



COLORADO STATE CUP NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES RULES AND PROCEDURES

**2014 Series
Revised July 2014**

I. PURPOSE OF THE COMPETITION

- A. The US Youth Soccer National Championship Series represent the first level in a three stage competition held annually to establish State, Regional and National Champions within US Youth Soccer. The Colorado competition is conducted in a tournament format to establish State Champion teams in age brackets U12 and older. By winning a State Championship in their respective age bracket, a team concurrently earns the privilege and responsibility of representing Colorado at the Region IV US Youth Soccer National Championship Series. A team in the U13 through U19 age brackets that achieves a Regional Championship concurrently earns the privilege and responsibility of representing Region IV and their state association in the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.
- B. CSA will also be offering a U11 State Cup Qualifying competition for those 11:11 teams who wish to participate. The winner of each respective gender will be eligible to participate in the U12 State Cup in the spring. Only the winner of the State Cup qualifier may participate in the U12 State Cup Competition.

II. AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The following Specific Rules shall apply to all US Youth Soccer National Championship Series games.
- B. The authority for approval of dates of the competition shall be vested in the Colorado Soccer Association Board of Directors.
- C. State, Regional and National Championship Competitions shall take precedence over all other games, whether they are league or tournament play, including out of state play. Match rescheduling for the purpose of allowing a team or members of that team, to compete in another event will not be permitted.
- D. The CSA State Cup Tournament Committee is responsible for developing the scheduling of games.
 - 1. Hosting sites may be asked to provide information on field size, location and availability to assist in the scheduling process.
 - 2. Within the limits imposed by these rules and current CSA Cup Process Guidelines and by uncontrollable external conditions, the schedule is developed in an objective manner with no favoritism shown to specific teams or Clubs.
 - 3. Schedules will be played as published by CSA.

- E. The entrance fees for this competition shall be established and approved by the CSA Board of Directors.

III. TEAM ELIGIBILITY

- A. US Youth National Soccer Championship Series shall be open to any age appropriate youth soccer team that is duly registered with CSA, providing that such team is in good standing. State Cup competition shall not be open to select teams.
- B. All players shall be registered with CSA affiliated clubs and teams.
 - i. Modification – Player Eligibility:
 - i. A player who played in the Presidents Cup Fall series who has transferred, selected or moved to another team may compete with their new team in the National Spring Cup series. This ONLY refers to the U12 and U13 boys and girls age groups under the following circumstances:
 - 1. Their Presidents Cup team was eliminated from advancing.
 - 2. The Presidents Cup roster cannot be less than 65% plus one player of the original Presidents Cup roster after the move.
 - ii. Clubs must request approval 14 days prior to start of Spring National Cup competition.
- C. The team roster for US Youth National Soccer Championship Series and all levels of Cup Competition for which the team qualifies, shall be the team league roster at the time the roster is frozen. The team roster for this competition shall be frozen no later than 9 calendar days (at the close of business) prior to the first scheduled Cup game. The roster properly submitted for State Cup will also be the National Championship roster. Regional rosters are frozen 14 days prior to the first match at Regional Competition.
- D. A team must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the league and every level of National Championships competitions by maintaining a minimum of 9 players common to the roster of the team at every level of the competitions.
- E. 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 level of Cup competition. Each player with a club pass will be assigned to a team roster competing in State Cup.
- F. Players with a club pass whose team is eliminated from State Cup play are eligible for other teams within the Club advancing within State Cup competition.
- G. A State Cup team roster may not include more than five (5) rostered youth who were previously rostered during the current seasonal year with a club other than the club of which the team is a member.
- H. U12 and up age groups may have up to 22 players on their roster.
- I. For those teams utilizing the 22 man roster, only 18 players may be suited up in game day uniforms to play at any given game. The team may allow the remaining 4 players to sit on the bench provided that they are not suited up in game day uniforms. These players are subject to the Laws of The Game.

