

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

U12 & U13 SAM IORFIDA Tournament Rules

Each Team is responsible for ensuring that they are aware of their schedule or any schedule changes. Team coaches or managers are responsible for communicating schedules and/or playoff designations to their players. Coaches/managers should check with tournament headquarters, or field convenors, periodically for any changes or updates, especially at the end of the day and at the beginning of each day. A set of updated rules will be available in hard copy, on the day/night of team registration. Unless your scheduled field is not in use, players should only warm up on any adjacent field space. Teams must be prepared to play immediately following the end of the previous game.

PLEASE NOTE: SCHEDULES WILL NOT BE RELEASED UNTIL THE WEEK OF THE TOURNAMENT

1) Laws of the Game

- (a) Basic IFAB-issued « Laws of the Game » will not be repeated in this document. All groups shall be played in accordance with the « Laws of the Game » as issued by IFAB – except as modified by these « Tournament Rules » and subject to approval by the Ontario Soccer Association or the Canadian Soccer Association.

2) Team Eligibility

- (a) All participating teams must be currently registered with their Provincial or National Association. All teams travelling from outside the Niagara District Association must present « Permission to Travel » duly authorised by their governing association to the tournament host before the first match played.
- (b) Teams are accepted **ONLY** upon receipt (prior to the published deadline), of the full Tournament registration package, registration fee, and proof of permission to travel (Niagara Soccer Association Teams excluded).
- (c) No alterations to the registered team roster are permitted unless approved by the Tournament Committee.
- (d) Teams that withdraw their applications **after the closing date (March 1st, 2026)** of the application shall **forfeit their entry fee in FULL**. This is non-negotiable.
- (e) **Teams that have not provided the entry fee payment in full (online, cheque, cash or money order) are not considered registered (will be considered pending) until the full payment is actually received. Teams registering late (after the closing date) may only be accepted upon specific approval of the**

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

Tournament Committee and may only pay via credit. All payments/cheques should be made out to Niagara Falls Soccer Club only.

- (f) Teams may also be placed on a waiting list if the division is full. Team registrations are accepted on a first-arrival basis only, and the committee will inform any teams placed on the waiting list. Entry fee cheques will not be cashed until a team is accepted into a division.

3) Team Roster

- (a) All players must have a valid OS photo roster or player cards for proof of age and eligibility. These documents must be presented to the tournament committee on the sign-in date.
- (b) Player ID documents must be available at each game. Coaches may request that the tournament committee provide proof of age for certain players, assuming that a formal protest has been initiated (see section 21). In the event of a dispute concerning player eligibility, the decision of the tournament committee shall be final. In special cases, Field Convenors may also ask for player cards prior to each game.
- (c) A team found guilty (by the tournament committee) of playing, or attempting to play, an ineligible player may be subject to severe sanctions such as a loss of all match standings or ejection from the tournament with no entry fee refunded, and such an incident will be reported to the OS.
- (d) **Team rosters shall be limited to a maximum of eighteen (18) players dressed per game.** Players must be registered with the club to which the team is registered. A maximum of (4) team officials with valid OS registrations may be present on the bench with the team. **Players may only play on ONE TEAM in this tournament.**

4) Guest Players

- (a) A maximum of **three (3)** Guest players are allowed per team.
- (b) Guest players must be registered to a team of equal age or younger and may be from within your Club or an outside Club, providing they have proper documentation such as an official Temporary Eligibility Permit (TEP) signed by their home club and authorised by their District. A copy of the signed document by all parties must be presented at the time of team registration. Players from the same Club are not considered Guest players but are Call-ups.
- (c) Guest Players may be registered to a team playing at a lower level of play than the team that is entered into the Tournament. All guest players must be pre-approved by the Tournament Committee in advance of the actual registration.

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

- (d) Participating teams are required to submit their team Ontario Soccer-approved roster through the SportsEngine link provided to them before the sign-in date on Friday, **March 20th 2026, for boys teams** and **Friday, March 27th, for Girls teams**.

5) Team and Player Registration

- (a) Teams/Coaches/Players must be registered with the tournament committee at Tournament Headquarters (3800 Springdale Ave.) on the published date and time (**4 PM - 9 PM on March 20th 2026, for boys teams** and **4 PM - 9 PM on Friday, March 26th, for Girls teams**), unless otherwise approved by the tournament committee.
- (b) Teams **must be registered no less than 1 hour** before their first game is played at the designated Tournament/Festival Headquarters only (3800 Springdale Ave.). Not at the Field of play. Teams failing to register at least 1 hour before their first games may, at the discretion of the tournament committee, be dismissed from the tournament, forfeiting their entry fee in full.
- (c) The **Niagara Falls Soccer Club Inc.** will conduct this tournament by gender and age for all divisions.
- (d) **The Tournament Committee reserves the right to cancel any division due to a lack of entries.** A minimum of three teams will be required to form a division.

