# RULES

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# US YOUTH SOCCER REGION II
# MIDWEST REGIONAL LEAGUE RULES
## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

**1.01 Name of League**
The name of the League shall be the "Midwest Regional League" (MRL).

**1.02 Mission**
To provide the highest standard of competitive play for youth teams in US Youth Soccer Region II (the Midwest Region) and assure the continued growth and development of elite level players.

**1.03 Owner of League**
The Midwest Regional League is owned and operated by the US Youth Soccer Region II. Participation in the MRL is governed by the rules adopted by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the United States Soccer Federation (US Soccer) and US Youth Soccer, except where modified below.

**1.04 Management of League**
The MRL shall be managed and supervised by the Midwest Regional League Commission (MRL Commission). Members of the eight-person MRL Commission shall include: (a) the Commission Chairperson who shall also be the US Youth Soccer Region II Director; (b) three (3) Region II member State Association Directors of Coaching; (c) three (3) Trustees Representing Player Interests; and (d) the League Commissioner. Appointment and terms are noted in the Midwest Regional League Commission Charter.

**1.05 Rules, Policies and Procedures**
The MRL Commission will have authority, subject to the provisions of the Midwest Regional League Commission Charter, to promulgate all league rules, policies and procedures reasonable and necessary for the administration and growth of the MRL.

**1.06 Matters Not Provided For**
The MRL Commission shall have final authority in all matters not specifically provided for by the policies or rules.

**1.07 Age Group Management**
Each age group will be managed and supervised by the MRL Commission, which will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following:

(a) Securing venues
(b) Creating match schedules
(c) Serving as the liaison with the Regional and State Referee Assignors to ensure that match officials are assigned.
(d) Collecting approved MRL team rosters
(e) Recording and posting of scores and standings
(f) Ensuring communication of age group news and information is shared with teams

**1.08 MRL State Association Representative**
Each Region II State Association shall appoint a MRL State Association Representative who shall provide his/her national State Association administration and President with all information relevant to the MRL. The duties and responsibilities of the MRL Representative under the jurisdiction of the MRL Commission shall include but are not be limited to:

(a) serving as a liaison between the MRL and active and prospective teams from the representative's State Association;
(b) working with the local State Director of Coaching in approving teams for the MRL;
(c) providing a site coordinator(s) for MRL events within a State Association when a site coordinator is not provided for by a hosting club or organization
(d) serving as a liaison between the MRL and the State Association's referee program for the purposes of referee assignment and assessment; and
(e) any other duties as assigned by the MRL Commission.

**1.09 Site Coordinators**
All Site Coordinators shall be approved by the MRL Commissioner.

(a) In cases where a participating MRL team is hosting multiple games at a local site, the host MRL team must provide a Site Coordinator for the MRL event.

(b) For MRL events hosted by an unaffiliated local organization, the MRL shall determine the Site Coordinator for the event.

**1.10 Site Coordinators Duties and Responsibilities**
The Site Coordinator's duties and responsibilities under the jurisdiction of the MRL Commission shall include but not be limited to:

(a) Serving as a liaison between the MRL and participating teams on site;
(b) Establishing a central location for site headquarters;
(c) Ensuring that the game fields are ready for play;
(d) Collecting and distributing Referee Game Reports;
(e) Collecting, recording and distributing appropriate Referee Game Fees;
(f) Forwarding Referee Game Reports to the MRL at the conclusion of the event ;
(g) Completing any other duties as assigned by the MRL Commission.

**1.11 Playing Seasons**
The MRL shall operate two separate playing seasons. The Spring Season will be played between January 1 and July 31; and the Fall Season will be played between August 1 and December 31. The MRL Commission shall determine the start and end dates of each season within the parameters of the calendar as outline above.

**1.12 Precedence of Games**
US Youth Soccer National Championship Series competition will have priority over MRL matches.

**1.13 Team Rights and Privileges**
Any team in the MRL shall have the same rights and privileges those accorded to any team playing in a league within their respective US Youth Soccer state association. Team participation in the MRL during the Spring and Fall sessions will meet the requirements of the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.

**1.14 Contact Information and Communication**
All member teams of the MRL shall have contact information on file with the MRL, including, but not limited to (a) the Team Manager's Name, Address, Phone Numbers and valid e-mail address and (b) the Team Coach's Name, Address, Phone Numbers and valid e-mail address. 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.

## SECTION II. TEAM APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

**2.01 Team Eligibility**
Any team affiliated with a US Youth Soccer State Association may request entry to the MRL.
US Youth Soccer Region II based teams will have priority for participation in the MRL, as out-of-Region II teams may apply for participation in the MRL but shall not eligible for available Wild Card slots in the US Youth Soccer Region II Championships.

