

Plant City FC Strawberry Classic (U9-U19)

<http://www.plantcityfc.com>

Tournament Headquarters: Tournament headquarters and all tournament games are located at the Otis M. Andrews Sports Complex, located at 2602 E. Cherry St., Plant City, FL 33563 or the Ellis Methvin Sports Complex located at 2401 E. Cherry St., Plant City FL 33563. Tournament Director is Ian Weitz. All tournament information can be found at <http://www.plantcityfc.com>

Tournament Hotels: Teams from out of town are not required to stay in club-approved hotels. A list of local hotels will be displayed on Plant City FC's website (<http://www.plantcityfc.com>) only as a guide to help teams looking for proximity to the fields. It will be the responsibility of all teams to make hotel accommodations they deem suitable for the tournament.

Team Check-In: Check in will occur online only for the Strawberry Classic. All documents are to be uploaded into the team's Gotsport account by February 2, 2026. The following documents are required for upload:

- One (1) copy of an approved official team roster either FYSA, other State association or US Club Soccer
 - Cross off any primary players not attending
 - List player jersey numbers on roster and in team account on Gotsport
- One (1) guest player form for **EACH** guest player this is from outside your club. The form will be completed and signed by the guest player's Club Registrar or Agent of Record. All guest players must have the same type of player passes as the rest of the team (FYSA, US Club, etc.)
- Coach and Player Passes from either USYS State Association for the current seasonal year. All coaches and players, including guest and club pass players must have laminated passes with photos and be from the same rostering organization (no mixing of passes from different organizations). **NO PASS, NO PLAY, NO EXCEPTIONS**
- One (1) player medical release form for each and every player participating. No notarization is required of the form, just a signature and a date

Team and Player Eligibility:

- The Plant City FC Strawberry Classic shall be open to all teams comprised of properly registered youth players from all USSF Affiliates, provided such team is in good standing with its youth association.
- Player are only allowed to be rostered for one (1) team during the tournament. Players are considered tournament-tied to the first team they participate with. If a player illegally participates with more than one (1) team in the tournament, games for the team(s) with illegal participants will be recorded 3-0 in the opponents favor.
- Age classifications for this tournament are:

U19 – Birth Year 2007
U18 – Birth Year 2008
U17 – Birth Year 2009
U16 – Birth Year 2010
U15 – Birth Year 2011
U14 – Birth Year 2012
U13 – Birth Year 2013
U12 – Birth Year 2014
U11 – Birth Year 2015
U10 – Birth Year 2016
U9 – Birth Year 2017

- Maximum rostered players and game formats for the competition shall be:
 - U9-U10 – Twelve (12) rostered players playing 7 v 7; a minimum of 5 players must be present at the start of a game to prevent forfeiture
 - U11-U12 – Sixteen (16) rostered players playing 9 v 9; a minimum of 6 players must be present at the start of a game to prevent forfeiture
 - U13-U19 – Eighteen (18) rostered players playing 11 v 11; a minimum of 7 players must be present at the start of a game to prevent forfeiture. Players not on the game roster are allowed to sit on the bench in the team's opposite uniform or street clothes.
- Five (5) maximum guest/loan players are allowed for all age groups. Club pass players are allowed and will not count toward the five guest player maximum. You may only use guest/loan players from the same US Youth Affiliation and they must be legally registered through their US Youth Affiliation. (FYSA teams can only have players with FYSA passes, US Club teams can only have players with US Club passes, etc).

Pre-Game Procedures:

- Prior to each game, all coach and player passes and official rosters will be verified by the center referee of the game. Please be at your respective field at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the game. A player arriving after the start of the game will not be allowed to enter the game until proper verification is done by the center referee.
- If both teams' jerseys are of similar color as determined by the center referee, it is the responsibility of the home team to change colors. Goalie jerseys should not be similar to either the home or visiting teams' colors or the referees' shirts.

During the Game Procedures:

