



## **CHAMPIONS SOCCER LEAGUE USA (CSLUSA)**

**This document shall supersede any contradictions in the Rules and shall be updated annually prior to and following the AGM, but prior to the start of the season.**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The CSLUSA's Board of Directors shall be controlled by 3-7 members. Below is the current Board of Directors listing. The Board of Directors shall meet at least two times per year.

- Kevin Hickling, Chairman
- Tim Melican
- Jonathan Langlois

### **LEADERSHIP**

President – Kevin Hickling  
Vice-President – Tim Melican  
Vice-President – Jonathan Langlois  
Director of Operations –  
Director of Marketing –  
Director of Media Relations –

### **COMMITTEES**

Rules - The Rules committee shall review all rules associated with playing, scheduling, promotion/relegation, player registration, etc.

Technical - The Technical committee will hear any appeals, protests, coaches, etc.

New Team - The New Team Liaison committee will help to seek out new markets for the League, help new teams understand requirements and best practices, etc.

### **MEETINGS**

Teams are required to send a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 individuals to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) that is held annually between January 15<sup>th</sup> and April 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **TEAM MANAGEMENT**

Registered and rostered players – Each team will maintain (at the most) a 26 man roster, up to 30 players may be under contract on each team, subsequent players shall be deemed on ‘inactive’, ‘injured’ or ‘reserve’ status. On Tuesday of each match week, teams shall disclose (to the opposing team and publish) an ‘active’ roster of 26 players (at the most) that are eligible for that weeks’ game. Game day rosters may contain no more than 18 players eligible for that particular match. A match will not be played with less than 7 players match fit during a match.

Player release and transfers – All players trying out for a team MUST complete a registration/waiver form for that team. Players may sign with any team they desire, but once a player has signed a contract they may not change teams without a release from the signing team. A player pool will be available for players unsigned or released from other teams and that may register with a new team. Players signing a contract with a team, MUST sign a League contract/registration. Players during their contractual period, shall only be released from their contract upon authorization of the club officials for which they are contractually bound to. Players may be released in three manners: 1) outright release effective immediately; 2) conditional release based on meeting certain criteria; 3) non-renewal of contract by either the team or the player. Transfer of players during the season (except during transfer windows) shall not be allowed for except for players that are released. Championship season window shall be: August 1<sup>st</sup> to the last day of April. Pro season windows shall be: preseason – May 1<sup>st</sup> to the last day of August; and mid-season January 1<sup>st</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. No players shall be added to rosters outside of transfer windows.

Professional players – A team shall not roster any more than 3 professional players that are ‘on loan’ to the club and under professional contracts. Any team classed as ‘NCAA eligible’ shall not be allowed to borrow or sign any professional players.

Youth players – A team may not file an International Transfer Clearance on any player that is less than 18 years old. A team may not roster more than 5 youth players (under 18 years old). Youth players may only be used on teams that are ‘NCAA eligible’.

Coaches – Teams are required to identify all coaching staff members at least 60 days prior to the season beginning. Teams must complete all paperwork required for hiring the coach as an independent contractor in the timeframe indicated by the league. Failure to complete the necessary paperwork shall render the Team responsible for the coaches regardless of the contract entered into by the Team.

## **GAME DAY**

Admission – Any rostered player may attend the game as a fan if they are not registered for that game. Players must show their ID at the entrance gate and enter when the gates are open for the general fans. Friends and family of players and coaching staff are required to pay for entry.

Stadium Arrival – All players/coaches need to be at the stadium at least 90 minutes prior to kickoff. Players and coaches are required to show their Player/Coach pass to enter the stadium through the designated gates. Players must conduct themselves in a professional manner when in the proximity of the stadium as it is a reflection on the team, league, and themselves.

Match Lineup cards – Lineups (3 copies) are due to the Liaison 60 minutes prior to the match starting. The Liaison will distribute to: Referee; Press-box; and Opposing team. Teams are responsible for their own player match cards. A copy must be emailed to the league a minimum of 60 min. prior to kickoff.

Pre-game Interviews – Coaches and/or Players may be requested to be interviewed before the game. This should be treated in a professional manner and granted by the coach/player.

Warm-up – Teams will have from one-hour before kickoff up to 15 minutes prior to kickoff to warm-up on the field of play. Players must wear the approved training jersey for warm-ups. Teams may have any rostered players participate in warm-ups.

Pre-game – Teams must leave the field of play 15 minutes prior to kickoff and return to their dressing rooms. Coaches will be instructed by their liaison at the 10 minute mark when the Coaches and Reserve players will report to the benches. The liaison will then lead the team onto the field (around the 5 minute mark) for player introductions and the National Anthem. Starting players will lineup in numerical order for the introductions. Players must wear their assigned numbers and complete kit.

