

CFFC Complete League Rules

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These are the comprehensive league rules. If you're a player just trying to become familiar with the league, our [Players Guide](#) summarizes the most important things you need to know.

1. Introduction

The Cape Fear Flipper Club (CFFC) rules provide a format for running a friendly league competition for pinball players of all skill levels. These rules are designed for leagues with six or more players, playing on four or more machines at a single location. Scoring is based on how well one does relative to players of similar ability. Competition is designed to be exciting down to the last ball of every game, and playoff spots are often not decided until the final ball has drained. The nature of the CFFC league system allows players of all skill levels to play in a single league which is fun and competitive for everyone.

1.1 League Officials

In these rules, *SLO* stands for Senior League Official. For situations requiring an immediate decision or rule interpretation, this refers to the highest-ranking league official present who is not directly affected by the decision. In particular, rulings of malfunctions or interference should be deferred to an uninvolved official. In other cases, it refers to any appropriate league officer.

The order of rank for league officers is: League Commissioner, League Deputy Commissioner, League Treasurer, League Statistician, other designated person(s).

1.2 Discretion of League Officials

These rules are a guide. At times situations will arise that aren't specifically covered by these rules. In these cases, the *SLO* should make a decision in the spirit of the rules. This decision shall be documented for later reference, and be applied consistently should the situation arise again.

Additionally, the *SLO* of a league may choose to override specific rules in this guide if he/she deems that such modifications are beneficial for that particular league. Any such modifications shall be made prior to the start of the season, and announced to players at the league location and on the [CFFC Web site](#).

2. Attendance and Tardiness

The *SLO* must designate a specific day and start time for the league, as well as length of season. League players are expected to attend all matches of the season.

2.1 Start Time

Any games in progress by league players at league start time are immediately halted. Players join their assigned group and begin league play immediately.

2.2 Announced Tardiness

If the *SLO* is notified before league start time that a player will be late, then players in the affected group will wait up to 15 minutes before beginning play.

2.3 Unannounced Tardiness

If a player arrives after his group begins play, the player may join the game in progress if possible. Joining the game is permitted if the machine permits it, and the last player of the group has not started ball 1.

2.4 Forfeits

If a player is not present and eligible to play a game, and does not have preplay scores for that game, a forfeit will be recorded for that player. The forfeiting player will receive zero (0) points for that game. The remaining players in the group will still play the game, and game points will be assigned based on the number of eligible (non-forfeiting) scores recorded.

If only one player in a group is present and eligible to play (or has preplay scores for) a game, that player earns a win by forfeit and receives three (3) game points. That player still plays the game and his score will be recorded for statistical purposes.

If a player wins all four games of a match by forfeit, he will be awarded two (2) match bonus points.

Players who join a league after the first game of a season will accumulate forfeits for the games they did not play. It is left to the *SLO*'s discretion to determine if these forfeits are "countable forfeits"; that is, if they count towards possible forfeiture of the season for that player. Unless designated by the *SLO*, all forfeits are considered to be "countable".

2.5 Forfeit of Season

If a player accumulates a total of eight (8) countable forfeits during a season, he automatically forfeits the season, and may not play in the league again until the next season begins.

2.6 Inclement Conditions

The *SLO* may cancel a league match, or institute Liberal Leave Policy, due to inclement weather or other inclement conditions, particularly if travel conditions are deemed unsafe for players. The *SLO* is encouraged to set conditions under which league play will automatically be cancelled and/or under liberal leave, such as the closing of a local university or government office, and advise all players of this condition prior to the start of the season.

2.7 Liberal Leave Policy

When the league is operating under the liberal leave policy, league play will go on as scheduled, but players may miss league if travel conditions are unsafe for them. These absent players may post-play league games for the affected match using the rules for preplays. Players in attendance for league record their scores normally.

The lowest-ranked player present in each group will have the first machine selection for their group. All players not in attendance for normal league play have until 12:01 AM on the day before the next scheduled match to complete and report their post-play scores to a league officer. Post-play scores do not count against the preplay allowance. Alternatively, players may inform the *SLO*, after the announcement of liberal leave but before the scheduled start of play for the affected match, that they wish their undated preplay scores to be used. Preplay scores used under these conditions do not count against the preplay allowance (but the preplay scores will no longer be available for future use).

Scores properly submitted prior to the next scheduled league match will be used to assign game and match points without penalty, as if players were in attendance for scheduled league play. A player who is unable to submit post-play scores for any games on time will receive a forfeit for those missed games.

2.8 League Cancellation

If a location should close down during league play, if less than two games have been played by any group, the match shall be cancelled and not recorded. If two or more games have been played by all groups, then scores will be recorded only for those games played by all groups. (Other games will be recorded as forfeits; these forfeits will not count toward individual player forfeit totals.)

If a league match is cancelled for any reason, the *SLO* must announce prior to the next scheduled meet whether the cancelled match will be dropped (shortening the season) or made up.

