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TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

Updated: *June17, 2025

*eliminated the reference to quarter-finals on page 10 for 16 team age group

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FINAL

2025 US YOUTH SOCCER SOUTHERN REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT RULES

1.1. GENERAL INFORMATION

A State Commitment:

1 Twelve (12) teams allotted per state (13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U, 18/19U boys and girls State Champions or State Representative)

2 State must notify the Southern Regional (SR) Chair of any unfilled slots by the team commitment deadline of March 27, 2025.

3 Wild Card slots will be offered to National League – Conference (NL-C) teams, then to states, beginning with the host state, if NL-C is unable to fill.

4 If multiple slots are open in a bracket, they will be filled in the order they are submitted to the Southern Region Program Manager

5 The Wild Card process could result in multiple state teams being placed in the same bracket. After the tournament draw, if the addition of wild card teams creates multiple teams from the same state in the same bracket, the bracketing will remain unchanged.

6 Slot(s) still vacant by the end of the Wild Card process will be returned to the state "owner" of the slot(s) who will be responsible for payment of any team fees deemed applicable by the Southern Regional Tournament Committee (SRTC).

B Fees

State Entry Fees

The **$11,400** entry fee is required for each participating state (12 x $950/ team). Each State Association entered in the competition must pay the entry fee. The entry fee shall be remitted directly to the National Office upon invoice, but no later than May 20th, after the state entries and wildcards have been determined. Refer to the State Payment Schedule for Wild Card.

1. National League Conference Fees

   The National League (i.e., Piedmont Conference; Frontier Conference; Sunshine Conference, and Mid-South Conference, winners) entry fee of **$45,600** will be paid directly to the National office by the National League no later than May 20th. Calculation: (48 x $950 /team)

2. Wild Cards

   There are 14 wild card slots identified: Total entry fee for the wild card of **$950** will be due to the National Office no later than May 20th. The state relinquishing the slot is assessed $500 and the wild card team $450. If the slot is not filled due to holding the bracket number at an even number – no state will be charged.

3. Referee Mentor Fee

   The $2150 referee mentoring fee is required for both participating state and National League Conferences. Each State Association & Conference must pay the referee mentor fee, regardless of the number of teams entering the competition. An invoice will be generated with payment remitted directly to the National Office no later than May 20th.

C Discipline

Tournament discipline will be the responsibility of the Southern Regional Tournament Committee (SRTC). Failure to comply with requirements could result in a fine, probation, suspension, or a combination of these determinations. It is the responsibility of the State Association to enforce all sanctions levied on their teams, players, and coaches.

D Hotels

3. Teams are required to stay in their state's hotel cluster for the duration of their participation in the tournament. Per the Stay to Play Addendum, a state must have a room reservation average across all teams of eight (8) rooms with a minimum of four (4) rooms per team. For example: Team A reserves 16 rooms and Team B reserves 10, the average number of reserved rooms between the two teams is 13 rooms, well over the required eight (8) rooms. An "opt-out" option is available for $2500, playable to the LOC. (*See Stay to Play Addendum available on Southern Regional Website*)

Any State Association with a team that fails to utilize the selected rooms without approval of the SRTC or Designee will be subject to the $2500 "opt out" fee plus an additional fine of $1,000 for a total of $3500/per team. The $2500 is payable to the LOC and the $1000 to the National Office – Southern Regionals. The team may also lose eligibility to participate in the competition. Fines must be paid prior to the state's participation in the current Regional Tournament. If a team is identified after the event, the state is responsible for having the payment to the Local LOC and National Office prior to any team advancing to the National Championship. (*See Stay to Play Addendum available on Southern Regional Website*)

E Team Forms

Teams must complete all forms as required by the tournament and SRTC. Forms are due at the team's state check-in on Thursday, June 26, 2025.

