

# CAROLINA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

GAME DAY HANDBOOK



The goal of this handbook is to provide assistance to clubs, coaches and managers to ensure the Carolina Champions League operates smoothly and is a positive experience for all involved – players, coaches, managers, club officials, referees, and parents.

When competing in Carolina Champions League Programs, the club is responsible for overseeing their coaches, players, parents and club personnel – administratively, on and around the field. Each club is responsible for ensuring all club members understand and meet the following requirements and follow Carolina Champions League Rules and Code of Ethics.





# Carolina Champions League Game day Rules and Regulations

## **Section 1: Competition Rules**

### **1.1 - Playing Rules**

All games under league jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by the Carolina Champions League which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/ U.S. Soccer (USSF) except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA or USSF.

### **1.2 – Power Rankings**

Due to many teams having unbalanced schedules both in terms of number of games played and strength of schedule, Carolina Champions League will determine power rankings in lieu of a league table. These power rankings at the end of each season will determine a division winner.



### 1.3 - Tie Breakers

When determining power rankings, if two teams are difficult to separate, the following may be used as tiebreakers:

1. "Head to head" points (win/lose/draw) between teams
2. "Head to head" Goal Differential between teams
3. Overall Goal Differential (up to 4)
4. Goals for (up to 4)
5. Goals against (up to 4)
6. Most points against highest non-tied team in group
7. Best goal differential against highest non-tied team in group
8. Most shutouts
9. Least red cards
10. Coin toss

**1.4 - Fields** The playing field used by each team must be lined according to USSF standards with goals (games can be played as long as both goals are the same size), nets, and flags.

**In all small sided formats (4v4, 7v7, and 9v9), the use of cones is permitted for the formation of the field lines.**



## **1.6 – Heading Game Rule**

**For U12 and below, when a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick 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. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.**

***This rule shall apply to the age groups of U12 and below. Players who are playing up will play according to the rules of the age group in which they are playing. It is the club's responsibility to understand the effects of this rule on players playing up.***

## **1.7 – No Re-Entry Protocol (for Head Injury)**

**In accordance with the US Soccer return to play guidelines, any player removed from the field for a suspected head injury will not be allowed to return to the field of play unless cleared by a Healthcare Professional.**



### 1.9 - Substitutions

As per FIFA guidelines, unlimited substitutions are allowed in all age groups. However, teams may substitute only with the referee's permission. Substitutes must wait on the sideline (off of the field of play) until the field player has left the field of play and/or the referee has indicated the substitute may enter the field of play. Players who are being substituted must leave the field at the nearest point of the boundary line unless otherwise directed by the referee.

*Substitutions by either team are allowed at any stoppage of play with the permission of the referee. Referees will be instructed not to allow substitutions that are deemed "excessive" or of a "time wasting" nature. Please be respectful of the integrity of the game and do not use the free substitution rules as a means to disrupt the match.*

### 1.11 - Playoffs for League

For matches that need a winner, the team with the most goals after regulation time will be the winner. If the match is tied after regulation for U9-U19 teams, two five minute periods will be played. Teams will have a 5-minute break before the first overtime. After 5 minutes, teams will change sides, with no break, and play the remaining 5 minutes. If the game is still tied after the two overtime periods, then kicks from the mark per FIFA will determine the winner. *Please make sure you arrive for your game knowing if the game can end in a draw or if a winning team is required.*

### 1.12 - Incomplete games

In the event that a game cannot be completed, the game will stand if half or m



### **1.12 - Incomplete games**

In the event that a game cannot be completed, the game will stand if half or more of the game was played; provided, however that if any team is directly responsible for the termination of the game, no matter how much of the match remains, due to poor sportsmanship towards a referee, opposing fans, or opposing players, the team will be required to forfeit the match. This could also lead to other sanctions set forth by the Carolina Champions League Office. If there is no result, and the match is suspended prior to the expiration of one half, the game shall be replayed at a time agreed upon by the competing teams in consultation with the Carolina Champions League Office. *Referees are required to submit an incident report for all matches that are ended early.*

### **1.13 - No-Shows**

A no-show occurs when a team willfully does not show up to a game agreed to by the teams. One no-show *may* result in the offending team being terminated from the league. Two no-shows in a single season shall result in the offending club's termination from the league.

