



Minnesota Youth Soccer Association

Minnesota State Cup Rules

1. Introduction

The following rules govern the Minnesota Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) requirements for the operation and administration of the US Youth Soccer Minnesota State Cup Championships (Minnesota State Cup). Additional requirements for the Midwest Regional Championships and the US Youth Soccer National Championships can be found in the respective rules for those competitions and are binding on all teams participating in the Minnesota State Cup. Those rules can be found on the respective website for each event:

<https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/midwest-regional-championships/>

<https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/national-championship-series/>

2. Team Eligibility

- a. **Generally:** The Minnesota State Cup shall be open to any team whose players are registered with MYSA so long as the team meets the following requirements:
 - i. The team is comprised of players that are properly registered and rostered to an MYSA team through an MYSA affiliated club;
 - ii. The team is in good standing with the MYSA;
 - iii. The team must compete in an approved league during the current seasonal year. The league must be organized through the MYSA or US Youth Soccer National League, or a USSF affiliate with MYSA's permission. This requirement applies to all teams except for 19U teams. The league competition must consist of a minimum of one game against each of 3 different teams participating in the league. Whether participation in any amateur league shall qualify a youth team for Minnesota State Cup competition under this policy shall be determined by MYSA; and
 - iv. The team must demonstrate continuity of rosters by maintaining a minimum of 11 players common to its league and Minnesota State Cup rosters.
- b. **Age Group Limitations:** A team may have on its team roster only players of the following age groups for the seasonal year in which the team is participating:
 - i. For team competition in the 13U through 15U groups, each player on the teams must be (A) of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year, or (B) of the age in either of the next 2 younger age groups of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year.
 - ii. For the teams competing in the 16U through 19U age groups, each player on the team must be (A) of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year, or (B) of the age of any younger age group, through the 14U age group, of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year.
- c. **Player Transfer Limitations:** a team may not have on its team roster more than 5 players who were previously rostered during the current seasonal year with a club other than the club of which the team is a member.



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3. Player Eligibility

- a. **Generally:** Players must be registered to MYSA and have a valid Member Pass per MYSA Rules.
- b. A player may be on the State Cup roster of only one team during the entirety of the State Cup competition during the current seasonal year.
- c. **Residency:** In accordance with MYSA Rules, a player must reside and attend school in Minnesota for six months prior to the beginning of the playing season. The MYSA may make exceptions to the above state residency requirement on a case-by-case basis.
 - i. Players that transfer from another state must obtain a release from any State Association in which they have registered during the current seasonal year.
 - ii. Players may only play in one State Cup competition in the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series per year. A player's home state association may be contacted to verify that the player has not participated in that state's competition and is therefore eligible to participate in the Minnesota State Cup.
 - iii. Any youth player wishing to play on a team of a member of a State Association other than the State Association where the player is registered, must receive written permission from—
 1. the State Association where the player is registered; and
 2. the State Association of the team on which the player wishes to play.
 3. Permission must be obtained each seasonal year.
- d. **Proof-of-Age:** a valid proof-of-age document must be submitted for all players. This proof-of-age document will be reviewed and verified by the MYSA.
 - i. Only those proof-of-age documents per US Youth Soccer Rule 204, PROOF-OF-AGE will be accepted. If a player has had a legal name change from the name on the birth certificate, then copies of appropriate documentation must also be provided. Proof-of-age documents written in a foreign language must have a certified English translation attached.
 - ii. If a challenge to any player's age arises, the player's team must provide an original proof-of-age document within 24 hours of request for review by the MYSA. The player whose age is being challenged will not be allowed to play until the player's age has been verified by the MYSA.
 - iii. Teams must post a \$100 bond to challenge an opposing player's age. This bond is non-refundable if the player's age is verified as correct by the MYSA.
- e. **Use of Ineligible Players**



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6. Seeding: MYSA will seed teams into brackets with the goal of facilitating a fair competition. Notwithstanding the criteria listed below, MYSA may also use other factors to seed teams in certain rare circumstances to further this goal.

