



RULES OF COMPETITION - MARYLAND CUPS

1. Team Eligibility

A. All teams and players must be registered with the Maryland State Soccer Association or a US Adult Soccer (USASA) affiliate to participate in the cups.

B. Teams that apply for the Rowland, Stewart or Maryland-District-Virginia Cups are not eligible to apply for the Morton Cup. Teams that apply for the Morton Cup are not eligible to apply for either the Rowland, Stewart or Maryland-District-Virginia Cups.

2. Player Eligibility

A. The Rowland, Maryland Over-30, Maryland Over-40, Maryland Over-50, Women's, Maryland-District-Virginia & Morton Cups are open competitions, open to players of professional or amateur status.

B. The Stewart Cup is an amateur competition and is limited to players not under contract and registered with a professional team.

C. For the Over-30, Over-40 and Over-50 competitions, a player is eligible once attaining the age of that competition within the calendar year of the competition. For the 2025 Cup Season, eligibility is the following:

- Over-30 - born 1995 or earlier
- Over-40 - born 1985 or earlier
- Over-50 - born 1975 or earlier

D. A player must be registered no later than Friday prior to a scheduled Sunday match to be eligible to play.

E. A player may participate for only one club in each MSSA cup competition. Players competing in the Rowland, Stewart or Maryland-District-Virginia Cups are not eligible to compete in the Morton Cup.

3. Player Pool

Teams may have a maximum of 30 players in their player pool. Players may be added to the pool list throughout the competition. Once a team reaches 30 players on its roster, no new players may be added.

4. Length of Match

All matches shall be played for 90 minutes, made up of two 45-minute halves. If a winner must be determined, there will be no extra time if the match ends tied after regulation. The winner will be determined by kicks from the penalty mark as prescribed by FIFA.

5. Standings - If group play is used:

A. Point System - 3 points will be awarded for a victory and 1 point for a tie.

B. Tie Breaker - If necessary, the tiebreaker will be determined in the following order:

1. Head-to-head competition - If more than two teams are tied, then matches played among those tied teams will determine head-to-head play before moving onto the next tiebreaker.
2. Goal differential
3. Goals scored

6. Match Day Rosters & Technical Area

A. Teams must provide identity of their rosters that include a photo of each player. A roster from either the TeamLinkt App or league identification form showing the list of players (photo of each player included on form) will suffice for identification.

B. If a player photo is missing from the Roster, then a photo ID must be presented that includes the player's name as listed on the roster and a head shot photo of the player. The ID may be issued by a state government or recognized school. Player or players without the proper identification are not eligible to play the match unless waived by the Cup Commissioner.

C. On match days, teams must submit a Match Day Roster that may name up to eighteen (18) players designated among the team player pool. The jersey numbers shall be added on the roster.

D. Teams will be permitted no more than four (4) coaches in the team's technical area (bench). Only those players designated among the 18 on the Match Day Roster are permitted in the technical area. All other players must view from the match from spectators' area. Both teams will set their benches on the same touchline.

7. Substitutions

A. For the Stewart Cup, a maximum of 7 substitutions shall be allowed. A player who has been replaced by a substitute may not re-enter the match.

B. For all other competitions, substitutions shall be unlimited in numbers and players who have been substituted may reenter the match at any time. Substitutions may be made as follows:

1. After a goal by either team.
2. On a goal kick by either team.
3. On a throw-in by the team in possession
4. By either team at half time.
5. For an injured player, when play is stopped for the injury.
6. When a yellow card is given for the player given the yellow card. The substitution is not mandatory.
7. In any situation above where players are at midfield waiting to come onto play as a substitute, those players may come on as substitutes

8. Matches will start at the scheduled time. A five (5) minute grace period beyond the scheduled starting time is permitted for a team to get the minimum number of seven (7) players on the field for the start of the match. If a team fails to appear or has less than seven (7) players and the opposing team has seven (7) or more players ready to play, the latter team shall claim the match by forfeit. **THE FORFEITING TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OFFICIATING FEES.**

9. In cases of conflicting colors, the home team must change jerseys.

10. All participating teams will prepare the required match forms for each match. Failure to do so will result in a \$25.00 fine.

11. The match shall be officiated by a referee and two assistant referees. All fees must be paid prior to the start of the match, divided evenly among the two teams (\$120 per team in cash).

12. Protests

Any intent to protest a match, a notice of protest must be presented to the referee and the MSSA field delegate (if present) in the following manner:

- A. For matters concerning ineligible players, prior to the start of the match. Notice must state the ineligible player(s) and rationale. The referee/field delegate will notify the opposing team of the protest to allow ability to correct any error.
- B. For matters concerning the match itself, the notice must be given after the match is completed to the referee/field delegate. Notice must state the error for the basis of the protest. The referee or field delegate shall immediately notify the opposing team.
- C. The referee/field delegate will notify the Cup Commissioner and state the matter of protest in their match report.
- D. No protest will be considered unless it has been delivered in writing by mail, email or in person to the MSSA cup commissioner no later than 9:00 PM of the day following the match. A fee of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) must accompany the protest.

A protest on the basis of the decision, judgment or interpretation of the referee will not be considered.

13. Discipline/Suspensions

- A. An individual sent off from a match (red card) must leave the playing area. The individual may observe the match from the spectator stands but any attempts to disrupt the match or create commotion with the referees, field delegate or opposing team, then the individual shall be removed from the grounds. The match will be temporarily paused until the said individual leaves.
- B. A player sent off from a match, whether the result of a red card or two yellow cards (caution) in the same match, the player shall be suspended for at least one match. Players sent off for violent conduct due to fighting or striking another player shall be suspended a minimum of two matches.
- C. The suspended player shall serve the suspension at the next scheduled cup match or matches in the competition the player received the suspension, if the team is still eligible to play in that competition. If the team is not eligible for that competition, the suspension shall be served at the next cup competition that the player is scheduled to play. If the player has no remaining cup matches during the year, the suspension shall be served at the following year's competition matches.
- D. If a player accumulates three yellow cards in all competitions during the cup season (excluding two yellow cards received in the same match), the player shall be suspended for one match, served at the next scheduled cup match.
- E. The MSSA reserves the authority to impose further sanctions necessary to uphold the integrity of the game.

14. Spectators - Spectators must be seated on the opposite touchline from the team benches or designated seating areas in the stands. Spectators are not permitted on the field or technical area. Teams are responsible for the conduct of their supporters. If it is determined that a match is disrupted or terminated due to the conduct of a team's supporters, sanctions may include forfeiture of match, disqualification from future cup matches and a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

15. The MSSA will make every effort to have a field delegate present at a match. In the absence of a delegate, the referee shall represent the MSSA.

16. The playing of these competitions will be governed by the rules of FIFA, USSF, USASA and MSSA except as noted above.