



IOWA STATE CUP

**U13-U19 Iowa State Cup
Rules and Interpretations**

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Please note that rules may be updated/revised at any time. Please make it a point to review the rules prior to the opening weekend of competition for your team.

1001 GENERAL INFORMATION

1001.1 National Championship Series Structure

The Iowa State Cup is the first step of US Youth Soccer's National Championship Series (NCS). The NCS is structured starting at the state level (known as State Cup), then progresses to the Regional level (US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Regional Championships) and concludes at the National level (US Youth Soccer National Championships).

1001.2 Purpose

The primary purpose of the Iowa State Cup is to identify the Level 1 team in each age division that will represent Iowa Soccer at the Region II Championships. The Iowa State Cup is considered the highest level of youth competition in the state and is associated with the only tournament of its kind -- the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series -- that can truly identify youth national champions. The secondary purpose is to provide Iowa Soccer members with meaningful and high-level matches.

1001.2.1 U13-U19 Iowa State Cup Champions will participate in the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Region II Championships, held in late June 2015. U13-U19 Regional Champions will then advance to the US Youth Soccer National Championships in late July.

1001.3 Dates

The Iowa State Cup will be conducted annually, on such dates and at such sites as will be determined by Iowa Soccer. Iowa Soccer will hold the Iowa State Cup in the fall and spring seasons of the same seasonal year. The Under-15 through Under-18 age divisions will hold their competition in the fall season preceding the Region II Championships, and the Under-13, Under-14 and Under-19 age divisions will hold their competition in the following spring season.

1001.3.1 The fall competition shall be referred to as the 2015 Iowa State Cup, Fall 2014 Competition.

1001.3.2 The spring competition shall be referred to as the 2015 Iowa State Cup Spring Competition.

1001.4 Age Groups

The Iowa State Cup accepts teams in the following Boy's and Girl's age groups: U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18, U19.

1001.4.1 Iowa Soccer affiliate clubs may enter more than one team in the same age division. As per the National Championship Series Rules players 1) must be rostered as primary to their State Cup team and 2) may play for only one team at State Cup.

- If multiple teams from the same club enter an age division they do so with the understanding that the teams **may not** share players.

The expectations for multiple club entries in the same age group are:

- Each team entered must be able to field at least 11 players on all play dates.
- Multiple entries in the competition must further the objective for more meaningful matches
- Team and/or club officials from that club will not engage in any actions that invite allegations of match-fixing or collusion between them, or independent of them, such that it benefitted the other team(s) from that club in that age group.

1001.5 Jurisdiction

All teams submitting an entry to compete in the Iowa State Cup thereby agree to abide by and accept the jurisdiction of the bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of the Iowa State Cup, the Iowa Soccer Association, US Youth Soccer, US Youth Soccer's National Championship Series, US Soccer and FIFA. No official, coach, club, referee, player, team or their representatives may invoke the aid of the Courts without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate affiliated soccer organizations noted above.

1001.6 Precedence of Games

Iowa State Cup competitions will take precedence over all other Iowa Soccer Association youth games.

1001.7 Communications

All questions and communications regarding the Iowa State Cup are to be between a team official (Club Director of Coaching, team coach, team coordinator) and the Iowa State Cup Director.

1001.8 Alcohol, Tobacco

Alcohol and/or tobacco products in any form will not be allowed on any playing field or areas adjacent to playing areas.

1002 ENTRY, FEES and ELIGIBILITY

1002.1 Full Entry and Provisional Entry Status; Team Entry and Advancement Fees

Each team wishing to enter the Iowa State Cup will deliver its entry and non-refundable entry fee in a format determined by Iowa Soccer, on or before the entry deadline. Iowa State Cup fees include a team entry fee and its corresponding online convenience fee, and advancement fees to Semifinals and Finals. Entry and convenience fees are paid at the time of team entry. Advancement fee is paid if your team advances to the semifinals and/or the final. Advancement fees must be paid for teams to advance.

1002.1.1 *Late entries will not be accepted.*

1002.1.2 The entry fee and associated fees are non-refundable.

1002.1.3 Provisional Entry, Commitment Bond, Full Entry

Teams from the same club entered in the same age group will be considered “provisionally entered” and their entry incomplete. In order to be accepted into State Cup, all provisionally entered teams must submit a \$600 Commitment Bond in the form of a check by a date that is no later than three days after the close of State Cup entry. For each team whose Bond is not received by the deadline, it will not be accepted into State Cup.

The Commitment Bond will be returned to the team after the conclusion of the Iowa State Cup if the following is met:

- The team fields at least 11 players at all State Cup matches
- Team officials’ actions and coaching decisions were not called into question with respect to collusion or match-fixing.

1002.2 Team Eligibility Requirements

Final determination of having met eligibility requirements will be made by Iowa Soccer. They are as follows:

Section 1 Requirements

1002.2.1 The team must be comprised of properly Iowa Soccer-registered and rostered youth players (as defined by US Youth Soccer) who are registered as primary to the State Cup team.

1002.2.2 The team must be in good standing with Iowa Soccer and must be in compliance with, and has not violated, any of the bylaws and policies of US Youth Soccer.

1002.2.3 At least 50% of the players on the team must be registered in Iowa.

1002.2.4 The team must compete in at least a 4-team approved league during the current seasonal year in its State Association, US Youth Soccer Regional League or US Youth Soccer National League, or with its State Association’s permission in another State Association, except for the U19 age group for boys and girls. The league competition must consist of a minimum of one game against each of three different teams participating in the league. Whether participation in any amateur league shall qualify a youth team for Championship competition under this policy shall be determined by Iowa Soccer.

1002.2.5 A team must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the league and every level of the National Championships competitions by maintaining a minimum of nine players

common to the roster of the team at every level of the National Championship Series (state, regional, national).

1002.2.6 A team may compete in only one age group of the National Championships competition during the seasonal year.

Section 2 Rostering and the Club Pass Rule

1002.2.7 Primary Roster Status. All players must be rostered as Primary to the Iowa State Cup Team Roster.

1002.2.8 Guest Players. Guest player allowances do not apply to Iowa State Cup or National Championship Series (NCS) rostering allowances.

1002.2.9 Tournament Team. Tournament team rosters do not apply to the Iowa State Cup or NCS rostering allowance.

1002.2.10 A club may issue a "Club Pass" to any youth player who is a registered youth player of the club before the team to which such youth player is to be rostered for the State Cup level of the National Championships competitions submits its National Championships roster for its first competition at the State Association level (the Iowa State Cup).

