

# **COPA MIAMI WINTER CLASSIC RULES**

## **December 6-7, 2025**

**Tournament Headquarters will be located at:**

**4577 N Nob Hill Road, Sunrise, FL 33351**

### **REGISTRATION AND TEAM ELIGIBILITY**

The Copa Miami Columbus Day Tournament shall be open to all teams comprised of properly registered youth players (as defined by the rules of the affiliated organization) in all age groups listed in the “Tournament Rules”, provided such team is in good standing with its youth association.

**AGE DETERMINATION:** the player’s playing age is determined by the following **USYSA guidelines for 2025/2026.**

Age Division	Birth Year	Maximum Roster	Guest Player Limit
U-9	1/1/17	12	5
U-10	1/1/16	12	5
U-11	1/1/15	14	5
U-12	1/1/14	14	5
U-13	1/1/13	18	5
U-14	1/1/11	18	5
U-15	1/1/11	18	5
U-16	1/1/10	18	5
U-17	1/1/09	18	5
U-18	1/1/08	18	5
U-19	1/1/07	18	5

**\*\*Each team will be allowed to have guest players, who are properly registered through their National and State Association, Federation or any other USSF affiliated organization.**

Guest players must have permission to participate/travel from their National and State Association, Federation, School or any other USSF affiliated organization. Players may not play for more than one team in the tournament.

### **HEADING GUIDELINES:**

In accordance with the recent U.S. Soccer recommendations on concussion risk management, heading has been eliminated in matches for player’s age 10-years-old and younger (2015-U11 and younger), per the new calendar year registration guidelines. 2014-U12 teams will participate in non-heading divisions until December 31, 2025 and then heading divisions shall be permitted Jan 1. The guidelines apply to leagues, tournaments,

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and other sanctioned events that include 2015-U11 and younger age group teams (2014-U12 in 2025) heading will not be permitted.

Leagues and tournaments shall allow for 2014-U12 heading age divisions after January 1, 2026. Leagues and tournaments will be permitted to form 2015/2014-U12 non-heading divisions. (see playing up guidelines) Teams that opt for 2015/2014-U12 non-heading divisions shall only participate in non-heading divisions in league play, tournaments, and all events. Sanctions will be made against teams that do not follow this guideline.

### **CONCUSSIONS:**

Pursuant to Florida Statutes (FS 943.0438) Florida in 2012 enacted a very stringent Head injury and Concussion Law. If the referee (or assistant referee) believes that, in his/her opinion, a player has suffered a head injury or possible concussion, the match must be stopped IMMEDIATELY.

The injured player if able to leave the field on their own must be escorted to their coach and the coach must be told that the player cannot return for the duration of the match. If a trainer is brought onto the field because the player is incapacitated, the referee must still notify the coach that the player cannot return to the game. It is the responsibility of the coach and the player's parent(s) or legal guardians to seek medical attention. The player may not resume participation until he/she has been cleared by a medical doctor. The Referee HAS NO FURTHER responsibility beyond removing the player from the match in which the player was injured. The referee crew must ensure, that UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES or due to the appeal from any coaching staff that the player is allowed to return to the game.

### **LAWS OF THE GAME**

All games shall be played in accordance with FIFA Laws, except as specifically modified by these rules. Law 11, Offside, will be enforced in all age divisions, including U9-U12.

### **SUBSTITUTION TIME**

- Substitutions shall be unlimited at any stoppage approved by the referee. Substitutions may be made only upon proper notification of the referee through the linesmen.
- The substitute shall not enter the field of play until the player he/she is replacing has left, and then, only after receiving a signal from the referee.
- When an injured player (inclusive of the goalkeeper) is attended to on the field of play, the player must leave the field of play for treatment and evaluation. A substitution may be made for the injured player.

### **SUBSTITUTION AGE LIMITS**

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For age groups U16 and younger, substitutions may be made at any stoppage only with the permission of the referee.

For age groups U17 years and older, free substitution as detailed above is allowed providing the tournament is not an official competition (but a friendly club tournament) and the age category does not include matches between national teams of FIFA member countries. If it does include national teams, then up to seven substitutions are allowed. These substitutions may be made only upon proper notification of the referee through the linesmen, with the referee's permission, at any stoppage of play.

