



RULES

As of June 12, 2015



**US YOUTH SOCCER REGION II
MIDWEST REGIONAL LEAGUE RULES
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US YOUTH SOCCER REGION II MIDWEST REGIONAL LEAGUE RULES

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

1.01 Name of League

The name of the League shall be the "Midwest Regional League" (MRL).

1.02 Mission

To provide the highest standard of competitive play for youth teams in US Youth Soccer Region II (the Midwest Region) and assure the continued growth and development of elite level players.

1.03 Owner of League

The Midwest Regional League is owned and operated by the US Youth Soccer Region II. Participation in the MRL is governed by the rules adopted by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the United States Soccer Federation (US Soccer) and US Youth Soccer, except where modified below.

1.04 Management of League-proposed

The MRL shall be managed and supervised by the Midwest Regional League Executive Committee in accordance with the Midwest Regional League Charter.

1.05 Rules, Policies and Procedures

The MRL Executive Committee will have authority, subject to the provisions of the Midwest Regional League Charter, to promulgate all league rules, policies and procedures reasonable and necessary for the administration and growth of the MRL.

1.06 Matters Not Provided For

The MRL Executive Committee shall have final authority in all matters not specifically provided for by the policies or rules.

1.07 Age Group Management

Each age group will be managed and supervised by the MRL Executive Committee, which will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Approving venues
- (b) Creating match schedules
- (c) Serving as the liaison with the Regional and State Referee Assignors to ensure that match officials are assigned.
- (d) Collecting State Association approved MRL team rosters from teams/State Association
- (e) Recording and posting of scores and standings
- (f) Ensuring communication of age group news and information is shared with teams

1.08 MRL State Association Representative

Each Region II State Association shall appoint a MRL State Association Representative who shall provide his/her State Association administration and President with all information relevant to the MRL. The duties and responsibilities of the MRL Representative under the jurisdiction of the MRL Executive Committee shall include but are not be limited to:

- (a) serving as a liaison between the MRL and active and prospective teams from the representative's State Association;
- (b) working with the local State Director of Coaching in approving teams for the MRL;
- (c) providing a site coordinator(s) for MRL events within a State Association when a site coordinator is not provided for by a hosting club or organization
- (d) serving as a liaison between the MRL and the State Association's referee program for the purposes of referee assignment and assessment; and
- (e) any other duties as assigned by the MRL Executive Committee.

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1.09 Site Coordinators

All Site Coordinators shall be approved by the MRL Commissioner.

- (a) In cases where a participating MRL team is hosting multiple games at a local site, the host MRL team must provide a Site Coordinator for the MRL event.
- (b) For MRL events hosted by a non MRL team based local organization, the MRL shall determine the Site Coordinator for the event.

1.10 Site Coordinators Duties and Responsibilities

The Site Coordinator's duties and responsibilities under the jurisdiction of the MRL Executive Committee shall include but not be limited to:

- (a) Serving as a liaison between the MRL and participating teams on site;
- (b) Establishing a central location for site headquarters;
- (c) Ensuring that the game fields are ready for play;
- (d) Collecting and distributing Referee Game Reports;
- (e) Collecting, recording and distributing appropriate Referee Game Fees;
- (f) Forwarding Referee Game Reports to the MRL at the conclusion of the event ;
- (g) Completing any other duties as assigned by the MRL Executive Committee.

1.11 Playing Seasons

The MRL shall operate two separate playing seasons. The Spring Season will be played between January 1 and July 31; and the Fall Season will be played between August 1 and December 31. The MRL Executive Committee shall determine the start and end dates of each season within the parameters of the calendar as outline above.

1.12 Precedence of Games

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series competition will have priority over MRL matches.

1.13 Team Rights and Privileges

Any team in the MRL shall have the same rights and privileges those accorded to any team playing in a league within their respective US Youth Soccer state association. Team participation in the MRL during the Spring and Fall sessions will meet the requirements of the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.

1.14 Contact Information and Communication

All member teams of the MRL shall have contact information on file with the MRL, including, but not limited to (a) the Team Administrator's Name, Phone Numbers and valid e-mail address and (b) the Team Coach's Name, Phone Numbers and valid e-mail address. E-mail will be the primary means of communication within the MRL. It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that accurate contact information is on file with the MRL.