- J. Any team utilizing the 22 man roster must inform the game assigned game day referee as to which players will be participating in their upcoming match. The Referee shall line out those players not participating on the provided game day roster.

Ultimate Level of Competition

Age	Boys	Girls
Under 19	National	National
Under 18	National	National
Under 17	National	National
Under 16	National	National
Under 15	National	National
Under 14	National	National
Under 13	National	National
Under 12	Regional	Regional
Under 11	State	State

IV. TEAM CREDENTIALS

- A. By entering the US Youth National Soccer Championship Series, each team agrees to appear for and to compete in every scheduled match for whom it qualifies, including any and all Regional and National Championship matches. Each team also agrees to assume full responsibility for the financial and travel requirements associated with competition at the Regional and National levels.
- B. All fees and forms required for State Cup registration must be submitted to the CSA office on or before the close of business on the due date specified on application documents.
- C. At every cup match each team must have valid player passes for all players listed on the roster. Coaches must also have valid pass for each team they are rostered at every cup match.

V. PROCEDURES OF THE COMPETITION

- A. **VENUE:** In State Cup Competition, pairings, sites and format of play shall be determined by the CSA Cup Committee.
- B. **FORMAT:** Teams in each age group will be seeded into 4 team flights. The number of flights shall be determined by the number of teams entered. Play-in matches will be held prior to the preliminary rounds to establish the 4 team flight requirement.
- C. **FLIGHTING:** Structure of the competition shall be as follows:

Teams	Number of Flights	Competition Structure
4	1	Preliminary & Final
8	2	Preliminary, Semi & Final
12	3	Preliminary, Quarter, Semi & Final
16	4	
20+	5 or more	

NOTE: The Cup Committee may modify the structure of competition to include cross flight play if the modification does **NOT** add more game days to the format of tournament competition.

- D. **SEEDING OF FLIGHTS:** In each gender/age category seeding will be conducted by the CSA League Operations Committee (LOC) according to the following order of criteria.
1. Previous year champion and finalist in National State Cup, first and second seed.
 2. Previous season league standings.
- E. **Play-In Matches:** Play-in matches will be held one to two weeks prior to preliminary round play to identify teams who will advance to the preliminary round to balance the 4 team flight requirements. Lower seeded teams will have a one game competition to establish who will advance to the preliminary round. If a team denies participation in the Play-In format, the remaining teams will not be reseeded. The scheduled opponent of the play-in match would automatically advance to Pool Play. If a team drops 4 days or more prior to the play-in match, the team entry fee will be refunded, less expenses that CSA cannot recoup. ie: referees, fields, medics, etc. If a team drops from a play-in match 3 or less days prior to scheduled match, the team forfeits the entire entry fee. CSA reserves the right to modify the Play-In format if the modification does not impact the specific Cup schedule; extending days of competition of the series. Play-in teams who do not advance into the preliminary round will have a portion of the fee refunded.
- F. **Officials:** The CSA State Referee Assignor shall select the referees for all State Cup Competition matches. Every effort will be made to supply (3) three referees. However, club lines shall be used in extreme situations. The Referee Assignor shall make every effort to properly balance the experience, assessing of Official performance and utilization of qualified referees to support the event.
- G. **Late withdrawals:** Teams who are accepted to the competition and then withdraw prior to their first scheduled match will forfeit their entry fee and their team/club will be fined \$1,000.00. In addition, the team will be placed on probation for State Cup play (President's or National Championship Series) for 2 years. Subsequent withdrawals under these conditions will result in the team being fined and not being accepted into competition.
- H. **NO SHOWS:** Any Cup team failing to appear for a single scheduled cup match without the prior approval of the Cup Committee will be assessed a forfeit, and the Cup Committee shall review the circumstances of the no show for possible disciplinary review and/or a fine.
1. A catastrophic event (one regarded as a great misfortune) outside the control of the Team will only be considered for rescheduling a missed match. The CSA Cup Committee decision is final upon review of the event.
 2. Any State Cup team failing to appear for two or more of its scheduled Cup matches will be eliminated from the competition, and all game results involving that team will be voided from the standings, whether earned or lost by competition or forfeiture. Should the Cup Committee find that the team's "failure to appear" was willful or negligent, the coach and/or club officials of said team would be referred for disciplinary action and fined.
- I. **TEAM EXPULSION:** A team removed from Cup Competition for any team fault for one or more matches shall be required to post a bond of no less than \$2,000 in certified funds with the CSA office prior to being admitted to any future state championship competitions.