F Late Withdrawal from Regional Championship

In the event a team withdraws from the tournament, a fine will be assessed as follows:

a. **15 days from the beginning of the tournament - $2000** ***(June 12, 2025)***
b. **10 days from the beginning of the tournament - $3000** ***(June 17, 2025)***

The team's State Association shall pay the fine to the South Region. Fines must be paid prior to that state's participation in the current Southern Regional Tournament

G National Championships Withdrawal:

- It is expected that teams who win the South Regional Championships will represent the region at the National Championships. If a team withdraws from the National Championships at any point following the South Regional Championships, the team shall be fined $5,000. The State Association shall be responsible for payment of any fine(s) and is responsible for collecting any fine(s) from the teams that are penalized by fines. Teams will be asked to confirm their intention to attend the National Championships prior to the team's age group Regional Championship game kick-off.
- If a team withdraws from the National Championships, the runner-up will be given the first opportunity to represent the region at the National Championships. If the runner-up is not available, the remaining semi-finalist teams will be given the opportunity in order of highest points in their respective brackets. See "P" Determination of Winners.

H Bad Standing:

Any State Association that does not pay the fine(s) assessed by US Youth Soccer shall be considered in bad standing, and no teams from that State Association shall be permitted to participate in future National Championship games until the fines are paid.

I Team Rosters and Roster Freeze Date

All teams will submit a Regional Roster to the SRTC via Got Sport prior to the Regional Roster freeze date. The State Association is responsible for confirming all players and coaches meet the NCS eligibility requirements. Regional Rosters freeze on Thursday, June 19, 2025 @ 11:59 pm CST.

J Game Rosters

Game rosters will be brought to the fields by the referees. The game roster will have a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 18 eligible players. Teams will designate their eligible players at the field.

K Registration

1. Team registration will be on the day prior to the start of the competition. State registration time will be set by the Southern Regional Tournament Committee (SRTC).
2. A team representative must register the team. All teams must present required forms, completed as specified, and their US Youth Soccer player and/or coach passes.
3. The passes must have a current photograph and be properly validated.
4. The passes must be laminated. Teams, players, and coaches without their US Youth Soccer passes cannot compete in the Tournament. Every State Association must have a State Representative present at registration.
5. State Representative will certify each team's roster. No additional administrative corrections will be permitted once a roster has been State certified.

L Tournament Draw

1. The tournament draw will be held no later than May 8th of the competition year.
2. Each age group/gender will have no more than 16 teams.
3. Competition with less than 16 will be the decision of the SR Chair and SRTC.
4. The SR Program Manager shall oversee the draw with participants from the SRTC, host state association and LOC.
5. The draw will first select the bracket for the NL-Conference team which will assume the first position in each bracket. (ex. A1, B1, C1, D1).
6. The remaining bracket positions will be filled by teams (state champions, state representative or wild card) representing the 12 states in the South Region
7. The draw is random with the exception that no bracket shall have two teams from the same state.
8. If a second team is drawn into a bracket with the same State Association, that position would exchange positions with the comparable position in the bracket to the right in an A-B-C-D, A-B-C-D or A-B-C scenario.
9. Once the tournament draw is finished, there will be no changes made even if a wild card team is placed in a bracket with a team from the same state.
10. The draw will be published after all State Associations have completed their State Championship tournaments.

M Scheduling of Games

1 The SRTC is responsible for developing the schedule of games.
2 The schedule will be posted 10 days before the competition. If teams withdraw prior to 14 days of the start of the competition, wildcards may be used as replacement teams.
3 If teams withdraw within 14 days of the start of the competition, teams may or may not be replaced. Scheduled opponents could receive a "bye game" during the preliminary round.
4 The best scheduling to ensure maximum rest for each team is to play one game per day. All teams are entitled to sufficient rest between games. If it is necessary to schedule two matches on the same day, four and one-half hours between the scheduled start of two successive games is considered to be sufficient rest.

Within the limits imposed by these rules and guidelines and by uncontrollable external conditions, the schedule is developed in an objective manner with no favoritism shown to specific teams or State Associations.

