

Springfield Men's Soccer League (SMSL) Rules

1. GENERAL

- a. The purpose of the Springfield Men's Soccer League (SMSL) is to provide recreation and competition for soccer players and teams.
- b. Each Board member, captain, player, referee and referee assistant is responsible for familiarizing himself/herself with the League rules.
- c. The Springfield Men's Soccer League is not responsible for loss of property or injury suffered by any player, referee, assistant referee, or spectator due to participation in or involvement with the Springfield Men's Soccer League.
- d. Rules, bylaws, and any and all revisions, shall generally be available on the SMSL's Web site.

2. LEAGUE OPERATIONS

- a. The League will strive to play two ten game seasons in each calendar year, a Spring season and a Fall season. Each season the Board will dictate the method of a playoff (if any) to determine a regular season champion. Teams may be divided into divisions or otherwise organized at the Board's discretion. Following the regular season, there may be an open tournament for league teams. The Board may reduce the number of games played in any season or tournament due to financial or other considerations. The Board will provide a schedule of games to the team captains and/or post a schedule on any SMSL Web site.
- b. Any Board member wishing to amend League rules, for other than typographical or grammatical reasons, must present the proposed amendment to the Board in writing. Suggestions for rule changes by any player should be directed by email to the Board at board@smslonline.com. A majority of Board members voting shall be required to pass any motion or to amend these rules.
- c. The Board shall strive to recognize the achievements of League teams and League players by awarding trophies, plaques, or other such items of appreciation.
- d. Volunteers are a vital part of the success of the League. The Board shall encourage all League members to take volunteer actions for the betterment of the League including but not limited to preserving fields of play and cleaning up after league activities. In this spirit, the teams playing the first game in a given day are responsible for setting up the nets and corner flags if needed. The teams playing the last game are responsible for taking down the nets and corner flags after the last game of the day and properly placing the equipment in storage. In order to facilitate League operations the Board may select and appoint team captains, field marshalls, and a referee coordinator.
- e. Team captains will be selected by the Board to balance player participation and team competitiveness. The Board shall select team captains for any season from the pool of participants who request to be a captain. Qualifications for being a captain shall include, but not be limited to: past history of league participation, past history of being a captain, communication skills, and leadership qualities. Players who desire to be captains should not do so merely to maximize their own playing time. Captains are responsible for setting the formation to be played, dictating the tactics to be used, controlling their players and ensuring substitutions that not only enhance team competitiveness but also guarantee that all players get at least a minimum of playing time for each game.
- f. The team captain is responsible for insuring that all players get a minimum of 30 minutes playing time in each regular season game. The only exceptions to this rule are for absence, injury or late arrival for a game. In the event a player does not receive 30 minutes playing time in a regular season game and wishes to file a complaint, the player will send an email to the Board President indicating lack of playing time. The Board President will then contact the corresponding captain indicating that a complaint has been filed. The Field Marshall for the next game involving the

complaining player will monitor playing time and attempt to work with the captain to correct any observed deficiencies. Failure to abide by the minimum playing time rule may result in disciplinary action. Playing time during playoff and tournament play is at the discretion of the captain with no minimum guarantee of time.

g. Field marshalls shall be designated by the Board or the Chairman acting for the Board. Field marshalls shall assist the Referee in maintaining order; collect game cards from the Referee and appropriately transmit the results; manage, distribute, and collect game balls for to each game; make binding interpretations of the current FIFA rules and/or the SMSL rules should the need arise. The League will provide Field Marshalls with a game schedule, a first aid kit, and other such information and items as may be deemed necessary.

h. A Referee Coordinator may be appointed by the Board President and confirmed by the SMSL Board. The Referee Coordinator is responsible for selecting and scheduling all Referees and Assistant Referees. The Referee Coordinator shall develop a schedule for all Referees and Assistant Referees for the entire season. As scheduling permits, the referee schedule should be provided to the Board Secretary and posted to the League website. The Referee Coordinator is responsible for providing a current copy of the SMSL rules and regulations to each referee before they officiate their first SMSL game.

i. Forfeits are financially draining to the League. Should a captain know that his team will not have sufficient players available to play a game, the captain shall notify the Referee Coordinator so that Referees will not be scheduled for said game. The Referee Coordinator will notify the Board Secretary and the captain of the opposing team of the planned forfeit. Any team that accumulates two forfeits throughout the regular season may be eliminated from participating in the regular season playoffs and/or the open tournament.

j. Team standings shall be computed based on game results. Standing points are awarded in the following manner:

- i. Three points are awarded for a win or a win by forfeit.
- ii. One point is awarded for a tie.
- iii. No points are awarded for a loss or a loss by forfeit.

