



## **2018 Spring Season SCHEDULING INFORMATION**

This document outlines the scheduling information needed by teams for the coming MRL season. Be sure to read through this document so that you are familiar with all aspects of the scheduling process.

Scheduling will be done by the respective teams within your assigned division. It is our hope that teams will be able to schedule their matches within their division on their own in a coordinated manner following the process outlined herein and in the Scheduling Email sent to each team within a division.

A Division Scheduling Coordinator (DSC) will be appointed from within your division to coordinate scheduling within your division. **Only Club Directors of Coaching, the Head Coach of a participating team within the division, or a Full-time Club Administrator are expected to be selected as the DSC for your division.** Generally, this person will be someone who has scheduled MRL games in the past and understands the nuances in scheduling on a regional basis. The DSC's role is to facilitate and guide the process and all duties cease when the schedule is finalized.

It is strongly recommended that team coaches or Club DoC's be involved as the point person for a team in the scheduling process as experience has shown that early all team parent administrators (sometimes known as managers) either have their own selfish agendas that conflict with a team's/club's interests or are incapable of coordinating scheduling as per MRL guidelines.

Boys and Girls 15U – 19U Premier I and Premier II Teams and Divisions: you will have until Tuesday, October 30, 2017 Noon ET to complete your division schedule via a collaborative effort or the MRL may create your division schedule with no regard for team availability or travel.

All others: you will have until Friday December 22, 2017 Noon ET to complete your division schedule via a collaborative effort or the MRL may create your division schedule with no regard for team availability or travel.

Further, the lack of participation by a team in the process may result in fines to the team and club assessed by the MRL Commissioner and/or the acceptance of the division schedule without non-participating team's approval.

Spring Season play may begin on Friday, February 9, 2018

Spring Season games are to be played on or before Sunday, June 3, 2018

## **MRL Scheduling--GROUND RULES and PROCEDURES—2018 Spring Season**

Spring Season MRL teams must be available to play on the following weekends (April 22-23, April 28-29, May 5-6, May 12-13). Teams are excused from MRL play during these weekends only for State Cup play on those particular days (Note: Those teams that are unavailable to play due to state cup conflicts must be available to play on all other non-state cup weekends throughout the MRL season). Of course, teams may determine not to play on the Must Be Available to Play Weekends as per their in-division scheduling.

### **GROUND RULES**

- The Goal is to come out of this process with your MRL schedule for the 2018 Spring Season. Each game should be assigned a site and a host organization designated for such site. The MRL is cognizant that teams, primarily with opponents from within their own state association, may opt to play One-Offs (or Self Schedule Games--i.e. teams set their own date, time and location). There is no limit on the listing of One- Offs (Self Schedule Games). However, the designation of which games are One-Offs (Self Scheduled Games) must be firmed up. Once it is agreed that certain games shall be One Offs/Self Schedule Games, then those games must be confirmed (site, date, time) by no later than February 23, 2018. (See Scheduling Policy for sanctions if games are not confirmed by February 23, 2017).
- TRAVEL--A reminder from the MRL 2017 Spring Season Information Sheet: *“All teams understand that this is a Regional League and that teams may travel hundreds of miles to participate in MRL games. The determination of game sites is based in part due to home locations of teams within a division and field availability. Teams understand that they may not play any home games”*
- COACHES--*“Teams should understand that due to the nature of scheduling of games for teams from across the region that scheduling games for the benefit of a single coach who coaches multiple teams should not be expected. Time conflicts will occur for those coaches that coach multiple teams on MRL weekends and the MRL, as well as the other teams within a division, are under no obligation to assist these coaches with their conflicts.”*
- For purposes of hosting, the MRL has divided the Hosting of games into four types of categories:
  - ONE-OFF HOSTING (SINGLE GAME) One field—one game
  - GROUP HOSTING (MID-SIZE, MULTIPLE TEAMS, MULTIPLE GAMES)
    - One to three fields—multiple games
  - GROUP HOSTING (LARGE-SIZE, MULTIPLE TEAMS, MULTIPLE GAMES)
    - Four or more fields—multiple games
  - MRL HOSTED EVENTS (MULTIPLE TEAMS, MULTIPLE GAMES)
    - Games hosted by MRL at neutral sites See the 2018 Spring Season Game Hosting Guidelines document for more information.
- The MRL does not prohibit teams from scheduling more than one game per day if the teams so agree.
- If scheduling two games in one day, MRL Rules stipulate that efforts be made so that a minimum of three hours rest occur between games (from the end of the first game to the start of the second).
- Also, in situations where teams agree to play three games in a weekend, teams understand that their opponents may not play a similar schedule of games for that particular weekend. Teams should understand that if they agree to play three games in a weekend, that their opponents and other teams participating that weekend may not play an equal number of games and have equal rest between games. For example, in situations where opponents have different amount of rest in the same day between games, (in order) the host team or local team(s) should be the team(s) scheduled with the least amount of rest.
- Team(s) may agree to play four games in a weekend due to exceptional circumstances as agreed to with the MRL Commissioner.

