



**Rec Challenge Cup – Competition Rules**



1. The Rec Challenge Cup is for Iowa Soccer member 7U through 16U recreational teams and players (also known as “recreational” teams and players). Your team must be a regular-season team that has already been registered with Iowa Soccer by a date designated by Iowa Soccer which will be prior to your team’s entry and plays in a league with this roster; it cannot be a group of players pooled together and registered with Iowa Soccer for the purpose of playing in a tournament.

## 2. Regular Season Teams and the Guest Player Allowance

The Rec Challenge Cup is targeted to and intended for regular-season teams/rosters. However, we understand that not all players or parents can commit to an entire weekend of soccer even during the “regular” season. In the interest of participation, we do have a Guest Player Allowance of up to three. Allowing for guest players is, in some cases, the difference in whether a team can enter the event. While allowing for guest players may create some competitive imbalances if coaches try to find “ringers”, not allowing guest players may mean 10 players who could play won't because there aren't enough available on their team to enter the tournament. It is in this spirit -- INCLUSION -- that we expect coaches to use the Guest Player Allowance.

There are only two circumstances under which you may use the Allowance: One, AFTER asking all players on your team if they are available and would like to play in the tournament, but some cannot. Or, two, your regular season roster is just large enough to field a team, but for a tournament (multiple games in a weekend) you need additional players for substitutes.

If using the Allowance you need to try to find guest players who are of like skill rather than seeking out those who may be further ahead with their soccer development.

Players who have any Level designation other than recreational are not eligible. Translated: if they are dual rostered to a select team, that is their primary team, and they are NOT eligible as a recreational player for the Rec Challenge Cup.

- Regular-season maximum roster sizes apply.
- Up to three guest players are allowed and may only be current Iowa Soccer-registered players
- Guest players must be recreational registered players only (a.k.a. “recreational”) and cannot also be classified as select players.
- Guest players do not need to be from your club, but must be currently registered with Iowa Soccer. Currently registered means in the current seasonal year which is fall/spring (August 1-July 31).
- You must submit the Guest Player Form in advance of the event. Iowa Soccer officials will make the final determination of eligibility.
- You are not permitted to submit the form onsite, nor are you allowed to declare guest players once onsite. **No exceptions.**
- You must verify that you have asked all players on your team to play in this event and include in the form the names of those players who will not be playing at the Rec Challenge Cup.

Iowa Soccer officials will verify all guest players and make the final determination of their eligibility. The form coaches must use to submit guest players and to verify they are following the spirit and the letter of the Guest Player Allowance will be provided to them by Iowa Soccer.

3. Depending on the number of teams entered in an age group, some age groups may be combined so that teams can still participate, rather than turning entries away. If combined, age group combinations would look only like: 7U-8U Girls or 7U-8U Co-ed; 9U-10U Girls or 9U-10U Co-ed; 11U-12U Girls or 11U-12U Co-ed; 13U-14U Girls or 13U-14U Co-ed, 15U-16U Girls or 15U-16U Co-ed. Girls would only be combined with girls and co-ed would only be combined with co-ed.

4. Players must be on the entered team's regular season roster in order to participate. Violation of this rule will result in the forfeiture of all games played by the offending team. The exception is if you are using the Guest



Player Allowance, whereby you have submitted your guest players for verification of eligibility and they have been approved by Iowa Soccer.

5. A player can only play for one (1) team and if his/her regular season team has entered the Rec Challenge Cup, that is the only team he/she may play for. Any ineligible player discovered shall cause the teams on which he/she played for to forfeit any game. An exception may be made for a player playing in two different age divisions. This exception MUST be cleared by Tournament Officials beforehand.

6. All players must have a US Youth Soccer/Iowa Soccer player pass. They are eligible for a US Youth Soccer/Iowa Soccer player pass if they have been properly registered to an Iowa Soccer member organization and rostered to a club's team in the current seasonal year. A coach must have player cards for all of his or her players on-site and available at the event. If you have been playing all season without using player passes, contact your club's registrar about obtaining them. There are no exceptions – no pass, no play!