The bond will only be refunded after the team has played in all Cup matches for whom it qualifies.

J. **PLAYER/COACH/SPECTATOR MISCONDUCT**

1. Penalties received by players/coaches in State Cup Competition, be it red or yellow cards, will be served only within the context of Cup play, and will not carry over into league or tournament play. If applicable, penalties will be served in Regional/National competition or carried over to the players/coaches next State or Presidents cup enrollment regardless of their team affiliation. If the coach is participating in both State and Presidents Cup, the penalty will be applied to the event in which it occurred.
2. Any coach rostered to more than one team in the competition who is ejected shall sit out a minimum of the next SCHEDULED MATCH for the team with which the ejection was awarded.
3. If a player/coach/spectator is sent off/dismissed for misconduct, the referee will submit the game report to the State Cup Commissioner or designated alternate. The player/coach/spectator shall be subjected to penalties described below and shall be ineligible until he or she is reinstated by cup administration.

IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION FROM CURRENT MATCH AND A MINIMUM ONE (1) GAME SUSPENSION FROM NEXT SCHEDULED MATCH

a) **Serious foul play (S1)**

Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to: when a player, in a violent or dangerous manner intentionally trips, holds, pushes, charges, or tackles an opponent from behind

b) Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball. This does not apply to a goalkeeper within his /her own penalty area **(S4)**

c) Denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick **(S5)**

d) **Offensive, Insulting or Abusive Language and/or Gestures (S6)** Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to: language uttered in frustration and, in the referee's opinion loud enough to be heard

e) Derogatory Language or inappropriate gestures displayed and directed at others. IF PERSISTENT IN OBSTINATE BEHAVIOR, THE CUP COMMITTEE CAN ENFORCE ADDITIONAL PENALTIES

f) **Receiving a Second Caution in the same match (S7)**

IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION FROM CURRENT MATCH AND A ONE (1) OR MORE GAME SUSPENSION FROM NEXT SCHEDULED MATCHES UPON REVIEW

g) **Irresponsible Behavior, Violent Conduct (S2)** Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to: Striking or attempting to strike another player, team official or spectator, unlawfully entering the field of play during an altercation.

h) Pushing in an act of aggression, striking or attempting to strike a referee, linesperson or fourth official will result in immediate suspension from all CSA

sanctioned activities and upon CSA Disciplinary Committee review a potential minimum of one (1) year suspension from all US Youth Soccer sanctioned activities, unless serious injuries are inflicted then the minimum suspension period will be at least five (5) years.

- i) **Spits at an Opponent** or any **other Person (S3)** Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to: spitting or other unseemly acts on or at another person.
- j) **Miscellaneous:** Any player, substitute or coach who refuses the referee's request for their name, or gives a false name, while the referee is gathering data to report an infringement of the "Laws of the Game", involving them, shall have a minimum of one (1) game added to the suspension that would normally be levied by the Disciplinary Committee. Actions listed above are to be regarded as minimum suspensions.
- k) **COACHES AND ASSISTANT COACHES SENT OFF THE FIELD OF PLAY FOR IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR, VIOLENT CONDUCT (S2) OR WHO PERSIST IN OFFENSIVE, INSULTING OR ABUSIVE LANGUAGE AND/OR GESTURES DIRECTED AT PERSON OR PERSONS (S6) AFTER BEING CAUTIONED MAY HAVE ONE (1) ADDITIONAL GAME ADDED TO THE SUSPENSION. BASED ON THE SEVERITY OF THE INCIDENT, THE CUP COMMITTEE MAY REFER THE INCIDENT TO THE CSA DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER REVIEW AND ACTION.**
- l) In specific situations, the State Cup Committee may place an individual on probation in addition to the suspension. The probationary period is to be served immediately following the suspension period and is intended to monitor the individual's degree of reform. Should an individual on probation be sent off the field of play and shown the red card during the probationary period the matter shall be referred to the State Cup Committee for evaluation.