### **Players' Equipment**

Player equipment must conform to FIFA rules. All players will wear shin-guards (under the socks).

Orthopedic casts are not permitted; however, soft braces can be worn with written approval from a doctor, and judgment as to safety is at the discretion of the referee, the ultimate authority is the referee.

No player shall be allowed to wear ANY jewelry while participating in any USYSA sanctioned match. The only exception that may be allowed is a medical alert bracelet or necklace when taped to the body. The referee shall make the decision as to the safety of the player and the referee's decision is final.

Teams will wear uniforms of matching design and color with a minimum of six (6) inch numbers affixed to the back of the uniform shirt. In case of similar team colors, the designated home team per the tournament schedule will be required to change to a color accepted by the referee. In cases where the schedule does not designate a home team the first team listed on the game report will be considered the home team.

The uniform of the goalkeeper must be distinctly different in color from the basic colors of the competing teams and the referee.

### **The Referee**

The center referee for all matches must be certified by the Federation. Visiting international referees must be approved by the Federation.

In the event, the assigned referees fail to appear and the assignor and/or Site Director fails to provide a replacement, the senior assigned assistant referee shall assume the duties and shall find an alternate assistant. The game will be played as scheduled and will be deemed official.

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### **The Duration of the Match**

Age Group	Ball	Preliminary Games	Playoffs	Overtime
U9/U10	4	25 min. halves	25 min. halves	"Kicks from the Penalty Mark"
U11/U12	4	25 min. halves	25 min. halves	"Kicks from the Penalty Mark"
U13/U14	5	30 min. halves	30 min. halves	"Kicks from the Penalty Mark"
U15/U16	5	30 min. halves	30 min. halves	"Kicks from the Penalty Mark"
U17/U19	5	30 min. halves	30 min. halves	"Kicks from the Penalty Mark"

No change per FIFA "Laws of the Game" with the following exceptions:

### **POST GAME PROCEDURES**

As a mutual courtesy, both teams will meet at the center circle and congratulate each other for a game well played.

Manager/coach of both teams will insure their respective sideline areas are clean and that all trash is in containers.

At the end of each game, a team representative must sign/initial the game report prior to collecting the player cards, with the exception of any players or coaches sent off, from the referee or field marshal. The ultimate responsibility of collecting the passes from the referee lies with the coach/manager of the teams participating.

A completed game report will be submitted to the tournament director complete with scores and a supplemental report for send offs, injuries or special circumstances that need explanation.

### **CONTROL OF SIDELINE CONDUCT**

Players, reserve players, managers, coaches, and fans are expected to conduct themselves within the letter and spirit of "The Laws of the Game." The Site Director has the authority and the responsibility to remove any person(s) from the tournament for abuses of conduct, in addition to any specific disciplinary action brought about by any other authority.

In addition to good manners, the following rules will apply to the SC:

The Site Director will designate one sideline to be for the sole use of the players listed on the game roster and a maximum total of three (3) managers/coaches/trainers from each team, with one team occupying one side of the mid field and one team, the other.

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While the game is in progress the manager/coach/trainer and the reserve players must remain on their respective benches and may not roam the sidelines. The Site Director will designate the opposite sideline for the spectators. No one will be allowed behind either end line.

The manager/coach will be responsible for the behavior of their fans and the referee will have the authority to warn and ultimately send off, any manager/coach whose fans behave in an abusive or disruptive manner.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ARE NOT PERMITTED AT GAME SITES.**

**ARTIFICIAL NOISE- MAKING DEVICES ARE PROHIBITED**

### **CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

It shall be solely the team's responsibility to determine the status of its players. Any suspension from a tournament, local league, etc. is the responsibility of the team to notify the Tournament Director of this suspension at the time of the player check in.

As stated in Rule 504.1, Red card suspension or send off suspensions can only be served with the team with which the suspension was earned in games played by their team. Until the suspension is served, the player/coach is suspended from any other team(s) to which the player/coach may be registered.

Players may not serve suspensions as "guest players" nor may they "guest play" with any other team(s) until such time as the original suspension is served.

The Copa Miami will have a Discipline Committee of no less than three (3) members. The Discipline Committee will review and rule on all reports of unacceptable conduct by players, manager, coaches, referees, spectators, etc. The committee will utilize FYSA Code of Conduct Rule 502 as a MINIMUM standard guideline with the committee's decision final and not appealable. FYSA (post tournament) will determine if any additional discipline is required pursuant to Rule 502.

