



SOUTH TEXAS YOUTH SOCCER

SPRING CUP MANUAL

Updated: January 2016

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Section 1 – COMPETITIONS OVERVIEW

This Manual is designed to document the methods, procedures and guidelines for the South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) Spring Cup competitions.

Each year South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) hosts a series of Spring Cups that are designed to accomplish the following:

1. Determine a South Texas State Champion which, in the U13 through U19 age groups will represent South Texas in the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Regional and National competitions.
2. Determine the Presidents Cup Champion which, in the U13 through U17 age groups, will represent South Texas in the US Youth President's Cup Regional and National Competition with the other twelve states composing Region III.
3. Provide a format where a team doing above average in one level of play may test itself against the next higher level of play.
4. Provide a format where teams may enter a South Texas sponsored competition with teams that they may not normally play against.
5. Provide a quality competition during a period of the year when other sports may decrease the number of teams playing soccer.

South Texas Youth Soccer will host the following Cup competitions each Spring. The format and details of these competitions may differ based on the Cup and the District in which the team plays.

- ◆ State Cup (US Youth Soccer National Championship Series) – Open Entry
- ◆ Presidents Cup – Open Entry
- ◆ Directors Cup – District and State - Restricted Entry
- ◆ South Texas Cup – District and State – Restricted Entry

Two Types of Competitions:

Open Entry – competition is open to any South Texas registered team of the appropriate age group who wishes to participate.

Restricted Entry – competition is limited to South Texas registered teams who qualify based on their previous Fall level of play as defined by the competition.

COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements:

1. All participants must be properly registered with South Texas Youth Soccer.
2. All participants must be properly rostered to the team with which they participate.
3. A team may participate in only one Cup competition during the year.
4. A player may play for only one team in each round of Cup competition.
5. All teams must play in a qualifying league to be eligible for Cup play. A qualifying league is defined as a league sanctioned by South Texas Youth Soccer, comprised of a minimum of 4 teams who play 3 or more games between September 1st and the Cup entry deadline as specified by the South Texas Perpetual Calendar. Note: In US Youth Soccer National Championship Series, the U19 age group is exempt from playing in a 4-team league.
6. For the Cups with restricted entry, the level of play in which the team participated in the immediately preceding fall shall determine the team's eligibility.

7. All teams that wish to participate in Cup play must comply with the registration procedures appropriate for their competition as posted on the South Texas website at www.stxsoccer.org.

Discipline & Protest Procedures

1. The STYSA Progressive Disciplinary System applies to all Cup competition at the state level and below.
2. While penalty points do not accrue in advancement play beyond the state competition, ejections issued during Cup play at the state level must be served at Regional play. If an ejection is received in the last game of State play, then the individual must sit out the first game of Regional play.
3. In each Cup, each level of play will have its own disciplinary system (D&P). Decisions from the individual disciplinary systems may be appealed to the STYSA Appeals Committee and/or Executive Committee as designated by the STYSA D&P Procedures. If D&P Procedures are not published for a level of play, the STYSA D&P Procedures shall be used.

Note: Ejection shall mean that a player is issued a Red Card or receives two cautions in a single game.

Forfeiture Rule

- For District group games
 - Failure to play a match as scheduled will result in forfeiture of the match. The opposing team will be awarded a 3-0 win.
 - Any team that forfeits a scheduled match shall be fined \$500 per match, payable within five (5) business days to STYSA.
 - Any team which fails to play two (2) or more officially scheduled games shall be considered to have abandoned the competition. Games played will not count to determine final standings nor shall they be considered in the standings as forfeits.
 - If a forfeit is declared because of a rules violation or protest, the winning team will be awarded 10 points, the game scored 3-0 and marked as an administrative forfeit.
- For Playoff or State games
 - In the event a team forfeits any match, the official game scores for all of that team's games will be recorded as 3-0 losses.
 - If a team fails to appear or play a game, the team shall be removed from the competition immediately and their games shall not count, with final review by the STYSA Appeals Committee. Any team that fails to complete the tournament may be subject to disciplinary sanctions and/or fines by STYSA.
 - If a forfeit is declared because of a rules violation or protest, the winning team will be awarded 10 points, the game scored 3-0 and marked as an administrative forfeit. In cases of administrative forfeits, a team will not be removed from the event.

Cup Competition Management Authority

The South Texas State Program Managers will serve as the Directors for all the STYSA Spring Cup competitions, as well as Fall Championships, and State League Competitions. The STYSA Executive Vice President and the STYSA Competitions Committee (comprised of the STYSA Executive Vice President, Eastern District Vice President and Western District Vice President) will provide oversight for all South Texas State Competitions. The decisions of the Tournament Directors, in conjunction with the Competitions Committee, are final and may not be appealed.

SECTION 2 – ENTRY PROCEDURES / REQUIREMENTS

Instructions will be posted in late Fall each year detailing the process for entering teams into State Cup and Presidents Cup. Entry into Directors Cup and South Texas Cup will be through an Invitational District Tournament held in each district in late April composed of teams that have competed in a local association spring league, if offered, the same seasonal year. Registration will be through an online process which will require the team administrator to designate the competition the team wishes to enter and payment of the entry fee. All entries and fees must be submitted prior to the stated deadline. Requests for late entry will be reviewed by the Competition Committee to determine whether the team will be placed on a waiting list or is denied entry.

Recommendations will be provided as to which competition is best suited for each level of play; however, open entry tournaments (State Cup and President's Cup) will accept teams from other competition levels with the understanding that they must comply with the same requirements as all other teams. Teams playing in a league that qualifies teams for the next season will be seeded into the appropriate Spring Cup competition based on the Fall competition.

A team wishing to "challenge" into a higher competition than they qualified for must enter the competition for which they are qualified and indicate their desire to "challenge" in their registration. The competition administrator will determine whether a challenge match is required and, if so, designate the date and location of the game.