SECTION II. TEAM APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

2.01 Team Eligibility

Any team affiliated with a US Youth Soccer State Association may request entry to the MRL.

US Youth Soccer Region II based teams will have priority for participation in the MRL, as out-of-Region II teams may apply for participation in the MRL but shall not eligible for available Wild Card slots in the US Youth Soccer Region II Championships.

2.02 National Cup Competitions Requirement

Any team at the Under-14 through Under-18 age groups making application to the MRL must have competed in one of US Youth Soccer's National Cup competitions during the past seasonal year and must participate in a US Youth Soccer National Cup competition during the current seasonal year. Currently, the National Cup Competitions include the National Championship Series and the National Presidents Cup. There is no National Cup Competitions Requirement for the Under-13 age group. The requirement for competing in the National Cup Competitions during the past seasonal year may be waived pending a request of waiver by a team. The MRL Commissioner in consultation with the respective State Association may grant or deny the waiver.

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2.03 Good Standing

All teams must be properly registered competitive teams that meet the requirements for participation and are in good standing with their respective member State Association.

2.04 State Association Approval

All teams applying for membership in the MRL must be approved by their respective State Association. Teams competing in the MRL must satisfy eligibility requirements for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.

2.05 Recommendations from State Associations-proposed

A maximum of eight (8) teams per age group per gender may be recommended by each state association to the MRL for each season of play. A total of four (4) teams per age group per gender are guaranteed acceptance into the MRL for each season of play from each state association. The MRL Executive Committee may determine if additional teams may be accepted above the four team limit

2.06 Structure

The MRL will offer competition for Boys and Girls in six Age Groups, including the Under-13, Under-14, Under-15, Under-16, Under-17 and Under-18 age groups. On a yearly basis the MRL Executive Committee will determine the number of tiers offered in each gender age group for each seasonal year. The maximum number of tiers in a gender age group is three. The naming of tiers and split of teams, if necessary, within a tier into divisions is addressed in Section 4 of these Rules.

2.07 Additional League Competitions

The MRL Executive Committee may determine on a seasonal basis to offer other competitions in league format for specific clubs and/or teams. Teams may not advance from such competitions to the Region II Championships. Such league competitions shall be administered by the MRL with specific competition rules and procedures approved by the MRL Executive Committee.

2.08 Application Deadlines

All applications for participation in the MRL must be received by the deadline established by the MRL Executive Committee for each playing season.

2.09 Application Process

Team Applications to participate in the MRL must be completed on-line at www.midwestregionalleague.com.

2.10 Acceptance of Teams

Teams approved to participate in the MRL by their State Association are not automatically accepted into the MRL. The MRL Executive Committee will evaluate all State Association approved teams and determine final acceptance into the MRL based on the number of positions available and the configuration of teams in each tier and sub-division. It is understood that State Associations shall not unreasonably withhold approval for a team application if such team has earned a Premier I Division or Premier II Division team slot.

2.11 Acceptance of MRL Rules

Any team applying to play in the MRL, agrees to accept, abide by and comply with all rules, policies, and decisions by the MRL and further agrees to pay all fees that are due to the MRL for participation in the MRL.

2.12 Final Authority

The MRL after consultation with State Associations shall have the final authority and right to refuse admittance of any team based upon the team's prior performance in the MRL. These factors include, but are not limited to: failure to play MRL matches as scheduled; failure to comply with MRL rules; failure to pay MRL referees; and/or failure to pay assessed MRL fees or fines on time.

2.13 Fees and Other Expenses

Each team playing in the MRL will pay the fees established by the MRL Executive Committee. The MRL is not responsible for expenses incurred by teams through travel, housing, coaching, uniforms, and other related team operating costs.

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2.14 Additional State Association Entry Fees and Bonds

State Associations may require an additional fee or bond for participation in the MRL. Such fees and bonds are to be handled directly by the teams with their respective state association. The MRL does not participate nor endorse such state association requirements.

2.15 Return of MRL Fees

The MRL shall return any fees paid to the MRL for any team that is not admitted into the MRL. Once the team acceptance list is posted on the MRL website, the team fee for the season becomes non-refundable.

