

MARITIME

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP



2026

Competition Handbook

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Maritime Club Championship

1. Tournament Overview

The Maritime Club Championship is a regional youth soccer competition bringing together top clubs from Nova Scotia (NS), New Brunswick (NB), and Prince Edward Island (PEI). The Championship is designed to provide a high-quality competitive environment and to determine a regional Club champion for the Maritime region.

2. Divisions

The tournament will operate the following four (4) divisions:

- U15 Girls
- U15 Boys
- U17 Girls
- U17 Boys

Each division will operate independently but under the same competition structure and regulations outlined in this handbook.

3. Teams

3.1 Tournament Composition

Each division will consist of **12 teams**, allocated by province as follows:

- Nova Scotia (NS): 7 teams
- New Brunswick (NB): 4 teams
- Prince Edward Island (PEI): 1 team

Total per division: **12 teams**

In the event that an NS or NB cannot fulfill their quota, the remaining spot(s) will be offered to the other province to retain a 12-team division.

3.2 Team Eligibility

- There will be a maximum of 1 team per Club in any given division
- Teams must actively be competing in the highest level of competition within their Province
- Teams must meet all required standards and deadlines outlined in this document and supporting documents

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3.3 Team Qualification

- Teams must apply to enter the tournament using the official application form by March 27, 2026
- Where the number of eligible applicants per province is equal to, or less than, the number of allocated slots, teams will gain automatic acceptance, provided they meet all other criteria
- Where the number of applicants per province is greater than the number of allocated slots, each individual province will determine a method of qualification

For more information, see the [Qualification Appendix](#) (Nova Scotia teams)

For more information see the [Qualification Appendix](#) (New Brunswick teams)

3.4 Team Declaration and Costs

- Teams must declare by using the official [team declaration form](#) by March 27.
- Cost of entry is \$300 per team (to be reviewed annually,) which will be invoiced upon acceptance into the tournament
- Additional costs include: 50% turf costs per game, 50% referee costs per game to be invoiced upon completion of the tournament

4. Hosting

- Group stage games will be hosted by organizations through an application process and must meet certain criteria, as outlined in the attached Hosting Document.
- Hosts will commit to hosting both age groups for the selected gender (U15 and U17 boys, or U15 and U17 girls).
- The Semi-Final and Final will be hosted by the PTSO on a rotating basis
 - 2026: Soccer NS
 - 2027: Soccer NB
 - 2028: PEI Soccer

For more information, please see the [competition hosting document](#)

5. Competition Format

5.1 Group Stage

- Each division will be divided into **four** (4) groups of **three** (3) teams.
- Groups will be designated **Group A, B, C, and D**.
- The group stage will be played as a round-robin, with each team playing:
 - Two (2) matches within their group.
- Group Stage Dates: June 5, 6, and 7, 2026

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NOTE: Matches that are even after regulation time will head straight to a penalty shoot (three points will be awarded for a win in regulation time, one point will be awarded to each team for the draw, and an additional point will be awarded for the winner of the penalty shootout)

5.2 Advancement to Semi-Finals and Final

- Only the top-ranked team from each group will advance.
- A total of four (4) teams per division will qualify for the Semi-Finals.
- Semi-final matchups will be determined as follows:
 - **Semi-Final 1:** Winner Group A vs Winner Group B
 - **Semi-Final 2:** Winner Group C vs Winner Group D
- Winners of the semi-finals will advance to the **Championship Final**.
 - There will be no bronze medal game
- Knockout Stage Dates
 - **U15 boys and U17 boys - August 8/9, 2026**
 - **U15 girls and U17 girls - August 15/16, 2026**

6. Match Points & Group Ranking

6.1 Points System - Group Stage

- Win: 3 points
- Tie - PK win: 2 points
- Tie - PK loss: 1 point
- Loss: 0 points

6.2 Tie-Breaking Procedures

Teams are ranked by total points (3 for a win, 2 for a win in PK, 1 for a draw, 0 for a loss). If two or more teams are tied on points, apply the following criteria **in order**:

1. **Head-to-Head Points** in matches played between the tied teams.
2. **Head-to-Head Goal Difference** (goals scored minus goals conceded, excluding penalty shootouts) in matches between the tied teams.
3. Total goals scored in matches between the tied teams (excluding penalty shootouts)
4. **Overall Goal Difference** from all tournament matches (excluding penalty shootouts)
5. Total goals scored in all tournament matches (excluding penalty shootouts)
6. **Fair Play Points** - Fewest disciplinary points (example: yellow = 1 point, red = 3 points).
7. Random draw conducted by the tournament organizer.