- All games will follow the FIFA "Laws of the Game". U9-U10 (7 v 7) and U11/U12 (7 v 7) will play in accordance with the USSF new player development initiatives.
- **Ball Size:** U13 and Older will use a size #5; U12 and younger will use a size #4.
- **Substitutions:** unlimited. They can occur prior to a throw in by your team, after a goal is scored, during an injury timeout or at the beginning of the second half/overtime. Substitutions occur at midfield after called on by the referee.
- Shin guards are mandatory to be able to participate in a game (worn under the socks). Under FYSA Rule 402.2, player equipment shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Affiliate, FYSA and FIFA rules. Additionally:
 - a.) Screw in cleats are permitted; however, judgment as to their safety is at the discretion of the referee.
 - b.) Orthopedic casts can be worn at any sanctioned FYSA tournament with written approval from a doctor and written permission from a tournament official, final judgment as to its safety is at the discretion of the referee.
 - c.) Soft braces can be worn with written approval from a doctor, and judgment as to safety is at the discretion of the referee.
 - d.) It is the policy of FYSA that no player be allowed to wear ANY jewelry while participating in any FYSA sanctioned match. The only exception that may be allowed is a medical alert bracelet or necklace when taped to the body. The referee shall make the decision as to the safety of the player and the referee's decision is final. (no taping earings). If a referee notices a player wearing jewelry while the match is under way at the next stoppage of play, the referee will instruct the player to remove the item. If the referee deems the jewelry to be dangerous to any player, the referee must stop the match to correct the situation.
- **Referees:** **U11+:** One center referee and two assistant referees will be used. **U9-U10:** One center referee. If an assigned referee (center or assistant) is unable to attend a game, a replacement of

suitable quality and certification will be assigned by the Referee Assignor and the game(s) will be played as scheduled.

- The technical area relates to matches played in game fields with a designated seated area for team officials, substitutes and substituted players as outlined below:
 - a) The technical area shall only extend 1m (1 yd) on either side of the designated seated area and up to a distance of 1m (1 yd) from the touchline.
 - b) Markings shall be used to define the area, temporary or Permanent
 - c) The number of persons permitted to occupy the technical area is defined by the competition rules
 - d) The occupants of the technical area:
 - 1) Are identified before the start of the match in accordance with the competition rules
 - 2) Must behave in a responsible manner
 - 3) Must remain within its confines except in special circumstances, e.g., an athletic trainer entering the field of play, with the referee's permission, to assess an injured player
 - e) Only one person at a time is authorized to convey tactical instructions from the technical area

- U9-U10 duration of games will be (pool play, semifinals, and finals): 2×25 (minutes) = 50 minutes total. There will be no overtime in a semifinal or final. The game will go straight to penalty kicks according to FIFA's "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark". U9 and U10 games will use the Build Out Line.
- 7 v 7 BUILD OUT LINE – There will not be a build out line on 7 v 7 modified fields
- U11-U12 duration of games will be (pool play, semifinals, and finals): 2×30 (minutes) = 60 minutes total. There will be no overtime in a semifinal or final. The game will go straight to penalty kicks according to FIFA's "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark". **HEADING IS NOT ALLOWED** in U11 or U12 games at the tournament.

Heading Guidelines

- a) Deliberate heading is not allowed in age groups U12 and younger
- b) If a U12 or younger 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
- c) If the deliberate header of a U12 or younger player occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infraction occurred.
- U13-U14 duration of games will be (pool play, semifinals, and finals): 2×30 (minutes) = 60 minutes total. There will be no overtime in a semifinal or final. The game will go straight to penalty kicks according to FIFA's "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark".
- U15-U16 duration of games will be (pool play, semifinals, and finals): 2×35 (minutes) = 70 minutes total. There will be no overtime in a semifinal or final. The game will go straight to penalty kicks according to FIFA's "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark".

- U15-U19 duration of games will be (pool play, semifinals, and finals): $2 \times 35 \text{ (minutes)} = 70 \text{ minutes}$ total. There will be no overtime in a semifinal or final. The game will go straight to penalty kicks according to FIFA's "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark".
- Any team that is not present fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled match time with the required minimum number of players is subject to a forfeit. A minimum of eligible players (7 for 11v11) must be present, dressed, and ready to play within the grace period to constitute a "team". The Tournament Director may extend the wait time based on unforeseen circumstances or make the decision to declare a forfeit and award the victory to the other team. A score of 4-0 will be recorded in the case of a forfeit. If the scheduled time is revised from the printed schedule, coaches/managers will be notified by email, tournament website, phone or in person by a Tournament Official of the new game time. Any additional penalties as a result of a forfeit will be reviewed by the Tournament Discipline Committee. Additional penalties may include:
 - Not allowing the team to be declared a division winner or wild card team
 - Forfeit one you forfeit all. The forfeiting team may play all remaining Group Play Matches (using referees) as official exhibitions.
 - The decision of the committee will be final
- In any FYSA sanctioned match a break will be given at the midpoint of each half of regulation time and at the end of each overtime period (if played) for player hydration. This break will be given at a normal stoppage of play and it is mandatory for any FYSA sanctioned match during which the air temperature is or is expected to reach eighty- five (85) degrees. Violation may result in charges under FYSA's Code of Ethics. Game clock will continue to run during the breaks.
- Pursuant to Florida Statutes (FS 943.0438), Florida in 2012 enacted a very stringent Head Injury and Concussion Law. If the referee (or assistant referee) believes that, in his/her opinion, a player has suffered a head injury or possible concussion, the match must be stopped IMMEDIATELY. The injured player, if able to leave the field on their own, must be escorted to their coach and the coach must be told that the player cannot return for the duration of the match. If a trainer is brought onto the field because the player is incapacitated, the referee must still notify the coach that the player cannot return to the game. It is the responsibility of the coach and the player's parent(s) or legal guardian to seek medical attention. The player may not resume participation until he/she has been cleared by a medical doctor. The referee HAS NO FURTHER responsibility beyond removing the player from the match in which the player was injured. The referee crew must ensure, that UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES or due to appeal from any coaching staff that the player is allowed to return to the game.
- **There will be NO PROTESTS. Decisions by referees may not be appealed. All disputes will be resolved immediately by the Tournament Director. These decisions will be final.**

