



Spring 2025 Tournament Rules

A Round Robin tournament will be played. The First Preliminary Round Games will be scheduled for play on May 10th. as either a Home or Away game. The Second and Third Preliminary Round Games will be scheduled for play on Saturday, May 17th at a common site yet to be determined. The Championship games will be scheduled for play on Sunday, May 18th at the same common site.

Once schedules are published, the Preliminary Round Games on Saturday, May 17th, and the Championship games on Sunday, May 18th, WILL NOT be re-scheduled.

PLEASE NOTE: Teams must notify the MSSA Administrators if they do not intend to participate. A team that does not notify MSSA (email preferred) of their intention to drop out of the tournament by 11:59pm on the date specified on the webpage and MSSA agenda, will incur a \$200 fine. If that team, or the League through which they are registered, does not pay the fine, they will NOT BE ALLOWED to play in MSSA in subsequent seasons until the fine is paid. If a team cannot participate in the tournament, they will still get their t-shirts.

Noisemakers

The use of artificial noisemakers, i.e. air horns, vuvuzelas, tambourines, megaphones, bells, whistles, bugles, or other such devices are prohibited during MSSA tournament games by players, coaches or spectators. Referees may use their discretion as to whether noisemakers, visual materials or use of drones interfere with the game they are officiating.

Division Placement will be based on the results of the regular season games for which scores have been reported. Divisions will consist of 8 teams divided into 2 "Groups" of 4 teams. Depending on the number of teams participating, Divisions may be formed with a total of other than eight teams. Teams within each Division will be randomly assigned to a "Group" within the Division. A round robin will be played among the teams within each Group to determine which team in each Group advances to the finals.

1. All games will begin at the scheduled time unless it is delayed because of an overrun of the previous game. Added time is permissible in cases of serious injuries, excessive delays by one of the teams, or outside interruptions to the normal run of play. If a team is not prepared to start the game at the scheduled time, the game will be declared a forfeit.
2. If one team does not appear for their game, the game will be declared a forfeit.
3. **If a team forfeits one game, they forfeit all games.**

However, once a team forfeits a game, that team may play the remaining scheduled games provided that playing a game does not result in their opponent having to play two games on a given day when other teams in their "Group" play only one game that day, unless the coach of that team agrees to play the game. If a team forfeits a game, they may not advance to either a Semi-Final Game or Championship Game.

4. The score of all forfeited games will be recorded as 3-0.
5. The Mercy Rule, as defined for regular season play, WILL NOT BE APPLICABLE to tournament games.

6. Players may NOT play on more than one team. If a violation of this rule can be documented, the result will be a forfeiture of all games.
7. Players must be on the team's regular season roster to qualify for play in the tournament. If a violation of this rule can be documented, the result will be a forfeiture of all Tournament Games.
8. A maximum of three (3) coaches are allowed on the bench.
9. A player, coach, bench personnel, or spectator that has been disqualified from a contest shall be barred from participating in the next contest.
10. **Certified referees are to be used for all games.** ADULT referees are preferred. If youth referees are used, they must be at least two years older than the players on the field. Both a three-person and two-person officiating system is acceptable. In a three-person system, the most experienced (or adult) referee should be the center.
 - a. **First Preliminary Round Games must be played with at least one certified referee officiating. In any case, the first preliminary game, scheduled for May 10th, must be played PRIOR TO the second-round game.**
 - i. If two referees report for the rescheduled game, a two-person officiating system will be used.
 - ii. If only one referee is available, a three-person officiating system will be used with a center referee and two club linespersons. The home team will provide one club person and the visiting team will provide one club linesperson.
 1. Each coach should explain the circumstances to their respective parents and advise them that, if in the opinion of the referee, the players, coaches or spectators can no longer be properly controlled, the game will be suspended.
 2. If the game is suspended, the MSSA Administrator, after consultation with the referee and the respective MSSA League Coordinators, will determine the outcome of the game.
11. The First Preliminary Round Games will be scheduled to be played on Saturday, May 10th. However, these games may be played any time prior to the Second and Third Preliminary Round Games on Saturday, May 17th, **provided both coaches agree**. If both coaches cannot agree on a date other than the scheduled date for these games, they will be played as scheduled.
 - a. If one of the teams cannot play the game on the re-scheduled date, for whatever reason, they will forfeit the game.
 - b. If both coaches do agree on a date other than the initially scheduled date, but the game cannot be played prior to Saturday, May 17th - **due to inclement weather** - the team that could not play the game on the originally scheduled date, for whatever reason, will forfeit the game.
12. The HOME TEAM for the First Preliminary Round Game must provide a field and referees for the game. The Home Team IS TO REPORT the game score to the MSSA Office following the game (614-793-8320 or MSSA@DublinSoccer.net). On Saturday, May 17th, the WINNING COACH should report the score to the site administrator as soon as possible after the game.
13. All Preliminary Round games will be played in two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves. Preliminary Round games that end in a tie, will remain a tie. Both teams would earn one point.