1002.2.11 Only at the Iowa State Cup level of the National Championships competition (but not at the Regional and National levels of the competitions)

1002.2.11.1 A team may roster any player not having a club pass of that team's club if a written request, stating the reason why this action has been requested, has been made to and approved by Iowa Soccer on a form provided by Iowa Soccer; and

1002.2.11.2 At the time a team's National Championship Series roster for the Iowa State Cup level is determined under this rule, the team may not have more than five rostered youth who were previously rostered (a.k.a transfer players) during the current seasonal year with a club other than the club of which the team is a member. The rostering of such youth players with such club shall be made in compliance with the rules of Iowa Soccer.

1002.2.12 Iowa Soccer is not required to consider as a rostered player a player on a school team when Iowa Soccer administers school programs.

1002.2.13 In addition to the application of the Club Pass provisions of the policy, a team participating in the National Championship Series may release involuntarily a player from its roster if the player has violated bylaws, policies or requirements of US Soccer, US Youth Soccer, Iowa Soccer, or the club through whom the player is registered.

1002.2.14 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 in the National Championship Series

1002.2.14.1 For teams competing in the U14 and U15 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 in either of the next two younger age groups of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year.

1002.2.14.2 For teams competing in the U16, U17, U18 and U19 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 U14 age group, of that age group competition in which that team is participating in that seasonal year.

Section 3 Rosters Defined: “Team”, “National Championships”, “Game”

1002.2.15 Every team in the National Championship Series shall have a *Team Roster*, a *National Championships Roster* and a *Game Roster* for every match or competition. The following is as they are defined for the Iowa State Cup level.

1002.2.15.1 *Team Roster*

A *Team Roster* shall have a minimum of 9 registered players on its roster at all times. The *Team Roster* may have up to 22 youth players on it. It will be approved by Iowa Soccer and is available to you from your Club Registrar. By the roster freeze date, all players who intend to play with the team at the Iowa State Cup must be rostered as primary to this *Team Roster*. This roster will be submitted as part of the “Final Paperwork” requirement. The Final Paperwork deadline also serves as the Roster Freeze Date.

1002.2.15.2 *National Championship Roster*

At the Iowa State Cup, a team will have a *National Championship Roster*, which is based upon its *Team Roster*. Iowa Soccer will provide to each team coordinator the form which must be completed and submitted and which will be known as the *National Championship Roster*. As per the *Team Roster* size allowance of 22, the *National Championship Roster* may have up to 22 youth players on it. This roster will be submitted as part of the “Final Paperwork” requirement.

1002.2.15.3 *Game Roster*

The *Game Roster* is used for each match at the Iowa State Cup and is submitted by the team coach to the referee crew prior to each match. The *Game Roster* is a photocopy of your *National Championship Roster*. Its purpose is to track those who are participating in a given match and to designate the “active” players, or in other words, the up to 18 players who could play for the team in a given match. The *Game Roster* shall have a maximum of 18 “active” players and a minimum of seven “active” players. Every player listed on the *Game Roster* must be first included on the *Team Roster* and the *National Championship Roster* to be eligible to participate with the team in the Iowa State Cup.

1002.2.15.3.1 For the purposes of making sure you have them for your games, the team coordinator is required to present the requisite number of *Game Rosters* at Team Check-in. After presenting them, the team coordinator should give them to the team coach who must submit to each referee crew prior to each match.

Section 4 Eligibility Forfeits

A team shall forfeit each game of the team in which

1002.2.16 An unregistered player was with the team at the game in a uniform

1002.2.17 A player was improperly entered on a *Team*, *National Championships* or *Game Roster*.

1002.2.18 The team no longer has a recognized team official on the team bench during a match

Section 5 Benefits/Use of Club Pass Rule

The Club pass rule applies from one level of the National Championship Series to the next level. In other words, from the Iowa State Cup level to the Regional Championships; then from the Regional Championships level to the National Championships.

1002.2.19 At the Regional and National levels of the National Championships competitions, a team of a club may have on its *National Championship Roster* an eligible player of that club

who was not on the team's National Championship Roster at the prior level of the team's National Championships competition.

1002.2.20 A player may be rostered to only one team's National Championships roster at each level of the National Championships competitions during the seasonal year.

1002.3 Good Standing Requirement

Teams and affiliates must be in "good standing" with Iowa Soccer

1002.3.1 The club or affiliate of any team whose fees are returned for insufficient funds may be determined by Iowa Soccer to not be in "Good Standing" with Iowa Soccer.

1002.3.2 A club or affiliate whose team has unpaid fines from prior years' Iowa State Cup, the Iowa Soccer League (ISL) or US Youth Soccer Midwest Region or National League competition may be determined by Iowa Soccer to not be in "Good Standing" with Iowa Soccer.

1002.3.3 The club or affiliate of any team who submits inaccurate information to support its entry in the Iowa State Cup may be determined by Iowa Soccer to not be in "Good Standing" with Iowa Soccer.

1002.4 Player Eligibility Requirements

Final determination of having met eligibility requirements will be made by Iowa Soccer. They are as follows:

Section 1 Primary and Properly Rostered

1002.4.1 All players must be properly registered, added or released to a team and rostered in accordance with the rules and policies of US Youth Soccer and Iowa Soccer and must be rostered "Primary" to the Iowa State Cup team roster.

Section 2 US Youth Soccer's Club Pass Specifications

1002.4.2 A youth player may be on the Team and National Championship Rosters of only one team at each of the three levels of the National Championship Series during any seasonal year. The first Team and National Championship Roster of a team to which the player is rostered is the only team with which the player may participate in at each level of the National Championships competitions for a seasonal year, except as noted below for the Regional and National levels:

1002.4.2.1 Provided that a youth player was rostered to a team of a club at the time of the State Cup competition and had been issued a club pass of that club, and provided that team does not advance to the next level of the National Championship Series, the player may be rostered to another team of that same club at the next level of the National Championship Series.

1002.4.2.2 Subject to the foregoing, and subject to the provisions of US Youth's Rule 221, Section 1 (5), which is the same as Iowa State Cup Rule 1002.2.1-1002.2.6, at each level of the National Championships competitions, a team may add to its National Championship roster for that level as many registered youth players holding club passes of that club of which a team is a member as the team or its club determines so long as the roster does not exceed 22 players. A team may not change the club of which it is a member at any time after the commencement of the National Championship competitions, beginning at the state level, and in any event only in compliance with the rules of the State Association of which the club is a member.

