

NUTMEG WOMEN'S SOCCER LEAGUE LEAGUE RULES

Article 1: MEMBERSHIP

- i. The Nutmeg Women's Soccer League shall consist of teams located in the state of Connecticut.
- ii. Teams which played during the previous season must indicate their intention to participate in the upcoming season 45 days before the first day of the season.
- iii. Any new team that meets all requirements and agrees to abide by the League By-Laws and Rules may apply to join the League by submitting a request in writing or via e-mail 60 days before the first day of the season. A roster, a copy of each player's driver's license as proof of age, payment of the team bond, and a commitment for use of a field for home games must be submitted to the League no later than 45 days before the first day of the season. The League Board of Directors shall review all applications and either approve or decline the application.
- iv. Any new team applying to join the League that plans to roster five or more players who are currently registered to any one existing team must notify the League of their intention 90 days before the first day of the season.

Article 2: PLAYERS

- i. No player may be currently under suspension from the Nutmeg Women's Soccer League or any other CSSA-affiliated organization or league.
- ii. Not more than five players on a team may be from a team that is currently under suspension or expulsion from the the Nutmeg Women's Soccer League, or from any other CSSA-affiliated organization or league.
- iii. All players must be registered with the league one week prior to the start of each season and must pay all required fees to the League. Players may be dropped from or added to a team's roster at any time during the season, but are not eligible to play in sanctioned League games until registration materials have been submitted, all fees have been paid to the League and the Registrar has confirmed that registration is complete.
- iv. Official League player passes will be provided to each team representative for their respective team members. Each player pass must contain the player's name, a recent color photo of the player, the player's birthday, and must be validated by the league. Players without their individual player pass will not be permitted to participate in the soccer match unless approved in advance by the League Registrar for an extraordinary situation, in which case an e-mail from the Registrar shall suffice as approval to play.
- v. A player may not register with two teams in the same Age Division at the same time; however players may register for one team in each Age Division. Individual players who wish to transfer to another team within an Age Division should send a request via e-mail to their current team representative and the League Registrar who will expedite the transfer and notify the teams involved within two weeks of receiving the request.

Article 3: LEAGUE STRUCTURE

- i. The league shall be organized into two Age Divisions, Over-30 and Over-40.
- ii. The league shall schedule games for the Fall and Spring seasons annually. For administrative purposes, the Fall season shall begin September 1 and the Spring season shall begin April 1.

Article 4: OVER-30 AGE DIVISION TEAM AND MATCH RULES

4.1 Team Structure

- i. Players in the Over-30 Division must turn 30 within the calendar year., i.e., by December 31. Goal-keepers may be 28 years old and will have a special pass indicating such. Goal-keepers under the age of 30, who do not turn 30 within the calendar year, may not play on the field.
- ii. Statistics for the Over-30 Age Division will be maintained, based upon the total number of points accumulated; with teams receiving three points for each victory, one point for each tie, and zero points for each loss.
- iii. The League may choose to group teams according to the previous season's record with the intent of scheduling games (predominantly) between teams with similar skills. A decision whether to subdivide and group the teams will be made at the League General Meeting according to the rules established in the By-Laws.

4.2 Team Rules

- i. Each team shall choose a representative or captain who will represent the team at League General Meetings. The team representative is responsible for corresponding with all players rostered to their team about game schedules, League rules, meetings and other matters as requested by the Board of Directors. The team representative is also responsible for communicating to the League Registrar about field assignments for home games.
- ii. Each team is responsible for ensuring that all required League fees are collected from their rostered players. Teams in the Over-30 Age Division must also post a bond in the amount equivalent to two times the current referee fee. Fifty percent (50%) of the posted bond shall be forfeited in the event that a game is canceled for inadequate reasons as described in Article 6: League Match Rules.
- iii. Each team may also assess additional fees from their rostered players to cover costs such as referee fees, uniforms, fields, etc. at their discretion.
- iv. Each team must provide a home field of appropriate size and quality. Home teams are responsible for ensuring that nets and flags or cones are in place before the start of the game, and must provide a game ball.
- v. Each team must provide two contrasting uniforms, jerseys, T-shirts, or pinnies with permanent visible numerals on the backs of the shirts. Visiting teams shall always wear their primary uniform, as indicated on the league schedule; home teams may wear either uniform except that they must wear a uniform that is distinct in color from that of the visiting team.
- vi. The home team will pay the referee fee for all home games. The referee fee is set by the League.

4.3 Match Rules

- i. Games will be scheduled for the Fall and Spring seasons every year and will be played on Sunday afternoons unless otherwise arranged and previously agreed upon by representatives of both teams. Changes in game dates and/or times must be communicated to the state referee coordinator with sufficient notice to allow for re-assignment of referees.