6) Medical Assistance:

Directions and phone numbers to local emergency services will be provided in all coaches' packages.

The nearest Hospital/Medical Facility is located at;

Greater Niagara General Hospital
5546 Portage Rd, Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6X2

7) Extraordinary Weather

- (a) In the event of severe weather (i.e. continuous heavy rain, flooding, lightning, excessive heat or humidity), only a Tournament official or the City Parks Department may cancel a game. The Tournament Committee has the authority to change the duration of the games or any other function of the tournament, including such things as the following:
- Relocate and/or reschedule any game(s)
 - Reduce, by up to 50%, the duration of any scheduled game;
 - Cancel any game in the preliminary round which has no bearing on the deciding group winners.

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

- (b) A game is considered complete if 75% or more of the playing time has elapsed in a game terminated by the referee for causes as noted above.
- (c) In cases where a game has been cancelled or altered in any way, it is the responsibility of the teams involved to contact the Tournament Headquarters for verification of these changes.

8) Substitutions

- (a) There is no limit to the number of player substitutions during a game. With the Referee's permission, substitutions are permitted when;
 - When a goal is scored
 - At a goal kick
 - For an injured player
 - On own throw-in (piggybacking is permitted)
- (b) No substitutions will be allowed for a player ordered from the field by the referee as a sending-off offence (Red card or 2nd Yellow card in the same game).

9) Position of Teams and Spectators

- (a) Teams (players and coaches) will take up positions on opposite sides of the field from spectators. All players and coaches shall restrict their movements to an area along each touchline and within ten (10) meters of either side of the centre line.
- (b) All players, coaches and spectators will remain two (2) meters back from the touchline. Players, not sitting, who are dressed for the game, should wear pinnies on the sidelines while they are warming up to play.

10) Playing Equipment

- (a) Each team shall have two sets of different coloured jerseys. In the event of a conflict of jersey colours, the home team will be required to change. The home team will be the first team shown on the game schedule.
- (b) The goalkeeper's jersey must be distinct from his/her team, the opposing team and the referee. All players must wear shin guards, and socks must cover the shin guards completely.
- (c) Players with injuries that require casts or hard splints may not dress for the game and must not enter the field of play. All players will enter the playing field with the jersey neatly tucked in, and all jewellery must be removed (Except Medical Alert).

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

(d) The referee may make additional determinations to ensure the safety of all game officials and players on the field.

(e) The game ball will be provided by the Home Team.

11) Days of Play

(a) All U12 and U13 Boys will play on Saturday, March 21st and Sunday, March 22nd, 2026.

(b) All U12 and U13 Girls will play on Saturday, March 28th and Sunday, March 29th, 2026.

12) Game Duration and Ball Size

(a) All game officials will allow a five-minute rest period between halves.

(b) Game duration and ball sizes are listed below:

All preliminary round games:

Division	Game Duration
U12	2 x 25-minute halves not exceeding 120 minutes per day
U13	2 x 25-minute halves not exceeding 120 minutes per day

There must be a minimum of 50 minutes between each game played by any team. Each team is guaranteed 3 games.

All Championship Final games:

Division	Game Duration
U12-U13	2 x 25-minute halves

(c) All games may be shortened for other specific reasons at the sole discretion of the Tournament Committee.

(d) Game Balls will be Size 4 for U12

(e) Game Balls will be Size 5 for U13

(f) The Home Team is responsible for the Game Ball.

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

13) Referee Fees

- (a) U12 - Head Match Official \$40.00 - Assistant Referee \$25.00
- (b) U13 - Head Match Official \$40.00 - Assistant Referee \$25.00

14) Arrival Time – Finals

- (a) Teams qualifying for the finals of a division shall be prepared to kick off thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled start time. Kick-off times may be changed at the discretion of the tournament committee.

15) Scheduling

- (a) Scheduling of games and referees is the responsibility of the **Niagara Falls Soccer Club**.
- (b) The schedule may not be released until 2 days before team sign-in due to division and fields changing
- (c) Sunday schedules will not be updated until 10:30 pm Saturday night

16) Extra Time Rules

In any game where a winner must be determined, not including the group stage, the decision will be to go right to penalty kicks.

17) Game Sheets and Referees' Reports

- (a) All game sheets and referees' reports must be returned to tournament headquarters by the Field Marshal/Convenor or tournament official as soon as possible after the completion of a game.
- (b) The referee and one official from each team must sign the game sheet. Additional game sheets are available from the Field Marshal/Convenor or from the tournament headquarters.

