CATEGORY	RULE
JURISDICTION	1. Unless otherwise noted, the current USSF National Rules and Regulations and FIFA Laws of the Game will be used for this tournament. The following rules are intended specifically for this tournament ONLY! 2. The Tournament Committee (including the Tournament Director, Assistant Director(s), Field Director, Referee Director, and other designated staff) will have jurisdiction over all games played. Disputes will be resolved by the end of the soccer day. Referee judgment calls are NOT subject to dispute or protest!
FEES	1. The entire entry fee must accompany the tournament application and will be returned if the application is not accepted.
ACCEPTANCE	1. Applications are due on August 7th, 2026 2. Applications will be accepted on a first-come basis based on their completion (see Team Application Form for criteria). Teams will be notified by email within 48 hours of receiving their applications. 3. Teams not accepted into the tournament will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. If a team chooses not to be on a waiting list, the application and entry fee will be returned within 48 hours of notification. 4. The primary form of communication between the Tournament and applying teams will be email and the Tournament website. Teams must designate a Team Contact on their application who has an email and Internet access.
REFUNDS	1. Teams withdrawing 30 days or more before the tournament will be issued a full refund. 2. Teams withdrawing less than 30 days before the start of the tournament will only be issued a refund if a replacement team can be found.

CATEGORY	RULE
	3. If the tournament is canceled and cannot be rescheduled, a full refund will be issued.
RAINOUT/ CANCELLATION	1. If the tournament is canceled due to weather after partially completing and it cannot be rescheduled to be completed, refunds will be made to teams on a prorated basis, based on the number of actual games played. 2. If the tournament cannot be held due to weather or other conditions beyond the control of the tournament hosts, then a full refund will be sent to all teams, less the cost of any pre-ordered items (items for sale by the tournament which are not included with the registration fee). Any pre-ordered items will be sent to the team.

Blackhills Cup Tournament
Rules

PLAYERS/TEAMS	1. Players on participating teams must be properly registered to play. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all players meet eligibility requirements. 2. The team roster must be verified and approved by each club. Roster changes may be submitted (with the written approval of the Club Director); however, these changes must be received by the Tournament Registrar before the tournament. There will be no roster changes allowed on tournament day. 3. 3 Guest Players will be allowed for each team. However, the Guest Player will be required to have the approval of the Club Leadership. 4. Coed teams will be accepted; however, they must play in the boys' divisions only.

CATEGORY	RULE
	5. Division U-12 will play 9-v-9, and there will be a roster limit of 14 players per team. Division U-10 will play 7-v-7, and there will be a roster limit of 12 players per team. 6. Division U8 will play 7v7, and there will be a roster limit of 12 players per team
COACHES	1. The coaches must be listed on the Official Team Roster. 2. Each coach must be SafeSport certified. 3. Coaches are expected to set an example for their team by exhibiting proper behavior as role models. Coaches are expected to remain in the technical area during games and only enter the field of play as requested by the referee.
REFEREES	1. All referees must be SafeSport registered. 2. The diagonal system of control will be used to referee the games. 3. Youth referees (center referees) must be at least 2 years older than the age group they are refereeing. 4. All referees must be in full uniform as defined by USSF, including the Referee Badge. Referees not in uniform will not be permitted to referee games. 5. Referees are expected to check in at the Referee Station at least 30 minutes before their assigned game. Failure to appear on time may result in a replacement referee crew being assigned to the field. Once a replacement crew has been assigned, they will have priority and the original crew must report to the Referee station for alternative assignment.

CATEGORY	RULE
	6. Referees will be expected to uphold the tournament rules, USSF Rules and Regulations, and FIFA laws. Any failure of the referee to uphold these rules may be cause for dismissal from the tournament.
FIELDS	1. All fields will be set up and taken down by the tournament staff. 2. Trash cans will be provided at each field. Teams will be expected to clean up all trash in their area before leaving.
FORMAT	1. This is a pool-play tournament. 2. Each age division will be bracketed into playing pools. Each team will play a minimum of 3 preliminary play games within their respective pools. Where there are sufficient teams, divisions will also be separated into multiple competition flights. 3. Teams will advance from qualifying pools based on pool play standings points. The number of teams advancing per pool will be determined by the number of pools in the division.
CHECK-IN	1. Teams must check in 60 minutes before their first game and must present a roster with photos of players. 2. Coaches must have these Team Roster Forms with them at all times and ready for presentation to Tournament Officials / Referee. 3. Late-arriving players must be cleared by the Tournament Staff / Referee before participating in any games.
FIELD MONITORS	1. There will be a tournament Field Monitor assigned to each field, who will report to the Tournament Field Director. 2. After the game, the match referees must return the completed game cards to the Referee station..