SECTION III. TEAM ROSTERS

3.01 Team Rosters

Teams must file with the MRL, in a process outlined on a seasonal basis by the MRL, its state association approved Team Roster and state association approved Club Pass Player Roster. All teams must submit an initial official MRL Team Roster of players no later than seven (7) days prior to the team's scheduled first game. A state association approved Club Pass Player Roster must be filed with the MRL no later than 24 hours prior to a game's kickoff in order for all players to be listed on the roster(s) to be eligible to play. Additions to the Team Roster or the Club Pass Player Roster must be filed with the MRL no later than 24 hours prior to a game's kick off in order for players listed on the roster(s) to be eligible to play. An authorized official from the Team's respective home State Association must authorize the validity of all rostered players in order for players to be eligible for MRL play.

3.02 Player Eligibility

All players must be current US Youth Soccer members and have member passes that have been approved by their respective State Association. During a season (Fall or Spring) a player may be listed on one Team Roster. Players listed on a Team Roster may also be listed on a Club Pass Roster(s) on team(s) within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club as approved by the team's State Association, in accordance with MRL Rules and Policy. A player that is rostered to a team outside of the MRL but within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club as approved by the team's State Association, may also be listed on the Club Pass Roster(s) on team(s) within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club. In situations where a player may be listed as a Primary or Secondary player, such player may only be on a Team Roster or Club Pass Roster for a team within the player's Primary Club

3.03 Maximum Roster Size

The maximum number of players on a Team Roster shall be 22

The maximum number of players on a Club Pass Roster shall be as follows:

If up to 9 players on Team Roster:	16 players
If 10 players on Team Roster:	15 players
If 11 players on Team Roster:	14 players
If 12 players on Team Roster:	13 players
If 13 players on Team Roster:	12 players
If 14 players on Team Roster:	11 players
If 15 players on Team Roster:	10 players
If 16 players on Team Roster:	9 players
If 17 players on Team Roster:	8 players
If 18 players on Team Roster:	7 players
If 19 players on Team Roster:	6 players
If 20 players on Team Roster:	5 players
If 21 players on Team Roster:	4 players
If 22 players on Team Roster:	3 players

3.04 Member Passes

Valid US Youth Soccer member passes will be used for MRL play. All US Youth Soccer member passes must be valid for the current season, have a current player photo and be laminated.

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3.05 Team Roster & Player Guide (Policy)

On a seasonal basis, the MRL Executive Committee shall provide a Policy titled "Team Roster & Player Guide" for participating that may include additional guidelines in regards to team rosters and player eligibility. The MRL Executive Committee, at its discretion, may establish roster freeze dates for each playing season (Fall and Spring).

3.06 Player's MRL Participation on a Daily Basis

At no time may a player play for more than one MRL team in any one day.

3.07 Player's Rostering Limitation within an Age Group

At no time may a player be on a Team Roster or Club Pass Player Roster for more than one team within the same gender age group.

SECTION IV. FORMATION OF TIERS AND SUB-DIVISIONS WITHIN TIERS

4.01 Tiers (Divisions) of Competitions and Sub-Divisions within Tiers

The tiers of competition shall be named: Premier I Division, Premier II Division and First Division. Within each tier, based on the number of teams participating in a particular gender age group, the MRL Technical Committee may further split the teams into sub-divisions. The MRL may, at its entry age group(s), conduct qualification competitions to determine placement of teams into tiers for future seasons of play.

4.02 Team Selection, Tier Placement, and Division Placement including Promotion and Relegation

The MRL shall publish on an annual basis for each season its specific procedures for "Team Selection, Tier Placement and Sub-Divisional Placement Criteria" that are to be developed and applied by the MRL Technical Committee. The MRL Technical Committee will consult with the Region II State Directors of Coaching, in the selection of the placement of teams into tiers, and the placement of teams into sub-divisions within each tier for each Boys and Girls Age Group. The process of determining the placement of teams into tiers will utilize the accepted concept of Promotion and Relegation of teams between tiers based on the finish of teams in the previous year's MRL standings. At a minimum, at least one team from each higher tier level shall automatically be relegated to the next lower tier. At a minimum, at least one team from each lower tier level shall automatically be promoted to the next higher tier level. The number of teams relegated and promoted between tiers will be reviewed and determined on a seasonal basis by the MRL as well as on an age group-by-age group basis and a tier-by-tier basis.

4.03 Competition Structure and Procedures for the U-13 and U-14 Age Groups in the Fall Season

The MRL shall publish on an annual basis the Competition Structure and Procedures by which teams participating in the Fall Season in the U-13 and U-14 age group shall compete in qualification competitions for the determination of the placement of teams into tiers for the next Spring Season of the MRL.

