

Commissioners Cup Rules and Regulations



Disclaimer: These rules are subject to change at the discretion of the FYSA Competition Committee. Rules are also subject to change at any time before the start of play. All Regional scheduling will be at the discretion of the respective Regional Vice President, with input from the Regional Committee. The locations for the regional round of play will be determined based on the number of teams entered into the event, hosting agreements, and field availability. There is a high chance that travel will be required. Updated 01/28/2026 all previous versions are null and void

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The competition is open to 9U-16U teams that meet all team eligibility requirements. 9U, 10U, 11U, and 12U age groups will have a Division 1 and a Division 2. All other age groups will have one division. There will be no heading allowed in the 9U-12U divisions in this tournament. Age groups and divisions may be combined as needed based on team registrations. The determination to combine will be made by the Regional Vice President.

I. Administration

- A. A Commissioners Cup Committee will be established to oversee the administration of the competition. The commission will have the authority to decide on all Commissioners Cup matters, including the interpretation of rules and regulations, the development and implementation of rules and regulations, and the development and implementation of policies and procedures. The committee will be comprised of the (4) Regional Vice Presidents, (1) staff member (to be appointed by the Vice President of Competition).
- B. The Commissioners Cup Committee and/or FYSA will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by any team due to the cancellation in part or whole of the tournament or for any travel incidental to the competition.

II. Eligibility

A. Team Eligibility

- 1. For 13U-16U age groups, teams participating in the highest level(s) of any Florida Youth Soccer Association-sanctioned league or its equivalent(s) are not eligible to participate in the Commissioners Cup unless the Regional Vice President grants a waiver for each regional event. Teams participating in the Florida State Premier League (FSPL) may apply, and their applications will be reviewed for eligibility and competitive balance by the Commissioners Cup Committee. 9U - 12U teams are excluded from this rule.
- 2. Teams may only enter the Commissioners Cup in the age group of their oldest player, based on the roster at the time of entry. After entry, teams may not release players in order to qualify for a younger age group. No team may enter an age group for which it does not have at least one player rostered of that age at the time of the roster freeze.
- 3. Teams participating in the Commissioners Cup must reside in the State of Florida.
- 4. All teams will be reviewed for eligibility and proper placement to make a final determination.
- 5. Failure to comply with one or more of the Team Eligibility requirements will result in the team's disqualification from the Commissioners Cup and forfeiture of the entry fee. Additional sanctions may be enforced according to non-compliance rules or at the discretion of the Commissioners Cup Committee.

B. Player Eligibility

- 1. Only players in good standing with current, valid, and verified player membership with a US Soccer Organization Member will be allowed to participate.
- 2. Players may only be rostered to a team as Primary players or Primary 1 players (formerly Club Pass). Secondary or guest players are prohibited from participating in the Commissioners Cup.
- 3. Teams are limited to a total of five (5) Primary 1 players per team.
- 4. Players may only participate on one Commissioners Cup team.
- 5. Players may not be simultaneously rostered to any other team participating in the Commissioners Cup or to any team participating in the Presidents Cup or the State Cup at the time of or after the roster freeze. Once the team has been eliminated from the

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Commissioners Cup competition, players may be eligible to be transferred to the Presidents Cup or State Cup teams, provided they do so prior to their respective roster freeze dates and they are permitted by the respective competition rules.

6. It shall be solely the club's responsibility to determine the eligibility of its players. It is the responsibility of the team to notify the site director of any player or coach suspension from a tournament, league play, or other event at the time of check-in.
7. Failure to comply with one or more of the player eligibility requirements will result in the player's disqualification from the Commissioners Cup and forfeiture of any previous games in which the ineligible player participated. Additional sanctions may be enforced according to non-compliance rules or at the discretion of the Commissioners Cup Committee.

C. Coach Eligibility

Only coaches in good standing with current, valid, and verified membership through a US Soccer Affiliate are permitted to coach. Verification of membership shall be accompanied by a current photo, and proof of valid risk management clearance, including concussion safety education, FDLE/USOPC background check, and SafeSport training.