N Length of Games, Overtime Periods, Ball Requirements

Age Group	Game Length	Overtime	Ball	Circumference	Weight
19 and younger	Two 45' halves	Two 15' halves	#5	27-28 inches	14-16oz
18 and younger	Two 45' halves	Two 15' halves	#5	27-28 inches	14-16oz
17 and younger	Two 45' halves	Two 15' halves	#5	27-28 inches	14-16oz
16 and younger	Two 40' halves	Two 15' halves	#5	27-28 inches	14-16oz
15 and younger	Two 40' halves	Two 15' halves	#5	27-28 inches	14-16oz
14 and younger	Two 35' halves	Two 10' halves	#5	27-28 inches	14-16oz
13 and younger	Two 35" halves	Two 10' halves	#5	27-28 inches	14-16oz

1 Halftime shall consist of 10 minutes
2 In the preliminary round-robin portion, tied scores at the end of regulation time shall stand.
3 In the knock-out portion of the competition, 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.
4 Unfinished game due to any cause shall be replayed providing neither team is at fault and play has not begun in the second half. If play is stopped during the second half and play cannot be resumed as determined by the Southern Regional Tournament Committee (SRTC), and provided neither team is at fault, the SRTC may deem the game complete. Should play be stopped at any time due to one of the teams being adjudged at fault, it shall be at the discretion of the SRTC as to whether the game is to be replayed, stand as is, or declared a forfeit.

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(4^{th}) 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.

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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

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

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.

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D National League Conferences (NL-C)

The National League consists of:

Girl's Side: Four (4) conferences: Piedmont, Frontier, Sunshine, and Mid-South.

Boy's Side: Four (4) conferences: Piedmont, Frontier, Sunshine, Mid-South

Each conference is allotted 12 spots (6 boys and 6 girls) for a total of 48 National League Conference teams

E Game Cards

The official records of the tournament are the game verification report, signed by both team officials at the field, and the referee match report submitted to the SRTC.

F Game Balls

Each team shall be able to provide a game ball at each game. The game ball for each age group must meet US Youth Soccer requirements per Section 1.1 (N). Once the game begins, a protest cannot be lodged because of an illegal ball.

G Grace Periods

Any team not ready to play at the scheduled start time shall be granted a fifteen (15) minute grace period. Any team not ready to play after this grace period has expired shall be reported to the SRTC by the referee. The SRTC shall decide when a forfeit is declared. A minimum of seven (7) players constitutes a legal team.

H Home Team/Visiting Team

The home team is the first team listed on the schedule.

I Decorum

1. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of themselves, their coaching staff, parents/spectators, and their players.
    a. Coaches must remain within the confines of the technical area except in special circumstances (i.e., entering the field of play to assess an injured player), with only one person at a time authorized to give tactical instructions.
    b. The remaining bench personnel must remain seated.
2. Coaches and other team officials shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the IFAB Laws of the Game.
3. The IFAB Laws of the Game explicitly list offenses that shall result in either a warning, yellow card, or red card.
4. Where an offense is committed by a team official and the offender cannot be identified, the head coach will receive the disciplinary sanction.
5. Suspensions will be governed by tournament rules.
6. Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team, such as relatives and spectators, are also subject to the jurisdiction and authority of US Youth Soccer and the Tournament.

J Team and Spectator Location

The teams will sit on the opposite side of the field from the spectators. Teams will be separated by the table/bench/chairs for the officials. Spectators are to remain on the half of the pitch across from their own team's bench.

K Team Bench and Sidelines

Players and up to 4 club-specific credentialed team officials may be on the bench. The credentials will be issued at registration and must be visible during each match. Non-game day rostered players may sit on the bench and must wear clothing distinct from game-day uniform. Each team may order a maximum of four (4) bench passes. Club/State Medical Trainer – Credentialed trainers electing to be on the bench will count as part of the maximum four (4) team officials permitted and must have a Team Bench Pass. The general medical credential grants individual permission to step on to the field with permission from the referee or bench area as only in a supporting medical role. The Tournament Medical Team is primary related to medical care. Club/State Medical Trainer will assume a secondary role**.**

L Uniforms

1. Each player must wear an official uniform with a number on the back of the jersey.
2. Numbers are not required on goalkeeper jerseys.
3. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players and game officials.
4. Duplicate numbers or tape on uniforms is not permitted.
5. HOME teams wear Light colored jersey and socks.
6. VISITING teams wear Dark colored jersey and socks.
7. The team in the incorrect color will have to change.
8. If the teams are wearing the correct color uniform (home-light, away-dark) but the referee determines there is a color conflict between the home and visiting team's uniform - the home team must change.
9. Each team MUST have 2 (TWO) complete uniform kits onsite, including socks. (One light and one dark)
10. The referee's decision is final.