### **1.14 Forfeits**

A forfeit occurs when a team is unable to attend a scheduled game and the teams are unable to come to terms on a time to reschedule (after the scheduling deadline has passed). A forfeit will result in a 3-0 win to the team, not at fault. A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident, or act of god (weather, etc) should immediately notify the opponent and the League Office. In these circumstances, the League Office will review and rule on the situation.



### **1.15 - Protests**

Protests regarding the match conditions (i.e. field condition, etc.) must be made prior to the start of the match and be clearly written on the official game card. Protests regarding the use of illegal players may be made prior to or following the match and be clearly written on the game card. Specific referee decisions cannot be protested. No match condition protests will be allowed at Carolina Champions League hosted events. All protested games should be sent to the appropriate event coordinator, who will forward to the League Office for a ruling.

### **1.16 – Fines**

**The Carolina Champions League Office may impose the following fines:**

- Team drops out of the league after final brackets are posted: \$250
- Team drops out of the league after 1<sup>st</sup> game is played: \$100 per game missed
- No-show/ Forfeit within 72 hours to a scheduled game: \$300



## **Section 2: Rosters**

### **2.1 - Player Registration**

Players shall be registered according to US Club Soccer rules.

### **2.2 - Game Roster**

Each team must create an official US Club roster. No matter how many players are listed on a team's roster, only 22 players for U13 and up, 16 players for U11-U12, and 14 players for U9-U10 may be used for Carolina Champions League matches.

Each roster will be locked after a specific date determined by the Carolina Champions League office. Rosters will be checked very thoroughly before a playoff game has taken place.

### **2.3 - US Club Soccer Player Pass**

All players and coaches must present their US Club Soccer player pass to the referee prior to the match. If the individual picture is not on the ID card and the card is not laminated, the individual will not be eligible for the match.

### **2.4 - Forgotten US Club Player Credentials**

If a team forgets their US Club player passes for a Carolina Champions League game, the game should be played under protest. Any players that wish to play must have a picture taken prior to the game and submitted to the League Office to verify that the players were eligible to participate. If this is a continuous issue with a team or club, the league office may remove that team from the league.

## 2.5 - Guest Players

No guest players are allowed in the Carolina Champions League.



## 2.6 - Illegal Players

Any player who does not appear on the official US Club roster or have a valid US Club Soccer Player Pass issued by the same club at the time of the match shall be considered an illegal player.

Any team using, **or attempting to use,** an illegal player shall forfeit the game, the coach of the team using the illegal player will be suspended from all Carolina Champions League competitions for one year, and the club of the illegal player will incur a \$500 fine.



## **Section 3: Game Day Procedures**

### **3.1 - Game Day Procedures**

Each manager should have the following at every game:

- US Club Medical Release forms
- US Club Soccer roster of team
- US Club Soccer passes for its players and team officials
- Provide and pay current year licensed USSF referees

### **3.2 - Post-Game Procedure**

Home and Visiting team Responsibilities:

- Coach or manager must sign the Game Card following the game.
- If a red card is given, see red card procedure below – this requires immediate action from the center referee and manager.

### **3.3 - Personnel on the bench**

A maximum of 3 team officials are allowed in each team's technical area. Team officials must have a US Club pass in order to sit in the technical area. It is highly recommended that teams have several credentialed coaches or managers with passes for the team just in case something happens to the head coach. A US Club pass makes a person eligible to coach any team in the club for which that coach or manager is credentialed.

### **3.4 – Score reports**

Following the match, the officials and each coach need to sign the game card. The home team will collect the Game Card and deliver it to the Carolina Champions League HQ tent.



### **3.5 - Red Card Procedure**

**In any game where a red card is issued, the referee must notify the Carolina Champions League office within 24 hours. The player card can be returned to the team as long as the Referee Send Off Report shows the infraction, the player's name, and ID number.**