

Soccer Maine



2026
Fall Classic League
Procedures and Rules



Fall Classic League Procedures and Rules

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Fall Classic League Procedures and Rules

100. Name and Purpose

The name of the competition is the **Fall Classic League**. The Fall Classic League’s purpose is to provide an opportunity for affiliated town/district classic club teams to participate in an organized league during the fall season.

200. League Organization:

201. Administration

The Classic Committee of the Soccer Maine Board of Directors, along with the Executive Director, will conduct the Fall Classic League. The Vice President of Classic and District Directors constitute the Classic Committee.

202. Dates

The Fall Classic League season will run from Sunday, August 23rd to the first weekend of November.

Sunday game dates for **U12 through U14** are: **8/23, 8/30, 9/13, 9/20, 9/27, 10/4, with playoff dates starting 10/17 through 11/1.**

Sunday game dates for **U11** are **8/23, 8/30, 9/13, 9/20, 9/27, 10/4, 10/18, 10/25 – an eight game schedule.**

Sunday game dates for **U8 through U10s** are: **8/30, 9/13, 9/20, 9/27, 10/4, 10/18, with end-of-season festivals on 10/24 & 10/25.**

Saturdays could be a possibility if there are uneven numbers of teams in various brackets, necessitating bye weeks and a Saturday game date for some teams.

203. Level of Play

Level of play for the Fall Classic League is town-based grassroots travel soccer.

204. Team Eligibility

The Fall Classic League is open to teams fielded by Soccer Maine Affiliated Member Classic Clubs who have correctly entered the league, paid the league fees, and are in good standing. Teams must have players of appropriate age on the team, i.e. a U12 team cannot be comprised of all U11 players.

205. Age Groups Offered

The Fall Classic League will offer competition in the following age groups:

Age group:	Type of League:	Format:	Player Age prior to Aug 1 st , 2026:
U-8	Non-Competitive	7v7	7
U-9	Non-Competitive	7v7	8
U-10	Non-Competitive	7v7	9
U-11	Non-Competitive	9v9	10
U-12	Transitional-Competitive, no declared division	9v9	11
U-13	Competitive, declared division 1 or 2	11v11	12
U-14	Competitive, declared division 1 or 2	11v11	13

See Appendix B for the age group chart.

205.1. Under-8 and Under-9 and Under-10 Age Groups: All clubs who can field teams (based on their registration data) at the U-8 age level, U-9 age level and U-10 age level are instructed to do so. If there are enough U-8 teams, we will form a division, otherwise they will be mixed into the U-9 playing division. Further,



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clubs are instructed to field teams at the lowest age league possible. In other words, place the U-8's on one team, the U-9's on another, and the U-10's on another. **Soccer Maine requires players to be age 7 by August 1 of this year** in order to be registered and play.

205.2. Non-Competitive and Transitional-Competitive Age Groups: For clubs who have more than one team in non-competitive and transitional-competitive age brackets, teams will be evenly balanced; i.e., no "A" or "B" teams.

300. Entry Procedure and Fees

301. Club Affiliations

All Clubs must answer the annual Club Affiliation questions through their Got Sport club account and submit their Club Affiliation fee of \$100 to Soccer Maine by July 15th.

302. Sanctioning of Clubs: As a general rule, Soccer Maine will sanction only one travel soccer club from a particular city, town, or school district. Soccer Maine will sanction additional clubs within a town, city, school district which already has a sanctioned soccer club only if, based upon evidence presented by the proponents of the proposed additional club to the Soccer Maine Board of Directors, the Soccer Maine Board of Directors is convinced that the sanctioning of an additional club is necessary to prevent the denial of competitive soccer opportunities for travel-level youth soccer players in the affected town, city or school district. In addition, to be sanctioned as a club for Fall Classic play, the proposed additional club within such town or city must be able to field teams in at least two (2) age levels, and must offer both boys and girls teams (at least 4 teams).

303. Statement of Intent: The purpose of the rules stated above is to encourage the formation of new soccer clubs by allowing small town and cities, which individually would be unable to form a competitive or full-service club, to combine for such purpose, while, at the same time, not requiring the dissolution of existing multi-community clubs, such as Lewiston-Auburn Soccer Club (LAYSА.) The rule is not designed to encourage the formation of premier or select teams; thus the rules against recruiting and collusion. As the rule is more liberal than the prior rule—because of the absence of the four-team limit—the Soccer Maine Board will monitor compliance more strictly, and exceptions will not be granted. The rule will also be studied to ensure that the above-stated goal is met—that is, to expand opportunities for prospective youth soccer players in Maine, not to further restrict them.

304. Team Entry and Declarations

304.1 All Team Entries: Clubs must enter teams through their GOT SPORT club account on their Teams page by July 15th. This commits your teams to the Fall Classic league. Team submissions cannot be deleted by the Club once submitted. All team contact information must be in the team account when applying for the league.