4.04 Premier I Division or Premier II Division Team—Failure to Return to MRL

In situations whereby a team does not apply for participation for a season where such team had previously earned placement as a Premier I Division or Premier II Division team, such slot may be filled at the discretion of the MRL Technical Committee in accordance with its "Team Selection, Tier Placement and Division Placement Criteria."

4.05 Removal of Team from a Premier I Division or Premier II Division Slot

Teams that had previously earned placement as either a Premier I Division or Premier II Division team may be removed from the Premier I Division or Premier II Division, or from the entire MRL for disciplinary reasons, or if the composition of the team has changed significantly from season to season and the team is no longer competitive.

4.06 Returning Teams Policy

The MRL shall publish on an annual basis a policy "Defining Returning MRL Teams" that shall be used to determine the eligibility of teams claiming pre-qualified Premier I Division and Premier II Division slots.

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4.07 New Teams in the MRL Policy

The MRL shall publish on an annual basis a policy “Defining New Teams to the MRL” that shall be used to place teams into the appropriate tier of the MRL.

SECTION V. NATIONAL/REGIONAL COMPETITIONS

5.01 US Youth Soccer Region II Championships Wild Cards

In the U-13, U-14, 15, U-16, U-17, U-18 and U19 age groups, two Wild Card slots to the US Youth Soccer Region II Championships will be awarded to MRL Premier I Division teams. In order to be eligible for a Wild Card slot, the following conditions must be met:

- (a) The team must participate in their State Association State Cup competition for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series during the current seasonal year competing in the same age group of competition as participating in the MRL (for example a U-16 MRL team must play in state cup at the U-16 level), except in the U-18 age group where the MRL team may compete in either the U-18 or U-19 State Cup competition.
- (b) The team must meet all current eligibility requirements for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.
- (c) The team may not have forfeited a game in the MRL or in their State Association State Cup competition.

5.02 Selection of MRL Wild Cards for US Youth Soccer Region II Championships

MRL Wild Card Qualifiers for the US Youth Soccer Region II Championships shall be earned from the following seasons:

	Boys	Boys	Girls	Girls
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
U-13	0	2	0	2
U-14	0	2	0	2
U-15	0	2	1	1
U-16	0	2	1	1
U-17	0	2	1	1
U-18	0	2	1	1

The MRL shall publish on an annual basis, based on the structure of the Premier I Division in the Fall and Spring Seasons, the process for “Determining the MRL Wild Card teams to the US Youth Soccer Region II Championships.”

SECTION VI. MATCHES--OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

6.01 Scoring Method

The standings of teams within divisions/sub-divisions are based upon the number of points earned. Teams earn points as follows:

- Three (3) points for a win
- One (1) point for a tie
- No (0) points for a loss

6.02 Forfeits

In the event of a forfeit, the match score will be recorded as 0-4. The opponent will be awarded three (3) points and a 4-0 win. In the event that a team forfeits more than one game, the MRL Commissioner shall review the impact that such forfeits have on the standings and may consider dropping all results by all teams versus the team that has committed forfeits from the standings. This shall only be done if forfeits have a direct impact on the final placement of teams for MRL Regional Wild Card slots or for promotion and relegation purposes.

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6.03 Forfeited Matches

A team that forfeits a match shall be subject to the following:

If the team is currently in the Premier I Division or Premier II Division, the team (1) shall be subject to a fine, (2) shall become ineligible for a MRL Wild Card slot to the Region II Championships, and (3) will be automatically relegated one tier despite its finish in the standings.

If the team is currently in the First Division, the team (1) shall be subject to a fine, and (2) shall be automatically relegated out of the MRL subject to review by its respective State Association and the MRL Technical Committee.

6.04 Uneven Number of Games

In the event that the teams in a Division/Sub-Division do not play the same number of games due to unforeseen circumstances, not including games that teams refuse to play (i.e. forfeits), the Final Standings may be determined by using the percentage of points earned versus the maximum points the team could have earned. The MRL Executive Committee will also determine any tie-breaking procedures that may need to be applied.

6.05 Reporting of Scores

Site Coordinators shall report game scores in a manner as determined by the MRL Commissioner. In situations where single games are played (i.e. One Off Games), both teams are required to report the scores in a manner as determined by the MRL Commissioner.