7. Match Regulations

7.1 Game length - Group Stage

- U15: 2x 40-minute halves (10-minute halftime)
- U17: 2x 45-minute halves (10-minute halftime)
- In the event of a tie, proceed straight to PK's, per laws of the game

7.2 Game length - Knockout Stage

- U15: 2x 40-minute halves (10-minute halftime)
- U17: 2x 45minute halves (10 minute half time)
- In the event of a tie, proceed straight to PK's, per laws of the game

7.3 Rosters & Starting Lineups

- Teams must have a minimum roster size of 17 players
- Teams must have a maximum roster size of 22 players
- Final rosters are to be submitted 30 days prior to first tournament game
- Players can only appear on one tournament roster
- Only players listed on the official roster may play - call-ups are not permitted
- Only coaches listed on the roster may appear on the bench
- Starting line up must be entered into the RAMP GameSheets app, no later than 45 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the match, at which time the rosters will become locked.
 - If, after the 45-minute mark, the team needs to change a starter for medical reasons, they may do so, the player being removed from the starting lineup may not participate in the match.

7.4 Coaching Requirements

- Teams must register a minimum of two (2) coaches
- Teams may have a maximum of four (4) team staff on the bench.
- All Head Coaches must be C License/C Diploma Certified (minimum) - 2027
- All assistant coaches must be Soccer For Life trained (minimum)
- All coaches must meet the Canada Soccer Full Safe Sport Roster
 - Make Headway in Sport
 - Understanding the Rule of Two
 - NCCP Emergency Action Planning
 - Making Ethical Decisions and/or Online Evaluation
 - Respect in Sport - Activity Leader

7.5 Substitutions

- 5 substitutions are allowed during the game, plus an unlimited number of subs at halftime.

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- In-game substitutions require the use of a sub-slip, one per player
- Substitutions at half-time require a sub-slip, with all subs on a single slip
- Re-entry is permitted
- The use of a concussion substitute is permitted in accordance with the Soccer Nova Scotia Concussion Substitution Policy 8.7.5.1
 - Any players removed from a game via a concussion substitute is subject to the Return to Play Protocol as defined by the Soccer Nova Scotia Concussion Substitute Policy

8. Discipline

In keeping with Standard Penalties, the following disciplinary sanctions apply:

8.1 Misconduct (Yellow cards)

| Misconduct | Description | Standard Penalty |
|------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1.1 | Received three cautions within the competition | 1 game suspension within the competition |

8.2 Dismissal (Red cards)

| Misconduct | Description | Standard Penalty for first seasonal offense |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1.2.1 | Dismissed for receiving two yellows in one game. For the purpose of counting yellow and red cards, two yellow cards received in a match counts as one red card, not two yellows | 1 game suspension |
| 1.2.2 | Dismissed for denying the opposing team a goal or obvious goal scoring opportunity by handball offense | 1 game suspension |
| 1.2.3 | Dismissed for denying the opposing team a goal or obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offenders goal by an offense punishable by a free kick | 1 game suspension |
| 1.2.4 | Dismissed for serious foul play (including the use of excessive or brute force) | 2-game suspension |
| 1.2.5 | Dismissed for violent conduct (including elbowing, punching, kicking etc.) | 3-game suspension |
| 1.2.6 | Dismissed for biting or spitting at an opponent or any other person | 7 game suspension |
| 1.2.7 | Dismissed for using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures | 2-game suspension |

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For secondary and tertiary seasonal offences, please refer to the [Standard Penalties document](#)

9. Protests & Appeals

- All protests must be submitted in writing to the Competition Committee within 1 hour of the match's completion, accompanied by a \$250 protest fee.
- Cards are non-protestable, except in the case of mistaken identity, which must be verified with video footage
- Decisions of the Competition Committee are final unless otherwise stated.

10. Competition Committee Authority

The Competition Committee reserves the right to:

- Interpret and enforce all rules within this handbook
- Make decisions in unforeseen circumstances
- Modify schedules or formats due to weather, safety, or logistical considerations

All decisions made by the Competition Committee are final.

11. Awards

- **The Championship Trophy** is awarded to the winner of each division and returned to the organizing committee
- The championship banner is awarded to the winner for the team to keep
- **Gold and silver medals** are awarded to the finalists

11. Amendments

This handbook may be amended prior to the start of the tournament. Any amendments will be communicated in writing to participating teams and provincial associations.