CATEGORY	RULE
	3. Field Monitors will respond to any incidents or injuries, and will be in contact with the rest of the tournament staff by radio. Tournament participants are encouraged to report any concerns immediately to the Field Monitor, and also to respectfully follow any instructions given by the Field Monitor.
STANDINGS	1. Standings for pool play games will be determined on the “ten-point system” as follows: WIN = 3 points TIE = 1 points LOSS = 0 points GOAL = 1 point per goal differential up to a maximum of 3 per game SHUTOUT = 1 point for a shutout, including a 0-0 tie FORFEIT =3 points (scored as a 1-0 win) RED CARD/ EJECTION 1. Winners of ties in standings will be determined as follows: Head-to-head competition The greatest number of wins Goal differential (goals scored to three per game, less total goals allowed; highest differential advances) Goals allowed Coin toss at the end of pool play. <Kicks from the Penalty Mark can be the last tiebreaker>

CATEGORY	RULE
	Wildcard teams will be the team(s) with the highest standings points from all teams in the division who are not automatically advancing. Standings will be updated at the Tournament Scoreboard. The deadline to challenge the posted results will be after Pool Play.
ADVANCEMENTS	1. Pool winners (and in some cases, wildcard teams) will advance to medal round play. 2. Teams will play semi-final and/or championship final matches, depending on the number of teams in each pool and the format of play for that flight.
MEDAL-ROUNDS	1. All medal round matches ending in a tie will have two full overtime periods of five minutes in length, with teams changing field direction after the first five-minute period. In these matches, if still tied after overtime play, the game shall be decided by FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.
AWARDS	1. Medals will be presented to coaches and players in the championship match

CATEGORY	RULE
CONDUCT	1. Coaches will be expected to set a positive example for the team and will be held responsible for the actions of their team, including spectators. All spectators must remain behind the control line and between the 18-yard lines (penalty areas in small fields). Coaches must remain in the marked coaching area (within ten yards either way from the halfway line). 2. After each match, the referees will indicate on the reverse of the game cards any point deductions for poor sportsmanship. Referees will be required to complete a game misconduct report for all misconduct during the game, as well as any incidents of interference by spectators. 3. Any coach or spectator ejected must immediately leave the vicinity of the playing field (out of sight and sound) and will be prohibited from attending the next scheduled game. Any player sent off (red carded) must immediately leave the vicinity of the game and may not return to the field of play during the current game, including for the post-game handshake, and may not be substituted for, and is suspended from participation in the next game. The player may stay on the sidelines under the supervision of the coach. There will be penalty point deductions for all send-offs (see Standings rules). 4. Any violent conduct, red card, or ejection will result in that player/coach/spectator being barred from the remainder of the tournament. 5. If it is determined that an ineligible player has participated in a game, the team will forfeit all games in which that player participated illegally. Furthermore, if it is determined that the coach knowingly played a player illegally, that coach will be barred from further participation in the tournament. 6. It is mandatory to play a scheduled game. If it is determined that a coach willfully fails to have his team participate in a scheduled game, the coach will be dismissed from the tournament, and the incident will be reported to the respective Director.

CATEGORY	RULE
	7. All conduct problems will be reported to the respective Club Leadership.
MEDICAL/FIRST AID	There will be a First Aid station at the main tent where participants may receive ice, etc., for minor injuries. 1. Field Monitors will communicate via radio to call the first aid staffer to the field where first aid is requested.

