

Memorandum

To: All Members and Affiliates
From: Chris Branscome, Chief Executive Officer
CC: Board of Directors
RE: US Soccer mandates/Small Sided Games changes for 2016-17

First, thank you for the patience and understanding necessary as this unique period in US Soccer takes shape. As I've spoken to many clubs and leagues over the past six months, this is an historic undertaking for US Soccer. This is the first time such broad changes have been introduced by our governing body.

We have collectively been in a holding pattern while waiting for requested updates and alterations from US Soccer. Issues regarding the new mandates were being addressed at a national level by US Youth Soccer in concert with other national youth organizations. Our initial expectation was that we would have some response in January, and then by the US Soccer AGM which was held last weekend. Although I can assure you the discussions are taking place, and US Soccer is listening, the answers we would like to give to you have not been settled on.

The staff and I have been involved in the conversations and have advocated for our members, and others, to move forward at a quicker pace. We are acutely aware of our local calendar and processes, but they are not in the same order as the national priorities. Along with several other state associations, we have decided it is necessary to move forward. We have developed local modifications for small-sided games, based on the US Soccer Player Development Initiatives and the previous US Youth Soccer recommendations, as well as conversations directly with those entities. We are still vetting the rules changes, including the adoption of the new heading rules and protocols and field-size ranges. We will provide that very soon. For today, the primary concern is the roster size. We feel it's absolutely necessary to allow you to prepare for tryouts this spring with no further hesitation.

For the 16-17 season, roster sizes will be:

Under 8 and younger – eight (8) players maximum

Under 10 - recommend twelve (12) players, maximum of fourteen (14)

Under 12 - recommend fourteen (14) players, maximum of eighteen (18)

Under 13 and older – maximum of 22 players (limited to 18 players for games. See US Youth Soccer National Championship Series rules)

Under 8 is developmental and primarily recreation and intramural. All players are required 50% playing time. At Under 10 and Under 12, our recommendation on the lower number is twofold: 1) It is regarded as the lowest number of players that is being proposed and 2) The reasoning is that it would promote more playing time for the children. The other consideration is to double the number of players on the field.

Also logical, but as we do not know which will be the final choice, the lower number is prudent at this time. The other state associations that make up our region are all working similarly, but there may be variations from one state to the next. Ultimately we will have a national standard.