NOTE:

At every level of the National Championships competitions, each player, team, and team official may only have on his/her/their apparel the name, logo, or other identifying mark of US Youth soccer or a member directly or indirectly of US Youth Soccer.

1. A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before a player, team or team official may enter or remain at a field complex where the National Championships competition is being held.

2. After an initial warning pursuant to (1) above, the name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before the player, team or team official may enter or continue in the competition.

M Player Equipment

All players must wear shin guards. The referee is the sole judge of allowed player equipment as prescribed by the IFAB Laws of the Game.

N Player/ Team Official Passes

- The referee will review all 18 player passes prior to the beginning of the game.
- Before each half, the fourth official will receive the player passes from a team official for the starting 11 players.
- When a substitute player enters the game, they will hand their pass to the fourth official.
- Player passes will be returned to the team official after each half.
- Beginning with the semi-finals, the fourth referee official will hold the passes instead of the AR. It will be the responsibility of the team official to obtain the passes at the end of the game.
- Coaches must have their US Youth Soccer pass and Team Bench Credential, visible on their person always, while on the bench.

If teams' US Youth Soccer passes cannot be produced at the start of a game, the SRTC will determine appropriate actions.

O Substitutions

The number of substitutions shall be unlimited for 13U and 14U.
For all other age groups, a maximum of 7 substitutions for each team shall be allowed in each game during each half of play and during overtime play. After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game.

Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee at any stoppage of play.

Per Rule 242 Playing Rules Section 3 (subsection 3) Medical Substitution from the USYSNC National Championships Policy:

(3) If a player is suspected of suffering a head injury, they may be substituted for evaluation without the substitutions counting against the team's total number of allowed substitutions during each half or overtime period. If the player with the suspected head injury has received clearance from the events' Health Care Professional, the player may re-enter at any stoppage of play. The evaluated player must replace the original substitute and will not count as a substitution. The temporary substituted player may re-enter the game as a regular substitute. A team may only make a temporary substitution if they have a substitution available.

P Determination of Winners

Scoring Method in Round-Robin

- In preliminary round-robin games, points will be awarded as follows:

  Win - 3 points
  Tie - 1 point
  Loss - 0 points

There will be no overtime played during the round-robin portion of the tournament.

Q Advancement

The team earning the most points in each bracket will advance to the next round of the tournament.

- In groups of 10 teams (1 bracket of 4 teams & 2 brackets of 3 teams) the team with the most points in the 4-team bracket, top two teams with most points in the combined 3-team brackets plus the next highest remaining team on points across all brackets advances as the wildcard to the semi-finals.
- In groups of 12 teams (3 brackets of 4), the team with the most points after group play in each of the 3-brackets will advance plus the next highest remaining team on points across all 3-brackets advances as the wildcard to the semi-finals.
- In groups of 14 teams (2-brackets of 4 teams & 2-brackets of 3 teams) the team with the most points in each of the 2-brackets of 4, and the top two teams on points when combining both 3-team brackets will advance to the semi-finals.
- In groups of 16 teams (4 brackets of 4 teams) the team with the highest points in each bracket will advance to semi-finals.

In groups where a single crossover game is scheduled, only the game points earned within the bracket will count in determining the bracket winner. To determine the wildcard team all game points earned, including crossover game points, will count.

A full bracket crossover in the preliminary round (ex. Group A plays Group B) all games count.

R Tiebreakers

In the event teams are tied based on points, the following tiebreakers will be considered in order until the tie is broken:

a. Winner of head-to-head competition. (This criterion is not used if more than two teams are tied.)
b. Winner of most games.
c. Goal differential (goals scored minus goals against) with a maximum of five goals per game.
d. Fewest goals allowed.
e. Kicks from penalty spot per IFAB Laws of the Game (as described in National Championships Rule 242 Section 2 (c)).

