

Christmas Tournament Rules

Respect

- All spectators must remain in the designated spectator area.
- All teams & coaches will be on the same side of the field, on the inside of the field opposite the spectators.
- Only 2 coaches should be on the coach's side.
- Fair play: emphasis on equal playing time, development and respect over results.
- Any teams found guilty of misconduct or any abusive behavior toward officials, opponents, spectators could result in your team being disqualified from the tournament.

Number of Games

- Each team is scheduled for a minimum of 3 games.

Bracket Structure

- 8 Team Divisions.
 - Teams will be split into two brackets: A & B. Teams will play every team within their bracket. First & second place in each bracket, upon the completion of the group stage, will move onto a semi-final.
 - Semi-finals: A1 v B2 & B1 v A2
 - Winners of semi-finals move onto a final.

Awards

- First and second place teams will be presented with medals.

Team Size & Game Format

- Roster Size: 8 players
- Format: 5v5
 - 4 outfield + 1 GK
- Ball Size:
 - U7/U8 Pre-Academy: Ball size #3
 - U9-U12: Ball size #4
 - U13 and up: Ball size #5
- Minimum players to start: 4
- Game Length: 10 minutes
- No halftime

Scoring

- Team standings based on following system:
 - 3 points for a win
 - 1 point for a draw
 - 0 points for a loss
- Goal difference will be used if teams are tied after group play.
 - If still tied, teams will participate in a best of 3 penalty shoot-out to break the tie.
- If semi-final or final ends in a tie, teams will participate in a best of 3 penalty shoot-out to decide the winner.

Kick-offs & Restarts

- Kick-offs can be taken forward or backward.
- A goal may not be scored directly from a kickoff.
- All free kicks are indirect, unless it's a penalty.
- Goal kicks are taken from inside the penalty area and the ball must leave the area before being in play.
- Pass-ins off the touch line will replace throws-ins.
 - Dribble-ins are also allowed at U7/U8, U9 & U10.
- If indoors, ceiling contact is out of bounds and a pass-in must take place from nearest adjacent touchline.

Substitutions

- Rolling subs allowed at any stoppage with acknowledgment from the referee.

Goalkeeper Rules

- GK can handle the ball inside the penalty area only.
- GK must release the ball within 6 seconds.
- GK must wear a different color than their team.
- GK may not score a goal by using their hands; cannot throw or hit the ball directly into the opponent's goal.

Offside

- No offside rule in 5v5.

Fouls & Penalties

- Normal fouls apply: kicks, pushes, handballs, tripping, offensive language, etc.
- Penalty kicks are taken from 6yd, or the edge of the penalty area.

Player Equipment

- Shin guards are required.
- Cleats or turf shoes are allowed.
- Teams must wear matching tops or pinnies.
- No jewelry may be worn, and piercings must be removed.