Subject to the sole discretion of MYSA, the following criteria will be used to seed teams:

- a. Previous Year's State Cup Finalists
- b. Current National League P.R.O. Teams
- c. Current Premier I teams using past results
- d. Random Draw

7. Format:

- a. **Generally:** The format for each age group is dependent on the number of teams that register, and could include play-in games, group-play and single elimination games or any combination thereof. Group-play will be limited to 12 teams per age group. MYSA has discretion to decrease the number of group-play teams and to decide which teams are seeded into group-play. There is no guarantee on the number of games a team will play.
- b. **Play-in Games:** In age groups where nine or more teams register or where an odd number of teams register, play-in games may be conducted. Teams who are not seeded directly into group-play will be given the opportunity to qualify through a single-elimination play-in game(s).
- c. **Group-Play and Standings:** Teams will be seeded into groups and play a round-robin format within their group. To determine standings, the following criteria will be used in sequence:
 - i. Highest number of points
 1. Three points for a win or a game forfeited to them
 2. One point for a tie
 3. No points for a loss.
 - ii. Winner of head-to-head competition (unless more than two teams are tied)
 - iii. Winner of most games
 - iv. Goal differential (goals scored minus goals against, with a maximum of four (4) goal differential per game)
 - v. Fewest goals allowed
 - vi. IFAB "Kicks from the Penalty Mark" (following the last round-robin game or at least 60 minutes prior to the scheduled elimination round game)
- d. **Advancement to Elimination Rounds:** The highest finishing team in each group based on standings will advance to the elimination rounds. Additional elimination round berths (wildcards) will be awarded to the highest finishing second place team(s) based on the criteria above. Detailed formats (based on the total number of teams in the tournament) and how teams advance to elimination rounds can be found on page 11 of this manual.



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- e. **Elimination Round Procedure:** Elimination round games (play-in, semi-final or championship game, and single-elimination format cups) must have a winner.
 - i. Knockout Round matches, will proceed directly to Penalty Kicks if tied, with no Extra Time played in order to determine a winner.
- f. **Semifinal Games:** The semifinal games will be scheduled as follows:
 - i. 2 Groups
 - 1. Winner of Group A will play the Second Place team of Group B
 - 2. Winner of Group B will play the Second Place team of Group A
 - ii. 3 Groups
 - 1. Winner of Group A will play the Wildcard
 - 2. Winner of Group B will play the Winner of Group C
 - 3. If the Wildcard comes out of Group A the following schedule will be followed:
 - a. Winner of Group A will play the Winner of Group C
 - b. Winner of Group B will play the Wildcard

8. The Technical Area:

- a. The technical area will be marked on all fields.
- b. The only individuals who may occupy the technical area are individuals listed on the official roster with a member pass.
 - i. Players: Players that are on the official roster, but not on the designated game roster may be in the technical area so long as they are not dressed for the game. Game rostered players in the technical area must wear a pinnie, warm up suit, or unique shirt different from the uniform of players on the field until they enter the field of play. Game rostered players in the technical area must be wearing the same item
 - ii. Team Officials: There may only be four team officials in the technical area per game, regardless of the number of team officials listed on the official roster.
- c. Players must remain in the technical area at all times except when a game rostered player wishes to warm up. Players are allowed to warm up along their half of the touchline but are not allowed to use a ball anywhere along the touchline.
- d. Team officials must remain in the technical area at all times except in special circumstances (for example, a coach or trainer entering the field of play, with the referee's permission, to assess an injured player).
- e. Only one person at a time is authorized to convey tactical instructions and must return to their position after giving these instructions.

9. Control of Sideline

- a. The MYSA will designate one sideline for the sole use of the teams with one team on one side of the midfield line and one team on the other side of the midfield line. Only team players and team officials are allowed on the team side of the field, and must remain on the team side of the field.



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- b. The MYSA will designate the opposite sideline for the sole use of spectators. Spectators must remain on the spectator side of the field or the game will not start or continue if already started. Spectators must remain at least eight feet from the touchline. Only field marshals and/or tournament officials are allowed to stand behind the goal or goal line.
- c. The MYSA will designate areas on the team side of the field for the use of college coaches. Spectators, players and team managers are not allowed in this area. Coaches will be allowed to talk to college coaches in this area but must vacate that area once discussions are complete.
- d. All spectators, shall be subject to the authority of the MYSA. The team officials shall be held responsible for the actions of any individual at any match that, in the opinion of the referee or the MYSA, is a supporter of that team. It is assumed that players, team officials, and spectators will conduct themselves within the letter and the spirit of the game. The MYSA has the authority and responsibility to remove any person(s) from the tournament for abusive or unsportsmanlike behavior.