304.2 Competitive Team Entries: All U13 and U14 teams must additionally declare the division they request assignment into. Division 1 is more competitive and Division 2 is more developmental. **Clubs must include D1 or D2 in the U13 and U14 team names during the registration process of GOT SPORT.** Teams declared as Division 1 and Division 2 **MUST** play the complete regular season in their requested division. **U12 teams will not be placed in a declared division and clubs with multiple U12 teams will balance them strength-wise.**

304.3 D2 Champions and Finalists from Past Year: **All winners and finalists of the Division 2 championships from the past year will not be considered for inclusion in Division 2 for the upcoming Fall Classic League** in U-13 or U-14 unless unusual or extraordinary circumstances can be demonstrated



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to the Classic Committee. Those teams should declare themselves as Division 1 teams, unless granted permission by the Classic Committee to enter Division 2.

305. Team Entry Fees

Payment is due by July 15th. After July 15th, Soccer Maine will charge late fees.

305.1 U8, U9, U10 & U11 Team Entry Fees: The team entry fee is \$275 per U8, U9, U10 & U11 team.

305.2 U12, U13 & U14 Team Entry Fees: The team entry fee is \$325 per U12, U13 & U14 team.

306. Player Registration Fees

The player registration fee is \$16 per player due July 15th. Player fees not included in July 15th payments for late registering players must be paid by August 7th. While player data should be substantially complete when the team is submitted, you can add players after submission.

307. Team Withdrawal

Clubs may withdraw any submitted team prior to July 15th and receive a full refund of the entry fee. **Teams can only be withdrawn/removed from the league by notifying the Soccer Maine Executive Director in writing.** Any team withdrawn from the Classic League after July 15th forfeits the full team entry fee. Further, any team withdrawn after July 15th will incur an additional \$300 fee.

308. Late Fees: A late fee of \$50 per team will be assessed if Soccer Maine receives fees after the prescribed due dates.

400. Player Eligibility, Player Registration, Team Rosters and Player Passes

401. Player Registration

As many players as possible should be correctly registered in the Soccer Maine GOT SPORT player registration database and on the league roster by July 15th indicating that your team is viable. The player registration fee is \$16 per player. Additional players can still be added after this date, but the team must show a viable roster by this date to be included in the scheduling.

402. Player Eligibility Rules: Club participation is based on where you reside. All players must be from the same town, or school district in the case of a club representing several small towns in close proximity that may be part of a consolidated school district, i.e. Merrymeeting SC which represents the 4 small towns of Topsham, Bowdoin, Bowdoinham and Harpswell-all part of RSU 75.

402.1 Exceptions: Players may be from a different area other than the club's specific territory if one or more of the following exceptions apply to each such player:

- 1) The town, city or school district in which such player **resides** does not have a travel soccer club to join;
- 2) The town, city or school district in which such player **resides** does have a travel soccer club, and player registered in such club by the club's deadlines, but such club (the "host club") does not offer a team for such player's age group or, for U-11 and up, within one year of such player's age group and such player's host club has signed a waiver/transfer form; (for purposes of this rule U-10 is a single age group, including U-9 and U-8); or
- 3) Such player registered and tried out for a team offered by his/her host club, such player was not selected for such team, and such player's host club has signed a waiver/transfer form.



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402.2 Waivers: Host clubs shall execute waiver/transfer forms for players within exceptions 2 and 3. The purpose of the waiver/transfer form in such instances is to have the host club certify that the facts establishing eligibility for the exception are true, and constitutes the host club's written certification to that effect. A waiver form can be found on the Soccer Maine website at www.soccermaine.com.

402.3 Procedure: If a club wishes to include players falling within any of the exceptions listed above (or any combination of such exceptions), the club registrar must fill out the Eligibility Waiver, have both club presidents sign the form and send in the waiver to the Soccer Maine Executive Director for approval. Before the roster is approved the Soccer Maine Executive Director shall review with the VP Classic to determine compliance with this rule. If the VP Classic and Executive Director determines that there has been a violation of this rule, the Classic committee can, in addition, and in its sole discretion, determine the team or teams affected to be ineligible for regular season and/or any end of season tournament and/or festival, and may, in addition, and in its sole discretion, impose other sanctions upon the coach or club involved, including, without limitation, suspension from Soccer Maine activity.

402.4 Double-roster player: Players are not permitted to double roster with teams participating in the Fall Classic League.

403. Prohibition Regarding Recruiting: Clubs and coaches are not to engage in the recruiting of players for the fall travel season. Clubs may generally advertise the time and location of tryouts in available public media, and may state that persons from other towns/areas known not to have a travel soccer club may participate. Moreover, clubs and individual coaches (whether acting with or without the knowledge or approval of their club) are absolutely prohibited from conspiring or colluding to create a pool of players who meet any or all of the above-listed exceptions in order to create a team (in other words, a premier-like team). An example of prohibited conduct would be two clubs (or coaches) agreeing that one would offer a U-12 team (but not a U-14 team) while the other offered a U-14 team (but not a U-12 team) so that both teams would be stronger (and both could have fielded teams in both age groups). This example is not meant to be limiting.

