

# **METROLINA ADULT SOCCER LEAGUE**

## **Rules (Effective Fall 2018)**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teams are welcome to participate in the Metrolina Adult Soccer League (MASL), so long as they abide by the following rules and deadlines. All team captains are also responsible for any team deadlines and ensuring that each and every player on your team, new to the team or not, are aware of all rules & regulations laid out by this document.

### **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

All players who wish to play within the Metrolina Adult Soccer League are required to be at least 18 years of age prior to their first match. Players are only allowed to play on one team per each league. For example, Player A cannot play on two Sunday Coed League teams, regardless of whether or not those two teams are in two different divisions within the Sunday Coed League.

### **TEAM ROSTERS**

Official game rosters will be done through the North Carolina Adult Soccer Association (NCASA) website, and carry an

NCASA seal. The roster is comprised of a minimum of 11 players with a valid DOB (Date of Birth according to player eligibility), having signed the online league waiver and having posted a photo to be used for player validation. The maximum number of players on the team roster will be restricted to 25 people. Online rosters will be finalized prior to the fifth week of play and will be finalized by the league. After the 5th week, teams will not be allowed to add any players to their roster. This roster will be the final roster for the remainder of the regular season and playoffs.

Captains must make sure that no player is on the field that is not on the official roster. If it is determined that a team fielded an ineligible player in a match, regular season or playoffs, that team will forfeit all matches in which the ineligible player played in. Items that can make a player ineligible can be, but is not limited to, the following:

- Improper DOB (under Player Eligibility)
- Player not listed on current NCASA official game roster
- Player is currently serving a suspension for a red card or yellow card accumulation
- Added to roster after rosters have officially been finalized for the remainder of that season

The photo on the NCASA official game roster will be enforced by the referees before each game for the regular season and playoffs. Players, who do not post a passport style photo to

their online profile must bring official photo identification (a driver's license, official state ID card or passport ONLY) to all regular season and playoff games in order to play. Posting a passport style photo may not immediately show on the roster the referees have for the following week of games and players should be prepared to show a proper photo ID.

## **PLAYER FEES**

The Metrolina Adult Soccer League, starting with the Fall 2018 Season will move from team fees to individual player fees. The fee for each season will be based on the league that the player is playing within. For example, Fall 2018 MASL Player Fees will be \$75\*\* per player with each team required to have a minimum of 20 players. If a team elects to play with fewer than 20 players, that team should contact the league so arrangements can be made. All player registrations will close after Week 04 of the regular season. Should a team not complete the minimum 20 players registered and paid prior to Week 04, that team will forfeit all matches from that point forward until the remainder of their 20 registrations are complete. This means that Week 04 would be the first week that a team would begin forfeiting matches. Week 01-03 game scores will remain as played.

\*\* The \$75 MASL Player Fee is for the 2018 Fall season and is based upon current costs of fields and referees. As costs

increase in the future, this player fee could increase.

## **TEAM UNIFORMS**

All teams are required to have unique jerseys and players are required to have a number on their jersey. A player must be assigned a number for the season; any changes to a player's number during the season must be updated immediately on the official NCASA game roster as both names and numbers are utilized by the referees to record goals and cards. Having this information correct and updated leads to efficiencies during pregame check in and post match reporting.

Should two teams arrive wearing the same color, it is the responsibility of the home team for the match (as listed on the official schedule) to change to a contrasting uniform that is approved by the referee.

Teams getting new uniforms or new teams entering the league are encouraged to get uniforms of whichever color they choose, but we also recommend getting a color that is not a common color within your current division.

## **LEAGUE DIVISIONS (including promotion/relegation)**

When a league grows to a certain size (12 teams or greater), that league will separate into two divisions and grow from

there. The ideal number of teams within a specific division will be 6 which will allow for 2 games against each team within a division over the course of a 10 game regular season. The highest division will be called the Premier Division. After the Premier Division, the 1st Division will be next followed by the 2nd, 3rd, etc. The promotion/relegation system for each division and playoffs are as follows:

#### Division Champion (w/ automatic promotion)

- Regular Season Champion based upon points will also be the Division Champion and automatically be promoted to the division above for the upcoming season. The exception to this will be the top division (Premier Division).
- The Regular Season Division Champion will NOT participate in the new playoff format.
- As the Premier Division has no higher division, the Premier Division Playoff winner will be crowned Premier Division Champion.

Relegation: Last place within a division at the conclusion of the regular season will automatically be relegated to the division below.

#### Playoffs (chance for additional promotion/relegation)

- Division Playoffs will be held with the following teams:

The 5th Place team from the division above alongside the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Place teams from the current division. The 5th Place team will hold the 1 Seed for the playoffs with the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Place teams holding their matching seed.

