



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

**Chicago Empire F.C.**  
**Puma Fall Classic**  
**Puma Fall Classic 2025 Rules**  
(Updated 10/2025)

### **Eligibility:**

All teams and players must be registered and in good standing with their local USYS/USSF/FIFA organizations. All teams registered and in good standing with their National Organizations, including USYS State Associations and US Club Soccer, are eligible to play.

### **Roster Sizes and Game Lengths:**

U8 (boys & girls) division maximum roster size of 10 and games will be 2 x 20 minutes.  
Will play 5v5 with #4 size ball

U9 & U10 (boys & girls) divisions maximum roster size of 14 and games will be 2 x 25 minutes.  
U8 if requested\*  
Will play 7v7 with #4 size ball

U11 & U12 (boys & girls) divisions maximum roster size of 16 and games will be 2 x 30 minutes  
Will play 9v9 with #4 size ball

U13 – U19 (boys & girls) divisions maximum roster size of 22 (18 dress per game) and games will be 2x35 minutes Will play 11v11 with #5 size ball



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

### Age Divisions:

Soccer Season	Fall '25 - Spring '26
<b>Birth Year</b>	
<b>2019</b>	U7
<b>2018</b>	U8
<b>2017</b>	U9
<b>2016</b>	U10
<b>2015</b>	U11
<b>2014</b>	U12
<b>2013</b>	U13
<b>2012</b>	U14
<b>2011</b>	U15
<b>2010</b>	U16
<b>2009</b>	U17
<b>2008</b>	U18
<b>2007</b>	U19

### Registration:

- All teams are required to have **USYS or US Club player passes**. No other form of identification will be accepted.
- All teams will be required to provide their **State Roster** approved by their state association.
- All teams are required to provide **IYSA Emergency Medical Release & Liability Waiver** for each player. This form must be completed and signed prior to registration and will be kept on file with the tournament registrar.
- All Non-IYSA/USYS Teams (US Club other non-USYS affiliates) need to fill out **the Non-IYSA/US Youth Soccer & Foreign Team Agreement (Form NT)**. They also need to provide **Proof of Insurance**.
- All Teams will be required to sign and submit the **IYSA Risk Management Certification Form**.
- Teams from outside of Illinois must present an approved **Application to Travel** from their home state's USYS affiliate. US Club teams do not need to provide this form.
- All teams will be required to provide a **signed Tournament Roster** at registration.



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

- Each team will be allowed to have a maximum of 5 guest players on their roster. For USYS teams, a completed State Guest player form is needed. If a guest player is from the same club, no form is needed and the player must only be added to the Tournament Roster. Each player must have a valid USYS or US Club player pass. Guest players must come from the same sanctioning body. US Club players may only guest play with US Club teams and USYS (IYSA) players may only guest play with USYS (IYSA) teams.
- Guest players must be from the same division/level or lower to be an acceptable guest player, whether from a different club or the same club.
- No roster changes will be permitted after a team roster has been approved at tournament registration.
- All team members must wear the same uniform.

### **Bracket Layout:**

#### **4 teams**

All teams are in 1 bracket.

All teams play each other once in a round-robin format.

Top two teams will play in a final\*\*\*

#### **5 teams**

All teams are in 1 bracket.

All teams play each other once in a round-robin format.

Champion determined by highest point total.

#### **6 teams**

2 brackets with 3 teams each.

The teams in bracket A play each other in pool play.

The teams in bracket B play each other in pool play.

The winners of both brackets will play in a final, remaining teams will play a consolation match (second place plays second place, third place plays third place).

#### **7 teams**

All teams are in one bracket, will play a guaranteed 4 games.

Champion determined by highest point total.

#### **8 teams**

2 brackets of 4 teams each.

The teams in bracket A play each other in pool play.

The teams in bracket B play each other in pool play.

The winner of bracket A & bracket B will play each other in a final.



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

### **9 teams**

3 brackets with 3 teams each.

The teams in bracket A play each other in pool play.

The teams in bracket B play each other in pool play.

The teams in bracket C play each other in pool play.

The winners of each bracket advance. All other teams play a consolation match.

The bracket winner with the most points (or wins the tiebreaker if necessary) advances to the finals (Wildcard #1).

The remaining two bracket winners play a semifinal game to advance to the finals (Wildcard #2 and Wildcard #3).

Consolation games: Remaining Teams will play in consolation matches (will play a team that was not in their bracket).

### **10 teams**

3 brackets

Bracket A contains 4 teams.

Brackets B and C contain 3 teams each.

Bracket A teams will all play each other.

Brackets B and C will play all 3 teams in the opposite bracket (Crossover bracket).

The winner of Bracket A advances and the next two highest point earning teams advance..

The team with the most points (or wins the tiebreaker if necessary) advances to the finals (Wildcard #1).