404. Team Rosters

Clubs are required to create a team roster in the Soccer Maine player registration database when they apply their teams. **Rosters freeze is at mid-day on August 9th for U11-U14, and August 16th for U8-U10. Each team must always have a printed Official Roster available for inspection by game referees or league officials.** Only Official printed Rosters with the signature of the Executive Director/State Registrar will be accepted at games and the year-end play-offs and festivals. **Each Frozen Roster MUST accurately include each player's jersey number.**

Please note - A minimum of five (5) players for U8 through U10, and seven (7) players for U11 and up constitutes a team for play.

405. Roster Sizes

405.1 U8-U10 Roster Sizes: Fourteen (14) is our maximum roster limit. This is double the number of players on the field. If additional players are necessary beyond 14, please request approval from Soccer Maine so that the internal Got Sport roster limit can be adjusted.

405.2 U11-U12 Roster Sizes: Eighteen (18) is our maximum roster limit. This is double the number of players on the field. If additional players are necessary beyond 18, please request approval from Soccer Maine so that the internal Got Sport roster limit can be adjusted.

405.3 U13-U14 Roster Sizes: Twenty-two (22) is our roster limit. Beyond 22 players, please have this request approved by the Soccer Maine so that the internal Got Sport roster limit can be adjusted.



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The goal with rosters is always maximum playing time for the players. Extremely large rosters are discouraged as they are not advantageous for the players.

406. Player Passes

Individual players on Fall Classic League teams are not required to have player passes. If a team is participating in an event that requires player passes, i.e., a tournament, please contact the State Office. Frozen rosters will be used for all games and at the year-end play-offs. **Each Frozen Roster MUST accurately include each player's jersey number.**

407. Club Pass

The "club pass" concept's core objective is to provide clubs and coaches with the flexibility to move players **from team to team** in their own club as necessary for equity in games based on player development and team needs. **Club Pass allows Clubs to temporarily loan players from one team to another for a specific game.** Players may be allowed to move up two age groups but never move down an age group. Each Club shall determine their participation and Soccer Maine will not mandate participation.

Club Pass is allowed for **ANY U-8, U-9, U-10 or U-11 league or end-of-season festival or round-robin game to a maximum of 4 players.** Club Pass is allowed for any league game or playoff game for **U12, U13 and U14, where a team has no substitutions or not enough players to place on the field, to allow the team to have a maximum of 2 more players than the number of players on the field, i.e. 11 players total for U-12, 13 players total for U-13 or U-14. For example, if a U12 team has only 8 players available for a game, they can club pass 3 players allowing for 2 players to be on the bench.** If a U13 team has 12 players available for a game, they can club pass 1 player to allow for 2 players to be on the bench.

Club Pass is allowed for any "friendlies" in the **U-8 through U-14 age groups.**

Paper copies of the team roster and the roster from which the club pass players are rostered would need to be presented to the game officials for any game where this exception is utilized.

500. Scheduling, Canceling, and/or Terminating Games

501. Scheduling

Soccer Maine staff will create the League schedule based on the team entries submitted to Soccer Maine. Schedules will be posted on the Soccer Maine website by August 7th.

501.1 Non-Competitive level games:

The primary, but not sole determining factor in bracketing is geographic location. The Classic Committee will focus on minimizing travel while ensuring the quality of the games does not diminish. We will attempt to not have Club teams compete against one another. The Classic Committee reserves the right to move teams as needed in developing viable brackets.

501.2 Competitive level games: The primary factors in determining bracketing are geographic location, and Division declaration for U13 and U14. However, based on the population of the brackets, teams may be distributed into brackets outside their districts in an effort to create equity amongst the Clubs and teams.

501.3 League Games: League games are predominately scheduled for Sundays. On a few circumstances, league games may be scheduled on Saturday because of bracketing constraints, or if both clubs/teams agree to move a Sunday scheduled game. **Rescheduling of league games must be within the weekend of the Soccer Maine scheduled date so as not to create a situation where multiple**



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games have not been played by a team late in the season. For example, if a team wishes to move a Sunday league game to a Saturday, it must be the preceding Saturday. Clubs must submit a Game Change Request form in Got Sport a minimum of 10 days ahead of the game date and that form must be approved by Soccer Maine. Upon approval, Soccer Maine will move the date of the game in the schedule.

501.4 Club Responsibilities: Once the schedule has been created and posted for teams to view, clubs have the responsibility to arrange the times and locations for home games. Contact information for teams is available within the posted schedule. Soccer Maine does not secure playing sites or assign game times. This is the responsibility of the Member Clubs to allow for scheduling flexibility. Clubs are required to have field availability.

Games should be scheduled in Got Sport a minimum of one week prior to the game to give proper notification to the opposing team. Games not scheduled as required are subject to forfeit.

502. Cancelling Games

502.1 Unforeseen Circumstances: As a general rule, games are not cancelled, however, if severe weather or extenuating circumstances, such as loss of a field due to a weather event, would prevent a game from being played safely, and if the game must be postponed, the home team is responsible for informing the opponent, the referees **and Soccer Maine**. The referees should be paid if the game is not cancelled within a reasonable amount of time prior to kick off. The home team is responsible for attempting to find a suitable time to reschedule the game within the next week if possible. Games cannot be pushed off to the end of the season. If the teams cannot find an agreeable time to make up the game, the game will be considered cancelled and one team will be assigned a forfeit. The home team must inform Soccer Maine of any such cancellation by email prior to the game date/time. Per paragraph 404, a minimum of 5-7 players constitutes a team, therefore teams are expected to play their scheduled games if they have 5 (U8-U10) or 7 (U11-U14) or greater players. Any other cancellations are considered No Shows/Forfeits per the paragraph below.