- If the challenging team wins the challenge, the lower Cup fee will be refunded less a challenge game fee at the current cost per game.
- If the challenging team loses the challenge, no refund will be issued
- If the challenging team loses the challenge then withdraws from the cup competition they qualify for, no refund of cup fees will be issued.

Note: El Paso teams do not have to challenge as they are, by the rules, awarded one team into the State Tournament in each age group.

CUP CHALLENGE REQUIREMENTS

A team wishing to "challenge" into a higher cup competition must indicate their desire to challenge at the time they enter and pay the entry fee for their competition for which they are pre-qualified. Any team wishing to challenge will be assessed a "challenge" fee in the amount of \$300, in addition to the registration fee for their pre-qualified cup. Payment of the challenge fee must be included with the entry fee as an "add-on" sale item during the GotSoccer event registration process. Failure to pay the challenge fee by the stated deadline will result in the challenge being disallowed. Should the challenging team lose the challenge match then withdraws from the cup competition they qualify for, no refund of cup fees will be issued.

Format for Challenge Matches against the Lowest Seeded Cup Team:

The lowest seeded team of the higher cup competition and the challenger team will play one game to determine if a challenge is successful or not. After completing the game, the winning team will be placed into the higher cup competition. The losing team will be placed in the lower cup competition. Should the score be tied after the game, the game will be extended by two overtime periods (U11-U14 – 10 min. halves, U15-U19 – 15 min. halves). In the event that the score remains tied at the end of the second overtime period, the winner will be decided by Penalty Kicks.

Multiple teams challenge Format:

If multiple teams challenge into an age group, seeding of the challenging teams will be based on the final Fall standings in their respective District leagues. The challenge games will be determined based on the following format.

2 team challenge		
Rd. 1 (1)	Challenge #1	Challenge #2
Rd. 2	Cup Challenge Seed	Rd. 1 (1) Winner
3 team challenge		
Rd. 1 (1)	Challenge #2	Challenge #3
Rd. 1 (2)	Challenge #1	Rd. 1 (1) winner
Rd. 2	Cup Challenge Seed	Rd. 1 (2) winner
4 team challenge		
Rd. 1 (1)	Challenge #2	Challenge #3
Rd. 1 (2)	Challenge #1	Challenge #4
Rd. 2 (1)	Rd. 1 (1) winner	Rd. 1 (2) winner
Rd. 3	Cup Challenge Seed	Rd. 2 (1) winner
5 team challenge		
Rd. 1 (1)	Challenge #2	Challenge #5
Rd. 1 (2)	Challenge #3	Challenge #4
Rd. 2 (1)	Rd. 1 (1) winner	Rd. 1 (2) winner
Rd. 3 (1)	Challenge #1	Rd. 2 (1) winner
Rd. 4	Cup Challenge Seed	Rd. 3 (1) winner

6 team challenge		
Rd. 1 (1)	Challenge #1	Challenge #6
Rd. 1 (2)	Challenge #2	Challenge #5
Rd. 1 (3)	Challenge #3	Challenge #4
Rd. 2 (1)	Rd. 1 (2) winner	Rd. 1 (3) winner
Rd. 3 (1)	Rd. 1 (1) winner	Rd. 2 (1) winner
Rd. 4	Cup Challenge Seed	Rd. 3 (1) winner
7 team challenge		
Rd. 1 (1)	Challenge #2	Challenge #7
Rd. 1 (2)	Challenge #3	Challenge #6
Rd. 1 (3)	Challenge #4	Challenge #5
Rd. 2 (1)	Challenge #1	Rd. 1 (3) winner
Rd. 2 (2)	Rd. 1 (1) winner	Rd. 1 (2) winner
Rd. 3 (1)	Rd. 2 (1) winner	Rd. 2 (2) winner
Rd. 4	Cup Challenge Seed	Rd. 3 (1) winner

FINAL ROSTER REQUIREMENTS

A final roster date will be designated at the time teams enter the competition. This is the date by which all roster changes must be completed in preparation for qualifying round play. Typically this date will be no more than 14 days prior to the start of the competition within each District. Changes to a team's roster will be accomplished by the Registrar of the Club / Association through which the team is registered. An earlier deadline may be established locally to allow the Registrar time to process all requests prior to the state deadline. No changes to the roster after that date will be recognized on the team's playing / game roster until the team advances to the next level of the competition.

CLUB PASS / GUEST PLAYER UTILIZATION

Use of Club Pass is not allowed during the group play (District) portion of the Cup Competitions. Before the start of Presidents and State Cup Finals Weekend, teams may use the club pass system defined in the USYS National Championship Series policy to make changes effective for the current round of play. A designated date will be specified by which time all club pass changes must be submitted to the competition administrator at the State Office. Use of club pass or guest players are not allowed at any stage of the Directors Cup competition. South Texas Cup will allow the utilization of up to 3 guest players (see the South Texas Cup section for more information).

ROSTER CHANGES

All changes to the roster must be processed through the current state registration system prior to the stated deadline. It is the responsibility of the team to provide the required documentation, properly completed and in compliance with the rules, to the Association Registrar within the time line designated. Again, it is the responsibility of the coach or team manager to determine whether the paperwork will be submitted by the Association Registrar or if the team representative is responsible for submitting the documents. Failure to submit paperwork due to confusion as to responsibility is not a valid reason for late submission.

If any question arises regarding a roster change and the appropriate documentation is not on file and cannot be located, the team is at risk for disqualification from the competition. It is advised that the Coach / Team Manager / Registrar retain copies of all above mentioned documents for the entire seasonal year.