2.9 Guests

Non-CFFC members may play as a guest in the league at the *SLO*'s discretion. A guest's scores are recorded on the score sheet, but game points and match bonus points are assigned as if the guest player were not present.

3. Machine Play Rules – General

3.1 Extra Balls

On machines set to three (3) or less balls per game, one (1) extra ball may be played per player per game. Other extra balls must be plunged and not played. Extra balls that must be plunged and not played are referred to as “unallowable” or “plunged” balls in this document.

When a player is required to plunge an extra ball, the player may touch the machine to set up a skill shot before launching the ball. Once the ball is set into motion, the player may no longer touch the machine. If the ball is returned to a launcher lane that requires a manual plunge (e.g. by a ball saver), the player may re-plunge the ball.

If a plunged extra ball becomes stuck somewhere on the machine, the player may attempt to nudge the machine to free the ball. If nudging fails to free the ball, and there is no operator present to free the ball, the player (or *SLO*) will be required to tilt the game in an attempt to free the ball. No compensation is provided in this event, nor is it considered a major malfunction.

Buy-ins for extra balls are not allowed, except as noted in sections [4.2](#) and [4.3](#).

3.2 Replays and Specials

No award is given for credits earned by replays or specials during league play. If a machine awards extra balls for replays or specials, they are played as prescribed in section [3.1](#).

3.3 Malfunctions

Pinball machines are complex assemblies that can exhibit many unintended behaviors during play. To keep league play on track and prevent excessive focus on minor glitches, only serious machine malfunctions can affect league play. Serious machine malfunctions are broken down into two categories: major malfunctions and catastrophic malfunctions.

A **major malfunction** is one that results in a loss of a playable turn that is not a normal part of the game (i.e. premature loss of turn). A “playable turn” includes the player’s current turn at play, and any other balls that the player is entitled to play. This does not include “unallowable” extra balls. Note that an active multiball is part of the “current turn at play” and therefore a major malfunction during multiball is only counted once. In disputed situations, the *SLO* shall decide whether or not a malfunction is considered major.

The following are examples of major malfunctions:

- A player is forced to tilt the ball in an attempt to dislodge a stuck ball (unless it is an unallowable extra ball; see section [3.1](#)).
- A turn ends prematurely (i.e. with 1 or more balls in play).
- A ball is auto-plunged or otherwise shot into play without the player’s involvement, resulting in loss of ball.

The following examples would not be considered major malfunctions:

- A player tilts away a stuck ball when it was not clearly necessary.
- A multiball round ends prematurely but does not result in loss of turn.
- A ball goes airborne and drains.
- A lit kickback fails to kick the ball back into play.
- A ball saver fails to work.
- A player tilts another player’s ball. (This is **Interference**.)

- If a problem with a machine is announced to league players by the *SLO* before league play is started, then that problem is not considered a major malfunction even if the result is loss of ball in play.

Catastrophic malfunctions deny a player a playable turn without that player having any opportunity to play the ball. As with major malfunctions, this does not include “unallowable” extra balls. The following are examples of catastrophic malfunctions:

- Slam tilt
- Total machine failure / reset
- Loss of electrical power
- Fire due to overheated components

Note that these events are not considered catastrophic for the ball the player is currently playing, provided the ball was put into play before the malfunction occurred. That player receives a major malfunction, not a catastrophic malfunction. In disputed situations, the *SLO* shall decide whether or not a malfunction is considered catastrophic.

If a major malfunction or catastrophic malfunction occur to a player during the course of a game, the player will be allowed to play as many balls on a new game of the same machine as were affected by malfunction on the original game. After those balls are played, the displayed score from the new game is added to the displayed score from the original game to calculate the player’s final overall score for the game. Affected balls include any balls prematurely ended by major malfunction and any balls never launched into play, including collected allowable extra balls, but not uncollected or unallowable extra balls. At the *SLO*’s discretion, balls to be played on the new game may start with other than ball 1, in which case the leading ball(s) must be plunged and the displayed score from those ball(s) subtracted from the player’s final score. At the *SLO*’s discretion, game features may be set on the new game to match the known state of the original game, subtracting any incidental points required to establish this state from the player’s final score. The rest of the group waits for the player to finish the compensatory game before starting their next game.

The *SLO* can declare a machine unplayable at any time if it is not functioning properly and the resulting malfunction(s) will, in his estimation, impair the ability of players to obtain fair scores. In these cases, the entire game is replayed immediately on a machine designated by the *SLO*. Any recorded scores on the machine at the time of failure will be used if the machine is brought back into service and affected players replay, or players accept agreed-upon scores.

It is recommended that the league prepare a maintenance sheet on which is noted any malfunctions that are found on the various machines during league play. This list should be passed on to the site’s management to assist in the proper maintenance of the machines.