Section 3 Player Information Requirements for the Team Coordinator

1002.4.3 Each player must submit to the team coordinator a completed Medical Release Form. *No longer is there a requirement these forms be notarized.*

1002.4.4 Each player must submit to the team coordinator an acceptable proof of age. Acceptable proof of age will consist of a birth certificate, a Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card (DD Form 1173) issued by the uniformed services of the United States, birth registration issued by an appropriate government agency, board of health records, driver's license, passport, alien registration card issued by the

United States government, or a certificate of an American citizen born abroad issued by the appropriate government agency. *Hospital, baptismal or other religious certificates will not be accepted.*

1003 PAPERWORK REQUIREMENTS

1003.1 Final Paperwork Requirements

In addition to team entry and payment of fees by the entry deadline, supplemental materials are required. The supplemental materials are known as the: Team Roster, Verification of Eligibility Form and National Championships Roster. The materials must be received in the Iowa Soccer office by the “Final Paperwork Deadline.” As of this deadline, all rosters will be frozen (a.k.a. the roster freeze date/frozen rosters). The date will be up to two weeks prior to the opening date of Iowa State Cup play. Late materials are subject to a \$100 fine. All materials may be submitted via email, by snail mail, or dropped off at the Iowa Soccer office.

1003.1.1 Team Roster (the one approved by Iowa Soccer and obtained from your club registrar)

Each coordinator is required to submit its Team Roster (see 1002.2.15.1); players are frozen to this roster as of the Final Paperwork date and time (i.e. player changes are no longer allowed for State Cup). These Iowa Soccer-approved rosters must reflect that any transfer players, up to five, have been officially rostered to the team. This roster is available from your club registrar as a .pdf file and includes the “Iowa Soccer-approved” stamp. While players are frozen on this date, coaches are not and may be modified as needed.

1003.1.2 Verification of Eligibility Form

Each coordinator is required to submit the Verification of Eligibility Form. Final determination of having met eligibility requirements will be made by Iowa Soccer. Contact the State Cup Director if you are in doubt about eligibility. The form is available on the Iowa State Cup webpage.

1003.1.2.1 If it is determined that an ineligible player or coach participates in an Iowa State Cup match, the match will be forfeited.

1003.1.2.2 Any team found guilty of knowingly using an ineligible player will not be eligible to compete further in the Iowa State Cup or subsequent levels of the National Championship Series (NCS) in the current seasonal year.

1003.1.2.3 Any coach, team coordinator or team/club official found guilty of knowingly using an ineligible player will be prohibited from competing further in the Iowa State Cup and the NCS in the current and subsequent seasonal year.

1003.1.2.4 Any player found guilty of knowingly playing as an ineligible player will be prohibited from competing further in the Iowa State Cup and the NCS in the current and subsequent seasonal year.

1003.1.2.5 Any coach, team coordinator, team/club official, and/or player found guilty of knowingly submitting falsified birth information or knowingly falsifying information on the Verification of Eligibility Form will be prohibited from competing further in the Iowa State Cup and the NCS in the current and subsequent seasonal year.

1003.1.3 National Championship Roster

Each coordinator is required to submit a National Championship Roster (see 1002.2.15.2). The form is available on the Iowa State Cup webpage.

1003.1.3.1 Prior to submitting the National Championship Roster with your final paperwork, make as many copies of it as games your team could play. The copies then constitute the “Game Roster” (as per 1002.2.15.3). The team coordinator should retain these copies to show at team check-in and then use as noted in 3002.1.

1004 TEAM WITHDRAWAL AND FORFEITS

1004.1 Withdrawal

Team officials/coaches should only enter a team into the Iowa State Cup knowing it will be able to field at least 11 players on all competition dates. If for any reason a team withdraws from the Iowa State Cup, it is subject to a fine of up to \$500. A notice of withdrawal, stating the reason, must be given to the State Cup Director in writing (e-mail is acceptable). As per 1002.1.2, the entry fee is non-refundable.

1004.2 Forfeits

Teams that forfeit an Iowa State Cup match for any reason whatsoever will not be allowed to advance. Forfeits will result in having the team fined up to \$500, with the team and/or its club also subject to additional sanctions. As per 1002.1.2, the entry fee is non-refundable. Any team proven guilty of violating any of the rules of the Iowa State Cup, the Iowa Soccer Association, US Youth Soccer, US Youth Soccer's National Championship Series, US Soccer and/or FIFA will forfeit all matches.

1004.2.1 Failure of a team official to give notice to the State Cup Director of intention to forfeit may result in additional penalties or sanctions levied against the team and/or its club.

1004.2.2 The score awarded to a team winning team as a result of a forfeit is 4-0.

2001 COMPETITION FORMAT and PARTICULARS

As per US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Rule 202, Section 1 (b), the format for the competitions at the State Association level to determine teams representing the State Association shall be a *tournament format* established by the State Association. League competition may not be considered a tournament format.

2001.1 Format

NOTE: U15-U19 age groups will play only one match per day unless extenuating circumstances require otherwise.

<i>Note that age group differences are due to more play dates for U15-U18, which accommodate more group sizes.</i>			
Group size	Age Group Applies to	Groups, Games, Advancement	Seeding & What Seed Means
1	All	No games Team declared Champion	None
2	All	Group of two, single elimination Winner is Champion	None
3	All	Group of 3, single elimination, two games. #1 seed gets bye	1
4	All	Group of 4, group play. Top two point-getters advance to the Final.	1-2
5	U13-U14, U19	Qualification Match to get to a Group of 4.	1-5 #4 and #5 placed in Qualification Match.
5	U15-U18	Group of 5, group play. Top two point-getters within the group advance to Final.	1-5 <i>If scheduling allows, seed #5 will be scheduled to play the first four consecutive play dates. Last group game for remaining teams played on weekend three; Final played on weekend three.</i>