The remaining two teams that advance play a semifinal game to advance to the finals (Wildcard #2 and Wildcard #3).

### **12 teams**

3 brackets with 4 teams each.

Each team plays the other teams in their respective bracket.

The winners of each bracket advance.

The bracket winner with the most points (or wins the tiebreaker if necessary) advances to the finals (Wildcard #1).

The remaining two bracket winners play a semifinal game to advance to the finals (Wildcard #2 and Wildcard #3).

\*\*\*U8 & U9 brackets with 4 or 5 teams will not play a final. Champion will be determined by total points (and tiebreaker if necessary).\*\*\*

\*\*\*U16, U17, U18, & U19 brackets of 4 or 5 teams will not play a final. Champion will be determined by total points (and tiebreaker if necessary).\*\*\*



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

### **Player Equipment-All Age Groups:**

1. Every player must have the basic compulsory equipment: jersey, shorts, socks, shin guards, and cleats. Cleats will not have any sharp edges that may injure another player.
2. Any appliances such as knee braces must be worn in such a way that they do not pose a threat of injury to other players. All casts and splints must be padded to protect other players from injury.
  - The decision of the Referee on the field with regard to equipment will be final.
  - Only sport eyeglasses are permitted.
  - No jewelry.

### **Laws of the Game:**

All games shall be played in accordance with the laws observed by the USYS/FIFA/IYSA with the exceptions noted herein.

### **U8 Amendments:**

- NO OFFSIDES
- Fouls committed inside the 18-yard box will result in a penalty kick.

### **HEADING BAN Amendment (U11 Bracket and Lower):**

In accordance with US Soccer, Illinois Youth Soccer and US Club Soccer US Clubs the regulations regarding heading has been modified. Regulations for player's U11 and younger for all Illinois Youth Soccer Member League play, practices, and tournaments are below:

When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.

### **Substitutions:**

There is no limit to the number of substitutions that can be made during a game. Substitutions may be made on the fly or at any stoppage of play for 5v5, 7v7, and 9v9 games. 11v11 games substitution rules will follow league rules during balls out of play or stoppages.



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

### Game Procedures:

- Home Team will be required to change uniforms in the event of a color conflict.
- Home Team will take the kickoff to start the game, Away Team will have the choice of sides.
- All games will be played with a running clock. The referee may stop the clock for serious injuries or other incidents. The referee is the official timekeeper, and therefore all decisions of this nature made by the referee are final.
- Teams (consisting of coaches and players) are to be on one side of the playing field and spectators on the opposite side.
- A team will forfeit the match if more than 10 minutes late after the scheduled game start time.
- The Tournament Director may relocate, reschedule, cancel, or shorten any game.
- Any game that has completed one-half of play is considered an official game.

### Scoring:

- Win, 3 points
- Draw, 1 point
- Loss, 0 points
- Shut out, 1 point (**games ending in a 0-0 tie, both teams will be awarded 1 point for the shutout**)

### Tie Breaking Procedures:

#### **Tie Breaking-Group Play**

In the event of a tie deciding group winners, the following criteria will be used:

- Head-to-Head
- Goal Difference, up to +5 or -5 per game
- Goals Against, up to 5 per game
- Total Goals Scored, up to 5 per game
- Coin Flip

#### **Tie Breaking-Semi Final and Championship Games**

In the event of a tie in a semi-final or championship game:

- Teams will play 2 full 5-minute overtimes. No golden Goal Rules apply.
- If still a tie, each team will designate 5 players to take alternate kicks: best of five is the winner. Only those players on the field of play at the end of the overtime are eligible to take penalty kicks.
- If still tied, alternate penalty kicks by remaining players until winner is decided.



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

### **Awards:**

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams will receive awards.

### **Forfeits:**

- The Tournament Director will have the final decision as to whether a forfeit shall be allowed.
- For U8, a minimum of 4 players constitutes a team at the start of the game. For U9-U10, a minimum of 6 players constitutes a team at the start of the game. For U11-U12, a minimum of 7 players constitutes a team at the start of the game.
- In the event of a forfeit, the winning team will be awarded 4 points for the win. The victory will be recorded as a 3-0 win.
- No team having a forfeit loss may advance to playoff rounds.
- Refunds will not be issued when a team has forfeited a match.

### **Failure to Show:**

- Any team quitting the field of play before the conclusion of any game is automatically disqualified from the tournament and the game will be considered a forfeit.
- Any team having accepted entry to the tournament, failing to appear as scheduled, will cause all teams from its club to be banned from Puma Fall Classic. In addition, the team's state association will be informed of the team's misconduct, with a recommendation for further action.
- Any team failing to appear will forfeit its tournament entry fee.
- Upon a team's acceptance to the tournament, the application fee becomes non-refundable.