- **NOTE:** If more than two teams are tied, the sequence will be followed until a team is eliminated/advanced. The remaining teams will then restart the sequence at Point "b" above until the tie is broken.

If IFAB penalty kicks are required and there are more than two (2) teams tied after going through the Tie Breakers, there will be a draw by the Southern Region Tournament Committee (SRTC). The first team drawn will receive the bye; the next team drawn will be the home team against the remaining team in the first contest of penalty kicks. The winner of the first contest will then compete against the bye team in penalty kicks to determine the round robin winner. The bye team will be the home team. Each team competing will name eleven players eligible to participate in the penalty kick-off.

The same tiebreakers will be used to determine wildcard teams.

S Championship Game

Teams competing in the championships games and going on to the National Championships will have their team picture taken after the Final match. Champion team photos will be forwarded to the US Youth Soccer office to be included in that event's program.

T Forfeiture Rule

In the event a team in round-robin competition forfeits any match, the official game scores for all that team's games will be recorded as 3-0 losses. A team that forfeits a match will be considered to have withdrawn from the tournament.

Remaining teams in the bracket will receive:

- 3 points for the win
- 3 goals for
- Zero goals against

The forfeiting team shall be awarded:

- Zero points for the loss.
- Zero goals for.
- 3 goals against

U Unfinished Games

Unfinished game due to any cause shall be replayed providing neither team is at fault and play has not begun in the second half. If play is stopped during the second half and play cannot be resumed as determined by the Southern Regional Tournament Committee (SRTC), and provided neither team is at fault, the SRTC may deem the game complete. Should play be stopped at any time due to one of the teams being adjudged at fault, it shall be at the discretion of the SRTC as to whether the game is to be replayed, stand as is, or declared a forfeit.

V Terminated/Suspended Games

Once play has begun, games may only be terminated/suspended by the Referee, SRTC or his/her representative.

W. Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones)

Per USYS Policy on Unmanned Aircraft Systems (DRONE) (Adopted November 22, 2015)

Section 3: Prohibitions

a. The use of non-approved UAS at any event that is sanctioned by US Youth Soccer is strictly prohibited.
b. The use of UAS at US Youth Soccer Events may be approved by US Youth Soccer
   (1) for a specified promotional activity at an Event, and
   (2) in a designated area or areas that are away from youth soccer players, spectators and over any field of play or practice.

Section 4. Enforcement

a. Any person violating Section 3. of this policy shall be immediately removed from the Event by the US Youth Soccer authority managing the Event.

Y. Noise Makers

a. At no time will air horns or any noise making device be permitted to be used at the tournament complex.
b. Noise making devices include but not limited to shakers, drums, whistles and clappers,
c. Individuals that fail to adhere to the "no noise maker" rule will receive a warning and if the noise continues may be escorted out of the complex.

1.3 Ejections

A Player Ejection:

1. A player who is sent off from the field must remain in the team bench area until the conclusion of the match. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players at all times.
2. The player's pass, together with the referee report, shall be turned over to the SRTC or his/her designee by the referee.
3. The minimum penalty for an ejection is that the player shall not be permitted to play in the immediate next competition match of his or her team. This penalty may be increased at the determination of the SRTC.
4. Any appeal of an increased suspension by the SRTC must be submitted in writing to the Southern Regional Program Manager within two hours of the team's notification of increased suspension.
5. If the team of an ejected player allows the player to participate in the game he or she is to be sitting out, that team will automatically forfeit the game. A team that forfeits a match will be considered to have withdrawn from the tournament.
6. A player is allowed to serve their suspension at the game on the team bench, provided they are not in uniform.
7. A member of the SRTC or their designee shall notify the player's State Representative of the send-off. The player's pass shall be returned to the State Representative following the disciplinary period.

B Coach or Credentialed Team Representative:

If a coach or credentialed team official is ejected from any game, they will be escorted by a member of the SRTC or designee out of sight and sound of the field and may not coach another team during the time slot for which they were ejected. The ejected coach or credentialed official may not be in sight or sound of the field while serving their suspension.

