

2025 Texas Lightning Puma Cup Rules

· Each Team must have permanent numbered alternative jerseys or numbered T-shirts available. Violators will be removed from the field and not allowed back on the field of play until the players' equipment is corrected. Home Team is team listed first on the final schedule. The Home Team will wear white or light jerseys, Visitors will wear dark jerseys. Spectators will occupy the "Bleacher" side of a field. Players/Coaches will occupy the "Bench" side of a field.

· A game shall be declared a forfeit if a team is not ready to play at the published game time, within ten (10) minutes of the preliminary/mini-games and within ten (10) minutes of a full length games. At halftime, the teams must be ready to resume play within five (5) minutes of the referees' designation.

· A game shall be declared a forfeit by the Cup & Games Committee or Tournament Committee if an ineligible player participates in the game. Any protests of an ineligible player must be reported in writing with a one hundred dollar (\$100) cashier's check, money order or cash deposit, before the end of the game, to the Tournament field headquarters.

	Prelim	Championship	Ball Size	Format	Max Roster
7U-8U	4x10 min	4x10 min	#3	4v4 no GK	8
8U-10U	2x25 Min	2x25 Min	#4	7v7 w/GK	12
10U	2x25 min	2x25 min	#4	9v9 w/GK	16

Each team playing 4v4 must have three (3) players on the field to begin and continue the game. Each team playing 7v7 must have five (5) players on the field to begin and continue the game. Each team playing 9v9 must have seven (7) players on the field to begin and continue the game. No Guest Players for 7U-10U academy teams. Roster frozen when Tournament begins. Players may only play on one team in the Tournament. All Managers must have valid Medical Release forms for each player with them at the tournament. Medical Release forms do not need to be notarized.

	Prelim	Championship	Ball Size	Format	Roster	guest players
11U*-12U	2x25 min	2x25 min	#4	9v9	16	5
12U-14U	2x30 min	2x30 min	#5	11v11	18	5
15U-19U	2x35	2x35	#5	11v11	22	5

*** NO HEADING ALLOWED IN U11 AND YOUNGER AGE GROUPS**

Players may only play on one team in the Tournament. All players must have valid Medical Release forms with them at the tournament. Medical Release forms do not need to be notarized. Guest Players: Five (5) guest players will be allowed per team in the 11U – 19U age groups. Club Pass Players will be allowed in the 11U-19U age groups. Club Pass Players must be from the same club as the team the player will play with. For Puma Cup, Club

Pass Players are not considered Guest Players and are not included in the Guest Player limit.

- **SUBSTITUTIONS** – A player may be substituted at any stoppage of play with the permission of the referee. Under extreme heat conditions, water breaks will be left to referees' discretion. However, Host Club has the right to make water breaks mandatory.

- **OVERTIME** – International Football Association Board (IFAB) RULES USED – If overtime periods are used, overtime periods must be played to completion. "Golden Goal" and "Silver Goal" are no longer allowed.

- Teams will advance to Semi Final or Final games by accumulating the most points in their bracket.

- In brackets with three (3) or four (4) teams that play each other within the bracket, the team with the highest total points will advance from the bracket. In three (3) team brackets that play crossover game with other three (3) team brackets, the two (2) teams with the highest total points of the two (2) brackets will advance. Teams with the highest total points may advance from the same bracket.

- If an age division contains brackets with unequal number of teams (4, 4, 3 – 3) then the points for advancement will be divided by number of games played. Total points on the preliminary games will be divided as follows: teams playing 3 games will be divided by 3, teams playing 2 games will be divided by 2. This is for bracket advancement only.

Preliminary games may end in a tie. If Quarter Final game (if applicable) ends in a tie, IFAB kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM) will be taken to determine the winner. If Semi Final or Final games end in a tie, two (2) ten (10) minute overtime halves will be played to determine the winner. If game is tied at the end of two (2) ten (10) minute overtime periods, IFAB kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM) will be taken to determine the winner.

- **NTSSA scoring system for preliminary/mini games will be as follows:**

- A. 6 points for a win
- B. 3 points for a tie
- C. 0 points for a loss
- D. 1 point per goal scored in the game with a maximum of 3 points
- E. 1 point for a shut-out (not allowing an opponent to score)
- F. All forfeit games will be scored a 1-0 win in calculating mini-games points for tiebreaker determination.

- If two or more teams are tied in points after their preliminary games are completed, the following tie breaker procedures will be used to determine which teams will advance:

- A. Head-to-head game results – winner will advance.

- B. Most number of “shutouts”
- C. Goal differential – Team with highest goal differential against opponent will advance (maximum of five (5) goal differential. (Example: A 7-0 game = 5-0 in calculating advancement.
- D. Fewest goals allowed – team with fewest goals will advance.
- E. Fewest accumulation of caution points, 1 point for yellow and 2 points for
- F. Penalty Kicks

These tiebreaker procedures will be applied, in order, to the teams tied in points until one team is selected for advancement. In the event of a “NO SHOW” points will be determined by games played. Game averaging will be used to determine advancement.

- The “Wild Card” team is the 2nd place team with the highest number of points. The “Wild Card” team will be determined by the following procedure in age divisions with an unequal number of teams (4 – 4 – 4, 4 – 3 – 3, etc.) in brackets. Each team in the age division will divide their points by total games played to determine the team with the highest percentage. The team with the highest percentage will advance to the next level of play. In the event of a percentage tie between teams, then the tiebreaker procedure above will determine the “Wild Card.”

- Any “send-off” should be reported to the Tournament Committee immediately following the game. Any player or coach sent-off (other than for receiving two (2) yellow cards in one game) shall automatically sit out the next played tournament game. If player is sent-off for fighting, the player will be suspended for the remainder of the tournament. The A & D Committee has the right to hold a hearing and increase the suspension at its discretion. The player or manager should come to the Tournament Headquarters and obtain a “Player Sit-out Verification Form” have it signed by the Referee, then return it to the Tournament Headquarters following the game that the player sat out.

- All referee decisions are final, within the laws of the game. No protests will be allowed, except for ineligible player.

- The Tournament Director’s decision is final in all matters. No appeals will be allowed beyond that point.

- If a game is played into a second half but is stopped before full time, other than acts on the part of one of the teams, the game shall be considered complete.

- In the event of inclement weather, format for tournament play and/or completion of the tournament will be determined by the Tournament Committee.

- Both teams must turn in score cards immediately upon completion of each game.

- Any team that withdraws from a tournament less than two (2) weeks from the start of the tournament or after the publication of the schedule, whichever comes first,

or does not complete all required scheduled games, may not be allowed to enter any sanctioned tournaments until said team appears before the NTSSA Cup and Games Committee for a hearing explaining their actions and will forfeit their entry fee and performance bond, if one has been posted.

- Please check our web site, www.texaslightning.org for weather updates. If the tournament is canceled due to inclement weather prior to completion of a team's first scheduled game, a maximum of 50% of the entry fee may be retained by the tournament to cover start-up costs of the tournament.