502.2 Forfeited Games: Teams are required to play all games assigned by Soccer Maine. In the event a team does not arrive at the venue (a 'no show') at the scheduled start time, the game is considered forfeited. It is the responsibility of the hosting team (home team) to notify Soccer Maine of any team who forfeits a game as a result of a 'no show.' **All forfeited teams are subject to the following fines and sanctions:**

502.2a 1st Occurrence: Any team who forfeits a game will have the game recorded as a 0-3 loss and shall be fined \$500 per game payable to Soccer Maine, along with the appropriate referee fees, within fourteen (14) days of the scheduled game.

502.2b Additional Occurrence: Any team who forfeits any additional games will have the game recorded as a 0-3 loss, shall be fined \$500 per game payable to Soccer Maine, along with the appropriate referee fees, within fourteen (14) days of the scheduled game, and shall be ineligible to compete in Soccer Maine's year-end festival and/or tournament.

502.2c Withdrawal from league during season: If a team withdraws from the league any time within 3 days of or after the beginning of the season, every missed league game shall be considered a forfeit and the sanctions in section 502.2a and 502.2b shall be applied.

502.2d Standing within Soccer Maine: Failure by a club to pay the fine shall result in the club not being in good standing and thus its teams being ineligible to compete in any Soccer Maine sanctioned game and/or event. The Classic Committee has exclusive and final decisions in determining a decrease or waiving fines in exceptional circumstances.



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503. Terminating Games

Once a referee has jurisdiction over a game, the game may only be terminated by the referee as provided for in the FIFA Laws of the Game.

503.1 Game Terminated in First Half: If a game is terminated before the second half of the game has begun, and the termination is not due to the conduct of one of the teams, the game shall be played in its entirety.

503.2 Game Terminated in Second Half: If a game is terminated after play has begun in the second half of the game, but before the end of the second half, and the termination is not due to the conduct of one of the teams, the game is considered complete, and the score at the time of termination will stand.

600. Referees and Referee Fees

601. Assigning

Home teams are responsible for obtaining referees for League games. Member Clubs must have a Certified Referee Assignor. The Referee Assignor must assign only currently certified referees **and must make every attempt to assign referees to scheduled games. If for any reason that is not possible, the Assignor should immediately notify the member club that he/she cannot assign the game and therefore the game should not be scheduled.** There are no exceptions to these requirements. The minimum fee for assigners is \$5/game assigned. However, assignors negotiate their fees annually with the club they represent. **Clubs are strongly encouraged to have a written contract with their referee assignor - identifying the roles and responsibilities of both parties and the compensation agreed upon in advance of the fall travel season.**

602. Number of Referees

The Under-8, Under-9 and Under-10 age groups will use a single center referee. All other age groups **MUST utilize a “three-person” system employing the diagonal system of control.** A “two-person/two-whistle” system may NEVER be utilized under any circumstances. In the event that an Assistant Referee is missing at the last moment, the center referee can ask the participating teams to assist him/her in finding a “club linesperson”. The “club linesperson” will only signal the ball in or out of play according to Law 9. If an Assignor is unable to assign referees, the game should not be scheduled until such time as the correct number of certified referees can be assigned

603. Referee Fees

Each team will pay half of the referee fees directly to the assigned referees. Teams must pay fees in full in advance of the game. Referees will be instructed not to commence a game until they have been paid in full. Referee fees are as follows:

Age Group	Referee:	Assistant Referee (each):
Under-8, -9 & -10	\$50/game	NA
Under-11 & Under-12	\$60/game	\$30/game
Under-13 & Under-14	\$70/game	\$35/game

700. Game Procedures

701. General

All Fall Classic League games played (scheduled games and friendlies between teams in the league) are considered Soccer Maine sanctioned games and subject to application of all rules and conditions set forth in this handbook and all other Soccer Maine Policies, Procedures and Rules. Sanctioned games are the only games in which your insurance coverage is in effect.



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701.1. Game Ball: The home team shall provide the game ball.

701.2. Jersey Colors: The away team shall have choice of jersey colors. In the event of a conflict, the home team must change or wear different colored pinnies if so directed by the referee.

701.3. Availability of Procedures and Rules: Coaches are required to have a copy of these Procedures and Rules with them for any clarifications.

701.4. Field determination: Both teams, and a **maximum of three (3) team officials for each team**, shall take the same side of the field. Spectators shall take the other side of the field. The home team shall choose which side the teams will take.

701.5. Post-Game Procedures: Home teams in competitive level games will document scores in the Got Sport system. The Event ID and Event Pin will also be posted on Soccer Maine's webpage under the Fall Classic League. The home team should immediately post the score, and must have the score posted by the following Monday at 12 noon. Failure to post the score by this time will result in the score being recorded as a 0-3 win for the away team and the game being marked as a forfeit.