3.4 Positive Malfunctions

If a malfunction causes a player to receive an exceptionally unfair advantage over the other players, and there is no reasonable way to avoid it, then the game is stopped and a new game is started

either on the same or a different machine at the *SLO*'s discretion. If a positive malfunction can be avoided (such as the awarding of extra points by repeated tapping of a flipper button), then this behavior shall be reported to the *SLO* and shall be avoided during subsequent league play. At the discretion of the *SLO*, the game may be replayed if it is felt that an unfair advantage was already gained by one or more players due to the malfunction. In this situation, the *SLO* may also rule that completed scores on the game are to be discarded. It is the responsibility of all members of a group to ensure that positive malfunctions are not abused.

Note that a one ball "multiball" (or stuck ball during multiball) is not considered to be an exceptionally unfair advantage.

3.5 Gameplay Promptness

When a player's turn comes up in a league match, he is expected to begin play promptly. If a league player does not begin play in a reasonable amount of time, the *SLO* may plunge the ball for him, and the player may not play the ball.

3.6 Practice Games

Once league play starts, a player may not practice games that he is scheduled to play later in that match. Practice games are allowed on machines that a player is not scheduled to play during that match, if it does not interfere with league play by his own or other groups. Practice games must be ended immediately if a league group is ready to begin a scheduled game on that machine.

3.7 Distractions

In general, random distractions that occur during league play (including minor physical bumps) are considered normal play conditions and no allowances are made for the effects of such distractions on a player's game.

3.8 Non-League Players

League players do not take precedence over other customers at the establishment. Having a non-league customer play your ball is considered a distraction and not interference; control of the ball should be regained as quickly and politely as possible. Close attention should be paid by league players to their game in progress to guard against this situation.

4. Illegal actions

4.1 Playing Own Unallowable Extra Ball

If a player nudges, flips, or otherwise plays his own unallowable extra ball, he must stop as soon as the error is recognized, and must plunge his next "allowable" ball without playing. If the error occurs on or after the player's last "allowable" ball, his final machine score is reduced by 25%.

4.2 Playing Opponent's Ball

The violator shall attempt to trap the ball(s) on a flipper as soon as the error is realized. This is Interference, and the violator will receive a machine score of zero for the game.

If the affected ball was an unallowable extra ball, and the victim has no more allowable balls, there is no additional compensation for the victim. Otherwise, the victim may choose one of three options: continue playing the erroneously plunged ball (if control can be recovered), drain the plunged ball and play an additional ball through a buy-in or (normally unallowable) earned extra ball, or replay the entire game. The player must announce a decision to all players in the group before play resumes. The deciding player is responsible for ensuring that the next player does not begin play before a decision is announced. If he continues play without announcing a decision, then no other compensation will be provided. If the game is replayed, the second (replay) score becomes his score on that game, regardless of whether it is better or worse than his previous effort. The rest of the group waits for the player to finish the replayed game before starting their next game.

4.3 Interference

Interference in another player's game is not tolerated. Interference includes (but isn't limited to) intentional slam tilts, tilting an opponent's ball, or nudging the machine during another player's ball, even if the action does not cause the victim to lose the ball. It also includes intentional distraction of a player during his play. Talking or coaching is not considered interference, unless the player at the machine specifically requests that he not be talked to during play.

If a player interferes with another player, causing a drain and/or loss of turn, the victim of the interference may either replay the entire game, or continue the game and play one (1) additional ball to replace the interfered ball (using either an earned, normally unallowable extra ball or a buy-in ball). If the next player starts play with no decision announced, the victim is presumed to wish to continue his game. The interfering player is required to pay for the replayed game or the buy-in ball, even if there are credits on the machine.

Interference is a serious violation of league play rules, and a penalty will be assessed on the violator.

4.4 Slam Tilts

An **intentional slam tilt** is one caused by an aggressive and excessive shove of the machine, or by an attempted bangback or deathsave, and is considered interference. Any other slam tilt is considered accidental. All slam tilts are handled as catastrophic malfunctions.

4.5 Serious Violations of League Rules

Serious violations are those so designated in these rules, as well as any conduct by a player that the SLO determines to be exceptionally detrimental to the league.

Serious violations are cumulative over an entire season, not just one match. For these violations, the following penalties are assessed:

- First and second offense: Forfeit the current game with a machine score of zero.

If the violator's group does not have a "current" game in progress, this penalty will be assessed against the game of the current match for which the violator has the highest league points. If there is more than one such game, the last such game of the match will be penalized.

- Third offense: Forfeit of all games in the current match with machine scores of zero.

Behavior which causes a player to be ejected from the establishment by the management will be penalized as an automatic third offense, even if it occurs before or after league play. If the violator's group does not have a "current" match in progress, the match chronologically closest to the violation will be penalized.

- Fourth offense: Forfeit of season. The player's scores are wiped, and the player will be suspended from the league.

Violence of any kind against fellow players, vandalism of pinball machines or other property will be penalized as an automatic fourth offense.

