

# Sports Monster Soccer Rules

## SAMPLE OF GAME RULES TO LIVE BY:

1. **Starting the Game:** Please try to arrive early so that we can start on time. Games are to be started no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled start time or forfeit goals shall be assessed as outlined below against the team unable to field a squad. The schedule will show home/visitor for that week. Kick-off will be determined by flipping a coin with the winning team determining side or possession. Teams will change sides each period/half. Official time is started 5 minutes into the official game time and will run regardless of whether the game started on time.

*Warm-up Time:* Our goal is to have matches start on time. So, warm-up time will be limited to a brief time on field. However, once the preceding match has concluded, please feel free to practice until such time as the referee is ready to start the match.

*Warm-up Area:* For outdoor leagues, warm-up around field should be fine so long as you do not interfere with play on our field(s) or other groups. For indoor leagues, it is unlikely there will be space to warm-up. But be sure to ask your SMC rep first before using any space indoor.

2. **Method of Scoring:** Single point goals score all games. Games are won by a one goal advantage. The referee prior to the second half and should announce the score following each goal scored.

Goals are scored when the ball has completely crossed the plane of the goal line. All goals will be called at referee's discretion.

Tie games will be scored as such during the regular season. Playoff games ending in a tie will progress to a shoot-out to determine a winner

Scoring discrepancies in the standings? Contact your SMC local office for clarification.

3. **Game Length:** SMC soccer match times vary by location and skill level. Our most popular outdoor format is an hour match time played with two fifty (25) minute halves. Please check your location for scheduled game duration.

*Special Note:* Should extreme weather or other factors limit normal scheduled game duration, SMC shall consider one half of a game played as officially recorded.

*Slaughter Rule:* Ouch! It hurts to get slaughtered so we have a rule in place that a match is stopped once a team reaches a 12-goal lead over their opponent. Teams may opt to continue play for fun if time permits but the official scoring shall cease once a slaughter has been reached.

4. **Time-out:** This is soccer! There are no time-outs in soccer. If you need a break, you can rest your butt on the pine.
5. **Playing Area:** The playing area should be properly defined and all space between, and including, the lines are considered within play. If a ball goes beyond the marked or understood playable distance, the referee shall declare the ball “Out of Play” and that ball is dead.

Indoor: Any ball that is sent out-of-play will result in an indirect free kick at that spot.

Outdoor: Any ball that is sent out-of-play along the sidelines will result in a throw-in awarded to the opposing team. A ball sent out of play along the touch/goal lines, shall result in a corner kick (if sent out by defending team) or goal kick (if sent out by offensive team).

6. **Restart for out of bounds balls:**

Throw-Ins: Ball is kicked/touched out of bounds along the sideline. Possession is given to the opposing team. To complete a proper/clean throw-in:

- a) Ball **MUST** be thrown in a fluid motion from back to front directly over the head.
- b) Ball **MUST** start behind the head for a clean throw.
- c) Arms must be in tandem, as any leading of one arm will be called illegal.
- d) Both feet must be in contact with the ground upon release of the ball.
- e) The lead foot must **NOT** entirely cross into the field of play upon release.
- f) Goals may not be scored directly from a throw-in.

Goal Kick: Ball is kicked/touched out of bounds along the goal line by the offensive team. The defensive team gets possession by kicking the ball back into play at any point along the six-yard box. Yes, any player can kick the ball. No, the ball may not be touched by a second player until it crosses the 18-yard box. Any infraction will result in a re-kick.

Corner Kick: Ball is kicked/touched out of bounds along the goal line by the defensive team. The offensive team gets possession by kicking the ball back into play at either end/corner. Ball may be played immediately upon contact. Goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

7. **Match Substitutions:** Each outdoor team is allowed unlimited substitutions on any goal kick, their corner kick, their throw-in and both teams may sub at the restart. Subs are **NOT** allowed on direct or indirect free kicks unless removal of injured player requires a substitute. The referee **MUST** be notified as to when subs are entering the pitch. Failure to notify the referee will result in a yellow card and other illegal substitutions will result in a yellow card for that player making the sub. Goalies may sub but must announce their substitution whenever it occurs.

Each indoor team can have unlimited “flying” substitutions, except in the case of the goalie who can only be replaced when the ball is not in play. A “flying” substitution is one which is made when the ball is still in play and for which the following conditions shall be observed: The player leaving the pitch shall do so from the touchline crossing over at the sector called the substitution zone. The player entering the pitch shall do so from the substitution zone but not until the player leaving the pitch has passed completely over the touchline.

