

# North Texas Soccer State Cup Rules and Procedures

In the event that a situation is not covered by the following rules, the US Youth Soccer Competition Rules will apply. Except as otherwise provided herein, these rules, IFAB Laws of the Game as modified by US Youth Soccer Policy on Players and Playing rules shall apply.

## **Rule 101. Team Eligibility**

The North Texas Soccer State Cup shall be open to any US Youth Soccer-affiliated team provided such team is in compliance with all of the following requirements:

### **Section 1. Team Composition and Standing**

- a. The team must be comprised of properly registered and rostered youth players (as defined by the rules of the NTX Soccer and US Youth Soccer) and must be registered with an NTX Soccer member association.
- b. The team must be in good standing with its League/Club and NTX Soccer and must be in compliance with, and has not violated, any of the rules of the NTX Soccer and/or US Youth Soccer
- c. A Team must demonstrate the continuity of rosters between the State Cup and every level of the National Championships Competitions by maintaining a minimum of fifty percent (50%) players familiar to the roster of the Team between the frozen State Cup roster.
- d. Roster Frozen Date Deadline is no earlier than 14 days prior to the scheduled date for your particular age group/gender. All rosters are frozen at that time. Only those players legally rostered at such time are eligible to participate in further State or National Competitions.
- e. A Team may compete in only one age group of the National Championships Competitions during the seasonal year.
- f. Any team that advances to the USYS National League PRO event that conflicts with our dates of competition will be provided a play-in opportunity for the semi-finals.

## **Rule 102. Player Eligibility**

- a. A player must be properly registered and rostered in accordance with the rules of the United States Youth Soccer Association and the North Texas Soccer.
- b. A player may play for only one team in State Cup competition in any seasonal year.
- c. A player who has been suspended may play after the player's term of suspension has expired.
- d. A player may not play for a team in the State Cup competition unless the player was listed on the team's frozen State Cup Roster for State Cup play.
- e. No guest players are allowed in the State Cup.

## **Rule 201 Format of Competition**

**Section 1.** The competition will be scheduled in a "Round Robin" format where possible.

- a. However, depending on the number of teams entered per age group and the relevance of a specific game's outcome to the standings, teams may play as few as one game.
- b. All decisions rendered are under the jurisdiction of the NTX Soccer Youth Commissioner (or designee) and may not be appealed.
- c. The goal of the competition is to identify a State Champion, with the 13U and up Champions representing North Texas Soccer at the US Youth Soccer National Championships.

### **Section 2. Player/Coach Passes**

Virtual ID Cards will be used for NTX Soccer State Cup. All players, coaches, and managers must be on the team's official roster to show up on the Virtual ID Cards. Teams will need to have their Virtual ID Cards ready to view before each game for the referees to check in the team.

### **Section 3. Ineligible Players**

Teams found guilty of playing ineligible player(s) shall forfeit all games, and the offending team will be disqualified from the event. Any coach found guilty of knowingly playing an ineligible player in this event is not eligible to compete further in the National Championship competitions in the current and subsequent seasonal year with any team and may face additional discipline from the State Association.

### **Section 4. Uniforms**

Each team must have two (2) complete uniform kits (one light-colored, including socks, and one dark-colored, including socks) at each match during the event.

- a. The home team is required to wear the light uniform (including socks) and the away team is required to wear the dark uniform (including socks). If, in the referee's opinion, there is a color conflict, the team causing it must change.
- b. Uniform numbers must be a minimum of six (6) inches in size on the back of the shirt. Goalkeeper jerseys are not required to have a number.
- c. Duplicate numbers are not permitted.

**Section 5.** At every level of the National Championship Series competitions, each player, team, and team official may have on his/her/their apparel only the name, logo, or other identifying mark of US Youth Soccer or a member of US Youth Soccer, directly or indirectly.

- a. 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.
- b. After an initial warning pursuant to one (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.

### **Section 7. Game Reports**

Game Reports will be provided by the State Cup Tournament Committee.

### **Section 8. Schedule Start Time**

- a. All teams must be at their assigned game field by the scheduled start time, ready to play. Any team that has not taken the field, ready to start their game, within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled start time shall be subject to forfeiture of the game. The only approved exceptions will be through NTX Soccer Youth Commissioner or designee.
- b. Each team must have a minimum of seven (7) players on the field to start and continue the game.