CATEGORY	RULE
	2. If an injury is serious, the first aid staff or the Tournament Director will call 911 for emergency response. 3. Directions to the nearest hospital/urgent care center will be available at the First Aid station.
UNIFORMS/SAFETY	1. All players must wear the approved uniform only according to the National Rules & Regulations, and all players on the same team must wear matching uniforms (goalkeeper excepted – may have a different jersey, 2. Each player's uniform must be clearly marked and an affixed unique number that matches the uniform number on the Team Roster. Garments may be worn under the uniform (i.e., long sleeves, etc.) during inclement weather, however, the match referee will be the judge of what should be allowed or not. 3. Not allowed: jewelry, hard metal, or plastic clips on clothing or hair. No player will be allowed to participate with any type of cast or splint unless approved by the referee. Knee braces will be allowed by players in events and programs, provided that the brace is adequately covered and padded in the judgment of the referee, to eliminate the possibility of its causing injury to the other players on the field. Referees will have final approval.
PROTESTS	1. Protests will be considered only for the following reasons: a. An ineligible player has played. 2. All protests must be presented in writing to the Tournament Director within 1/2 hour of the completion of the game. 3. All protests will be heard by a Protest Committee of at least three persons selected by the Tournament Director. In all cases, the members of the Protest Committee will be unrelated to either team involved in the protest. ALL PROTEST DECISIONS ARE FINAL!

CATEGORY	RULE
	4. Referee judgment calls are FINAL and are not grounds for nor subject to protest or dispute!
RULES INTERPRETATION	The Tournament Director retains the right to interpret and apply the tournament rules to the optimum benefit of all tournament participants.

OPTIONAL RULES THAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER

PLAYERS/TEAMS	1. Players may play up a division 2. For identification purposes, each team must have available a team roster with player photos
REFEREES	1. For participants who wish to provide some observations (positive and constructive) regarding one of the referees in the tournament, there will be feedback forms for this purpose at the Information Booth. The information on these forms will not be used to overturn a referee's ruling or the outcome of a game, but will be used as an opportunity to provide further education. 2. Youth referees are appreciated at the tournament, as long as they are not players on a team in the tournament.
CHECK-IN	1. Each team must provide a team roster. The team roster must be presented to the tournament official at Team Check-in or with electronic check-in and be available for inspection before each game by the referees.
GAMES	1. There will be a running clock during all pool play games. There will be no time added on for injuries or time wasted during substitutions. Each coach is urged to have their team ready at the start of each half and to conduct substitutions in as expedient a manner as possible. 2. A whistle will be sounded when it is time to start and end each half.
SUBSTITUTIONS	1. Substitutions will be allowed at the stoppage of play as allowed by the referee.
MEDAL ROUNDS	1. All medal-round matches ending in a tie will have two full overtime periods of five minutes in length, with teams changing field direction after the first five-

	minute period. In these matches, if still tied after overtime play, the game shall be decided by a Kick from the Penalty Mark. Kicks from the Penalty Mark shall follow the FIFA Laws of the Game procedures.
AWARDS	1. Medals will be presented to coaches, team managers, and players from the championship match 2. A Team Trophy will be awarded to the coach of the winning team in each age division.

Modified Rules for U12

The new rule for the U12 age group is:

Heading - Yes
Punting - Yes
No Buildout Line
Offsides is the halfway line.
This falls in line with the U12 Pre ECNL Rules (which is open to all RCL clubs in the future).

Modified Rules for U8-U11 Age Groups:

• **No heading** of the ball (any heading of the ball will result in the opposing team being awarded an indirect kick from the spot of the infraction)

• **No punting or dropkicks** by the goalkeeper. If the goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

• Rules to support the build-out line.

Goal**-kick**. The opposition team on defense lines up behind the build-out line. As soon as the ball is in play, the opposition can enter the build-out area.

Once **the ball is in play**, the opposition can enter the build-out area.

After the goalkeeper obtains the ball during live play: **Once the opposing team is behind the build-out line,** the goalkeeper can pass, throw, or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed).

Following **a save**, once the goalkeeper puts the ball on the ground, the ball is considered in play, and the opposing team can cross the build-out line, and play resumes as normal.

o **Offside** will be enforced at the midfield/center line