8. **Gender Ratio:** SMC leagues vary by format and are noted below. Women may not participate in SMC leagues designated for men unless expressly granted by the local office with notification provided to all teams. Please do NOT bring a woman to play in a men’s match without receiving local approval first as she will not be allowed to play.
- a) Coed 11: 7 men and 4 women -- to avoid forfeit: 7 players present
  - b) Coed 8: 5 men and 3 women -- to avoid forfeit: 5 players present
  - c) Coed 7: 5 men and 2 women – to avoid forfeit: 4 players present
  - d) Coed 6: 4 men and 2 women -- to avoid forfeit: 4 players present
  - e) Coed 5: 3 men and 2 women -- to avoid forfeit: 3 players present

Yes, if a coed team shows up with the minimum permitted roster and they are all guys, a legit match WILL be played. If male players are missing, a team may opt to field more women. If female players are missing, it is up to the discretion of the opposing team whether more men will be allowed during the regular season. Once agreed upon by the opposing captain to allow extra male player(s), the decision is binding through the remainder of the game. However, upon the late arrival of extra female player(s), that team MUST remove corresponding extra male players and substitute in the newly arrived female players.

SMC outlined gender ratio must be followed during the playoffs. No exceptions.

9. **Offsides:** Ok, here we go...First, there is NO offsides for any leagues playing less than 11v11 format. Your location may have a midfield line but it is not used for anything other than the marker for starting the game/half or re-starting following a goal.

For 11v11 leagues, offsides is called at the discretion of the referee. An infraction is assessed upon contact with the ball, NOT when the ball is in transit or arrives. An infraction will result in an indirect free kick to be awarded to the offended team. The referee will indicate the infraction. Note: It is NOT an offense in itself to be in an offside position.

- a) Offensive player is nearer to the opponent’s goal line than both the ball and the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last opponent positioned in the opponent’s half of the field is the criteria for the call.
- b) Offensive player is in an offsides position upon the ball being played to that player. Any indirect or direct free kicks as well as through the course of regular play can result in an offsides call.

Player will NOT be called offsides if they are not, in the referee's opinion, part of the play. An example would be a player on the left side of the field and a ball is played to the right side. Player will not be called offsides if the ball is directed to them via a defensive play.

Offsides is not applicable to a player receiving: a corner kick or throw-in!

Do not stop play on the expectation of an offsides penalty being called. Continue to play until you hear the whistle. Also, if you are playing in a match with one main referee, keep in mind that he/she will most likely be behind play and will have a different viewpoint angle – so allow for some defensive space as a cushion.

10. **Goalies:** Goalies are permitted for all outdoor leagues and for all indoor leagues played with standard indoor goals. For small court indoor leagues, the last defender may stand in goal but cannot use his/her hands.

Goalies must wear a jersey that is unique to their team and also to their opponent's jersey colors. It is recommended that goalies come to matches with two jerseys. Goalies may wear padded apparel and protective gloves. No metal protective wear is permitted.

11. **Cards:** No, not the Hallmark/American Greetings kind; these are the kind that get you into trouble. If given a Yellow Card, that player is to leave the game immediately and a substitute player may be brought in. If no substitute is available, the team will play shorthanded. The carded player may return after two minutes upon signal of referee. A Red Card or second Yellow Card shall result in that player leaving the game immediately and no substitute may be brought in at any time.

If a player receives three Yellow cards during the season, he/she MUST sit out the next game. If a player received two Red cards (hard or soft) during the season, he/she will not be permitted to participate in the playoffs. Please check with your local soccer league manager if you have a question on your card status.

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13. **Free Kicks:** Upon a called foul or misconduct penalty (see below), the referee will award either an indirect free kick or a direct free kick to be played by the offended team.

- a) A direct free kick is one with which a goal can be scored directly. Referee will indicate a direct free kick with one arm pointed in the direction of the kick
- b) An indirect free kick must contact at least one other player before a goal can be scored. Referee will indicate an indirect free kick with one arm raised and usually will point the other arm in the direction of the kick.

**14. Fouls & Penalties:** The following is a list of fouls, punishable by awarding a direct free kick to the opposing team?