7. Any adult who intends to be on the sideline with the team during the match in the role of coach, assistant coach, team manager or otherwise, must be on the Rec Challenge Cup roster. If the adult has properly registered with a club and passed Iowa Soccer's Risk Management procedure, the adult is eligible to be on the Rec Challenge Cup roster. If you have been coaching all season without completing Iowa Soccer's Risk Management procedure, you and your club are not in compliance and you must contact your registrar immediately about properly registering with the club, and then complete the background check procedure.

You will not be allowed on the team's sideline during the Rec Challenge Cup if you are not on the event roster. This is an issue of risk-management and there are no exceptions!

8. All teams must have a coach that is 21 years of age or older.

9. Except as noted herein, all games will be played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game.

10. Forms of the game & Game Length

*If the minimum number of players cannot be fielded within five (5) minutes after scheduled game time, then the team that cannot field the minimum number of players shall forfeit the match.*

- 9U – 10U games will be played with a maximum of seven (7) players per side, and a minimum of four (4) players per side. **7v7**
  - **2x20 minute halves (40 minutes)**
  - **Build-Out Line:**
    - The Rec Challenge Cup requires that the opponent “drops off” to the halfway line on all goal kicks to what is referred to as the “build-out line.” The defending team may not release from the half line until the goal kick has been played. Referees will be instructed to strictly enforce this rule. This rule is designed to encourage the development of building out of the back.
  - **Goalkeeper Distribution**
    - Goalkeepers are NOT allowed to punt or drop-kick.
    - If a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball, an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt or drop-kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.
    - Referees must be flexible when enforcing the 6-second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opposing players have moved behind the build-out line.
    - Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build-out line. However, the goalkeeper is allowed to put the ball into play sooner, but he or she does so accepting the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.



- **Offside:**
    - As per US Soccer mandates, the 9U-10U age groups will play with the offside law.
    - The build-out line (half line) is the offside line.
  - 11U – 12U games will be played with a maximum of nine (9) players per side, and a minimum of six (6) players per side. **9v9**
    - **2x25 minute halves (50 minutes)**
  - 13U – 14U games will be played with a maximum of eleven (11) players per side and a minimum of seven (7) players per side. **11v11**
    - **2x30 minute halves (60 minutes)**
  - 15U – 16U games will be played with a maximum of eleven (11) players per side and a minimum of seven (7) players per side. **11v11**
    - **2x30 minute halves (60 minutes)**
  - **All games will have a continuous running clock. The time will only be stopped at the referee's discretion.**
11. Maximum roster size
- 9U – 10U is 12 players
  - 11U – 12U is 16 players
  - 13U – 19U is 22 players; only 18 may be active/play in a given match and the 18 may change from match-to-match
12. Substitutions for all age groups will be unlimited. Teams, with the consent of the referee, may make substitutions at any stoppage of the game.
13. Each team shall furnish a regulation game ball to the referee prior to each match. The referee's choice of the game ball is final. 7U-8U games will use a size 3 ball. 9U-12U games will use a size 4 ball. 13U-above will use a size 5 ball.
14. Playing Conditions. Teams will be expected to play according to the schedule of games regardless of weather conditions. Only the Tournament Director may reschedule games or alter the competitive format because of inclement weather or other just cause. Games shall be considered complete if one half has been completed and play is stopped by the referee or tournament officials. When necessitated by playing conditions, the game format may be altered to include shortened games, kicks from the mark, or coin tosses. If a game is decided by kicks from the mark, the winning team's score for that game will be recorded as 1-0.
15. A coin toss will be done at the beginning of each game to determine who kicks off and/or choice of ends.
16. Each team should be prepared to provide another color uniform. It is the responsibility of the Home team to change to a different color uniform or pinnies if necessary (the Home team is always the first team listed on the schedule). The referee is the final authority on uniform colors. It is recommended to have, at the minimum, white T-shirts available. For 10U-above, the primary uniform, at least, should have easily discernible numbers on the back. Secondary uniforms may be numberless but should only be worn if there is a color conflict.
17. Standings/Point System (Used in 11U-above games only):
- Win = 3 points
  - Tie = 1 point
  - Loss = 0 points
18. Team Divisions/Advancement
- **All 10U-below divisions**  
The emphasis is on participation and therefore scores and standings are not kept.
    - 9U and 10U Co-ed (Boys) and Girls play both Saturday and Sunday



- **All 11U-above divisions**

Group play games (a.k.a. round-robin) may end in a tie; no overtime will be played during group play.

