

HOUSTONIANS INTERNATIONAL CUP - YOUTH SOCCER TOURNAMENT

TOURNAMENT RULES

VERSION/REVISION 1.0

These rules were written/modified on January 1, 2017 by Jeff Rodgers, Tournament Chairman & Organizer.

Some of the language in these rules have been copied and or para-phrased from other sources. The Houstonians Futbol Club for Urban Youth Soccer, Inc. makes no claim to the originality of these FIFA LAWS, language and or modifications as set forth below.

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TOURNAMENT HEADQUARTERS

Tournament Headquarters will be located at the primary location of the event.

REGISTRATION AND TEAM ELIGIBILITY

Houstonians International Cup Tournaments 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.

Tournament officials shall conduct all credentials checks:

- At initial registration
- At the field before each game.
- There will be no roster changes and/or additions once a team's first tournament game has started.

Documentation required at check-in:

Arrange player passes/books/passports/Waiver Forms in alphabetical order to match roster.

Teams from The United States:

- The Players and bench personnel must present picture identification cards.
- Identification cards must be verified, photo attached, and laminated.
- If the player does not have a picture identification card, then they must present a birth certificate and photo ID.
- Teams must provide proof of approval of the team's tournament participation, if required.
- Teams from a US Youth Soccer Association outside of South Texas must provide proof of permission to travel.
- Teams must provide a tournament roster.
- Teams not from USYS or US Club must provide proof of insurance.
- Teams must provide a completed Waiver Form for every person on the roster.

Foreign Teams:

- Players must present passports or proof of entry at registration.
- Teams must provide proof of approval of the team's tournament participation, if required.
- Teams must provide a tournament roster.
- Teams must provide a completed Waiver Form for every person on the roster.
- Teams must provide proof of medical insurance or sign affidavit that they have current medical insurance.

Documentation required for pre-game check-in:

All Teams

- Teams are required to have and present player picture identification cards.
- Identification cards will be checked against the tournament generated game reports.
- Teams must have on hand a certified/approved tournament roster.
- U14 – U19. The game roster shall have a maximum of 18 players.
- Each team is limited to three (3) registered coaches on the bench.
- The jersey number of each player must be the same as the player's jersey number on the tournament roster.

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Souvenir patches, flags, crests, etc. may be exchanged and group team pictures may be taken at this pre-game procedure or during the handshake after the game.

A player who arrives late at the playing field after the pre-game procedure may enter the game once the game's official(s) verify the player is eligible and with the permission of the center referee.

Only at the pre-game procedure may a player be challenged by an opposing manager/coach. Challenged player(s) will be noted by the Referee on the game report and will be allowed to participate in the game (if said player has been certified as eligible by the Houstonians International Cup Tournament Credentials Committee). A late arriving player may be challenged at the time he/she is allowed to participate by the Referee. ANY TEAM USING AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER WILL FORFEIT ALL TOURNAMENT MATCHES PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE. A report will be filed with the offending teams National Organization or National State Association. If you are not sure of a player's eligibility, ask, in writing, the Tournament Director.

MANDATORY: As a condition to compete in HOUSTONIANS INTERNATIONAL CUP all players and coaches, except as noted below, will be required to use the designated official tournament hotel for participation in the tournament IF your team is traveling to the tournament and using hotels. If your team is local and not traveling, this does not apply. Teams traveling may be required to reserve a set number of rooms. Teams not fulfilling the above requirements may be required to pay a per team surcharge to participate in the tournament.

PLAYER AGE AND ELIGIBILITY

In no event will a player be allowed to participate who has not been certified by the Houstonians International Cup Tournament Credentials Committee.

AGE DETERMINATION: the player's playing age is determined by the following US Soccer guidelines:

Age Division	Birth Year Range	Maximum Roster*	Guest Player Limit*
Under 19	Born in 1998	22	6
Under 18	Born in 1999	22	6
Under 17	Born in 2000	22	6
Under 16	Born in 2001	22	6
Under 15	Born in 2002	22	6
Under 14	Born in 2003	22	6
Under 13	Born in 2004	22	6
Under 12	Born in 2005	16	5
Under 11	Born in 2006	16	5
Under 10	Born in 2007	12	4
Under 09	Born in 2008	12	4

*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. If the guest player is not registered they must have photo ID and be identified on the roster as a non-registered guest player. Players may not play for more than one team in the tournament.

CONCUSSIONS:

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 matches must be played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, except as specifically modified as follows in the tournament rules.

LAW 1: Field of Play

U13 – U19 No change per FIFA "Laws of the Game"

U11 & U12 (9v9) & U9/U10 (7v7) must play in accordance with the USSF new player development initiatives.

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LAW 2: The Ball

The home team will provide a game ball at each match. This ball is to be presented to the referee at the start of each match. The ball is the team's responsibility and will NOT be replaced if lost or stolen.