702. Coaches

At all times, a **minimum of one Soccer Maine licensed and rostered coach** must coach the team and be in the player area. A maximum of three Soccer Maine licensed and rostered coaches rostered to the specific team may be in the team area during games. 3 coaches maximum can be listed on the physical roster.

All coaches, assistant coaches and other team personnel are required to complete all risk management requirements, which include a background check, SafeSport training and concussion awareness training processes in order to be rostered to and/or work with a classic team affiliated with a Soccer Maine club. These are all available in your Got Sport account. Coaches are also required to have the appropriate coaching education license. Courses are sponsored by Soccer Maine and can be accessed through the US Soccer Learning Center, also noted on the Soccer Maine website.

703. Field

The Fall Classic League is an outdoor league. The home team/club is responsible for ensuring the outdoor game field is ready and safe for play at least 30 minutes prior to kick-off. Ready and safe for play includes but is not limited to smooth and stable playing surface, proper field markings, corner flags, goals, goal nets, all according to FIFA Laws of the Game, **and goal anchors**. Should reasonable corrections be required by the referee, the home team is responsible for compliance.

If a club cannot provide a suitable outdoor game field for a scheduled game, they must either submit a game change request in a timely manner pursuant to the stated policies in this handbook, and/or give their opponent the option of hosting the game.

Failure to provide a suitable game field per the above standards and the specifications in Appendix A is grounds for a game to be terminated. If a game must be terminated due to a game field that is not ready and safe for play, the home team will incur a \$500 fine.

704. Game Oversight

Once the referee is on site, s/he is responsible for ensuring that the game is played to completion per the rules and regulations being applied to the game. The referee has the exclusive right and corresponding responsibility



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to terminate and/or abandon a game. Should this occur, the referee must provide a written game report within 24 hours to the VP Classic and Soccer Maine's State Referee Administrator.

705. Heading Protocol

There will be no heading allowed in games for players 10 and under (U11 and below). This protocol should be followed in all training/practices as well. Deliberate heading in these age groups will result in awarding an indirect free kick 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 the spot of the offense.

For U12 through U14 players, heading training shall be limited to no more than 30 minutes per week. Please note that this follows the newly released Heading Recommendations from US Soccer for all youth soccer players.

706. Tie Games: Tie scores will stand in all games. No overtime or penalty-kick tiebreakers.

800. Standings, Playoffs, Tiebreakers

801. Standings

League standings will be kept in each competitive age group division (U12, U13 and U14). Those standings will be determined by the number of points received. Points will be awarded as follows:

- a. Three (3) points for a Win
- b. One (1) point for Tie
- c. Zero (0) points for a Loss

802. Tiebreakers

In the event of a tie within a division, the following criteria will be used to determine final placement:

- a. Head to head result;
- b. Goal differential (only the first three goals greater than the opponent count toward goal differential);
- c. Fewest goals allowed;
- d. Coin Toss conducted by VP of Classic or Executive Director.

803. Festivals: Soccer Maine will hold festivals and/or round-robins for the age groups of U-8/U-9, U-10 on the weekend of 10/24-25, which are non-competitive.

As is the case for all teams, games, etc., no over-age players are allowed to play on teams within the festivals or round robins. Coaches are cautioned to follow the Soccer Maine Eligibility Rule and other Policies with respect to official rosters.

803.1 Participation in Festivals: The end-of-season Festivals are part of the season for all U8 through U10 teams. Clubs must notify Soccer Maine in writing (via email) to Soccer Maine's Executive Director by **October 1st, 2026**, if they have a team that cannot participate. This communication must come from the Club President. Acceptable reasons would be not enough players. A coach not being available is generally not an acceptable reason for non-participation by a team – most teams have more than one coach. There are no consequences for withdrawal from the festival prior to that date. After that date, withdrawal will be considered a forfeit.

803.2 Dates:

1. U-8/U-9 & U-10 boys' and girls' festivals occur on the weekend of October 24th/25th



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- a. North/Central at Bath, ME hosted by Midcoast FC
- b. Metro/South at Sanford, ME hosted by Sanford Springvale SA

803.3 Teams: For clubs who have more than one team in non-competitive age brackets, teams will be evenly balanced; i.e., no “A” or “B” teams. To help create balanced play at the festival, coaches should accurately indicate the comparative strength of their team. Clubs should notify the particular Festival Directors, if asked of the comparative strength of the Club’s teams.

803.4 Requirements:

803.4a Players: Players will not be permitted to play or participate in the festival if the player is not listed on the Official Roster or the player has been deemed ineligible to play due to the red card policy.

All uniforms must be numbered. **Duplicate numbers on any team are not permitted.** It is the home team’s responsibility to change uniforms if a color conflict arises. Pinnies, which permit the underlying number to be discerned, are acceptable for this purpose. Shirts must be tucked in and socks must cover shin guards. Boxer shorts, bike shorts, jams and the like, unless of the same color as the shorts over them, must not hang below the uniform shorts. The use of shin guards is mandatory. Referees will exclude players not so equipped from play. If weather is exceptionally cold, players may wear additional clothing of the same color, with referee approval.