### **Behavior:**

- All yellow and red cards issued during the tournament will be reported to the main referee/referee assignor.
- Any player or coach receiving a red card will be banned from, at the least, the next scheduled game for that team. Further action may be taken based on the severity of the situation. No substitutions will be permitted for an ejected player. If a coach is ejected, there must be a certified and licensed coach on the sideline for the game to continue.
- Any team or club receiving a disproportionate number of yellow or red cards may be banned from the Puma Fall Classic at the discretion of the Tournament Director.
- Anyone fighting will be ejected from further tournament participation. Based on the severity of the incident, teams as a whole may be suspended from any further tournament participation.
- Coaches will be held responsible for the behavior of their supporters.
- In accordance with the USYSA regulations, the issuance of all yellow and red cards and other matters involving the conduct of a team, its players, coaches, and supporters will be recorded by our organization and this information will be reported to the IYSA, the home club/league of the player, coach, team, or supporters involved. All matters involving referee assault shall, in accordance with the USSF rule 3042 be referred immediately to the IYSA.

Chicago Empire FC 700 Oak Brook Rd. Oak Brook, IL 60523

Puma Fall Classic



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

The home state association and home club/league of the player, coach, team or supporters (except in the case of referee assault) will have the responsibility for imposing, should the circumstances warrant, additional sanctions, within their respective jurisdictions, with regard to any matters arising from the tournament.

- Removal of jersey will result in a caution.

### **Refund Policy:**

Once a team has applied and been accepted into the Puma Fall Classic, no refunds will be issued to teams unless the tournament is cancelled. At that point refunds will be disbursed on a pro-rated basis. If the tournament is cancelled due to an “act of nature”, the tournament may retain a percentage of the team entry fee to cover non-refundable expenses for the tournament.

Note: The tournament committee has the right to relocate, reschedule, cancel, or shorten any game. Shortened games, relocated, and rescheduled games will constitute a played game, and the tournament will not refund any money for forfeited games.

### **Cancellation Policy:**

- Chicago Empire F.C. and the Puma Fall Classic or any of its affiliates or entities will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by any team in the event games are discontinued or canceled due to inclement weather or adverse field conditions.
- No refunds will be made unless the tournament is canceled prior to starting, in which case a percentage of out-of-pocket expense fee shall be retained by the tournament.
- Partial refunds will be issued on a pro-rated basis if games cannot be played due to severe weather conditions.
- All decisions and/or interpretations made by the tournament committee are final.

### **Protests:**

- All referee decisions are final. A Protest must be filed in writing with the Tournament Director within one (1) hour of game completion and must be accompanied by a \$100 check. If protest is upheld, the fee will be refunded in its entirety.



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

### **Lighting Prediction and Protection:**

#### Prediction System

Lightning is one of nature's most deadly forces. People can't predict lightning's likelihood. Unfortunately, the most dangerous locations are by water and open areas, which are areas where you are most vulnerable.

Stuart Sports Complex works directly with the National Weather Service and their respective weather prediction systems around the country. All weather-related issues will be tracked directly by the National Weather Service and communicated via Stuart Sports Complex and the Tournament Director of Puma Fall Classic.

### **Recognizing the threat:**

- Apply the 30-30 rule. When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds or less, seek proper shelter. Wait 30 minutes or more after hearing the last thunder before leaving shelter.
- Obey the rules established by the community park.
- Minimize the risk of being struck. Protect the safety of all participants by stopping activities immediately, so that participants and spectators may seek shelter. If you can hear thunder, you are within reach of lightning.
- Remain calm to prevent panic by young players.

### **Seeking Proper Shelter:**

- No place outside is safe near lightning and thunderstorms.
- Do not stay under a tent or under concession stand roof.
- The best shelter is a fully enclosed, substantially constructed building. A vehicle with a solid metal roof and metal sides is a reasonable alternative.

### **Most Dangerous Locations**

- Higher elevations
- Wide open areas, including fields
- Tall, isolated objects, such as trees, poles, or light posts
- Unprotected open buildings
- Rain shelters
- Bus stops
- Metal fences and metal bleachers



## Puma Fall Classic Rules

### **General Park Rules**

- Outside alcohol is not allowed
- No pets
- Vendors are required to have a permit issued by Stuart Sports Complex, the Fox Valley Park District, Kane County, and the Puma Fall Classic
- Oak Brook SportsCore (or Chicago Empire FC) is not responsible for lost or stolen items or damage to Personal property

*\*Chicago Empire F.C., the Puma Fall Classic, and the Tournament Director reserve the right to change or modify any and all rules as they see fit at any time\*\**

Chicago Empire FC 700 Oak Brook Rd. Oak Brook, IL 60523  
Puma Fall Classic