



**US Youth Soccer
Presidents Cup**

Competition Protocols

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This document contains important information about the US Youth Soccer Regional and National Presidents Cup competitions. All participating State Associations, clubs and teams are strongly urged to familiarize themselves with the information contained within this document, paying close attention to all deadlines. There are specific and critical responsibilities assigned, and ignorance or failure to comply with those responsibilities may result in unintended consequences.

PROTOCOL 501 SCOPE

Each State Association may enter one (1) male and one (1) female team in the 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 18U age groups. Competitions may be organized for qualifying players in the 12U and 19U age groups for both boys and girls as defined by Rule 104 of the US Youth Soccer Policy on Players and Playing Rules and will conclude at the Regional Presidents Cup level.

PROTOCOL 502 GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Teams and players competing in the US Youth Soccer National Presidents Cup competitions are representatives of their State Association and/or Region. The event Presidents Cup Committee expects exemplary behavior from anyone participating in the competition, including parents and spectators.

The primary expectation is sportsmanlike behavior and respect towards opponents, coaches, referees, competition staff and volunteers. Players should also understand how to behave in a pregame walkout, how to win with humility and lose with dignity.

PROTOCOL 503 COMPETITION ENTRY FEES

Each year, the entry fee for each level of the National Presidents Cup competitions will be determined as part of the US Youth Soccer budget process. This entry fee will be invoiced to State Associations and must be remitted directly to US Youth Soccer after all state entries and wildcards have been determined, but prior to the start of the competitions.

PROTOCOL 504 MEMBER PASSES

All rostered players and team officials must possess a printed, current and valid US Youth Soccer member pass with a recent face on, passport style photograph. Member passes will be verified against the official roster before the start of the competition. At each match, team member passes must be provided to the referee. If unusual or extenuating circumstances exist, and in order to ensure the orderly progression of the competition, electronic member passes may be utilized if approved by the Chair of the event Presidents Cup Committee or a designee. Printed member passes must be provided as requested.

Member passes must be laminated with no open sides or ends, with a hole punched in the upper left-hand corner of the pass and contained on a split binder ring. Passes must be in alphabetical order by last name, all players first and then followed by team officials at the end. If a State Association uses credit card style (plastic) player cards, they are exempt from the laminating requirement, but still need to be contained on a split binder ring.

PROTOCOL 505 HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

All National Presidents Cup competitions are governed by a "Stay to Play" policy. All participating teams are required to utilize the designated housing provider of the competition. It is the responsibility of the State Association to monitor and enforce the housing requirements for their teams. See Appendix A for the Regional requirements.



PROTOCOL 506 ROSTERS

Teams must submit a roster which lists all players participating in the competition. All rosters shall include the number of each player's jersey. 12U teams may roster up to 18 players and all rostered players may participate. 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U, 18U and 19U teams may roster up to 22 players. A maximum of 18 players are eligible to play in a match. Any players on the team roster not participating in a match may sit on the bench in street clothes. Once identified, the sitting players may not be substituted into that match.

Teams are strongly encouraged to roster a **minimum** of two (2) credentialed team officials. There may be situations when a credentialed team official is required to leave the technical area and all teams must have at least one (1) credentialed team official in the technical area at all times during a match.

States must verify the eligibility of all players listed on the roster and that participating teams maintain a roster continuity of at least nine (9) players from the state qualifying competition to the Regional and/or National Presidents Cup competition(s). By confirming and locking a team's roster in the US Youth Soccer Event Management System (EMS), the State Association is certifying compliance with all appropriate National Presidents Cup competitions policies and rules, including, but not limited to, age verification.

PROTOCOL 507 ROSTER FREEZE DATE

Rosters are submitted through the EMS. Information will be provided to teams detailing the EMS procedures. At least 14 days before the date of the first scheduled game of the National Presidents Cup competitions, each team in the competitions shall submit a roster with not more than 22 players.

The roster freeze date for all National Presidents Cup competitions is seven (7) days before the first day of competition.