Roster change requirements include:

- **Transfer** – Any player who was rostered to another team for the fall season must complete a Transfer / Release form prior to moving to another team. Included on the form must be the parent's signature and complete information regarding the player, the team from which the player is releasing and the team which the player is joining. Transfers should be accompanied by any state specified transfer fee. Player Transfers may be one of two types as defined below.
 - Club To Club Player Transfer means the movement of a player from a team to which the player was initially rostered during the current seasonal year to a team in a different club as defined in STYSA Rule 3.12.4. Club to Club player transfers meet the definition of a previously rostered player and will count toward the receiving team's maximum transfer limit.
 - Internal Club Player Transfer means the movement of a player from one team to another team within the same Club. This type of player movement does not meet the definition of a previously rostered player and does not count toward the receiving team's maximum transfer limit.
- **Release** – Any player who was rostered to the team in the fall remains rostered to the team for the spring. A player must request in writing a release from the team prior to their being removed from the roster. Coaches or managers may not release a player involuntarily unless they meet the criteria stated in the rules. The three reasons for involuntary release are: 1) violation of state or national rules; 2) moved an unreasonable distance to continue participating; and 3) sustained an injury that will prevent playing. Any requests for release based on the previous reasons that does not include a parent's signature must be documented as to why the parent's signature could not be obtained. Failure by a player to show up for practice, register for the spring, or pay club, association, or training fees are not valid reasons for release. **Any player for whom a signed Release form is not submitted will remain on the roster through the spring competition.**

- **New Player** – A “new player” is one who has not played with any STYSA or US Youth Soccer league or association during the current seasonal year. The player must register through the local organization, providing any required information / documents and pay the registration fee. Payment of fees to the state will be accomplished with the submission of Spring registration by the state member association.

SECTION 3 – STATE CUP (USYS National Championships Series)

Of the four South Texas Youth Soccer Association Spring Cups, the USYSNC State Cup is the highest level of competition.

- This is an open entry competition recommended for Premier League and upper level Division I teams.
- This competition will be played under the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series rules as published by US Youth Soccer.
- These rules apply from the first game played at the local level that determines advancement / elimination of a team.
- A team may only play in the age group in which they participated in during the Fall season.
- There is no play time requirement, no matter what the designated level of play is of the team entered in the competition.
- The State Tournament will be held in May on the date specified on the Perpetual Calendar and will include either 4 or 5 teams, two from each District and one team from El Paso, if entered in accordance with the entry requirements.
- The site of the USYSNC State Cup will alternate between Districts each year.
- State Champions in the U13 and older age groups will represent the State at the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Southern Regionals to be hosted by one of the Region III states in June each summer.
- The Regional Champions will then represent the State and the Region at the National Championship Tournament in late July.

ELIGIBILITY

- To be eligible, all players must be properly registered and in compliance with all state registration rules.
- Any team found to have an ineligible player on the roster or having used an ineligible player in any game during the competition forfeits each game involving the ineligible player and the team will be ineligible to advance to the Regional competition.
- Each player and team official participating in the State Cup competition must have a properly prepared and laminated ID Card for the current seasonal year that has been signed by the appropriate league official and includes a recent photo of the individual. ID cards will be checked by the referee crew prior to the start of each match of the Competition.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must wear an official uniform with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must have an alternate jersey of an opposing color (light vs dark) with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- If, in the opinion of referee, there is a color conflict, the home team shall change to a jersey of an alternate color.
- A team not ready to play at the scheduled start time will be granted a 10-minute grace period. If the team is not prepared to play at the end of the grace period, the game will be declared a forfeit (see forfeiture rule).
- A team must have at least 7 players on the field of play at the start of the game. If the team has less than 7 players, the team will forfeit the game (see forfeiture rule).
- Both teams and team officials participating in the game shall be on one touch line. Parents and spectators will be on the opposite touchline directly across from their team's bench area.
- A team may have no more than four (4) individuals designated as team officials on the team sideline at any given time. A coach or team officials Adult Participation Pass (Kidsafe Pass) will

be their Bench Pass. The Kidsafe Pass must be visible at all times that the coach or team official is on the team sideline.

- All team officials must remain within the designated technical area and behave in a responsible manner.

GAME PLAY

- Ball sizes, game lengths, and overtime periods will be in accordance with STYSA Rules.
- If inclement weather affects the State Cup, the following process will apply regarding play and the determination of the winner.
 - If play is suspended or the start of play is delayed, the Cup Committee may eliminate overtime periods in the event of a tie and go directly to FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.
 - The game length may be reduced as needed by the Cup Committee. If the game is terminated after the start of the second half, the result of the game will stand. In the event, the game is tied when terminated, advancement in the competition will be determined by FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.

PLAYER / TEAM GEAR LOGO POLICY

National Championships Series rule 241 Section 3 part (e)

- Rule 241. PASSES, ROSTERS, AND UNIFORMS (e) At every level of the National Championships competitions, each player, team and team official may only have on his/her/their apparel the name, logo, or other identifying mark of US Youth soccer or a member directly or indirectly of US Youth Soccer.
 - A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before a player, team or team official may enter or remain at a field complex where the National Championships competition is being held.
 - After an initial warning pursuant to (e)(1) above, the name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed before the player, team or team official may enter or continue in the competition.

STYSA Specific - At every level of South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) competitions, each player or team official at a game may only have on his/her/their apparel the name, logo, or other identifying mark of a member directly or indirectly of STYSA or US Youth Soccer A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than STYSA or US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before a player, team, or team official may participate in a STYSA sanctioned Fall league or Spring Cup competition.

LIMITED SUBSTITUTIONS

National Championships Series rule 242 Section 3 part (2)

- Section 3. At the National Championships competitions at the national and regional levels in the 2013 – 2014 seasonal year and effective at the State Association level in seasonal year 2014 – 2015.
 - (1) for the Under 13 and Under 14 age groups, unlimited substitutions shall be allowed; and
 - (2) for all other age groups, a maximum of 7 substitutions for each team shall be allowed in each game during each half of play and during overtime play. After leaving the game during a

half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game.

Roster/Game Card/Uniform Number Consistency (State Finals)

- Rosters, Game Cards and Uniform Numbers for State Finals weekend must be consistent and accurate. The number on a player's uniform must match what is listed on the Game Card and what is listed for the Official Team Roster. If a player is wearing a different number than what is listed on the Official Roster and Game Cards for State Finals weekend, the number on the Game Card and the Official Roster must be changed. Every change request to STYSA will result in a \$25.00 administrative fee.

