



2012 SPRING SEASON

*Be sure to review new information/rules in regards to size of Team Rosters—
now 22 in all age groups.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

The **MIDWEST REGIONAL LEAGUE's (MRL)** mission is to provide the highest standard of competitive play for youth teams that are members of US Youth Soccer Region II (the Midwest Region) and to assure the continued growth and development of elite level players. All of us associated with the MRL strive to provide a high-level competitive environment for our teams. The MRL offers quality league competition in our area as teams vie for the chance to earn spots into the Midwest Regionals as part of the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.

LEVEL OF COMMITMENT EXPECTED BY MRL TEAMS

Any team looking to participate in the MRL must understand the level of commitment it takes to participate in a League that stretches across the Midwest. All teams must understand that this is a Regional League and that teams may travel hundreds of miles to participate in MRL games. The determination of game sites is based in part due to home locations of teams within a division as well as field availability. Teams understand that they may not play any home games. A limited number of teams are accepted. Team success, with special emphasis on State Cup (a competition that all team must have participated in during 2010-2011) and Regionals competition results, helps determine qualification for participation in the MRL. The level of competition surpasses any youth team competition within a team's state association. Teams will be competing against the best US Youth Soccer affiliated teams from across the Midwest.

MRL rules allow teams to use up to 25 players during the course of a season. There should be no reason why a team cannot field a team to play in a scheduled match as teams have the ability to use 25 players during a season. If your team chooses to roster less than the allotted number (25) it is highly recommended that the team re-evaluates its commitment to playing in the MRL. There is no greater disservice to your opponents to participate in a weekend of MRL games with minimal number of players. Teams expect opponents to field competitive teams as the expense for participation is great due to travel demands.

AGE GROUPS OF COMPETITION

Boys and Girls competition will take place in the following Girls age groups:

Under 14: born on August 1, 1997 or later

Under 15: born on August 1, 1996 or later

Under 16: born on August 1, 1995 or later

Under 17: born on August 1, 1994 or later

Under 18: born on August 1, 1993 or later

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The Team Application deadline is **Wednesday, November 9, 2011**. Contact your State Association office for your State Code in order to enter the secure application website at www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com. Your local State Association shall review your application and solely determine if your team shall receive State Association recommendation (approval) to participate in the MRL. A maximum of eight (8) teams* may be recommended by a state association in any one gender age group of MRL competition. Teams participating in the MRL must have competed in their state association's State Cup during the previous year (2010-2011). Only after State Association recommendation, will the MRL review the application and determine if your team shall be accepted into the MRL for the 2012 Spring Season. In completing the application form, teams are required to submit accurate information on team accomplishments. Misrepresentation of team accomplishments may result in the team being disqualified from MRL participation.

Note: Premier Division slots in all age groups were determined based on play from previous MRL seasons. Teams that are reserved a slot, are not automatically entered—that is, the teams must apply via our on-line system. If your team is listed as a Premier Division team be sure to apply by the November 9th deadline. All Premier teams are also subject to review as per MRL Rule 4.06. In situations where teams that do not return to claim their Premier Division slots or are relegated as per Rule 4.06. The MRL has established a procedure to fill Premier Division slots (see 2012 Spring Season Team Selection and Division Placement Criteria document).

**-this number may be increased by the time that final selections are made.*

MIDWEST REGIONAL LEAGUE –2012 SPRING SEASON INFORMATION

Page two

ENTRY FEE

The Entry Fee to the MRL is \$350 per team (to the MRL) and is non-refundable if a team is accepted into the MRL and later drops out of the league. The Team Fee does not include Referee Fees that are paid on a game-by-game basis. Team Fees are paid to your respective State Association and are to be paid to your State Association on or around November 9, 2011 as determined by your local State Association. The State Association pays Region II for all teams entered in the Spring Season. Teams do not pay entry fees directly to the MRL.

SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

There is a two-step approval process for the MRL. First, each team must be endorsed by its respective State Association. Second, the MRL Technical Committee shall determine the final selection and placement of all teams. Accepted teams shall be notified via website posting or an e-mail regarding their acceptance and placement into specific divisions within the MRL. **The list of teams accepted with division placement into the MRL for the 2012 Spring Season is expected to be posted on our website on or around November 28, 2011.** Premier Division Teams are determined based on previous season performance (i.e. promotion/relegation). A list of teams who have earned Premier Division slots for the 2012 Spring Season is posted at www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com. The MRL, in conjunction with respective state associations, will review team applications in accordance with its Policy on Returning MRL Teams (see 2012 Spring Information page on the MRL website).

COMMUNICATION FROM/WITH MRL

E-mail will be the primary means of communication within the MRL. It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that accurate contact information is on file with the MRL. The MRL compiles a Pre-Season Team Information Packet of Information that is now exclusively posted on its website - www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com – for download. The MRL does not mail the pre-season packet to its teams.

REFEREES

The three-man system shall be used for all games. Each team is responsible for one-half of the total referee fees per game and payment is to be made in cash prior to each game. Referee fees are as follows:

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|------------------------|--|
| Under 14: | \$50 per game per team; a total of \$100 (\$40 to Referee and \$30 to each AR) |
| Under 15 and Under 16: | \$60 per game per team; a total of \$120 (\$50 to Referee and \$35 to each AR) |
| Under 17 and Under 18: | \$70 per game per team; a total of \$140 (\$60 to Referee and \$40 to each AR) |

TEAM ROSTERS

Teams may utilize 25 players during the course of a season in accordance with Team Roster and Team Guest Player Roster rules. A maximum 22-player Team Roster with a "floating" maximum of 3 to 7-player Team Guest Roster shall be utilized for the Under 16, 17 and 18 Age Groups. For the Under 14 and 15 Age Groups, an 18-player Team Roster and a maximum 7-player Team Guest Player Roster are permitted. Guest players may only come from within a team's club, provided that the player is a US Youth Soccer member. See MRL Rules and the MRL Team Roster and Player Guide for further information.