6.06 Tiebreakers

Tiebreakers—Two Teams are Tied

If two teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the team's placement will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria:

- (a) Winner of head to head competition
- (b) Winner of most games (all games).
- (c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (d) Fewest goals allowed.
- (e) Coin Toss

Tiebreakers—Three Teams That Are Tied

If three teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the three-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied resorts to the two team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

- (a) Points earned in head to head competition among the teams
- (b) Winner of most games (all games).
- (c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
- (f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
- (g) Drawing of lots.

Tiebreakers—Four Teams That Are Tied

If four teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the four-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied (either two or three teams) resorts to the two or three team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

- (a) Points earned in head to head competition among the tied teams
- (b) Winner of most games (all games).
- (c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game
- (d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
- (f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
- (g) Drawing of lots.

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Tiebreakers—Five Teams That Are Tied

If five teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the five-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied (two, three or four teams) resorts to the two, three or four team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

- (a) Points earned in head to head competition among the tied teams
- (b) Winner of most games (all games).
- (c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
- (f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
- (g) Drawing of lots.

Tiebreakers—Six Teams That Are Tied

If five teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the six-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied (two, three, four or five teams) resorts to the two, three, four or five team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

- (a) Points earned in head to head competition among the tied teams
- (b) Winner of most games (all games).
- (c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
- (e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
- (f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
- (g) Drawing of lots.

Tiebreakers—Not Covered

For any situation not covered within these rules, the MRL Executive Committee will also determine any tie-breaking procedures that may need to be applied.

6.07 Uniforms

Teams playing in the MRL are only permitted to wear the following on their game uniforms:

- (a) US Youth Soccer logo
- (b) Their individual club and/or team logo and team sponsor logo
- (c) Manufacturer of uniform logo
- (d) Name and number of player

No other patches or logos are permitted unless written permission is granted by the MRL Executive Committee.

6.08 Number of Games

Each team will be scheduled to play a minimum of four (4) games in a season. The scheduled number of games shall be determined by the MRL Commission based on the number of teams in a division

6.09 Scheduling of MRL Games

Scheduling of MRL games is done in accordance with the MRL Scheduling Policy for each season (Fall and Spring).

6.10 Travel/Hosting

For the purpose of MRL competition, Permission to Host/Travel Forms are not required. Permission to host/travel is granted when a team's respective State Association approves the team's application into the MRL.

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6.11 Match Schedule and Rest Periods

All matches will be played as scheduled, unless weather conditions dictate. It is the intent of the league to play only one match per day; however, when circumstances dictate, no more than two matches a day will be scheduled. Every effort will be made to provide for a minimum of three hours rest between matches.

6.12 Inclement Weather

The Host Team is responsible for notifying the MRL Commissioner as soon as possible if games on scheduled fields are unable to be played due to field closings or inclement weather. Rescheduling of games is done in accordance with MRL Scheduling Policy.

6.13 MRL Hosted Events--Hotels

At the discretion of the MRL Commissioner, the MRL may require out-of-town teams to use specific hotels in order to participate in an MRL hosted event. Such requirements are to be listed by the MRL at the time a location is offered to teams for scheduling and shall include disciplinary action for any violation(s).

SECTION VII. RULES OF PLAY

7.01 Laws of the Game

Games will be played under the applicable rules of US Youth Soccer. Teams are responsible for obtaining and being familiar with the U.S. Soccer Official Administrative Handbook and the FIFA Laws as they govern play subject to the modifications noted herein.

7.02 Substitutions

In the U-18, U-17, U-16 and U-15 age groups the MRL will operate under the FIFA-Seven (7) "per half" substitution system. Once replaced, players cannot re-enter the game during that half of play. Substitutions may be made during any stoppage in play. In the U-13 and U-14 age groups, unlimited substitutions will be permitted.

7.03 Match Length and Ball Size

Age Group	Length of Half	Ball Size
U-17 and U-18	45 min.	5
U-15 and U-16	40 min.	5
U-13 and U-14	35 min.	5

7.04 Field Size

Fields for all age groups must meet the FIFA requirements for full size fields. The MRL recommended field size is 116 yards by 72 yards.

