



FALL SEASON PLAYOFF PROCEDURES & RULES

How does the Delco Soccer League determine the playoff format and teams that advance to the playoffs?

- The playoff format for each division (U11 and above*) is determined by the Delco Soccer League ("league") competition committee prior to the start of the season. *In general, each division will have the top four seeds advance to semifinals then finals. For divisions with eight teams, all teams will advance to quarterfinals, then semifinals and a final. For divisions with seven or less teams where each team plays the other teams in the division twice, the top two seeds will advance directly to a final.*
- Following the completion of the regular season, the league competition committee will review the standings to determine the teams that advance to the playoffs. To assist with this process, all teams are asked to submit their game report online by 7:00 PM on the Sunday night of the regular season final weekend.
- **For any team that has a conflict with the playoff dates, they must contact the league no later than two weeks before the team's last scheduled regular season game to withdraw and allow another team in the division to take their spot in the playoffs. Any team that does not do this will have to forfeit the playoffs with the game vs. this team declared a 0-1 loss with the opposing team advancing to the next round.**
- If there is a tie for playoff seeding, then the following tie breaker formula will be used to determine seeding: (1) head-to-head result, (2) results against the rest of the playoff teams, or (3) a coin toss conducted by the league competition committee.
- If there is a tie for the final playoff spot, a play-in game will be held on the morning of the semifinals. If both teams' home fields are within one hour of the home field for the team that the winner will play the semifinal against in the afternoon, **then the home team for the play-in game will be the team that did not host the regular season game between the two teams.** If the two teams' home fields are more than one hour from the home field of the host of the semifinal game, then the play-in game may be hosted by the team that is also hosting the semifinal game (at the discretion of the league & when possible based on field availability).
- If three or more teams are tied for the final playoff spot, then two play-in games will be held. A coin toss will be conducted by the league competition committee to determine the play-in game seedings (team A vs. team B, winner of first play-in game vs. team C).
- If there is a three way tie for the third playoff spot, the playoff seeding tie break formula will be used to determine the third seed and then a coin toss will be held to determine the home team for the play-in game.
- Note, coin toss procedures will be held with two members of the league competition committee present, but the coin toss is not public.
- If there is a situation not specifically addressed in these guidelines, the league competition committee will make a ruling that is consistent with these guidelines.

Who determines the game locations and times for the playoffs?

- For the quarterfinal and semifinal games the higher seeded team will host the game. Once the playoffs seedings are determined by the league the delegates and coaches for both teams should work together to come up with an agreed upon time and location for the game. This information will then be submitted to the league for approval by the home team delegate. (Note: The league reserves the right to schedule semifinal games at a single site determined by the league when necessary.)
- **If both teams can't agree on the game time, than the league will determine the time & location. Delegates & coaches should work in earnest to come to a compromise before contacting the league.**
- The referee assignor should also be called directly by the home club delegate to verify the information.
- For the finals the league will arrange for a "neutral" site for the games and will assign the game times.
- Note hosting clubs must adhere to the field requirements as approved by the league membership.

(*As voted by the league membership prior to the 2012 season, playoffs are not held for U09/U10 age groups.)

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What if it rains for the playoffs?

- For the finals the league will make the determination the morning of the games if it is raining. It will be posted online and sent to the delegates. For the quarterfinals and semifinals it will be up to the home club to determine if the field is open. Once at the fields it is up to the referee to determine if the field is unplayable or unsafe, *not the coaches*.
- If a club closes their field due to the weather the opposing team must be called immediately to avoid them driving to a game canceled because of the weather. It must also be reported to the league. The referee assignor must be notified right away. If they are not notified in a timely manner the home team will be responsible for the full referee fees.
- Keep in mind that we need to try to get the games played if at all possible but we do not want to endanger the players.

What if I have a problem or question about league procedures while at my game?

- If any coach has any problem at their playoff game that requires league assistance they should first contact their delegate. If their delegate cannot help or is unavailable, they can call Monica Chrisanthos (610-513-3539), Goose Gosselin (610-331-8006), Tim Hoffman (610-909-1205) or Damon Nolan (610-310-3273).

What are the league's sideline procedures for playoffs?

- Teams must arrive at least forty-five (45) minutes prior to the start of their game.
- Parents are to take the sideline directly across the field from their players. Parents from both teams will be on the same sideline but not permitted to cross the midfield line at any time during the game. All spectators must follow the league's sideline procedures about sitting BEHIND the spectator line (minimum one yard off sideline) Home teams must make sure these lines are painted or cones use to mark off this area.
- Coaches need to remain inside the "technical" area during the entire game.
- Only Delco Soccer League carded coaches are permitted on the sideline with their teams (maximum of three). Coaches and their players are to remain on their half of the field as well during the game.
- Coaches are responsible for their behavior and that of their players and parents. If there is a problem the referees have been instructed by the league to deal with the problem by removing the coach if the behavior is not addressed by the coach immediately.
- *The Delco Soccer League's "zero tolerance" policy will be in effect at the games. Parents are asked that if they have something to say make it positive or don't say anything at all.*

What are the pregame procedures for the playoffs?

