

26th Annual Crossroads Challenge

October 10-11, 2026

Tournament Rules

1. Players and Coaches

The Head Coach must sign in, in person, an hour before their first game. At this time a complete roster will be checked against the frozen roster. Medical Release information should have been received prior to the tournament and must be submitted for a player to participate in any game.

Each team will provide a suitable game ball for each game. U9, U10, U11, and U12 will use a size 4 ball; all other ages will use size 5. Suitability of the ball is the sole determination of the referee.

Player passes are not allowed at the tournament. Only players on the Soccer Maine frozen roster are allowed to play on said team. **Club pass is allowed** in line with the Soccer Maine Handbook and a copy of both rosters should be provided to referee.

We will be using 6x12 goals for U9/U10, 6.5x18 goals for U11/U12, 8x24 goals for U13/U14.

2. Uniforms and Equipment

All uniforms must be numbered. **Duplicate numbers on any team are not permitted.** It is the home team's responsibility to change uniforms if a color conflict arises. Pinnies, which permit the underlying number to be discerned, are acceptable for this purpose. Shirts must be tucked in and socks must cover shin guards. **The use of shin guards is mandatory.** Referees will exclude players not so equipped from play.

3. Coaches and Sportsmanship

A minimum of one Soccer Maine licensed and rostered coach must coach the team and be in the player area. A maximum of three Soccer Maine licensed and rostered coaches may be in the team area during games.

Conduct and Responsibility

Coaches are responsible for their own conduct and for the conduct of their players and fans at all games. **Abusive or obscene language, violent play, violent conduct or other behavior detrimental to the game will not be tolerated.** Failure of a coach to control his/her players and fans may result in action against him/her by the referee. For any sportsmanship problems concerning the spectators, the referee will solicit the assistance of the Tournament Director and direct the offender(s) to leave the immediate area of the playing field. If the offender(s) fail(s) to leave the area as directed, the referee at his/her discretion may terminate the game and the Tournament Director may award a forfeit win to the non-offending team.

Coaches must stay at least 10 yards from the half-way line during the games. They must refrain from loud, persistent or intrusive coaching of field players from the touchline. Parents and other spectators must remain on the opposite sideline.

Failure to observe these rules will be considered behavior detrimental to the game and may be dealt with accordingly.

Coaches and managers who are ejected or are under suspension must leave and remain completely away from the playing site. Failure to abide by this rule may result in additional disciplinary action.

4. Referees

The referee is responsible for the conduct of the game. The latest IFAB rule changes that will be in play are as follows: Free Kicks, Goal kicks, Kick off, Dropped ball, Penalty Kicks, Cards for coaches, and Hand ball offenses. There will be a printed list of these rules at the Stats tent. The referee is the sole judge of the suitability of the field at game time and its equipment, the players' uniforms and equipment.

5. Duration of Games

U9 and U10 games shall consist of two equal halves of 20 minutes each.

U11, U12, U13 and U14 games shall consist of two equal halves of 30 minutes each.

U13 and U14 championship games are full length 35-minute halves.

Half-time breaks for all games should be 5 minutes.

6. Protests

- No protests will be allowed in this tournament. Decisions of referees stand for each game. Protests will not be heard on the quality or judgment of substitute referees.
- The Tournament Director has the final authority in the interpretation of the tournament rules and the operation of the Patriot Crossroads Challenge.

7. Player Safety

Any player who is found to be bleeding or to have blood on his/her uniform shall be asked to leave the field. The player may return only after demonstrating to the assistant referee that the bleeding has stopped and that all blood has been removed from the uniform.

8. Substitution

Substitutions shall follow Soccer Maine's Fall Handbook for each level as indicated below:

All levels - unlimited and made at mid-field:

- Prior to a throw-in – either team
- Prior to a corner kick – either team
- Prior to a goal kick – either team
- After a goal – either team
- After an injury when the referee stops the game – either team
- At half time – either team

9. Bracketing

U-9, U-10 & U-11 age groups are non-competitive per Soccer Maine tournament guideline requirements. For all other age groups, bracketed rounds will be played under FIFA

bracketing formats unless the number of teams in the division makes this impossible. Brackets will be formed by random draw. The FIFA bracket format is to be used for all bracketed play which means there is **No overtime** in bracketed play. The winner of each bracket is determined by the FIFA point system of:

Win = 3 points

Tie = 1 point

Loss = 0 points

Winners of forfeited games will be awarded 3 points.

FIFA Bracketing means you play everyone within your bracket once; bracket winners meet each other in a final. **Tie breakers for bracket play** will be in this order:

1. Head-to-Head result
2. Goal Differential (3 goals maximum per game)
3. Fewest Goals Given Up
4. FIFA Penalty Kicks

Three-way ties are resolved starting at tie breaker #2, with second place again starting with tie breaker #2.

