N1 South District #4
Official Rules

This document outlines rules and procedures specific to the N1 South District #4 and is intended to complement the official N1 League Rules and Handbook. In all cases, the official N1 League Rules and Handbook will govern and take precedence over any conflicting information contained herein.

1. Categories: This is a US Club Sanctioned Soccer League that is open to ALL participants affiliated, properly registered and carded with US Club Soccer: boys and girls ages U13-U18/19.

2. Registration Fee: The annual team registration fee for the N1 League is $2,500. This fee includes administrative costs, field usage, postseason qualification expenses, league awards, and two Voit official match balls per team. Team fee does **NOT** include US Club Player memberships, referee costs, Got Sport Software fee. Referee fees will depend on final number of teams and will be billed after division is finalized. Independent clubs are responsible for registering their players with US Club Soccer directly; alternatively, players may be registered under the EPPL club for the purpose of obtaining US Club Soccer identification cards.

3. Registration and Team Eligibility: Registration will be completed online. A team will only be considered eligible when all player and staff have been properly registered and have successfully received their US Club Soccer Membership (id card).

4. Roster Size:

- Minimum: 15 players
- Maximum: 30 players
- Game day roster: 18 players

5. League Structure:
Our N1 structure aims to create a balanced, competitive season with clear pathways to advancement. Each age group division will ideally have 12 teams. Across 6 to 8 dedicated N1 weekends, teams will play two matches per weekend, completing 11 regular-season games. At season's end, the top six teams enter a round-robin playoff. The first of these playoff matches will take place on the last regular season N1 weekend. The rest of the playoffs will be played across 2 additional N1 Playoff weekends. The first-place team earns an ECNL Conference League Playoff spot*. The runner-up qualifies for the US Club regional event in Oklahoma. The bottom six teams compete in a relegation playoff, where positions 7 to 10 remain safe, but positions 11 and 12 face a potential challenge for their spot.

If there are less than 12 teams in a division the following will apply:

8 team division

- 14 regular season games (play each team twice)

- NO playoff games
- 14 total games

14 game regular season, playing every team twice, with no playoffs. Final standings determine qualifiers and relegations

9 team division

- 16 regular season games (play each team twice)
- NO playoff games
- 16 total games

16 game regular season, playing every team twice, with no playoffs. Final standings determine qualifiers and relegations

10 team division

- 9 game regular season
- 4 playoff games
- 13 totals game season

9 game regular season followed by 4 game round robin playoffs split into Championship Playoffs and Relegation Playoffs.

11 team division

- 10 regular season games
- 4-5 playoff games
- 14-15 total games

10 game regular season followed by 4 or 5 game round robin playoffs. 5 top teams will go to Championship playoff. 6 bottom teams will go to relegation playoffs.

6. Division Standings and Tie Breakers: Read Official N1 Rules

7. Game Lengths: Read Official N1 Rules

8. EJECTIONS/DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Read Official N1 Rules

10. ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE:

PLAYERS:

- US CLUB Discipline Matrix and USSF Severity of Misconduct Matrix will be used as a guide to decide length on suspension for any disciplinary procedure.
- FIGHTING or MAJOR PHYSICAL ASSAULT will not be tolerated for any reason. Players sent off for fighting (striking or attempting to strike another coach, team official, player or spectator) will receive a minimum 3 GAME SUSPENSION and are subject to a longer suspension based on severity of aggression and pending league official's decisions.
- Referees will do their best to identify players that are involved in violent conduct and only those players will be punished. If violent conduct turns into a larger altercation the whole team will be subject to disciplinary actions.

- If, in the opinion of the Center Referee, a match must be terminated due to violent conduct, the offending team forfeits that match. If no offender can be clearly identified the game will be called a NO CONTEST and no winner will be named regardless of match type or score. (INCLUDING PLAYOFFS AND FINALS) These instances may lead to point reductions or suspension from the league.

COACHING STAFF AND SPECTATORS:

- US CLUB Discipline Matrix and USSF Severity of Misconduct Matrix will be used as a guide to decide length on suspension for any disciplinary procedure.
- In case of a violent situation within the field, coaches with valid IDs and Referees are the only authorized adults that may enter the field to control the situation.
- If spectators must enter the pitch, it must be solely to prevent imminent harm or stop an active physical fight may be considered mitigating, provided the individual:
    - Does not incite, participate in, or escalate conflict
    - Immediately disengages once officials gain control
- If spectators engage in a fight or violent situation before, during, or after a match the offending team forfeits that match. If no offender can be clearly identified the game will be called a NO CONTEST and no winner will be named regardless of match type or score. (INCLUDING PLAYOFFS AND FINALS) These instances may lead to point reductions or team suspension from the league.
- Any instance of spectators entering the pitch in an unauthorized manner will fall under the PITCH INVASION POLICY.

