

## MARLBORO KICK-OFF CLASSIC – 2026 TOURNAMENT RULES

### GENERAL RULES

- ★ The Tournament Committee, the Marlboro Soccer Association, CM19 Soccer, MSA Boosters, Inc. and/or the NJYSA will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by any team, club or individual if the Tournament is canceled in whole or in part.
- ★ The Tournament Committee's interpretation of these rules shall be final and binding.
- ★ The Tournament Committee reserves the right to decide on all matters pertaining to this tournament.
- ★ First Place Team Trophies and player medals and Second Place Team Trophies and player medals will be awarded to the winners and runners-up in each division.
- ★ All U-8 to U-9 teams will receive participation mementos for those teams that do not receive placement awards.
- ★ Notarized, current, Medical Releases for all players must be available for review at the fields upon request. Even if medical releases are not required by your State organization, Marlboro Soccer Association requires them. All teams must acknowledge they are in possession of medical releases for all players.
- ★ A copy of a certified roster must be presented at Registration. No players may be added after registration.
- ★ Smoking, pets and alcoholic beverages are not permitted on any field or at any complex.

### REFUNDS

- ★ In general, refunds will not be given to teams that withdraw after acceptances have been acknowledged. However, the Tournament Committee reserves the right to make all final determinations as to whether or not a team is entitled to a refund of the Tournament fee.
- ★ If for any reason the Tournament is cancelled before the start of the Tournament, it is our policy to refund 80% of a team's entry fee. If the Tournament is postponed or rescheduled, all teams accepted will be given the opportunity to withdraw from the revised date of the Tournament with a full refund of their entry fees.

### ELIGIBILITY

- ★ The competition is open to accepted teams composed of a maximum of 18 players meeting the age limit of the specified division, except for U8, U9 and U10 teams whose roster size will be governed by your State Association.
- ★ Each team must be registered with a State Soccer Association and with a league affiliated with the USSF or National equivalent. Teams must have valid player passes for the 2025-26 or 2026-27 year.
- ★ A maximum of three (3) guest players will be allowed. Players from the same club, but not rostered to the team (i.e. "playing up") will be considered guest players. Secondary players shall be considered guest players. Guest players shall be included in determining the maximum roster size. No player is permitted to play for multiple teams and may not appear on multiple rosters unless approved by the tournament director with valid reasoning.

- ★ Out-of-State teams must have a copy of the Permission to Travel form approved and signed by their State Association.
- ★ Player passes and coaches' passes will be checked online prior to the start of the tournament. Referees have discretion to check passes prior to the start of the game. Players who do not present passes at each field will not be permitted to play.

## **LAWS OF THE GAME**

- ★ Unless modified by the Tournament rules, all games will be played in accordance with the 2025-2026 IFAB Laws of the Game.

## **FIELDS**

- ★ The size of the field will be whatever the physical arrangements permit. Each team's players and coaches will take position on the opposite side of the field to the spectators (as space permits and at the final discretion of the Site Director).
- ★ Spectators must remain a minimum of three (3) yards from the touchlines. No spectator will be allowed to remain behind or near goal lines. Coaches must remain within ten (10) yards of the half way line on their team's half of the field and a minimum of three (3) yards back from the touchline. This will be the team's "technical area," whether or not lines are drawn.
- ★ Teams must wear uniforms with individual numbers on the shirt. Uniform numbers must coincide with the listing on the team's official tournament roster. Teams are expected to have alternate shirts or pinnies to accommodate color conflicts between the teams or the referees. If there is a conflict, the designated home team will be required to change. In some cases, the designated visiting team may also be asked to change. Shirt changes by the teams are at the discretion of the referee.

## **EQUIPMENT**

- ★ No jewelry will be worn by players (earrings, necklaces, watches, combs, metal barrettes, etc.)
- ★ Eyeglasses should be either sports goggle type or made of safety glass or plastic, and must be held in place with some type of elastic band. Players will not be permitted to play with an uncovered rigid cast. Normal soft braces without any hard exposed material will be permitted, with the approval of the referee. Knee or other type braces with external buckles or straps must be covered with the soft material that was supplied with the brace and must be worn.
- ★ No metal cleats will be allowed on any field. Referees will check all players for proper footwear. Players must wear shin guards or they will be prohibited from playing. Socks must be pulled up to cover shin guards.
- ★ At each game, the home team is responsible for providing the Tournament game ball which was supplied to them at Registration. Teams are required to be at the game site 30 minutes before the scheduled kick-off time. Coaches' passes, player passes and Tournament approved game cards will be checked by the field coordinator 15 minutes before game time. Each team will be responsible for ensuring that the game sites remain clean.