6	All	Group of 6: two groups of 3, group play with cross-bracket matches. Top two point-getters in each group advance to Semifinals. Winners advance to Final. Winner Group A v Runner-up Group B Winner Group B v Runner-up Group A	1-6 Group A: #1, #4, #6 (or QM Winner) A1 = #1, A2 = #4, A3 = #6/QM Winner Group B: #2, #3, #5 B1 = #5, B2 = #3, B3 = #2 <i>For U15-U18: If schedule allows, one group game on weekend one; two group games on weekend two. Semifinal and Final on weekend three.</i>
7	All	Qualification Match to get to a Group of 6.	1-7 #6 and #7 placed in Qualification Match.
8	All	Group of 8: two groups of 4, group play. Top two point-getters in each group advance to Semifinals. Winners advance to Final. Winner Group A v Runner-up Group B Winner Group B v Runner-up Group A	1-4 #1 and #4 placed in Group A #2 and #3 placed in Group B
9	All	Qualification Match to get to a Group of 8.	1-4, 8 and 9 #8 and #9 placed in Qualification Match
10	U13-U14, U19	Two Qualification Matches to get to a Group of 8.	1-4, 7-10 #7, #8, #9 and #10 will be placed in Qualification Matches (#7 v #10, #8 v #9).
10	U15-U18	Group of 10: one group of 4, two groups of 3, group play. Group of 4 plays within bracket; Groups of three group play with cross-bracket matches (as in a Group of 6). Top point-getter from each group plus a Wildcard advance to Semifinals. Winners advance to Final. <i>Wildcard team is next top point-getter after the Group winners.</i> Winner Group A v Winner Group B Winner Group C v Wildcard <i>If Wildcard comes from Group C then</i> Winner Group A v Winner Group C Winner Group B v Wildcard	1-10 Group A: #3, #4, #7, #8 A1 = #3, A2 = #4, A3 = #7, A4 = #8 Group B: #2, #5, #9 B1 = #9, B2 = #2, B3 = #5 Group C: #1, #6, #10 (or QM Winner) C1 = #1, C2 = #10/QM Winner, C3 = #6
11	U13-U14, U19	Three Qualification Matches to get to a Group of 8.	1-4, 6-11 #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 and #11 will be placed in Qualification Matches (#6 v #11, #7 v #10, #8 v #9)
11	U15-U18	One Qualification Match to get to a Group of 10.	1-11 #10 and #11 placed in Qualification Match

12	All	Group of 12: three groups of 4, group play. Top point-getter in each group, plus a Wildcard, advance to Semifinals. Winners advance to Final. <i>Wildcard team is next top point-getter after the Group winners.</i> Group A winner vs. Wildcard Group B winner vs. Group C winner <i>If Wildcard comes from Group A, then</i> Group A winner vs. Group C winner Group B winner vs. Wildcard	1-4 #1 placed in Group A, #2 placed in Group B, #3 and #4 placed in Group C
13	All	One Qualification Match to get to a Group of 12.	1-4, 12 and 13 #12 and #13 placed in Qualification Match
14	U13-U14, U19	Two Qualification Matches to get to a Group of 12	1-4, 11-14 Qualification Matches (#11 v #14, #12 v #13)
14	U15-U18	TBD	TBD
15	U13-U14, U19	Three Qualification matches to get to a Group of 12	1-4, 10-15 Qualification matches (#10 v #15, #11 v #14, #12 v #13)
15	U15-U18	TBD	TBD
16	All	Group of 16: four groups of 4, group play. Top point-getter in each group advances to Semifinals. Winners advance to Final. Winner Group A v Winner Group D Winner Group B v Winner Group C	1-4 #1 placed in Group A, #2 placed in Group B, #3 placed in Group C, #4 placed in Group D

2001.2 Competition Dates and Scheduling

Teams and coaches must plan to be available for matches at any time on the scheduled competition dates. In no case will matches be rescheduled off established play dates unless inclement weather forces changes. The State Cup Director will not entertain schedule requests or considerations. If your team cannot field at least 11 players on all competition dates, do not enter your team in State Cup.

2001.2.1 The scheduling for all age divisions and rounds is completed between the team entry deadline and the Draw for Placement.

2001.2.2 Should SAT or ACT testing fall on one of the State Cup Saturdays, U18 teams will be scheduled to play late in the day on that Saturday. U17 teams will be given later start times after the U18 teams have been assigned game times.

2001.3 Seeding and Placement

Seeding a division involves a discussion and polling of those coaches who have teams entered in the respective division. It is typically scheduled within a week of team entry closing. Seeding will be completed prior to "The Draw for Placement".

Section 1 Seeding for Group or Qualification Match Placement

2001.3.1 Seeding for Group placement and/or a Qualification Match will be as per 2001.1. Any unseeded teams will be drawn into groups by a double-blind draw.

Section 2 U13 Seeding

2001.3.2 As there are no previous year's State Cup results, necessary seeds are determined by a discussion and polling of coaches who have teams entered in the division.

Section 3 U14-19 Seeding

2001.3.3 The previous year's State Cup semifinalists will be seeded #1 through #4. Seed #1 is the prior year's State Cup Champion and seed #2 is the prior year's State Cup Finalist. Seeds #3 and #4 are the remaining semifinalists, with #3 being separated from #4 by a discussion and subsequent poll of coaches who have teams entered in the division. If there is not a returning semifinalist, the seeding for that opening will be determined by a discussion and polling of coaches who have teams entered in the division. If qualification match seeding is necessary, all remaining seeds beyond #4 will be seeded by a discussion and polling of those coaches who have teams entered in the division.

Section 4 Criteria guidelines for the seeding discussion beyond #1 and #2

2001.3.4 Common opponents/results at previous year's State Cup

2001.3.5 Common opponents/results from current seasonal year

2001.3.6 Current year team make-up vs. previous year's team (How many returning? Add/lose key players? Etc...)

2001.3.7 Common opponents and results over the previous year outside of State Cup

Section 4 Returning Team Rule

Prior to the time seeding is done, returning teams in consideration for seeds 1-4 will be required to submit their roster and the team coach and/or administrator must declare the team meets the returning team criterion. If at the time rosters are frozen it is determined that a team does not in fact meet the "returning team" standard, the team will lose its seed and be fined \$350.

2001.3.8 A returning team is one that has nine players returning from its previous-year's frozen State Cup Team Roster.

2001.3.8.1 In the event a returning team in consideration for seeding has changed clubs, if it meets the nine player standard, it will be a seeded team.

2001.3.8.2 In the event a returning team in consideration for seeding combines with another returning team in consideration for seeding, the nine player standard will be applied to each roster individually to determine the seed. The nine players cannot be a combination of, for example, four returning from one team and five returning from the other. If neither roster meets the nine player threshold, the team will not be seeded. If both rosters meet the nine player threshold, the team will be given the higher of the two seeds.

2001.3.8.3 If a team "plays up" in a division because part of its roster was comprised of older players, and that team enters the same age group in the successive State Cup (minus the older players), it will not be considered a returning team for that age group.

2001.3.8.4 It is possible not all returning team scenarios above are covered. Therefore, the State Cup Director, in consultation with the State Director of Coaching, will have the final authority in the seeding process and reserves the right to address any returning team scenarios not covered above and make a determination about a seed(s).

2001.4 The Draw for Placement

"The Draw" is held on a date in advance of the competition and is open for anyone to attend.

2001.4.1 The draw is conducted as a double-blind draw, with one chip drawn to determine bracket placement and the other chip drawn to determine the team that will fill that bracket placement.