Two goals shall be awarded to the winning team for forfeit victories. The tie-breaking procedure shall be sequentially as follows until a tie is broken:

- (1) Most Points
- (2) Winner of Head-to-Head Competition
- (3) Most Wins
- (4) Highest Goal Differential (Goals for minus Goal against)
- (5) Winner of Coin Toss

k. Sponsors are a vital part of the financial viability of the Springfield Men's Soccer League. All League Members are encouraged to help identify and recruit sponsors. Benefits to sponsors and levels of sponsorship may be determined by the Board as needed on a by season basis. The following levels and benefits will serve as a base for Board consideration:

- i. \$250 level- Team named after sponsor, sponsor name/logo on team shirt
- ii. \$500 level- Team named after sponsor, sponsor name/logo on team shirt, ability to place up to 3 players on sponsors team.
- iii. \$1,000 level- League naming rights, sponsor name/logo on all shirts, access to the mailing list of League players, other sponsor desired benefits as negotiated

3. TEAMS AND TEAM FORMATION

-Registration

a. Persons wishing to play in any season of the SMSL must register with the season Registrar. The use of an alias, or incorrect name, on the application shall be sufficient cause for the Registrar to drop the player from the draft or from a team roster should a player be selected in the draft.

b. Players must be 17 years of age to compete in the League.

- c. The registration fee for a team captain will be one-half the amount for a player.
- d. Players must provide all required registration information and agreed upon fees to the Registrar by the registration deadline to participate in the draft.
- e. Refunds of the registration fee or any part thereof must be requested in writing to the Registrar for that season. Approval for a refund shall be for cause such as injury or relocation and must be approved by vote of the Board. Refunds generally will not be given due to player dissatisfaction with his/her team and/or captain or because a player was not selected to a desired team.

-Draft

- f. Each season a player selection draft will be held at a time and place determined by the Board. Once a time and place has been determined, the Board and all captains will be notified should it be necessary to change either the time or the place for the draft. The draft will be conducted by sequential rounds with the intent of placing all properly registered players on a team.
- g. At a minimum, three Board members will conduct the draft: one to be in charge of the round draws, one to transcribe player selections to teams and one to track player selections against the season registration list.
- h. Prior to the draft the Board will hold a closed door meeting with the team captains selected for the season. The meeting will be intended to ensure that captains are aware of league rules and draft procedures.
- i. Should there be an association between a sponsor, team, or player, a player may be placed on a particular team should he/she so desire. Said player will then be placed in the draft selection round based on majority agreement of the captains. The Chair shall have final authority regarding the placement of any player. Only one player will be placed on any team unless approved in advance by a majority of the captains for a season.
- j. The draft will be conducted by blind draw by each captain for order of pick in each round. Each draft round will commence with a blind draw for order and the draft will continue until all teams are filled or all players registered are drafted. A captain will not be eligible to draft during a round in which he has an assigned player.
- k. The maximum number of players on a team in each season shall be set by the Board prior to the start of the draft.

-Player Replacement

- l. If after a player has been drafted for a season and prior to the first game it is determined the player will be unable to play for the entire season for good cause, the player may be replaced at the discretion of the Board.
- m. Teams needing replacement players shall make such needs known to the Registrar at least five days prior to the start of a season. The Registrar shall provide a list of players, if any, who have expressed a desire to play in the League for the current season but did not participate in the initial season draft.
- n. Player replacement will occur as follows:
 - i. The team captain or representative of each team desiring to replace players will draw random tokens or other items to determine replacement order.
 - ii. Team representatives will pick from the list of available replacement players in draw order until all teams are full.
 - iii. The player replacement procedure must occur no later than 5 days prior to the start of a season, e.g. by Tuesday for a season starting on a Sunday.
- o. Teams who have selected players in a player replacement procedure who then subsequently indicate they will not play for the season will not be granted a second replacement procedure. In the event of such an occurrence, teams

needing additional replacement players will be required to wait until the Supplemental Draft, except in extraordinary circumstances as determined by the Board.

-Player Trading Procedure

p. Teams can trade drafted players within 48 hours of the initial season draft.

q. For a trade to occur, each of the following conditions must be met:

- i. Each trading captain must agree to the trade.
- ii. The Board President must agree to each trade. The Board President may overrule captains and disapprove a trade for any reason including opinions about League and team balance and composition.
- iii. Trades must be on a one for one, player for player basis.
- iv. Teams are limited to 3 trades per season.

r. Inducements for trades such as monetary compensation and unethical trading behavior such as concealment of a player's true identity are strictly forbidden and may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension for any party involved.