Post- Game Procedures:

- At the end of every game, teams should congratulate each other in the spirit of good sportsmanship.
- We ask that all coaches of all teams to please make sure that their sideline areas are clean of all trash following the conclusion of each game.
- The coach or team representative must sign/initial the game report that the center referee will complete after the conclusion of each contest. The center referee will return all player/coach passes to the coach/team manager after both teams have signed the game report. Ultimately, the responsibility for the collection of passes from the referee lies with the coach/manager of the teams participating.
- The center referee will turn in a completed game report to the tournament director with scores. Any special circumstances (cards, injuries, etc.) will be written on the bottom of the game report.

Group Winners/Playoff Finalists:

- Finalists will be determined through a seeding format or by a division winner's format, depending on the number of teams that enter in a particular bracket. The rules to determine tie breakers will be the same for either format. Each team will be awarded three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie and zero (0) points for a loss. In the event of a tie within a division, the following criteria will be used to determine who moves forward:
 - First tiebreaker – head-to-head results
 - Second tiebreaker – Net goal differential with a maximum of four (4) goal differential per game
 - Third tiebreaker – Least amount of goals allowed
 - Fourth tiebreaker – Goals scored with a maximum of four (4) goals per game
 - Fifth tiebreaker – Most shutouts
 - Sixth tiebreaker – Penalty kicks according to FIFA laws
- If Penalty kicks in accordance with FIFA "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark." is required to determine the winner for advancement after steps 1-6 still result in a tie, penalty kicks will be taken thirty (30) Minutes before the scheduled start of the elimination game or earlier if a mutually convenient time can be agreed upon with representatives of both teams and the Tournament Director.

In the event of a tie among more than two teams, once a tie is broken by the above system, and if ties among remaining teams still must be decided, those ties would be broken by starting again from Step 1. Please see examples below:

Example 1: Three teams have 6 points and have all defeated each other. Team 1 has a goal differential of +6, Team 2 is +4, and Team 3 is +2. Team 1 is 1st, Team 2 is 2nd, Team 3 is 3rd.

Example 2: Three teams have 6 points and have all defeated each other. Team 1 has a goal differential of +4, Team 2 is +4 and Team 3 is +2. Team 3 is 3rd, Team 2 defeated Team 1 therefore Team 2 is 1st and Team 1 is 2nd.

Example 3: Three teams have 6 points and Team 1 has defeated the other two. Team 1 will be the group winner. The tie breaking procedure begins for the remaining tied teams with number 1.

If all 3 teams remain tied after Step 6, then a coin toss will determine which team sits out for the first round of "Kicks from the Penalty Mark". The winner of the first round of "Kicks from the Penalty Mark" will then take on the team that sits out to determine a winner.

Semi-Final and Finals

In head-to-head competition, if the game is not decided after regulation time, two 10-minute overtime periods (ONLY SEMI-FINAL AND FINALS) will be played. If still there is no decision after completion of overtime, penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA "Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark".

NOTE: Teams may be asked to move to a designated Penalty Kick area to permit the next scheduled game to proceed.

Division Structure

3 teams—Each team will play the other two teams in the group. On Sunday, #2 will play #3 in the Semi-Finals. The winner of the Semi-Final will play #1 in the Final.

4 teams—Each team will play the other three teams in the group. #1 will play #2 in the Finals.

5 teams—Each team will play the other four teams in the group. Champion and Finalists will be determined by points. No championship game in a 5 team group.

6 teams—Two groups of three. Each team will play the other two teams in their group and one team from the other group (opponent in other group determined at random). Wildcard #1 will play Wildcard #2 in the Final on Sunday (this could be two teams from the same group). Out of the 6 teams the top 2 teams will play in the final, regardless of which group they are in.