2001.5 Standings

Standings are based upon the number of points earned

2001.5.1 Win = 3 points; Loss = 0 points; Tie = 1 point

2001.6 Advancement: Tiebreaker Criteria and Procedures

Section 1 If two or more teams are tied in group play standings, the following sequence will be followed until a team is eliminated. Once a team has been eliminated, the remaining teams will then restart the sequence at the second criteria.

2001.6.1 Criteria, in order:

- 1) Winner of head-to-head competition (this criteria is not used if more than two teams are tied)
- 2) Winner of most games in team's respective group
- 3) Goal differential (goals scored minus goals allowed), with a maximum differential of four goals per game
- 4) Fewest goals allowed
- 5) FIFA Kicks From the Mark

Section 2 If three teams remain tied after going through the tiebreakers, thus requiring Kicks From the Mark, there will be a draw by the State Cup Director to determine which two teams kick first.

2001.6.2 The first team drawn will receive a bye

2001.6.3 The second team drawn will be the home team and will kick against the remaining team in the first contest of Kicks From the Mark.

2001.6.4 The winner of the first contest will then compete against the bye team in Kicks From the Mark to determine the team that will advance. The home team will be the bye team.

Section 3 If four teams remain tied after going through the tiebreakers, thus requiring Kicks From the Mark, there will be a draw by the State Cup Director to determine which teams kick against each other.

2001.6.5 The first team drawn will compete against the second team drawn in Kicks From the Mark. The first team drawn will be the home team.

2001.6.6 The third team drawn will compete against the fourth team drawn in Kicks From the Mark. The third team drawn will be the home team.

2001.6.7 The winners of each of the first two contests will then compete in Kicks From the Mark to determine the team that will advance. The home team will be the winner of the first drawn vs. second drawn contest.

3001 PLAYING RULES

3001.1 Laws of the Game

The playing rules for the Iowa State Cup will conform to the FIFA Laws of the Game except where noted in the following.

3001.2 Duration of Matches, Overtimes

Age Group	Game Length	Overtime	Halftime*	Ball Size	Circumference	Weight
Under 19	Two 45' halves	Two 15' periods	10 minutes	5	27-28"	14-16 oz.
Under 18	Two 45' halves	Two 15' periods	10 minutes	5	27-28"	14-16 oz.
Under 17	Two 45' halves	Two 15' periods	10 minutes	5	27-28"	14-16 oz.
Under 16	Two 40' halves	Two 15' periods	10 minutes	5	27-28"	14-16 oz.
Under 15	Two 40' halves	Two 15' periods	10 minutes	5	27-28"	14-16 oz.
Under 14	Two 35' halves	Two 10' periods	10 minutes	5	27-28"	14-16 oz.
Under 13	Two 35' halves	Two 10' periods	10 minutes	5	27-28"	14-16 oz.

*= Unless both coaches agree to five minutes; cannot agree to more than 10 minutes.

3001.2.1 In Qualification Matches, Semifinal and Final matches, if two teams are tied at the end of regulation, overtime will be played, with the two extra periods being played in their entirety. If the game is tied at the end of overtime, teams will go directly to FIFA Kicks From the Penalty Mark to determine the team that advances.

3001.2.2 Group play matches conclude at the end of regulation with the result recorded as a win, loss or tie.

3001.3 Substitutions

3001.3.1 U13-U14: Unlimited substitution is allowed for U13 and U14 teams. Substitutions can be made at any stoppage of play at the discretion of the referee.

3001.3.2 U15-U19: A maximum of seven substitutions for each team will 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. For substitutions, the two overtime periods are treated as one period, therefore, after leaving the game during either overtime period, the substituted player may not re-enter the game. Substitutions can be made at any stoppage of play at the discretion of the referee.

3001.3.2.1 If a player is removed from the game and no substitute enters the game for the player (team plays short), the original player may re-enter the game. Entry will be at a normal substitution point (with approval of referee) or at any point during the game if the referee signals for the player's re-entry.

3001.4 Player and Team Equipment

3001.4.1 Each player of a team is required to wear like uniforms within a team (jerseys, shorts, socks). Each player will have a number on the player's jersey and the number will be affixed to the back of the jersey and will be clearly visible. Each player on a team must wear a number different from the number of every other player on the team. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players and game officials; numbers for GK jerseys are optional. The referee will be the final authority of uniform colors. Players will start the match with shirts tucked in and socks pulled up.

3001.4.2 Each team should be prepared to provide an alternate color jersey, however it will be the responsibility of the home team to change to a different color uniform if necessary. The home team is the team listed first on the match schedule.

3001.4.3 At every level of the National Championships competitions, a player, team coach or team official at a game site for a match or associated activity of the competitions may only have on their outer wear a name, logo or other identifying mark of a youth soccer organization that is US Youth Soccer, a State Association or other member of US Youth Soccer, a member of a State Association, or an organization that is a member of 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 coach/official may remain at the game site for the match or associated activity.

3001.4.2 Players occupying the Bench Areas as substitutes, as players who have been substituted for, or as "game inactive" players will wear training bibs that distinguish them from on-field teammates and opposing players. A substitute standing at the halfway line waiting to enter the match will hand his/her bib to the player he/she is substituting for as his/her teammate exits the field.

3001.4.5 Wearing age- and size-appropriate guards will be enforced by referees. Casts are allowed if properly padded, keeping in mind the safety not only of the player wearing the cast, but of the other players. Referees will be the final authority of properly-sized guards and properly-padded casts.

3002 GAME-RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

3002.1 Required Game Rosters

All teams must have enough photocopies of their completed National Championships Roster (see 1002.2.15.2) as games they may play at the Iowa State Cup. The copies are used as the team's "Game Roster" (see 1002.2.15.3). Prior to each Iowa State Cup match, the team coach must submit a Game Roster to the referee crew. Although a team may have up to 22 players on its roster, only 18 total players are eligible to play in a given match.

3002.1.1 Coaches must submit to the referee crew prior to each match its Game Roster with checkmarks in the corresponding "game active" column designating the 18 "game active" players. They must be designated even if you have 18 or fewer on your roster.

3002.1.1.1 If a team has between 19-22 players, the 18 game active players may change from match to match, but cannot change at any point within a match.

3002.1.2 Non-designated/non-active players are allowed on the team bench during the match, but may not be dressed in any version of the team's uniform, or in the same colors that the team is wearing in that game. As with any player personnel in the technical area, they must also wear a bib and are subject to bench decorum expectations and to being sent off.

3002.1.2.1 For U13-U14, due to unlimited substitutions and the resulting challenges in keeping track of game active players, non-active players on the team bench must be dressed in street clothes.