Well in advance of the roster freeze date, teams should enter all player data into the EMS, verify that it is accurate and that all participating players are listed. The final responsibility for ensuring that all participating players are listed on the official team roster rests solely with the team. It is strongly recommended that teams allow adequate time to resolve any unforeseen issues before the roster freeze date.

PROTOCOL 508 SCHEDULE

The final schedule will be released a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the first day of competition. Teams dropping out of the competition after the schedule has been released will not be replaced. The schedule will not be changed, and the remaining teams in that group may play a reduced number of group matches. The withdrawing team will be noted in the schedule as "State - Forfeit", and any applicable fines will be assessed.

Teams that withdraw from the National Presidents Cup competitions are subject to the fine schedule below. The entry fee for a team withdrawing at any time will not be refunded.

- 61 days or more prior to the first day of competition: No fine
- Between 60 and 31 days prior to the first day of competition: \$1,500
- Between 30 and 15 days prior to the first day of competition: \$2,500
- 14 days or less prior to the first day of competition: \$5,000

Fines will be invoiced to the State Association and must be remitted directly to US Youth Soccer prior to the start of the competition. Any State Association failing to promptly remit fines may be considered in bad standing and teams from that State Association may not be permitted to participate in National Presidents Cup competitions until the fines are paid. The State Association is responsible for collecting any fine(s) from their teams.



PROTOCOL 509 WILDCARD INFORMATION

In the event a team withdraws 15 days or more prior to the first day of competition, every attempt will be made to secure wildcard team(s) in order to create an even bracket. In the event wildcard team(s) cannot be secured, the competition brackets will be adjusted as outlined in Protocol 513.

PROTOCOL 510 MATCH DAY

Teams should come to the fields dressed in the appropriate (dark or light) uniforms.

Referees will collect member passes from each team and verify them during their review. Only 18 players are allowed to be dressed for a match. If a team's roster has more than 18 players listed, a **credentialed** team official must inform the referee which players are not participating and they will be crossed off the game card. Rostered players not participating may be on the team bench in street clothes and may not wear shirts that are the same color of their team or the opposing team.

Shade tents and water coolers will be provided at team benches. If deemed necessary by the event Presidents Cup Committee, hydration breaks (3-minutes maximum) will be implemented. Players may leave the field and be substituted if desired. The referee will add time to compensate.

During matches, substitutes in the team bench area or warming up adjacent to it should wear pinnies to distinguish them from players on the field.

If a player is sent off by the referee, that player may remain on the team bench. Should that player's behavior subsequently become a disturbance and the player is dismissed by the referee, a **credentialed team official must escort and remain with** the player at a location out of sight and sound of the field until the referee crew has departed the field of play after the conclusion of the match.

If a team official is dismissed by the referee, he or she must leave the vicinity of the field before the match will be restarted. It is the responsibility of the State Representative or a designee to ensure that the dismissed team official remains out of sight and sound of the field until the referee crew has departed the field of play after the conclusion of the match.

Teams are strongly encouraged to roster a **minimum** of two (2) credentialed team officials. As outlined, there may be situations when a credentialed team official is required to leave the technical area and all teams must have at least one (1) credentialed team official in the technical area at all times during a match.

After each match, teams should ensure that the bench area is clean and that they vacate the technical area as quickly as possible to allow the next participants to prepare for their match.

US Youth Soccer Concussion Protocols are utilized at all National Presidents Cup competitions, including a mandatory medical release in order to return to play. The host state may have additional laws or protocols regarding concussions which must also be followed.

PROTOCOL 511 DRONES

The use of non-approved Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), more simply known as a Drone, at any event that is sanctioned by US Youth Soccer is strictly prohibited. The use of any UAS at any US Youth Soccer event must be approved by US Youth Soccer for a specified promotional activity at an event, in a designated area or areas that are away from youth soccer players, spectators and over any field for play or practice.

Any person violating this policy shall be immediately removed from the event by the US Youth Soccer authority managing the event.



