



Bolts Columbus Cup Rules – 2025

	U8	U9-U10	U11-U12	U13-U15
Field Size	7v7	7v7	9v9	11v11
Ball Size	4	4	4	5
Roster Size	15 max	15 max	16 max	22 max
Half Length	25 minutes	25 minutes	30 minutes	35 minutes
Offside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Minimum # Games	3	3	3	3
Playoffs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Awards	N/A	Champion and Finalist	Champion and Finalist	Champion and Finalist

Officiating

Qualified officials will officiate each game. For 7v7 and 9v9 games you should expect only one official for the match. For our 11v11 matches, the three-person system will be used. This Boston Bolts Tournament has a [Zero Tolerance Policy](#), which is in effect for the duration of the event.

Heading Rules

In alignment with state regulations, intentional heading of the ball will not be allowed at u11 and younger. Intentional heading of the ball will be penalized with an indirect free kick for the opposing team.



7v7 Playing Out of the Back

- In 7v7 competition, the opposing team must be behind the halfway line for goal kicks to promote playing the ball out of the back.
- Punting and drop kicking are not permitted in 7v7 play.

Substitutions

- This event will follow FIFA rules where **UNLIMITED** substitutions can be made at **ANY** stoppage with the consent of the official. This includes free-kicks, corners and opposition stoppages such as the other team's throw-in.

Hotels:

- This is a stay to play event. All teams requiring hotel stays will be required to book hotel rooms through our travel partner, Halpern Travel. Halpern will be reaching out to all teams requiring rooms to assist with your booking. Teams booking hotel rooms not through Halpern will be disqualified from the event with no refund given.

Weather

In the case of inclement weather every attempt will be made to play all scheduled games in the tournament. At the sole discretion of the tournament director/committee, some games may be declared a 0 – 0 tie and not made up. The following priority will be given to making up games:

- Teams that have not yet played a game in the tournament.
- Teams that have only played one game in the tournament.

The lightning policy for the tournament is as follows: At the first visible sign of lightning (regardless of the estimated distance from the field) all play will be stopped and players and spectators will be asked to move to a safe location. For all games that were in progress the game clock will continue to run. If time runs out and the game was at or past half time when play was stopped, the result at the time of play being stopped will stand. If 5 minutes or less remain in the first half and the score has 2 or more differential the game will be declared final.



If the game had not reached 5 minutes or less before half time every attempt will be made to make up the game at a later date and time.

Play will not resume until 30 minutes after the last visible lightning strike seen (regardless of the estimated distance from the field). When play is resumed, the game, which was scheduled closest to the re-start of play, will begin. For example, if play is stopped at 2:50 pm and restarted at 5:20 pm, the teams scheduled to play closest to 5:20 pm will play, NOT the teams scheduled to play at 2:50 pm.

Every attempt will be made to make up the 2:50 pm game at a later date and time. When play is stopped, or resumed, due to lightning, it is at the sole discretion of the referees and the tournament director/committee. Both referees and tournament officials will enforce strict adherence to the above policy. No appeals will be allowed. **Personal safety is the number one concern of the tournament and it will supersede any game situation.**

Standings and Playoff Qualification:

At all ages results will be kept and standings posted on the TapIn Sports site. Teams will be awarded 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss. Advancement to playoffs will be determined based on:

- Total Points from group play.
- Tiebreaker 1 – Head to head
- Tiebreaker 2 – Goal Differential to a maximum of 4 per game.
- Tiebreaker 3 – Total goals conceded.
- Tiebreaker 4 – Total goals scored.
- Tiebreaker 5 – Most shutouts
- Tiebreaker 6 – Penalty Shootout between the teams who are equal on points and all above tiebreakers.



Playoff Rules:

- If tied at the end of regulation, the teams will take kicks from the penalty spot to determine a winner. Each team will send up 5 penalty takers.
- If still tied after 5 penalty kicks the teams will alternate 1 shooter at a time until a winner is determined. The penalty takers must be on the field at the end of regulation to be eligible for the penalty shootout.

Maximum Goal Differential

All games will have a maximum goal differential of 4 - even if the margin of victory was greater than 4 goals. Tournament director and staff will have all official scores – but a 4-goal differential will be recorded in the results

Player Safety

It is expected that coaches will keep players who have sustained injuries off the field. Referees and coaches must not allow anything dangerous to be worn that could be harmful to a player or an opponent on the field. The referee's judgment shall determine what is safe and what is dangerous. Some examples of items that are considered unsafe (but not limited to those stated) are braces, splints, prior injuries, jewelry, hats, barrettes, and faulty cleats. **CASTS –Will be allowed if the cast has been properly wrapped in bubble wrap and deemed safe per referee discretion, the referee has the final decision on game day at the field.**

Player Deportment

Shirt must be tucked inside shorts. Shin guards must be firmly in place and covered by socks. Non- standard attire, accouterments, and apparel must be cleared prior to the Tournament with written U.S.S.F. approval: otherwise, Rule 4 of the FIFA rules apply. The Referee Committee will continue to be the sole arbiter as to what is legal and what is not legal.

The issuance of all red and yellow cards and other matters involving the conduct of a team, its players, coaches or supporters will be recorded and reported immediately to the home state association and the home/club league.



A player receiving two cautions (yellow cards) in a single game is considered to have been given an ejection (red card). A player who has been ejected (sent off) will not be replaced. A player who has been ejected will not return for that game and will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game. A coach who has been ejected (sent off) will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game.

Any player or coach ejected (Red Card) from a game shall be ineligible to take part in any further action with the team during that match.

The referee, referee coordinator and Event staff/director will assess the ejection and decide upon further suspension. The discretion will be solely down to the tournament director and referee coordinator.

Assault or abuse by players, coaches, or supporters will result in immediate suspension for the balance of the event.

Uniforms

The home team shall wear white or their lighter colored uniforms. The away team should wear their darker colored uniforms.

Field Marshals

Field Marshals will be present at all fields. All participants should be aware that the Marshals have the authority and right to remove any unruly or uncivil spectators from the game field perimeter and/or the field complex area.

Event Committee

In the event of conditions beyond the Event Committee's control, final decisions with respect to game cancellations, shortenings or terminations shall lie solely with the Event Committee and director. The Event Committee/Director, in conjunction with the Referees' Committee/Coordinator, reserves the right to change field assignments. In addition, the Event

Committee/Director reserves the right to change sectional and divisional assignments in the interest of fair and balanced competition.

Protests

No protests will be considered.



Refunds

In the event that the entire tournament is cancelled due to weather prior to your first scheduled match, Boston Bolts will either partially or fully refund your team once all tournament expenses have been fully covered. If weather curtails the tournament thereafter, every reasonable attempt will be made to assure teams play at least 2 games, but no refunds will be given.