**2.02 State Cup Requirement**
Any team making application to the MRL must have competed in the State Cup competition during the past seasonal year and must participate in its respective State Cup competition during the current seasonal year.

**2.03 Good Standing**
All teams must be properly registered competitive teams that meet the requirements for participation and are in good standing with their respective member State Association.

**2.04 State Association Approval**
All teams applying for membership in the MRL must be approved by their respective State Association. Teams competing in the MRL must satisfy eligibility requirements for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.

**2.05 Recommendations from State Associations**
A maximum of eight (8) teams per age group per gender may be recommended by each state association to the MRL for each season of play. A total of four (4) teams per age group per gender are guaranteed acceptance into

the MRL for each season of play from each state association. The MRL Commission may determine if additional teams may be accepted above the four team limit

**2.06 Structure**
The MRL will offer competition for Boys and girls in five Age Groups, beginning with U-14 and concluding with U-18. Each Age Group and gender will include Premier and First Divisions, whenever numbers allow. The MRL Commission will determine the configuration of divisions.

**2.07 Premier Division**
Participation in the Premier Divisions is based on teams earning their slots through MRL play, either through entry as Under 14 teams as per MRL Rule 4.03; (b) promotion as per MRL Rule 4.09: or (c) through placement in the event a Premier Division slot is vacant as per MRL Rule 4.10.

**2.08 First Division**
Participation in the First Division is for teams that have not qualified for the Premier Division but qualify for the MRL as per Rule 4.13.

**2.09 Application Deadlines**
All applications for participation in the MRL must be received by the deadline established by the MRL Commission for each playing season.

**2.10 Application Process**
Team Applications to participate in the MRL must be completed on-line at www.region2.com or at www.midwestregionaleague.com.

**2.11 Acceptance of Teams**
Teams approved to participate in the MRL by their State Association are not automatically accepted into the MRL. The MRL Commission will evaluate all State Association approved teams and determine final acceptance into the MRL based on the number of positions available and the configuration of teams in each division. It is understood that State Associations shall not unreasonably withhold approval for a team application if such team participated in the Premier Division within the previous calendar year and has retained its Premier Division status.

**2.12 Acceptance of MRL Rules**
Any team applying to play in the MRL, agrees to accept, abide by and comply with all rules, policies, and decisions by the MRL and further agrees to pay all fees that are due to the MRL for participation in the MRL.

**2.13 Final Authority**
The MRL after consultation with State Associations shall have the final authority and right to refuse admittance of any team based upon the team's prior performance in the MRL. These factors include, but are not limited to: failure to play MRL matches as scheduled; failure to comply with MRL rules; failure to pay MRL referees; and/or failure to pay assessed MRL fees or fines on time.

**2.14 Fees and Other Expenses**
Each team playing in the MRL will pay the fees established by the MRL Commission. The MRL is not responsible for expenses incurred by teams through travel, housing, coaching, uniforms, and other related team operating costs.

**2.15 Additional State Association Entry Fees and Bonds**
State Associations may require an additional fee or bond for participation in the MRL. Such fees and bonds are to be handled directly by the teams with their respective state association. The MRL does not participate nor endorse such state association requirements.

**2.16 Return of MRL Fees**
The MRL shall return any fees paid to the MRL for any team that is not admitted into the MRL. In situations where a Premier Division team withdraws following formal admission into the MRL, the team will forfeit its MRL team application fee. In situations where a team placed in the First Division withdraws from the MRL within ten (10) days of formal admission into the MRL, then one hundred and fifty dollars ($150.00) will be withheld from the team application fee and the balance returned to the team. In situations where a team placed in the First Division

withdraws from the MRL more than ten (10) days following formal admission into the MRL, then the team will forfeit its entire team application fee.

## SECTION III. TEAM ROSTERS

### 3.01 Team Rosters

Teams must file with the MRL, in a process outlined on a seasonal basis by the MRL, its state association approved Team Roster and state association approved Guest Player Roster. All teams must submit an initial official MRL Team Roster of players no later than seven (7) days prior to the team's scheduled first game. A state association approved Guest Player Roster must be filed with the MRL no later than 24 hours prior to a game's kickoff in order for all players to be listed on the roster(s) to be eligible to play. Additions to the Team Roster or the Guest Player Roster must be filed with the MRL no later than 24 hours prior to a game's kick off in order for players listed on the roster(s) to be eligible to play. An authorized official from the Team's respective home State Association must authorize the validity of all rostered players in order for players to be eligible for MRL play.

### 3.02 Player Eligibility

Player eligibility will be governed by the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series rules. A player may not be listed on the Team Roster on more than one MRL team; however, a player who holds a current US Youth Soccer member pass may "guest" on team(s) in other age groups from within the same US Youth Soccer affiliated club, as approved by the team's respective State Association.