803.4b Coaches: Coaches must register with the official responsible when they check in their players. There can be a maximum of three (3) coaches rostered per team, and on the field during a game; all must be registered with Soccer Maine.

803.5 Forfeit of Game: If any team in any age division does not show for a game at the festival the following will occur. The TEAM will be assessed a fine of \$500, plus referee fees, which must be paid within seven (7) days after the forfeit. If the Club does not pay the fine within the prescribed Otimeframe, the Club will not be permitted to participate in ANY Soccer Maine events until the fine is paid in full.

804. Playoffs

804.1 Participation in Playoffs: All competitive teams in the Fall Classic league qualify for the post-season tournament. Teams may choose not to participate in the playoffs, but must declare their intentions not to participate **in writing via email** from their Club President to the **VP of Classic and Soccer Maine Executive Director** by **October 1, 2026**. No consequences will happen for withdrawal from the play-offs prior to that date. After that date, withdrawal will be considered a forfeit.

804.2 Seeding for the Playoffs: Teams will be divided into geographical groups of North/Central and Metro/South and seeded for bracket play within their group. Teams may be moved from one geographical group to the other to create a greater balance between the two groups.

U12 teams will be evaluated within their playing groups for inclusion into Division 1 or Division 2 for playoffs only. Division 1 will be limited to 16 teams U-13 and U-14, and 24 teams for U-12. Teams ranked below that will be moved to or placed in Division 2.

The Classic Committee does not anticipate moving any U13 or U14 Division 2 regular season teams to Division 1 play-offs, unless circumstances arise that clearly show a team should be in the higher Division, or other reasons that may arise necessitating movement of teams.

804.3 Dates: Divisional Play-offs will begin play on October 17th through October 18th. All attempts will be to complete brackets in the one weekend depending on numbers of teams and weather concerns. **No team will play more than two (2) games in a single day with preference given to 1**



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game per day. No team will play more than 3 games on the playoff weekend. Rain-date will be the following Saturday, October 24th.

804.4 Requirements:

804.4a Players: Players are not permitted to play or participate in playoffs if the player is not listed on the frozen Official roster or the player has been deemed ineligible to play due to the red card policy-Section 902.

804.4b Coaches: Coaches must check in with the official when they check in their players. All must be registered with Soccer Maine and have their **Soccer Maine Official rosters** with them.

804.4c Registration: If a team/player is not in compliance with sections 804.4a, 804.b or there is no registered coach, the game will be deemed as a forfeit.

804.4d Uniforms: All uniforms must be number. Duplicate numbers on any team are not permitted. Teams must take this into account when utilizing club pass players and be sure their jersey number is not in conflict with others. It is the home team’s responsibility to change uniforms if a color conflict arises. Pinnies, which permit the underlying number to be discerned, are acceptable for this purpose. Shirts must be tucked in and socks must cover shin guards. Boxer shorts, bike shorts, jams, etc., unless the same color as the shorts over them must not hang below the uniform shorts. The use of shin guards is mandatory. Referees will exclude players not so equipped from play. If weather is exceptionally cold, players may wear additional clothing of the same color under their uniforms.

804.5 Play-off brackets: The creation of play-off brackets shall be primarily based on the regular season-end seeding in an age group/division. The bracketing shall be developed in a serpentine format as such;

Bracket # 1	Bracket #2	Bracket # 3	Bracket # 4
1	2	3	4
8	7	6	5
9	10	11	12
16	15	14	13

Once completed the Executive Director shall post all brackets on the Soccer Maine website and list the seeding for each team within each bracket. Hosting priority will be given to the top seed in the bracket; however, Soccer Maine’s priority is to make sure all brackets are hosted by clubs that can provide the necessary fields, referees, and oversight, and that travel is not unduly impacted by location of the bracket.

804.6 Bracket Winners: The playoffs for U12 and up is a single elimination format. Games with a tied score at the end of regulation shall complete two (2) 5-minute overtimes (no golden goal). If the game is still tied at the conclusion of the overtime periods, then FIFA Kicks from the penalty mark, as specified in the Laws of the Game shall be followed to determine a winner. One round of five (5) kicks from the penalty mark per team will be taken. If a winner has not been determined, sudden death kicks from the penalty mark will be performed. Only players on the field at the end of the match are eligible to take penalty kicks.

804.7 Forfeit of Game: If any team in any age division does not show for a game in the playoffs the following will occur. The TEAM will be assessed a fine of \$500, along with referee fees in full which must be paid within seven (7) days after the forfeit. If the Club does not pay the fine within the prescribed timeframe, NO OTHER team within the Club will be permitted to participate in ANY Soccer Maine events until the fine is paid in full.



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804.8 Fall Classic Semi-Finals and Finals:

804.8a Dates: The Classic and Champions Cup semis and finals tournament is scheduled for weekend of **October 25, 2026, and October 31/November 1, 2026**. Soccer Maine reserves the right to change the date games are played as necessary based on weather and field concerns.