D. Team/Application/Roster

Any changes and/or corrections must be made per FYSA registration procedures before the roster freeze date. It is the clubs' responsibility to ensure all changes or corrections are complete and accurate prior to the roster freeze date. Coaches can be added after the roster freeze date, provided the approval of the Vice President of the respective region or the FYSA Director of Competition for the State Finals stage has been obtained.

1. Application

The Commissioners Cup is limited to US Soccer Affiliate-registered teams in the 9U through 16U age groups. The application must be entered online in GotSport for a team to be accepted into the competition. It can be entered by the club registrar or a registered team staff member rostered to that team who has received access to the GotSport team account. The application cost will be published on the Commissioners Cup web page.

2. Roster Size

All teams must not have more than the maximum allowed number of players on their roster as of the freeze date. Roster maximums and requirements for age groups are as follows:

- a) 9U and 10U teams may have a roster of twelve (12) players at roster freeze.
- b) 11U and 12U teams may have a roster of sixteen (16) players at roster freeze.
- c) 13U-16U teams may have a roster of up to twenty-two (22) players at the roster freeze.
- d) Secondary and Guest players will be dropped from the roster at the time of roster freeze.
- e) Failure to comply with one or more of the roster eligibility requirements will result in the player's disqualification from Commissioners Cup play and forfeiture of any previous games in which the ineligible player participated. Additional sanctions may be enforced according to non-compliance rules or at the discretion of the Commissioners Cup Committee.

3. Roster Freeze

The roster freeze date is the final date by which all changes, additions, or deletions may be made to a team roster for the Regional Event. All-time reference Eastern Standard Time (EST). All team event

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rosters will be frozen at 5:00 p.m., ten days prior to the start of the first round of regional play for each age group.

Once the roster has been frozen in the Commissioners Cup event, no player activity can occur on the team's roster. Any player change will result in the team being disqualified from the competition. Coaches/Volunteers may be added after the roster freeze date.

For teams that advance to the State Final round, the rosters will open, and they will be frozen 10 days prior to the start of the semi-final round. Only changes & adjustments that meet the following criteria will be allowed:

- A maximum of 3 additions can be made to the roster
- Players who are added to the roster must be Primary 1 Players
- No players from outside of the club may be added to the roster
- If a player is being added to the roster to replace an injured player, the injured player must be removed from the roster.
- If a Primary 1 player is added to a roster that has reached its maximum number of players, a player must be removed from the roster for the Primary 1 player to be added.
 - Ex. If 3 players are added to a roster, 3 players must be removed if the roster is at the maximum limit.

III. Competition Format

A. Regional Authority

1. The Regional Vice Presidents, in conjunction with the Commissioners Cup Committee, will determine their respective Commissioners Cup dates, number of rounds, type of each round, and progression of advancing teams in each group in each region. The Regional Vice Presidents will conduct the blind draw for each Region. The winner of each age group will advance to the FYSA Commissioners Cup State Finals at the Lake Myrtle Sports Complex in Auburndale. If a region fails to have a team available for an age group, a blind draw will be conducted by the State office to fill the vacant spot.

B. Age Group Advancements

1. Teams competing in the 9U-10U age groups will end at the Regional Round. 9U-10U teams will not advance to the State Finals Round.
2. Teams competing in the 11U-16U age groups will advance from the Regional Round to the State Finals Round.

C. Determination of Standings

1. In any elimination match for the Regional and State Finals round that ends in a draw, the match will go directly to penalty kicks. There will be no overtime periods. In group play, there will be no penalty kicks or overtime periods. Standings in a group will be determined as defined below. In no case, once a tiebreaker has been used, will it be revisited if a team is eliminated. Points and tie-breaker criteria do not carry over to subsequent group play rounds.
 - a) First are game points: 3 points for a win
1 point for a tie
0 points for a loss
 - b) Second, as follows:

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- 1) **Head-to-head competition** (not used if 3 or more teams are tied in points); if no clear winner, then
 - 2) **Winner of most games**, if no clear winner then
 - 3) **Net Goal differential (NGD)** calculated as goals scored minus goals allowed, if no clear winner, then
 - 4) **Most Goals For**, if no clear winner then
 - 5) **Least Goals Against**, if no clear winner, then
 - 6) **Penalty kicks** in accordance with FIFA "Penalty Shootout"
- c) If three or more teams are still tied, then:
- 1) In the event three (3) teams are tied at the end of group play and are tied through all the above tiebreakers, the Site Director will hold a random draw with the first team drawn sitting out. The other two teams will then take kicks at the mark to establish a winner. The winner of this will then participate in kicks at the mark with the team that initially sat out the first round, and the winner will advance. If a 2nd team advances from this group, kicks from the mark will be taken by the 2 teams that lost their kicks from the mark pairing to determine the next team to advance.
 - 2) If four (4) teams tie at the end of group play, the site director will hold a random draw with the first team drawn and will participate in kicks from the mark against the second team drawn. The third and fourth teams will also participate in kicks from the mark. The two winners will then take kicks from the mark, with the winning team advancing. If a second team advances, the losing team in this pairing will be the next team to advance.

IV. Rules of Play

A. Laws of the Game

1. All games shall be in accordance with FIFA, US Soccer, and FYSA Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and US Youth Soccer Rules except as noted within the Commissioners Cup rules.
2. Heading in the 9U-12U Divisions
 - a) There will be no heading for the 9U-12U divisions for this tournament.
 - b) If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense.
 - c) If a deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

B. Game length

The duration of each match round is noted below. The game can end in a tie during the Group play rounds. Game lengths may be reduced due to scheduling constraints or extreme external circumstances.

Age Group	Game time
15U-16U	2x40
13U-14U	2x35
11U-12U	2x30
9U-10U	2x25

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Regions may use shorter game times when teams are playing two games per day:

Age Group	Game time
15U-16U	2x35
13U-14U	2x30
11U-12U	2x25
9U-10U	2x25

C. Ball Size

The size of the ball to be supplied by the “home team” will be (minimum of 2 balls to be provided):

1. 9U-12U Size 4 ball.
2. 13U-16U Size 5 ball.

D. Number of players

1. 9U-10U will play with seven (7) a side, including a goalkeeper
2. 11U-12U will play nine (9) a side, including a goalkeeper
3. 13U-16U will play eleven (11) a side, including a goalkeeper

E. Substitutions

1. Will be allowed at any stoppage by either team with the referee’s permission
2. Substitutions for this tournament will be unlimited.

F. Player Equipment

1. Each player shall have a number on their jersey. The number shall be clearly visible. Duplicate numbers are not permitted. Numbers are not required for goalkeepers.
2. In the event of a uniform color conflict, the team designated as the home team will wear light-colored jerseys and socks, and the team designated as the away team will wear dark colored jerseys and socks. The team causing the conflict in the opinion of the referee will need to change jerseys and socks.
3. All player equipment, including cleats, orthopedic braces, shin guards, and jewelry, must comply with FYSA Rules.

G. Water Breaks

When temperatures are at or expected to reach eighty-five (85) degrees or higher, a break will be given at the midpoint of each half of regulation time and the end of each overtime period (if played) for player hydration. This break will be given at a normal stoppage of play. This break will be a maximum of one (1) to two (2) minutes. The tournament director can add additional water breaks if necessary.

V. Pre-game Procedures

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- A. For all rounds, a representative (Coach/Manager) from each team is required to be at the site no less than one hour (1) prior to their scheduled game time, for check-in with the Site Director. At the time of check-in, the coach must inform the officials and note on the roster any player who will not participate in the match due to suspension (i.e., for a previous red card). 13U-16U teams with more than 18 players must declare the active 18 for the match prior to going to the field of play.
- B. Failure to comply with pre-game procedures will result in a \$50 fine. A member of the Commissioners Cup Committee may consider extenuating circumstances.
- C. For all Rounds prior to the Commissioners Cup State Finals, the Coach/Manager will pay each game's referee fees to the Center Referee at the field. No fees, no play. FYSA is responsible for referee costs for the Commissioners Cup State Finals round only. These fees may be adjusted for matches where half-lengths are reduced or if teams are required to play more than 1 game a day. The regional VP will communicate this in advance of the event.