## **DELIBERATE HEADERS - U11 AND YOUNGER**

- ★ In a U11 or younger game, players are not permitted to deliberately head the ball. The referees will be instructed to follow the New Jersey Youth Soccer guidelines regarding deliberate heading in games.
- ★ There will be no misconduct as a result of a deliberate header (no red card if a deliberate header denies a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity).

#### **BUILD OUT LINE FOR 7V7 - U8 TO U10**

- ★ On a goal kick, a defensive free kick inside the penalty area, or when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball with their hands, the opposing team must move behind the build-out line until the ball is put back into play.
- ★ The goalkeeper can pass, throw, or roll the ball to put it back into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed).
- ★ On a goal kick or when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball with their hands, the opposing team may cross the build-out line when:
  - The goalkeeper changes possession from their hand to play the ball with their feet, or a second touch is made by another player on the goalkeeper's team, or 3. the ball comes to a complete stop, or 4. the ball crosses the buildout line.

#### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

- ★ Regardless of weather conditions, coaches and their teams must appear on the field of play, ready to play as scheduled.
- ★ Failure to appear will result in automatic forfeiture of the game. Only referees and/or the Tournament Directors can cancel or postpone a game.
- ★ In the event of inclement weather, the Tournament Committee shall have the authority to change games as follows:
  - Relocate or reschedule any game(s).
  - Change the duration of any game(s).
  - Cancel any game(s) which have no bearing on the determination of the division winner or runner-up.
- ★ Recommence or restart a game of which less than one-half has been played.
- ★ Should inclement weather force cancellation of a game after one-half of play has been concluded, the game shall be considered official and the score at that point shall be the final score.

AGE GROUP	BIRTHYEAR	# OF FIELD PLAYERS	BALL SIZE	GAME LENGTH
U8	Aug 1, 2018-July 31, 2019	7	4	25
U9	Aug 1, 2017-July 31, 2018	7	4	25
U10	Aug 1, 2016-July 31, 2017	7	4	25
U11	Aug 1, 2015-July 31, 2016	9	4	30
U12	Aug 1, 2014-July 31, 2015	9	4	30

U13	Aug 1, 2013-July 31, 2014	11	5	30
U14-U15	Aug 1, 2011-July 31, 2013	11	5	30

- ★ There will be a five (5) minute break for half-time at all age levels
- ★ Depending on conditions, the Tournament Directors may mandate water breaks.
  - These breaks will normally take place at the midpoint of each half.
  - At a normal stoppage of play, the referee will announce the water break and play will restart based on the reason play had stopped.
  - Even if not mandated, both teams can agree to have water breaks and should inform the referee before the game begins.
  - These breaks should be brief as the game clock will not be stopped during the break.

### **SUBSTITUTIONS**

- ★ Substitutions, with the permission of the referee, may be made without limit at ANY STOPPAGE of play.
- ★ In order to avoid delays, substitutes must be up and ready at the halfway line when the stoppage occurs. At the referee's discretion, if the team with possession of the restart is looking to restart quickly, the referee may delay the substitution until the next stoppage.

### **PROTESTS**

- ★ No protests will be allowed. Decisions of the referees and Tournament Directors are final.

### **REFEREES**

- ★ The Tournament Committee has made a commitment to the use of the three-man referee system for U11 and older games. All referees will be currently registered with USSF.

### **CONDUCT**

- ★ Players, coaches and spectators are expected to conduct themselves within the spirit of the game, as well as the letter of the law.
- ★ The Tournament Committee encourages the exchange of patches between teams. This can be done as a continuation of good sportsmanship and good conduct by the players at the handshake following the end of each game.
- ★ Referees will report all yellow and/or red cards to the field coordinator. Players, coaches and spectators ejected from a field by the referee must immediately leave the field area. Anyone receiving a red card will also be ineligible to attend the next scheduled game. In the event that a red card is issued during a team's last scheduled Tournament game, the Tournament Committee will forward the offender's pass, together with the Referee's Report, to the appropriate State Office per USSF guidelines.
- ★ Anyone receiving a red card for fighting will be ineligible for any remaining tournament play.
- ★ If a coach is coaching more than one team and receives a red card for either team, they will be suspended from coaching any team until they clear the one game suspension with the team with which the red card was issued.

- ★ Any individual ejected from the field who refuses to follow ejection orders will risk their associated team having to forfeit the game.
- ★ Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their team's spectators and upon request of the referee will be responsible for removing any spectator that the referee has determined may no longer remain at the field.
- ★ Incidents of misconduct will be reported by the Tournament Committee to the team's respective League or Affiliation, as well as to the New Jersey State Youth Soccer Association.
- ★ The Tournament Committee reserves the right to suspend any player, coach or team from the Tournament for behaving irresponsibly.