10. Scheduling, Unfinished games, and Forfeited Games

- a. **Schedules:** MYSA reserves the right to alter game schedules to accommodate changed circumstances or weather-related incidents. Schedules could be altered in the following ways: moving the date of the game, moving the time of the game, modifying the duration of the game, modifying the overtime procedure of a game. MYSA reserves the make any changes to best serve the interests of the tournament as a whole.
- b. **Complete Games:**
 - i. **Group-Play:** A game will be considered complete if play has begun in the second half, and neither team is at fault for the discontinuance of the game.
 - ii. **Elimination Rounds:** A game will be considered complete if a winner has been declared.
- c. **Unfinished Games:**
 - i. Unfinished games due to any cause shall be replayed providing the following conditions are met.
 - a. Neither team is at fault
 - b. Play has not begun in the second half
 - ii. If the score is tied then the game will resume with IFAB Kicks from the Mark unless one team is adjudged to be at fault.
 - iii. Should play be stopped due to one of the teams being adjudged to be at fault, the MYSA, at their discretion, will decide whether the game is to be replayed, declared a forfeit, or resumed as IFAB Kicks from the Mark.
- d. **Forfeits**
 - i. **Result of Forfeit:** In the result of a forfeit, the opposing team will be awarded 3 points, and the score will be reported as 4 - 0.



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ii. **Grace Period:** A ten-minute grace period shall be extended beyond the scheduled game time, if seven players are not available to start the game at the scheduled time.

1. A team of seven players must start the game as soon as seven players are at the field after the originally scheduled game time.
2. At the end of the ten-minute grace period, if the required seven players are not in attendance, the game will be considered a forfeit.

iii. **Forfeits or Failure to Compete**

1. Forfeits or failure to compete in any game during State Cup by a team or club shall be a matter for review by the MYSA which shall have the authority to take such action against the team or club as it deems appropriate.
2. Any team forfeiting a game in the US Youth Soccer Minnesota State Cup may be fined up to \$500 per game. Fines are assessed against the member soccer club. All forfeited games will be posted as a 4-0 loss. In addition to the financial fines, all games for that year's state cup may be recorded as a forfeit, and the club may not be allowed to field a team in the US Youth Soccer Minnesota State Cup in the appropriate age group the team would be in the following year. If the team (team is defined as a minimum of 50% of the players) moves to a different club, they may not be eligible to participate in the following year's US Youth Soccer Minnesota State Cup.
3. Teams forfeiting a game during group play will not be eligible for advancement to the knockout rounds.
4. Any team that advances to Midwest Regional or National Championships has an obligation to participate in that competition. A team that withdraws from the competition within 60-15 days prior to the start date shall be fined \$3,000.00. A team that withdraws within 14 days prior to the start date shall be fined \$5,000.00. Further sanctions, including denial of eligibility of team or club to compete in the following year's State Cup may be levied against them. The State Cup runner-up will be asked to be the State's Representative at the Midwest Regional Championships
5. Any team that advances to Midwest Regional or National Championships has an obligation to stay in the accommodations assigned to them by the tournament. Teams failing to stay in the assigned accommodations, for any reason, shall be fined \$2,000.

11. Laws of the Game: IFAB "Laws of the Game" shall apply to all games played during the Minnesota State Cup, except as specifically modified by USSF, MYSA, and US Youth Soccer National Championship Rules. Specific modifications for Minnesota State Cup play are enumerated below.



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- a. LAW 3 - THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS
 - i. Limited Substitution Policy:
 - 1. For the Under 13 & 14 age groups, **Unlimited** substitutions over **three moments** per **half** plus halftime.
 - 2. For Under 15 – Under 19, **Unlimited** substitutions over **four moments** per **match** plus halftime.
 - ii. Substitutions can occur at any stoppage with the referee's approval. Re-entry is permitted at designated substitution points or at any time during play if the referee permits.
 - iii. Substitutes for Suspected Head Injuries: If a player is suspected of suffering a head injury, they may be temporarily replaced so they can be evaluated by a qualified health professional. The temporary substitute does not count toward the team's normal substitution limits.
 - 1. If the player is cleared, they may return to the match, and the temporary substitute player must come off. No substitution is charged to the team.
 - 2. If the player is not cleared and permanently removed, the change becomes a concussion substitution. In that case, both teams receive one additional substitution and the opponent can make one additional substitution for one, singular player.