PROTOCOL 512 USYS ATHLETE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The US Youth Soccer Athlete Incident Management System (AIMS) is a reporting tool designed to streamline the injury management process while acknowledging any local, state and/or federal laws as well as any US Youth Soccer policies related to injury documentation and education requirements. Use of the AIMS system is mandatory at all US Youth Soccer regional and national Presidents Cup competitions.

For any suspected concussions, the player will be immediately removed from participation as outlined in US Youth Soccer policies and procedures. Event Athletic Trainers must submit a report in AIMS immediately and update the Return-to-Play status to "Not Cleared".

Return-to-Play can only occur once the player has been cleared by a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy specializing in concussion treatment and management. The player must be certified by that medical professional to be symptom free. Athletes may not return to play until they have been cleared by an appropriate medical professional.

Only authorized USYS staff and committee members are authorized to update an athletes Return-to-Play status. The official clearance document, signed by an appropriate medical professional, must be presented at competition headquarters.

Any other injury, regardless of type, resulting in a player's removal from a game for any amount of time must be reported in AIMS within 24 hours.



PROTOCOL 513 COMPETITION BRACKETS

Wherever possible, brackets will be comprised of an even number of teams. Wildcards will be utilized to fill out brackets when available. In the event of late team withdrawals or other unusual situations, brackets with an odd number of teams may result. The event Presidents Cup Committee will make every effort to avoid these situations but in some cases it may be unavoidable. A minimum of four (4) teams is required to make a bracket.

4-Team Bracket | One Group of 4

Teams play a round robin to determine standings. Group winner and runner-up advance to the final.

5-Team Bracket | One Group of 5

Teams play a round robin to determine final standings. Each team will have a day where no match is played. The Champion and Finalist are determined by standings at the conclusion of the round robin.

6-Team Bracket | Two Groups of 3

Teams cross over and play the opposite group to determine standings. The four (4) highest point totals (regardless of group) advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Highest Points vs. 4th Highest Points and 2nd Highest Points vs. 3rd Highest Points. Semi-finalists could have played each other during group play.

7-Team Bracket | One Group of 4 and One Group of 3

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. Teams in the group of three (3) will have a day where no match is played. Group winners and two (2) Wildcards (the next two (2) highest point totals regardless of group) advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Higher Point Wildcard and Group B Winner vs Lower Point Wildcard. ***If and only if*** the Higher Point Wildcard is from Group A ***and*** the Lower Point Wildcard is from Group B, then the semifinals are modified to Group A Winner vs. Lower Point Wildcard and Group B Winner vs Higher Point Wildcard. **Note:** For teams that play two (2) group matches, the average number of points earned from those two (2) matches will be added to their point total for purposes of determining advancement.

8-Team Bracket | Two Groups of 4

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. Group winners and runners-up advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Group B Runner-Up and Group B Winner vs Group A Runner-Up.

9-Team Bracket | Three Groups of 3

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. Each team will have a day where no match is played. Group winners and a Wildcard (the next highest point total regardless of group) advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Group B Winner and Group C Winner vs Wildcard. If the Wildcard comes from Group C then the semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs Group C Winner and Group B Winner vs. Wildcard.

10-Team Bracket | One Group of 4 and Two Groups of 3

The 4-team group plays a round robin to determine standings. The 3-team groups cross over and play the opposite group to determine standings. The 4-team group winner and the next three (3) highest point totals (regardless of group) advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. 3rd Highest Points and Highest Points vs 2nd Highest Points. Semi-finalists could have played each other during group play.

11-Team Bracket | Two Groups of 4 and One Group of 3

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. Teams in the group of three (3) will have a day where no match is played. Group winners and a Wildcard (the next highest point total regardless of group) advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Group B Winner and Group C Winner vs Wildcard. If the Wildcard comes from Group C then the semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs Group C Winner and Group B Winner vs. Wildcard. **Note:** For teams that play two (2) group matches, the average number of points earned from those two (2) matches will be added to their point total for purposes of determining advancement.