4.6 Not Starting the Proper Number of Games

If too many games are started inadvertently, balls for the extra games are plunged but not played. If too few games are started, additional games are started, if possible, so that the number of games on the machine matches the number of players in the group. In these cases, no further action is required.

If the proper number of games cannot be started by the above means, the game is ended immediately, voiding all players' scores. A new game is started on the same machine with the correct number of players. The player responsible for the wrong number of games being started should also pay the cost of restarting the game for all players.

4.7 Deathsaves and Bangbacks

Deathsaves and bangbacks ("biffs") are techniques used by some players to return a ball back into play that has already gone down an outlane or otherwise drained. These techniques are not allowed in CFFC league play. A player that successfully performs a deathsave or bangback will receive a machine score of zero on that game, and must plunge any remaining balls without playing them. However, it is allowable for the ball to bounce back into play of its own accord (most common on Gottlieb games).

Since these maneuvers do not interfere with any other player's game, performing a deathsave or bangback is not considered a serious violation of league rules.

4.8 Intentional Tilting

A player who deliberately tilts a machine in order to derive some benefit to their own play, or the play of others, will receive a machine score of zero.

4.9 Cheating

Pinball can often be frustrating, especially during competition. The CFFC rules are designed to deal fairly with this fact, to encourage people to control themselves, and to compensate for various mishaps that might occur during play. On the other hand, violation of any rules with the clear intent of preventing another player from fairly playing the machine or of unfairly increasing one's own score

can only be described as cheating, and is not tolerated. Cheating will result in the player's immediate suspension from the league.

5. Scoring

It is each player's responsibility to be sure that their machine scores are recorded correctly on the scoresheet as each game is finished. Any possible scoring errors should be brought to the attention of the *SLO* as soon as possible. Once notified of a possible error, the *SLO* shall contact all the players in the affected group to determine their recollection of the scoring. If all players are in agreement, then the scoring will be corrected. However, if all players in the group do not concur with the reported error, then the scores as written on the scoresheet shall stand.

5.1 Game Points

For two-player games, the winner of the game is awarded three (3) points. A bonus point is awarded to the winner if his score exceeds three times the loser's score. Otherwise, the bonus point is given to the loser.

For three-player games, the winner is awarded three (3) points, and the second-place player gets two (2) points. A bonus point is awarded to the winner if he exceeds the sum of the second- and third-place player's scores. Otherwise, the bonus point is given to the third-place player.

For four-player games, the winner is awarded three (3) points, the second-place player two (2) points, and the third-place player one (1) point. One bonus point is allocated to either the first- or third-place player, as in a three-player match. Another bonus point is given to the second-place player if his score exceeds the sum of the third- and fourth-place players. Otherwise, the second bonus point is given to the fourth-place player.

Any ties in machine score will be resolved by a one ball playoff between the affected players on the same machine. If this does not resolve the tie, the playoff game continues, one ball at a time, until the tie is broken. All extra balls are unallowable and must be plunged during the tiebreaker playoff; points earned on the plunged ball count. The tiebreaker playoff affects the finish order but not the recorded machine scores for the original game.

5.2 Effective Points

To prevent players from being misgrouped due to game forfeits, any player who forfeits games of a match will receive two (2) **effective points** for each game forfeited. Players with valid scores for a game will receive effective points equal to their actual league point count for that game. Effective points are used solely for determining grouping.

5.3 Match Bonus Points

Match bonus points are awarded at the end of a league match to increase the reward of winning the overall match, and to keep players competitive through the end of the final game. Match bonus points have the same value as game points in determining league standings.

After all four games of a match are played, the actual (not effective) league points for the players are totaled. Match bonus points are allocated by treating these totals as machine scores for a “fifth” game. Match bonus points are awarded in a similar manner as game points. However, there is a difference in 4 player groups. The first match bonus point will be awarded to the first place player if he **equals** or exceeds the sum of the second and third place players’ scores; otherwise, the first match bonus point is awarded to the third place player. Likewise, the second match bonus point will be awarded to the second place player if he **equals** or exceeds the sum of the third and fourth place players’ scores; otherwise, the second match bonus point is awarded to the fourth place player.

In the event of a tie, finish order on the last game played by the tied players is used as a tiebreaker.

Players who forfeit three or more games in a match are not eligible to receive match bonus points for that match, and these players will be excluded from the match bonus point calculation for their group.

6. Player Grouping – Non-Playoff Matches

Players are arranged into groups of three or four, so that players of similar ability are playing against each other during any given match. A match consists of four games, played on four different machines (if possible) during a single meet. All games are played in multiplayer mode (players alternate turns and scores are displayed simultaneously on the machine). At the end of each match, players move between groups based on their performance in the current match.

6.1 Group Size

Players are arranged into as many groups of three players as possible, but in most cases there should be at least one four-player group for the lowest-ranked players. The following table shows suggested group sizes for a given number of players in the league.