- b. LAW 4 – UNIFORM
 - i. A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself/herself or another player (including any kind of jewelry).
 - ii. All teams must wear uniforms that conform to acceptable standards for National Championship Series play. Compulsory equipment of a player is:
 - 1. Jersey: an official uniform of an accepted soccer style jersey with a six-inch minimum size permanent number on the back of the shirt. Each number must be different. Numbered jerseys for goalkeepers are optional. The jerseys must have finished sleeve openings and enclosed sides. The goalkeeper must wear colors that distinguish them from other players, the referee, and assistant referees. All teams must have a primary and alternate color jersey (if thermal under garments are worn, they will be the same basic color as the shirts or white or black and all players wearing under garments must wear the same color);
 - 2. Shorts: (if thermal under garments are worn, they will be the same basic color as the shirts or white or black and all players wearing under garments must wear the same color);
 - 3. Stockings: All teams must have a primary and alternate color stockings;
 - 4. Shin guards: must be covered by stockings, made of suitable material, that provide a reasonable degree of protection
 - 5. Footwear; and



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6. Players must wear a shirt during warm ups prior to competition.
 - iii. Players may not decorate their hands, faces, hair, shoes or uniforms.
 - iv. The referee and/or the MYSA may suspend a game or declare a game a forfeit, if the uniforms worn by the team are not acceptable for competition. The team shall be given an opportunity to change uniforms or cure any defects in their equipment.
 - v. Each team must have two (2) uniform sets (one light color and one dark color) at every match of the competition. The home team (listed first in the schedule) is required to wear their light color jersey and light color socks. The away team (listed second in the schedule) is required to wear their dark color jersey and dark color socks. The MYSA shall determine the home team (listed in the first column on the schedule).
 - vi. A player or team official may only have on the outer wear of the player or team official a name, logo, or other identifying mark of a youth soccer organization that is US Youth Soccer, a State Association or an organization that is a member of a State Association. A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any other youth soccer organization must be removed, replaced, or covered before the player or team official may continue to remain at the game site for the game.
- c. LAW 5 - THE REFEREE
- i. All officials must be currently certified.
 - ii. A three-person system (diagonal system of control) will be used in group-play and play-in games.
 - iii. A fourth (4th) official may be scheduled in all semi-final and championship games.
- d. LAW 7 - THE DURATION OF THE MATCH
- i. 13U-14U: two 35-minute halves
 - ii. 15U-16U: two 40-minute halves
 - iii. 17U-19U: two 45-minute halves
 - iv. Completeness and overtime are discussed above.
 - v. The referee is the official timekeeper and sole judge of the amount of time played.
- e. LAW 12 - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT
- i. Minimum 1 game suspension
 1. Sent off by the referee for persisting in misconduct after receiving a first caution. That is, after having received a yellow card, received a second yellow card for one of the following:
 - a. unsporting behavior;
 - b. dissent;
 - c. persistently infringing the Laws of the Game;
 - d. delaying the restart of play;



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- e. failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick;
 - f. entering or reentering the field without the permission of the referee; or,
 - g. deliberately leaving the field without the permission of the referee.
2. Sent off by the referee for denying a goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball
- ii. Minimum 2 game suspension
 1. Sent off by the referee for one of the following:
 - a. guilty of serious foul play;
 - b. guilty of violent conduct;
 - c. spits at an opponent or any other person;
 - d. denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.
 - e. uses offensive, insulting or abusive language.
 - iii. Red card suspensions issued in State Cup must be served in State Cup. If a team advances from State Cup, unserved suspensions will carry forward to the subsequent Regional or National Competition. If a team does not advance from State Cup, unserved suspensions will carry forward to the next State Cup Competition. Red card suspensions may not be served in MYSA League Play; however, egregious behavior may result in suspension from all MYSA activity.