PLAY FORMAT AND ADVANCEMENT

U13-U19 age groups - Each District will include 2 groups with a maximum of 4 teams (there may be some variation dependent upon the initial group size for a specific age/gender group). After round-robin group play, the top two point finishers from each group will participate in a cross-bracket District semi-final as follows: (A1vB2 and B1vA2) in which the two winners will advance to the State Finals and represent their District. There will be 2 teams from each District advancing to the State Finals weekend.

The 1st place finisher in each age group/gender at the State Cup Finals Weekend will represent South Texas at the US Youth Soccer Regional III Tournament.

STATE CUP ROSTER NOTES

- All teams are subject to the STYSA entry deadlines, transfer limit rules (5 inter-club transfers) and the roster core requirement (greater than 50%) from the fall qualifying event roster.
- All teams are subject to their local member association transfer rules and registration deadlines.
- The Regional competition has a continuity requirement for advancing teams to be eligible for participation. The required **Regional Roster Continuity of 9** will be based on the Official State Cup Roster submitted by the Competition's roster freeze date.

SECTION 4 – PRESIDENTS CUP

This is the second tier of Spring Cup competitions and also identifies a State Champion in each age group.

- This is an open entry competition recommended for lower level Division I and Super II teams.
- The competition will be played under the South Texas Presidents Cup rules as published by STYSA.
- These rules apply from the first game played at the District level that determines advancement / elimination of a team.
- A team may only play in the age group in which they participated in during the Fall season.
- There is no play time requirement, no matter what the designated level of play is of the team entered in the competition.
- The State Tournament will be held in May on the date specified on the Perpetual Calendar and will include either 4 or 5 teams, two from each District and one from El Paso, if entered in accordance with the entry requirements.
- The site of the Presidents Cup will alternate between Districts and will be played in the District not hosting the State Cup. State Champions in the Under-13 through Under-17 age groups will represent the State at the Region III Presidents Cup to be hosted by one of the Region III state associations in early June.
- Regional Champions will then represent the State and the Region at the National Presidents Cup Tournament in mid-July.

ELIGIBILITY

- To be eligible, all players must be properly registered and in compliance with all STYSA registration rules.
- Any team found to have an ineligible player on the roster or having used an ineligible player in any game during the competition forfeits each game involving the ineligible player and the team will be ineligible to advance to the Regional competition.
- Each player and team official participating in the Presidents Cup competition must have a properly prepared and laminated ID Card for the current seasonal year that has been signed by the appropriate league official and includes a recent photo of the individual. ID cards will be checked by the referee crew prior to the start of each match of the Competition.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must wear an official uniform with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must have an alternate jersey of an opposing color (light vs dark) with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- If, in the opinion of referee, there is a color conflict, the home team shall change to a jersey of an alternate color.
- A team not ready to play at the scheduled start time will be granted a 10-minute grace period. If the team is not prepared to play at the end of the grace period, the game will be declared a forfeit (see forfeiture rule).
- A team must have at least 7 players on the field of play at the start of the game. If the team has less than 7 players, the team will forfeit the game (see forfeiture rule).
- Both teams and team officials participating in the game shall be on one touch line. Parents and spectators will be on the opposite touchline directly across from their team's bench area.
- A team may have no more than four (4) individuals designated as team officials on the team sideline at any given time. A coach or team officials Adult Participation Pass (Kidsafe Pass) will

be their Bench Pass. The Kidsafe Pass must be visible at all times that the coach or team official is on the team sideline.

- All team officials must remain within the designated technical area and behave in a responsible manner.
- **NEW FOR 2016** - In State Associations where player registrations are 25,001 or larger during the immediately preceding seasonal year, a player who participated in quarter, semi or final matches in a designated State NCS series or participated in the National League or the most competitive division of the respective regional league (SRPL-W), is not eligible to participate in a Regional or National President's Cup. Players who were on the Primary Roster for a South Texas team who participated in SRPL are not eligible to compete in the South Texas Presidents Cup.

GAME PLAY

- Ball sizes, game lengths, and overtime periods will be in accordance with STYSA Rules.
- If inclement weather affects the Presidents Cup State Tournament, the following process will apply regarding play and the determination of the winner.
 - If play is suspended or the start of play is delayed, the Cup Committee may eliminate overtime periods in the event of a tie and go directly to FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.
 - The game length may be reduced as needed by the Cup Committee. If the game is terminated after the start of the second half, the result of the game will stand. In the event, the game is tied when terminated, advancement in the competition will be determined by FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.

PLAYER / TEAM GEAR LOGO POLICY

National Presidents Cup Rule 304. Passes, Rosters and Uniforms

- (3)At every level of the National Presidents Cup competitions, a player or team official at a game site to participate in a game or associated activity of the competitions 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 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 official may continue to remain at the game site for the game or associated activity.

STYSA Specific - At every level of South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) competitions, each player or team official at a game may only have on his/her/their apparel the name, logo, or other identifying mark of a member directly or indirectly of STYSA or US Youth Soccer. A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than STYSA or US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before a player, team, or team official may participate in a STYSA sanctioned Fall league or Spring Cup competition.

Roster/Game Card/Uniform Number Consistency (State Finals)

- Rosters, Game Cards and Uniform Numbers for State Finals weekend must be consistent and accurate. The number on a player's uniform must match what is listed on the Game Card and what is listed for the Official Team Roster. If a player is wearing a different number than what is listed on the Official Roster and Game Cards for State Finals weekend, the number on the Game Card and the Official Roster must be changed. Every change request to STYSA will result in a \$25.00 administrative fee.

PLAY FORMAT AND ADVANCEMENT

For the U13-U19 age groups, four groups will be formed from each District with a maximum of 4 teams in each group (total of 16 teams from each District). Some group sizes may be adjusted based on the total number of teams registered. After round-robin group play, the top point finisher from each group will participate in a cross-bracket District semi-final as follows:

West A1 vs West D1
West B1 vs West C1
East A1 vs East D1
East B1 vs East C1

The winner of each semi-final game will advance to the South Texas Presidents Cup Finals Weekend, totaling four teams...two from the Eastern District, two from the Western District, with a coin flip used to determine seeding. A final game will be played in each District for those age groups where El Paso will be sending a team to the Finals weekend.