6 to 8 players: 2 groups

- 6: 3 3
- 7: 3 4
- 8: 4 4

9 to 12 players: 3 groups

- 9: 3 3 3
- 10: 3 3 4
- 11: 3 4 4
- 12: 3 3 3 3

13 to 15 players: 4 groups

- 13: 3 3 3 4
- 14: 3 3 4 4
- 15: 3 4 4 4

16 to 18 players: 5 groups

- 16: 3 3 3 3 4
- 17: 3 3 3 4 4
- 18: 3 3 4 4 4

19 to 21 players: 6 groups

- 19: 3 3 3 3 3 4
- 20: 3 3 3 3 4 4
- 21: 3 3 3 4 4 4

22 to 24 players: 7 groups

- 22: 3 3 3 3 3 3 4
- 23: 3 3 3 3 3 4 4
- 24: 3 3 3 3 4 4 4

25 to 32 players: 8 groups

- 25: 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 4
- 26: 3 3 3 3 3 3 4 4
- 27: 3 3 3 3 3 4 4 4
- 28: 3 3 3 3 4 4 4 4
- 29: 3 3 3 4 4 4 4 4
- 30: 3 3 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 31: 3 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 32: 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

33 to 36 players: 9 groups

- 33: 3 3 3 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 34: 3 3 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 35: 3 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 36: 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

37 to 40 players: 10 groups

- 37: 3 3 3 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 38: 3 3 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 39: 3 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
- 40: 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

These suggested groupings may be altered by the *SLO* if other groupings are deemed more appropriate for a league location. In particular, four-player groups may be replaced by three-player groups (e.g. in leagues with 15, 18, 21, etc. players) at locations with a large number of machines. However, mid-season regrouping should be avoided if at all possible.

6.2 Ladder and Group Ranks

At each meet, all players in the league are ordered in a single ladder listing, beginning with the top player in group 1 and continuing down to the last player in the lowest group. This ladder is then divided into groups based on the league size, as shown above, and players within each group compete directly with each other during that meet.

Ladder rank is defined as the numerical order of all players as of the start of each meet, based on group order and rankings within each group. For example, if group 1 has three players, the top player (highest seed, or group winner from the previous match) has a ladder rank of 1 for that meet, with the other players in group 1 having ranks of 2 and 3. The top-ranked player in group 2 is assigned a rank of 4, etc., continuing down to the lowest-ranked player in the bottom group.

The initial assignment of ladder rankings before the season starts is made by the *SLO* based on their best determination of skill levels of league members. Unranked players are placed in the middle of the rankings unless some indication of their skill relative to other league players is known.

Group rank is the ordering of players within their groups based on the results of a match. It is used to determine who gets to select the first machine to be played and which players switch groups after each match.

6.3 Group Movement

After each group match, players within each group are re-arranged in descending order based on their effective points earned in that match. In case of a tie, the player with the highest machine score in the last game commonly played by the tied players prevails. If this fails to resolve the tie, perhaps due to a full match forfeit, affected players will be ranked by their start-of-meet ladder orders. These group rankings are followed by switches between groups to determine that meet's final ladder ranking, and groupings for the following meet.

Players are switched between each pair of adjacent groups according to the following rules:

- If either or both of the groups have three or less players, the top-ranked player in the lower group (that match's winner) switches places with the bottom-ranked player in the higher group (that match's loser). The winner of group 1 does not move.
- If both groups have four players, the two highest group-ranked players (winners) from the bottom group switch with the two lowest-scoring players from the next-higher group. Each pair of players moved maintain their relative rankings. Consider the following example of the bottom two groups of a league:

End-of-Match Ranking	Next Meet's Grouping/Ranking
Group Y	Group Y

A (winner)	[loser of group “X”]
B	B
C	E
D	F
Group Z	Group Z
E (winner)	C
F	D
G	G
H	H

6.4 Mid-Season Dropouts

If a player drops out of the league, new groupings are determined as follows: The groupings and group rankings based on the results of the previous meet are kept unchanged. Next, all switches between groups are made as specified above, except that any switch involving the player who dropped out is simply ignored. If the dropped player is part of a 4-player switch between two groups of four, that switch is treated as a two-player switch between the remaining top-ranked player in the lower group and the lowest-ranked player of the higher group. The dropped player is then removed from the roster, and groups are reformed from the new overall ladder listing as specified in section [6.1](#). Note that this regrouping may result in fewer groups for the remainder of the season.

7. Machine Selection and Play Order

At each meet, the winner of each group who has moved up (except the winner of group 1) will choose their new group’s first machine to be played. In the lowest group, the lowest-ranked player will choose the first machine to be played. If there is a conflict due to dropouts and regrouping, then the lowest-ranked player in each affected group will have the machine pick. If that player is not present at game selection time or has dated preplays for the current match, the next lowest-ranked player in the group will make the choice. If no eligible player in a group is present, the group’s selection will be moved to the end of the game selection cycle and the next group gets the next machine pick. Selections can be made from any available game not already picked by other groups.