Half-time – Teams must leave the field of play and return to their dressing rooms for a 12 minute half-time break. Liaisons will notify Coaches when 4 minutes remain in the half time at which time teams may return to the field/bench areas.

Post-game – Teams must leave their bench area and field free of debris following the match. It is highly suggested that teams thank their supporters following the match. Locker rooms will remain closed for 15 minutes after the match at which time they will be opened for any press members.

Match reports – The referee report shall be sent by the referee (within 3 hours of the completion of the match) to the League Commissioner via email by the referee. The box score shall be signed by the referee and the home team shall be responsible for sending the box score to the League Commissioner via email (within 3 hours of the completion of the match). The home team is responsible for ensuring that all paperwork is adequately submitted to the league via email.

## **SCHEDULING**

Schedules will be finalized and published as early as possible. Teams must provide to the League any and all dates that are potential conflicts in: playing any game/playing as the home team/ or playing as the road team, to the league by March 20<sup>th</sup> each year. Schedules shall list matches in a HOME V AWAY format listing the home team first followed by the visiting team. Teams must be available for league matches during for all dates during the 'season'. Teams MUST field a qualified team for any game deemed to be the League Championship, league mandated tournament (i.e. US Open Cup and/or qualifier, similar tournaments or public relations matches) given the team is notified at least 30 days in advance. Failure to participate or field an appropriate team shall be grounds for removal from the league for cause and a fine shall be levied in accordance with the fine schedule.

Uniforms – Teams shall identify both their home and away kit by February 25<sup>th</sup> each year. The league shall review team uniform colors (Jersey, Shorts, Socks) as well as Keeper colors to ensure no conflicts exist. Once match uniforms are confirmed, there will be no changes unless authorized by the League Commissioner.

## **GENERAL**

Game timing, standings, and tiebreaker rules – Each game shall be defined as 90 minutes broken into a first and second half of 45 minutes plus any stoppage time added by the referee. At the end of regulation (during the regular league season) if the game is tied, the game shall end in a draw. Three (3) points shall be awarded for a win, one (1) point for a draw. In a playoff situation, if a game is tied at the end of regulation, there will be two (2) 15 minute sessions (non-sudden death) and if the match remains tied the game shall go to penalty kicks. Penalty kicks will start with five (5) players from each side alternating kicking, upon the game still in a tie, one (1) player at a time shall alternate kicking until one team succeeds at scoring and the other team fails to score. The standings shall break ties in the following order: 1) Goal differential (goals for – goals against); 2) Goals for; 3) Goals against; 4) Coin toss.

Point system – Three (3) points shall be awarded for a win, one (1) point for a draw.

Player substitutions – During a match, each team may make up to seven (7) substitutions, but no player shall be allowed to re-enter the game at any time.

Cautions and send-offs – Two (2) yellow cards by the same player in the same match will result in an automatic red card and send off by the referee. The player must leave the playing surface and return to the dressing room for the remainder of the match. A red card will result in a send-off and the player shall miss the next scheduled league match for the team. Cumulative cards during the season – each yellow card counts as one (1) point and a red card as two (2) points. Any combination of cards during the same season will result as follows: 4 points – 1 additional game suspension; 8 points – 2 additional games suspension; 12 points – 3 additional games suspension; 16 points – suspension for the remainder of the season. Abuse/violent conduct/fighting – an immediate 2 game suspension will be imposed pending a review by the League Commissioner. A player/coach shall have the right to appeal such suspension and will be given 24 hours after the incident to file an appeal. The final suspension for this conduct shall range from 2 games to a lifetime ban by the Commissioner for players and coaches.

## **BEST PRACTICES**

Tryouts – Establish multiple tryout dates even if it means small numbers of players. This allows players to get seen on a schedule that works for them. Get players committed early before they are seen by other teams. Look for opportunities such as InfoSport's soccer combine (Lakewood Ranch) for a chance to find talented players. Teams are responsible for the payment to the league for all players they allow to tryout, no refunds will be given for any circumstance.

Player signing – Don't wait too long to have players signed on your roster as they may sign with any team until a contract is signed. Once the contract is signed the contract must be sent to the

League office for processing. We request a player bio (if any) and a player headshot photo (digital) to be emailed upon signing (this allows us to create a press release about the player signing). Upon the contract being signed the club becomes responsible for the membership fee (\$200) to the League and is responsible for either collecting payment or ensuring players pay that fee via the League website or by mailing a check to the League office, no refunds will be given for any circumstance. Upon signing the Team shall promptly assign and notify the League of the jersey number for the player. Due to the nature of player signing timing, numbers shall be pre-identified by the League to the Team based on shirt sizing. Teams are responsible for ensuring players are assigned to numbers that meet their sizing requirements. Payments must be sent to:

Champions Soccer League USA (CSLUSA)  
5118 N. 56<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 127  
Tampa, FL 33610

**Roster management** – Teams may not exceed 30 signed players at any time. If teams have 30 signed players and wishes to sign a new player, they must issue a release for another player prior to signing the new player. Players may be released under the conditions of their signed contract upon the completion of the Leagues' Player Release form. Released players are not eligible for a refund for any portion of tryout or membership fees paid or due to a Team and/or the League.

