



**WINTER 2025/26**



**SKILL CENTER LEAGUE**



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# NSSL & HFX WANDERERS PARTNERSHIP

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Soccer Nova Scotia (SNS) will continue their collaboration with the HFX Wanderers through the Nova Scotia Soccer League.

As part of this partnership, the Halifax Wanderers will manage game day operations for NSSL skill center league. This collaboration, aims to enrich the experience for players, coaches, and fans by creating a fun and engaging atmosphere during league matches.

With their expertise and enthusiasm for the sport, the Wanderers will continue to support programming and resources to our community, promoting development and nurturing a love for soccer among our skill center age groups.







## INTRODUCTION TO SKILL CENTERS

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Every person involved in soccer in Canada deserves an enjoyable experience with the game, regardless of the role they play, their age, their level of experience or their ability. For young players, an enjoyable experience means that they have access to high-quality programs where they can have fun with their friends, learn new skills and play the game in an appropriate format. Clubs play an important role in this, as they are the primary providers of soccer programs where young players experience the game in Canada.

Canada Soccer has created the Skill Center Programs to guide clubs towards best principles in player

development by taking a nationally coordinated approach to developing young soccer players. Skill Center Programs provide a challenging, enjoyable environment for players to develop and nurture the skills required to succeed in the game of soccer.

By taking a structured, long-term approach to player development – based around the principles of Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) – our young players will develop the foundation of fundamental skills required to succeed at whatever level of the game they aspire to reach.





# SKILL CENTER GOALS

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*The best environment possible for as many young players as possible for as long as possible*

1.

Keep more young players involved in the game for longer by providing them with an enjoyable experience with the game

2.

Produce clear training guidelines for clubs so they can deliver the best possible environment for young players in their region.

3.

Produce better players across Canada by increasing opportunity & access to better training and competition for more young players.



Canada Soccer Skill Center Programs are aligned with the best principles of player development from around the world. The underlying aim of the Skill Centers Program is to provide the best environment possible to as many young players as possible for as long as possible





# SKILL CENTER PRINCIPLES

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01

BALL CONTACT  
TIME WILL BE  
HIGH

TRAINING WILL  
RESEMBLE THE  
GAME

02

03

TRAINING  
WILL BE FUN

PROGRAMS  
ARE  
ACCESSIBLE

04

05

MEANINGFUL  
FEEDBACK FROM  
COACHES





# SKILL CENTER LEAGUE DATES & LOCATIONS

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The NSSL SC League will take place at BMOSC - 210 Thomas Raddall Dr, Halifax, NS B3S 0J2  
U10/11 divisions take place on Saturdays & U8/9 divisions on Sunday



The season open son Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> and finish no later than March 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>



# SKILL CENTER LEAGUE STRUCTURE

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U8/9 teams must be evenly balanced, no tiering or stacking or teams permitted. The NSSL promotes fluid rosters and player movement between teams throughout the season.

U10/11 teams will be matched up against other teams/players whom are “similarly developed” as determined the club/league. For U10 & U11 there will be two pools of competition. Pool 1 - “currently more developed players” and Pool 2.

The NSSL promotes fluid rosters and player movement between teams and pools throughout the season.