K. SCORING: Scoring will be:

Points	
11	Beneficiary of forfeiture
7	Win
3	Tie
0	Loss
1	Each goal scored up to a maximum of three goals
1	Shut-out (unless a 0-0 tie)

L. DETERMINATION OF WILD CARD TEAMS WHEN NECESSARY:

Because of the variance in the number of flights in an age group, the wild card team will be determined by point averaging. That is to say, the total points accumulated at the end of first round play will be divided by the number of games played. Formats for advancement games are presented as projections only. They are subject to change because schedules may be changed to minimize a wild card team playing a former opponent.

M. KICK OFF AND WAITING TIME:

Kick off will be at the time shown on the tournament schedule. A 15-minute grace period will be allowed from the scheduled kick off time. If a team is not ready for play at the end of the grace period, the game is a FORFEIT.

N. THE TECHNICAL AREA (SIDELINES):

The technical area is a designated area for rostered substitutes and no more than four (4) technical staff members.

1. No more than four (4) rostered technical staff members are allowed in the designated area during the game. Team or Club Medical or Sports Management Trainers are not considered one of the four. Only one Medical or Sports Management Trainer is allowed within this area during the match. Medical or Sports Management Trainers must identify themselves via a pictured Coaches pass signifying that they are associated with the Club. Clubs are responsible to ensure that Medical or Sports Management Trainers are certified in their expertise.
2. The occupants of the technical staff in the bench area must be rostered to the team occupying the bench.
3. Technical Staff occupants of the technical area shall be identified to the referee by presenting a US Youth Soccer Coaches pass with current picture during team check-in. Each Coach or other Club Technical person will need to have a pass for each team they represent on the side-line.
4. Both teams shall be located on the same side of the field. Spectators of both teams shall occupy the opposite side of the field from the teams and coaches. Teams and spectators will not occupy a common side of adjacent fields.

O. DURATION OF GAME:

Age	Game Length	Half Time	Overtime – Playoff Rounds ONLY
U19	2 X 45	5 Minutes	2 X 15
U18	2 X 45	5 Minutes	2 X 15
U17	2 X 45	5 Minutes	2 X 15
U16	2 X 40	5 Minutes	2 X 15
U15	2 X 40	5 Minutes	2 X 15
U14	2 X 35	5 Minutes	2 X 10
U13	2 X 35	5 Minutes	2 X 10
U12	2 X 30	5 Minutes	2 X 10

Overtime Periods (for Play-In, Quarter Finals, Semifinals, and Championship Final Games Only): no overtime periods shall be played in preliminary-round games. If a quarterfinal, semifinal or final game is tied at the end of the second regulation period, there shall be two full overtime periods. If a quarterfinal, semi-final or final game is still tied at the end of the second overtime period, the winner shall be determined by FIFA kicks from the mark.

4 team Bracket minimum:

An age group must have a minimum of 4 teams to form competition. A single bracket age group would play 3 matches to determine bracket seed. A Championship match would be held between the #1 and #2 teams which would be a rematch. This would allow champion determination by a game, not by points.

P. TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES:

Should there be a tie at the completion of a round that determines advancement, the tie will be broken by the following order of criteria:

1. If a final preliminary match is between 2 teams that are tied, the match will be played until a winner is determined; OT periods and kicks from the mark if necessary.
2. Head to head results
3. Winner of most games
4. Cumulative goal differential between goals scored and goals allowed in all games played within the team's flight. Maximum difference allowed is four (4) goals per game.
5. Least goals allowed in all games played within the team's flight
6. Kicks from the penalty spot per FIFA Law

Note: If more than two teams are tied, the sequence will be followed until a team is eliminated. The remaining teams will then restart the sequence at Point "2" above until the tie is broken.