MRL RULES AND INFORMATION

Additional information on the MRL is available on the league website: www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com. Click on the "Administration" tab for the MRL Charter, Rules and Policies. Any questions can be directed to Paul Luchowski at MRLCommissioner@Region2.com

PERMISSION TO TRAVEL

Teams are not required to complete Permission to Travel permits/forms for games played outside of their State Association as permission is automatically granted by State Association approval of the team for MRL play.

COACHES—LICENSING REQUIREMENT

The following rule is in place:

"Team Coaches – Licensing Requirement

Beginning in the 2010-2011 season, all coaches participating in MRL games must hold at least a US Soccer "D" License (or equivalent*) as the minimum coaching qualification. Beginning in the 2013-2014 season, all coaches participating in MRL games must hold at least a US Soccer "C" license (or equivalent*) as the minimum coaching qualification.

*Equivalencies are based on US Soccer standards."

At the time that a team submits an application to participate in the MRL, It should be expected that teams will be required to list all coaches (DOC, Head Coach, and Assistant Coaches) and their current coaching license status. Proof of Coaching License status will be required. Within the MRL, holders of a NSCAA Advanced National Coaching diploma is considered equivalent to a US Soccer "C" License, and holders of a NSCAA National Coaching diploma is considered equivalent to the a US Soccer "D" License.

MIDWEST REGIONAL LEAGUE –2012 SPRING SEASON INFORMATION

Page three

COMPETITION FORMAT

All competitions in every age group and sub-division shall be round robin in nature. There will be no end of season playoffs to determine Regional Wild Cards or teams that earn promotion into the Premier Division. Based on the number of teams placed into divisions, teams may play up to a total of 11 MRL games during the course of the Spring Season (each team will be scheduled for a minimum of six MRL games). **Please be aware of the number of games that teams will be required to play. MRL teams are required to fulfill their commitment by playing out their entire MRL schedule of games.** The MRL Commission shall determine the penalty for failure to fulfill a team's schedule.

LOCATION OF GAMES--HOSTING MRL GAMES

Teams might have the opportunity to host their Division games at their home sites. To qualify, a team must submit an APPLICATION TO HOST MULTIPLE MRL GAMES, which can be downloaded from the MRL website. Multiple field locations are preferred. The MRL shall review applications and have the sole authority in determining if a team shall host MRL games at their proposed site. In addition to individual team sites, the league offers MRL hosted sites as a courtesy to its teams. The expected dates and locations of MRL hosted sites are: April 21-22 at the Overland Park Soccer Complex in Overland Park KS; April 28-29 at Sportscore II in Rockford IL; May 5-6 at the Muscatine Soccer Complex in Muscatine IA and additional sites may be added. Field space is limited and offered on a first-scheduled first-served basis.

MUST BE AVAILABLE TO PLAY WEEKENDS

Spring Season MRL teams **Must Be Available to Play** are April 21-22, April 28-29 and May 5-6. Teams are excused from MRL play on these weekends due to state cup conflicts. However, it is the responsibility of teams, affected by their inability to play on Must Be Available to Play Weekends, to be flexible in being able to schedule MRL games on other weekends during the Spring Season. A team's requirement to be available to play on these MRL weekends ceases once the division schedule is agreed to by the teams. The purpose of the Must Be Available to Play Weekends is to insure common play dates. MRL allows flexibility in scheduling providing all teams in a division agree to scheduling flexibility.

GENERAL SCHEDULING INFORMATION

--Spring Season play may begin on March 2, 2012. All MRL play must be completed on or before June 10, 2012.

--During last Spring's MRL Season all division schedules were completed by teams without having to attend a face-to-face scheduling meeting. Thus there will be no face-to-face scheduling meeting for 2012. On or about November 28, 2011 after the placement of teams into divisions, teams will be provided with the MRL scheduling process, through a group email to the primary and secondary contacts for teams within a specific sub-division. The MRL provides the opportunity for teams to schedule all games in a division in accordance with MRL procedures. All teams in a sub-division must agree to the entire schedule by no later than Wednesday, December 21, 2011. Availability of fields at MRL hosted sites is limited and will be provided to teams on a first completely approved scheduled, first served basis.

--Scheduling is driven by the teams and a Scheduling Coordinator (SC) who will be appointed by the MRL from within the division to assist in the process. Generally, this person will be someone who has scheduled MRL games in the past and understands the nuances in scheduling on a regional basis. If a schedule for a specific division is not completed at that time, then each and every team in the division may be assessed a fine for each day that the schedule is not completed.

--Teams should understand that due to the nature of scheduling of games for teams from across the region that scheduling games for the benefit of a single coach who coaches multiple teams should not be expected. Time conflicts will occur for those coaches that coach multiple teams on MRL weekends and the MRL is under no obligation to assist these coaches with their conflicts.

--MRL games may be scheduled during other US Youth Soccer sanctioned competitions during the Spring Season weekends (if approved by the MRL), but games must be played under MRL rules. Teams and host organization will be held responsible for MRL rules compliance in these situations and may be required to provide additional information on their event to the MRL.

--Once schedules are developed, schedule changes are permitted in accordance with MRL Scheduling Policy.

All information in this document is subject to change at the discretion of the MRL ... October 1, 2011