The 1st place finisher in the U13-U17 age groups at the Presidents Cup Finals Weekend will represent South Texas at the Region III Presidents Cup Tournament.

PRESIDENTS CUP ROSTER NOTES

- All teams are subject to the STYSA entry deadlines, transfer limit rules (5 inter-club transfers) and the roster core requirement (greater than 50%) from the fall qualifying event roster.
- All teams are subject to their local member association transfer rules and registration deadlines.
- The Regional competition has a continuity requirement for advancing teams to be eligible for participation. The required **Regional Roster Continuity of 9** will be based on the Official State Cup Roster submitted by Competition's the roster freeze date.

SECTION 5 – DIRECTORS CUP

The third tier of the Spring Cup series is identified as Directors Cup.

- This is a restricted entry competition open to teams that played at the Super II or Division II level in the previous fall season and is recommended for lower Super II and upper level Division II teams.
- The competition will be played under STYSA rules.
- These rules apply from the first game played at the local level that determines advancement / elimination of a team.
- All teams must retain a consistency of rosters between their Fall and Spring rosters as designated in the entry instructions.
- A team may only play in the age group in which they participated in during the Fall season.
- There is a requirement to play each player at least 50% of the time.
- In order to be eligible, teams must have participated in a fall qualifying league and must participate in their local association's spring league (if offered). Any exceptions to team eligibility must be approved by the Competitions Committee.
- An Invitational District Tournament will be held in late April within each District.
- The State Tournament will be held in May on the date specified on the Perpetual Calendar and will include the first and second place teams in each age group from the two District tournaments, along with a representative from El Paso if entered.
- There is no advancement from the Directors Cup.

ELIGIBILITY

- To be eligible, all players must be properly registered and in compliance with all state registration rules.
- Any team found to have an ineligible player on the roster or having used an ineligible player in any game during the competition forfeits each game involving the ineligible player.
- Each player and team official participating in the Directors Cup competition must have a properly prepared and laminated ID Card for the current seasonal year that has been signed by the appropriate league official and includes a recent photo of the individual. ID cards will be checked by the referee crew prior to the start of each match of the Competition.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must wear an official uniform with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must have an alternate jersey of an opposing color (light vs dark) with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- If, in the opinion of referee, there is a color conflict, the home team shall change to a jersey of an alternate color.
- A team not ready to play at the scheduled start time will be granted a 10-minute grace period. If the team is not prepared to play at the end of the grace period, the game will be declared a forfeit (see forfeiture rule).
- A U13-U19 team must have at least 7 players on the field of play at the start of the game. If the team has less than 7 players, the team will forfeit the game (see forfeiture rule).
- A U11-U12 team must have at least 6 players on the field of play at the start of the game. If the team has less than 6 players, the team will forfeit the game (see forfeiture rule).
- Both teams and team officials participating in the game shall be on one touch line. Parents and spectators will be on the opposite touchline directly across from their team's bench area.
- A team may have no more than four (4) individuals designated as team officials on the team sideline at any given time. A coach or team officials Adult Participation Pass (Kidsafe Pass) will

be their Bench Pass. The Kidsafe Pass must be visible at all times that the coach or team official is on the team sideline.

- All team officials must remain within the designated technical area and behave in a responsible manner.

GAME PLAY

- Ball sizes, game lengths, and overtime periods will be in accordance with STYSA Rules.
- If inclement weather affects the Directors Cup State Tournament, the following process will apply regarding play and the determination of the winner.
 - If play is suspended or the start of play is delayed, the Cup Committee may eliminate overtime periods in the event of a tie and go directly to FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.
 - The game length may be reduced as needed by the Cup Committee. If the game is terminated after the start of the second half, the result of the game will stand. In the event, the game is tied when terminated, advancement in the competition will be determined by FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.

PLAYER / TEAM GEAR LOGO POLICY

- At every level of South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) competitions, each player or team official at a game may only have on his/her/their apparel the name, logo, or other identifying mark of a member directly or indirectly of STYSA or US Youth Soccer A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than STYSA or US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before a player, team, or team official may participate in a STYSA sanctioned Fall league or Spring Cup competition.

PLAY FORMAT AND ADVANCEMENT

Play groups will be formed in each District. The number of teams in each group and number of groups will be determined based on the total registration numbers for each age group. Advancement scenarios to Directors Cup State Finals Weekend will differ based on the number of teams participating in each age group/gender. Advancement determination for each age group will be posted on the South Texas website (www.stxsoccer.org) after the number of teams/groups in each age group is finalized.

The 1st and 2nd place finishers at the District Playoffs will advance to the Directors Cup State Finals Weekend.

SECTION 6 – SOUTH TEXAS CUP

South Texas Cup is a developmental level State competition offered in the Spring.

- This is a restricted entry competition open to Division II or Division III teams from the previous fall season and recommended for lower Division II and upper Division III teams.
- There will be two brackets of play (Division II and Division III). STYSA may combine brackets based on the number of registered teams.
- Teams must be registered for South Texas Cup by the date designated by STYSA.
- In order to be eligible, teams must participate in their local association's spring league.
- An Invitational District Tournament will be held in mid-April within each District composed of teams that have competed in a local association spring league the same seasonal year.
- The State tournament will be held 1 to 2 weeks after the District tournament as specified on the Perpetual Calendar. The State tournament will include the first and second place teams in each age group from the two District tournaments, along with a representative from El Paso if entered.
- There is a requirement for coaches to make every effort to play each player at least 50% of the time.
- Each team will be allowed up to 3 guest players
 - Guest players must be a primary player from a team that is eligible for, but not participating in, the South Texas Cup.
 - Guest players must be of the same age group or younger than the team they are guest playing for.
 - Guest players must be of the same level of play or lower than the team they are guest playing for (i.e. a Division III team may NOT use guest players who are Division II).
 - Guest players who are rostered to another team participating in South Texas Cup or any other STYSA cup competition are not eligible to guest play.