804.8b Games: All games played in the Championship rounds shall be played in a single elimination format. Games with a tied score at the end of regulation shall complete two (2) 5-minute overtimes (no golden goal). If the game is still tied at the conclusion of two overtime periods, then the FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark Tie-Breaker procedure as specified in the Laws of the Game shall be followed to determine a winner. One round of five (5) kicks from the penalty mark per team will be taken. If a winner has not been determined, sudden death kicks from the penalty mark will be performed. Only players on the field at the end of the match are eligible to take penalty kicks.

804.8c Locations: The Semi Finals will be held in locations to be decided within the two regions of North/Central and Metro/South. **The Finals will be held in the South District for 2026.**

900. Protests & Suspensions

901. Protests: Decisions of referees or host site agents in administrating any section of this handbook cannot be protested. The Classic Committee will not accept any protests.

902. Suspensions: Any player who is ejected from a game (receives a red card) or coach who is ejected from a game must sit out the next Fall Classic League game. Any player or coach who is ejected from the last game of the season (receives a red card) must sit out the next Soccer Maine sanctioned game, whether in a league, tournament, or other event. A player or coach may be suspended for more than one game if the VP of Classic and Executive Director, in concert with the State Referee Administrator determines the initial offense to merit more severe consequences. **All Red Cards and ejections must be reported to the State Referee Administrator and Soccer Maine Executive Director.**



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APPENDIX A – LAWS OF THE GAME

Except as otherwise provided for in these rules; FIFA's "Laws of the Game" apply to all age groups within the Fall Classic League.

For all age groups, goals must be anchored securely to the ground.

Rules: U-08, U-09 & U-10 Modified Rules - 7v7

Law 1 – The Field:

- A. Dimensions: The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 65 yards nor less than 55 yards, and its width not more than 45 yards or less than 35 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width. Recommendation: Length – 60 yards, Width – 40 yards.
- B. Markings:
 1. Distinctive lines necessary, sidelines and goal lines.
 2. Penalty Area – 12 yards out from the goal line x 24 yards wide.
 3. A halfway line can be marked out across the field or otherwise indicated.
 4. While other markings are possible, they are not necessary to ensure the enjoyment and development of the youngsters.
 5. A center circle with an 8-yard radius.
 6. Four corner arcs with a two-foot radius.
 7. Goal Area – 4 yards from the goal line x 8 yards wide.
 8. Goals – **6 feet high and 18 feet wide.**

Law 2 – The Ball: Size 4.

Law 3 – Number of Players:

- A. Maximum number of players on the field at any one time: seven. One of these players must be designated as the goalkeeper.
- B. Playing time: Each player **SHALL** play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.
- C. There will be U-8, U-9 & U-10 girls' teams and U-8, U-9 & U-10 boys' teams. Boys' teams may be co-ed. If there is one boy on a team, it is considered a boys' team.

Law 4 – Player's Equipment: Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

- A. Footwear: Tennis shoes or soft-cleated shoes.
- B. Shin-guards: Mandatory.

Law 5 -- Referee:

- A. Certified referees.
- B. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – Assistant Referees: N/A

Law 7 – Duration of the Game:

- A. The game shall consist of two equal halves of 25 minutes each.



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- B. The half time break shall be five minutes.
- C. If the game is 'tied' at the conclusion of the second half, the match is deemed complete and a "tie" is awarded to both teams.

Law 8 – The Start of Play: Conform to FIFA with the following exception: Opponents must be seven yards from the center mark while the kick-off is in progress.

Law 9 – Ball in and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 -- Offside: There shall be no offside.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

- A. All fouls will result in an **INDIRECT FREE KICK** with the opponents seven yards away from the ball.
- B. The referee must briefly explain **ALL** infractions to the offending player.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

- A. Shall be classified under one heading – **INDIRECT**.
- B. Opponents must be seven yards away from the ball.
- C. A goal may not be scored until the ball has been played or touched by a second player on either team.

Law 14 – Penalty Kicks: No penalty kicks are to be taken during these games.

Law 15 – Throw-in: Conform to FIFA with the following exception: A second throw-in must be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee shall explain the proper method before allowing the player to re-throw.

Law 16 – Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

- A. Goal kick may be taken within two to three yards of the goal.
- B. Opponents must retreat to mid-field when the kick is taken.

Law 17 – Corner Kick Conform to FIFA with the following exception: Opponents must be seven yards away from the ball.

Law 18 – Substitutions: Substitutions shall be unlimited, and be made at mid-field for both players entering and players exiting:

1. Prior to a throw-in -either team
2. Prior to a goal kick –either team
3. After a goal -either team
4. After an injury when the referee stops the game –either team
5. At half time –either team



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Rules: Rules: U-11 & U-12 Modified Rules - 9v9

Law 1 – The Field:

- A. Dimensions: The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 80 yards nor less than 70 yards and its width not more than 55 yards or less than 45 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width. Recommendation: Length - 75 yards, Width - 50 yards.
- B. Markings:
 1. Distinctive lines not more than 5 inches wide.
 2. A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
 3. A center circle with an 8-yard radius.
 4. Four corner arcs with a radius of two feet.
 5. Goal Area - 5 yards out from the goal line x 16 yards wide.
 6. Penalty Area - 14 yards out from the goal line x 36 yards wide. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made ten (10) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.
 7. Goals: Correct Size is 7 feet high by 21 feet wide. 6 feet high by 18 feet wide can be used if no 7v21 foot goal is available. 8x24 foot goals cannot be used for U11/U12. This is a full field 11v11 size and is not appropriate for U11/U12.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size 4.

