Louisiana Classic Soccer League
Scheduling Handbook

Introduction

In preparation for the 2019-20 season, LSA scheduled 1,453 LCSL games for 303 teams in 46 divisions. Of those games, 981 were rescheduled by teams before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. That equates to 70% of the games. Of those 981 games rescheduled, 68% were rescheduled due to coaching conflicts or the desire to participate in a tournament. That means that LCSL teams rescheduled 667 (46%) of the 1,453 games originally scheduled by LSA for reasons of which they were aware while the schedule was being hammered out. This process is neither efficient nor effective. It leads to a colossal waste of time, delays and unnecessary conflict between teams.

To be both efficient and effective, teams must be the driving force behind the schedule, not LSA or even our Clubs.

LCSL Scheduling Overview

A.   Brackets

LSA will distribute proposed brackets to Club prior to the Tryout Period. Once tryouts have been completed Clubs and teams must analyze whether a particular team is misplaced in the proposed brackets and must communicate their concern to LSA immediately.

B.   Letters of Intent, 11U Team Placement Forms and Field Availability Forms

Immediately after tryout each Club must submit
- Letters of Intent – LOIs must be completed fully and with input from coaches
- 11U Team Placement Forms and
- Field and Referee Availability Forms
- Referee Assignor Contact Information

This part of the process remains unchanged. However, in the past a few years, delinquent Clubs have delayed the scheduling process by failing to submit these forms in a timely manner. LOIs are used to make any final adjustments in bracketing. The failure of a Club to submit an LOI for a team by the deadline risks that team's ability to participate in the LCSL.

C.   Preliminary Schedule

Immediately after the deadline for the submittal of the forms in Step 1, LSA shall release a Preliminary Schedule that delineates each LCSL game to be played, which team is the home team and a Game Number to the game. The link to the Preliminary Schedule will be
- Published on the LSA website
- Sent via email to each Club
- Sent via email to each team. The team email shall be done division-by-division. In addition to the link to the Preliminary Schedule, this team email will include the contact information of the Coach and Manager for each team in the division and a link to the field availability forms.

D.   Field and Referee Availability

When and where LCSL games can be played completely depends on if and when a field and referee crew is available. For many reasons each Club's field and referee availability differs greatly. Together with the Preliminary Schedule, LSA shall publish in GotSoccer the field availability for each Club and available field complex. In addition, each Club's general field availability will be published in a single database, which will be accessible online.

E.   Team Coordination

Each Coach and Manager should
- Review the Preliminary Schedule
- Determine their team's anticipated calendar for the year detailing the tournaments they wish to attend, school schedule conflicts (e.g. ACT testing dates) and social conflicts (e.g. local festivals) that may pose conflicts in their scheduling.

- Teams should also communicate directly with teams in their division from the same Club and the Club itself for possibly scheduling Club Jamboree dates during which all of their teams that are in the same division can play each other.
- Draft a tentative schedule that reflects all potential conflicts.

F.   Team Scheduling

Once each team has a tentative schedule, they have all of the information they need to craft their schedules. In crafting a team's schedule Managers and Coaches should take all of the following into account

- What tournament(s) they plan to attend
- Coaching conflicts
- Holidays
- School and church events affecting members of the team
- ODP training and event dates (see: ODP page of LSA website)
- Travel
- No more make-up weekends. Teams are given the freedom to schedule their own make-up weekend (care should be taken to leave date(s) open late in the year)
- Festivals, LSU and Saints games and other social events

LCSL Scheduling Process

Below is the Team Scheduling Process. All schedules must be completed on or before the Monday prior to the starting weekend of the season. If a team is having difficulty scheduling or is not receiving cooperation from an opposing team, the team may ask LSA to assist or intervene.

Step 1   Team Communication

Teams should consult the Field and Referee Availability database then communicate with each other via email and agree on a date and time.

Step 2   Home Team Emails Field Assignor

The home team emails their Club's Field Assignor to find out whether a field is available on the date and time agreed upon. For efficiency purposes, the subject line of the email to the Field Assignor should indicate the Age/Gender group and Game Number of the game needing to be scheduled (Example: "LCSL - 14U Girls Game #214"). If the teams feel comfortable doing so, they may agree on more than one date and time for their game so the home team has options when they contact the Club's Field Assignor.

- If there IS NOT a field available the teams return to Step 1 to agree on a different date and time.
- If there IS a field available, the home team will receive the date, time and field number then move to Step 3.

