserves the right to adjust game length for conditions beyond their control. See Weather/Reschedule section below.

The game clock will not be stopped because of injury to any player, except if deemed necessary by the referee. Due to the time allowed for the completion of all games, the clock should run continuously.

HYDRATION BREAKS

Tournament directors may mandate a 1-minute hydration break at the middle of each half (running clock).

PENALTY KICK SHOOTOUTS:

If a semifinal or final game ends regulation in a tie, teams will proceed directly to a shootout. The shootout will follow FIFA Laws of the Game with one exception: the first round will consist of a best-of-three shooters (instead of five) and it will then proceed to sudden death best-of-one rounds. Only players on the field at the end of the game are eligible for penalty kicks. A coin flip will determine who will kick first (visiting team calls) and teams will alternate kicks. The most goals scored after three kicks for each team wins the game. If the score remains tied, teams will alternate shooters until there is an unmatched goal between the teams. After all eligible players on the field of play have taken kicks (including goalkeepers), teams will start with their first kickers again and in the same order.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

Any player or coach ordered off the field by a referee for any fouls or misconduct may be suspended for their next game, two games, or for the remainder of the tournament, as determined by the Tournament Committee.

- Double Yellows - 1 game suspension
- Red cards from Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity by Handling - 1 game suspension
- Red cards for Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity by Foul and Serious Foul Play - 2 game suspension
- Any other Red card (Spitting, Violent Conduct, Abusive Language) - Full tournament suspension

The Tournament Committee shall review each incident based on the report of the Referee. The Tournament Committee's decision with respect to any suspension shall not be subject to review or appeal.

NOISEMAKERS:

Noisemakers of any kind are prohibited from being used at any games at all sites during the tournament.

FORFEITS:

A minimum of 7 players constitutes a team (5 for U8/U10). A 10-minute grace period will be extended beyond the scheduled kick-off time before a forfeit shall be declared. Failure to complete a match, or a

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team leaving the field during play, will result in forfeiture. No team that has forfeited a match will be declared a group winner for advancement purposes. Winning teams as a result of forfeits will be automatically awarded the average number of goals either scored and/or allowed in their games.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

The Tournament Committee shall have the authority to make the following changes if deemed necessary:

- A. Shorten the duration of the games.
- B. Suspend temporarily or permanently any game in progress. (Preliminary games terminated after one half of play because of bad weather shall be considered official as of the time of termination.)
- C. Reschedule games to alternate field locations within 1 hour drive of primary soccer facility (such as if primary soccer facilities become closed due to unforeseen weather event).
- D. Cancel any or all games if necessary. Cincinnati Soccer Club, the EPIC Cup tournament committee, any of our sponsors, advertisers, supporters, or providers of soccer facilities are not responsible for any expense incurred by cancellation of scheduled games due to weather or field conditions.
- E. In the event that a game cannot be played or finished, if the game has reached half time then that score will stand. If less than one half of the game has been played, or the game not started, then the score will be recorded as 0-0.
- F. In the event that a final cannot be finished, if the game has reached half time then that score will stand and a winner declared. If less than one half of the game has been played, or the game not started, then co-champs will be declared and the score will be recorded as 0-0.

WEATHER COMMUNICATIONS:

Three long blasts of the air horn signal that games must be stopped and players and spectators must leave the field. Three short blasts signal that games can resume.

The tournament directors will communicate weather updates and possible game cancellations via Twitter (<https://twitter.com/epiccupsoccer>) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TheEPICcup>).

TEAM CONTACT PERSON:

Each team, on checking in, must have a contact person who can be reached at any time should the necessity arise.

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GAME SCORES:

The Center Referee will keep the official game card, which they shall receive from the designated Field Marshal prior to each game. The Center Referee shall obtain the signature of each participating head coach to attest to the recorded score. The Center Referee will be responsible for returning the game card to the designated Field Marshal after each game.

