



## Houston Express nrg Power Cup

### Rules of Play – 9 v 9 (U11/U12)

#### I. Game Format

- A. **9 v 9** – 9 players max on the field for each team, 8 field players plus a goalkeeper.
- B. **Minimum Players** – a team must have 6 players to start or continue a game.
- C. **Game length** – Group Stage and semifinal (if needed): 50 minutes, in 2 25-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. Final: 60 minutes, 30-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime.
- D. **Uniforms** – Each team must wear distinctive uniforms with unique jersey numbers for each player. Home teams should wear their darker uniforms, away teams their lighter uniforms. In case of a uniform conflict, the home team should change. The referee has final say on whether uniforms conflict. Goalkeepers must wear a jersey or pinnie that distinguishes them from their teammates and opponents.  
*Note:* The ultimate goal is to play the game. If the uniforms conflict and the home team has no alternate jerseys the away team should change. If neither team has alternate jerseys pinnies may be used. The conflict must be resolved or both teams may be subject to a forfeit (0 points and -3 goal difference for both teams).
- E. **Start of Game** – The referee should use a coin toss to determine which side the teams start on and which team kicks off.
- F. **Substitutions** – Unlimited at any stoppage with referee permission

#### II. Concussion Initiative

The nrg Power Cup will follow the guidelines that US Soccer has set out for the concussion initiative, with the two components below:

- A. **Head Injuries** - If a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee is instructed to stop play to allow for treatment/evaluation as needed. If the player leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made in that moment. The player with the suspected head injury may not return to the game unless a Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) has cleared the player. Any coach or parent insisting on returning the player to the game without approved clearance will result in the referee ending the game.

**B. Heading** - Deliberate heading is not allowed in U11 games. If 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. Unless the offense is within the penalty area, in which case the kick should be given at the nearest place to the top of the penalty area. 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 nearest point to where the infringement occurred. U12 teams may head the ball without restriction.

### **III. Coach/Spectator/Trainer Instruction**

Coaches/Substitutes/Substituted player/Spectators/Trainers are not allowed on the field of the play for the purpose of instruction or otherwise (the only exception is dealing with an injured player *after* receiving permission from the referee). Constructive comments can be made from their technical area without reprimand. Spectators should not instruct from the viewing area. The coach/trainer or team supervisor can be approached to control their spectators. Actions contrary to the “good of the game” may result in removal. In the event that a “sporting environment cannot be restored or attained”, either or both teams may result in forfeit. Actions that are deemed violent, threatening, obscene, or publicly indecent will be reviewed by civil authorities present or called as necessary.

### **IV. All Other Rules Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game**