- ii. Each team shall be scheduled for the same number of games. The regular season shall consist of home and away games for each team. Other friendly matches within or outside the League may be arranged as agreed upon by the team representatives.
- iii. Games will consist of two 45-minute halves, unless both team representatives agree before the match to a shorter time period. In cases of extremely hot weather, it is permissible to play four quarters with short water breaks.
- iv. Games may be canceled only if the field is officially closed by the town where the match was scheduled, or, in the case where the town does not provide guidance, if the team representative determines that the field is not playable. Cancellations must be communicated by telephone to the other team's representative no later than 12:00 noon on the day of the game. Cancellations and changes must also be communicated to the state referee coordinator as well as to the referee(s) assigned to the match.
- v. Teams which cancel games without adequate notice are liable for the referee fees, regardless of whether they are the home or away team. Such teams will forfeit 50% of their posted team bond per canceled game and must post an additional bond in the amount forfeited within 10 days following the date of the forfeited game.
- vi. The minimum number of players required by a team to play a match is seven. A game can not begin until a minimum of seven are present from each team. If a team does not have the required number of players to begin a game by 15 minutes after the designated game start time, the game is a forfeit by that team.
- vii. Every effort must be made to field a team. If a team is short players, the available players must attend the match. They may then be supplemented with the other team's substitutes or a short-sided game may be played. If a game is played, regardless of format, the team bond will not be forfeited.
- viii. Any team that forfeits two or more games in accordance with Article 4.3.v during one season will not be allowed to participate in the League for the next season unless a petition to the Board of Directors is approved.

Article 5: OVER-40 AGE DIVISION TEAM AND MATCH RULES

5.1 Team Structure

- i. Players in the Over-40 division must turn 40 within the calendar year, i.e., by December 31. Goal-keepers may be 38 years old and will have a special pass indicating such. Goal-keepers under the age of 40 who do not turn 40 during the calendar year, may not play on the field.
- ii. An Over-40 Age Division Coordinator, appointed by the League Board of Directors, shall oversee the organization of teams, and schedule games and fields. The Over-40 Division Coordinator shall communicate with the League Registrar about game times and field assignments and coordinate referee assignments with the state referee coordinator. The Over-40 Age Division Coordinator will assess a fee to be determined before the beginning of each season, to cover the cost of referee fees and other administrative costs as necessary.

5.2 Team Rules

- i. Each team shall choose a representative or captain who will represent the team at League General Meetings. The team representative is responsible for corresponding with all players rostered to their team about game schedules, League rules, meetings and other matters as requested by the Board of Directors.
- ii. Each team must provide two contrasting uniforms, T-shirts, or pinnies. The team designated as 'visiting' shall wear their primary uniform, as indicated on the league schedule; "home" teams may

wear either uniform except that they must wear a uniform that is distinct in color from that of the "visiting" team.

5.3 Match Rules

- i. Games will be scheduled in the Fall and Spring seasons of every year and will be played on Saturday mornings at a time and location to be determined before the beginning of each season. All matches will begin within 15 minutes of the designated start time.
- ii. Games will consist of two 40-minute halves, unless both team representatives agree to a shorter time period. In cases of extremely hot weather, it is permissible to play four quarters with short water breaks.
- iii. Games may be canceled only if the field is officially closed by the town where the match was scheduled, or, in the case where the town does not provide guidance, if the team representative determines that the field is not playable. Cancellations will be communicated to all players no later than two hours before the scheduled start of the match on the day of the game. Cancellations and changes must also be communicated to the state referee coordinator as well as to the referee(s) assigned to the match.
- iv. The Over-40 Age Division Coordinator will pay the referee fee for all games. The referee fee is set by the League.

Article 6: LEAGUE MATCH RULES

- i. All matches will begin within 15 minutes of the designated start time.
- ii. Games may end in ties.
- iii. Except as provided below, matches shall be played according to FIFA rules:
 - (a) Slide tackling is not allowed in the League, except for the goal-keeper inside her own penalty box. First offense is a verbal warning, the second offense may warrant a Yellow Card at the discretion of the referee and a third offense may warrant a Red Card. The restart for a slide-tackling offense is an Indirect Free Kick, unless there is an additional penalty associated with the incident.
 - (b) Teams are allowed to substitute freely at all stoppages in play after recognition by the referee.
- iv. Only USSF certified referees may be used in League sanctioned games. If a team must use a non-USSF certified referee in an emergency, the other team's representative must be notified of such and a mutual agreement reached before play may begin. In this case, insurance provisions may be null and void.
- v. Match referees shall be responsible for administering the League Rules during the match, and their decisions shall be final.

Article 7: PROTESTS

- i. Any team may file a protest with the League President, when it feels that a match or a part of a match has not been played in accordance with League Rules, provided that it informs the referee at the time it feels the rule has been violated and notifies the League President within 48 hours of its intent to file a protest, and subsequently files a written protest within one week of the date of the game.
- ii. If grounds for protest exist before the game begins, such as field conditions, nets, or player registrations, then the protest must be registered with the referee, in writing, before the game begins.

- iii. If a reason for a protest should arise during the game, the referee must be notified before the end of the game, and confirmed in writing at the end of the game.
- iv. The League President will obtain written statements from both coaches and referees and the League Board of Directors will convene a special meeting to determine the outcome of the protest. If the President is involved, the Vice President will collect the statements and convene a meeting of the remaining members of the Board of Directors.
- v. Decisions affecting matters of fact concerning play are not protestable.

