Winter Cup 2027
Tournament Rules

1. This is a NTSSA sanctioned tournament which accepts teams registered under US Club and USYSA state associations. All teams must provide an approved player roster and player cards from the organization they are registered under. Guest Players must be registered within the same organization the team is registered and guest player paperwork completed per that organization's guidelines.

2. Maximum number of Guest Players allowed is 6 per team. This includes use of Club Pass Players. If playing in a Developmental bracket, guest players cannot be older than the team's current age group.

3. Each team must have numbered alternate jerseys or numbered T-shirts available. Pennies may be used over the jersey to resolve color conflicts – must be able to see jersey number. Goalkeepers are not required to have a number on their jersey but should be identified by a number on the roster. No taped numbers are allowed.

4. The home team uniform primary block color must be white or light in color. Generally speaking, in case of uniform conflict, the **home team is responsible for changing to an alternate color** (ex. If home team has 2 colors that clash with away team, home team changes). If **both teams are in light colors, the AWAY team must change**. Highly recommended visiting team arrives wearing their darkest uniform. The complex director will resolve any dispute.

5. The **home team is listed first or on top in the schedule**. Unless instructed otherwise, both teams will occupy the same side of the field. Parents and un-rostered visitors will occupy the opposing side from the teams.

6. Each team must be prepared to present a game ball to the Referee prior to the start of the game for his/her selection.

7. A game shall be declared a forfeit if a team is not ready to play at the published time within ten (10) minutes of the game. At half time the teams must be ready to resume play within five (5) minutes of the referee's designation.

8. A game shall be declared a forfeit by the Cup & Games Committee or tournament committee **if an ineligible player participates in a game. *Any protest of ineligible player must be reported in writing, with a one hundred dollar ($100.00) cash deposit*,** before the end of the game to the tournament field headquarters.

9. The coach is responsible for all verbal and physical actions of their spectators and players and can receive a disciplinary card from the referees***. Verbal and physical abuse will not be tolerated and may result in forfeit of the game and/or expulsion from the tournament***.

10. Each team must be able to present its validated tournament game roster and player cards to the Tournament Official prior to the start of each match, if requested**. A player may play for only one team in the tournament and must be listed on the approved roster.** If a player plays in a game and is not properly registered, the team will automatically forfeit that game and may face further penalties as determined by the Tournament Director and/or Home Association. The coach and/or manager is responsible for making sure player is not playing on more than one team.

11. **All games full length up through U14; U15-U19 modified preliminary game length**. All finals full length. Half time will be 5 minutes. Developmental level is offered in select age groups for those teams wishing to play up to next age **format** with teams of their current age bracket (ex. U8's would be U9 Dev.). If not enough teams to form a DEV group, teams will have an option to play up in the older age group.

Age	Prelim Game Length	Final Game Length	BALL SIZE	OVERTIME - semi and finals	Approx. Field Size	Roster Size	Playing Format
U6 – U8	20 min halves	20 min halves	3	IFAB Kicks	35 by 25	8	4 v 4
U9 Dev	25 min halves	25 min halves	4	IFAB Kicks	40 by 60	14	7 v 7
U9 – U10	25 min halves	25 min halves	4	IFAB Kicks	40 by 60	14	7 v 7
U11 Dev	30 min halves	30 min halves	4	IFAB Kicks	50 by 80	16	9 v 9
11U - 12U	30 min halves	30 min halves	4	IFAB Kicks	50 by 80	16	9 v 9
U13 Dev	35 min halves	35 min halves	5	IFAB Kicks	Full	18	11 v 11
13U – 14U	35 min halves	35 min halves	5	IFAB Kicks	Full	18	11 v 11
15U – 16U	35 min halves	40 min halves	5	IFAB Kicks	Full	22	11 v 11
17U - 19U	35 min halves	45 min halves	5	IFAB Kicks	Full	22	11 v 11