PITCH INVASION POLICY:
DEFINITION: A pitch invasion is defined as any entry onto the field of play without the explicit permission of the referee, before, during, or after a match.

DO NOT COME ON TO THE FIELD. Any pitch invasion by a coach, parent, or spectator that incites, escalates, or participates in violence will result in an automatic forfeit by the offending team, regardless of match type. Any unauthorized entry onto the field is prohibited and will carry consequences, and at a minimum will result in an automatic yellow card to the head coach of the offending team. If the situation does not escalate, there is no physical violence, and the referee is able to quickly regain control, the match may continue at the discretion of the referee and/or EPPL staff, with additional sanctions as appropriate (including removal of spectators, red cards, suspensions, and bans).

Referee and EPPL Staff Authority

- The referee and/or EPPL Staff have **FULL AUTHORITY** to determine:
    - Whether entry was authorized
    - Whether behavior was mitigating or aggravating
    - Whether a match should be suspended, abandoned, or forfeited
- Referee and/or EPPL Staff decisions regarding safety and match control are final.

Zero-Tolerance Statement

While the league recognizes rare emergency circumstances, unauthorized pitch invasion will be treated as a serious offense. Parents and spectators are expected to remain off the field at all times unless expressly directed otherwise. Failure to comply jeopardizes player safety, match integrity, and the future participation of the offending team.

ZERO VIOLENCE AGAINST MATCH OFFICIALS:
Any violence whatsoever by a player, coach, or spectator against a match official will result in the immediate ejection of the team involved from the event. No refunds will be issued.

BEHAVIOR TOWARDS EPPL STAFF:
- EPPL staff is here to provide a service to you and your team. This service is a privilege and not a right. Any person that verbally assaults, harasses, or threatens an EPPL staff member will be subject to suspensions for not only themselves but also their player and their team.
- "WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE SERVICE TO ANYONE"

Coach Behavior and Consequences
Coaches will be held to the highest standard and we expect every single coach to behave in a manner that aligns with the values of this league. Coaches will be respectful, supportive, and will do their best to promote good sportsmanship and fair play, so that in return they may instill in their players the same values.

- If a coach is being disrespectful, rowdy, or showing poor sportsmanship the following will apply:
    - The coach will be given a verbal warning and will be shown a yellow card (caution).
    - If coach continues to display the same behavior, they will be shown a red card and asked to leave the fields.
    - If coach does not leave, the game will be forfeited by the offending team regardless of the score or match type. If there is no other coach present with a valid and present coach ID the game will be forfeited by the offending team regardless of the score or match type

Parent Behavior/Consequences
Parents and Spectators are expected to behave in a manner that aligns with the values of this league. Parents and Spectators will be respectful, supportive, and will do their best to promote good sportsmanship and fair play.
- If a parent or group of parents are being disrespectful, rowdy, or showing poor sportsmanship the following will apply:
    - Referee will verbally warn head coach and ask them to control their spectators.
    - If behavior continues, coach will be shown a yellow card (caution)
    - If behavior continues, head coach will be shown a second yellow card, subsequent red card, and will be sent off.
    - Game will continue if coach leaves, and spectators improve their behavior. If those two things do not happen, game will be stopped and forfeited by the offending team regardless of the score or match type. If there is no other coach present with a valid and present coach ID, the game will be forfeited by the offending team regardless of the score or match type

11. Cheating/Protests/Consequences
Cheating
- There will be no tolerance for cheating in this league. A team caught cheating will suffer the following consequences:
    - On the first offense, the offending team will be removed from the season, and an email will be sent out to all participants notifying them of the team's removal. No refunds will be given.
        - THIS INCLUDES PURPOSEPLY PLAYING A PLAYER NOT ON THE ROSTER AND OVER AGE PLAYERS!
    - If there is a second offense, the entire club will be removed from the season. No refunds will be given.

Protests

- Player Protests
    - Player Protests must be handled at the site of play and must occur before the game, at half time, or right after the game before signing the game report.
    - If a coach has reason to believe a player is not eligible, they may approach the referee and ask to see the player's ID and check it against the game report.
- Formal player age protest
    - Do not be a part of the problem
    - Make a formal protest via email to formally protest a players age.

12. Forfeits: Teams will receive a 10-minute courtesy period if they are not present or do not have enough players to start a match. The 10-minute courtesy period starts at the scheduled game time. At the end of the 10-minute courtesy period, if the team is not ready to start, the game will be forfeited. Referees will declare all forfeits. The minimum number of players required to field a team for is seven. **A game that is forfeited will be scored 5-0.**

Forfeits:

- **Forfeits will be scored 5-0**
- **NO CALL – NO SHOW:**
    - Teams that do not show up to play a game will automatically lose the game via forfeit and will incur NO CALL - NO SHOW fee.
    - **A NO CALL - NO SHOW fee is equal to referee fee plus a $500 fine.**
        - Team will not be allowed to play until fee is paid.
    - A team or club that consistently forfeits games without notifying will no longer be accepted to participate in the N1 South District 4 League.