### 3.03 Maximum Roster Size

The maximum number of players on a Team Roster shall be 22
The maximum number of players on a Club Pass (formerly Guest Player) Roster shall be as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| If up to 18 players on Team Roster: | 7 players |
| If 19 players on Team Roster: | 6 players |
| If 20 players on Team Roster: | 5 players |
| If 21 players on Team Roster: | 4 players |
| If 22 players on Team Roster: | 3 players |

### 3.04 Member Passes

Valid US Youth Soccer member passes will be used for MRL play. All US Youth Soccer member passes must be valid for the current season, have a current player photo and be laminated.

### 3.05 Team Roster & Player Guide (Policy)

On a seasonal basis, the MRL Commission shall provide a Policy titled "Team Roster & Player Guide" for participating that may include additional guidelines in regards to team rosters and player eligibility. The MRL Commission, at its discretion, may establish roster freeze dates for each playing season (Fall and Spring).

### 3.06 Player's MRL Participation on a Daily Basis

At no time may a player play for more than one MRL team in any one day.

### 3.07 Player's Rostering Limitation within an Age Group

At no time may a player be on a Team Roster or Guest Player Roster for more than one team within the same age group.

## SECTION IV. FORMATION OF DIVISIONS

### 4.01 Formation of MRL Divisions

The MRL Commission is responsible for the placement of teams. The MRL Technical Committee, comprised of the three (3) MRL Commission State Directors of Coaching, in conjunction with the remaining Region II State Directors of Coaching, will recommend placement of teams to the MRL Commission, subject to specific rules regarding Premier Division placement herein. The MRL divisions in the U-15, U-16, U-17 and U-18 age groups are based on previous MRL season results where the concept of Promotion and Relegation is applied.

**4.02 U-14 Placement of Teams—Fall Season**
In both the Boys U-14 and Girls U-14 age groups, teams entering the MRL for the Fall Season shall compete for the opportunity to earn slots in the Premier Division for the Spring Season. All team applications that are recommended for MRL competition by their respective State Associations shall be reviewed by the MRL's Technical Committee. The MRL Technical Committee, comprised of the three (3) MRL Commission State Directors of Coaching, in conjunction with the remaining Region II State Directors of Coaching, will recommend the selection of and placement of teams into the Boys and Girls U-14 sub-divisions for the Fall Season. The MRL Commission shall approve the final placement and acceptance of teams for the Fall Season.

**4.03 U-14 Placement of Teams—Spring Season Premier Division**
The MRL Commission shall determine the number of teams that will earn Premier Division slots in the Spring Season for the Boys and Girls U-14 age groups based on performance in the previous Fall Season. Only those teams that participated in the MRL's Fall season will be eligible for the Premier Division in the Spring. The MRL Commission shall determine the number of teams in the Premier Division for Spring Season competition.

**4.04 U-14 Placement of Teams—Spring Season First Division**
All team applications that are recommended for MRL competition by their respective State Associations shall be reviewed by the MRL's Technical Committee. Teams that earned Premier Division slots shall be automatically placed into the Premier Division. The MRL Technical Committee, comprised of the three (3) MRL Commission State Directors of Coaching, in conjunction with the remaining Region II State Directors of Coaching, will recommend the selection of and placement of all other teams into the Boys and Girls U-14 First Division for the Spring Season. Based on the number of teams accepted the MRL may further divide the First Division into sub-divisions.

**4.05 Placement of Girls Teams into Premier Divisions for Subsequent Seasons**
Following the Spring Season of U-14 competition, teams shall retain/earn Premier Division slots for either the MRL's Fall or Spring Season. Girls U-15 teams that earn Premier Division slots must declare by a date as determined by the MRL Commission, which season of competition (Fall or Spring) that such team will compete for a potential Regional Wild Card slot. While Girls teams at the U-15, U-16, U-17 and U-18 age groups may compete in both the Fall and Spring Seasons, they may only compete in one of the seasons for a potential Wild Card slots.

**4.06 Premier Division**
Teams placed in the Premier Division will remain in the Premier Division in succeeding years until they are relegated. Teams may also be removed from the Premier Division -- or the MRL -- for disciplinary reasons, or if the composition of the team has changed significantly from season to season and the team is no longer competitive.

**4.07 Number of Teams Relegated from the Premier Division**
At a minimum, the bottom team in the Premier Division will automatically be relegated to the First Division. Teams relegated from the Premier Division will be scheduled to play in the First Division during the following season. The number of teams relegated from each Premier Division and, by extension, promoted from the First Division will be reviewed and determined on a seasonal basis by the MRL as well as on an age group-by-age group basis and a division-by-division basis. In addition, promotion/relegation will involve the "Concept of Competitive Distance."