12. Advancements

Advancing to Semifinals & Finals	
Awards for First and Second Place Finishes in All Age Brackets; First team listed is the home team	
FOUR TEAM BRACKET - *One bracket of four teams*	**FINAL**: Highest points in bracket vs. Second Highest in bracket
FIVE TEAM BRACKET - *One bracket of five teams*	Teams play each other for 4 preliminary games. There is no playoff. 1st in points receives first place, 2nd in points receives second place. Tie breaker rules apply for determining top 2 teams.
SIX TEAM BRACKET - *Two brackets of three teams, playing true cross-over games* *(Example: A1, A2, A3 play B1, B2, B3. All games outside bracket)*	**FINAL**: Highest points of 6 teams vs. Second Highest points of 6 teams
EIGHT TEAM BRACKET – *Two brackets of four teams*	**FINAL**: Winner of Brac A vs. Winner of Brac B
TEN TEAM DIVISION - *Two brackets of three teams each playing cross-over games and one bracket of four teams*	**SEMI-1**: Highest points in combined 2 brackets of 3 teams vs. Wildcard* **SEMI-2**: Highest points in bracket of 4 vs. Second Highest points in combined 2 brackets of 3 teams **FINAL**: Winner of Semi 1 vs. Winner of Semi 2
TWELVE TEAM BRACKET – *Three brackets of four teams*	**SEMI-1**: Winner of first bracket listed vs. Wildcard* **SEMI-2**: Winner of second bracket listed vs. Winner of third bracket listed **FINAL**: Winner of Semi 1 vs. Winner of Semi 2
FOURTEEN TEAM BRACKET - *Two brackets of three teams playing cross-over games and two brackets of four teams*	**SEMI-1**: Highest points in combined 2 brackets of 3 teams vs. Highest points in first listed 4-team bracket **SEMI-2**: Second highest points in combined 2 brackets of 3 teams vs. Highest points in second listed 4-team bracket **FINAL**: Winner of Semi 1 vs. Winner of Semi 2
**Wildcard next highest points any bracket after other advancers determined*	

13. Preliminary games may end in a tie. Tiebreaker rules will apply for teams tied to determine which team advances to playoffs. If teams are still tied, IFAB “kicks” from Penalty spot will be taken to determine winner. If Quarter Final, Semi-Final, or Final games end in a tie, IFAB "kicks" from the penalty spot will be taken to determine the winner.

14. 10 Point Scoring System for preliminary games will be as follows:

    a. 6 points for a win
    b. 3 points for a tie
    c. 0 points for a loss
    d. 1 point per goal scored in the game with a maximum of 3
    e. 1 point for a shut out (not allowing opponent to score)
    f. A forfeit game will be scored at a 3-0 win in calculating preliminary game points for tiebreaker determination.

15. **It will be the responsibility of the winning team (or in case of tie, the home team) to email the game sheet/score card to tournaments@triumphfc.org, unless instructed otherwise.** The coach/manager must verify the posted score prior to the team’s next game. If any discrepancy between the two teams reported scores, then the referees score will be final.

16. If, in the first round of the championship series, the predetermined pairings result in two opponents from the same bracket, realignment of the pairings may be made by the Tournament Committee.

17. **TIE BREAKERS:** If two or more teams are tied in points after their preliminary games are completed, the following tie breaker procedures will be used to determine the team advancing:

    a. Head to Head game results - winner will advance.
    b. Goals For – team with most goals scored will advance. Limit 8 per game.
    c. Goals Against - team with fewest goals allowed will advance. Limit 8 per game.
    d. Most number of "shut-outs" - team with most "shut-outs" will advance
    e. Most wins – team with most wins will advance
    f. IFAB kicks (kicks from the penalty spot)

    These tiebreaker procedures will be applied, in order, to the teams tied in points until one team is selected for advancement.

    THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REMOVE ANY TEAM FROM THE TOURNAMENT AND/OR MAKE THEM INELIGIBLE FOR THE PLAY-OFF ROUNDS FOR INTENTIONALLY FORFEITING A GAME(S).

18. **Minimum Players:** In 11v11 format games, each team must have a minimum of seven (7) players on the field to start the game. There must be a minimum of seven (7) to continue the game. In 9v9 format games, seven (7) players are required to start and continue the game. In 7v7 format games, five (5) players are required to start and continue the game. In 4v4 format games, three (3) players are required to start and continue the game.

19. There will be free substitution, with the referee's consent, at the following times:

    a. A player receiving a yellow card (the player carded only)
    b. Prior to a throw-in for the team in possession only
    c. Prior to a goal kick
    d. After a goal by either team
    e. After an injury, when the referee stops the play
    f. At half time by either team
    g. In case of extreme heat, at the referees discretion

20. Team Discipline - Misconduct of Youth Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches

    1. Member Associations, Playing leagues and Tournament Officials may institute their own “CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM” for players/coaches and assistant coaches or additional sanctions as they see appropriate. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card. Sanctions for misconduct will remain within the competition where they are earned.