14. If a Semi-Final Game is required, it will be played in two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves. In the case of a tie at the end of regulation time, the winner will be determined by a shootout.
15. All Championship Games will be played in two (2) thirty (30) minute halves. In cases of a tie at the end of regulation time; a ten-minute, GOLDEN GOAL, over-time period will be played. A coin toss will be conducted prior to the start of the over-time period. The visiting team will call the toss. The winner of the coin toss will choose which goal to defend. The first team to score wins the match. If the score remains tied at the end of the over-time period; a second ten-minute, GOLDEN GOAL, over-time period will be played. There will be no break between the over-time periods. Teams will switch goals for the second over-time period and the team that did not kick off for the first over-time period will kick off for the second over-time period. The first team to score wins the match. If there remains a tie at the end of the second over-time period, the winner will be determined by a shootout.
16. In the event of thunder or lightning, the game will be suspended for 30-minutes. Each occurrence will serve as the new baseline for the 30-minute suspension.
17. If a FIRST PRELIMINARY ROUND GAME must be suspended because of thunder and lightning delays, it will be declared an official game if the first half has been completed. If the first half has not been completed, the game will be resumed as soon as practically possible and will be restarted from the time the game was suspended. THE GAME MUST BE RE-SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION PRIOR TO SATURDAY, May 17th.
18. If a 2nd or 3rd Preliminary Round Game must be suspended because of thunder or lightning delays, the Field Commissioner may declare it an official game if the first half has been completed. If the first half has not been completed, the game will be resumed as soon as practically possible following the thunder and lightning delay and will be restarted from the time the game was suspended. Upon conclusion of the first half, the Field Commissioner may declare it an official game to resume the playing of the remaining scheduled games.
 - a. The Field Commissioner may shorten the length of the remaining games to get all of the 2nd or 3rd Preliminary Round Games played.
 - b. If all of the scheduled 2nd or 3rd Preliminary Round Games cannot be played, they will not be re-scheduled for a later date and the tournament will be terminated.

Tournament Scoring

Three (3) points will be awarded for a win. One (1) point will be awarded for a tie. The team with the most points, within the Group, will advance to the Finals.

Two-Team Tie-Breaker Procedures

In the event of a tie between two teams, within a Group, the following tie breaker rules will be applied to determine which team advances to the Finals.

1. **Head-to-Head Competition.** If the tied teams played each other, the winner of that game will advance. If the tied teams did not play each other, or if the score of that game was a tie, the following criteria will be applied.
2. **Fewest Number of Goals Allowed.** The team with the fewest number of goals allowed will advance. If the tied teams allowed the same number of goals, the following criteria will be applied.

3. **Goal Differential** (goals scored minus goals allowed). When determining goal differential, the maximum goal differential that will be allowed for a single game will be three. The team with the greater goal differential will advance.
4. **Coin toss.** If the tied teams have the same goal differential, a coin toss will be conducted to determine which team advances.

More Than Two-Team Tie-Breaker Procedures

If there is a tie between more than two teams, within a group, the following tie breaker rules will be applied to determine which team advances:

1. Rule #2, under the two-team tie breaker procedures, (Fewest Number of Goals Allowed) will be the first rule applied to determine which team shall advance.
2. After Step #1 above, if TWO TEAMS remain tied;
 - a. Rule #1, under the two-team tie breaker procedures, (Head-to-Head Competition) will be applied to determine which team shall advance.
 - b. If the score of that game was a tie; Rule #3, under the two-team tie breaker procedures, (Goal Differential - goals scored minus goals allowed) under the two-team tie breaker procedures, will be applied to determine which team shall advance.
 - c. If the tied teams have the same goal differential, a coin toss will be conducted to determine which team advances.
3. After Step #1 above, if MORE THAN TWO TEAMS remain tied;
 - a. Rule #3, under the two-team tie breaker procedures, (Goal Differential - goals scored minus goals allowed) will be applied to determine which team shall advance.
 - b. *If two teams remain tied;* Rule #1, under the two-team tie breaker procedures, (Head-to-Head Competition) will be applied to determine which team shall advance.
 - i. If the score of that game was a tie, a coin toss will be conducted to determine which team advances.
 - c. *If more than two teams remain tied;* a coin toss will be conducted to determine which team advances.
 - i. Team #1 will have a coin toss with Team #2. The winner of that coin toss will then have a coin toss with Team #3. The winner of that coin toss will advance.

Shoot Out Procedures

Shall be applied, if necessary, for Semi-Final and Championship Games Only

1. Players do not have to be in the game at the end of regulation time to participate in the shootout.
2. The head referee will choose a goal at which all the kicks from the penalty line will be taken.
3. Each coach will select any five players (except those who may have been disqualified from the match) to take the kicks.
4. A coin toss shall be held. The Visiting Team will call the toss. The team winning the toss shall kick first.

5. Teams will alternate kicks. There is no follow-up on the kick.
6. The defending team may change goalkeepers prior to each penalty kick.
7. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring the greater number of kicks shall be declared the winner.
8. If the score remains tied after the first five kicks, a Golden Goal round will be conducted.
9. Each coach will pick five different players to participate in the Golden Goal round.
10. The team that took the first kick in the first round will take the first kick in the Golden Goal round.
11. If the first team to take a kick scores a goal, and the second team to kick scores a goal, the shoot-out continues to the next set of players until one team scores a goal and the other team does not.
12. If the score remains tied after five kicks, a second Golden Goal round will be conducted. Each coach will select any five players to participate in the second Golden Goal round.
13. The above procedure will be followed until a winner is declared.

- End -