7.05 Official Match

A match shall be considered official after one full half of play is completed (the second half does not have to start). If less than one half is completed and the match is abandoned, the entire match must be replayed, subject to MRL Rule 8.04 and/or review by the MRL Executive Committee. If a match is abandoned in the second half of play due to inclement weather, the final score will be the score at the time the match is abandoned. If a match is abandoned for any other reason including but not limited to gross misconduct, the MRL Executive Committee will decide the disposition of the match score following review of all information available including but not limited to Referee Game Reports, reports for MRL staff, etc.

7.06 Forfeits-Lack of Appearance

A fifteen minute delay in the start of a game due to a team's lack of appearance is permitted for scheduled matches before the game is abandoned. A delay is permitted past 15 minutes with the permission of the MRL Commissioner, Failure to appear for a scheduled match will result in a forfeit.

7.07 Anchored Goals

The coaches and match referee should inspect the integrity of the goals to ensure they are secure and suitable for play. Matches shall not begin until both goals have been firmly secured.

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7.08 Player Passes/Rosters/Lineup Game Cards

Each team must bring their laminated US Youth Soccer member passes (i.e. passes issued by their respective State Association) signed by an official of their home State Association, a MRL Lineup Game Card, and a copy of their Official MRL Roster and Official MRL Team Club Pass Roster to every match. Lineup Game Cards are to be given to the Match Referee prior to the start of a match. The Game Lineup Card and/or Official MRL Team Roster and Official MRL Team Guest Roster are to be provided to the opposing team upon request. No more than 18 players from a team may appear on the Lineup Card as eligible to play and play in any single game. Referees are to collect the Player Passes for any non-participating player that is sitting on a team's bench for the match prior to the match to insure that such players do not participate in the match. Such Player Passes are to be returned to the team following the match.

7.09 Playing of Ineligible Player

A team that plays an ineligible player shall be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to: forfeiture of the match, suspension of the team's coach from MRL competition, or expulsion of the team from the MRL.

7.10 Member Passes Presented to Referee

US Youth Soccer Member Passes shall be presented to the referee upon entering the field of play. Passes will be returned to the players at the end of the half. Players will present passes upon entering the match during the second half. This rule shall not apply for U-13 and U-14 age groups due to the unlimited substitution rule for these age groups, all player passes are to be presented to the Referee prior to the game. Referees are to collect the Player Passes for any non-participating player that is sitting on a team's bench for the match prior to the match to insure that such players do not participate in the match. Such Player Passes are to be returned to the team following the match.

7.11 Availability of Team Rosters

Upon request, copies of official MRL game rosters must be provided to the opposing team coach/manager prior to the start of each game.

7.12 Uniform Color Conflict

When there is a conflict in uniform color, the team listed first on the schedule must change their uniform color, subject to the Match Referee's decision

7.13 Coaching from Sidelines

Limited coaching from inside the team's respective Technical Area is permitted. Coaches may not leave their team's Technical Area or enter the field of play without permission from the Referee.

7.14 Team Bench Supervision

A coach, manager or team official must supervise a MRL team at all times at the Team Bench Area. Coaches, managers and team officials are required to provide the Referee with a pass, as provided by their host state association, certifying that the coach, manager or team official is currently rostered with the team/club. If by send off or emergency, a team does not have a coach, manager or team official to supervise the MRL team during a MRL game, then the game shall be forfeited.

7.15 Team Coaches – Licensing Requirement

The MRL Executive Committee on an annual basis shall establish the minimum coaching license requirements for coaches and teams.

SECTION VIII. MATCH CONTROL

8.01 Three Person System

Matches should be officiated by the three-person FIFA/USSF Referee System. In the event the assigned officials fail to appear (within 10 minutes of the match time); an attempt to secure certified officials should be done to officiate the match. In the event certified USSF officials are not available, the Referee may appoint Club Assistant Referees. Club Assistant Referees shall be limited to decisions only on touchlines and possession as specified by FIFA/USSF Referee Guidelines. The MRL Commissioner or designee may provide further procedures on replacement officials as necessary.

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8.02 Game Officials

Game officials will be assigned under the authority of the MRL working with the hosting US Youth Soccer State Association SRA or SYRA

8.03 Payment of Referees

Referees and Assistant Referees appointed under the provisions of these MRL Rules shall be paid at the conclusion of the match upon receipt by the Site Coordinator of the MRL Referee Report, Game Cards, and Team Rosters. Each team is responsible for payment of one half of the MRL required fees of the match officials.