If all games have not been selected at league start time, the remaining games will be selected randomly by the *SLO*.

Each meet, the starting group for game picks should change (suggested: move down one place), so that a different group gets the initial game pick at each meet. As an example, a league with eight groups and a ten meet season might use the following pick order, with the first listed group getting the first game pick:

Meet 1: Games randomly chosen by *SLO*.

Meet 2: Group 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

Meet 3: Group 2-3-4-5-6-7-8-1

Meet 4: Group 3-4-5-6-7-8-1-2

...

Meet 9: Group 8-1-2-3-4-5-6-7

Meet 10: Group 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

Selected machines are distributed among all the groups by the *SLO*, according to a well-defined scheme.

7.1 Machine Play Order

After machines are selected, each group begins play on the machines assigned to it in the order listed on the score sheet. When a group finishes a game they move to the next machine assigned to their group. If another group is playing the next scheduled machine, the moving group must wait for the other group to finish. Groups may not skip machines. Groups should not cut ahead of other groups.

7.2 Machine Replacement Selection

If a machine should become unplayable during league play, a replacement machine must be designated by the *SLO*, subject to as many of the following constraints as possible.

The replacement machine:

- Should be in good working order.
- Should not be already scheduled for play by the affected group.
- Should not be scheduled to be played by another group in the affected round.
- Should be chosen to minimize group backlogs.

7.3 Individual Play Order

Order of play in a game is determined by player selection. For the first game, players sequentially select their play order in the reverse order of their group rankings on the score sheet. For subsequent games, choices for order of play are made in the reverse order of their scores on the previous game (i.e. the lowest-scoring player in a game receives first choice of play order in the subsequent game). If a player joins their group late (e.g. due to tardiness), they will get first choice of order for the first game they play.

8. Playoffs

8.1 Playoff Divisions

To provide a fair chance for players of all skill levels to participate in the playoffs, the league is separated into playoff divisions based on league size. Leagues with 8 or fewer players will consist of a single division. Leagues having between 9 and 17 players will be divided into two divisions (A and B), with A Division containing the top-ranked players. Leagues having between 18 and 27 players will be divided into three divisions (A, B and C). Leagues having 28 to 44 players will be divided into four divisions (A, B, C, and D). Leagues having 45 or more players will be divided into five divisions (A, B, C, D, and E). Division sizes are determined by dividing the number of players into equal-sized groups, with any extras being allocated to the higher division. For example, an 11-player league will have a 6-player A Division and a 5-player B Division, and a 26-player league will have 9 players in both A and B Division, and 8 players in C Division.

Division qualification is determined by each player's average ladder rank over the season. Ties in qualification are resolved by applying these tiebreakers, in order, until the tie is resolved: head-to-head results between tied players (winner goes to higher division), total league points between tied players (higher points goes to higher division), final ladder order (ladder order closest to 1 goes to higher division).

Division determination is finalized at the end of the third-to-last meet each season, which allows for two meets of direct competition for playoff qualification before the season ends. Ladder rankings for each player are averaged across all meets, excluding the rankings of the first two and last two meets of the regular season. (For example, given a regular season of 10 meets, divisions will be based on the results from meets 3 through 8 inclusive.) At the end of the third-to-last meet, all league players are listed in descending order of average ladder ranking, and this listing is divided into divisions as specified above. Player dropouts in the final two meets do not affect the number of divisions or qualifiers in each division.

8.2 Awarding Playoff Spots

Within each division, players with the highest league point totals for the season qualify for playoff competition. There are between 3 and 5 playoff qualifiers in each division, based on division size. Each division in a given league will have the same number of qualifiers, with approximately 50% of the players qualifying for post-season play.

5-player playoffs consist of a semifinal match, followed by a 3-player final match between the top three scorers in the semifinal match. 3- and 4-player playoffs consist of a single finals match. Based

on these guidelines, the number of divisions and qualifiers per division are determined from the following table.

Players per Match per Division

League Size	SEMIFINALS	FINALS
5-6	<i>n/a</i>	A-3
7-8	<i>n/a</i>	A-4
9-14	<i>n/a</i>	A-3, B-3
15-17	<i>n/a</i>	A-4, B-4
18-21	<i>n/a</i>	A-3, B-3, C-3
22-27	<i>n/a</i>	A-4, B-4, C-4
28	<i>n/a</i>	A-3, B-3, C-3, D-3
29-36	<i>n/a</i>	A-4, B-4, C-4, D-4
37-39	<i>n/a</i>	A-3, B-3, C-3, D-3, E-3
40-55	<i>n/a</i>	A-4, B-4, C-4, D-4, E-4
56-60	A-5, B-5, C-5, D-5, E-5	A-3, B-3, C-3, D-3, E-3

The winner of each final match is named Division Champion for the season.