18) Determination of Group Winners

- (a) Each team will be awarded:

Win - 3 points

Tie - 1 point

Loss - 0 points

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

At the end of a preliminary round, the group winner shall be the team with the most points, if teams are tied on points, the following additional criteria shall be used to determine the winner. These rules shall be applied in the following order:

- (a) Head-to-Head - The winner of the game between the two teams tied (applies to two-way ties only)
- (b) Most wins
- (c) Goal Differential - Best goal spread (goal difference total goals for minus total goals against in preliminary round play)
- (d) Most goals for in the preliminary rounds
- (e) Penalty Kicks

If it is necessary to provide additional teams for quarterfinal and/or semi-final games, wildcard teams may be selected. Such teams will be those with the best non-qualifying record in the age division, determined by the number of points earned. In the event of a tie, criteria 14 (a) through 14 (e) shall apply.

19) Failure to Show

- (a) A team shall be allowed a **ten (10) minute period of grace** after the scheduled kick-off time before it is considered to have failed to show. In the event of a failure to show, the offending team shall forfeit the game.
- (b) A minimum of seven (7) players constitutes a team. The game will start if a team has the minimum number of players, even if it must play short-handed against its opponent.
- (c) At the discretion of the field Convenor, the grace period (maximum of 10 minutes) may be allowed only if there are fewer than the minimum number of players and the coach assures the Convenor that the other players will be arriving shortly. If both teams fail to show, the tournament committee will make a determination with regard to the standings.

20) Abandoned Games

In the case of game abandonment (quits) by either a team or the Referee before it is completed, the outcome will be determined by the Tournament Committee.

21) Forfeited Games

- (a) At the discretion of the Tournament Committee, teams that forfeit a game may be subject to dismissal from the tournament, and all entry fees shall be forfeited without appeal. Such incidents will also be reported to the governing body of that team and the OS.

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

- (b) All opponents of a team which has forfeited a game will be awarded a win and three points in the preliminary standings. The game shall be recorded as a 1-0 win. A team that forfeits a game will NOT be allowed to advance in tournament play.

22) Discipline

- (a) All discipline and match ejections shall be subject to review by the Tournament Committee. Match ejections, due to severity, may be subject to further sanctions.
- (b) A player receiving a 2nd caution (Yellow Card) or an ejection (Red Card) in the same game will automatically be suspended from the following game.
- (c) A player receiving a 3rd caution (Yellow card) during the tournament or an ejection (Red card), or a team official ordered from the field, shall be subjected to discipline. The player or team official shall be suspended from the following game.
- (d) Any physical confrontation or aggression will disqualify a player, team official or entire team from the rest of the tournament. All determinations will be made by the discipline committee, at their discretion, with the consultation of the match officials. No exceptions or refunds.
- (e) The Tournament Committee may, where justified, suspend any person dismissed during, or after a game, from all further participation in the tournament.
- (f) In the case of a referee assault, the player, team and/or team official will be suspended for the remainder of the tournament. The District Association or League to which the team or team official is registered may impose additional sanctions for serious offences.
- (g) All discipline reports will be forwarded to the District Association to which the player or team official is registered.
- (h) Use of an illegal player will result in an automatic forfeiture of the game and potential further sanctions at the discretion of the tournament committee.

23) Protests and Appeals

- (a) Protests (Appeals) relating to Rule 19 (above) or to any other matter must be processed by the Tournament Committee located at tournament headquarters. Field convenors and Game officials WILL NOT process appeals will not be processed on the playing field. Protest forms will be made available at the headquarters building for this purpose.

The SAM IORFIDA Spring Kickoff Tournament (U12 & U13)

(b) Protests must be registered, in writing, within **ONE HOUR** of the end of the game within which the incident occurred and must follow the procedure as outlined below:

- Brief written (legible) description of the problem on the protest form stating pertinent facts only.
- Payment of \$200.00 CDN bond fee in cash.
- Submit the protest form and bond fee at the tournament headquarters.

NOTE: Protests will **not** be considered for on-field decisions made by referees.

(c) Protest will be processed within 2 hours of the original request. If the protest is upheld, the bond payment will be refunded in full. If the protest is not upheld, the entire bond shall be forfeited to the Niagara Falls Soccer Club.

24) General

- (a) The **Niagara Falls Soccer Club** shall not be responsible for any expenses incurred by any team if the tournament is cancelled or shortened.
- (b) The **Niagara Falls Soccer Club** and the Tournament Committee reserve the right to decide on all matters pertaining to this event.