**Section 9. Game Day Roster** - Teams may have up to 22 players on their State Cup game day roster, except for the 11U and 12U age groups, the max is 18 players.

**Section 10. Bench Personnel Credentials** – Each individual must have a valid North Texas Soccer member pass. Only those individuals listed on the official roster will be allowed on the same side of the field as the players. All parents and spectators must remain on the opposite side of the field.

### **Section 11. Furnishing of Match Ball**

Each team shall be responsible for providing a ball suitable for use in the match. The decision on which ball will be used is the responsibility of the referee unless an “official game ball” has been provided by the event.

## Section 12. Length of Games, Overtime Periods and Ball Size.

Age Groups	Ball Size	Game Length	Halftime
17-18/19U	#5	Two - 45 minute halves	15 minutes
15-16U	#5	Two - 40 minute halves	10 minutes
13-14U	#5	Two - 35 minute halves	10 minutes
11-12U	#4	Two - 30 minute halves	10 minutes

**Semi-Finals and Finals will proceed directly to Penalty Kicks if tied, with no Extra Time played.**

**Section 13. Substitution** At the National Championship Series competitions at the National and State Association level, the following substitution rules shall apply.

- a. For 14U and below age groups, unlimited substitution over three moments per half plus halftime;
- b. For all other age groups, Unlimited substitutions over four moments per match plus halftime.
- c. Substitutions can occur at any stoppage with the referee's approval. Re-entry is permitted at designated substitution points or at any time during play if the referee permits.
- d. If a player is suspected of suffering a head injury, they may be substituted for evaluation without the substitutions counting against the team's normal substitution limits.
  - a. If the player cleared, they may return to the match, and the temporary substitute player must come off. No substitution is charged to the team.
  - b. If the player is not cleared and permanently removed, the change becomes a concussion substitution. In that case, both teams receive one additional substitution, and the opponent can make one additional substitution of one singular player.
- e. A substitution can be made with the consent of the referee during any stoppage of play, except Penalty Kick.

### Rule 301 Discipline

**Section 1.** All send-offs are reported immediately to the State A & D Committee. The player may remain on the player bench for the remainder of the game, provided they do not continue to be a disciplinary issue.

**Section 2.** Any player sent-off shall automatically sit out a minimum of one game – the next played tournament game in the National Championship Series. If it is the player's second tournament send-off, the player is suspended from the remainder of State Cup.

**Section 3.** If any player receives two (2) cautions in any one game, that player is immediately sent-off for the remainder of that game and shall not be eligible to play in the next scheduled State Cup game or the next National Championship Series game, if the team advances.

**Section 4.** Any player serving a sit-out may attend the game they are sitting out and sit with their team, as long as they are not dressed in the game-day uniform. They may not step on the pitch, including for warm-ups or team huddles.

**Section 5.** Any adult who is sent off must leave the complex immediately and may not be at the complex for the next game the team plays.

### Rule 303. UNFINISHED GAMES

**Section 1.** (a) Unfinished games due to any cause shall be replayed, providing neither team is at fault and play has not reached half time. If play is stopped after completion of the first half and cannot be resumed as determined by the Youth Commissioner or his/her designee and provided neither team is at fault, the Youth Commissioner or his/her designee may deem the game completed.

(b) Should play be stopped at any time due to one of the teams being adjudged at fault, it shall be at the discretion of the State Cup Committee as to whether the game is to be replayed, stand as is, or be declared a forfeit. In the event of rain, only the Youth Commissioner or his/her designee has the right to cancel or declare the game complete.

### **Rule 306. Spectators**

**Section 1.** Spectators (parents, relatives and/or other individuals) who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team are subject to the jurisdiction and authority of North Texas Soccer and the State Cup Committee. The actions of these individuals are the responsibility of the credentialed team officials appearing on the roster.

**Section 2.** The spectator area is located on the opposite side of the field from the technical/bench area. No spectators are permitted anywhere behind the goal line during a match. The spectator area is 3-yards beyond the touchline and extends from a point 3-yards from the center line down to the corner flag. Spectators must remain in this area, in the half of the field directly across from their team's bench, subject to the following exception.