Referee Fees			
Age Groups	Total Per Team	Center Referee	Asst Referee
9U/10U	\$25	\$50	N/A
11U/12U	\$60	\$50	\$35
13U/14U	\$70	\$60	\$40
15U/16U	\$80	\$70	\$45

- D. The game card will be given to the center referee once the teams have checked in with the site director. Referees may only accept the official game card for the match. Player and Coach passes will be presented to the referee for check-in on the field and to verify the jersey numbers of each player on the roster who will participate in the game. Virtual IDs are permitted.
- E. The referee will verify the player's identity using their pass and inspect their equipment. Only at this time may a player be challenged. The referee will note the challenged player's name on the game report, and a staff member of the team requesting the challenge must inform the Site Director of the challenge. The player will be allowed to play. No player's identity can be challenged or protested by the opponent after the start of each game.
- F. No more than four (4) team staff members are allowed on the side with the team. All must have the appropriate U.S. Soccer Federation passes and be listed on the team roster. At the discretion of the site director and with proper credentials, a coach or manager may be written on the game card.
- G. A player who arrives at the playing field after the start of the game may enter the game after showing their pass to and being checked by the referee/assistant referee.
- H. A team will be allowed a fifteen (15) minute grace period from the scheduled game time before awarding the match to the opponent. Failure to meet the scheduled play will result in the automatic payment of a forfeiture fine. A match shall start as soon as the minimum number of players or a rostered coach/manager, as required under the Laws of the Game, is present. A forfeited match shall be recorded

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as a 3-0 score in favor of the opponent. The site director, in accordance with the Commissioners Cup Committee, can extend the 15-minute time allocation due to unforeseen circumstances.

I. Control of sidelines

1. Players, managers, coaches, and fans are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the letter and spirit of The Laws of the Game. The Site Directors shall have the authority and responsibility to remove any person(s) from the tournament for abuses of good conduct without warning; in addition to the rules of good manners, the rules below will apply in this competition.
2. The Site Director will designate one sideline for the sole use of the players, coaches, and spectators, with the opposing team taking the opposite sideline, except when specific facility guidelines are in place.
3. A restraining line may be drawn four (4) yards from the side touchline, and all sideline viewers must remain outside of that line.
4. Coaches will be accountable for the behavior of their fans and may be ejected for non-compliance
5. All Coaches are required to remain within their technical area and should remain seated on their respective benches (if provided), except to give tactical instructions, or to make substitutions. The use of cell phones from the bench sidelines is prohibited. Violators are subject to dismissal from the match.

VI. Post-Game Procedures

At the completion of the match, the referee/assistant referee will return all player and coach passes to the team on the field. The referee will complete the Game Report, ensure that both teams sign the completed Report, compile any other reports as may be required, and give the report(s) to the Site Director.

VII. Unfinished games

- A. Unfinished games due to any cause shall be replayed, providing neither team is at fault and the first half of the match has not been completed. If play is stopped after the completion of the first half and play cannot be resumed, and provided neither team is at fault, the game is considered complete. Any match that is not played or terminated where both teams are at fault will be marked as a "No Contest." A match that is labelled a "No Contest" may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Commissioners Cup Committee.
- B. Should play be stopped at any time in the second half due to one of the teams being adjudged at fault, it shall be at the discretion of the Committee as to whether the game is to be replayed, complete with the score at the time of stoppage, or declared a forfeit in favor of the team not adjudged at fault.
- C. In the event unusual conditions necessitate rescheduling, curtailment, or cancellations of games, the Commissioners Cup Committee shall have absolute authority to make changes to best serve the interests of the tournament.

VIII. Discipline

- A. It shall be the club's, teams, and coach's responsibility to determine the status of their players. It is the responsibility of the team to notify the Site Director of any suspensions from a tournament, local league, prior year's State Cup, etc., that are to be served at the time of the player's check-in (see pre-game check-in).

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- B. Any team playing with a suspended player or coached by a suspended coach shall be immediately disqualified from the Competition. All games played by this team will be considered forfeits with a score of 3-0 in favor of the opponent.