- a) Kicking or attempting to kick an opponent
- b) Tripping an opponent
- c) Jumping an opponent
- d) Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
- e) Striking or attempting to strike an opponent, or spitting at him/her
- f) Holding an opponent (in other than a loving fashion)
- g) Pushing an opponent
- h) Handling of the ball – ALL hand balls are direct kicks!
- i) Slide tackling an opponent from behind (all skill levels)
- j) Slide tackling an opponent (all leagues except Striker level games played with 45-minute halves)
- g) Dressing like The Wiggles and leading the team in a sing along.

If any of the above offenses occur within the defender's goal area (18-yard box), a penalty kick will result. Any of the above offenses may result in an immediate yellow or red card to the offending player at the referee's discretion.

If a player is guilty of the following, the opposing team will be awarded an indirect free kick:

- f) Obstruction
- g) Dangerous play
- h) Foul or abusive language

**15. Penalty Kicks:** A penalty kick will be taken at the penalty mark with only the kicker and the opposing goalie on line of the goal. All other players must be outside the 18- yard box and behind the ball.

The referee will signal the kick by whistle. Goalie may not move until the ball is contacted. An infraction shall result in a re-kick if there is no score.

**16. Fighting:** Not tolerated. Any player involved in a physical altercation will be Red Carded and expelled immediately from the game and that team will play down a player for the remainder of the game.

Involved player(s) faces possible suspension to be determined by Sports Monster. A penalty kick will be awarded to the offended team. A second offense by any player will automatically result in league expulsion.

17. **Uniforms/Attire:** By the advertised Week 2 matches, Sports Monster requires each team wear same colored shirts. They don't have to be fancy – you can go to Kmart, Wall-Mart, Sears, etc. and buy a bunch of same color tee shirts and maybe permanent marker the numbers on the back. Or you can go out and get a really nice set. We just need you all to look the same. If placing numbers, numbers must be clearly visible from 50 feet away and should be at least 8 inches tall.

Do not put on masking/duct/electrical taped numbers onto shirts. That stuff falls off when you get all sweaty...and you like it sweaty...and then the field has to be cleaned up afterwards and during the match we don't know who's who out there.

Does EVERYONE have to have a same colored permanent shirt on the pitch? No. The goalie MUST be in an opposite color (to both teams).

Everyone else playing MUST be in the same color and not the same "color family." We will NOT referee a rainbow assortment of candy flavors out there. This means that if your team wears Kelly Green shirts, do not show up in Yellowish Green shirt you like from Brazil or Forest Green or Lime or a white tee shirt with some greenish snot on the front. It's confusing to the referees to try to figure out who is who.

If your team does pick up sub(s) from another team to help out, then that player MUST be in the same uniform as your team. If you do not have extra shirt(s) for them, then they cannot play. If they step foot on the pitch, they will be promptly sent off with a warning and then Yellow Carded.

Do teams have to wear matching shorts and/or socks? No. SMC leagues are still largely recreational so we do not require the full ensemble. We need you to wear the same colored shirts so the referees can quickly tell who's on which team to make quick calls and for the league to keep track of Yellow and Red card infractions.

We recommend teams bring both their jersey/shirts as well as a light or dark shirt (whichever is opposite) in case the other team matches too closely.

Do players have to wear shin guards? Yes. All players are required to wear shin guards and socks should fully cover the guard.

Soccer specific shoes are encouraged but not mandatory. Molded rubber cleats are permitted for outdoor leagues. NO metal cleats permitted. Indoor facilities vary by location as to what footwear is permitted.

Failure to be in proper uniform shall result in a warning first to individual player(s). Subsequent infractions that match by same/other players shall result in a Yellow Card.

For full teams in violation for not wearing shin guards, the match shall be called as a forfeit and discontinued. For full teams in violation for not wearing same colored permanent numbered shirts, the match shall be called a forfeit but the match will still be played and refereed as a scrimmage.