ELIGIBILITY

- To be eligible, all players must be properly registered and in compliance with all state registration rules.
- Any team found to have an ineligible player on the roster or having used an ineligible player in any game during the competition forfeits each game involving the ineligible player.
- Each player and team official participating in the South Texas Cup competition must have a properly prepared and laminated ID Card for the current seasonal year that has been signed by the appropriate league official and includes a recent photo of the individual.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must wear an official uniform with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- Each player (including the goalkeeper) must have an alternate jersey of an opposing color (light vs dark) with a jersey number that is different from the number of every other player on that team.
- In, in the opinion of referee, there is a color conflict, the home team shall change to a jersey of an alternate color.
- A team not ready to play at the scheduled start time will be granted a 10-minute grace period. Any team not ready to play after this grace period has expired shall be reported to the Tournament Director by the center referee. The STYSA Appeals Committee shall decide when a forfeit is declared.
- A U13-U19 team must have at least 7 players on the field of play at the start of the game.
- A U11-U12 team must have at least 6 players on the field of play at the start of the game.

- Both teams and team officials participating in the game shall be on one touch line. Parents and spectators will be on the opposite touchline.
- A team may have no more than four (4) individuals designated as team officials on the team sideline at any given time. Each team official must have their Adult Participation Pass (Kidsafe Pass) displayed at all times while they are on the team sideline.
- All team officials must remain within the designated technical area and behave in a responsible manner.

GAME PLAY

- Ball sizes, game lengths, and overtime periods will be in accordance with STYSA Rules.
- If inclement weather affects the South Texas Cup State Tournament, the following process will apply regarding play and the determination of the winner.
 - If play is suspended or the start of play is delayed, the Cup Committee may eliminate overtime periods in the event of a tie and go directly to FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.
 - The game length may be reduced as needed by the Cup Committee. If the game is terminated after the start of the second half, the result of the game will stand. In the event, the game is tied when terminated, advancement in the competition will be determined by FIFA Kicks from the Penalty Mark.

PLAYER / TEAM GEAR LOGO POLICY

- At every level of South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) competitions, each player or team official at a game may only have on his/her/their apparel the name, logo, or other identifying mark of a member directly or indirectly of STYSA or US Youth Soccer A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than STYSA or US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before a player, team, or team official may participate in a STYSA sanctioned Fall league or Spring Cup competition.

PLAY FORMAT AND ADVANCEMENT

Any Division II or III team not pre-qualified for Directors Cup may enter the South Texas Cup District event. The number of teams in each group and number of groups will be determined based on the total registration numbers for each age group. Advancement scenarios to South Texas Cup State Finals Weekend will differ based on the number of teams participating in each age group/gender at the District competition. Advancement determination for each age group will be posted on the South Texas website (www.stxsoccer.org) after the number of teams/groups in each age group is finalized.

The 1st and 2nd place finishers at the District Playoffs will advance to the South Texas Cup State Finals Weekend.

SECTION 7 – CUP FINALS WEEKEND RULES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION A – Pre-Tournament Procedures

Scheduling of Games

- The Cup competition administrator will oversee the scheduling of games for the competition based on information with regard to field sizes, locations, field conditions, availability.
- Schedules will be developed with placeholders based on the number of teams participating
- The format of the tournament shall be in compliance with State Rules which require a full round robin. Games may end in a tie.

Mandatory Check-in

A team representative is required to check-in the team on Friday night or at the time and location designated. Requests for an exception must be submitted in writing prior to the event stating the reason one team representative cannot be present on Friday evening. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Check-in Documentation

The team representative must provide the following documents at Team Check-in:

- US Youth Soccer Player Pass - each player must have an ID Card that includes the player's name, age group, birth date, a current photo of the player, is signed by the Association registrar, and is laminated with a material that allows the information to be seen and read
- Adult Participation (Kidsafe) Pass - each adult must have a pass of the color defined for the current seasonal year that includes the adult's name, a current photo of the adult, is signed by the adult and Association registrar, and is laminated with a material that allows the information to be seen and read. This pass must be visible at all times.
- Team roster – any roster provided by the team will be checked against the roster provided by the State. Any discrepancies must be resolved as the State Roster will be the official roster for the State competition
- Penalty Point Report – The Cup competition administrator will generate this report and provide at check-in.
- Completed and signed copies of any other documents required for that competition
 - i.e. for State Cup and Presidents Cup a Advancement Commitment Form is required

Copies of birth certificates are not required as this information is considered to have been verified by the Association or Club Registrar at the time of registration. If a player's birth date is challenged, the team representative will have 24 hours in which to provide a copy of the document for the player being challenged.

Any birth certificate of age verification document that is in a foreign language must have an English translation attached to the original document. Translations may be provided by anyone recognized as a translator by South Texas Youth Soccer Association. No parent or other family member will be allowed to translate for any member of their son or daughter's team unless they are certified or accredited to teach the specific language, i.e. high school teacher, professor of languages at a university or college, a court translator, or anyone recognized as an official translator by the organization. All translations will be dated and include qualifications to translate, the translator's signature, address and telephone number.

Official Game Cards

The official record of the tournament is the game card filled out by the referee. All game cards will be produced prior to the event and will be available for distribution to the referee prior to the game for which they are scheduled. The Game Card must include, but is not limited to:

- Game information – date, time, location, game number, field number
- Division of play – age and gender
- Team names – designated as “home” and “away”
- Jersey number of each player
- Jersey number of players who scored
- Game time of scores
- Final score of the game
- Coaches Name
- Details on cautions and sendoffs
- Notation for any person sitting out a Red Card suspension
- Referee comments
- Referee signatures
- Coaches / Team Official signatures

At the end of each match a team administrator from each team is required to inspect and sign the game report. Any discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the referee at this time. Once the report is turned into tournament headquarters by the referee, it will be deemed as the official report and no changes to information on the card will be permitted.

