



Premier Copa

2025 TOURNAMENT RULES

Version 1.0 (revised 6.1.2024)

1. Registration

- a. For check-in to the tournament (via online [for US teams] or in person check-in [for International team]) the team is required to provide the team's official roster or player passes/cards, tournament roster (in GotSport), photos of players (in GotSport), and appropriate Guest Player paperwork. Also, the team must have available for presentation upon request during the tournament: passports or copy of birth certificates, insurance forms and any required (by home association) parental permission slips and travel permission forms.
- b. For teams from the United States:
 - i. The Players must present picture identification cards issued by the team's Federation Organization Member (USYS, AYSO, other).
- c. For a team coming from any other nation:
 - i. Players must present passports at registration or, if from a nation that the United States does not require passport, proof of entry into the United States that is required by the United States.
 - ii. Teams are required to have and present player picture identification cards.
- d. If required, the team shall have a completed form from its Provincial or National Association approving the team's participation in the tournament.

2. Team Rosters and Guest Players

- a. U90C tournaments are sanctioned through US Club Soccer, but we accept official team rosters from US Club Soccer, SAY, USSSA, AYSO, and USYSA State Associations (NTSSA, STYSA, OSA, etc.).
- b. Teams must be registered through one of the above organizations and all team paperwork must be from the same organization. *The official team roster that a team submits as part of online or in-person check-in MUST be certified through one of these organizations.* More information about which documents are required can be found at www.u90c.com



Example: Teams MAY NOT mix USYSA (NTSSA, STYSA, OSA, etc.) official rosters with US Club Soccer Player Loan forms or vice versa.

- c. All players, including guest players, must be listed on the team's online GotSport roster prior to check-in.
- d. A player may play on two different teams, provided ALL of the following requirements are met:
 - i. Teams are in two different age groups,
 - ii. Player is age eligible for both age groups,
 - iii. Player is listed on the GotSport roster for both teams prior to check-in.
- e. There is no limit to the number of guest players a team may bring, provided they do not exceed the roster maximum for their age group and have required paperwork/documents for each guest player. More information about which paperwork/documents are required can be found at www.u90c.com

3. Player Jerseys/Numbers

- a. Each team must have numbered jerseys for all players, no two players may have the same number.
- b. Player names, primary and alternative jersey numbers must match the roster posted in the team's GotSport account. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by a U90C representative.
- c. Goalkeepers are not required to have a number on their jersey, but should be identified by number on the team's GotSport roster. Goalkeeper jersey must be of a different color than field players on both teams.
- d. Jerseys must be same primary color, but do not have to be of identical style. If the referee orders a jersey change due to color confusion, players/teams must comply.
- e. Home Team is team listed first (left) on the schedule. Home Team will wear white or lighter-colored jerseys. AWAY TEAMS ARE NOT TO WEAR WHITE JERSEYS. In case of similar jerseys (i.e. – Neon jerseys), then Away team changes.
- f. Pennies (mesh scrimmage vests) may be used over the jersey to resolve color conflicts as long as the jersey numbers shows through the pennies to the referee's satisfaction.
- g. Players must wear shin guards that are age appropriate and completely covered by socks. Referees may require players to leave the field to change or correct improper/unsafe equipment.
- h. Shoes with metal cleats/studs are not allowed.
- i. Violators will be removed from the field by the referee and not allowed back on the field of play until the player equipment issue has been corrected.
- j. Players cannot wear anything that is dangerous to themselves, or the other players and no jewelry is allowed. Braces and other medically required support

apparatuses must have no dangerous metal or hard plastic exposed, unless covered with a soft protective covering (bubble wrap, etc.). The referee shall make the final decision whether the player can play.

4. Team Bench

Team players and coaches are to be on the opposite side of the field from all spectators. Only rostered players, coaches, assistant coaches, trainers and team managers are allowed the sideline bench area. At complexes which are setup for a team and their spectators to be on opposite sides from the other team and their spectators, the Home team will occupy either the North or West side of playing field.

5. Spectator Areas

Spectators are to be on the same half of the field across from their team bench. No one may spectate or loiter behind the goal line and up to the 18 yard line/goal box on either end of the field. U90C Management Group, LLC will not be responsible for bodily injury or property damage.

6. Match Ball

Both teams will present a match ball to the referee for him/her to choose from for the official match ball. The referee may decide to use both, one as a back-up. If a tournament ball is provided it will serve as the primary official match ball.