12. Additional Policies & Rules

- a. All teams, team personnel and players must comply with all MYSA Rules and are held to the highest standard of sportsmanship. MYSA will issue sanctions for any violations of MYSA Rules during the Minnesota State Cup, and will investigate issues of unsportsmanlike behavior or misconduct.
- b. All teams must be familiar with Regional and National Championship Series rules.
- c. All teams must be familiar with the MYSA weather policy and how that might affect their schedule.
- d. Minnesota State Cup games shall take precedence over all other youth games.
- e. The MYSA will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by any team due to the cancellation (part or whole) of the Minnesota State Cup.
- f. **Fines:** The following fines will be levied as required:
 - i. Withdrawing from the competition after the seeding has been completed. - \$500.00 and forfeiture of the registration fee.
 - ii. Failure to provide a team official at any Minnesota State Cup Event - \$350.00
 - iii. Forfeiture of a Minnesota State Cup game - \$500.00
 - iv. Failure to clean up the sidelines at a Minnesota State Cup game - \$50.00



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- v. Any fines assessed against MYSA due to failure of a qualifying team to compete in one or more regional or national games shall be assessed against the offending team.

g. Alcohol & Illegal Drugs

- i. This is an alcohol-free and drug-free event.
- ii. This is a tobacco-free event.
- iii. Players in State Competition are prohibited from consuming alcohol or using illegal drugs. Players are also prohibited from using any form of tobacco at the playing site of the Minnesota State Cup. Penalty for violation by player participants is disqualification from the state competition.

- h. **Protests:** All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors or any other dispute or protest shall be referred to the MYSA. Decisions of the MYSA shall be binding on both teams. Any protest must be presented in writing by a team official to MYSA within one hour of the completion of the game under protest. All protests must include a \$100 bond that shall be returned only if the protest is upheld. Any protest involving field conditions or game behavior must be lodged in writing with both the referee and the opposing coach either before (field conditions) or immediately after (game behavior) the game ends. **Protests of referee decisions shall not be a basis for filing a protest.** It is the responsibility of the MYSA to investigate a properly protested violation immediately following its receipt. Failure of any club, team or individual to cooperate with such investigation shall result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

13. Matters Not Provided

- a. In all matters provided or not provided in the MYSA rules and regulations, the decision of the Chief Member Services Officer & MYSA shall be final and binding. The Chief Member Services Officer & MYSA Board Members shall have the power to deal with all violations and/or special circumstances.
- b. The MYSA and the Chief Member Services Officer have the authority to modify any of the rules as deemed necessary to ensure the orderly progression of the event.



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Number of Teams	Format	Seeding
2	teams go directly to finals, no group play	no seeding needed
3	single round robin, top team from group play advances to final, and the bottom two teams of the group advance to a semifinal to play-off for the finals spot.	no seeding needed
4	single round robin, top two teams from group play advance to final	no seeding needed
5	single round robin, top two teams from group play advance to final	no seeding needed
6	two groups of 3 teams each, winner of each group advances to semi-finals, and the bottom two teams of each group advance to quarterfinals to play-off for semi-final spots.	A: 1, 3, 6 B: 2, 4, 5
7	two groups, one of 4 and one of 3, top 2 teams from each group advance to semi-finals	A: 1, 3, 6 B: 2, 4, 5, 7
8	two groups of 4 teams, top 2 teams from each group advance to semi-finals	A: 1, 3, 6, 8 B: 2, 4, 5, 7
9	three groups of 3 teams, top 4 teams advance to semi-finals (group winners and WC)	A: 1, 6, 9 B: 2, 5, 8 C: 3, 4, 7
10	<p>three groups, one of 4 and two of 3, top 4 teams advance to semi-finals (group winners and WC). Group C has 3 games against all other teams of group C. Groups A and B play a round robin against the other members of their own group, and then play a crossover game based on their seeds going into the tournament as follows: A1vB3, A2vB2 and A3vB1.</p> <p>This gives all 10 teams in the group 3 games and the opportunity to acquire the same number of points and comparable tie-breakers. The wild card will be awarded to the highest finishing 2nd place team after group play is complete (including crossover games).</p>	A: 1, 6, 9 B: 2, 5, 8 C: 3, 4, 7, 10