STANDINGS:

Each team shall be awarded three points for a win, one point for a tie, no points for a loss. The following procedure will determine the final standings:

- (1) Most points (3 for win, 1 for draw, 0 for loss)
- (2) Head-to-Head (if 3 or more teams are tied on points, Head-to-Head changes to "Points in games between tied teams")
- (3) Goal Differential (sum of net goals, max of 4 net goals per game)
- (4) Least goals conceded
- (5) Least card points (Yellow Card = 1 point, Red Card due to two 2 Yellows = 2 points, straight Red Card = 3 points)
- (6) Tournament Director decision (possibly a PK shootout, if feasible)

If 3 or more teams are tied, the tiebreakers are used until one team is eliminated and then restarted with the remaining teams.

SEMIFINALS AND FINALS (CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES):

Matchups for Semifinals and Finals are determined differently for different size groups:

- For 4-team groups, the 1st and 2nd place teams play again in a final. In some cases the champion may be determined by group play (no final). If the two finalists are known going into the 3rd game of group play, the two teams can mutually decide to play that game as the final.
- For 5-team groups, each team plays two games and then the playoff rounds are determined by the standings. The 1st place team advances to the final vs. the winner of a semifinal match between the 2nd and 3rd place teams. The 4th and 5th place teams play a consolation match.
- For 6-team groups with two 3-team brackets, each team plays the other two teams in their bracket and then the top two teams in each bracket advance to semifinals (A1 vs B2 and A2 vs B1) and the 3rd place teams play each other in a consolation match.
- For 8-team groups with two 4-team brackets, the two group winners will play in the final.

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- For 12-team groups (4 brackets of 3), each team will play the other two teams in its bracket resulting in brackets with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams. Each of the four 1st place teams will advance to the Gold Semifinals. Each of the four 2nd place teams will advance to the Silver Semifinals. Each of the four 3rd place teams will advance to the Bronze semifinals. Winners of semifinal games advance to the Final of that level and losers of semifinals are eliminated. Tournament directors may choose to seed teams for semifinal games (e.g., best-performing 1st place team plays worst-performing 1st place team).

PROTESTS:

Protests must be in writing, be accompanied by a \$250 cash deposit and be presented to a Tournament Director. All protests must be received within one hour of the conclusion of the protested game. Referee judgment shall not be a basis for protest. The Center Referee must be informed of the pending protest at the conclusion of the game and must report in writing on the game card his comments as to the protested situation. Protests, which are upheld, will cause the return of the \$250 cash deposit, but protests denied will result in the forfeiture of the \$250 cash deposit.

FIELD AND PLAYING EQUIPMENT:

The Tournament Committee shall have the responsibility for providing nets, field markers, corner poles/flags, and supervisory personnel. Teams shall be benched diagonal from each other, on the same side of the field as their spectators, with the team on the right side (in front of the Assistant Referee) and the spectators on the left, with a 10 yard area at the halfway line left open for subs and referees.

PLAYER UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT:

All players of a team will wear the same color shirts, shorts, and socks. Each player will have a jersey number on their shirt and socks must be pulled up to cover shin guards. In the event of a color conflict, the home team should wear white or its lighter color.

LOST AND FOUND:

Any found items should be brought to the nearest Field Marshal or to Tournament Headquarters. We will attempt to find the owners, but will donate or dispose of unclaimed items shortly after the conclusion of the tournament.

FINAL ARBITRATION:

The Tournament Committee will be the final interpreter of the rules and regulations and reserves the right to issue the final decision on all matters pertaining to the The EPIC Cup soccer tournament.

GENERAL:

1. Coaches are required to bring all player/coach cards to every game. It is highly recommended that you bring medical release forms with you in case of injury.

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2. If a game is suspended due to weather, each team must leave the field and go their cars until conditions allow safe resumption of play. No one will be allowed on the fields until the weather conditions are favorable to resume, including as determined by current OSYSA rules related to lightning and thunder.
3. All teams are required to clean up their sideline after each match.
4. A coach may coach more than one team at the tournament
5. The tournament committee's interpretation of the foregoing rules/regulations shall be final.