U13 and older Size #5

U12 and younger Size #4

LAW 3: Number of Players

U13 and Older Maximum Eleven (11) – Minimum Seven (7) per side per FIFA

U11 and U12 Maximum Nine (9) – Minimum Six (6) per side

U09 and U10 Maximum Seven (7) – Minimum Five (5) per side

U13 and Older Game roster shall have a maximum of 18 players. Players not on the game roster are allowed to sit on the bench in the team's opposite uniform or in street clothes.

INTERNATIONAL WALK-ON

- For international matches only (involves ALL uniformed players from each team)
- The center referee shall stand on the center line and touch line intersection between both team benches.
- Each team to line up along their side of the touch line with one player next to the referee and the others extending toward end lines.
- The linesmen referees will each take a place on the end of each team players.
- Once all players are in position the center referee will direct them to walk to the center of the field, holding formation.
- Players will pause for three-five seconds for photos.
- Upon direction to break by the referee the players will shake hands and return to their bench.

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.
- 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

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.

LAW 4: Players' Equipment

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

Orthopedic casts ARE permitted but MUST be covered in a soft cushion and approved by the referee. The referee shall not impede a player to play if the cast is reasonably soft. Soft braces can be worn also and judgment as to safety is at the discretion of the referee, the ultimate authority is the referee.

It is the policy of the Tournament that no player be allowed to wear ANY jewelry while participating in any the Tournament 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 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.

LAW 5: The Referee

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

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Referees are required to submit a completed official USSF or a tournament specific game report to the Site Director containing game scores and any information relating to any game incidents involving players/coach, spectator misconduct, or injuries.

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.

LAW 6: The Assistant Referee

Two (2) assistant referees will be used in matches U11 and above. A single center referee with no assistant referees will be used for U9 and U10 6v6 matches. In the event, the assigned assistant(s) fail to appear; the referee must find suitable replacements. The game will be played as scheduled and be deemed official.

LAW 7: The Duration of the Match

The duration of the game will be:

Age Group	Pool Play (min)	Semis & Finals (min)	Overtime (min)
U13 - U19	2 x 30 = 60	2 x 35 = 70	2 x 5 = 10
U11 & 12	2 x 25 = 50	2 x 30 = 60	2 x 5 = 10
U9 & 10	2 x 20 = 40	2 x 25 = 50	No overtime - "Kicks from the Penalty Mark"

Law 8 – 11

No change per FIFA "Laws of the Game"

Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct

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

- U11/U12 (9v9) matches an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.
- U9/U10 (7v7) matches an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball. The goalkeeper may pass, throw or roll the ball to a teammate located within the build out line.
- U9/U10 (7v7) field will have a build out line 14 yards from the end line. All opposing players must move behind the build out line once the ball is in possession of the Goalkeeper or there is to be a Goal kick.

The Tournament has eliminated heading in matches for player's age 10-years-old and younger (U11 and younger), per the new calendar year registration guidelines. Heading will not be permitted in U11 and younger age groups.

Law 13 – 17

No change per FIFA "Laws of the Game"

TOURNAMENT AND MATCH SCHEDULES

Houstonians International Cup tournaments are designed as follows for all age groups and gender:

- During the preliminary stage of the tournament teams will play in a World Cup pool play format. Ties shall remain.
- Minimum number of teams at any age/flight is 4; maximum is 32.
- The tournament reserves the right to have multiple flights within an age group.
- All teams are guaranteed a minimum of 3 scheduled games.
- Maximum number of games is 5.
- Teams can play up to 3 games in one day but one game per day is preferred.
- A minimum of one time slot for rest purposes will be scheduled between games.
- Groups of 6 teams or less will go directly to finals
- Groups of 7 teams or more will have semi-finals or consolation and finals
- The Wildcard or best 2nd will always be considered the lowest seed. If the teams have the same number of points, the criteria in the "Determination of Group Winners" will be used to break the tie. Playoff pairings will be as shown on the tournament schedule. If the Wildcard is scheduled to play a team they have already played the schedule may be revised for the Wildcard to play the highest seed group winner available. This will only be done if the schedule can be arranged so all playoff matches have teams that have not already played. If this cannot be done then matches will revert back to the original schedule.

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.

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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 Houstonians International Cup Tournaments:

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. 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.

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's check in.

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. Players may not serve suspensions as "guest players."

Houstonians International Cup Tournaments 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's decision is final and not appealable.

All players and managers/coaches shall be subject to their respective Associations' 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 events at Houstonians International Cup.

Suspended Coaches may be located on the spectator side of the field but may not coach or communicate with the team in any manner; players may sit with the team but may not be in uniform.

Depending on the severity of the unacceptable conduct, the Discipline Committee may recommend the suspension of up to the duration of the tournament with 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 Houstonians International Cup Tournaments, 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 within seventy-two (72) hours of the conclusion of the tournament for possible further discipline and/or forwarding to the appropriate State and National Association.

