ST. PADDY'S DAY
INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT

2027 OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES

Tournament Contact: Jeff Kelly | JKelly@rslaz.org | Revised October 27, 2026

1. Eligibility & Registration

Applicable Rules

FIFA Laws of the Game shall apply as modified by USYSA, Arizona FC, and the Arizona Soccer Association as described in these tournament rules.

Eligible Teams

Open to all ASA, USSF, AYSO, USYSA, and US Club Soccer teams in good standing with appropriate registration forms and player passes.

Foreign Teams

Foreign teams are welcome to register with proper FIFA region- or country-issued player passes and documentation showing that each player has entered the United States legally via passport, along with proof of player insurance.

Guest Players

A maximum of five guest players per team is permitted for ages U7-U19. All guest players must be registered at team check-in. Each guest player must have a state-approved loan form with all required signatures, a picture player pass, and a medical release. Arizona-based teams must use the ASA Loan Form. A player may play for only one team in the tournament within an age division; otherwise, all matches played by that player are subject to forfeiture.

2. Pre-Match Requirements & Equipment

Pre-Match Check-In

U9-U19 teams must be ready to check in with game officials at the game field 30 minutes prior to the start of each match. Failure to check in may result in match forfeiture at the discretion of the Tournament Director. Player equipment will be inspected, player passes reviewed, and jersey numbers compared with the team roster. Game officials will retain player passes for the duration of the match; team officials are responsible for retrieving passes after each game.

Equipment

All players must wear shin guards during matches and may wear approved soccer-specific cleats (no front toe cleats). Jewelry of any kind is not permitted. Players U9 and older must wear numbered uniforms with no duplicate numbers. Soft casts or wrapped hard casts may be permitted with referee approval.

Minimum Players

Teams must have a minimum of five players for 7v7, six players for 9v9, and seven players for 11v11. Teams that forfeit during pool play may continue in pool play, but may not continue into elimination rounds.

Substitutions

Unlimited substitutions are allowed in all age groups with the center referee’s permission. Coaches should notify the assistant referee that a substitute is requested. The entering player must report within five yards of the halfway line and may enter only after the referee signals and the player being replaced has left the field. Substitutions during the final three minutes are at the referee’s discretion.

3. Match Format & Modified Rules

Division	Game Size	Field Size	Game Duration	Max Roster	Suited for Match
U7-U8	4v4	~30 x 20 yds.	4 x 10 min quarters	8	8
U9-U10	7v7	~60 x 40 yds.	2 x 25 min halves	14	14
U11-U12	9v9	~75 x 50 yds.	2 x 30 min halves	16	16
U13-U15	11v11	~110 x 70 yds.	2 x 35 min halves	22	22
U16-U19	11v11	~110 x 70 yds.	2 x 40 min halves	22	22

U7-U8 Modified Game Rules

- No offsides called.
- All free kicks are indirect; opponents must remain four yards back.
- Out-of-bounds balls are kicked in (indirect) rather than thrown in.
- No heading allowed.

U9-U10 Modified Game Rules

- The build-out line serves as the offsides line; defenders must retreat to the build-out line; the goalkeeper may not punt or drop-kick the ball.
- No heading allowed.
- Free kicks may be direct or indirect as signaled by the referee; penalty kicks are taken from ten yards off the goal line.
- Throw-ins, not kick-ins, are used.

U11 Modified Game Rules

- No heading allowed.

4. Tournament Scoring & Awards

All games, except championship games in a six-team bracket, that are tied at the end of regulation will remain tied; there is no overtime or shootout. Championship games tied after regulation will proceed immediately to a five-player FIFA penalty shootout. Players must have finished the match on the field to be eligible to shoot in the postgame shootout.

For ages U9-U19, the tournament uses a 10-point bracket-play scoring system:

- Win = 6 points
- Loss = 0 points
- Tie = 3 points
- Shutout = 1 point (not awarded in a 0-0 tie)
- Goals = 1 point per goal, maximum 3 points
- Red card / spectator ejection = -1 point per infraction

Forfeited matches are scored 3-0, resulting in 10 points for the winner.

If a match is abandoned, the non-abandoning team will receive a minimum of eight points and a maximum of ten points if it had already earned more than eight points at the time of abandonment. The team that abandoned the match receives no match points and loses an additional two points.

If neither team appears for a match, both teams lose two points in the standings. If weather forces termination of a match, the score will count only if the match was canceled during the second half.

Awards

- U7-U8: Medals for all players; no score is kept.
- U9-U19: Medals for first- and second-place players.

5. Group Stage Tie Breakers

Ties between two teams are broken in the following order until a winner is determined:

- Head-to-head winner
- Goal differential (five-goal maximum per game)
- Least goals allowed (five-goal maximum per game)
- Most goals scored (five-goal maximum per game)
- Most shutouts
- FIFA penalties

For FIFA penalties, the site and time will be set by the Tournament Director and communicated to the coach and/or manager. Each team must produce at least the number of players used in its match format - seven for 7v7, nine for 9v9, or eleven for 11v11 - at least five minutes before the scheduled time to be eligible to compete. Otherwise, the team will forfeit.