## **18. Other Rules:**

- 1) No attacking players in the wall on free kicks. Specifically, when there is a wall of three or more players, attackers are not allowed within one meter of it. Any attacking player found to be less than one meter from the wall when a free kick is taken will be penalized and the other team will be rewarded with an indirect free kick.
- 2) Goal Kicks: Previously, the ball was deemed 'dead' until it left the penalty area. Now the ball is in play as soon as it is touched, and it can be played inside the 18-yard box. Opposition players are still not allowed in the box until the ball is played.
- 3) Substitutions: Players must leave the nearest point. Players who are being taken off and replaced must now leave the pitch by the nearest point on the touchline.
- 4) Handball: Accidental offences deemed free kicks. There will be no goal in cases where the ball accidentally strikes a player's hand before crossing over the line. Similarly, if a player has accidentally handled the ball and created an advantage or subsequently scores, they will be penalized with a free kick.
  - a) Deliberate handball remains an offence.
  - b) The following 'handball' situations, even if accidental, will be a free kick:
    - i) The ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand/arm
    - ii) A player gains control/possession of the ball after it has touched their hand/arm and then scores, or creates a goal-scoring opportunity
    - iii) The ball touches a player's hand/arm which has made their body unnaturally bigger
    - iv) The ball touches a player's hand/arm when it is above their shoulder (unless the player has deliberately played the ball which then touches their hand/arm)
  - c) The following will not usually be a free kick, unless they are one of the above situations:
    1. The ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from their own head/body/foot or the head/body/foot of another player who is close/near
    2. The ball touches a player's hand/arm which is close to their body and has not made their body unnaturally bigger
    3. If a player is falling and the ball touches their hand/arm when it is between their body and the ground to support the body (but not extended to make the body bigger)
    4. If the goalkeeper attempts to 'clear' (release into play) a throw-in or deliberate kick from a team-mate but the 'clearance' fails, the goalkeeper can then handle the ball
- 5) Goalkeeper: Must have at least part of one foot on or in line with the goal-line during penalty kicks.

19. **Have Fun:** This is your leisure time, enjoy it. You're not playing for money, only the pride and prestige a Sports Monster championship brings and the adoration of thousands of area residents wishing they were you, a Sports Monster.

**Here are some handy regulations for SMC Soccer leagues:**

1. **Starting the Match:** Please try to arrive early so that we can start on time. Games are to be started no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled start time or forfeit goals shall be assessed as outlined below against the team unable to field a squad. If games do start later than 5 minutes into the hour because of tardy or unprepared players, you may find your match to be less than the advertised halves. If matches do not start on time because of your referee, please notify the local office.

2. **Match Scoring:** All matches are scored by goals. Goals are:

One goal scores = One goal

Matches are won by a 1 goal margin. Ties during regular season are recorded as such due to time constraints. Playoff games ending in a tie will have a shoot-out – a series of five (5) penalty shots – For coed leagues the 5 kickers must include at least 2 women. Kickers may be in any order. If still tied after first 5 kickers, there will be a single boy-girl-boy-girl-boy (order) penalty shot sudden death.

Contact SMC rep with any game rules or fault infraction questions regarding scoring.

3. **Season Ranking:** Teams will be ranked on overall won-loss record. Teams with the same won-loss record will be ranked based on higher goal differential. The goal differential is the total number of goals scored AGAINST each team subtracted by the total number of goals scored FOR that team. The team with the higher number will be ranked higher. Head to head scores are ONLY considered if there remains a tie for W/L and goal differential.

4. **Forfeits:** All around bad news. This is a big no-no and all will be subject to a caning when they show up the next week. Because there can be legitimate reasons for arriving late, Sports Monster does permit late starts BUT the offending/late teams shall start the match with the following point deficits:

2 goals down 11 minutes into the match and play shorter halves or one extended period  
4 goals down 16 minutes into the hour and start as second half game lost  
21 minutes into the hour

The referee should get a scrimmage playing 10 minutes into the hour. Upon late arrival/ready to play, the referee will commence the match and confirm what the starting score is for a late match. The match will start as noted above for late starts.

- a) 11: To avoid forfeit: 7 rostered players present
- b) 8: To avoid forfeit: 5 rostered players present



- c) 6: To avoid forfeit: 4 rostered players present
- d) 5: To avoid forfeit: 3 rostered players present

Registered/rostered players are those that have signed that team's waiver by the 6th week, are posted on the team's online roster and have played at least two matches for that team during the regular season.

Heaven help your team should you forfeit three times. A lynching party will be sent out and your team will be expelled from the league with no refunds provided. No forfeit fees have been built into league fees as forfeits have been extremely rare. A match forfeit will automatically be scored 0-10 (goals) and 0-1 (game)

**5. Minimum Age:** All SMC participants must be at least 19 years old. Valid picture id may be requested. Failure to provide a valid picture ID shall void participation until such time as proof of ID can be provided.