## **MRL Scheduling--GROUND RULES and PROCEDURES—2018 Spring Season**

**In the event that there is a conflict where teams are unable to agree to a mutually agreeable date for their game, teams should apply the concept that State Cup Games are the ONLY games that take precedence over availability for MRL games.**

- All games that are to be played between teams from the same club must be played during the first one-third of each team's season or the game will be considered a No-Contest. No consideration will be made for games that are postponed. These games must be played within the first third of a team's schedule. For example, in a 9 game season, this game must be 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> game of each team's season. For 6, 7 or 8 game season, this game must be the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> game of each team's season.
- The MRL hosted sites are listed on the availability sheets for each division. **These are not required dates and sites and are merely offered to teams as an option in scheduling games.**
- Spring Season play may begin on February 9, 2018. All games are to be played on or before June 3, 2018. Waivers to these dates may be permitted only if all teams in a division agree in writing to extend the season and with the approval of the MRL Commissioner; or by special approval by MRL Commissioner.
- Spring Season MRL teams **must be available to play** on the following weekends (April 22-23, April 28-29, May 5-6, May 12-13). Teams are excused from MRL play during these weekends only for State Cup play on those particular days (Note: Those teams that are unavailable to play due to state cup conflicts must be available to play on all other non-state cup weekends throughout the MRL season).
- There is risk involved in scheduling matches on grass fields. Do not expect hosts to guarantee that games will be played as field and weather conditions may deem fields unplayable and/or closed.
- Once the schedule is finalized teams are released from the Must be Available weekends requirement.

### **PROCEDURES**

- Once the DSC is appointed by the MRL, the DSC is to collect and confirm the availability of each team during the season's weekends.
- DSC to confirm the host site information as provided by teams within the division. Teams should reconfirm that a host team has the number of fields available necessary in order to play games at the same time and provide for equal rest time in situations where teams agreed to play two games in one day. Teams should also reconfirm the playing surface of each field. Teams should confirm if games are scheduled on grass or turf (synthetic), as well as fields with any floodlights. Hosts are not obligated to secure back up turf fields as delays or postponements due to weather or field conditions cannot be controlled. All teams understand that there is a risk of postponement. **Host pays for all costs associated with hosting. In situations where the host team has to move games from grass fields to turf fields, the host team is responsible for costs associated with such hosting. Visiting teams are under no obligation whatsoever to pay for such costs.**
- Utilizing the scheduling match-up template provided to the DSC, place sites and dates agreed to by teams next to game match-ups. **Game times for all games except those to take place at MRL hosted sites and any one-offs should be determined before the schedule is finalized.** It is expected that game start times and rest time between games played on the same day shall be equal (unless otherwise noted). **If field changes require game time changes and un-equal rest time between games, the hosting team (followed by other local teams) shall be required to accept a schedule with the least rest time between games (unless agreed upon by the other participating teams). In other words, hosting team shall have no scheduling advantage in regards to rest.** If game times are not determined, the host team has the right to schedule matches as they deem appropriate, pending MRL approval.

## **MRL Scheduling--GROUND RULES and PROCEDURES—2018 Spring Season**

- Teams may designate games to be One-Offs (Self Scheduled)—date/time/site of these games to be scheduled by February 23, 2018 or the game may be considered a No Contest Game.
- **In situations where games are scheduled for MRL hosted sites, the MRL shall have the sole authority to determine game times (as multiple divisions will be playing on-site for these weekends).** If a group of teams are scheduled to play two games in one day, game times should be designated as AM-for the series of games to be played first in the day; and PM-for the series of games to be played later in the day. This does not necessarily mean that AM games will be played in the morning. Games may start as early as 7:15 am. Game times listed as PM could stretch from anywhere from Noon to 9 pm. These games times will not be posted until mid-March. The MRL is not required to fulfill any special time requests for games scheduled at MRL hosted sites.
- Matches are scheduled on grass fields with no turf back-ups at MRL hosted sites in Rockford and Muscatine. There are no field costs to the teams for playing matches at MRL hosted weekend sites.
- MRL retains the right to move any matches scheduled by two local teams, as defined solely by the MRL, off of the MRL hosted sites at anytime.
- At MRL sites, please know that field sizes vary from 105 to 120 yards in length and 60 yards to 75 yards in width. **Fields at MRL hosted sites are available on a first finalized, first to secure basis as fields are limited.** The MRL is not required to fulfill any special time requests for games at MRL hosted sites.
- MRL games may be scheduled during other US Youth Soccer sanctioned competitions during Spring Season weekends. Games must be played under MRL rules and are subject to approval by the MRL. Teams and host organization will be held responsible for MRL rules compliance in these situations. Teams should know that scheduling matches at such events essentially strips MRL teams of all scheduling rights including but not limited to re-scheduling. Extra fees may also be charged.
- All games that are to be played between teams from the same club must be played during the first one-third of each team's season or the game will be considered a No-Contest. No consideration will be made for games that are postponed. These games must be played within the first third of a team's schedule. For example, in a 9 game season, this game must be 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> game of each team's season. For 6, 7 or 8 game season, this game must be the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> game of each team's season.
- Once a schedule is submitted to the MRL, the MRL Commissioner will distribute a note to all teams confirming that the schedule has been received and that teams have agreed to the schedule.
- **After the deadline date, the MRL has the authority to accept a schedule without approval of the schedule by all teams in a division if a team(s) fails to actively participate in the scheduling process or a team(s) fails to comply with availability on must be available to play weekends (as determined solely by the MRL Commissioner.**