Q. PROTEST AND APPEALS:

1. To be valid and eligible for consideration, protests shall be lodged verbally with the referee and the opposing coach at the game site within five minutes after the end of the game, except protests relating to the grounds, goal posts, bars, and their appurtenances of the game must be in writing and submitted to the referee and opposing coach prior to the start of the game.
2. All protests must be made in writing within three hours after the end of the game in which the protest incident occurred, accompanied by a non-refundable \$100.00 protest fee to the CSA State Cup Commissioner or the State Cup Commissioner's designated representative.
3. The judgment decision of a game official cannot be protested, only the misapplication of the laws of the games.
4. If these conditions are not met in full, the protest will not be considered.
5. Upon receiving a properly filed protest, the CSA State Cup Commissioner or designate will determine the time and location of the protest hearing and shall designate the members of the ad hoc protest committee. This committee will meet in a closed meeting to make a ruling on the protest. A hearing will be held immediately upon receiving filed protest and protest fee if it requires immediate action. Otherwise, a decision will be rendered within 48 hours.
6. A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the State Cup competitions is not sufficient grounds for a protest or appeal. Violators may expect appropriate action by the CSA Cup Committee.

7. In State Cup competitions at the State Association level, decisions made on protests and appeals by the CSA State Cup Committee protest and appeal authority are binding and allow the competition to proceed.

R. UNFINISHED GAMES:

1. Any game that is stopped for any cause except team fault before the end of the first half will be replayed.
2. Any match that is stopped in the second half for any reason except team fault will be considered complete. However, if the second half is started, there has to be confidence that the half will be completed. The Official, Cup Commissioner (or designated alternate) and site coordinator will assess the specific situation prior to starting the second half.
3. A playoff round match stopped for any cause may be reviewed by the CSA Cup Committee for determination of status.

S. RULES OF PLAY:

FIFA rules as modified by CSA will be in effect.

T. HOME TEAM DETERMINATION:

The home team is always listed first on the cup schedule. If both teams are wearing similar jerseys, the home team shall wear dark jerseys and the visiting team shall wear light colored jerseys. If the visiting team does not carry a light colored jersey, then the visiting team shall wear an alternate dark color that does not conflict with the home team's colors. Either team's goalkeeper shall change jerseys as the referee directs regardless of home/visitor status. Each team will provide a game ball for the match, subject to referee approval.

U. SUBSTITUTIONS:

1. U14 and below age groups; unlimited substitutions shall be allowed with the referees permission at the following stoppages:
 - a) Prior to a throw-in, only by the team throwing in.
 - b) Prior to a goal-kick, by either team.
 - c) After a goal, by either team.
 - d) After an injury when the referee has stopped play, by either team.
 - e) Between periods, by either team.
2. For U15 and up age groups; a maximum of 7 substitutions for each team shall be allowed in each game during each half of play and during overtime play. After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game. Substitutions can enter at any stoppage of play.

VI. MATTERS NOT COVERED:

1. Any matter not addressed in these rules or the US Youth Soccer National Championship State Cup Rules will be decided by the CSA Cup Committee. Decisions in such matters specific to State Cup Rules will be final and binding.

2. If a party has reasons to appeal a decision made by the CSA Cup Committee other than what is covered within these rules, an appeal may be filed with the CSA Board of Directors which must follow the Appeal process as described within CSA Rules and Procedures.
3. Awards: CSA provides awards for teams finishing (1st) and (2nd) in each age bracket of the State Cup Tournament. The First Place team also receives a “Traveling Cup” that will have to be returned to CSA by the end of August for previous Fall Series Participants and the end of January for previous Spring Series Participants for awarding to the next series winners.

(Subject to Change)

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