7 teams—Bracket A will have four teams. Bracket B will have three teams. On Saturday, each team will play two group games. On Sunday, Bracket B#3 will play Bracket A#4 in the Silver Semi-Finals. The winner of the Silver Semi-Finals will play Bracket A#3 in the Silver Final (5th place game). There will be no awards given to teams in the Silver Final (5th place game). Bracket A#1 will play Bracket B#2 and Bracket A#2 will play Bracket B#1 in the Semi-Finals. The winner of the Semi-Finals will play in the Finals.

8 teams—Two groups of four. Each team will play the other three teams in their group. Bracket A#1 will play Bracket B#1 in the Final.

Conduct/Discipline/Suspensions:

- There will be a Discipline Committee selected prior to the tournament by the Tournament Director and will consist of three (3) members. The Committee will review and rule on all reports of unacceptable conduct by players, managers, spectators and coaches, using the FYSA standards as set forth under Rules Section 502 and all players, managers, spectators and coaches shall be subject to Rules Section 502 – Discipline and Sanctions.
- It shall be solely the team's responsibility to determine the status of its players and coaches. Any suspension from a tournament, local league, etc. is the responsibility of the team to notify the Tournament Director of this suspension at the time of the player's check-in.
- A player or coach shall receive a minimum of one (1) game suspension, regardless of the cause of the ejection. Any player or manager/coach ejected (red carded) will not complete the game in which the ejection occurred. FYSA Guidelines and Policies will be used to determine minimum disciplinary actions for punitive measures. Depending on the severity of the conduct, the Discipline Committee may recommend a suspension up to the duration of the tournament. For more on suspensions, please refer to FYSA Rule 504.1:

FYSA Rule 504.1 - Red card suspension or send off suspensions can only be served with the team with which the suspension was earned in games played by their team. Until the suspension is served the player/coach is suspended from any other team(s) to which the player/coach may be registered. Games may not be scheduled to "work off" suspension. Players may not serve suspensions as "guest players" nor may they "guest play" with any other team(s) until such time as the original suspension is served.

Issued during Tournament Play: Tournament Red Card Report filed along with game reports as required by Post- Tournament rules. FYSA office to send copy of Red Card Report and appropriate game reports to the appropriate RC in the next immediate mail out. RC will notify club of a discipline/sanctions remaining.

- Depending on the severity of the unacceptable conduct, the Discipline Committee may recommend the suspension of up to the duration of the tournament in accordance with FYSA requirements. The committee's recommendations must be available to the affected parties no later than following the next scheduled match.
- The issuance of red and yellow cards and any other matter involving the conduct of a team, players, coaches or spectators will be reported to the home club and the FYSA office within seventy-two (72) hours of the conclusion of the tournament for possible further disciplinary action.
- Exhibiting or threatening violence of any sort by a player, coach, team official or spectator will be grounds for immediate expulsion for the duration of the tournament if such determination is made by the appropriate tournament officials.

Weather:

- In the event of inclement weather, the Tournament Director will have the sole authority to change games as follows in terms of location, duration, cancellation
- Games that have been started and subsequently suspended due to inclement weather or other external conditions, will be deemed complete if one half of play has been completed or the first half cannot be completed prior to the start time of the next scheduled game on that field. For any such game that is not completed, the score at the time of the suspension will be the final score. Any game that is not started and is canceled (as opposed to postponed) due to weather or other external conditions, will be recorded as a 0-0 tie. Canceled games will not be rescheduled.

Refunds/External Conditions:

The Tournament Director has the absolute authority to make changes that best serve the tournament and tournament participants in the event of any rescheduling or cancellation. If the event of a total cancellation, the tournament will follow rule 902.12 of the FYSA Tournament Rules. After a team has been accepted into the competition, NO REFUND WILL BE GIVEN should the team decide to withdraw from the event. Tournament entry fee returns/refunds will be issued as follows:

- Within five (5) days after notification that the team is not accepted by their application.
- Within five (5) days upon cancellation of the tournament.
- Within ten (10) days of withdrawal request of the application by a team prior to acceptance of that application by the tournament.

Miscellaneous:

- Under no circumstances whatsoever, will the Tournament Committee, Plant City FC, or any State Association be responsible for any expenses (including tournament entry fee) incurred by any team. This includes a situation where the tournament or any game(s) is cancelled in whole or part, due to any factor including inclement weather.
- The Tournament Committee's interpretation of these rules shall be **FINAL** and reserves the right to decide on all matters pertaining to the tournament.
- No sales of any kind are allowed without written consent from the Plant City Area Soccer Club, Inc. (Plant City FC)