**Section 3.** Technical instruction from any part of the spectator area, or provocative or unsportsmanlike behavior by any spectator may result in their removal from the complex. Any spectator asked to leave by a referee or competition official must immediately depart the field area and remain out of sight and sound of the match until the teams have departed the field of play and are no longer the responsibility of the referee.

**Section 4.** Whistles, air horns, megaphones, artificial noisemakers and/or similar devices are prohibited at all State Cup competitions. Air horns are for use solely by competition officials to signal when fields must be cleared due to inclement or dangerous weather conditions.

### **Rule 307. Match Manipulation**

Teams failing to compete in the spirit of the competition or are involved in the manipulation of a match result are subject to forfeiture and disqualification from all levels of the National Championships competitions.

- a. If failing to compete is observed and confirmed, the State Cup Committee will give notice to the offending team or teams.
- b. If corrective action is not taken, the team or teams will be subject to disqualification.

### **Rule 308. Tournament Management**

All questions relating to competitors' qualifications, to the interpretation of the rules, or to any dispute or protest concerning the National Championship competitions shall be referred to the State Cup Committee. The Youth Commissioner's decisions **are final**.

### **Rule 309. Inclement Weather Policy**

State Cup Committee decisions are final and not subject to appeal. Every attempt will be made to have all matches played. At the discretion of the State Cup committee, rescheduled games may be played under lights in the evening or may be scheduled for early morning, prior to normal starting time. Games may continue during rainstorms.

**Section 1.** Games will be suspended by State Cup Committee in the event of:

- a. Lightning - All Coaches, Players and Spectators should leave the fields immediately, seek shelter in their vehicles, and wait for the committee to tell you when it is safe to return to fields.
- b. Hail Storms
- c. Un-playable field conditions

**Section 2.** Rescheduling attempts will be made as quickly and fairly as possible, taking into account referee and field availability and the normal progress of the competition. The tournament's primary concern is the safety of players, referees, and spectators, followed by fairness to the affected teams and the orderly flow of competition to the championships. The State Cup Committee reserves the right to modify the competition's format at any time.

### **Rule 310. Scoring**

**Section 1.** The teams with the highest points will advance to the playoff round as determined by the playing format for each age division. The following 10-point system will be used:

- a. 6 points for a win
- b. 3 points for a tie
- c. 1 point for each goal scored (max. 3 goals/game)
- d. 1 point for a shutout of your opponent

**Section 2.** Forfeited games will be awarded as a 4-0 win.

**Section 3.** In divisions where a wildcard team advances, the wildcard team will be the second place team from any group in the age division with the next highest points after the first place qualifiers are identified.

- a. In the event of a tie in determining the wildcard team, the method used shall be from the section titled TIE BREAKERS (see below).
- b. In age divisions where there are uneven number of teams in brackets (i.e. some 3-team brackets; some 4-team brackets), the second place team from any bracket with the highest average of points earned in all preliminary games will advance.

### **Rule 311. TIE-BREAKERS**

**Section 1.** In age brackets that contain flights with different numbers of games, points for all teams will be determined on a 10 point system, totaled for all games played by each team and then divided by the number of games played by each team to obtain an average point total per game per team.

1. If teams are tied in points after the preliminary games are played, the following tiebreakers will be used to determine which team(s) advances.
  - a. **Winner of head-to-head competition.** If this was a draw, or if the teams did not play each other, then placement is determined by:
    - b. **Winner of most games**
    - c. **Goal differential** - subtract total goals allowed from total goals scored (in all bracket round games). Figure the goal differential per game, and then add the goal differentials together for the total. All goals scored will be counted, up to a maximum of 5 goal differential per game. The team with the highest goal differential will advance. Example: A score of 9-4 will be a goal differential of 5; a score of 9-1 will be a goal differential of 5 (the max.) If still tied, then:
      - d. **Fewest goals allowed** in all preliminary round games. If still tied, then:
        - e. **Penalty Kicks** Each team will take five alternating kicks. The team with the most

goals after the five kicks will advance. If they are still tied, then alternating kicks will be taken one-on-one until one team outscores the other after each team has taken an equal number of shots. All players on each team, including the goalkeepers, must shoot once before any player can shoot twice.