**6. Substitution Policy:** THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR TEAM!  
A new player filling in for your team during regular season is permitted. Even if they are only going to play once, they have to sign the team waiver prior to play.

Teams may add new players throughout the season up through two weeks before playoffs – for example: week 6 of a 7-week regular season. All new players **MUST** sign the team waiver and be posted on that team's online roster to be eligible for playoff participation. Registered/rostered players are those that have signed that team's waiver by the 6th week, are posted on the team's online roster and have played at least two matches for that team during the regular season.

Game day substitutes picked up from other SMC teams are allowed as long as team has minimum number of rostered players and only enough players may be picked up to field a full team (meaning no players on bench). Opposing team may not challenge a same league Sports Monster substitutes. Referee is to confirm eligibility.

Individual Teams ONLY: All outside substitutes **MUST** be approved by SMC to play. Please do not bring new players as they will **NOT** be allowed to play.

Playoffs: **ONLY 1 INTRA-LEAGUE SUBSTITUTION IS ALLOWED IN THE PLAYOFFS!** Teams must play with your registered/rostered players in the playoffs. Substitutes are to be used only for the purposes of fielding a complete team. Should additional rostered players arrive and are ready to play; intra-league substitute **MUST** discontinue play at the next whistled stoppage of play.

Roster substitution exceptions:

- a) If you know that you will be unable to complete the season, please notify SMC at least two weeks prior to playoffs. Upon approval, your substitute may take your place and remain eligible through playoffs.

b) A last-minute injury that prevents a player to participate will permit an outside substitution. Notification to SMC is required.

**7. Team Rosters:** Please keep in mind that each team has paid for league play. Each team determines their own roster and who will be playing and how much per person owes the captain. SMC does not dictate any team's roster unless there is a disciplinary issue or SMC is running that team as an individual registrant team. If players have been added to your team's roster without the team captain's knowledge or permission, please contact your SMC office.

ALL players MUST sign the team waiver AND be posted on that team's online roster to be considered eligible for playoff matches. Failure to sign the team waiver shall void participation in that round. Failure to be posted with the online roster shall void participation in that round until roster is amended.

Sports Monster does permit players to play for more than one team. We look at the big picture and if any team wants to sign up players from other teams to play with them so everyone has more fun, so be it. If teams pick up a player from another team during the season, then that player must sign each team's waiver and be added to that online roster. Such multiple team players will be permitted to play for those teams through the playoffs BUT must select only one team to play with if both teams play each other in any round.

Individual Teams ONLY: All outside roster additions and substitutes MUST be approved by SMC for new players to play. Please do not bring new players as they will NOT be allowed to play. If you feel people are just showing up, let us know asap.

**8. GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP:** Please observe standards of good sportsmanship during your time with us. Most people are great but there are some sour apples out there who try to ruin everyone's experience.

We understand that competition can generate strong emotions; however, your emotions and actions must not negatively affect the enjoyment, comfort or safety of any of our other participants!

Foul language is not acceptable. Learn new words such as "sugar" or "fudge."

Taunting opponents is not acceptable. Tantrums (throwing objects and/or yelling) are not acceptable. You are not a two-year-old or teething, so calm it down. Opposing team may call a time out and address the referee for consideration if it is felt that bad sportsmanship is being displayed by one or more on the opposing team.

At the discretion of the SMC ref, any displays of bad sportsmanship will result in the following penalties:

For individuals:

1st = verbal warning

2nd = Player expelled from match

If an individual is expelled from the match, that team shall play down a player. If that player is required to leave, play will only commence upon departure. Should player not leave facility that player's team will lose all goals or the full match following point of infraction. Team penalties may also be imposed at this time.

At the discretion of the SMC ref, any displays of bad sportsmanship will result in the following penalties

For team:

1 = verbal warning

2 = final warning: a penalty shot shall be awarded to the opposing team. 3 =

Game called (match forfeiture)

We are serious about penalizing the flagrant use of foul language. Aside from being offensive, you are playing in schools, church or park facilities that have young children around many times. If your referee does not actively pursue infractions, notify SMC.

**9. Taunting:** If a player blatantly taunts an opponent, a call of bad sportsmanship shall be assessed. His/her behavior will be the determining factor. Simultaneous taunting is a verbal altercation.