12-Team Bracket | Three Groups of 4

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. Group winners and a Wildcard (the next highest point total regardless of group) advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Group B Winner and Group C Winner vs Wildcard. If the Wildcard comes from Group C then the semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs Group C Winner and Group B Winner vs. Wildcard.

13-Team Bracket | One Group of 4 and Three Groups of 3

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. All teams in the 3-team groups will have a day where no match is played. Group winners advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Group B Winner and Group C Winner vs Group D Winner.

If quarterfinals are played, each group winner and runner-up advance. Quarterfinal pairings are (1) Group A Winner vs. Group B Runner-Up, (2) Group B Winner vs. Group A Runner-Up, (3) Group C Winner vs. Group D Runner-Up and (4) Group D Winner vs. Group C Runner-Up. Semifinal pairings are Quarterfinal 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 3 Winner and Quarterfinal 2 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 4 Winner.

14-Team Bracket | Two Groups of 4 and Two Groups of 3

The 4-team groups play a round robin to determine standings. The 3-team groups cross over and play the opposite group to determine standings. The 4-team group winners and the two (2) highest point totals from the 3-team groups advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Highest Points and Group B Winner vs 2nd Highest Points. Semi-finalists could have played each other during group play.

If quarterfinals are played, the 4-team group winners and runners-up advance, and the four (4) highest point totals from the 3-team groups advance. Quarterfinal pairings are (1) Group A Winner vs. 3rd Highest Points, (2) Highest Points vs. Group A Runner-Up, (3) Group B Winner vs. 4th Highest Points and (4) 2nd Highest Points vs. Group B Runner-Up. Semifinal pairings are Quarterfinal 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 3 Winner and Quarterfinal 2 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 4 Winner.

15-Team Bracket | Three Groups of 4 and One Group of 3

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. Teams in the group of three (3) will have a day where no match is played. Group winners advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Group B Winner and Group C Winner vs Group D Winner.

If quarterfinals are played, each group winner and runner-up advance. Quarterfinal pairings are (1) Group A Winner vs. Group B Runner-Up, (2) Group B Winner vs. Group A Runner-Up, (3) Group C Winner vs. Group D Runner-Up and (4) Group D Winner vs. Group C Runner-Up. Semifinal pairings are Quarterfinal 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 3 Winner and Quarterfinal 2 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 4 Winner. **Note:** For teams that play two (2) group matches, the average number of points earned from those two (2) matches will be added to their point total for purposes of determining advancement.

16-Team Bracket | Four Groups of 4

Each group plays a round robin to determine standings. Group winners advance to the semifinal round. Semifinal pairings are Group A Winner vs. Group B Winner and Group C Winner vs Group D Winner.

If quarterfinals are played, each group winner and runner-up advance. Quarterfinal pairings are (1) Group A Winner vs. Group B Runner-Up, (2) Group B Winner vs. Group A Runner-Up, (3) Group C Winner vs. Group D Runner-Up and (4) Group D Winner vs. Group C Runner-Up. Semifinal pairings are Quarterfinal 1 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 3 Winner and Quarterfinal 2 Winner vs. Quarterfinal 4 Winner.



APPENDIX A

REGIONAL TEMPLATE



US Youth Soccer Regional Presidents Cup competitions may have differing event formats and requirements. These differences are outlined below:

[Region Name] Region Information

State Entry Deadline:

Event Draw:

Wildcard Process:

Age Groups:

Competition

Group Play:

Quarterfinals:

Semifinals:

Finals:

Day of Rest:

Hotel Requirements

Hotel Draw:

Minimum Number of Rooms/Nights Required per Team:

Fine for Non-Compliance:

Stay to Play Buyout:

Commute Housing Waiver

Referee Requirements

Participating States Referee Ratio:

Alternate Method for Referees:

Fine for Non-Compliance:

Referee Housing:

Referee Transportation:

Referee Meals Provided:

Referee Meals Not Provided:

Match Payments/Stipends:

Fines

Forfeit Fines:

Other

Opening Ceremony:

Team Check-In:

Site Parking Fee Charged:

State Representatives: [Mandatory | Recommended]

Other Meeting(s):