- EXAMPLE - The 5th Place team from the 1st Division will play the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Place teams from the 2nd Division.
- IF the 5th Place team (from the division above) wins the playoffs, they will retain their spot in their current division.
- EXAMPLE - Using the example above, the 5th Place team would remain in the 1st Division for the upcoming season.
- IF the 2nd, 3rd or 4th Place team wins the playoffs, they will be promoted and the 5th Place team (from the division above) will be relegated to the division immediately below the division they participated within during the regular season.
- EXAMPLE - Using the example above, the 5th Place team would be relegated to the 2nd Division and the playoff winner will be promoted.
- Premier Division Playoffs - The Premier Division will have the traditional #1-4 Seed playoffs with the 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Place teams qualifying for the playoffs. The winner of the Premier Division Playoffs will be crowned the Premier Division Champion.

In the event that a team in an upper division (i.e. above the

lowest division), does not return for the following season (dissolves, merges, folds) a team from the division below will be promoted to fill the slot:

- The team finishing highest in the regular season, that did not win the promotion/relegation tournament will be promoted (i.e. if the 2nd place team from the regular season does not win the end of season tournament, it will be promoted).
- In the event more than one team does not come back in an upper division, the next highest team will be promoted.
- In each case, the team that was relegated from the upper division during the regular season, will remain relegated.
- The fifth place team from that same upper division, will remain in the division only if they win the promotion/relegation tournament.

Any new team joining the league will automatically enter the league in it's lowest division.

## **TIMING, SCORING, FORFEITS & TIES**

- Timing: All matches shall be played as two 45-minute halves on a full-size/regulation field. Deliberate actions to delay play of the game (e.g., deliberately playing the ball well outside the field of play, stepping directly in front (i.e.

within 5 yards) of a free kick that has been given to the opposition, stepping in front of a goalkeeper in the act of distribution), as determined by and at the discretion of the referee, will be issued a warning for the first offense by a team, followed by a yellow card on the second offense by a team in the course of a match.

- Scoring: A winning team receives 3 points for a win, 1 for a tie (draw) and 0 for a loss. Teams will be ranked in the standings by their Win/Loss/Draw points as the first criteria, then by head to head competition, season goal differential, and finally by goals scored. This system will be used to determine the pairings for the MASL Cup tournament.
- Forfeits: Forfeits with enough available players (7) will count as a 5-0 loss. If a team does not have 7 players available, a forfeit will count as a 3-0 loss. If a team has 2 consecutive seasons with 3 or more forfeits, the league reserves the right to not allow the team to play the following season.
- If a team is playing short-handed and subsequently decides to forfeit during the match (e.g. at halftime), the score will be recorded as either the score at the time of forfeit or the score for forfeits listed above, whichever is greater.
- Ties (draw): Regular season matches ending in a tie will remain a tie. All playoff matches must result in a victory for one team. For all playoff matches, shall the teams play



to a draw after the regulation 90-minute match, two 10-minute golden goal halves shall be played, followed by kicks from the mark (penalty kicks), again as governed by FIFA rules.

## **PRE-GAME CHECKIN/CONFERENCE**

Captains are required to bring their official NCASA Team Roster (with photos) to every match. We encourage each team to have multiple captains register as Team Captains in addition to their player pass so that they receive the ability to print this roster. The roster should be handed over to the referee in a timely fashion (15 minutes or more prior to the scheduled match time) so that checkin will happen quickly and the match may be started on time. This means encouraging all players participating for your team that day should arrive early to each match. Any player arriving late (after match has begun) is still required to checkin with the Assistant Referee on the bench side at an appropriate time for the officiating crew. Play should not be interrupted to check a player in.

Captains from both teams will meet with referees at mid-field to discuss expectations on behavior and discipline. If either team has any issues regarding number of players, field conditions or anything that may result in a team challenging the outcome of a match they should bring it to the referees attention. The coin-toss will also take place at this time, followed by kickoff and field selection.

# **LAWS OF THE GAME**

MASL recognizes and plays according to the current Laws of the Game (U.S. Soccer Version). Amendments to the Laws of the Game that are incorporated in MASL League Play are listed below:

## **Substitutions**

The following substitution rules and exceptions to the current Laws of the Game (U.S. Soccer Version) are as follows:

- There are no limits to the number of substitutions in a match
- Unlimited substitutions may occur by either team when either team has a goal kick or a team has just scored
- Unlimited substitutions may offer by a team on their team's throw-in and the opposing team IF the throwing team elects to sub
- If a team wishes to substitute a player who is injured or just received a card may substitute that player ONLY and if the opposing team wishes to make a single substitute for each injured/carded player who wishes to substitute, they may do so (ie 1 for 1)

## **GAME CONDUCT**

Sportsmanship and Fair Play are to be emphasized at all times.

Poor sportsmanship, abusive language and violent behavior are not acceptable in the MASL. Our referees have the full support of the League to use their discretion and good judgment while interpreting the Laws of the Game, and will have the full support of the League board in making the League a great place to play the Game. It is expected that Captains act on behalf of the League in ensuring their team's compliance to the spirit of the Game and good sportsmanship.

FIFA Laws of the Game outline cautions for unsporting behavior. Following a caution being issued in the course of a match for unsporting behavior, any further caution to the side shall warrant a yellow card.

## **POST-GAME CONFERENCE**

If necessary, at the conclusion of each match, referees will meet with the Captains at mid-field to agree on:

- The final score, including what players scored goals
- List of any/all players that received a card,
- And make sure that there are no unresolved issues, and receive a match report.