**A PLAYER(S) GUILTY OF TAUNTING MUST BE SINGLED OUT AND PENALIZED.** If a previous unsportsmanlike act has been committed and if this situation is **BLATANT**, a penalty shot must be assessed and the guilty player(s) must be ejected.

**10. Playoffs:** Unless otherwise noted in the specific league or tournament outline overview or rules, all teams will make the playoffs. Overall 1st place team is determined by regular season won/loss record. If there are tied teams, it will be broken by the higher plus point differential. If a tie still exists, overall head to head game scores will be compared. Playoff format will be single game elimination.

Playoff matches will be bracketed in a standard bracket based on a 16-team pool of teams. Most SMC leagues have less than 16 teams but the first round will still be predicated on the larger bracket - meaning for a 10-team league, the first round would have 8th vs 9th, 7th vs 10th before 1st and 2nd place teams would play, etc.

For any league of more than 8 teams, please be aware that you may have to play 2 or more matches in one week to finish playoffs. Smaller (4 or 5 team divisions) leagues may be completed in one week of playoffs.

Player eligibility may be challenged by opposing team captains or referees prior to the start of a playoff match or at the end of the first half. We recommend opposing captains print out their opponent's online roster and bring to match if they think there are suspect players. **NO NEW PLAYERS** will be allowed to play once the second half commences. A player who has not signed that team's waiver form (and is not the one intra-league substitute allowed for teams not fielding a full complement) and/or is not on that team's

online roster, they are not eligible for play in that match. As long as the referees are in agreement that the player has played at least 2 matches, that player would be eligible for the next match, should their team progress but ONLY if they have signed the team waiver and the online roster is updated when originally challenged.

**11. Referees:** All SMC leagues are organized for one paid referee for all formats other than 11v11 and two paid 11v11 referees to be on site per game. Referee is paid BY THE LEAGUE as part of your registration fees. So, if they ask for money, please notify the local office. There may be a rare occasion that there is no referee present. In such a case, teams are to play a regular match, keep score and make courtesy calls. We apologize in advance should a no referee situation occur in one of your matches. However, the largest single expense in your league is for facility rental and it is important that you play your match as there will not be a rescheduled game time. Match results will count towards final standings. Only in cases where a no referee match occurs more than once in a season to any one team will there be future credit consideration.

SMC referees are provided to make the match run as smoothly and error-free as possible. Obviously, no one is perfect and there may be occasion to question an individual call if the referee hasn't already offered an explanation. The only person permitted to question a referee's call is that team's captain. Should any other person other than the captain approach the referee during a game, a ruling of bad sportsmanship may be applied (see #8).

SMC referees sometimes will offer an explanation of calls as they are made, but this is not required and should not be expected. Signals should be clear and known to players. If no explanation has been offered, it is at that time that a captain's inquiry would be appropriate. Please keep in mind your tone of voice and to form a question. Scathing sarcasm and/or a demonstrative proclamation demanding a response usually will not be viewed favorably and a warning or penalty may be imposed.

Whether you agree or not, the referee's judgment is the final word during the game. A challenge (see #12) may be filed with the SMC office following the game and a final determination/ruling will be made prior to the next weeks match.

Any foul or abusive language directed at the referee or within earshot will result in an automatic individual or team warning and potential Yellow or Red Cards. Contrary to what you may think, no, you do not pay us enough to put up with abusive crap. Possible suspension or league expulsion penalties may result as well.

Any physical action taken by any individual against a referee will be met with full prosecution by SMC against that individual including possible involvement by law

enforcement. That individual will be banned from SMC league play and full team forfeiture may be imposed.

Please realize that referees can oversee hundreds of matches each year and really do not care who wins. They do care about running a cleanly played match and that people enjoy their playing experience.

Any questions or concerns specific to your league's referees should be addressed to your local SMC office during regular business hours and we encourage you to communicate with us while the season is underway so we can quickly address your concerns.

**12. Challenges:** SMC will not consider challenges if they are based solely on a decision involving the accuracy or judgment on the part of a referee pertaining to called plays/kept time.