7. Protests

The only protests allowed are for an ineligible player. All protests must be reported in writing, with a One Hundred Dollar (\$100) cashier's check, money order or cash. If a team wins the protest, their protest fee will be returned.

8. Match Duration

Teams will play full-length games similar to league play regulations.

| Division | Halves | Playing Format | Roster Max | Ball Size | Overtime (qtr's, semis & finals) |
|----------|------------|----------------|------------|-----------|----------------------------------|
| U8 | 25 minutes | 7v7 | 16 | 4 | 2 x 5 minutes, then pk's |
| U9 | 30 minutes | 9v9 | 18 | 4 | 2 x 5 minutes, then pk's |
| U10 | 30 minutes | 9v9 | 18 | 4 | 2 x 5 minutes, then pk's |
| U11 | 30 minutes | 9v9 | 18 | 4 | 2 x 5 minutes, then pk's |
| U12 | 35 minutes | 11v11 | 18 | 5 | 2 x 5 minutes, then pk's |

9. Scoring System

Pool Play games may end in a tie. Overtime only applies to Quarterfinals, Semi-finals, and Finals.

Scoring system for preliminary (pool) games will be as follows:

- 6 points for a win
- 3 points for a tie
- 0 points for a loss
- 1 point per goal scored in the game with a maximum of 3
- 1 point for a shutout (not allowing opponent to score)
- A forfeit game* will be scored at a 3-0 win
 - *The forfeiting team will receive zero (0) points for the match.
 - ** The team being forfeited to will receive points for a 3-0 win, and any additional points scored during play at the time of forfeiture will count towards goal differential.

THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REMOVE ANY TEAM FROM THE TOURNAMENT AND/OR MAKE THEM INELIGIBLE FOR THE PLAY-OFF ROUNDS FOR INTENTIONALLY FORFEITING A GAME(S).

10. Intentional and Unintentional Forfeits

Forfeits may be declared for the following reasons, but not limited to:

- A team has not arrived and on the field after ten (10) minutes of the scheduled start time
- Teams with the minimum number of players within ten (10) minutes of the scheduled start time refusing to take the field
- Game abandonment
- Players, coaches, or spectator(s) refusal to leave the complex (See #14)

| Format | Minimum to Start | Minimum to Continue |
|--------|------------------|---------------------|
| 7v7 | 5 | 5 |
| 9v9 | 6 | 6 |
| 11v11 | 7 | 7 |

11. Game Cards or Game Reports

If using Game Cards, the winning team will turn in. In the case of a tie, the Home Team turns in the Game Card. Please verify the referee has accurately recorded the field number, game time, team names, score, and misconduct (red and yellow cards). If using game reports, both teams must turn in the game reports after each game to the tournament headquarters at the complex where the game was played.





12. PREMIER COPA PLAYOFF ROUNDS

At the conclusion of the group round games, Premier Copa offers a unique format that provides playoff opportunities for EVERY participating team. Typically, playoff bracketing is predetermined simply based on group round bracket, such as "Bracket A1 vs. Bracket B2". However, for Copa, after the Copa group stage completes for all brackets (first three games) the entire event is re-bracketed for Quarterfinals play as follows below. However, the Tournament Committee reserves the right to modify the playing format, in both group play rounds and Playoff Advancements based upon number of teams and circumstances at the tournament site.

Playoff opponents are chosen by seeding teams based on total points. Example, if the winner of bracket C has 30 points after their first three games and they have the highest total points among all teams then they will be placed as the 1st seed and will play the 8th seed (one of the wildcard teams) (See the exceptions for "Non-32 Team" brackets if applicable).

Quarterfinal opponents are defined by the following seeding (except as noted above for various team bracket sizes):

1st vs 8th

4th vs 5th

3rd vs 6th

2nd vs 7th

**Because variety of competition is a significant element of Copa, the tournament committee reserves the right to adjust seeding by 1 position (possibly 2) to avoid teams facing each other in Quarterfinals who have already played each other during group rounds. Seeding adjustments are at the complete discretion of the tournament committee, but will not be made to affect which playoff bracket a team has earned a spot in.*

GotSport cannot calculate this structure, so it must be manually calculated and input by the tournament committee. This means that as group rounds complete, there will be a delay in posting the playoffs as the committee executes this process. Please be patient during this time, and do not contact tournament headquarters, as this only delays the process.