In the event that one or both coaches wish to file a protest regarding the match, this must also be noted on the game card and both coaches shall remain onsite until the issue is resolved.

SECTION B – One-site Procedures

Field Marking

Each sideline is to be marked with a clearly defined “Technical Area” for the teams. On the spectator’s sideline, an additional area should be marked that starts 3 yards from the half-field line and 1 yard from the touch line, extending to the top of the penalty area parallel to the touchline per spectator area. These spectator areas will keep the half-field area clear and provide uninterrupted line space for the assistant referee.

Game Balls

South Texas Youth Soccer Association will provide balls of the appropriate size for each age group in State Cup and Presidents Cup . Note: The game balls for each age group **MUST** meet the requirements of the competition. Once the game begins, a protest cannot be lodged because of an illegal ball.

Grace Periods

Teams must be ready to play at the scheduled start time. A ten (10) minute grace period may be allowed. Any team not ready to play after this grace period has expired shall be reported to the Tournament Director by the center referee. The STYSA Appeals Committee shall decide when a forfeit is declared. A minimum of seven (7) players constitutes a legal team.

Home Team – Visiting Team

The team listed first is the home team. The visiting team will have the choice of jersey colors. If, in the opinion of the referee there is a color conflict with the jersey color of the opponent, the home team shall change jerseys.

Team and Spectator Location

The teams will sit on the opposite side of the fields from the spectators. Teams will be separated by a minimum distance of 20 yards, 10 yards either side of the center line, or by a table or bench. A maximum of four adults per team will be permitted on the team sideline and all must have visible the Bench Pass issued by the Tournament.

Bench Passes

A coach or team officials Adult Participation Pass (Kidsafe Pass) will be their Bench Pass. The Kidsafe Pass must be visible at all times that the coach or team official is on the team sideline. No Pass, No Attendance on the team sideline, No exceptions.

Uniforms / Equipment

- Each player must wear an official uniform with a six-inch minimum size number on the back of the shirt (this includes goalies). Duplicate numbers are not permitted.
- The wearing of shin guards is mandatory for all players. A player will not be allowed to play without wearing them at all times during the game.
- In accordance with state rules, no player will be allowed to play with a hard cast, padded or otherwise. Braces with exposed metal or hard plastics must be wrapped with a minimum of ½ inch high density foam wrapping or the manufacturer's recommended protective coating.
- The referee has final judgment as to any equipment a player is allowed to wear. In the event a player wishes to wear a brace or other apparatus during a game, the player must have the apparatus inspected by the Referee Committee prior to the start of the competition. A log will be maintained by the Referee Committee of all inspections and will include the date and time of the inspection; the player's name, age, and team name; and whether the apparatus may or may not be worn during play.
- Each player, team, and team official may only have on his/her/their apparel the name, logo, or other identifying mark of US Youth soccer or a member directly or indirectly of US Youth Soccer.
 - A name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed, replaced, or covered before a player, team or team official may enter or remain at a field complex where the STYSA competition is being held.
 - After an initial warning pursuant to above, the name, logo, or other identifying mark of any youth soccer organization other than US Youth Soccer or its member must be removed before the player, team or team official may enter or continue in the competition.

Player / Adult ID Cards

Before each game, the referee or assistant referee will obtain the player and team official passes from either the field marshal or coach. The passes will remain with the referee for the duration of the game. Passes of individuals ejected from the game will be turned in by the referee or field marshal with the Game Card to Tournament Headquarters. It will be the responsibility of each coach, or his/her designee, at the end of the game, to obtain the remaining passes back from the referee and also from tournament headquarters for any players or coaches who were ejected and have served the required suspension.

SECTION C – Rules of Play, Scoring, and Forfeits

Except as otherwise noted in these rules, STYSA General Rules of Play will govern all games.

Play Time and Substitution Requirements for Players

- State Cup (USYS National Championship Series)
 - There is no play time requirement.
 - For the U13 and U14 age groups, the number of substitutions shall be unlimited.
 - Substitutions may be made with prior permission from the referee when the team is in possession of the throw in, or by either team when there is a goal kick, after a goal is scored, or there is an injury situation. After a caution, a substitution can be made for the player receiving the caution.
 - For the U15 through U19 age groups, the number of substitutions shall be limited.
 - a maximum of 7 substitutions for each team shall be allowed in each game during each half of play and during overtime play. After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game.
 - Substitutions may be made when the team is in possession of the throw in, or by either team when there is a goal kick, after a goal is scored, or there is an injury situation
- Presidents Cup
 - There is no play time requirement.
 - The number of substitutions shall be unlimited.
 - Substitutions may be made with prior permission from the referee when the team is in possession of the throw in, or by either team when there is a goal kick, after a goal is scored, or there is an injury situation. After a caution, a substitution can be made for the player receiving the caution.
- Directors Cup
 - Coaches must make every effort to play each registered player that is present one-half of the game unless unable to do so due to a player's illness or injury or for disciplinary reasons. In the event a player is present but will not be playing, the coach must inform the referee and the opposing coach as to the reason the player will not participate.
 - The number of substitutions shall be unlimited.
 - Substitutions may be made with prior permission from the referee when the team is in possession of the throw in, or by either team when there is a goal kick, after a goal is scored, or there is an injury situation. After a caution, a substitution can be made for the player receiving the caution.
- South Texas Cup
 - Coaches must make every effort to pay each registered player that is present one-half of the game unless unable to do so due to a player's illness or injury or for disciplinary reasons. In the event a player is present but will not be playing, the coach must inform the referee and the opposing coach as to the reason the player will not participate.
 - The number of substitutions shall be unlimited.
 - Substitutions may be made with prior permission from the referee when the team is in possession of the throw in, or by either team when there is a goal kick, after a goal is scored, or there is an injury situation. After a caution, a substitution can be made for the player receiving the caution.