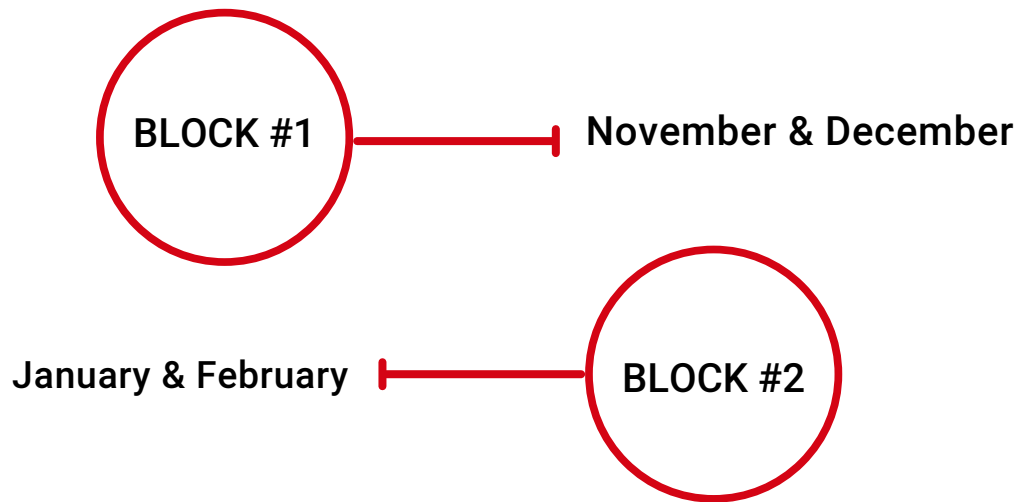




# ADDING/DROPPING TEAMS & ROSTER SIZES

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The season will be split into 2 blocks. Clubs will submit their teams at the declared NSSL league deadlines. U10 & U11 teams must have a roster size of no less than 12. Teams who do not meet these minimum numbers by the roster deadline will not be included in block #1 of the schedule.



Team deletions or additions for Block #2 are due by December 1st.  
\*Team additions will be dependent on turf availability\*

Exceptional circumstances on roster sizes may be granted, but must be approved by Zach Bauld, Director of Grassroots Programming & Cameron McCrae, NSSL League Operations Manager.



# NSSL MATCH MATRIX

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The NSSL SC Festival / League match format fully aligns with Canada Soccer Grassroots Standards.

Criteria	U8/U9	U10/U11
Match Format	5v5	7v7
Match Length	2 x 25 minute matches	50 minutes
Field Size	25m x 30m	30m x 55m
Ball Size	Size 4	Size 4
Net Size	5ft x 8 ft	6.5ft x 18ft
Retreat Line	Halfway	1/3rd
GK Area Size	5m x 10m	10m x 15m
PK Spot	5m from Goal	9m from Goal
Throw In or Kick/Dribble In:	Kick/Dribble In	Kick/Dribble In



# NSSL MATCH RULES

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## **Kick Off**

A coin is tossed prior to the start of the game and the team who wins the toss will kick-off first in the middle of the playing area.

## **Kick In/Dribble In**

Throw ins will not take place. Instead, restarts will happen with either a pass-in or dribble-in from the the sideline. Opposing players should be 3m from the player kicking or dribbling the ball into play.

## **Goal Kick**

Goal kicks happen when the ball exits the end of the field , last touching the attacking team. Goal kicks can be taken anywhere in the Goal Keeper area.

## **Corner Kick**

Corner kicks happen when the ball exits the end of the field, last touching the defending team. Corner kicks should be treated similarly to when the ball goes out on the sidelines. Corner kicks can be passed or dribbled into the field of play

## **Penalty Kick**

There is no penalty spot marked on the field for U8/9 divisions. Referees will need to walk out 5m from the goal .

## **Free Kick**

Free Kicks happen when a foul or handball takes place. The opposing player must back up three (3) meters. All free kicks are direct.

## **Indirect Free Kick**

There are no indirect free kicks in skill center divisions

## **Retreat Line**

The retreat line will come into affect when the GK has 1. A Goal Kick or 2. The ball in their hands. During these moments the opposing team must back up to the retreat line. The retreat line will be clearly marked by cones or poles. The retreat line is set at the halfway line for U8/9 and 1/3rd for U10/11.

## **Restarts/ Stoppages**

All restarts should be done as quickly as possible. After a goal is scored, restarts happen from the middle of the field

## **Substitutions**

Substitutions are on the fly, no stoppage is required.

## **PowerPlay Rule**

If a team is winning by 4 or more goals, the trailing team is permitted to add an additional player onto the field.

## **GK Area**

The Goalkeeper Boxes is 10m x 5m for U8/9 and is 15m x 10m for U10/11. Goalkeepers may only use their hands inside this area.

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# CONTACT INFORMATION

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[www.soccerns.ca](http://www.soccerns.ca)



**Cameron McCrae** [cameron@soccerns.ca](mailto:cameron@soccerns.ca);



**Zach Bauld** [zach@soccerns.ca](mailto:zach@soccerns.ca)