-Supplemental Draft

s. The purpose of the supplemental draft is to allow a captain to replace players who are unable to participate in SMSL games due to injury, poor attendance, or other appropriate reasons after the start of any season. A supplemental draft will be held if one or more of the captains request it and players have registered for the supplemental draft. The supplemental draft will occur after game 5 and before game 6 of the season. The registration fee for a player entering the supplemental draft is \$10 less than the full registration fee. The fee must be paid in full to the Registrar before the player can be drafted. The Registrar will provide a list of players registered for the supplemental draft to all captains requesting to draft players.

t. Each team wishing to participate in the supplemental draft shall construct a drop list of players it wishes to drop prior to the draft. The registrar will have the final authority to approve or disapprove players on a team's drop list. The team captain is responsible for notifying a player if his/her name is placed on a drop list. The Registrar will also contact the player to be dropped to confirm the player understands he/she is being dropped and why. Drop lists shall be provided to the Registrar prior to a date and time selected by the Board sufficiently in advance of the supplemental draft to allow the Registrar to verify the player drop status. A player may be added to a drop list for the following reasons:

- i. Poor attendance. Poor attendance is defined as missing 4 or more of the first 5 games.
- ii. Voluntarily resigning from the team.
- iii. Other reasons approved by the registrar.

u. Players may not be placed on the drop list due to disciplinary suspension or penalty. Players who have been suspended for the rest of a season by the time of the supplemental draft, for example, must remain on the roster of their original team for supplemental draft purposes. Dropped players may not play on any team for the remainder of the season, including postseason tournaments.

v. The supplemental draft will occur as follows:

- i. Each team drafting may elect to participate or not participate in each draft round. Teams are not required to draft players and may pass on making a selection in any round.
- ii. The team lowest in the combined standings ("lowest" is determined in order by lowest points, fewest wins, highest goal differential, head to head losses, and coin flip) shall choose first followed by other teams in lowest to highest standings order. The original drafted rank of any player(s) dropped by a team shall not be a factor in determining that team's supplemental draft pick order.
- iii. Each team participating in a draft round shall be entitled to one player selection per round. After each team in a round has selected a player, there shall be additional rounds conducted in lowest to highest standings order for the participating teams for as long as any team wishes to participate and there are available players to draft.

- iv. The number of new players a captain may draft must be less than or equal to the number of players on the drop list for his/her team

-Rosters

w. Players can participate on only one team within the SMSL. Following the initial and supplemental drafts, team rosters will be posted to the SMSL website or updated as needed. No player can be added to a team roster after the draft except in accordance with the procedures for a Player Replacement, Player Trading, or the Supplemental Draft.

x. A team shall forfeit any game in which a non-rostered player is used.

y. Every rostered player can be asked to present, in person, to a Field Marshall or Board member a photo ID. Such ID may be an Illinois Drivers License, an ISA card, or equivalent. The person requesting the ID will match the picture with the player to identify the player and make a determination of player status and eligibility.

z. A player that leaves a team after the draft is not eligible to play on any team in the SMSL for the remainder of the season.

4. THE GAME

a. Play will be governed by the rules set forth in the official current version of the FIFA Laws of the Game except as specified herein. The Referee has total authority to determine compliance with FIFA Laws of the Game. Failure to comply with FIFA Laws of the Game may cause a player to be ineligible to participate in the match. In accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, the decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final, and not subject to appeal. The SMSL will provide all teams with matching numbered jerseys. The Referee shall check uniforms and equipment for compliance with FIFA Laws of the Game.

b. League games shall consist of two 45-minute running clock halves with ten minutes between halves, except in accordance with Rules 10f & 10h. Time shall be kept by the Referee who shall be the final authority. There is no overtime in regular season play. Overtime for playoffs and tournament play will consist of 2 x 10 minute golden goal periods followed by penalty kicks, if necessary. Penalty kicks shall be completed as one set of 5 kicks for each team followed by pairs of sudden victory kicks. All players taking kicks must have been on the field at the end of play. No repeat kickers allowed until all eligible players have taken a kick. The only allowable substitution in penalty kicks is for an injured goalkeeper.

c. The minimum number of players to start the match is seven (7). If a team cannot field the minimum number of players within a 10-minute grace period, the referee will call a forfeit. The game clock will start at game time and the grace period included in the game's first half.