These tiebreakers will be applied, in order, to the teams tied in points until one team is selected for advancement. In the event of a tie involving age brackets with flights with different numbers of scheduled games, the same tiebreakers are used, except that averaging to determine b, c, and d will also be used.

**NOTE:** It is each team's responsibility to be aware of their standings. If it appears that a tie may exist at the end of bracket play, the teams involved in the tie are instructed to keep their players "on call" so they will be available to participate in Penalty Kicks at a moment's notice, if necessary.

2. If three or more teams are tied on points, the ranking will be determined by:

- a. **Winner of most games**
- b. **Goal differential-** subtract total goals allowed from total goals scored (in all bracket round games). Figure the goal differential per game, and then add the goal differentials together for the total. All goals scored will be counted, up to a maximum of 4 goal differential per game. The team with the highest goal differential will advance.  
Example: A score of 8-4 will be a goal differential of 4; a score of 9-1 will be a goal differential of 4 (the max.) If still tied, then:
- c. **Fewest goals allowed in all preliminary round games**
- d. If a team can be eliminated using this method (2 a, b, or c in this section), so that only two teams remain, the teams remaining will start at tie breaking rule 1a to eliminate one additional team.
- e. If three or more teams are still tied, then IFAB KFPM will be taken to determine rank. Lots will be drawn (method determined by North Texas Soccer Youth Commissioner to decide the order of taking the IFAB KFPM. The teams will be identified according to the lot drawn as 1, 2, 3, etc. Team 1 will shoot against goalie 2; team 2 will shoot against goalie 3; team 3 will shoot against goalie 1, and so on. Five alternating shots will be taken. If one team has scored more goals than the other teams, that team advances. If two or more teams are still tied, the KFPM will continue with those teams (alternating one-on-one) until one team outscores the other after each team has taken an equal number of shots. All players on each team, including the goalies, must shoot once before any player can shoot twice.

**Rule 312. PLAYOFF ROUNDS** will consist of a quarterfinal game, and/or a semifinal game, and/or a final game, depending on the number of teams entered.

1. If two teams who played each other in bracket play are scheduled to play each other in the playoff round, the playoff round pairings will not be changed.
2. To the extent possible, semifinal and final game schedules will be adjusted to accommodate coaching conflicts (head coaches who are the head coach for more than one team).

**Only those players on the field at the end of the second overtime period are eligible to take the IFAB Penalty Kicks.**

## **Rule 401. FORFEITS**

**Section 1.** During group play, a team must forfeit any match where they fall below the required minimum number of players. Subsequent matches will not be automatically forfeited.

**Section 2.** A team forfeiting a match for any other reason will result in **all** of their group matches being declared a forfeit.

**Section 3.** Forfeited matches will be reported as a 4-0 loss for scoring purposes.

**Section 4.** If a team forfeits a game or games, their eligibility to continue play in the event will be determined by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner or his/her designee.

## **Rule 403. Protest**

**Section 1** All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors, to interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest concerning the North Texas Soccer State Cup, shall be referred to the Youth Commissioner

**Section 2** (a) Valid protest and eligible for consideration at the State level of the North Texas Soccer State Cup Competition will only be considered for ineligible players and misapplication of the IFAB Laws of the Game. An eligible game protest:

- 1) must be verbally lodged by a team official listed on the team roster involved in the match with the referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play or leaving the match field, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section; and
- 2) must be filed with the event Youth Commissioner within 2-hours after the completion of the match being protested, accompanied by:
  - A) a cash fee in the amount of \$300.00;
  - B) one (1) electronic or two (2) written copies of the protest, which must include full particulars of the grounds on which the protest is lodged; and
  - C) one (1) electronic or two (2) written copies of any information to be presented by witnesses.
    1. Youth Commissioner shall immediately, upon receipt of the protest, notify the team against which the protest is made and shall provide a copy of the protest and all particulars to that team, which will then have the right to defend its case, with or without witnesses before of the State Cup Committee
    2. The decision of the Youth Commissioner is final

**Section 4.** During knockout rounds, a team forfeiting a match will result in the opponent advancing.

**Section 5.** Forfeiting teams are subject to being called in for a hearing before the NTSSA Competitive Committee and sanctions for forfeiting can be issued.