- (a) Referee fees for U-17 and U-18 games shall total \$160.00 (\$70 for Referee and \$45 for each Assistant Referee).
- (b) Referee fees for U-15 and U16 games shall total \$140.00 (\$60 for Referee and \$40 for each Assistant Referee).
- (c) Referee fees for U-13 and U-14 games shall total \$120.00 (\$50 for Referee and \$35 for each Assistant Referee).

If fields are closed and/or games are cancelled and the referees are not notified prior to their arrival at the site, the officials will be paid for their first scheduled match only. The site coordinator is responsible for collecting the referee fees prior to the match, and distributing them to the officials. In the event that there is only one Assistant Referee, only one Assistant Referee payment is made. The other Assistant Referee fee may be paid to a club assistant referee, if they are a registered USSF official.

8.04 Termination of Matches

Referees may terminate matches for lack of crowd control, poor team behavior or other unsportsmanlike circumstances. Each coach is responsible for the behavior and conduct of his/her players. Upon request by the Game Officials, coaches are responsible to assist in the control of parents, fans, and spectators. The Referee will report the termination of any match to the MRL Commissioner within 24 hours. The MRL Executive Committee shall ascertain the facts and determine appropriate disciplinary action that may include:

- (a) Reprimand,
- (b) Forfeiture of game as appropriate;
- (c) Suspension from future MRL matches or
- (d) Recommendation to the US Youth Soccer Region II Director of a more severe penalty.

If play is stopped at any time due to one of the teams (by action of players, coaches, administrators, spectators) adjudged to be at fault, it shall be at the discretion of the MRL Executive Committee whether the game is to be replayed or declared a forfeit.

8.05 Filing of Referee Match Report

In the event that the Match Referee does not provide the Site Coordinator with the Referee Report, Team Lineup Game Cards and Team Rosters immediately following the match, the Referee must file such Report with the MRL Commissioner within 24 hours of the match. In the event that red or yellow cards are issued during the match, the Report must be filed within 12 hours of the match. Filing shall be defined as providing pertinent match information via e-mail or fax. Original copies of all paperwork must be postmarked within 48 hours of a match.

SECTION IX. SEND OFFS AND DISCIPLINE

9.01 Send Offs

Any player, coach or team official who is sent off (red card) from a match will be suspended for the team's next MRL match. If a player, coach or team official who is sent off (red card) a second time in a season regardless if it is with the same team, the player, coach or team official will be suspended for the next three (3) MRL matches. Any player who is deemed guilty of Violent Conduct due to fighting with another player or coach on or off the field of play shall be suspended a minimum of one MRL match, subject to the above and pending further review by the MRL Commissioner.

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9.02 Disciplinary Actions

All disciplinary measures imposed by the MRL shall be limited to an individual or team's participation in the MRL. The MRL will record the issuance of all red and yellow cards and other matters involving the conduct of a team, its players, coaches or supporters and immediately distribute this information to the respective State Associations. The home State Association has the right to impose additional sanctions with regard to any matters arising from participation in the MRL.

9.03 Violation of Rules

Any violation of the rules herein will be subject to disciplinary action by the MRL.

9.04 Disciplinary/Fine Schedule

Prior to the start of the Fall and Spring Seasons, the MRL Executive Committee may distribute a Disciplinary/Fine Schedule.

9.05 Non Player Dismissal and Suspension Procedures

Any non-player (i.e. Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Administrator etc.) of a team dismissed from participating in a game must leave the field area and retreat to the parking area of the complex. Any dismissed non-player is prohibited from communicating with his/her team while the team is at the field for its game including but not limited to cell phone use, texting, tweeting or other means of communication. During a suspension any dismissed non-player is also prohibited from communicating with his/her team while the team is at the field for its game including but not limited to cell phone use, texting, tweeting or other means of communication. Violation of this rule may result in further disciplinary action against the individual and/or the team.

SECTION X. PROTESTS AND APPEALS

10.01 Definition of a Protest

A *Protest* is a formal written objection of any violation of established rules, policies, or procedures related to a specific match. Only those teams directly involved in a match (i.e. the two competing teams) are permitted to protest a game result. Third parties, i.e., coaches from other teams, state administrators, cannot file protests on a specific game.

