

SYSA 2016 City Tournament

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the City Tournament?

The Seattle Youth Soccer Association's annual City Tournament is a recreational tournament exclusively for teams U11 through U19 that participated in SYSA's fall recreational league. It is meant as a fun, competitive way for recreational league teams and players to conclude the season.

The tournament is run as a modified double elimination tournament. All teams are in competition until they lose two games, with one exception as further explained below.

The City Tournament is an open style contest, meaning any team that played in the fall recreational league may enter, regardless of their level of play during the season. There are no divisions, seeds, or weighting of brackets. All teams enter a pool, and are placed in the bracket through a random draw. Regardless of whether they played Gold, Silver or Bronze, any team may be matched up against any other team. While this may appear to give an advantage to Gold division teams, it is less of an advantage than seeding the tournament since the random placement spreads the chance to advance around to more teams (and encouraging more teams to participate). Many factors determine which teams end up in the final game. In the past, there have been some surprises.

At least three teams must enter the tournament for a bracket to be formed.

When does it start and end?

By SYSA Rules, the tournament begins the Monday after Thanksgiving. Games are played during the week and on the weekends for the following 20 days, concluding on a Saturday with the City Tournament Championships that match the remaining two teams for each age/gender bracket. In 2016, the City Tournament Championships will be held on Saturday, December 17th.

How many games will my team play?

All teams play at least two games. The total number of games any team plays is determined by how long they continue without losing two games, how many teams are in their bracket, and whether and how early they lose a game and drop to the "losers' bracket". A team in a large bracket with many other teams that loses a game early could end up playing as many as 6, 7, or 8 games if they continue to win. Most teams average 3 to 4 games played.

When will the bracket schedule be published?

Schedules for each age/gender bracket will be published during Thanksgiving week, as early in the week as possible. Some years, the schedule is tougher to put together but it always comes out before Thanksgiving.

What if my players can't make a game? Can I reschedule?

Rescheduling games is not permitted nor is it really possible in the City Tournament. There are many teams and many games, a limited number of fields (especially lit fields on weeknights) and games depend on the outcomes of other games. In other words, the entire tournament is scheduled extremely tight so games cannot be delayed or rescheduled. Teams are urged to get as many players as they can to attend games and play the game, even if shorthanded, rather than forfeit because of not appearing.

Can I add new players to my roster for the City Tournament?

All rosters for teams planning to participate in the City Tournament must be final by October 31 of the tournament year. No player can be added to or dropped from the team roster after that date, as stated in the SYSA Rules of Competition, Section 12.3 (<http://www.sysa.org/doclib/SYSARulesAndRegs2016-17.pdf>). Players who are added to a team before the October 31 date who are on a different SYSA or another team in Washington Youth Soccer must be transferred off the previous team. Players cannot play on two teams in SYSA's recreational league.

The City Tournament is a recreational tournament. It is meant as an end-of-season event for teams who played in the SYSA Citywide fall league. Unlike many select and premier level tournaments, guest players are not permitted as transfers onto teams. Any coaches requesting an exception to this rule must contact their club registrar and request a change be submitted to SYSA's VP of Competition, who acts as the City Tournament director, and will determine if an exception is justified.

What does "modified double elimination" mean?

A double elimination tournament means that teams play until they lose two games, after which they are out. The modification for City Tournament is that the final championship game matches the remaining two teams that haven't been eliminated. The final matches the team that advances out of the winner's bracket (the team with no losses) against the team that advances out of the loser's bracket (the team with one loss). The winner of this game wins the City Tournament.

Because of the challenges of scheduling fields and the referee crews and all the other aspects of putting together a championship event, SYSA decided many years ago to go with a format that provided for one finals match that would be final, regardless of whether a team lost twice or not.

When and where are the games played?

City Tournament games are played in Seattle and Shoreline on both Saturdays and Sundays during the day, and on weeknights wherever lighted, synthetic fields are available. In fact, part of the fun of City Tournament is playing night games on lighted fields. All the match venues are scheduled ahead of time so the referee crews can be assigned to appropriately aged games, so while there are "home teams", the home teams don't necessarily play on their league-season "home fields". Teams should be prepared to travel to fields anywhere in Seattle and Shoreline, regardless of where the team is located. U11 and U12 games are restricted to the fields where SYSA can set up appropriately sized fields.

Is the City Tournament only for the most competitive teams?

No! The tournament is open to all recreational teams, and they are encouraged to participate. It is a great way to wrap up the season, regardless of how far into the tournament a team goes. While quality of play is important in the tournament, there are other factors that determine how well a team does, including player participation (getting players to attend the games), weather, player enthusiasm, and to some degree, luck.

Where can my team practice in between games?

Unfortunately, there are no practice fields available during the tournament. In November, most grass fields are closed to use, and nearly all synthetic fields are being used for tournament games. There are usually some open field times during the Thanksgiving weekend for teams that want to do some drop in training before the tournament. SYSA will post any fields available for drop in practice on the City Tournament web site page.

What if a game ends in a tie?

All City Tournament games must end with a winner and loser. Games that are tied at the end of regulation go immediately to Kicks From The Mark (a.k.a., “penalty kicks” or a “shootout”). The rules for KFTM are the same as established by FIFA. Only players who are on the field at the end of the regulation period may participate in KFTM. Each team designates five players who take kicks, in alternating fashion. If one team is ahead after five kicks (or as soon as the other team has been mathematically eliminated even though all five have not been taken) then that team is the winner. If tied after five kicks, the remaining players take alternating kicks until one scores and the corresponding opponent doesn't. (The unofficial record is a game decided on the twenty-first kick.)