Ties between three teams are broken in the following order until a winner is determined:

- Head-to-head record, if all three teams played each other. If one clear winner is produced, that team advances. If two teams remain, use the two-team tie breakers above. If all three teams have equal head-to-head records, continue to the steps below.
- Goal differential (five-goal maximum per game)
- Least goals allowed (five-goal maximum per game)
- Most goals scored (five-goal maximum per game)
- Most shutouts
- FIFA penalties

6. Home / Visiting Teams & Sideline Conduct

Home & Visiting Teams

The home team is listed first on the schedule and must change jerseys in the event of a color conflict.

11v11: The home team will use the north or east sideline, together with its spectators in designated areas. The visiting team will use the south or west sideline. Team benches are on the same side of the field as the linesman.

4v4, 7v7, 9v9: Spectators must sit on the perimeter of the 11v11 field across from their team. Both teams share the same sideline on the interior of the field, with the home team on the north/east side and the visiting team on the south/west side.

Sideline Behavior & Etiquette

Head Coaches have ultimate responsibility for the conduct of themselves, assistant coaches, team officials, players, and spectators. Spectators and coaches may not stand behind either goal during a match.

Abusive comments and inappropriate or aggressive behavior on the field or sidelines will not be tolerated and will be enforced in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game. All participants are expected to demonstrate respect and promote fair competition. Spectators are not permitted to interact with referees at any time. There are no exceptions; a spectator who violates this rule may be asked to leave the soccer field.

Each team is responsible for cleaning its sideline after each match. Smoking, alcoholic beverages, pets, illegal drugs, and glass containers are prohibited on or near tournament fields. Pop-up tents are allowed at the Reach 11 Complex; stakes used to secure tents are not allowed.

7. Ejections, Discipline & Credentials

Arizona Soccer Association rules prohibit any coach, team official, or player who has been ejected from a match or suspended by the proper authority from remaining within sight or hearing distance of the field of play during the suspension. A coach, team official, or player receiving two cautions (yellow cards) in one match is considered ejected (red card) for tournament point-deduction purposes. An ejected player may not participate in the next scheduled match.

A coach, team official, or player ejected for violent conduct may not participate in the next two scheduled matches, subject to review by the Tournament Director. Any coach, team official, or player who assaults a referee will be immediately expelled from the tournament - NO EXCEPTIONS. Fighting will not be tolerated, and no refunds will be provided to a team removed from the tournament for fighting.

If a spectator, coach, or player is ejected and refuses to leave, the match will be considered abandoned. The team refusing to leave will lose two points in the standings and will be considered to have abandoned the match.

Teams must present player and bench-personnel picture identification cards, which will be checked against tournament-generated match reports. Sponsoring tournament club in-house teams are an exception.

Teams must have a certified/approved tournament roster from the team's Federation Organization available in case of discrepancies with tournament-generated match reports.

Each team is limited to three coaches on the bench, all of whom must be listed on the team roster, except for the club DOC. A team may not participate without a properly registered coach or assistant.

Each player's uniform number must match the number listed on the tournament roster. If it does not, the referee may not allow the player to participate until the uniform or roster number is corrected.

A team that plays without proper credentials, or removes any type of verification from the tournament check-in process, will be immediately disqualified from that match and the match will be considered a forfeit. All roster changes and player-pass changes must be completed by a tournament official.

Any team caught changing jerseys, or any player wearing a jersey other than the one listed on the official team roster verified at check-in, will be immediately disqualified from that match.

A player arriving after the pre-match procedure may enter once the match official(s) verify eligibility and the center referee grants permission.

8. Disputes, Weather & Tournament Authority

Disputes

The tournament committee will settle all disputes, and its decision will be final. No protests will be allowed.

Inclement Weather

Matches will be played in all weather conditions unless the Park Coordinator, Tournament Director, Tournament Referee Assignor, or Match Referee determines conditions are dangerous and/or life-threatening under FIFA/USYSA/ASA regulations. The tournament committee will work with site coordinators to make every reasonable effort to play all scheduled matches.

The tournament may use the following contingency plans, modified as needed to maximize the opportunity to play:

- Shorten all First Round matches to 50% of normal halves.
- Shorten all First and Second Round matches to 50% of normal halves.
- Shorten all First, Second, and Third Round matches to 50% of normal halves.
- If fields become unplayable or weather becomes hazardous, some matches may be decided by FIFA penalties.
- If penalties are not possible and all tournament-approved fields are unplayable, Arizona FC Tournament Staff may use a coin toss to determine the winner. The winner will receive a 1-0 result and eight points: six for the win, one for the goal, and one for the shutout.

Disclaimer

Arizona FC reserves the right to use other facilities within the Valley if reserved facilities are shut down. In the event of tournament or division cancellation due to acts of God, inclement weather, or other reasons beyond Arizona FC's control, entry fees will not be refunded.

QUESTIONS? Tournament Contact: Jeff Kelly | JKelly@rslaz.org