**Practices** – Teams can schedule practices for a date and time of their choosing. We have found that having two practices at a minimum is essential to team success. Finding a balance of days/times that work for players with work/school can be challenging but setting the expectation early and applying a consistent application of rules works best. Sometimes setting a mandatory practice day and then several non-mandatory practices help to ensure your core players attend at least the mandatory practice to play altogether. Players should be practicing in their training kits (Admiral gear). Only players on the team roster shall be allowed to practice with the team.

**Kit management** – Teams will be provided home/away kits for 26 players (including keepers) and training kits for 30 players (including keepers). The game day kits are to be maintained and controlled by the Team and should not be sent home with players. Training kits should be maintained by the Player and controlled by the Team. Kits that become in disrepair shall be the ultimate responsibility of the Team. Match kits needing immediate replacement shall be relayed to the League office for replacement. Replacement costs are noted below in the Fines and Fees section. If players damage or lose their training kit, the Team is responsible for collecting the monies needed for replacement as noted below.

**Equipment management** – Teams will be provided practice balls for their use in training. These balls shall be controlled and maintained by the Team. At the end of the contract any missing or damaged equipment shall be replaced at the rates shown below in the Fines and Fees section. Equipment (if needing to be purchased should be done so through the approved vendor (Admiral) for items in the catalog for use with the CSLUSA Team. These purchases can be done directly through Admiral.

**Friendlies/Tournaments** – Teams may establish their own friendly matches as well as any tournaments to compete in on their own schedule, however, the Naimoli Stadium will not be provided by the

League unless the League agrees in advance. No Team shall contact the University regarding booking the stadium for their use directly and shall only look to do so through the League office. When teams book matches outside of league play, details including date / time / location / opponent should be sent to the League office via email ASAP to allow time for the League to promote and post these matches. Teams MUST field a qualified team for any game deemed to be the League Championship, league mandated tournament (i.e. US Open Cup and/or qualifier, similar tournaments or public relations matches) given the team is notified at least 30 days in advance. Failure to participate or field an appropriate team shall be grounds for removal from the league for cause and a fine shall be levied in accordance with the fine schedule.

Social Media – The League will continually reach out through social media to post press releases and other information for fans and players. We suggest ensuring your club, coaches, and players ‘Like’ and ‘Follow’ the CSLUSA in Facebook and Twitter. Please send any news stories to the League office via electronic methods of anything that you want shared so that we can get it out ourselves as well as through our press contacts.

Merchandise – The League will at its’ discretion, purchase and place for sale merchandise belonging to teams in the League. The merchandise will be sold at the prices set by the League and will remain the responsibility of the League. Teams will receive credit for merchandise sold by the League through game day sales and through retail outlets, or online stores/vendors. Teams may not sell or give away merchandise at games or produce merchandise similar in nature or that utilize the Teams’ role in the League. Note - We are able to provide this opportunity to clubs and we front the financial burdens, we need to be able to market and sell merchandise to fans and others to receive some financial recovery for our efforts. Undermining this will hurt the League and ultimately lead to hurting the Club as well.

Match tickets – Due to the need for revenue to be generated by the League, free match tickets are not available. Tickets can be purchased online through the League website. We may at our discretion, allow Teams to establish a payment link to be shared on their Club website for Club members to purchase tickets at a discounted rate. Teams will receive a portion of ticket sales for games that they are scheduled as the home team, however, building a regular fan base for all games will help the club to generate income overall.

### **PAYMENTS, INVOICES, AND STATEMENTS**

Periodically your Club will receive an invoice. Invoices do not require payment, but are used a tracking method for items given to the Team (kits, balls, etc.)


Each month (February – September), your Club will receive a statement outlining revenues (tryout fees, membership fees, ticket sales, merchandise sales, sponsorship sales, etc.), charges (tryout fees, membership fees, fees/fines, replacement items, etc.), and any payment or due dates.

Final invoice/statement will be sent to each club by December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year with any remaining bills/fines/or revenue.



Certification – Prior to the start of the season, the League (member of the Board of Directors) shall certify, sign and date this document prior to the implementation of said Operating Procedures.

By signing below the signed Director certifies this 'Operations Manual' for the 2017 season of the Champions Soccer League USA (CSLUSA).

  
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Signature

December 18, 2016  
Date

Kevin Hickling  
Printed Name

President  
Title