8.3 Playoff Format and Machine Selection

Each division playoff match consists of a series of games played between 2-4 players, using the same game scoring criteria as regular-season games. Match bonus points are not earned in playoff competition.

Player seeding in the first playoff match is determined by total league points accumulated during the season. Seeding in the second playoff match (if any) is determined by league points accumulated in the first playoff match. Machine picks and play order are selected by the first player listed for each game in the charts below. (Numbers indicate seed positions.) Machine selections will begin 15

minutes before the scheduled start of a playoff match. All selections must be recorded prior to the start of the match. If a second match (i.e. finals) is scheduled immediately after the first match (semi-finals), machine selections for the second match will begin upon the conclusion of the first match.

Playoff Matchups – Numbers Indicate Seed Positions

Players	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
Two (*)	1-2	2-1	1-2	2-1	1-2
Three	2-1-3	2-3	1-3	1-2	1-2-3
Four	2-1-3-4	1-4; 2-3	1-3; 2-4	1-2; 3-4	1-2-3-4
Five	2-5; 3-4	1-5; 2-3	1-4; 3-5	1-3; 2-4	1-2; 4-5

(*) There may be only two players in a playoff match if one of the qualifiers is absent or drops out and no eligible substitute is available; see section [8.6](#).

The highest seeded player in each division makes all of his machine picks first, followed by the next highest seeded player, and so on. Players' machine picks must adhere to the following rules as much as possible, subject to machine availability:

- Players must select different machines for each game in a match.
- A player may not select a machine already chosen for the same round by a higher seeded player in the same division. (ex: in a five player match, if the #2 seed chooses to play Addams Family in round 1, the #3 seed may not choose Addams Family in round 1.)
- A player may not select a machine he is already scheduled to play twice in a match due to picks by higher seeded players. (ex: in a five player match, if the #4 seed is scheduled to play Twilight Zone in rounds 1 and 3, he may not select Twilight Zone for round 5.)
- A player may not select the same machine for a head-to-head (2-player) game against the same opponent in both the semifinals and finals.

If a player is not present when it is time for their machine selections, that player will drop to the lowest playoff seed in their division. All lower seeded players will advance one seed, and the next seeded player will immediately be asked to provide machine selections.

If a machine is declared unplayable by the SLO due to malfunction, the player who chose that machine may select a replacement machine, subject to the restrictions listed above, unless that player has no permissible options, or the SLO determines that operational issues (e.g. location

closing times) preclude the alternate selection. In these events, the *SLO* shall randomly select a replacement machine.

8.4 Ties in Playoff Qualification

If there is a tie in divisional standings based on total league points, the tie is first broken by the season's head-to-head win-loss record for individual games between the tied players. If the tie is still unresolved, the next tiebreaker will be the season's average ladder ranking (excluding first two and last two meets) that is used to determine division qualification. If a tie still exists, then current ladder order (including the results of re-ranking at the end of the match) will break the tie. In each case, the smaller ladder rank (higher position) wins.

8.5 Ties in Playoff Results

Two-way ties during the playoffs are decided by the head-to-head game between the tied players during that playoff match. In the event there is a three or more way tie, the head-to-head games are used first as a tie-breaker. If the tie is unresolvable (such as a three-way tie that is circular in the head-to-head games), then the final game played commonly by all tied players is used as the tie-breaker.

If the playoff format used does not culminate in a final game between all the players (e.g. a playoff match of five players), and the head-to-head games are not able to break a tie (e.g. a circular tie), then the *SLO* shall randomly select a machine for a one game tiebreaker between the tied players.

8.6 Tardy or Missing from Playoffs

Tardy players may request a 15 minute delay in their match start time per section 2.2, though this does not prevent any drop in seeding, as described in section 8.3. If a player is not present for their match start time, they are immediately disqualified from the match, all lower-seeded players advance one spot, and the next highest ranked player from the division becomes the lowest-ranked playoff player. If no A-qualified player is available for an A-division spot, the spot is given to the highest ranked B-division player present who is not already in the playoffs. If no B-qualified player is available for a B-division spot, the spot is given to the highest ranked C-division player present who is not already in the playoffs. Under no circumstances can a league player participate in a lower division playoff.

If a player is dropped from the match, other players will be permitted to change their machine selections for games involving the dropped player. Machine selections for games not involving the dropped player may not be changed.

9. Preplays

Preplays allow a player to submit scores in advance for a planned or unplanned absence or tardiness for a league meet.

Each player may use a maximum of twelve (12) preplay scores per season. Preplays necessitated by religious observations do not count against this total.

Preplays may not be done while the preplayer is in an active league match. Any preplays in progress at league start time must be immediately stopped and the score at that time will be recorded as the final preplay score. At least one other player must participate in a preplay. Before starting each preplay game, the preplayer must announce that the game is a preplay for a specific date, or an undated preplay. For each preplay set, all working games at the league location should be played (since the specific games that will be played by the absent player's group are not known in advance). Preplays are subject to all normal rules of league play (e.g. extra ball restrictions). All preplay scores for the absent player are recorded by the other player and are reported by them to the *SLO* as soon as possible. It is recommended that the person submitting preplay scores retain a copy of them.