**4.08 Concept of Competitive Distance**
In addition to the number of teams to be relegated from the Premier Division, as determined on a seasonal basis by the MRL Commission, additional teams may also be relegated from the Premier Division if their point total for the season is not greater than 33% (one third) of the total accumulated by the Premier Division champion in their division or sub-division. For example, if the first place team has 18 points, the teams at the bottom of the table above the relegated team(s) must secure at least six (6) points in order to retain their Premier Division status for the next season.

**4.09 Promotion to Premier Division from the First Division**
On an age group-by-age group basis, the MRL Commission shall determine the mechanism (league play and/or playoff competition) by which to determine the teams that shall be promoted into the Premier Division for the next season.

**4.10 Premier Division Team—Failure to Return to MRL**
In situations whereby a team does not apply for participation for a season where such team had previously earned placement as a Premier Division team, such slot may be filled at the discretion of the MRL Commission.

**4.11 Placement of Teams—First Division (U-15, U-16, U-17, U-18)**
All team applications that are recommended for MRL competition by their respective State Associations shall be reviewed by the MRL's Technical Committee. Teams that earned Premier Division slots shall be automatically placed into the Premier Division. The MRL Technical Committee, comprised of the three (3) MRL Commission State Directors of Coaching, in conjunction with the remaining Region II State Directors of Coaching, will recommend the selection of and placement of all other teams into respective Boys and Girls First Divisions. Based on the number of teams accepted the MRL may further divide the First Division into sub-divisions.

**4.12 Team Selection and Division Placement Procedures**
On a seasonal basis, the MRL shall post on its website its procedures for Team Selection and Division Placement Criteria that are to be developed and applied by the MRL Technical Committee, and approved by the MRL Commission.

**4.13 Boys Divisions**
The Boys Premier Divisions may be balanced into sub-divisions, as necessary, based on the number of approved teams and quality of such teams. The Boys First Division may be constructed on either (a) sub-regional basis as determined by the MRL Technical Committee; or (b) on a balanced basis as determined by the MRL Technical Committee.

**4.14 Girls Divisions**
The Girls Premier Divisions may be balanced into sub-divisions, as necessary, based on the number of approved teams and quality of such teams. The Girls First Division may be constructed on either (a) sub-regional basis as determined by the MRL Technical Committee; or (b) on a balanced basis as determined by the MRL Technical Committee.

## SECTION V. NATIONAL/REGIONAL COMPETITIONS

**5.01 US Youth Soccer Region II Championships Wild Cards**
In each age group, two Wild Card slots to the US Youth Soccer Region II Championships may be awarded to MRL Premier Division teams. In order to be eligible for a Wild Card slot, the following conditions must be met:

(a) The team must participate in their State Association State Cup competition for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series during the current seasonal year
(b) The team must meet all current eligibility requirements for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.
(c) A team's roster is frozen for MRL play when it is frozen for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series at the state level.
(d) The team may not have forfeited a game in the MRL or in their State Association State Cup competition.

**5.02 Selection of Wild Cards for US Youth Soccer Region II Championships**
Wild Card Qualifiers for the US Youth Soccer Region II Championships shall be earned from the following seasons:

| | Boys | | Girls | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fall | Spring | Fall | Spring |
| U-14 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| U-15 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| U-16 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| U-17 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| U-18 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

(a) Boys' Age Groups: Two (2) teams from each Premier Division Age Group will earn the right to represent the MRL as wild card teams in the National Championship Series at the Midwest Regionals.

In situations where there is a single Premier Division in an Age Group, the top two teams in that division will be awarded the NCS Wild Card slots, providing all eligibility requirements are met by each individual team, and each team is not a State Cup Champion.

In situations where the Premier Division in an Age Group has subdivisions, the top team in each subdivision will be awarded the NCS Wild Card slot, providing all eligibility requirements are met by each individual team, and each team is not a State Cup Champion.

(b) Girls U-14 Age Group: Two (2) teams from each Premier Division Age Group will earn the right to represent the MRL as wild card teams in the National Championship Series at the Midwest Regionals.
In situations where there is a single Premier Division in an Age Group, the top two teams in that division will be awarded the NCS Wild Card slots, providing all eligibility requirements are met by each individual team, and each team is not a State Cup Champion.
In situations where the Premier Division in an Age Group has two subdivisions, the top team in each subdivision will be awarded the NCS Wild Card slot, providing all eligibility requirements are met by each individual team, and each team is not a State Cup Champion.

(c) Girls U15, U-16, U-17, U-18 Age Groups: Two (2) teams from each Premier Division Age Group (1 Fall and 1 Spring) will earn the right to represent the MRL as wild card teams in the National Championship Series at the Midwest Regionals.
In situations where there is a single Premier Division in an Age Group, the top teams in that Age Group (Fall and Spring) will be awarded the NCS Wild Card slots, providing all eligibility requirements are met by each individual team, and each team is not a State Cup Champion.
In situations where the Premier Division in an Age Group has subdivisions, the MRL Commission shall determine the playoff format to determine the Wild Card slot.