- In age divisions where there are four teams, all teams will play each other in round-robin play. The top-two point getters then advance to a Final match to determine the Champion.
- In age divisions where there are five teams, all teams will play each other in round-robin play. The two teams with the most points from round-robin play will be declared Champion (most points) and Finalist (second most points), respectively.
- In age divisions where there are six teams there will be two groups of three teams each. All teams will play each other within their group, plus one cross-over game in round-robin play. The team with the highest points total in each group will advance to play in the championship match.
- In age divisions where there are eight teams, the teams will be divided into two groups with four teams each. Each team will play the other teams in their group. The team with the highest points total in each group will advance to play in the championship match.
- In age groups where there are 10 teams there will be three groups (Group A with four teams, Group B with three teams and Group C with three teams). In Group A all teams will play the teams in Group A. In Group B and Group C, teams will play against the two teams in their Group and one cross-bracket game. The three group winners will advance to the semi-finals along with the best 2<sup>nd</sup> place finisher (known as the wildcard) in any of the groups. The semifinals will be Group A Winner vs Group B Winner and Group C Winner v Wildcard. If the Wildcard comes from Group C, the semifinals will be Group A Winner v Group C Winner and Group B winner v Wildcard.
- In an age group where there are 11 teams there will be three groups (Group A with five teams, Group B with three teams, and Group C with three teams). In Group A, all teams will play each other in round-robin play. The two teams with the most points from round-robin play will be declared Champion (most points) and Finalist (second most points), respectively. For Groups B and C, all teams will play each other in round-robin play. All teams will play each other within their group, plus one cross-over game in round-robin play. The team with the highest points total in each group will advance to play in the championship match. There will be 2 Champions and 2 Finalists for groups of 11 teams.
- In age divisions where there are 12 teams, the teams will be divided into three groups with four teams each. Each team will play three round-robin games. The team with the highest points total in each group plus a "Wildcard" team (the next highest points total team of ALL remaining teams after the top three) will advance to play in the semifinals. The winners of the semifinals will advance to play in the championship match.
- In age groups where there are 14 teams there will be four groups (A, B, C, D). There will be four teams in A and B Groups and three teams each in C and D Groups. In the A and B Groups all teams will play the teams in their respective bracket in round-robin play. In the C and D Groups the teams will play the other two teams in their bracket plus one cross-bracket game. Semi-Finals will be Winner of A vs. Winner of C and Winner of B vs. Winner of D. If any teams have the same point total, then the tiebreaker criteria (see Rule 19) will be used to determine the final standings.
- In age groups where there are 16 teams there will be four groups (A, B, C, D). There will be four teams in each group and teams will play three group games in round-robin play. The winner of each group advances to the semifinals: Winner of A v Winner of B; Winner of C v Winner of D. If any teams have the same point total, then the tiebreaker criteria (see Rule 19) will be used to determine the final standings.



- Semifinal and/or Final matches must end with a winner. If matches are tied at the end of regulation in a semifinal or final, Kicks From the Mark (KFTM) will be used to determine a winner. The KFTM procedure is in Rule #21.
19. Tie Breakers. If any teams have the same point total, the following will be used as a tiebreaker, in order.
1. Head to head competition (not used if more than 2 teams are tied).
  2. Goals scored minus goals allowed (maximum of 5 goal differential per game, example - a score of 9-1 would be calculated as 6-1).
  3. Most shut outs.
  4. Fewest goals allowed.
  5. Kicks from the mark.
20. In the event that Kicks From the Mark must be used to determine a winner, the format will be as follows:
- Each team will select five (5) players to kick. Only players on the field at the conclusion of the game may be selected to kick;
  - Teams will alternate (the first team to kick will be determined by the referee's coin toss)
  - If the score remains tied after five (5) kicks, the teams will alternate kicks with the remaining players that were on the field at the end of play, one at a time, until a winner is determined;
  - A team goalkeeper can be changed with the referee's permission after each shot.
21. Any team that withdraws from a match or fails to play a match will forfeit that game and the following game at a score of 3-0 for each game.
22. Following each match, the score of the match will be reported to the Administration Tent and published in Demosphere. The referees' decisions are final. There will be no protests and results/games will stand as played.
23. Any player who receives a red card will be expelled for the rest of the game and will be suspended from playing in the next scheduled game. Any coach that receives an expulsion from a game shall be expelled for the remainder of that game and the next game. **Any spectator that is expelled from a game shall not be allowed to be on the premises of the Hunziker Youth Sports Complex, including the parking lot, for the remainder of the tournament.**
24. Any person involved in a fight will be immediately expelled from the tournament area for the remainder of the tournament. Any coach or player expelled in this manner will not be allowed to participate during the remainder of the tournament.
25. Every player and coach is participating at his or her own risk.
26. All coaches are responsible for the conduct of their fans throughout the tournament. Abusive language and actions by spectators will not be tolerated. The referee has the authority to verbally warn, caution, or send away the team coaches for the conduct of the spectators.
27. Every team is requested to help ensure that the field and the surroundings are left clean and litter-free.
28. Alcohol in any form will not be allowed on any playing field, adjacent to the playing field or parking lot areas.
29. Withdraw Policy. The tournament will refund entry fees up to the date entry closes. After this period refund will be left to the discretion of the Tournament Director. After schedules are finalized there will be no refund of the entry fee if a team withdraws.