10.02 Definition of an Appeal

An *Appeal* is a request to transfer the matter from one jurisdiction to another for re-examination of the decision made by the lower body. Appeals arise as the result of an adverse decision from an administrative action or disciplinary action at a lower level. Only those parties to the original action, who are adversely impacted by such decisions, shall be allowed to appeal.

10.03 Filing Procedures

A Protest or Appeal must be filed in writing and must include:

- (a) The nature and specifics of the complaint
- (b) A listing of the rules, policies, or procedures that have been violated.
- (c) A statement of the desired resolution
- (d) Copies of all documents relevant to the Protest or Appeal
- (e) The filing fee for a protest or appeal is \$500.00 (certified check or money order – made payable to US Youth Soccer Region II).

All Protests and Appeals must be filed with the MRL Commissioner. The original document of the Protest or Appeal, along with all supporting documents, must be sent by Registered or Certified U. S. Mail – Return Receipt Requested.

10.04 Return of Filing Fee

In the event that a Protest or Appeal is upheld then the filing fee shall be returned to the entity filing the Protest or Appeal; otherwise the filing fee is non-refundable.

10.05 Notification of Parties

The MRL Commissioner shall notify all parties involved, no later than three (3) business days from receipt of an Appeal or Protest, that an Appeal or Protest has been filed.

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10.06 Protests of Games Played

Notice of intent to Protest activity that occurred during a match must be registered with the MRL Commissioner within 24 hours of completion of the match. All Protests must be submitted in writing with the appropriate fee to the MRL Commissioner. The Protest must be postmarked no later than three (3) business days from match completion in accordance with the Filing Procedures listed in Section 10.03. The Referee is the final authority on the field of play. All decisions of the referees with the respect to matters of fact, including judgment matters are final. The MRL Commissioner is authorized to settle disputes which arise in the course of a MRL match. The MRL Commissioner, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will hear the Protest, investigate and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by teams, coaches, players or others involved related to such match and may impose appropriate sanctions for any violation found. A decision on a Protest must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of a Protest. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted). When an Appeal of a MRL Commissioner's decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the MRL Executive Committee.

10.07 Appeal of Decision of the MRL Commissioner

The MRL Executive Committee is authorized to hear Appeals of MRL Commissioner decisions. The MRL Executive Committee, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will investigate and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by teams, coaches, players or others involved related to such matter and may impose appropriate sanctions for any violation found. A decision on an Appeal must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of an Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted). When an Appeal of a MRL Executive Committee decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the Region II Regional Council.

10.08 Appeal of MRL Assessed Fines

An Appeal of MRL assessed fines, must be postmarked no later than three (3) business days from notification of an assessed penalty in accordance with the Filing Procedures listed in Section 10.4. Such Appeal will be heard by the MRL Executive Committee. The MRL Executive Committee, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will investigate and adjudicate the Appeal. A decision on an Appeal must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of an Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted). When an Appeal of a MRL Executive Committee decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the Region II Regional Council.

10.09 Appeal of Administrative Matter

The MRL Executive Committee is authorized to hear Appeals that are administrative in nature. The MRL Executive Committee, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will investigate and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by teams, coaches, players or others involved related to such matter and may impose an appropriate sanction for any violation found. A decision on an Appeal must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of an Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted). When an Appeal of a MRL Executive Committee decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the Region II Regional Council.

10.10 Region II Regional Council Decision

The Region II Regional Council hearing an Appeal of a MRL Executive Committee's decision shall make the final decision on this matter. The Region II Regional Council will render a decision no later than twenty one (21) business days from receipt of the Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted).

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10.11 US Youth Soccer Bylaw 704, Section 1

In accordance with MRL Rule 1.03, USYSA Bylaw 704, section 1 states that: “No member of USYSA, official, league, club team, player, coach, administrative, or referee may invoke the aid of the courts of the United States or of a state without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate soccer organizations, as provided within USYSA.” Additionally, for violation of USYSA Bylaw 704, the offending party shall be subject to suspension and/or fines, and shall be liable to the MRL and USYSA for all expenses incurred by the MRL or USYSA and its officers and members of the Board of Directors in defending each court action, including the following: (a) court costs; (b) attorney’s fees; (c) reasonable compensation for time spent by the MRL or USYSA officials and employees in responding to and defending against allegations in the action, including responses to discovery and court appearances; (d) travel expenses; and (e) expenses for holding special meetings by the MRL or USYSA necessitated by court action.