The Process for determining the Wild Card representatives is as follows:

1. Determine final standings for each division/subdivision based on 6.07.
2. After all applicable State Championships have been determined; eliminate those teams that will represent their State Association as either the State Champion or as a State Wild Card.
3. After all State Champions/Wild Cards have been eliminated, the highest ranking team of those remaining, based on the original determination of standings, will be awarded the MRL Wild Card slot.

## SECTION VI. MATCHES--OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

### 6.01 Scoring Method

The standings of teams within divisions/sub-divisions are based upon the number of points earned. Teams earn points as follows:

Three (3) points for a win
One (1) point for a tie
No (0) points for a loss
Minus two (-2) points for a forfeit

### 6.02 Forfeits

In the event of a forfeit, the team that forfeits the match will have two (2) points deducted, and the match score will be recorded as 0-4. The opponent will be awarded three (3) points and a 4-0 win. In the event that a team forfeits more than one game, the MRL Commissioner shall review the impact that such forfeits have on the standings and may consider dropping all results by all teams versus the team that has committed forfeits from the standings. This shall only be done if forfeits have a direct impact on the final placement of teams for MRL Regional Wild Card slots or for promotion and relegation purposes.

### 6.03 Forfeited Matches—Premier Division

A Premier Division team that forfeits a game shall be subject to a fine, become ineligible for a Wild Card slot in the US Youth Soccer National Championships, and will be demoted to the First Division, for the next season of participation.

**6.04 Forfeited Matches—First Division**
A First Division team that forfeits a game shall be subject to a fine, and may be expelled from the MRL, for the next season of participation.

**6.05 Uneven Number of Games**
In the event that the teams in a Division/Sub-Division do not play the same number of games due to unforeseen circumstances but, not including games that teams refuse to play (i.e. forfeits), the Final Standings may be determined by using the percentage of points earned versus the maximum points the team could have earned. The MRL Commission will also determine any tie-breaking procedures that may need to be applied.

**6.06 Reporting of Scores**
Site Coordinators shall report game scores in a manner as determined by the MRL Commissioner. In situations where single games are played (i.e. Self Scheduled Games), both teams are required to report the scores in a manner as determined by the MRL Commissioner.

**6.07 Tiebreakers**
Tiebreakers—Two Teams are Tied
If two teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the team's placement will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria:

(a) Winner of head to head competition
(b) Winner of most games (all games).
(c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(d) Fewest goals allowed.
(e) Coin Toss

Tiebreakers—Three Teams That Are Tied
If three teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the three-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied resorts to the two team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

(a) Points earned in head to head competition among the teams
(b) Winner of most games (all games).
(c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
(f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
(g) Drawing of lots.

Tiebreakers—Four Teams That Are Tied
If four teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the four-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied (either two or three teams) resorts to the two or three team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

(a) Points earned in head to head competition among the tied teams
(b) Winner of most games (all games).
(c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game
(d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
(f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
(g) Drawing of lots.

Tiebreakers—Five Teams That Are Tied
If five teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the five-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied (two, three or four teams) resorts to the two, three or four team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

(a) Points earned in head to head competition among the tied teams
(b) Winner of most games (all games).
(c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
(f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
(g) Drawing of lots.

Tiebreakers—Six Teams That Are Tied
If five teams are tied on the basis of points earned, the final rankings will be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria. If a criterion creates a situation where the six-way tie is broken, then the tiebreaker for the teams that are tied (two, three, four or five teams) resorts to the two, three, four or five team tiebreaker specifically for those teams.

(a) Points earned in head to head competition among the tied teams
(b) Winner of most games (all games).
(c) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in games among the tied teams with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(d) Best Goal spread (goals scored minus goals against) in all games with a maximum of plus/minus four goals per game.
(e) Fewest goals allowed in games among the tied teams
(f) Fewest goals allowed in all games.
(g) Drawing of lots.

Tiebreakers—Not Covered
For any situation not covered within these rules, the MRL Commission will also determine any tie-breaking procedures that may need to be applied.

**6.08 Uniforms**
Teams playing in the MRL are only permitted to wear the following on their game uniforms:

(a) US Youth Soccer logo
(b) Their individual club and/or team logo and team sponsor logo
(c) Manufacturer of uniform logo
(d) Name and number of player

No other patches or logos are permitted unless written permission is granted by the MRL Commission.

**6.09 Number of Games**
Each team will be scheduled to play a minimum of four (4) games in a season. The scheduled number of games shall be determined by the MRL Commission based on the number of teams in a division and any play-off process.