30. Amendment to the Rules. The Tournament Director and/or Tournament Committee have the right to modify these Rules as they deem to be necessary throughout the tournament.

31. Decisions made by the Tournament Director are final.

32. Tournament Officials, field hosts and referees shall have the authority to remove any person from the tournament for unsporting conduct.

33. Cancellation/refund policy: The Tournament Director shall have the full and final authority concerning the cancellation, delay, change of time, or any other alteration of games that may be required due to the weather or emergencies. If the tournament is cancelled due to inclement weather, the following applies:

- No games played = 80% of entry fee.
- 1 game played = 50% of entry fee.
- 2 games played = 25% of entry fee.
- 3 games played or failure to play semi-final and/or final games = no refund.
- If semi-final or final games are cancelled, Champion and runner-up will be determined on points standing after preliminary games.

34. Weather: The Tournament Director will make the decision to clear the field with the safety of all participants – players, fans, referees, tournament officials -- as the primary concern. It is not up to referees to make this decision.

- Multiple horn blasts, followed by referees blowing their whistles to stop play, will indicate play has been suspended.
- When the Tournament Director has indicated play has been stopped via the horn blasts, participants are expected to seek shelter immediately inside their vehicles.
- Do not leave the premises unless and/or until directed to do so by the Tournament Director or tournament officials. Communication will be between the Tournament Director and the contact listed on the team's entry, who is charged with relaying the information to his/her coach and team.
- Multiple horn blasts will indicate that play will resume and participants should return to the field they left when play was suspended.

If the delay is lengthy and significantly affects the remainder of the day's schedule, any decisions made regarding the schedule will be relayed by the Tournament Director to the contact person listed on the team's entry, who is then responsible for getting that information to his/her coach and team. Game lengths may be shortened. Tournament officials ask for and appreciate your patience and cooperation in weather situations.

35. Sportsmanship/For the Good of the Game

Iowa Soccer tournament officials reserve the right to make certain decisions regarding the competition, as he/she deems necessary, for the good of the game, in order to improve the game and/or to protect the participants. Such decisions shall include but are not limited to: postponement or cancellation of games; rescheduling of games; changing of fields; changing of sites; fair play; unsporting behavior.

In the interest of fair play and good sporting behavior, conduct by coaches, team officials and players that calls the game or competition into disrepute is prohibited. It is expected that all participants will participate in good faith and fairly. If it is determined that a particular action by a team or any of its players, coaches, team officials or spectators is deemed unacceptable for any reason, the team may be reprimanded, disqualified, sanctioned, and/or face forfeiture of one or more games. Examples of such action include but are not limited to: knowingly violating the Guest Player Allowance, suspected forfeiture or otherwise determining the outcome of a game with the design or purpose of controlling the advancement of any team from its own group or any other group, intentionally losing a game, or unnecessarily running a score up. To be clear, this is not an all-inclusive list. Iowa Soccer tournament officials do not subscribe to the notion that that which is not expressly prohibited is, therefore, permitted.