d. A team may substitute at any throw in, any goal kick, a team's own corner kick, after a goal is scored by either team, or for an injured player at an injury stoppage. A player receiving a yellow card must be immediately substituted.

e. The Referee will keep the official match results and provide these results on a game card to the Field Marshall assigned to that game. A minimum of two officials will be scheduled for each match. A USSF licensed referee who is not registered to play in the league will be preferred to officiate as Referee. Anyone can be an Assistant Referee. If a certified non-league Referee is not available, an alternate person, including a current league player, may Referee provided that both team captains agree. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Board President will reschedule the game.

f. There shall be no arguing with officials or disputing their decisions. Unsportsmanlike conduct, unnecessary roughness, abusive or inappropriate language, or any other such conduct will not be tolerated and shall be dealt with by the Referee(s) as they deem appropriate. Protests of matches will be considered only due to extremely compelling

reasons. The Referee and Field Marshal must be notified during the match of the protest and the Board President must be notified no later than the day following the game.

g. Any player that accumulates three (3) yellow cards during the course of a season is prohibited from playing the next game following the third yellow card.

h. Any player receiving a red card must immediately leave the field of play for the remainder of the game. That player is prohibited from playing the next game following the red card. Any player that accumulates three (3) red cards during the course of a season is prohibited from playing for the remainder of the season, including playoffs and tournament games.

i. Yellow and red cards accumulated during the regular season are counted separately from those accumulated during playoff and tournament play. However, any penalties associated with accumulated yellow/red cards will carry over into playoff and tournament play.

-Disciplinary Procedures

j. Additional actions may be taken by the Board either in support of Referee decisions or otherwise with regard to any incident of abusive or inappropriate language or assault or conduct by a player or players before, during, or after a SMSL game that is deemed to be of a nature serious enough to require action above and beyond the issuance of an in game yellow or red card

k. Anyone (i.e., Referee, Assistant Referee, Field Marshal, captain or player) witnessing conduct of a nature that they believe to be serious enough to require discipline beyond the issuance of a yellow/red card may contact the Board with a description of the conduct. The level of detail in the report including such items as the date and time of the conduct, player(s) involved and a description of the conduct, will be an important factor in the treatment of the report.

l. The Board or a Board Committee will review any reports and determine whether any additional penalties should be issued to the player(s) involved. The Board or a Board Committee shall communicate any decisions regarding an incident to the individual who filed reported the incident, the players(s) involved and the corresponding captain(s) of the player(s) involved.

m. A player that is suspended for more than the one game, for reasons other than yellow/red card accumulation, can appeal the Board's or Board Committee's disciplinary decision either in person, in writing or by email within 1 week of the date the Board or Board Committee issues the decision. The Board will schedule a meeting to hear and rule on the appeal within a reasonable amount of time after receiving the request for an appeal. The Board shall communicate any ruling on the appeal to the individual who wrote the initial complaint and the player(s) involved, and the rest of the SMSL Board.

n. The following table lists examples of violations and the penalties/suspensions that can be assessed to a player. The list is not all-inclusive, and is provided solely as a guideline for the Board and Board Committees:

<u>Violation</u>	<u>Penalty – Suspension</u>
Excessively abusive or inappropriate language or persistent violations	1 game to 1 season
Assault on a player, coach, or spectator by a player	1 season to 1 year
Assault on an official by a player, coach, or spectator	5 years +

o. A player that has been suspended from the league for 5 years or more can petition the committee to be allowed back into the league. The player must serve a minimum of 3 years before the first opportunity for a petition.

p. The Board and Board Committees shall strive to make discipline be consistent between seasons and similar violations.

-Cancellation/Postponement of Games

- q. The Referee or Chairman can cancel or suspend a scheduled game or an in progress game due to weather conditions, safety concerns or other reasons.
- r. A game suspended after the start of the second half can be resumed at the point of suspension and played to termination in a normal fashion on the same day on which the game was suspended or it can be terminated and deemed a completed game pursuant to decision by the League.
- s. A game suspended during the first half can be resumed at the point of suspension and played to termination in a normal fashion on the same day on which the game was suspended. A game can be suspended more than one time.
- t. A game suspended prior to the start of the second half which cannot be resumed on the same day, or in a reasonable time frame at the sole determination of the Chairman, shall be considered cancelled and not to have occurred. Such a cancelled game may be rescheduled and played from the beginning or it may be eliminated from the game schedule at the discretion of the Board.
- u. All decisions concerning canceling or postponing a scheduled game are at the sole discretion of the Chairman, including determining the time and place of any rescheduled game.

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