**6.10 Scheduling of MRL Games**
All MRL games will be scheduled by the MRL Commission or designee. Once the MRL publishes the season schedule, no game can be rescheduled without the written permission of the MRL Commissioner. In the event that games are postponed, the MRL Commissioner shall have final authority in rescheduling the games.

**6.11 Travel/Hosting**
For the purpose of MRL competition, Permission to Host/Travel Forms are not required. Permission to host/travel is granted when a team's respective State Association approves the team's application into the MRL.

**6.12 Match Schedule and Rest Periods**
All matches will be played as scheduled, unless weather conditions dictate. It is the intent of the league to play only one match per day; however, when circumstances dictate, no more than two matches a day will be scheduled and no more than three matches per Saturday/Sunday weekend. Every effort will be made to provide for a minimum of three hours rest between matches.

**6.13 Inclement Weather**
The Host Club/State Association is responsible for notifying the MRL Commissioner as soon as possible if the scheduled fields are unavailable due to inclement weather. The MRL Commissioner will be responsible for notifying all teams regarding game postponement due to inclement weather. All reasonable efforts must be made to complete the match on the scheduled dates.

## SECTION VII. RULES OF PLAY

**7.01 Laws of the Game**
Games will be played under the applicable rules of US Youth Soccer. Teams are responsible for obtaining and being familiar with the U.S. Soccer Official Administrative Handbook and the FIFA Laws as they govern play subject to the modifications noted herein.

**7.02 Substitutions**
In the U18, U17, U16 and U15 age groups the MRL will operate under the FIFA-Seven (7) “per half” substitution system. Once replaced, players cannot re-enter the game during that half of play. Substitutions may be made during any stoppage in play. In the U14 age group, unlimited substitutions will be permitted.

**7.03 Match Length and Ball Size**

| Age Group | Length of Half | Ball Size |
|---|---|---|
| U-17 and U-18 | 45 min. | 5 |
| U-15 and U-16 | 40 min. | 5 |
| U-14 | 35 min. | 5 |

**7.04 Field Size**
Fields for all age groups must meet the FIFA requirements for full size fields. The MRL recommended field size is 116 yards by 72 yards.

**7.05 Official Match**
A match shall be considered official after one full half of play is completed (the second half does not have to start). If less than one half is completed and the match is abandoned, the entire match must be replayed, subject to MRL Rule 8.04 and/or review by the MRL Commission. If a match is abandoned in the second half of play due to inclement weather, the final score will be the score at the time the match is abandoned. If a match is abandoned for any other reason including but not limited to gross misconduct, the MRL Commission will decide the disposition of the match score following review of all information available including but not limited to Referee Game Reports, reports for MRL staff, etc.

**7.06 Forfeits-Lack of Appearance**
A one-hour delay in the start of a game due to a team’s lack of appearance is permitted for scheduled matches before the game is abandoned. Failure to appear for a scheduled match will result in a forfeit.

**7.07 Anchored Goals**
The coaches and match referee should inspect the integrity of the goals to ensure they are secure and suitable for play. Matches shall not begin until both goals have been firmly secured.

**7.08 Player Passes/Rosters/Lineup Game Cards**
Each team must bring their laminated US Youth Soccer member passes signed by an official of their home State Association, a MRL Lineup Game Card, and a copy of their Official MRL Roster and Official MRL Team Guest Roster to every match. Lineup Game Cards are to be given to the Match Referee prior to the start of a match. The Game Lineup Card and/or Official MRL Team Roster and Official MRL Team Guest Roster are to be provided to the opposing team upon request. No more than 18 players from a team may appear on the Lineup Card as eligible to play and play in any single game.

**7.09 Playing of Ineligible Player**
A team that plays an ineligible player shall be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to: forfeiture of the match suspension of the team's coach from MRL competition, or expulsion of the team from the MRL.

**7.10 Member Passes Presented to Referee**
US Youth Soccer Member Passes shall be presented to the referee upon entering the field of play. Passes will be returned to the players at the end of the half. Players will present passes upon entering the match during the second half. This rule shall not apply for U-14 age group as due to the open substitution rule for this age group, all player passes are to be presented to the Referee prior to the game.

**7.11 Availability of Team Rosters**
Upon request, copies of official MRL game rosters must be provided to the opposing team coach/manager prior to the start of each game.

**7.12 Uniform Color Conflict**
When there is a conflict in uniform color, the team listed first on the schedule must change their uniform color, subject to the Match Referee's decision

**7.13 Coaching from Sidelines**
Limited coaching from inside the team's respective Technical Area is permitted. Coaches may not leave their team's Technical Area or enter the field of play without permission from the Referee.