DETERMINATION OF GROUP WINNERS

In group play, there will be no overtime games. Standings in a group will be determined by:

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Game Points: 3 points for a Win 1 point for a Tie 0 points for a Loss.

If Two Teams Tie:

Starts with tie breaker number 1 and proceed through each level, as needed to determine a winner.

1. Head to head result
2. Net goal differential, maximum of four (4) goals per game
3. Most goals scored, maximum of four (4) goals per game
4. Least goals allowed, no maximum
5. Minus 1 Game Point for each Red Card/Send-off
6. Penalty kicks* in accordance with FIFA "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark."

*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.

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.

If more than two teams are involved in a tie, tie breaker number 2 (except in the case of example 3) will be used first to rank the teams. If teams are still tied, tie breaker number 3 will be used to rank the teams, and so on until a tie is broken. Once a team has been ranked higher or lower, the tie breaking procedure begins for the remaining tied teams with number 1. If more than two teams are still tied after tie breaker number 5 the team that applied first will sit out. The other two teams will then take kicks from the mark to establish a winner. The winner of this will then play the team sitting out, (kicks from the mark) the winner will advance. When all teams will advance to the playoff rounds the teams will be seeded based on date of application, from earliest to latest, in lieu of kicks from the mark.

Example 1: (4 Team Bracket) Three teams have 6 points and have all defeated each other. Team 1 has a goal differential of +6, team 2 is +4 and team 3 is +2. Team 1 is 1st, team 2 is 2nd, and team 3 is 3rd.

Example 2: (4 Team Bracket) Three teams have 6 points and have all defeated each other. Team 1 has a goal differential of +4, team 2 is +4 and team 3 is +2. Team 3 is 3rd, Team 2 defeated Team 1 therefore team 2 is 1st and team 1 is 2nd.

Example 3: (6 Team Bracket) Three teams have 6 points and Team 1 has defeated the other two. Team 1 will be the group winner. The tie breaking procedure begins for the remaining tied teams with number 1.

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

In the semi-final and final game, if a clear winner is not decided after regulation time, overtime will be played. Overtime will be two periods of equal length, per Law 7. If a clear winner is not decided after the overtime periods, penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark." In quarter-final matches if a clear winner is not decided after regulation time, penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark."

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:

- Not allowing the team to be declared a division winner or wild card team
- Forfeit one you forfeit all
- 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. Houstonians International Cup Tournaments 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.

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In case of inclement weather or field conditions. By order of the Tournament Director games may:

- Be shortened - all such matches will be considered official.
- Be reschedule (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 - cancel any match due to weather or other external conditions.

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 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) as determined by the Tournament Director or referee, 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 a maximum of one (1) to two (2) minutes of time.

TERMINATED GAMES

Pool play matches

In the event a referee terminates a match (different from temporarily suspending), before half time, it will be up to the Tournament Committee whether to record the score at the time of the termination or finish the game at a rescheduled time and location.

In the event a referee terminates, or abandons a match (different from suspending) after half time the score will be recorded, as it was when the game was stopped and declared official.

Play-off matches

In the event a referee terminates, or abandons a match (different from suspending) the score will be recorded as it was when the game was stopped. In the event, a match, other than the final, ends in a tie, the team that earned the most points during group play will be declared the winner. If the teams have the same number of points, the criteria in the DIVISION RANKING CRITERIA will be used to break the tie.

Final Matches

In the event, a referee terminates, or abandons a final match (different from suspending) while the teams are tied, co champions will be declared. Both teams shall receive Championship trophies.

Games terminated, or abandoned for other than inclement weather, i.e. violent or uncontrollable situations will not be replayed.

The decision as to the score of such games and whether teams advance will be made by the Tournament Discipline Committee after receiving reports from game officials. The decision of the Committee will be final and is binding on all parties. Further disciplinary actions may be taken.

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.

TOURNAMENT ENTRY FEE RETURNS/REFUNDS AS FOLLOWS:

- Within five (7) days after notification that the team is not accepted by their application.

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- Within five (7) days upon cancellation of the tournament.
- Within ten (10) days of withdrawal request of the application by a team.

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 Director shall notify any participant not less than a week prior to the beginning of the tournament if any age group advertised will not be offered.

GENERAL

Houstonians International Cup Tournaments, the Tournament Committee, respective Association 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 affiliates of USSF; Houstonians International Cup 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

- IF ORTHOPEDIC CASTS MUST BE WORN - THEY MUST BE COVERED CUSHIONED AND APPROVED.
- 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.
- IN THE EVENT OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY THERE ARE CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINERS OR EMTs ON SITE.
- COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF THEIR SPECTATORS.
- ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ARE NOT PERMITTED AT GAME SITES.