There will be a period of 2 ½ - 3 hours after completion of ALL group round games before quarterfinal games are posted as the Tournament Committee verifies all teams' standings and points. GotSport updates will be sent to notify teams when play-off rounds are FINAL. ****(Playoff Rounds will be HIDDEN beginning late Friday afternoon - IGNORE the schedules for quarterfinals in GotSport UNTIL team contacts are notified via email / text that schedules have been completed)****



Once the Quarterfinals are set, the single elimination tournament will play out as scheduled. There is NO reseeding after the Quarterfinals.

If teams are tied in points after their preliminary (pool) games are completed, the following tiebreaker procedures will be used to determine the team advancing:

- a. Head to Head game results - winner will advance.
- b. Goal differential
- c. Goals Against (least)
- d. Goals For (most)
- e. Most Shutouts
- f. Kicks from the mark, aka. Penalty Kicks

These tiebreaker procedures will be applied, in order, to the teams tied in points until one team is selected for advancement. In the event of a tie involving age brackets that contain flights with different numbers of scheduled games, then the same tie breakers are used with the exception that averaging to determine b, c, d, and e will be used.

If more than two teams are involved in a tie, tie breaker number 2 (except in the case of example 3) will be used first to rank the teams. If teams are still tied, tie breaker number 3 will be used to rank the teams, and so on until a tie is broken. Once a team has been ranked higher or lower, the tie breaking procedure begins for the remaining tied teams with number 1.

If more than two teams are still tied after tie breaker number 5, the team that applied first will sit out. The other two teams will then take kicks from the mark to establish a winner. The winner of this will then “play” the team sitting out, (kicks from the mark), the winner will advance.

Example 1: (4 Team Bracket) - Three teams have 6 points and have all defeated each other. Team 1 has a goal differential of +6, Team 2 is +4 and Team 3 is +2. Team 1 is first; Team 2 is second and Team 3 is third.

Example 2: (4 Team Bracket) - Three teams have 6 points and have all defeated each other. Team 1 has a goal differential of +4, Team 2 is +4 and Team 3 is +2. Team 3 is third, Team 2 defeated Team 1, therefore, Team 2 is first and Team 1 is second.

Example 3: (6 Team Bracket) - Three teams have 6 points and Team 1 had defeated the other two. Team 1 is the group winner. The tie-breaking procedure begins for the remaining tied teams with number 1.



13. Substitutions

There will be free substitution, with the referee's consent at the following times:

- a. A player receiving a yellow card (the player carded only)
- b. Prior to a throw-in for the team in possession (the opposing team may substitute when the team in possession subs)
- c. Prior to a goal kick
- d. After a goal by either team
- e. After an injury by either team when the referee stops the play
- f. At half-time by either team
- g. At the referee's discretion

14. Send off Disciplinary (See #10)

An official send-off is the referee ejects the coach, player, or spectator from the remainder of the game AND fills out a Misconduct Report. Any send-offs should be reported to the Tournament Director immediately following the match. Any players, coaches, or spectators sent-off by the referee must leave the complex in a timely manner by, at least, going to the parking lot or tournament headquarters and having NO form of communication with the team. If a player's parent or guardian is not in attendance, they may report to the tournament headquarters with a manager or a team parent until the game has concluded.

15. Match Suspensions

Tournament Committee and/or Tournament Director have the right to adjust match suspensions.

- a. Any player or coach officially sent-off (other than on account of receiving two cautions in the same game) shall automatically sit out the next played tournament game with the same team.
- b. Any player receiving three (3) cautions (yellow cards) in the tournament must sit out the next played tournament game with their team. If the third caution occurred in the last game of the tournament for that player, that player would be required to sit out their next scheduled game played.
- c. Any players, coaches, or spectators sent-off for fighting (punching, kicking, etc.), spitting, or is the player's second tournament send-off, is subject to expulsion from the remainder of the tournament.

16. All referee game decisions are final.

17. The Tournament Director, or their designee, is empowered to make all decisions regarding the competition during the tournament.



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18. Tournament Director decisions are final in all matters. No appeals will be allowed beyond that point.
19. In the event the referee or linesmen are missing from the field, report immediately to your Field Coordinator. In the event the linesmen are not available, each team is required to provide a "club linesman".
20. Nets and Flags are provided by the tournament.
21. There will be NO use of any Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system or spectator video in U90C tournaments.
22. The use of communication devices for the purpose of coaching is not allowed.