Prior to game selection at each league meet, all submitted preplay scores will be made public. After machines are chosen, preplay scores are recorded on the score sheet.

9.1 Dated Preplays

If a player knows they will not be able to attend an upcoming league meet, the player may submit a dated preplay set for that meet. Preplay games must be played as close as possible to the meet that will be missed.

If one or more games are not available during the preplay session for any reason, the player may attempt to schedule another preplay session for these games. At most two separate sessions may be used to obtain each complete set of preplay scores. A session that includes games played immediately before and after a league meet counts as a single session.

If, during the league meet, any game played by the group was not played when a preplay player's session occurred, the absent player receives a league score of zero for that game and the other scores for that machine are assigned as if the absent player were not in the match. If the player is present and guesting in their scheduled group, they may record scores for any machines that did not have scores recorded during their preplay session.

If a player will miss more than one meet in a row, he may preplay multiple meets in one or more sessions. All working games at the league location are played once, and then all the games are played again for the additional set of preplay scores.

Dated preplays are normally applied only for the specific date submitted by the player. If a player makes a mistake in reporting the date of a preplay, and the *SLO* is informed of the error **before** game selection on that date, then **once** per season the scores may be slipped to the next league meet. Preplay scores will be discarded only if the designated league meet is canceled.

9.2 Undated Preplays

Players have the opportunity to do undated preplays of any or all machines at the league location early in the season. Players who wish to submit undated preplays must do so prior to the start of play of that player's third meet of the season. Undated preplays are only valid for that season. If a new machine arrives mid-season, players have until the start of the third league meet that the new machine is available for league play to submit undated preplays for that machine.

Undated preplays will be used as replacement scores for the first four (4) applicable missed games. An **applicable missed game** is one for which the player is not aware of his group's machine selections and has an unused undated preplay score for that machine, provided that **no** dated preplays have been submitted for that date by that player. However, if a player has unused undated preplays and has already done dated preplays for eight (8) games, his undated preplays will take precedence for the final four preplays. (In this case only, preplay scores may still be submitted for any machines for which the player has no unused undated preplay score.)

9.3 Multiple Preplay Sets

Any submitted preplay scores may include from 1 to 4 complete plays of all machines at the location. Should a player wish to submit multiple scores, they must record scores for all available machines before preplaying any machine for the second time. Players are advised to submit multiple scores as part of a preplay if the location's machine selection makes it likely that machines will be played more than once on league night (e.g. if fewer than 4 machines are available and working).

If multiple scores are submitted for a machine, scores must be clearly labelled as "#1", "#2", etc, and this numbering must reflect the order in which the scores were recorded. On league night, these scores will be applied in order.

9.4 Banking

As an alternative to dated and undated preplays described above, the *SLO* may opt to use preplay score banking. When banking is in effect, the following changes apply:

- Dated preplays are disallowed, and all preplays are undated.
- Players may submit undated preplays any time during the season, not only prior to the player's third meet / third meet of machine availability.
- The limit of four (4) undated preplays per season is lifted; undated preplays can be used for any applicable missed games, up to the overall preplay limit for the season (normally 12).

All other terms of rules 9.2 and 9.3 remain applicable when banking is used.

For any league season, the *SLO* must select *either* traditional dated+undated preplays, or banking, and announce this selection to the league prior to the start of the season. If no such announcement is made, banking will not be used.

10. Dues

The league treasurer may collect dues from every league player at each meet. Players will also pay for games played. The league maintains a "kitty" which players pay when there are already credits on a machine. Money can be taken from the kitty to buy credits on a machine when the pricing scheme awards bonus credits for additional coins, if it is to the league's benefit to do so. Money collected in the kitty will be added to the league treasury. The league treasury pays for all games played in the playoffs, and is also used for trophies, parties, prizes, and other league expenses.

Appendix A – Special Rulings

The following section lists rulings on game-specific malfunctions and other situations that have occurred during CFFC league play. These rulings detail our ideas on what does or does not count as a major malfunction on the games, as well as special cases (bugs) that call for a special ruling. This section is intended to be a dynamic document, subject to expansion and modification as new and unforeseen special circumstances occur.

Under no circumstances will the *SLO* modify a player's score to account for points unearned due to a machine software bug or hardware malfunction, unless there is a Special Ruling already on the books. If an unexpected glitch causes a player to be cheated, the score displayed on the machine stands, and the *SLO* will attempt to discern if a Special Ruling is necessary for future occurrences. In order for a Special Ruling to be made, the glitch must be reproducible and the cause and effect must be clearly understood. If these conditions are not met, no Special Ruling will be made.