Article 8: LEAGUE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

8.1 Procedures

- i. The Disciplinary Committee shall be chaired by the current League President who shall appoint additional members to serve as necessary. Should a conflict of interest exist for the League President, the Disciplinary Committee will be convened by the Vice President; if the conflict of interest also includes the Vice President, the Disciplinary Committee will be convened by the Secretary, Treasurer or Registrar, in that order of preference.
- ii. The Disciplinary Committee shall act for the League in all disciplinary matters and have discretionary powers in interpreting the degree of correction. The Disciplinary Committee shall receive, review and make decisions on complaints against individuals or teams.
- iii. Penalties and/or suspensions shall be assessed according to Appendix I. Player Sanctions. All penalties and/or suspension(s) mandated by the Disciplinary Committee shall be served in the next scheduled league game(s) immediately following the notification by the Disciplinary Committee Chair. Upon notification of a suspension, the team representative must immediately turn in the player pass to the Disciplinary Chair. Once the suspension has been served, it is the team representative's responsibility to notify the Disciplinary Chair that the suspension has been completed. The Disciplinary Committee Chair shall then return the player pass to the team representative. The failure to notify the Disciplinary Committee Chair may result in retaining the player pass.
- iv. All decisions concerning sanctions against players will be made within two weeks of the infraction(s).

8.2 Appeal to the Board

- i. A person(s) may appeal the decision or any order of the Disciplinary Committee to the current Vice President of the Board of Directors by serving a written notice of appeal within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision or order. The Vice President may convene a committee to review the appeal at her discretion. A decision shall be made within two weeks of receipt of the written notice of appeal.
- ii. No member shall participate in the hearing of an appeal if:
 - (a) The board member has a conflict of interest or is biased
 - (b) There is any reasonable basis on which it may appear that the board member may have a conflict of interest or may be biased.
- iii. On hearing an appeal the Vice President or the appointed committee may:
 - (a) Dismiss the appeal.
 - (b) Dismiss the finding of guilt.
 - (c) Direct further inquiries by the investigation committee or appoint a new investigation committee to reinvestigate the matter.

- (d) Direct a new hearing or further inquiries by the Disciplinary Committee or appoint a new hearing committee to rehear the matter.
- (e) Modify the penalty and/or sanction initially determined by the Disciplinary committee.
- iv. Pending the resolution of an appeal, the player in question may continue to play in League games until the outcome of the appeal.

Article 9: AMENDMENTS TO THE LEAGUE RULES

- i. League Rules amendments may be made by the Board of Directors and approved with a majority vote by the members of the Board of Directors, subject to ratification at the next General Meeting of the League. Amendments may be proposed by a member of the League in writing or via e-mail to the League Secretary at least 30 days prior to a General Meeting of the League. All League Rules amendments must be ratified by a simple majority vote of the member teams voting at the General Meeting.

Approved March 6, 2010

Appendix I Player Sanctions

- i. Players, substitutes and team officials (participants) shall at all times act in the best interests of the game and shall not act in any manner that brings the game into disrepute. The Disciplinary Committee may take action against any participant who is in breach of this rule.
- ii. The Disciplinary Committee shall apply sanctions against players who have committed offenses and may suspend players for one or more games according to the situation. In case of repetition (i.e., if the same player during the same season is reported for another offense, even if the infraction is not of the same nature) more severe action may be taken.
- iii. Suspensions in effect at the end of the season will be carried over and served at the start of the following season. Changing teams will not void the suspension.
- iv. Any player receiving a red card who gives a false name or who refuses to leave the field will be dismissed from the League.
- v. Any player who receives two red cards in one season, or who has been reported for a rule infraction reported by another player, coach or referee, may be called to a hearing before the League Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee will review the referee report(s) and/or other account(s) to determine whether an additional suspension or other type of sanction is necessary.
- vi. Any player receiving a red card for infractions during League game will receive at a minimum the penalty indicated in the table below. The referee issuing the red card will send a report to the President of the League.

Infraction	Minimum Penalty
Denying a goal by handling the ball	1 match suspension
Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity by committing a foul	1 match suspension
Second caution (yellow card)	1 match suspension
Abusive language (not referee abuse)	2 match suspension
Spitting	3 match suspension
Serious Foul Play	3 match suspension
Violent Conduct	3 match suspension
Second red card	Add 1 match suspension

Referee Abuse: Misconduct against referees includes referee abuse or referee assault during and after the match, including travel to and from the match and also at later times when directly related to the duties of the game official as a referee. Referee abuse includes, but is not limited to, foul or abusive language, verbal statement (or physical act) that implies or threatens physical harm to a referee, or the referee's property or equipment. Assault includes, but is not limited to, hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting at or on, grabbing, or bodily running into a referee, kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury, damaging the referee's uniform or personal property (i.e. equipment, car, etc.). The Disciplinary Committee will review all such acts and will impose strict suspensions ranging from multiple games to one or more years.