If the teams feel comfortable doing so, they may agree on more than one date and time for their game so the home team has options when they contact the Club's Field Assignor.

Step 3   Home Team Emails Referee Assignor

The home team forwards the email response from the Field Assignor to their Club's Referee Assignor to find out whether a referee crew is available on the agreed upon date, time and field number approved by the Field Assignor. Again, for efficiency purposes the subject line of the email to the Referee Assignor should indicate the Age/Gender group and Game Number of the game needing to be scheduled.

- If there IS NOT a referee crew available, the teams return to Step 1 to agree on a different date and time.
- If there IS a referee crew available, the home team moves to Step 4.

Step 4   Home Team Emails Field Assignor to Confirm Referee Availability

After receiving confirmation from the Referee Assignor, the home team must communicate with the Field Assignor that the Referee Assignor has confirmed a referee crew is available on the agreed upon date, time and field, and that the game will be scheduled in GotSoccer.

Step 5   Scheduling Home Games in GotSoccer

> **Step 5A**   The home team's Manager or Coach logs in to their GotSoccer Team account to schedule the game. From the team's overview page, click the name of the league (Example: "2020-21 Louisiana Classic Soccer League - 15U-17U").

> **Step 5B**   From here, click the "Schedule" tab.

> **Step 5C**   Click "Home Game Scheduling" to view the unscheduled games.

You will see the unscheduled games on the Calendar View highlighted in red (in the example below, the calendar shows 1/1, meaning there is one unscheduled game out of one game for that day).

Step 5D   From the Event Calendar, click on the date that the game is placed on. In the example above, this means November 22. After clicking on the date from the Event Calendar, scroll down below the Chart View to see the Unscheduled Game(s) for that date.

Step 5E   To schedule your games, click and hold the gray icon and drag the icon to a field and time slot. <u>Of note, only the fields created within your team's Club account will appear for scheduling. If you do not see a particular field you need, you will need to contact your Club to add the field.</u>

Once a game has been scheduled, it will be highlighted in **Red** on the Chart View and you are finished.

G. Communication and Cooperation

Managers and Coaches shall use the contacts list from GotSoccer to communicate about scheduling and rescheduling games and game weather-related updates. Communications should be accomplished by email to maintain a record of the Teams' agreements. Teams shall cooperate with each other throughout the seasonal year in scheduling and rescheduling games and shall be reasonable and accommodating with each other. This sense of cooperation has grown exponentially over the past few years and must continue to do so.

In the event teams fail to communicate or cooperate in bad faith with each other in scheduling or rescheduling an LCSL game or if an impasse exists in the teams' schedules, LSA shall have full authority to schedule the game. In determining how and when to schedule around team conflicts, LSA shall utilize the Priorities in Scheduling set forth in Policy 305.5.4.3

> *In the Team Scheduling and rescheduling processes teams must observe priorities in soccer events, but shall also be reasonable in accommodating conflicts. Below are priorities for teams that would excuse them from scheduling or rescheduling a game on a particular day.*
> 1. *The team is playing in a US Youth Soccer Regional League game*
> 2. *There is an education-related activity (e.g. ACTs, required school event, etc.) that affects 20% of the team*
> 3. *The team is already scheduled to play an LCSL game*
> 4. *The team is participating in a tournament hosted by the Team's Club*
> 5. *At least 20% of the team is participating in an ODP Event*
> 6. *The team is participating in a Tournament not hosted by their Club*
> 7. *Community or social events (e.g. festivals, school social events)*
> 8. *All other soccer events*

The home team will present its possible dates and the visiting team will present its reasons those dates don't work. If an agreement cannot be mediated on any of the home team's dates, the visiting team will list their available dates and so forth. Both teams should be ready for an online meeting with LSA to seek a swift resolution.

Should LSA determine that a team's failure to communicate or cooperate with another team is unreasonable the team shall be subject to loss of home field advantage and/or a fine.

Summary

Time and statistics have taught us that the old LCSL scheduling system is grossly out-of-date, inefficient and ineffective. LSA has been tasked with building a 1,500 game schedule with only a fraction of the information needed to do so with any degree of success. This new process gives teams the freedom to create their own schedules from the outset and reduces the need to reschedule games during the season. The scheduling workload is done up front and, in the incredibly hectic world, coaches, players and their families all know what their soccer schedule is before the season starts. The key to success in any organization is teamwork. That is certainly the case here. Communication and cooperation are key elements to this new process and must be observed at every turn.