Law 3 – Number of Players:

- A. Maximum number of players on the field at any one time: nine. One of these players must be designated as the goalkeeper.
- B. U-11 Playing time: each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.
- C. There will be girls' and boys' teams. Boys' teams may be co-ed. If there is one boy on a team, it is considered boys team.

Law 4 – Player's Equipment: Conform to FIFA.

Law 5 -- Referee:

- A. Certified Referees.
- B. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – Assistant Referees:

- A. Certified Assistant Referees.
- B. Use "Club Linesman"

Law 7 – Duration of the Game:

- A. The game shall consist of two equal halves of 30 minutes each.
- B. The half time break shall be five minutes.
- C. U-11 is "non-results oriented."
- D. U-12 is "results oriented."
- E. If the game is 'tied' at the conclusion of the second half, the match is deemed complete and a "tie" is awarded to both teams.



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Law 8 – The Start of Play: Conform to FIFA with the following exception: Opponents must be 8 yards from the center mark while the kick-off is in progress.

Law 9 – The Ball in and Out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 -- Offside: Conform to FIFA.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the following exception: Opponents must be eight yards away from the ball.

Law 14 – Penalty Kicks: Conform to FIFA with the exception that the penalty mark is ten yards from the center of the goal line.

Law 15 – Throw-in: Conform to FIFA.

Law 16 – Goal Kick:

U-12 Conforms to FIFA.

U-11 conforms to FIFA with the following exceptions:

- a. Goal kick may be taken within two to three yards of the goal.

Law 17 – Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA.

Law 18 – Substitutions: Substitutions shall be unlimited, and be made at mid-field for both players entering and players exiting:

1. Prior to a throw-in -either team
2. Prior to a goal kick –either team
3. After a goal -either team
4. After an injury when the referee stops the game –either team
5. At half time –either team



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Rules: Rules: U-13 & U-14 Modified Rules - 11v11

Law 1 – The Field:

- A. Dimensions: The field of play shall be rectangular, its length being not more than 120 yards nor less than 100 yards and its width not more than 80 yards or less than 60 yards. The length in all cases shall exceed the width. Recommendation: Length - 100 yards, Width - 70 yards.

- B. Markings:
 - 8. Distinctive lines not more than 5 inches wide.
 - 9. A halfway line shall be marked out across the field.
 - 10. A center circle with a 10-yard radius.
 - 11. Four corner arcs with a radius of three feet.
 - 12. Goal Area - 6 yards from each goal post and 6 yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.
 - 13. Penalty Area - 18 yards from each goal post and 18 yards into the field of play, joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.
- C. Goals: 8 feet high and 24 feet wide. This is a full size goal.

Law 2 – The Ball: Size 5.

Law 3 – Number of Players:

- A. Maximum number of players on the field at any one time: eleven. One of these players must be designated as the goalkeeper.
- B. There will be girls' and boys' teams. Boys' teams may be co-ed. If there is one boy on a team, it is considered boys team.

Law 4 – Player's Equipment: Conform to FIFA.

Law 5 -- Referee:

- A. Certified Referees.
- B. All rule infractions shall be briefly explained to the offending player.

Law 6 – Assistant Referees:

- A. Certified Assistant Referees.
- B. Use "Club Linesman"

Law 7 – Duration of the Game:

- A. The game shall be divided into two equal halves.
 - U-13 35-minute half
 - U-14 35-minute half
- B. The half-time break shall be five minutes.
- C. If the game is 'tied' at the conclusion of the second half, the match is deemed complete and a "tie" is awarded to both teams.

Law 8 – The Start of Play: Conform to FIFA.



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Law 9 – Ball in and out of Play: Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – Method of Scoring: Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 -- Offside: Conform to FIFA.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct: Conform to FIFA.

Law 13 – Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA (new rule as of 2020)

Law 14 – Penalty Kicks: Conform to FIFA.

Law 15 – Throw-in: Conform to FIFA.

Law 16 – Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA.

Law 17 – Corner Kick: Conform to FIFA.

Law 18 – Substitutions: Substitutions shall be unlimited, and be made at mid-field for both players entering and players exiting:

1. Prior to a throw-in -either team
2. Prior to a goal kick –either team
3. After a goal -either team
4. After an injury when the referee stops the game –either team
5. At half time –either team



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APPENDIX B - AGE GROUP CHART

2026 FALL CLASSIC LEAGUE

U8	8/1/2018-7/31/2019
U9	8/1/2017-7/31/2018
U10	8/1/2016-7/31/2017
U11	8/1/2015-7/31/2016
U12	8/1/2014-7/31/2015
U13	8/1/2013-7/31/2014
U14	8/1/2012-7/31/2013

Players whose birthdates are later than 7/31/2019 cannot be rostered to a team in the 2026 Fall Classic League.

Players whose birthdates are prior to 8/1/2012 cannot be rostered to a team in the 2026 Fall Classic League.