All players and managers/coaches shall be subject to USYSA discipline and sanctions.

A player, manager, or coach ejected will have an automatic minimum one (1) game suspension regardless of the cause of the ejection. Duration of suspension is cumulative based on further misconduct after receiving the initial dismissal.

The referee(s) are in jurisdiction of the match while in the vicinity of the game. Players and bench personnel may be issued a Red Card/Send Off either before or after a game.

A coach or spectator who is ejected must leave the field of play area a minimum of 100 yards immediately. Failure to comply will result in suspension from the entire event and jeopardize inclusion into future SC tournaments.

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uniform.

Depending on the severity of the unacceptable conduct, the Discipline Committee may recommend the suspension of up to the duration of the tournament in accordance with FYSA requirements with potential further disciplinary action by the appropriate National and State Association, Federation or any other USSF affiliated organization. The Discipline Committee recommendations will be available to the affected parties no later than before their next scheduled game.

At the conclusion of the SC, it is the responsibility of the team's coach or manager to pick up the passes from the tournament office (even if suspension has not been completed). A complete report will be sent to USYSA pursuant to their rules located at <http://USYSA.org>.

### **DETERMINATION OF GROUP WINNERS**

Finalists will be determined through a seeding format or by a division winner's format. The Tournament Committee will decide which format each age group and bracket will follow. This will be announced prior to the commencement of competition. The rules to determine tiebreakers will be the same for either format. Each team will be awarded three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie and zero (0) points for a loss. At the end of the preliminary rounds, if the division winner determines the finalists for a particular age group and bracket, the division winner will be the team with the most points in their division. In the event of a tie within a division, the following criteria will be used to determine who moves forward:

1. Head to head competition (this criterion will not be considered in the case of a tie among more than two (2) teams.) \*\*\*\*
2. Goal differential to a maximum of four (4) per game.
3. Most goals scored to a maximum of four (4) per game.
4. Least goals allowed to a maximum of four (4) per game.
5. FIFA penalty kicks.

\*\*\*\* In the event of a tie between more than two teams, once a tie is broken by the above system, and if ties between remaining teams still must be decided, starting again from the top of the tie breaking procedure would break those ties.

In the event that a wild card team must be selected for the playoff rounds, the above procedure will be used across the entire age group and bracket involved.

- If a division winner does not show up for play, the division team with the next best record shall be named the division winner.
- In the event the finalists for a particular age group and bracket are determined by seeding, the finalists (or semi-finalists if applicable) shall be determined based upon the two teams (or more if semi-finals are applicable) with the most points in the overall age group and bracket involved. In the event of a tie, the same criteria as utilized for division winners shall be used to determine the finalists.
- In the event that there is an age group(s) and bracket in which semi- finals are held, to be determined at the discretion of the Tournament Committee, the foregoing rules shall be applied to determine the teams that shall qualify for the semi-finals.

\*If both teams are to advance to the playoff rounds the team that applied first will receive the higher seed in lieu of penalty kicks.

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If Penalty kicks\* in accordance with FIFA "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark." is required to determine the winner for advancement after steps 1-5 still result in a tie, penalty kicks will be taken thirty (30) Minutes before the scheduled start of the elimination game or earlier if a mutually convenient time can be agreed upon with representatives of both teams and the Tournament Director.

The team whose official tournament name, as written in the schedule, is first alphabetically will call the coin toss.

The tournament reserves the right to adjust pairings of the first elimination round so teams will not play teams already played.

### **FORFEITS**

Games should start at the given start time. In case the team does not have the minimum number of players there will be up to a fifteen (15) minutes grace period. At that time the Tournament Director may extend the wait time based on unforeseen circumstances or make the decision to declare a forfeit and award the victory to the other team. A forfeit will be scored 4-0.

The tournament discipline committee will review the circumstances of the forfeit and may add additional penalties such as:  
~~and not allowing the team to be declared a division winner or wild card team~~

- Forfeit one you forfeit all. The forfeiting team may play all remaining Group Play matches (using referees) as official exhibitions.
- The decision of the committee will be final

### **PERFORMANCE BOND**

A \$1,000.00 performance bond may be required of all foreign teams to guarantee participation. The SC will return any non-forfeited bonds immediately after the team's final game.