10. Suspended & Terminated Games

Fitness of playing conditions will be determined by the Patriot Soccer Club prior to the game. Responsibility then shifts to the referee during the game. Qualifying games will be considered complete if the game is terminated after the first half has been played. Any game terminated prior to completion of the first half will be recorded as a 0-0 tie. Championship games may be suspended during play by the referee. The Patriot Soccer Club will then rule on a possible reschedule to complete the game. If the game cannot be restarted, and the first half is completed, then the winner will be determined by the current score, if there is a tie, and/or the first half has not elapsed, both teams will be declared co-winners.

11. Score Sheets

Both coaches and referees must sign the referee's score sheet at the conclusion of each game.

12. Cancellations / Refunds

Any team that is accepted into the tournament and later withdraws will forfeit the registration and entry fees. No refund will be made in the event of cancellation or shortening of any matches due to inclement weather or unsafe field conditions from the inclement weather.

13. Tournament Finals

- All final games will be played in a single elimination format.
- Games with a tied score at the end of regulation shall complete two (2) 5-minute overtimes (no golden goal). If the game is still tied at the conclusion of two overtime periods, then the FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark Tie-Breaker procedure as specified in the Laws of the Game shall be followed to determine a winner. One round of five (5) kicks from the penalty mark per team will be taken. If a winner has not been determined, sudden death kicks from the penalty mark

will be performed. Only players on the field at the end of the match are eligible to take penalty kicks.

14. Awards

U-9, U-10 & U-11 age groups will be non-competitive, and all participating, rostered players will receive a Patriot Crossroads Tournament Medallion. U-12, U-13 & U-14 age groups will be competitive and only the winning team and second place team participating, rostered players will receive Patriot Crossroads Tournament Trophies.

15. Zero-Tolerance Policy

Applicability

Each coach is responsible for his/her actions, the actions of his/her players, spectators associated with his/her team, and other members of the coaching staff with regard to game referees. Each coach, player, and spectator shall at all times support the referee and assistant referees. Failure to do so will undermine the referee's authority and has the potential of creating a hostile environment for the players, spectators, coaches, and referees alike. **No one is to address the referee in a negative manner during or after the game.** We will follow Soccer Maine's Referee Abuse policy.

Coaches' communications with the referee and/or game officials

Coaches and/or bench personnel may NOT address any member of the referee crew during play except for:

- Responding to a referee-initiated communication.
- Making a request for substitutions.
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues, such as an injured player on the field.
- To request clarification of any call provided the request is courteous and non-argumentative and must wait until either half time or after end of game.

Violations of this policy during a game will have the below consequences:

- First infraction: Referee may stop the game and remind the coach or bench personnel of Soccer Maine's Referee Abuse Policy.
- Second infraction: Caution. (**Yellow card shall be shown to any coach or bench personnel**). The referee may issue a final warning that a third infraction may result in an ejection.
- Third infraction: Ejection. (**Red card shall be shown to any coach or bench personnel**). The referee may instruct the coach or bench personnel to leave the field. Thereafter, the ejected person must depart to a distance where he or she can no longer see or hear anything to do with the match. If the ejected person fails to leave the field, the referee may abandon the game.

Spectator communications with the referee and/or game officials

Spectators should not say anything to the referee and/or game official, nor should they do anything which, in any way, could convey any criticism of the referee.

Spectators may respond to a communication initiated by the referee or may point out any emergency safety issue.

Coaches are responsible for their spectators and will be responsible for their actions.

Negative or critical comments directed to any member of the referee crew will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy at any time will have the below consequences:

- **First infraction:** Referee may stop the game, request the assistance of both coaches, and remind the spectators of Soccer Maine's Referee Abuse Policy.
- **Second infraction:** Referee may stop the game and issue a final warning that a third infraction may result in the ejection of the coach in charge of the spectator(s).
- **Third infraction:** The referee may instruct the coaches to direct the spectator to leave the field and may eject the responsible coach for failing to control the spectator(s). If the ejected coach and the spectator(s) fail to leave the area of the field, the referee may abandon the game. In the event the referee abandons the game, the offending team will forfeit the game. The game score will be recorded as 3-0.

Notification

Should a referee eject any player, coach, bench personnel or spectator, and/or abandon a game, he/she shall notify Soccer Maine in writing. A written report of the pertinent facts should be sent to the Soccer Maine office within 24 hours. If a game is abandoned prior to completion, the referee will make no determination as to the outcome of the match. Soccer Maine may refer the matter to its disciplinary committee for further action, if necessary, and/or to the appropriate competitive committee for disposition of an abandoned game.