- Official rosters generated only from the team's state association must be exchanged between the two coaches and a copy given to the referee.
- Both teams are to provide the referee with coaches' passcards before the start of the game for all coaches that will be on the team sideline. Any team official without a passcard may not be on the team sideline. The league policy allows for a maximum of three carded team officials at any game, including playoffs.
- Jersey numbers must be listed on the roster and any player not playing must be crossed off the roster or they will be considered as having played.
- There cannot be any duplicate jersey numbers or jerseys without numbers.
- Passes must be check by each team against the roster and jersey numbers checked for accuracy with the player. Any player not listed on the roster is ineligible to play. Club pass and guest players are not allowed.
- The referee is not to handle this check in procedure. They can be part of it if they choose, but each coach must check their opponent's credentials before the game begins. Please review the league's game day procedures posted online.
- Teams should bring two copies of this document to the field and ask the referee if he/she is familiar with the league's rules, including the playoff overtime procedure. If not, provide the referee with a copy.
- If a player arrives late he may not enter the game until he checks in with the referee.
- For the finals there will be an assigned field marshal for each field in case there is a problem.
- Any concerns must be reported to the referee prior to the start of the game.
- Games must start on time in case of overtime.
- A pre-game conference will be held between the referees and the team captains at least five (5) minutes prior to the game's scheduled start-time. The team listed as the away team will have the choose of heads or tails for the coin toss and the team that wins the toss will decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the game. The team that losses the coin toss will take the kickoff and start the game with the ball.

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- If a referee does not show for the game, a substitute referee must be agreed upon by both coaches. All playoff games will be played as scheduled per the league policy on "no show" referees. Coaches cannot cancel games on their own because a referee did not show for a playoff game.

Who pays the referee fees for the playoffs?

- Referee fees for the quarterfinals and semifinals are the responsibility of the teams (1/2 each team). The league will be responsible for the finals. Referee should be paid prior to the start of the game. Coaches need to get the referee's name for their game report.

What team changes jerseys if there is a conflict?

- The home team listed on the schedule is the team who will change their jersey if there is a conflict.

Do I still need to report my score for the playoffs?

- **Both** teams are required to report their playoff game scores by 8:00 PM the day of the game. Coaches must report any cautions or ejections to the league (player name and jersey numbers are required).
- In addition to the online incident report both coaches must call Goose Gosselin (610-331-8006) immediately after the game to verbally report the red card.
- Coaches are reminded that the player pass for any red carded player must be given to the referee immediately after the game.

Are there awards for both teams?

- **Both the championship and finalists** in each age group will receive an award and are to report to the awards area immediately following the final.

The game rules remaining the same for the playoffs as the rule for the regular season:

- FIFA Laws of the Game rules apply except for the following modifications. To review the current Laws of the Game, visit the US Soccer web site at <http://www.ussoccer.com/Referees/Laws-of-the-Game.aspx>.
- Regulation game lengths (all games have a 5 minute halftime) and ball sizes:

U11-U12	(2) 30 minute halves	size 4 ball
U13-U14	(2) 35 minute halves	size 5 ball
U15-U16	(2) 40 minute halves	size 5 ball
U17-U18-U19	(2) 45 minute halves	size 5 ball
- For all age groups, a team can make substitutions on their own throw-in or on the other team's throw-in as long as the opposing team is making substitutions as well. Either team may make substitutions during a kick-off or goal kick (no teams may make substitutions during a corner kick). During an injury stoppage both teams may make substitutions. However, only one player may be substituted for the injured player, and the other team may only substitute for one player. The approval of the referee is required before making any substitution. *Players must be up at the midfield ready to enter the game when the ball leaves the field of play.*
- When play is stopped while the referee is issuing a caution (yellow card) to a player, the coach of that player may substitute for the player to provide a "cooling-off" period and to improve game continuity and control. This action must be taken and completed without significantly delaying the game any further.
- For small-sided games (8v8), goalkeepers are restricted from punting (including drop kicks) the ball directly in the air into the opposing penalty area. The restart for this foul is an indirect kick by the opposing team from any point within their penalty area by a player of the defending team.

What if a playoff game is tied at the end of regulation?

- Play-In Games, Quarterfinals and Semifinals Overtime Procedure:
 - Play-in games, quarterfinal and semifinal games tied at end of regulation play two full ten minute overtimes, switching goals at the end of the first period. **NO SUDDEN DEATH/GOLDEN GOAL.**
 - Play-in games, quarterfinal and semifinal games tied at the end of the two overtime periods will be decided by kicks from the penalty mark. The best of five (5) kicks taken alternately by each team will determine the winner. Only those players on the field at the end of overtime may participate in the kicks. If the score is tied at the end of five (5) kicks, teams will continue to take kicks from the penalty mark, alternately, until there is a winner. All players on the field must take a kick before any player is allowed to take a second kick.

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- Finals Overtime Procedure:
 - Final games tied at the end of regulation play two full ten minute overtimes switching goals at the end of the first period. NO SUDDEN DEATH/GOLDEN GOAL.
 - Final games tied at the end of the two ten minute overtime periods will result in co-champions.

Referees should be asked if they are aware of the league's playoff rules before the start of the game. If they are not aware or unsure of them coaches should hand them a copy of the rules stating that the league has asked all coaches to provide the referees a copy of the rules prior to the start of the game.