## GAME SCORES

- ★ All teams will play every other team within their specific flight unless the number of teams per flight makes this impossible.
- ★ Each team will be awarded points on the following basis:
  - 3 points for a win.
  - 1 point for a tie.
  - Zero (0) points for each Loss
- ★ Bonus points will be awarded on the following basis:
  - One (1) point for each shutout.
    - 0-0 tie is excluded.

***In recognition of fair play, there is a six (6) goal differential. If you go over the 6 goal differential your team will forfeit all tie-breakers. The MSA Tournament Committee reserves the right to log games as a forfeit if it's found a team is deliberately running the score up on an opponent.***

## DIVISION WINNERS

- ★ In the event of a four (4) team division, the First and Second place teams (as determined by point totals in their first three (3) games only and/or the following tie-breaking rules) will play each other in a Final game which will determine the division Winner and Runner-Up.
- ★ In the event of teams tied for a position in this Final game, the following tie-breaking rules will apply:
  - Teams must not exceed six (6) goal differential
  - Head to head
  - Most wins
  - Most shutouts
  - Goal differential (Max +3 goals per game)
  - Fewest goals allowed
  - Penalty Kick Shootout, to take place on a separate field at a later time at the Tournament Directors' discretion for championship games. FIFA rules apply.
- ★ In a flight of 4 teams there will be 1 group of 4 teams. The two teams with the highest number of points in the group will compete in the championship game. The same tie-breaker rules will apply if 2 or more teams are tied in points.

- ★ In a flight of 8 teams, there will be 2 groups of 4 teams. The team with the highest number of points in each group will compete in the championship game. The same tie-breaker rules will apply if 2 or more teams are tied in points.
- ★ In a flight of 6 teams, there will be 2 groups of 3 teams. Each team will play 2 groups. The 1st and 2nd place teams advanced to a Semi-Final with the winners of the Semi-Final advancing to a Final
- ★ In a flight with 5 (five) each team will play 4 games. The winner for these flights will be determined by points as outlined above. The same tiebreaker rules will apply if 2 or more teams are tied in points.
- ★ The above procedure will also be used in the selection of any "third place" and "consolidation" games, if applicable, with the exception that a coin flip will be used for any consolidation game instead of a penalty kick shootout.
- ★ In the event of a game indicated on the schedule as "Semi-Final" or "Final", the winner will be determined by FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark on the same field immediately at the conclusion of the game.

### **GAME AND SCORE REPORTING**

- ★ Each coach is responsible for verifying the accuracy of the game report presented by the referee to the field coordinator before the coordinator leaves the game site and reports the results of the match. No changes will be accepted once the game report has been filed unless approved by the Tournament Directors.

### **FORFEITS OR FAILURE TO SHOW**

- A team shall be allowed a ten (10) minute grace period after the scheduled kick-off time before the game is awarded to their opponent.
  - ◆ A minimum of seven (7) players constitutes a team and if seven (7) players are present, the game may not be delayed past the scheduled starting time (five (5) players for U8, U9 and U10 teams).
  - ◆ At any time a team should fall below the minimum player count mentioned above, the game will be forfeited to their opponent and the score at the time of the forfeit will stand.
- In no case shall a team which has forfeited a game be declared a Division winner.
- A forfeit shall be awarded as three (3) points for a win and zero (0) points for a loss. Any team withdrawing or being ejected during a game will be considered withdrawn or ejected from the entire Tournament, and will be ineligible for any trophies or awards. All games for such teams, whether played or un-played, will be considered 1-0 losses against such teams.

### **GOLF CART POLICY**

- ★ All drivers must have a valid driver's license. No drivers under the age of 18 (preferably 21) can drive. Do not let unauthorized persons use the vehicle.
- ★ Drivers and all passengers should keep all body parts inside the cart while the vehicle is in motion.
- ★ Carry only the number of passengers for which there are seats. No passengers in the cargo area.

- ★ Be aware of driving conditions and reduce speed accordingly. There is a mandatory reduction of speed when encountering hills, steep turns, pedestrian crossings, motor vehicles and inclement weather
- ★ Set the parking brake and remove the key from the vehicle when it is not in use. Return the vehicle to its proper place when finished using it.
- ★ Drivers may not be under the influence of any substance that may impact driving ability or response time. Coverage is for use of the carts during daylight hours only.
- ★ DRIVE SAFELY AT ALL TIMES