Determination of Winners - Scoring

Team standings shall be determined by accumulation of points awarded as follows:

- 6 points for a win
- 3 points for a tie
- 0 points for a loss
- 1 point for each goal to a maximum of 3 goals
- 1 point for a shutout

Tiebreakers

In the event two or more teams accumulate an equal number of points within any group, the following tiebreakers will be considered in order until the tie is broken:

- Winner in head-to-head competition; then, if the teams are tied,
- Highest goal difference (goals for minus goals against) with a maximum of three (3) goals difference per game counted both for and against. For example, if the score is 8-3, the calculation would be +3 goals for the winning team, -3 goals for the losing team. If the score is 6-4, the calculation would be +2 goals for the winning team and -2 goals for the losing team.
- Total goals allowed. (Team with the fewest total goals allowed advances.)
- Penalty kicks (See Admin Handbook 5.8.5.)

Forfeiture Rule

In the event a team forfeits any match, the official game scores for all of that team's games will be recorded as 3-0 losses. A team that forfeits a match will be considered to have withdrawn from the tournament, with final review by the STYSA Appeals Committee.

If a forfeit is declared because of a rules violation or protest, the winning team will be awarded 10 points, the game scored 3-0 and marked as an administrative forfeit. In cases of administrative forfeits, a team will not be removed from the event. If a team fails to appear or play a game, the team shall be removed from the competition immediately and their games shall not count. Any team that fails to complete the tournament may be subject to disciplinary sanctions and/or fines by STYSA.

Unfinished Games

If any game is abandoned, the STYSA Appeals Committee or any three (3) members of the STYSA Executive Committee shall decide: a) if the score at the time of the abandonment shall be the score of the game; b) if the game shall be declared a forfeit for one or both teams; or, c) if the game shall be replayed. There shall be no appeal of the decision.

SECTION D – DISCIPLINE AND PROTESTS

Player Ejections

- A player who is sent off must be escorted from the field by a person with a Bench Pass to the designated red card holding area for the duration of the match. The player may not remain in the bench area.
- The player's pass, together with the referee report, shall be turned over to appropriate person at Tournament Headquarters by the referee.
- The minimum penalty for an ejection is the player not being permitted to play in the immediate next competition match of his or her team. This penalty may be increased in accordance with Section 4 of the STYSA Administrative Handbook.

- If the team of an ejected player allows the player to participate in the game he or she is required to sit out, that team will automatically forfeit the game (see forfeiture rule).
- An ejected player may rejoin their team after the match from which he/she has been ejected has completely ended.
- A team representative is responsible for picking up the player's pass from tournament officials following the completion of the disciplinary period.

Bench Personnel Ejection, Point Accumulation, Send-off, or Request to Leave

- If a coach, assistant coach, trainer or any other adult associated with the team is not ejected or asked to leave a game by a referee but reaches 9 penalty points (e.g., third caution), then the suspension is for the next game actually played by the team which played the game in which the coach received his 9th point. Suspension shall not be served in forfeited games.
- If a coach, assistant coach, trainer or any other adult associated with the team is ejected or asked to leave the game by the referee, the suspension requires that they leave the facility and cannot return for the remainder of that day and for the next regularly scheduled match day, and for the next game actually played by the team which played the game from which they were ejected.
- If a coach, assistant coach, trainer or any other adult associated with the team is not ejected or asked to leave a game by a referee but reaches 18, 24 or 30 penalty points, then the suspension will be for the next 2, 3, or 4 games actually played by the team which played the game in which the coach reached the appropriate points.
- The coaches' pass together with the referee's report of the incident shall be turned over to the appropriate person at Tournament Headquarters who will submit it to the STYSA Appeals Committee.
- The minimum penalty for the ejection is a one game suspension to be served in the next immediately following game played by the team.
- The penalty may be increased at the determination of the STYSA Appeals Committee. No appeals are allowed.
- Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team, such as relatives and spectators, are also subject to the jurisdiction and authority of US Youth Soccer and the STYSA. A team may be held responsible for the actions of any individual at any game that is a supporter of that team.

Tournament Discipline

Tournament discipline will be the responsibility of the STYSA Appeals Committee. Any extenuating circumstances that would prevent a team from complying with all requirements must be submitted to the designated Tournament Coordinator prior to the tournament. Failure to comply with all tournament requirements could result in a fine, probation, suspension or a combination of these determinations.

Coaches are responsible for their behavior as well as that of their coaching staff, parents and players.

Protests

All questions relating to the qualifications of the competitors or interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest shall be referred to the STYSA Appeals Committee.

- Validity – To be valid and eligible for consideration, each protest must:
 - be verbally lodged with the referee and the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play or before leaving the game site except as noted below.
 - be filed with the Chair of the STYSA Appeals Committee or his/her representative within 30 minutes of the completion of the game in protest.

- include one written copy of the protest including all particulars regarding the grounds on which the protest is being lodged; and
 - include the protest fee of \$200 in the form of cash or a cashier's check or money order made payable to STYSA.
- Timing
 - Game Situations - All protests must be received by the Chair of the STYSA Appeals Committee or his/her designee within 30 minutes of the completion of the game being protested.
 - Non-game situations - All protests must be received by the Chair of the Protest Committee or his/her designee within four hours of the scheduled start time of the last game in the bracket or division in question, whichever is latest.
- Playing Conditions - All protests relating to the ground, goal posts, bars or other appurtenances of the games shall be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the referee and the opposing coach prior to the start of the game.

Procedures

- The STYSA Appeals Committee shall immediately upon the receipt of a protest notify the teams and shall give a copy of the protest and all particulars to the teams, which will then have the right to defend their cases, with or without witnesses (maximum of 2 per each team).
- A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations is not sufficient grounds for protest. Judgment decisions of the referee are not subject to protest.
- The STYSA Appeals Committee shall compile the necessary information to hear the protest, from all available sources before the protest is heard. This shall include, if possible, coaches, field marshals, referees, assessors, witnesses if necessary, etc.
- After compiling the necessary information, the STYSA Appeals committee will meet to conduct the protest hearing. The decisions of the committee shall be binding on all parties. The STYSA Appeals Committee will notify the parties of the committee's decision.