3002.1.3 The Game Roster will remain with the Fourth Official and will be filed with State Cup officials immediately following each match.

3002.2 Required Approved Credentials: Player and coach passes

Players and coaches must carry a current and valid US Youth Soccer member pass. If all eligibility and entry requirements have been met, each pass will include an official Iowa State Cup sticker. The player and coach passes must be presented to and checked by the referee crew prior to each match. No player pass, no play. No coach's pass, no coach.

3002.2.1 The player's member pass shall be a white colored US Youth Soccer Club Pass identifying the player's club by name or other appropriate means of identification. **Note: your color IPSL passes are not legal and will not be accepted.**

3002.2.2 The coach's member pass shall be a US Youth Soccer member pass and must correspond to the team(s) he/she is coaching at the Iowa State Cup. It is known as a "paper pass".

3001.6.2.1 In 2010, Iowa Soccer began issuing "hard passes" for coaches. Currently, hard passes are not accepted at the Region II Championships, and therefore will not be utilized at the Iowa State Cup. At State Cup, coaches must use the US Youth Soccer paper pass that corresponds with (each of) the team(s) he/she is coaching at the Iowa State Cup and if they advance, at the Region II Championships and Nationals.

3002.2.3 All passes must have a securely-affixed current photograph and must be laminated (no exceptions; open-ended "pouches" are not considered laminated). **Note: passes no longer need to be signed by the player or coach!**

3002.3 Team Bench Non-Player Personnel

A team may have a maximum of four team coaches/officials on the team bench during a match and each will go through the pregame check-in procedures conducted by the referee crew.

3002.3.1 Only those coaches/officials listed on the Game Roster for that match, and who have their US Youth Soccer member pass that corresponds to that team are allowed on the team bench; the pass must also include the Iowa State Cup sticker. The "team bench" includes the team's pre-game or halftime meeting, regardless if it occurs outside the technical area.

3002.3.1.1 At no time is it allowable for a coach not associated, rostered or credentialed with a team that is playing to be on the team bench or sideline, even if the coach is from the same club as the team that is playing.

3002.3.1.2 At no time is it allowable for a coach who is associated and rostered with a team playing to be on the team bench or sideline if there are already four team coaches/officials on the team bench.

3002.3.1.3 The four-per-match allowance cannot change during the match. For example, six different credentialed coaches cannot interchange among the four allowable spots during the same match. The four must remain the same throughout regulation and any overtime or Kicks From the Mark.

3002.3.1.4 The four-per-match allowance can change from match to match.

3002.3.1.5 If there are not already four team coaches/officials on the team bench and a coach arrives at the match after it is already in progress, upon arriving the coach must report immediately, with his/her coaching pass for that team, to the Fourth Official. If the coach's pass does not correspond to the team that is playing, or if it does not have the official Iowa State Cup sticker on it, the coach is not allowed on the team bench or sideline.

3002.3.1.6 This rule will be strictly enforced by game and tournament officials.

3002.4 Bench Decorum and the Technical Area

The Iowa State Cup is the highest level of competition in Iowa for Iowa's highest level of teams and coaches, and our champions advance to Regional competition as representatives of Iowa. As such, at the Iowa State Cup competition coaches, team officials and team members will be held to a higher standard of etiquette than that of a regular-season match or of any other tournament. Although these expectations may be beyond what is standard within your league play or other tournament matches, tournament officials appreciate your understanding of the high level and esteemed nature of the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series and the Iowa State Cup, and expect your cooperation.

3002.4.1 Technical areas will be marked and will be enforced.

3002.4.2 Only one person at a time may convey tactical instructions and must do so from within the technical area.

3002.4.3 The coach and other occupants of the technical area must behave in a responsible manner.

3002.4.4 Fourth Officials will enforce the use of bibs by players on the bench.

3002.4.5 Soccer balls are expected to be packed away in bags.

3002.4.6 Following the match, teams are expected to clean their bench and sideline area and throw away all trash. Should Iowa Soccer be assessed an extra cleaning fee by the competition grounds authority, fines will be assessed to teams accordingly.

3003 SEND-OFFS

3003.1 Players

3003.1.1 Players who are sent off must immediately leave the field and the match. The player may not remain at the match, must leave it in a timely manner, and must be out of sight and out of sound of the match. Players may receive additional suspension or sanctioning if they do not comply or are found to have returned within sight and sound of the match.

3003.1.2 A team may not substitute for a player who is sent off, and the team will play down a player for the remainder of that match.

3003.1.3 Players who are sent off will not be allowed to participate in his/her next immediately scheduled Iowa State Cup match. This suspension encompasses his/her team's pre-game, halftime and post-game.

Should the player choose to attend the match he/she must sit out, he/she is only allowed on the spectator sideline. If the send-off occurs during the last match of the Iowa State Cup competition, the player will not be allowed to participate in his/her first scheduled match in his/her next Iowa State Cup.

3003.1.3.1 In order for a player to officially serve his/her suspension, the player's name must appear on the Game Roster as "inactive" and there must be an indication that the player will not play due to suspension in the "notes" column.

3003.1.4 If the player is sent off during the last match of the Iowa State Cup competition, and the player's next game is at the National Championship Series Region II Championships, he/she will not be allowed to participate in his/her first scheduled Region II Championships game. This suspension encompasses his/her team's pre-game, halftime and post-game.

3003.1.5 The Fourth Official will keep the player's pass and turn it in to State Cup officials at the administration tent immediately following the conclusion of the match. A team coach or official may pick up the player's pass only after the match in which he/she sat out has concluded.

3003.1.6 At the discretion of the Iowa State Cup Director, the player's suspension may be increased and a player may receive a more than one game suspension. Suspensions may be extended into the next levels of the National Championship Series Competition.

3003.2 Coaches and Other Team Officials

3003.2.1 Coaches and other team officials will be subject to all rules contained herein, including cautions, send-offs and standard suspensions.

3003.2.1.1 As per FIFA Laws of the Game, coaches or team officials are not shown an actual card in the case of a caution or send-off. If a verbal caution or send-off has been issued, it is treated as if a yellow or red card was shown.

3003.2.2 Coaches and other team officials who are sent off must immediately leave the field and the match. The coach may not remain at the match, must leave it in a timely manner, must be out of sight and out of sound of the match, and may not have contact with the team or other coaches during the remainder of the match. Coaches may receive additional suspension or sanctioning if they do not comply, are found to have returned within sight and sound of the match, or attempted communications with the team or its remaining coaches.

3003.2.2.1 If the coach and/or other team official is properly credentialed to a team that has a match being played concurrently on a field whose technical area is back-to-back with the technical area for the match from which he/she was sent off, the out of sight and sound standard will be applied, which results in not being allowed on that team's bench either.