13. Schedule Changes: Teams are expected to prioritize all South District 4 / N1 matches and remain available for their officially scheduled game dates.

All schedule change requests must be submitted through the **Official Schedule Change Form**. The form can be found in the **Schedule Change** section of the South District 4 website.

Schedule change requests submitted by text message, direct email, phone call, or any other communication method will not be considered official and may not be processed.

Schedule change requests are subject to the following fees based on the amount of notice provided prior to the originally scheduled match:

- **At least two (2) weeks before the match:** $50 per game
- **Less than two (2) weeks but more than 96 hours before the match:** $100 per game
- **96 to 48 hours before the match:** $250 per game
- **Within 48 hours of the match:** No schedule changes will be permitted
- **No-show:** $500 fine plus all applicable referee fees

Submission of a schedule change request does not guarantee approval. All requests are subject to field availability, referee availability, opponent availability, scheduling limitations, and approval by South District 4 administration.

Schedule change fees apply only to new requests initiated after the official schedule has been published. If a scheduling issue resulted from an administrative error, or from a previously submitted and approved preseason scheduling request that was not properly accommodated, the schedule change fee will not apply.

Teams requesting review of a possible administrative scheduling error must provide the team name, division, affected match information, and documentation or details regarding the previously submitted request.

Failure to follow the official schedule change process does not relieve a team of its obligation to participate in the originally scheduled match.

14. Coach's Responsibilities: Coaches are responsible for their team preparation, being on the correct field at the scheduled time, their own substitutions, and for the conduct of their players, bench, friends, and spectators at all times. Coaches are responsible for obtaining and maintaining a valid US Club Coach ID. Read Official N1 Rules for more information on requirements.

15. Home team: Home team will be listed first on the schedule and will take the north or west side of the field.

16. Jersey color conflict, Player credentials, Uniforms: Read Official N1 Rules

17. Player Equipment: Shin guards are required for all players (**NO EXCEPTIONS**). No hard casts are allowed. Soft casts are allowed with the permission of the League Officials.

18. Game Ball: Each team must provide a FIFA approved game ball. A penalty kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the beginning of the match if a team fails to present a game ball. **The game ball must be presented AT GAME TIME. THERE IS NO COURTESY PERIOD FOR A TEAM NOT HAVING A GAME BALL.**

19. Awards: First place and second place teams will receive a team trophy and custom medals

- Individual Awards:
  - Top Goal Scorer: An Individual player award will be given to the player that scores the most goals during the regular season of their respective division.
  - MVP: An individual awards will be given to the Head Coach of the CHAMPION team, and they will award the MVP to a player from their team.
  - Best Goalkeeper: An Individual player award will be given to the goalkeeper of the team that receives the least number of goals during the regular season of their respective division. (*per team)

21. Protests and Disputes: Decisions by field officials (Referee) are **FINAL**. Any further protest or dispute will be handled by the league director and their decision is **FINAL.**

23. Club Pass:

What is the CLUB PASS?
The Club Pass is a special designation that can be given to a player in order to allow the player to play for multiple teams within their own club.

What is a CLUB (regarding CP)?
A club is a group of teams that:

a) Are enrolled by the same account (person).
b) Have the same name and uniform that displays the "Club Logo"
c) A club MUST have a single "registrar" responsible for roster change communication.

League Officials reserve the right to deny a player CP status if they find the two teams do not belong to the same club.

Rules and Limitations

- Read Official N1 Rules for more information.
- A player can only play in ONE official N1 match per day regardless of CP designation.
- A player can only play for another team within their own club and may not use the CP designation to play for a team outside their club. *This does not refer to the league "club" to which all players belong to*
- A Player may play for any team within their club if they meet the age requirements. In other words, they can play in their age group and up, never down.
- A player may not play in two teams in the same division regardless of CP designation.
- Any player who is not assigned a CP designation may not play for more than one team.
- ***IMPORTANT* We cannot guarantee that the schedule will always accommodate the needs of a CP player.**

24. INCLEMENT WEATHER OR UNEXPECTED TERMINATION OF PLAY

CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE SEVERE WEATHER/LIGHTNING POLICY

25. GAMEPLAY

Laws of the game: All matches will be played in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game, except for what has been modified in this rules sheet AND THE NEW USSF MODIFICATIONS

Team check-in prior to games:
Coaches must have physical or virtual team official N1 roster and/or player cards ready for official review before every game.

Substitutions: Read Official N1 Rules

SCORE REPORTING:
League Director and or League officials are responsible for reporting scores and posting them online. Referees turn in game cards to field marshals and marshals turn in cards to committee. Official scores are kept on score cards at EPPL office. An official team representative is required to sign and approve game cards after each match.

For More Information:
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