    2. Yellow Cards A player receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game and the next game within that competition.

    3. Red Cards A player receiving a red card or a coach/assistant coach who is sent off is suspended for the balance of that game and the next game within that competition.

21. A**ll referee decisions are final. No protests will be allowed, except for ineligible player.**

22. Per USSF Guidelines: **Players in 11U programs and younger shall not engage in heading**, either in practices or in games. In adherence to these new requirements, referees have been instructed by U.S. Soccer of the following rule addition: When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the 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.

23. Build Out Lines for 7v7: There is no punting for the playing format of 7v7. The keeper can release the ball by throwing, rolling the ball outside of the goalie area or placing the ball on the ground and kicking the stationary ball. The ball may NOT be moving before the kick is taken. All opposing players must be behind the build out line. Once the ball is placed on the ground by the keeper for a stationary kick, the ball becomes live in play once the ball makes a forward motion.

24. There will be NO use of any Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system or spectator video.

25. There will be NO use of Unmanned Aerial Devices (UAS), or drones. Following directives from other youth soccer organizations, namely U.S. Youth Soccer, which states “the use of unmanned aircrafts are not to be at activities of events…for youth soccer players” and FAA restrictions for UAS, which includes a restriction stating UAS’s “cannot fly over people not involved in the device’s operation”; it has been decided that all types of unmanned aircrafts, including drones, will not be allowed to fly over the tournament.

26. The Chairman of Cup & Games, tournament director, or their designee, is empowered to make all decisions regarding the competition during the tournament. The decision of the Chairman of Cup & Games or Tournament Director is final in all matters. No appeals will be allowed beyond that point.

27. In the event the referee or linesmen are missing from the field, report immediately to your Field Coordinator. In the event the linesmen are not available, each team is required to provide a "club linesman".

28. **Inclement Weather:**

    a. In case of rain or lightning - weather updates will be posted on the website as soon as possible. Additionally, messages will be sent to managers and coaches through the Got Soccer program.
    b. Game stoppage notifications will be sent via the facilities notification system; tournament staff; referees or air horns.
    c. All players, coaches, and spectators are to go to their cars. DO NOT LEAVE THE SITE. Air horns will sound, or notification received from the staff when it is clear to return to the field.
    d. Games will be suspended until 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder has left the vicinity.
    e. Format for tournament play and/or completion of the tournament will be determined by the tournament committee.

29. If inclement weather cancels the tournament prior to completion of a team's first scheduled game of the tournament, a maximum of 50% of the entry fee will be retained by the tournament to cover start-up cost of the tournament. If you purchased the optional event cancellation insurance, refunds are processed directly through the insurance company.

30. If a game is played into the second half but is stopped short of full time, other than acts on the part of one of the teams, the game shall be considered complete. Finals, if tied will be determined by the tiebreaker procedure. If the game is stopped due to the acts of one team or its spectators or a coach, player or spectator refuses to leave the complex, these acts (or refusals) may cause a game abandonment, which would be considered a forfeit by that coach's, player's or spectator's team and the final score would be recorded as a 3-0 win by the other team.

31. Net and Flags will be provided by the Tournament.

32. Any team that withdraws from a tournament less than two weeks from the start of the tournament or does not complete all required scheduled games, may forfeit their entry fee and performance bond, if one has been posted.

33. **Teams that withdraw prior to two weeks from start of the tournament are eligible for a refund of the Tournament Fee paid minus $50 credit card and processing fee.**

34. All teams not accepted by the tournament will be refunded in full within 10 days of the notification of rejection, or notification to the teams accepted, whichever comes first. (Posting on web sites can be considered notification of teams accepted)

35. Once game time temperature exceeds 90 degrees, the Tournament Director may institute water breaks (mandatory or referee's discretion). The water breaks would occur in 1st and 2nd halves of play and the official time will not stop.

36. **For any assistance needed, see the Cup & Games Field Coordinator, or call the tournament headquarters at 214-908-4342 or email tournaments@triumphfc.org**

Website: https://www.triumphfutbol.club