SMC does offer a two-level challenge format available following a match regarding strong disagreement regarding a referee's ruling resulting in specific sanction(s) or player eligibility or failure to abide by written league rules as provided herein:

- a) Contact your local SMC office's manager for your Sport to address your challenge. In some cases, this person may be the local market manager. Any verbal challenge must be accompanied with a written challenge outlining the team/player's position and circumstances to be formally considered. This written challenge may be sent via e-mail for expedience. However, SMC confirmation of receipt is required for e-mail challenges. Please allow 2-3 business days for information from all parties to be processed and a ruling to be determined.
- b) If you are not satisfied with the challenged ruling, you may contact that office's general manager or SMC headquarters and re-submit your challenge. You will again need to allow 2-3 business days for information from all parties to be processed and a final ruling to be determined.

As it is possible that a sanction may be reduced, it is also possible that a sanction may be increased upon review of the challenged situation. Upon issuing any challenge, it is understood that the challenging party will abide by the final league ruling.

Because many rulings and sanctions are time sensitive, it is important that any challenges involving a ruling or suspension be officially recorded in writing within 48 hours of the initial on-site ruling. Failure to do so can impact the ability of a final ruling being issued before the sanction occurs. Once a time sensitive sanction has already been enforced (example: one-week suspension ruling and the next week's match has already occurred with player sitting out), there may be no recourse for overturning the original ruling except for general clarification.

In the event a challenge has been submitted following the allowed 48-hour window, the League may still investigate and provide follow-up but no changes shall be made to the original ruling, sanction or score.

In cases where a general ruling is challenged solely for clarification, there is no deadline for submission.

**13. GUIDELINES FOR INFECTION CONTROL:** If a player suffers a laceration or a wound where bleeding occurs, the referee shall suspend the game at the earliest appropriate time. Upon suspension of play, the captain shall be informed that he/she has the option to, immediately, substitute for the player or call a timeout. If a substitute replaces the player, the opposing team shall be allowed to substitute one player. The injured player may return to the game when they have the appropriate bandage.

If the player returns to the game, the referee should make certain that any lesion, wound or dermatitis is covered with a dressing that will prevent contamination to and/or from other sources. A wrist or sweat band is not considered a suitable bandage.

ONLY the injured player may be removed from the game under these circumstances. That player's team may make a substitution as necessary to replace the injured player even if it is in the middle of a half.

**14. Alcohol:** It is strictly forbidden to bring alcoholic beverages onto/into any Sports Monster league site. Regardless of local guidelines, we do not allow open containers in any of our matches - specifically in the bench area and playing field. If spotted, you will be asked to remove your stash. Failure to do so will result in an automatic suspension in addition to possible police involvement. Note that this restriction includes fans in attendance also.

If a player, in the judgment of an SMC referee, is intoxicated, they will be removed from the game and receive a warning. A second offense shall result in league expulsion. We are not your mothers - unless she is a fabulous referee and then have her call us because we always need good refs - so common sense and personal responsibility are expected.

**15. Equipment:** Sports Monster will provide goal nets, corner and mid-field markers, balls, referees and facilities for match play.

It is very common for teams to bring their own balls and to request to play with those. We are fine with that so long as it is agreed by both teams to play with a certain ball.

**16. Weather:** For ALL indoor and outdoor facilities, unless that facility has closed, you should consider your match to be played as scheduled. Each SMC city home page has a weather box that is updated on/by 5:00 pm local time on weeknights and at various times on weekends. Should games be canceled in advance, we will contact captains directly and send out a league-wide email. There may be occasion when games are canceled while you are in transit and we apologize in advance for that inconvenience.

**17. T-shirts:** All SMC soccer participants (non- paid substitutes excluded) will receive a SMC t-shirt mid to late season.

**18. Prizes:** There will be prizes for the winning team. Don't pester us about what they are: okay, well tell you, it's a dented 20-year-old broomstick we found in the alley. Cash prizes are not awarded. If you would like to receive cash prizes in future leagues, let us know & fees will be adjusted accordingly.

19. **Have Fun:** This is your leisure time, enjoy it. You're not playing for money, only the pride and prestige a Sports Monster championship brings and the adoration of thousands of area residents wishing they were you: A Sports Monster champion.

These rules have been updated as of 5/15/20 and shall remain in effect until such time as another update is required.

Thank you for choosing Sports Monster! We appreciate your business very much. Please let us know what we are doing well that you like and what we can do to improve for next season because as a fellow Sports Monster, this is your league and we want to see a lot more of you in the future. Please call or e-mail us with any questions, comments or suggestions. Enjoy your season with us! E-mail us at [info@sportsmonster.net](mailto:info@sportsmonster.net) – be sure to include your name and league location with any feedback.