23. Drones and Unmanned Aircrafts

Any facility U90C uses for its tournaments or events may have its own policy for Unmanned Aerial Devices (UAS), or drones. When that is the case, if the facility has a policy which restricts or denies the use of UAS's, their policy will supersede U90C's.

Following directives from other youth soccer organizations, namely U.S. Youth Soccer, which states "the use of unmanned aircrafts are not to be at activities of events . . . for youth soccer players" and FAA restrictions for Unmanned Aerial Devices (UAS), which includes a restriction stating UAS's "cannot fly over people not involved in the device's operation"; U90C has decided that **all types of unmanned aircrafts, including drones, will not be allowed to fly over U90C tournaments or events.**

Certain exceptions may however apply. People who wish to apply for an exception to fly a UAS or drone over U90C tournaments or events can do so a minimum of 10 days prior to the event. In considering the possible exception, U90C will review in addition to other items: the operator's commercial pilot's license, the UAS's FAA registration and special exemption, and the operator's ability to prove the use of the UAS will not violate local restrictions governing the use of UASs.

24. In the event that a game needs to be stopped due to inclement weather, lightning, etc., you will be instructed by one or all of the following methods:
 - a. Notification System utilized by playing facility (Thor, Vaisala, etc.)
 - b. Notified by U90C On-site Staff (tournament official, etc.)
 - c. Notified by Referees
 - d. Air Horns





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All players, coaches and spectators go to their cars. **DO NOT LEAVE THE SITE.** The air horns will sound again or you will be informed by a tournament official when everything is "all clear." You should then return to the field. If it is necessary for you to check with Tournament Headquarters regarding this situation, we ask that only the teams' head coach or team manager go to the headquarters tent.

Games will be suspended until 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder has left the vicinity (roughly 6 mile radius). Inclement weather is always a possibility and such weather may result in delayed, abbreviated or canceled games. The tournament committee will attempt to reschedule games to insure that each team will play a full schedule for the tournament. Games may be shortened or postponed or scheduled at a different site in order to meet this goal. The Tournament Directors and Site Coordinators have authority to suspend games due to weather.

25. If a game has played one full half (is, at least, AT halftime) but is stopped short of full time, other than acts on the part of one of the teams or its spectators (See #10), the game shall be considered complete.
26. In the event of inclement weather, park closure or any other forced cancellations outside of our control, the format for tournament play and/or completion of the tournament will be determined by the Tournament Director. Every attempt will be made to avoid cancellation. All communications with regard to schedule changes / modifications will be made directly with the coach and team manager / contact listed within GotSport.
27. Tournament cancellation post Round Robin games completion:

If Quarterfinals or Semi-Finals cannot be played, no winners will be declared. If Finals cannot be completed (see #25) or the Final is in the second half with a tied score, Co-Champions will be awarded.
28. All teams not accepted by the tournament will be refunded in full within fifteen (15) days of the notification of rejection, or notification to the teams accepted, whichever comes first. (Posting on web sites can be considered notification of teams accepted.)
29. Once accepted into the tournament, any team that withdraws from the tournament or does not complete all required scheduled games, will not receive any refund and may be banned from future U90C tournaments.
30. Once game time temperature exceeds 90 degrees, the Tournament Director may institute water breaks (mandatory or referee's discretion). The water breaks would occur in 1st and 2nd halves of play and the official game time will stop during the water breaks (water





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breaks should not exceed two minutes). If the restart is delayed, the referee, upon his discretion, may issue a yellow card to the team causing the delay.

U-11 and Below guidelines:

- 31.** Per USCS Guidelines: Players in U-11 programs and younger shall NOT engage in heading, either in practices or in games. In adherence to these new requirements, referees have been instructed by U.S. Soccer of the following rule addition: When a player **deliberately** heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

7v7 Standards of Play

- 32. Build Out Line** (per the U.S. Soccer Player Development Initiatives)

The build out line promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting. When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build out line until the ball is put into play. The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed). After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal. Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the build out line. However, the goalkeeper can 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.

If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should 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.

The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called. Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line. Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build out line and goal line.

To support the intent of the development rule, coaches and referees should be mindful





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of any intentional delays being caused by opponents not retreating in a timely manner or encroaching over the build out line prior to the ball being put into play. Coaches are responsible for addressing these types of issues with their players. Referees can manage the situation with misconduct if deemed appropriate. Referees should be flexible when enforcing the 6 second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build out line.