The Lead Referee Assignor will report all scores to the MASL Webmaster (who will send to Discipline Committee regarding cards and/or issues governed by the disciplinary committee). The only way to dispute a recorded score will be to produce a

match report. Referees will also make sure they have the names and numbers of any players receiving yellow/red cards. Any Captain that does not comply with providing the refs the names of players that received cards during the match will be suspended.

## **YELLOW/RED CARDS + INTENT TO INJURE**

It is imperative that Captains/players make their teammates aware of the following policies.

### Yellow Cards

Any player receiving 3 yellow cards during the season will be suspended for 1 match following the match with the 3rd yellow card. Should this same player accumulate 2 additional yellow cards during the season (5 matches with a yellow card), that player will be suspended their next match following the 5th yellow card and it will be brought to the attention of the Disciplinary Committee for consideration of additional suspensions. All yellow cards and suspensions will carry over to the tournament, but not the next season.

### Red Cards

Any player receiving a red card will be removed from the match immediately, required to leaving the playing area (out of sight, out of sound at the discretion of the referee) and will be suspended for the match following the match in which such

player received the red card. If a player receives a second Red Card during the season, he/she will be suspended for one additional match (i.e. 2 match suspension for the second Red Card of the season). If a player receives a third Red Card during the season, he/she will be suspended for the remainder of both the Regular Season and the Tournament.

### Intent to Injure (Excessive Force Red Cards)

MASL promotes a safe environment and recognizes that some incidents warrant additional sanctions beyond a one game suspension. With that said, if a referee files a red card as one of the following red cards (listed below), the suspension carries a minimum 2 game suspension with the disciplinary committee looking at potential further sanctioning.

1. Serious Foul Play - A tackle or challenge that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality must be sanctioned as serious foul play. Any player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for the ball from the front, from the side or from behind using one or both legs, with excessive force or endangers the safety of an opponent is guilty of serious foul play.
2. Violent Conduct - Violent conduct is when a player uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball, or against a teammate, team official, match official, spectator or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made. In

addition, a player who, when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the force used was negligible.

Though matches do get competitive, fighting is an unacceptable action in MASL. At the Referee's discretion, per the Laws of the Game, fighting, punching, elbowing, charging, tripping etc. judged to be an attempt to injure the opposing player, will be dealt with severely. If a player physically strikes a referee or makes physical threats to a referee, this player will be immediately banned from MASL for a full year (2 seasons). This behavior is unacceptable and Captains must make sure their players are clear on this issue.

#### Additional Red Card Notes:

- Red Card + Forfeited Next Match: If the match in which a red carded player was to sit results in a forfeit, that player's match suspension will apply the following. If the forfeit notification was emailed/communicated (sent) 1 hour prior to the match time, the player's match suspension will not be satisfied until the following match. If the forfeit notification occurs within 1 hour of the match time, the player's match suspension will be satisfied and they will be eligible for their next available match.
- Red Card Appeals: Unless otherwise notified by the league, a red carded player's match suspension must be

served regardless of whether or not a player has filed an appeal or not. For example, a player who receives a red card on a Saturday (doubleheader weekend or playoffs) must still sit out the following game on Sunday even if an appeal has been filed, but a final verdict has not occurred (regardless of the reason a verdict has not been met).

- Red Card Male/Female (Coed Matches): If a male player receives a red card, that player's team will be reduced to the maximum number of field players by one and the maximum number of males that can be on the field by one. If a female player receives a red card, that player's team will be reduced by one and the minimum number of female players will also be reduced by one (ie the two women rule will become a one woman rule, with 1 required female player and a maximum of 9 male players). The two women rule still applies except if the ejected player is a woman.

## **FOUL LANGUAGE**

While inappropriate language may be the by-product of competitive matches and situations, its use should be minimized by everyone, and never directed towards an individual. Per the Laws of the Game, match referees have the authority to issue disciplinary cards for abuses of language. It is imperative that captains and teammates help check one

another in this regard.

Teams/captains could face cards and/or game forfeiture due to fan/bench language and behavior.

*\*\*\* This opens up a whole can of worms as there's no such card given in USSF for bench personnel or directly to a captain on behalf of the team. IF this is an issue league wide and something that needs to be addressed, we should look for another alternative. \*\*\**

Note: Family members and friends often attend MASL matches. All players should keep this in mind with regards to their use of foul language.

## **DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

The committee consists of 4 league members or captains. One committee leader, 2 full time committee members and 2 alternates have been chosen to decide any items and issues not clearly handled by the above. The committee leader has the authority to rule on forfeits regarding late league fees, late rosters and ineligible players. The leader will consult with the other members of the committee when discipline involves a match issue. Appeals by players/teams will be decided on prior to the next week's matches. This committee will not over rule a referee's call unless it has been determined by the



committee to be clearly outside the FIFA Laws of the Game and MASL policy. Captains on the committee will excuse themselves from any issues regarding their team and an alternate will be chosen to rule on the issue to prevent conflict of interest.