The minimum penalty for an ejection is a one game suspension to be served in the next US Youth Soccer National Championship Series game played by the team where the ejection was received. The penalty may be increased at the determination of the SRTC. Any appeal of an increased suspension must be submitted in writing to the Southern Regional Program Manager within two hours of notification of the increased suspension.

Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team, such as relatives and spectators, are also subject to the jurisdiction and authority of US Youth Soccer and the Tournament.

C Player and Coach Suspension

Any player, coach or bench personnel who have received more than a one-game suspension may appeal the decision to the Southern Regional Program Manager. The Program manager will appoint a Tournament Appeals Committee with the US Youth Soccer South Region Board Rep or designee as the Chair. This appeal must be made within two hours of notification of the suspension. Judgement decisions of the referee may not be protested or appealed.

1.4 Protests

All questions relating to the qualifications of the competitors to interpretation of eligibility and/or the rules, or any dispute or protest shall be referred to the Southern Regional Tournament Committee (SRTC). **Judgement decisions of the referees may not be protested.**

A Validity

To be valid and eligible for consideration each protest:

1) must be orally lodged by a Team official listed on the Team Roster involved in the game with the referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play or leaving the game site, except as provided in Section (B) **Timing**; and

2) must be filed with the Southern Regional Program Manager within two (2) hours after the completion of the game being protested, accompanied by—

(a) A fee in the amount of $300. This fee may be in cash, cashier's check, or money order. Personal checks will not be accepted. Cashier's check or money orders must be made payable to US Youth Soccer South Region.

(b) Three (3) written copies of the protest, which must include full particulars of the grounds on which the protest is lodged; and

(c) Three (3) written copies of any information to be presented by witnesses.

Any protests relating to the ground, goal posts, bars or other appurtenances of the games shall be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the referee and the opposing coach prior to the start of the game.

The Protest Administrator of the Committee with which the protest is properly lodged shall immediately on receipt of the protest notify the Team against which the protest is made and shall send a copy of the protest and all particulars to that Team, which will then have the right to defend its case, with or without witnesses.

B Timing

1. Game situations
   Notification of protest must be received by the South Region Program Manager or his/her or designee within two hours of the completion of the game being protested.
2. Non-game situations
   Notification of protest must be received by the South Region Program Manager or his/her or designee within two hours of completion of the last game in the bracket or division in question, whichever is latest.

C Procedures

The committee shall immediately upon the receipt of a protest notify the team's State Representative against which the protest is made and who shall give a copy of the protest and all particulars to that team, which will then have the right to defend its case, with or without witnesses. A written response must be made within 2 hours of notification.

A plea of ignorance to the rules and policies of the US Youth National Championship Series and/or the US Youth Soccer Southern Regional Championships is not sufficient grounds for protest. Judgment decisions of the referee are not subject to protest.

The committee shall compile the necessary information to hear the protest from all available sources before the protest is heard. This shall include, but not be limited to, coaches, field marshals, referees, assessors, witnesses, if necessary, etc. All materials will be treated with confidentiality.

A lawyer shall not represent a team at the hearing of a protest unless the lawyer is listed on the team's roster as a coach, assistant coach, or team manager.

After compiling the necessary information, the committee will meet to conduct the protest hearing. The decisions of the committee shall be binding on all parties.

The Southern Regional Protest Committee will notify the State Representative, who will notify their respective parties of the committee's decision.

1.5 APPEALS

The decisions of the Tournament Committee and the Tournament Protest Committee may be appealed to the Tournament Appeals Committee. The appellant shall bear the burden of showing that the decision being appealed is clearly erroneous. No new evidence may be presented to the Appeals Committee unless circumstances have materially changed, or new facts are discovered that were unavailable at the time of the original hearing.

1. An appeal must be filed in writing with the Chairman of the Appeals Committee or their representative within two hours of notification of the Conduct or Protest Committees decision and include:
   - **A fee in the amount of $500. This fee may be in cash, cashier's check, or money order. Personal checks will not be accepted. Cashiers' checks and money orders must be payable to US Youth Soccer South Region.**

2. Ignorance
   - **A plea of ignorance to the rules of the competition is not sufficient grounds for appeals or protests.**

3. Judgment decisions
   - **Judgment decisions of the referees are not subject to appeal or protest.**

1.6 LAWS OF THE GAME

Except as otherwise provided herein, the rules of US Youth Soccer and IFAB Laws of the Game shall apply.