3003.2.3 Coaches or team officials who are sent off will not be allowed to participate in or attend the next immediately following Iowa State Cup match played by the team that was being coached when the send-off occurred. If the send-off occurred during the last match of the Iowa State Cup competition, the coach or team official will not be allowed to participate in or attend his/her first scheduled match of the next Iowa State Cup for that team.

3003.2.4 If the coach or team official is sent off during the last match of the Iowa State Cup competition, and that team advances to the National Championship Series Region II Championships, the coach or team official will not be allowed to participate in the first scheduled Region II Championships game played by that team.

3003.2.5 The fourth official will keep the coach's or team official's pass and turn it in to State Cup officials immediately following the conclusion of the match. A team coach or official may pick up the coach's pass only after the match in which he/she sat out has concluded.

3003.2.6 At the discretion of the Iowa State Cup Director, the suspension may be increased, and may result in the ineligibility of the team.

3003.3 Associated with the Team

3003.3.1 Teams and coaches will take one side of the field and parents/spectators will be on the opposite side of the field. Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team such as relatives and spectators, will also be subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the Iowa Soccer Association, Iowa State Cup Director and tournament and game officials. Any coach or team official will be responsible for the actions of any individual(s) at any match that in the opinion of the officials is a supporter of that team.

3003.3.2 The State Cup Director, tournament and game officials have the authority to remove any such individual(s) from the match and competition grounds.

3003.3.3 Coaches or team officials who are sent off for the action(s) of any such individual(s) at a match are subject to the same send-off penalties as detailed in these rules, sections 3001.8.7 through 3001.8.12.

3003.3.4 At the discretion of the State Cup Director, the suspension may be increased, and may result in the ineligibility of the team.

3004 OFFICIAL GAMES and KICKOFF

3004.1 Official Games

Every attempt will be made for all games to be played at the scheduled times, unless delayed or interrupted by bad weather or other events beyond the control of tournament officials.

3004.1.1 Suspended games will be played or restarted as soon as the condition for the delay is no longer a reason for further delay; suspended games will be restarted at the point of suspension. Should one of the teams be adjudged at fault, it will be the discretion of the State Cup Director as to whether the game will be restarted, replayed in its entirety, or that a forfeit will be declared.

3004.1.2 Game lengths may be shortened to ensure the completion of the competition when there has been significant delay in games due to bad weather or other events beyond the control of tournament officials.

3004.2 Starting the Match and Grace Period

A minimum of seven players constitutes a team; a team with seven players present must start the game at the scheduled time. If seven players are not available, a 10-minute grace period will be extended beyond the scheduled kick-off time. If at the end of the 10-minute grace period the team does not have seven players, the referee will suspend the game and report it as a forfeit to tournament officials. Any team that forfeits a game will not advance any further in the tournament.

3005 REFEREES

3005.1 Referees

A referee assignor will be used to assign referee crews to Iowa State Cup matches. Crews include a Referee, two Assistant Referees and a Fourth Official. Any referee appointed to officiate any game will not be a present member of either of the competing teams or clubs, nor will they have any personal relationship with either team involved in the match.

3005.1.1 Each match is controlled by a Referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match to which he/she has been appointed. The powers and duties of the Referee are in accordance with Law 5 – The Referee.

3005.1.2 The decisions of the Referee regarding the facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored, and the result of the match, are final. The Referee may only change a decision on realizing that it is incorrect or, at his/her discretion, on the advice of an Assistant Referee or Fourth Official, *provided he/she has not restarted play or terminated the match.*

3005.2 Assistant Referees

The Assistant Referees assist the Referee in controlling the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game and Law 6 – The Assistant Referee. They also assist the Referee in all other matters involving the running of the match at the request and direction of the Referee.

3005.3 Fourth Official

The Fourth Official serves an important role in Iowa State Cup competition and is a member of the referee crew and should be viewed as such by participants. At the direction of the Referee, the Fourth Official may also assist with controlling the Technical Area and with match control. He/she is also equipped with a radio in order to have game-time communication with and assistance from the State Cup Director and tournament officials.

3005.3.1 Immediately following the match, the Fourth Official, in conjunction with the Referee, must complete the Official Referee Match Report Form, which will include the names and passes of anyone sent off, and return the form to the State Cup Director along with each team's Official Game Roster.

3005.4 Concerns and Communication

Concerns and feedback about referee performance at your match should be noted on the Coach Match Report Form provided to coaches prior to each match, and can also be directed to the State Youth Referee Administrator (SYRA), the Referee Assignor or the State Cup Director, all of whom are onsite during the competition.

- ***The Iowa State Cup Director, Referee Assignor and SYRA use these forms or conversations in real time at State Cup. If you choose not to communicate with us, we miss out on a vital viewpoint that could help us during the competition. Please make this commitment to communicate.***
- ***Our goal, which is shared by our referee crews and assignor, is for matches to be decided by the teams. The care we take with referee crew assignments, match assessments and mentoring, and utilizing coach feedback in real time to make this so is an ongoing commitment.***

4001 PROTESTS

4001.1 Investigation

It is the responsibility of the Iowa State Cup Director to investigate a properly lodged protest at the Iowa State Cup immediately following its receipt. Failure of the parties involved to cooperate with such investigation will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

4001.2 Protests

All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors, to interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest concerning the Iowa State Cup competition will be referred to the Iowa State Cup Director. Decisions will be made by the Iowa State Cup Director and will be binding on all parties, and the competition shall proceed.

4001.2.1 A plea of ignorance to all rules and regulations governing this competition is not sufficient grounds for protests.

4001.2.2 A referee's judgment will not be a basis for protests and a referee's decision will be final. This includes, but is not limited to, yellow or red cards or a coach send-off.

4001.2.3 Misapplication of the Laws of the Game may be a valid basis for a protest.

4001.2.4 To be valid and eligible for consideration

- A protest relating to grounds, goal posts or bars, or other appurtenances of the game will be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the referee and with the opposing coach prior to the start of the game by a team official listed on the Game Roster from the involved game.
- In any other instances, a protest must be verbally lodged by a team official listed on the Game Roster from the involved game with the referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play, or before leaving the game site at the conclusion of the match.

