



Coaches: Are You Ready for Some Futsal?

The LI Futsal 2020 season starts weekend (Jan. 4th & 5th, 2020) and **Long Island Futsal** which has been running leagues since 1996, is now one of the largest futsal leagues in the country - **thanks to your support and participation**. There are nearly 220 teams playing this year in Suffolk County and the potential for growth keeps increasing as more and more people see futsal as a great tool to develop soccer players - FIFA has always considered futsal as their official indoor soccer game and U.S. Soccer now has recently incorporated futsal as part of their Academy Development program.

Long Island Futsal have grown significantly over the years, and we always strive to improve and maintain the highest quality possible. All our refs are certified by the United States Soccer Federation to ref both outdoor games and futsal games. Should you have a gripe about a ref or would like to report a good experience, please complete our referee evaluation format this link: [REFEREE EVALUATION FORM FOR COACHES](#) I can assure you that we have and will continue to take all evaluations seriously.

Some important information for the season:

- **Use of the build out line** for the U8-U10 age group. Scores and standings are not kept for the U8/9 age group, which is also consistent with U.S. Soccer's player developmental program. The defensive player can only cross the build out line when the ball is touched, after the goalie releases the ball, by the team in possession
- **NO Heading** for the U12 and younger age groups
- **"Arm Locking" will be called a holding foul this year.**
- **Goalie Futsal (2 touch) back-pass** rule applied for U13 and older only
- **The official score** will be kept by the referee on the field – the flip score, if used, will NOT be the official score this year
- **Coaches of both teams** are to review and sign the score – sheet – please look at the team names and scores carefully as many team and club names are very similar
- **Players will be checked in** by the referee prior to each game and teams must have the **Game roster** available for the referee – please print your roster: If you forget to bring the Game roster, you must complete a hand written one prior to the game (this will result in a one point deduction from the standings). The game time may be reduced if this causes a delay in the start.
 - **Schedule Completion** – the full schedule is nearly completed other than the makeup games (TBD's) due to team conflicts and finishing early on Super Bowl Sunday These will be posted prior to your third game at the latest
 - **Sunday – Feb. 2nd** all games will finish at 4 pm in all venues, so teams that usually play after 4 pm will have their games re-scheduled
- **Schedule Requests** that were made after the deadline of December 8th, can only be considered if the all parties involve agree to the change and there is gym time available. This year, some school districts are less flexible in their policy and will charge the league for the reserved (rather than actual usage) time even we if we have a cancellation. Scheduling is the most difficult part of running the league, due to so many requests and school board constraints. We do prioritize sister teams playing back to back and allowing coaches who coach multiple teams to be present for each of their teams. However, that is also extremely challenging as teams can be in different age groups and most likely different venues, so please have an assistant coach available to assist if necessary. This year, thanks to your support and passion for the game, we had an overwhelming number of sister teams, as well as coaches being responsible for coaching multiple teams.

- **Building/Facility Use:** We are very fortunate that the school districts allow us to continue to utilize their facilities for futsal – they often open up when the buildings are closed for the holiday and provide the league a cost effective and excellent venue for futsal – so ...
- **Please respect all the facilities**
 - **If siblings are brought to the games, they must be supervised by their parents and not roaming the hallways – games may be stopped by the referee (we have had false fire alarms activated and soccer balls (which are not allowed in the facility) bouncing and setting off alarms. If this occurs the school may be ordered to be evacuated and games cancelled for the day**
 - NO Food or Drinks (other than water for the players) are allowed in the gym and players are not allowed to warm up in the hallways
 - Teams must pick up their trash after the game. **Only futsal balls** can be used for warm-up.
- **Competition** – we do our best to balance the competition of the divisions, but it is not a perfect science by any means and futsal is game where many goals are scored and sometimes teams are overmatched. The brackets are Premier, A (Div. 1&2) and B (Div3 and lower) We typically place Premier teams to play a year up. This year, we will again post the tentative brackets and make appropriate adjustments where possible. If absolutely necessary, we may adjust after the first two weeks. Also, we allow “uneven” brackets rather than trying move one team up or down to balance the scheduling. This does result in some teams having to play a second game in the day – last year this helped balance the level of play in the division. We do combine age brackets if necessary due to not enough teams in a bracket, but do match skill level. We feel it is better to combine two age groups of similar ability than having a team play in their own age bracket of a significantly higher or lower skill level, as futsal is more dependent on skill, rather than size, speed or aggressiveness compared to the outdoor game.
- If however, the game starts to become lopsided, try challenging your players by placing restrictions (i.e. 2 touch only) on their play. I appreciate your consideration in this concern. Also, the only tiebreaker is head to head, so there is no goal differential that will be used to decide a division winner. If head to head does not settle a tie and teams are tied for points in a division, then all the tied teams will be declared division winners and will receive awards.

Thank you. John Branca/LI Futsal League Owner