Concussion Procedure and Protocol for US Youth Soccer Events

Concussion: a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. Medically, a concussion is a complex, pathophysiological event to the brain that is induced by trauma which may or may not involve a loss of consciousness (LOC). Concussion results in a constellation of physical, cognitive, emotional, and sleep-related symptoms. Signs or symptoms may last from several minutes to days, weeks, months or even longer in some cases.

CONCUSSION SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, AND MANAGEMENT AT TRAINING AND COMPETITIONS

Step 1:

Did a concussion occur?

Evaluate the player and note if any of the following signs and/or symptoms are present:

(1) Dazed look or confusion about what happened.
(2) Memory difficulties.
(3) Neck pain, headaches, nausea, vomiting, double vision, blurriness, ringing noise or sensitive to sounds.
(4) Short attention span. Can't keep focused.
(5) Slow reaction time, slurred speech, bodily movements are lagging, fatigue, and slowly answers questions or has difficulty answering questions.
(6) Abnormal physical and/or mental behavior.
(7) Coordination skills are behind, ex: balancing, dizziness, clumsiness, reaction time.

Step 2:

Is emergency treatment needed?

This would include the following scenarios:

(1) Spine or neck injury or pain.
(2) Behavior patterns change, unable to recognize people/places, less responsive than usual.
(3) Loss of consciousness.
(4) Headaches that worsen
(5) Seizures
(6) Very drowsy, can't be awakened
(7) Repeated vomiting
(8) Increasing confusion or irritability
(9) Weakness, numbness in arms and legs

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Step 3:

If a possible concussion occurred, but no emergency treatment is needed, what should be done now?

Focus on these areas every 5-10 min for the next 1 - 2 hours, without returning to any activities:

(1) Balance, movement.
(2) Speech.
(3) Memory, instructions, and responses.
(4) Attention on topics, details, confusion, ability to concentrate.
(5) State of consciousness
(6) Mood, behavior, and personality
(7) Headache or "pressure" in head
(8) Nausea or vomiting
(9) Sensitivity to light and noise

Step4:

A player diagnosed with a possible concussion may return to US Youth Soccer play only after release from a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy specializing in concussion treatment and management.

Step 5:

If there is a possibility of a concussion, do the following:

(1) The attached Concussion Notification Form is to be filled out in duplicate and signed by a team official of the player's team.
(2) If the player is able to do so, have the player sign and date the Form. If the player is not able to sign, note on the player's signature line "unavailable".
(3) If a parent/legal guardian of the player is present, have the parent/legal guardian sign and date the Form, and give the parent/legal guardian one of the copies of the completed Form. If the parent/legal guardian is not present, then the team official is responsible for notifying the parent/legal guardian ASAP by phone or email and then submitting the Form to the parent/legal guardian by email or mail. When the parent/legal guardian is not present, the team official must make a record of how and when the parent/legal guardian was notified. The notification will include a request for the parent/legal guardian to provide confirmation and completion of the Concussion Notification Form whether in writing or electronically.
(4) Player Pass
    (a) In league play. The team official must also obtain the player's pass from the referee and attach it to the copy of the Form retained by the team.

    (b) In tournament play, including, but not limited to, Regional and National Tournament play in the US Youth Soccer National Championships and President's Cup. The tournament committee will obtain the player's pass and keep it until a proper medical release relating to the injured player is received by the committee.

References:

Kissick MD, James and Karen M. Johnston MD, PhD. "Return to Play After Concussion." Collegiate Sports Medical Foundation. Volume 15, Number 6, November 2005. http://www.csmfoundation.org/Kissick_-_return_to_play_after_concussion_-_CJSM_2005.pdf. April 22, 2011.

National Federation of State High School Associations. "Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports". 2008 NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook (Third Edition). 2008 77-82. http://www.nfhs.org. April 21, 2011.

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