

1.2 COMPETITION FORMAT

A FORMAT

1. Round-Robin

- a. Wildcard teams may be used as necessary to bring age divisions to an even number of teams. National League Conference teams are placed within the brackets by random draw, as specified in the bracket below.
- b. Each age group will be divided into three or four team sub-groups. The teams in each sub-group will play three preliminary round-robin games according to established matrices (section 1.2 (B)). Advancement to the semi-final round will be determined as follows.

2. Semi-Finals and Finals

- a. Games are single elimination format. Winners of the semi-final will advance to the final match.
- b. There are no consolation games unless both teams advancing to the finals are NL Pro teams that have already qualified for the National Championship. A Consolation game will be played on finals day to determine the team that will represent the South Region at the National Championship competition. *See #3 regarding Consolation Games.*
- c. In 12 team groups, teams from the same bracket, or teams that have already played each other in the round-robin will not play each other in the semi-final games.
- d. If the National League Qualifier team wins the final game, the finalist team advances as the Southern Regional Representative to the National Championship.
- e. If the score is tied at the end of regulation play, two complete overtime periods will be played at the end of normal playing time. The duration of the overtime periods will be two 10-minute halves for 13U and 14U and two 15 minutes halves for 15U and older.
- f. If at the end of the overtime periods a tie still exists, the game result shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with IFAB Laws of the Game.

3. Consolation Game to Determine Southern Regional Representative

- a. If both Champion and Finalist teams are National League Pro Qualifiers, a playoff game will be played on the finals' day between the two remaining semi-finalists to determine the Southern Regional Representative
- b. If three (3) of the four (4) semi-finalist teams are National League Pro Qualifiers, the remaining semi-finalist(4th) will be the Southern Regional Representative.
- c. If all four (4) semi-finalists are National League Pro Qualifiers, a play-off game will be held on the final's day between the *two highest point-earning teams (not already National League Qualifiers) to determine the Southern Regional Representative.
** Subject to event tie-breaker protocols for determination of next two (2) highest point-earning teams.*

4. Day of Rest

- a. Teams will receive a day-of-rest as the schedule permits.

B. Playing Matrix

10 - Team Divisions

A	B	C
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10		

- Bracket A plays within the bracket for group play
- Bracket B plays Bracket C in group play
- Brackets B & C are combined when determining advancement on points
- Semi-final #1: Winner A v BC #2
- Semi-final #2: Winner BC #1 v Wildcard (next highest in pts after A, BC#1 & BC#2 determined)

12 - Team Divisions

A	B	C
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12

- Winner on points advances from each bracket
- 2nd place over all on points advances as the Wild Card
- Semi-final #1: Winner A v Wildcard
- Semi-final #2: Winner B v Winner C
- If the Wildcard comes from Group A, then
- Winner A v Winner C and
- Winner B v Wildcard.

14 - Team Divisions

A	B	C	D
NL	NL	NL	NL
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10		

- Four (4) NL-C teams will be drawn – one for each bracket
- Semi-final #1: Winner A v Wildcard
- Semi-final #2: Winner B v Winner C/D
- If the Wildcard comes from Group A, then
- Winner A v Winner C/D and
- Winner B v Wildcard.

16 - Team Divisions (includes National League – Conference Teams)

One (1) winner from each of the conferences (*Piedmont; Frontier; Sunshine and mid- Mid-South*) will be drawn and placed in the first position of each group.

A	B	C	D
NL	NL	NL	NL
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12

The winners of each quarterfinal will play in the semi-finals.

- **Semi-final #1: (Winner A v 2nd B) v (Winner B v 2nd A)**
- **Semi-final #2: (Winner C v 2nd D) v (Winner D v 2nd C)**

C Wildcard

1. Age groups will consist of either 12, 14 or 16 team divisions. Wildcard(s) may be added to meet the team division requirements.
2. There will be two categories of wild cards.
 - State Wildcard represents one of the 12 slots “owned” by a state, where the state is unable to provide a team.
 - National League Wildcards will be added to slots that a state is unable to fill.
One State wildcard team per state, per tournament, will be selected unless no other state can fill the open slot. National League Wildcards will be exhausted first – then requests will first be sent to the host state – then to the remaining states
3. Procedure for State Wildcard selection, if National League is unable to fill:
 - State notifies the SRTC that they will not be able to fill their state’s slot in an age group.
 - A State wildcard may be selected to fill the open slot.
 - Order of selection of State wildcards:
 - 1) NL- teams from conferences
 - 2) Host state
 - 3) Offer to all states – first state accepting will be given the open spot

A state may accept or decline a wildcard slot in either gender division. The order selection proceeds until the wildcard slot is accepted. Pairings will not be changed to accommodate states. A state’s team and wildcard team may be in the same bracket.

4. Procedure for National League Wildcard selection:
 - National League will be given the first opportunity to fill “un-owned” competition slots.
 - States will be offered any slots the National League is unable to fill.