### **PROTEST AND DISPUTES**

There will be NO PROTESTS. Decisions by referees may not be appealed. All disputes will be resolved immediately by the Site Director. These decisions will be final.

### **EXTERNAL CONDITIONS, WEATHER, ETC.**

Regardless of weather conditions, players and coaches must be on the field at the scheduled time, ready to play. In case of inclement weather or field conditions, games may:

- Be shortened - The Tournament Director may reduce the length of matches due to weather conditions before the start of a match; all such matches will be considered official.

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- Be shortened – The Tournament Director may reduce the length of halves due to weather conditions before the restart of a match once delayed due to weather; all such matches will be considered official.
- Be rescheduled (time and location determined by Tournament Director)
- Go to “Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark.” (time and location determined by Tournament Director)
- Be canceled - the tournament committee has the right to cancel any match that has no bearing on the scoring and progression of tournament play.

If the Tournament Director rules that during the preliminary round “Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark.” will be done due to inclement weather or field conditions, the following rule will apply:

- Each team will take a maximum of five (5) penalty kicks.
- At the end of five (5) kicks the game will be scored as a 1-0 win for the team that has scored more penalty kicks, or a 0-0 tie if both teams are tied in penalty kicks at the end of five (5) kicks
- In the overall standings, 3 points will be given for the win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss
- The 1-0 win in penalty kicks will not be counted for or against to determine the tie breaker for advancement
- If regular games have been played in the bracket and the Tournament Director has determined that other games go to penalty kicks due to inclement weather or field conditions, the regular games score will revert back to a 1-0 win or a 0-0 tie.

Only referees or duty manager can suspend a match already started due to weather conditions. Duration of any suspension will be determined by the Tournament Director.

In case of extreme weather (heat/humidity), a break will be given at the midpoint of each half of regulation time and at the end of each overtime period (if played) for player hydration. This break will be given at a normal stoppage of play and it is mandatory for any match during which the air temperature is or is expected to reach eighty - five (85) degrees. This break will be a maximum of one (1) to two (2) minutes of time.

The Tournament Discipline Committee will make the final decision on all disputes regarding the suspension, termination and resumption of play in the best interest of the tournament and all participants.

### **CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL CEREMONY**

Following the completion of each championship game, the two competing teams will present themselves to the Tournament Director for awards.

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### **TOURNAMENT ENTRY FEE RETURNS/REFUNDS AS FOLLOWS:**

- Within five (5) days after notification that the team is not accepted by their application.
- Within five (5) days upon cancellation of the tournament.
- Within ten (10) days of withdrawal request of the application by a team prior to acceptance of that application by the tournament.

Any team that will not be permitted to play in the contracted age group shall have the option to withdraw and receive a full refund of all entry fees. The tournament shall notify any participant not less than fifteen days prior to the beginning of the tournament if any age group advertised will not be offered.

### **GENERAL**

The Copa Miami, Coral Springs United, the Tournament Committee, FYSA, USYSA, USSF, and/or the host affiliate will not be responsible for any expense incurred by any team due to the cancellation in part or whole of this tournament.

The tournament committee's interpretation of the foregoing rules and regulation shall be final and reserves the right to decide on all tournament matters.

The tournament committee has the responsibility to uphold any previous suspension imposed by US Club Soccer, US Youth Soccer and/or affiliates of USSF; SC, Coral Springs United is not responsible for the behavior of players, coaches, and spectators off the field, or damages resulting from such behavior. Coaches and players committing breaches of the law may be ejected from the tournament at the discretion of the tournament committee.

### **PLEASE REMEMBER**

- NO ORTHOPEDIC CASTS ARE ALLOWED - NO EXCEPTIONS
- AT THE END OF EACH GAME, A TEAM REPRESENTATIVE MUST SIGN/INITIAL THE GAME REPORT TO GET YOUR PLAYER CARDS BACK FROM THE REFEREE AT THE END OF EACH GAME.
- RED CARDS MUST BE RETRIEVED FROM TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS.
- PLEASE ENSURE YOUR TEAM REMOVES ALL TRASH FROM THE SIDELINE AFTER EACH GAME.
- COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF THEIR SPECTATORS.
- ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ARE NOT PERMITTED AT GAME SITES.