**7.14 Team Bench Supervision**
A coach, manager or team official must supervise a MRL team at all times at the Team Bench Area. Coaches, managers and team officials are required to provide the Referee with a pass, as provided by their host state association, certifying that the coach, manager or team official is currently rostered with the team/club. If by send off or emergency, a team does not have a coach, manager or team official to supervise the MRL team during a MRL game, then the game shall be forfeited.

**7.15 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."

## SECTION VIII. MATCH CONTROL

**8.01 Three Person System**
Matches must be officiated by the three-person FIFA/USSF Referee System. In the event the assigned referee fails to appear (within 10 minutes of the match time); a certified official must be found to officiate the match. The Referee may appoint replacements for Assistant Referees who fail to show up by the match time. In the event certified USSF officials are not available, the Referee may appoint Club Assistant Referees. Club Assistant Referees shall be limited to decisions only on touchlines and possession as specified by FIFA/USSF Referee Guidelines.

**8.02 Game Officials**
Game officials will be assigned under the authority of the MRL working with the hosting US Youth Soccer State Association SRA or SYRA

**8.03 Payment of Referees**

Referees and Assistant Referees appointed under the provisions of these MRL Rules shall be paid at the conclusion of the match upon receipt by the Site Coordinator of the MRL Referee Report, Game Cards, and Team Rosters. Each team is responsible for payment of one half of the MRL required fees of the match officials.

(a) Referee fees for U-17 and U-18 games shall total $140.00 ($60 for Referee and $40 for each Assistant Referee).
(b) Referee fees for U-15 and U16 games shall total $120.00 ($50 for Referee and $35 for each Assistant Referee).
(c) Referee fees for U-14 games shall total $100.00 ($40 for Referee and $30 for each Assistant Referee).

If fields are closed and/or games are cancelled and the referees are not notified prior to their arrival at the site, the officials will be paid for their first scheduled match only. The site coordinator is responsible for collecting the referee fees prior to the match, and distributing them to the officials. In the event that there is only one Assistant Referee, only one Assistant Referee payment is made. The other Assistant Referee fee may be paid to a club assistant referee, if they are a registered USSF official.

**8.04 Termination of Matches**

Referees may terminate matches for lack of crowd control, poor team behavior or other unsportsmanlike circumstances. Each coach is responsible for the behavior and conduct of his/her players. Upon request by the Game Officials, coaches are responsible to assist in the control of parents, fans, and spectators. The Referee will report the termination of any match to the MRL Commissioner within 24 hours. The MRL Commission shall ascertain the facts and determine appropriate disciplinary action that may include:

(a) Reprimand,
(b) Forfeiture of game as appropriate;
(c) Suspension from future MRL matches or
(d) Recommendation to the US Youth Soccer Region II Director of a more severe penalty.

If play is stopped at any time due to one of the teams (by action of players, coaches, administrators, spectators) adjudged to be at fault, it shall be at the discretion of the MRL Commission whether the game is to be replayed or declared a forfeit.

**8.05 Filing of Referee Match Report**

In the event that the Match Referee does not provide the Site Coordinator with the Referee Report, Team Lineup Game Cards and Team Rosters immediately following the match, the Referee must file such Report with the MRL Commissioner within 24 hours of the match. In the event that red or yellow cards are issued during the match, the Report must be filed within 12 hours of the match. Filing shall be defined as providing pertinent match information via e-mail or fax. Original copies of all paperwork must be postmarked within 48 hours of a match.

## SECTION IX. SEND OFFS AND DISCIPLINE

**9.01 Send Offs**

Any player, coach or team official who is sent off (red card) from a match will be suspended for the team's next MRL match. If a player, coach or team official who is ejected (red card) two times in a season, the player will be suspended for the next three (3) MRL matches. Any player who is deemed guilty of fighting with another player or coach (violent conduct) on or off the field of play will be suspended for a minimum of two (2) MRL matches, pending further review by the MRL Commission.

**9.02 Disciplinary Actions**

All disciplinary measures imposed by the MRL shall be limited to an individual or team's participation in the MRL. The MRL will record the issuance of all red and yellow cards and other matters involving the conduct of a team, its players, coaches or supporters and immediately distribute this information to the respective State Associations. The home State Association has the right to impose additional sanctions with regard to any matters arising from participation in the MRL.

**9.03 Violation of Rules**

Any violation of the rules herein will be subject to disciplinary action by the MRL.

**9.04 Disciplinary/Fine Schedule**
Prior to the start of the Fall and Spring Seasons, the MRL Commission shall distribute a Disciplinary/Fine Schedule.

## SECTION X. PROTESTS AND APPEALS

**10.01 Definition of a Protest**
A *Protest* is a formal written objection of any violation of established rules, policies, or procedures related to a specific match. Only those teams directly involved in a match (i.e. the two competing teams) are permitted to protest a game result. Third parties, i.e., coaches from other teams, state administrators, cannot file protests on a specific game.