- The Iowa State Cup Director must be verbally notified of the intent to lodge a protest within 30 minutes of the end of the match or decision being protested by a team official listed on the Game Roster from the involved game.
- The protest must be filed with the Iowa State Cup Director within two hours after the completion of the game being protested and include:
 - A fee in the amount of \$150.00
 - Five written copies of the protest, which must clearly articulate the disputed matter and include the grounds on which the protest is lodged
 - Five written copies of any information to be presented by witnesses.
- After having received a properly lodged protest, the Iowa State Cup Director will notify the team/party against which such protest is made, who will have the right to defend its case. A copy of the written protest will be provided to the team/party.
- A lawyer will not represent a team/party at a hearing unless he or she is a bona fide member of one of the teams/parties concerned.

4001.3 All decisions by the Iowa State Cup Director are final and shall not be the basis of a protest or an appeal, nor shall any such decision be the basis for the withdrawal of a team or the refund of its entry fee.

5001 WEATHER

5001.1 Weather

The State Cup Director will make the decision to clear the field with the safety of all participants – players, fans, referees, tournament officials -- as the primary concern.

- Multiple horn blasts, followed by referees blowing their whistles to stop play, will indicate play has been suspended.
- When the State Cup Director has indicated play has been stopped via the horn blasts, participants are expected to seek shelter immediately **inside their vehicles. You must go to your vehicle; standing under a tent or concession stand-type awning is not safe.**
- Do not leave the premises unless and/or until directed to do so by the State Cup Director or tournament officials. Communication will be between the State Cup Director and the team coordinator, who is charged with relaying the information to his/her coach and team.
- **Do not return to the fields until the State Cup Director has indicated play will resume by way of multiple horn blasts.** It is only at this time that participants, coaches, referees and spectators should return to the field they left when play was suspended.

If the delay is lengthy and significantly affects the remainder of the day's schedule, any decisions made regarding the schedule will be relayed by the State Cup Director to the team coordinator, who is responsible for getting that information to his/her coach and team. In accordance with 3004.1.2, game lengths may be shortened. Tournament officials ask for and appreciate your patience and cooperation in weather situations.

6001 FOR THE GOOD OF THE GAME

Iowa Soccer is an Alliance 4 All-Endorsed State Association and will conduct its programming in accordance with this status.

6001.1 The Iowa State Cup Director reserves the right to make certain decisions regarding the competition, as he/she deems necessary, for the good of the game, in order to improve the game and/or to protect the participants. Such

decisions shall include but are not limited to: postponement or cancellation of games; rescheduling of games; changing of fields; changing of sites; fair play; unsporting behavior.

6001.2 It is the position of Iowa State Cup tournament officials that the pursuit of becoming an Iowa State Cup Champion and practicing good sportsmanship are not mutually exclusive. Club officials and their Director of Coaching are expected to take the lead in directing their coaches, parents, spectators and players to “practice better sportsmanship” while their teams are being showcased at the highest level of competition in the state, the Iowa State Cup.

6001.3 In the interest of fair play and good sporting behavior, conduct by coaches, team officials and players that calls the game or competition into disrepute is prohibited. It is expected that all participants will participate in good faith and fairly. If it is determined that a particular action by a team or any of its players, coaches, team officials or spectators is deemed unacceptable for any reason, the team may be reprimanded, disqualified, sanctioned, and/or face forfeiture of one or more games. Examples of such action include, but are not limited to: suspected forfeiture or otherwise determining the outcome of a game with the design or purpose of controlling the advancement of any team from its own group or any other group, intentionally losing a game, or unnecessarily running a score up for no purpose other than to humiliate the opponent. To be clear, this is not an all-inclusive list. Iowa State Cup tournament officials do not subscribe to the notion that that which is not expressly prohibited is, therefore, permitted.

6001.4 Match fixing, collusion, coaching decisions

The Iowa State Cup has a primary -- but not sole -- purpose and that is to identify the teams that will advance to the Regional level tournament of this US Youth Soccer National Championship Series competition. In 2013, the U15-U18 Iowa State Cup format was changed from single elimination to group play (with advancement to semifinals and finals) because there was a demonstrated need for expanding the event in order to provide more “meaningful games” for Iowa Soccer members.

The group play format allows for a range of coaching decisions and Iowa State Cup officials recognize that coaches have the latitude to make strategic, tactical and personnel decisions such that they put their teams in a position to be successful. At the same time in our sport we also know that decisions made about how to handle one’s final group game can have an impact within the group on another team’s chance to advance. Moreover, in groups with cross-bracket matches, decisions about how to handle one’s final group game can influence final standings in both groups. The cross-bracket scenario invites coaches, acting alone or in concert with another coach, to make unethical strategic, tactical and/or personnel decisions for the purpose of manipulating outcome and, therefore, final group standings in both groups in order to gain what is believed to be a better semifinal match-up.

While strategies like this or agreements between coaches to predetermine outcome may be an accepted part of the “soccer culture”, the Iowa State Cup is a youth event wherein lessons about ethics and commitment should be modeled foremost. At the Iowa State Cup, under no circumstances is it acceptable to make decisions or agreements with or independent of anyone to not play in earnest, or to predetermine match, goal differential or goals-for outcome. Not playing in earnest to win or not playing in earnest in order to get to a desired goal differential outcome is not acceptable, it is disrespectful and it sends youth players the wrong message.

Team coaches, who should receive guidance and leadership from their Club Director of Coaching about what is acceptable at State Cup, must recognize that there are standings/advancement scenarios in which his/her coaching decisions will come under increased scrutiny from coaching peers and Iowa State Cup officials. Examples include, but are not limited to: if his/her team has already advanced out of the group stage with group game(s) remaining; or if his/her team is in a cross-bracket situation where a loss or loss with a certain goal differential ensures what is believed to be a better semifinal match-up. The opportunity to play in a high level and meaningful Iowa State Cup game, and to treat it as such, should not be taken for granted, nor should a coach’s responsibility to teaching youth players. Such actions bring the game into disrepute and if proven, will be dealt with harshly.

Procedure used to address an allegation of match-fixing or collusion:

- During the match(es) in question, a Club Director of Coaching or his/her designee must inform the Iowa State Cup Director of his/her allegation. Allegations made by parents, spectators, players or team coaches will not be accepted. Allegations made after the match concludes will not be accepted.
- The Iowa State Cup Director will go to the match(es) and speak with the involved coach(es) and if warranted, issue a verbal warning to the involved coach(es). The Director of Coaching of the involved coach(es) will be informed of the warning.
- If the coach(es) have been warned and the run of play does not appreciably change, teams, coaches and clubs will all be subject to sanctions that may include immediate suspension from the Iowa State Cup as well as fines and future ineligibility at the Iowa State Cup.

The expectations of Iowa State Cup officials are that this competition will be treated with respect, that coaching decisions will be made accordingly and that Club Directors of Coaching will be at the forefront of leading their coaching staffs to coach in such a manner.