- C. Ejections

1. A player or coach who is ejected will have at least one (1) game suspension. The suspension must be served during their next Commissioners Cup match(es). If no more Commissioners Cup matches remain in the season, the suspension will be served at the next scheduled USSF-sanctioned match(es). Players in 13-16U teams serving a red card suspension do not need to be included in the 18-player Game Day Roster. A player/coach may receive more than one game suspension based on the severity of the actions. The minimum suspensions for unacceptable conduct will be in accordance with FYSA's discipline procedures.
2. A player who receives a red card may remain on the team's bench for the remainder of the match, provided the player does not cause any additional problems. If further issues arise from the red-carded player, additional penalties may be imposed against the player and/or their coach. A player under the age of eighteen (18) may leave the site if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian only.
3. Any coach ejected must leave the Site immediately following an ejection. An ejected Coach shall not return to the site for subsequent matches until the suspension has been served. Coaches who coach more than one team will not be eligible to coach during games of other teams until the suspension is served with the original team with which the coach received his ejection. Failure to comply may result in the match being declared a forfeit.
4. Coaches and other team officials shall be subject to all rules pertaining to misconduct contained herein, including cautions, ejections, and standard suspensions. Any other individual, who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team, such as relatives and spectators, shall also be subject to the jurisdiction and authority of this Association. Any coach or team official shall be held responsible for the actions of any individual(s) at any match, who, in the opinion of the referee, is a supporter of that team.

- IX. Forfeits

- A. All games declared a forfeit shall be recorded as a 3-0 score in favor of the opponent.
- B. In the case that actions by both teams would result in a forfeited match, neither team will receive points for the match. If the game is part of a knockout round, neither team will advance to the next round.
- C. All forfeits are subject to fines according to the parameters set within section X for nonperformance.

- X. Non-Performance - Affiliates may be fined for teams withdrawing from the competition, failing to appear for a scheduled match, or for player, coach, or team misconduct that reflects adversely upon the Competition or FYSA, or for actions requiring law enforcement to be called, or for conduct deemed unsatisfactory by the Commissioner Cup Committee.

The minimum fines for the following offenses shall be as follows:

1. Team withdraws after the close of registration and before the draw date; \$500 plus entry fee.
2. Team withdraws after the draw date but before the schedule is posted \$800 plus entry fee.

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3. Team withdraws after the schedule is posted \$1000 plus entry fee
4. Team withdraws after the schedule is posted and before roster freeze \$1200 plus entry fee
5. Team withdraws after roster freeze \$1500 plus entry fee
6. Team withdraws after preliminary round \$2500
7. Failure to meet the scheduled match \$800 and all referee fees for the match
8. Failure to attend the scheduled consolation/3rd place match at the State Final Round will result in a \$800 fine, as well as all referee fees for the match.
9. Failure to fulfill the obligation to compete in the FYSA Commissioners Cup Final event after winning the regional competition will result in a \$2,500 fine to the Club.

- XI. The Commissioners Cup Committee reserves the right to require a club to post a performance bond of up to \$500 per team before the start of the tournament in response to a club's history of nonperformance. During the event, the Commissioners Cup Committee may also require a club to post a performance bond prior to the team's next game in case of non-compliance. In cases where a club has posted a performance bond and commits one of the Non-Performance offenses above, the performance bond will be forfeited in addition to the sanctions listed.

Protest and Appeals - For a protest to be considered, the following procedure will be followed:

1. No protest on referee judgment or discretion calls will be accepted.
2. Verbal notification of intention to protest must be given to the site director immediately following the match.
3. All protests must be submitted in writing and delivered to the site director within one hour of the match's conclusion. A protest fee of \$400 must accompany the protest, along with all supporting documentation, which should be delivered to the site director. The protest must be submitted and signed by a team rostered official. The fee must be a money order or cash. Personal checks are not accepted. The site director will then forward the protest fee, along with the written protest, to the RVP of the Region. The decision of the Commissioners Cup Committee will be binding on all parties, allowing the competition to proceed. Only in the case of a successful protest will the protest fee be refunded.

B. Appeals

1. Any appeal of a decision not covered above must be filed within seven (7) days of the decision. The appeal must be filed and received at the FYSA State Office, in writing, and be accompanied by a fee of \$400.00. This fee must be a money order, cash, or club check. Personal checks will not be accepted. Only in the case of a successful appeal will the fee be refunded. The chair will then present the appeal to the Commissioners Cup Protest and Appeals Committee for determination. The decision of the Commissioners Cup Protest and Appeals Committee will be binding on all parties, allowing the competition to proceed.