**10.02 Definition of an Appeal**
An *Appeal* is a request to transfer the matter from one jurisdiction to another for re-examination of the decision made by the lower body. Appeals arise as the result of an adverse decision from an administrative action or disciplinary action at a lower level. Only those parties to the original action, who are adversely impacted by such decisions, shall be allowed to appeal**.**

**10.03 Filing Procedures**
A Protest or Appeal must be filed in writing and must include:

(a) The nature and specifics of the complaint
(b) A listing of the rules, policies, or procedures that have been violated.
(c) A statement of the desired resolution
(d) Copies of all documents relevant to the Protest or Appeal
(e) The filing fee for a protest or appeal is $250.00 (certified check or money order – made payable to US Youth Soccer Region II.)

All Protests and Appeals must be filed with the MRL Commissioner. The original document of the Protest or Appeal, along with all supporting documents, must be sent by Registered or Certified U. S. Mail – Return Receipt Requested.

**10.04 Return of Filing Fee**
In the event that a Protest or Appeal is upheld then the filing fee shall be returned to the entity filing the Protest or Appeal; otherwise the filing fee is non-refundable.

**10.05 Notification of Parties**
The MRL Commissioner shall notify all parties involved, no later than three (3) business days from receipt of an Appeal or Protest, that an Appeal or Protest has been filed.

**10.06 Protests of Games Played**
Notice of intent to Protest activity that occurred during a match must be registered with the MRL Commissioner within 24 hours of completion of the match. All Protests must be submitted in writing with the appropriate fee to the MRL Commissioner. The Protest must be postmarked no later than three (3) business days from match completion in accordance with the Filing Procedures listed in Section 10.03. The Referee is the final authority on the field of play. All decisions of the referees with the respect to matters of fact, including judgment matters are final. The MRL Commissioner is authorized to settle disputes which arise in the course of a MRL match. The MRL Commissioner, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will hear the Protest, investigate and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by teams, coaches, players or others involved related to such match and may impose appropriate sanctions for any violation found. A decision on a Protest must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of a Protest. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted).When an Appeal of a MRL Commissioner's decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the MRL Commission.

**10.07 Appeal of Decision of the MRL Commissioner**
The MRL Commission is authorized to hear Appeals of MRL Commissioner decisions. The MRL Commission, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will investigate and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by teams, coaches, players or others involved related to such matter and may impose appropriate sanctions for any violation found. A decision on an Appeal must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of an Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted).When an Appeal of a MRL Commission decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the Region II Regional Council.

**10.08 Appeal of MRL Assessed Fines**
An Appeal of MRL assessed fines, must be postmarked no later than three (3) business days from notification of an assessed penalty in accordance with the Filing Procedures listed in Section 10.4. Such Appeal will be heard by the MRL Commission. The MRL Commission, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will investigate and adjudicate the Appeal. A decision on an Appeal must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of an Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted).When an Appeal of a MRL Commission decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the Region II Regional Council.

**10.09 Appeal of Administrative Matter**
The MRL Commission is authorized to hear Appeals that are administrative in nature. The MRL Commission, in accordance with the disciplinary policies and procedures of Region II, US Youth Soccer, and US Soccer, will investigate and adjudicate all allegations of misconduct by teams, coaches, players or others involved related to such matter and may impose an appropriate sanction for any violation found. A decision on an Appeal must be made within fourteen (14) business days from the receipt of an Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of investigation and adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted).When an Appeal of a MRL Commission decision is authorized, the Appeal will be made to the Region II Regional Council.

**10.10 Region II Regional Council Decision**
The Region II Regional Council hearing an Appeal of a MRL Commission's decision shall make the final decision on this matter. The Region II Regional Council will render a decision no later than twenty one (21) business days from receipt of the Appeal. Decisions shall be reduced to written form and shall be sent to the principal parties no later than two (2) business days from the conclusion of adjudication (Sundays and holidays excepted).

**10.11 US Youth Soccer Bylaw 704, Section 1**
In accordance with MRL Rule 1.03, USYSA Bylaw 704, section 1 states that: "No member of USYSA, official, league, club team, player, coach, administrative, or referee may invoke the aid of the courts of the United States or of a state without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate soccer organizations, as provided within USYSA." Additionally, for violation of USYSA Bylaw 704, the offending party shall be subject to suspension and/or fines, and shall be liable to the MRL and USYSA for all expenses incurred by the MRL or USYSA and its officers and members of the Board of Directors in defending each court action, including the following: (a) court costs; (b) attorney's fees; (c) reasonable compensation for time spent by the MRL or USYSA officials and employees in responding to and defending against allegations in the action, including responses to discovery and court appearances; (d) travel expenses; and (e) expenses for holding special meetings by the MRL or USYSA necessitated by court action.