

April 2021

I. Tournament Sanction and Officials

The Alabama State Championships is a tournament sanctioned and conducted annually by the Alabama Soccer Association (ASA) for competition among boy's and girl's teams in the 13U through 19U age groups. It is a part of and a qualifying event for the US Youth Soccer Regional and National Championships sanctioned and conducted by US Youth Soccer. In addition to the Rules listed therein, all other applicable ASA rules and US Youth Soccer rules are in force. The ASA State Cup is conducted under the direction of the State Tournament Committee.

Any matters not provided for in this policy shall be decided by the Tournament Committee, and its decisions are final. To continue to improve the games, this manual may be updated by the Tournament Committee and redistributed.

Division A for each age group and gender will qualify for continuation into USYS Region Events. The winner from Division A will have first opportunity to compete at USYS National Championship series. The Finalists will have first opportunity to compete at USYS Presidents Cup Championship series. If winner from Division A declines the USYS NCS, then the finalists will have next opportunity and the 3rd place winner will have next opportunity at USYS Presidents Cup Championship series. The depth of Division A to move on to Regional play and available Regional Wild Cards will be at the discretion of ASA Executive Director.

Division B-Z for each age group and gender will not move on to USYS Regional Events.

II. Eligibility of Teams and Players

A. Eligibility. State Cup competition is open to the teams of any member who are registered and in good standing of the Alabama Soccer Association.

B. Team Roster Size and Continuity. A team may not have more than the maximum number of players allowed by US Youth Soccer. Teams that can have a maximum of 18 players must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the league and National Championships competitions by maintaining a minimum of 9 players common to the roster of both competitions, and teams that can have a maximum of 22 players must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the league and National Championships competitions by maintaining a minimum of 11 players common to the roster of both competitions. A team is limited to five (5) previously rostered players during a seasonal year.

C. Age Group Entered. A team must enter the competition in the age group corresponding to the age of its oldest player.

D. Team Rosters. After the roster is frozen:

1. No player changes are allowed (no "adds" or transfers).

2. A team and its players shall be considered to have competed in the State Cup competition for that seasonal year, whether the team or players participated in a State Cup game.

3. Teams and players may compete in only one (1) State Cup competition in a seasonal year. **(Season Year August 1 – July 31)**

E. Game Rosters

Each team must provide a Game Day Roster for each match. If the game day roster has a maximum of 22 players, then the game day roster shall reflect a maximum of 18 eligible players and a minimum of 7 players. Each coach/manager will elect to scratch the players who will not be participating in a match. Every eligible player on the game day roster is eligible for participation until struck and can be different from game to game.

F. Roster Changes.

1. All transfers must be completed prior to the published State Cup roster freeze date for a player to be eligible for State Cup.

Transfers are governed by all applicable rules of US Youth Soccer and ASA. It is the responsibility of the coach and/or team official that has changed its roster to ensure that the ASA or their representative verifies the change.

G. Eligibility Rule Violations. Violations of player or team eligibility rules will result in the forfeiture of any game in which an ineligible team or player has participated. Any coach or team official found to have rostered an ineligible player is, together with the team, ineligible to compete further in State Cup competition in the current year.

III. Competition Bond, Deadlines/Withdrawals, & Forfeits

A. Each team participating in the State Cup must post a \$400.00 performance bond upon entering the team in the ASA State League. In all cases, the performance bond will be held until the conclusion of the State Cup. A team's performance bond will be forfeited by:

- A team's failure to be ready to play at the scheduled time plus grace period of any game.
- A team's failure to participate in the entire awards ceremony if that team is a participant in the championship game.
- A team forfeits any match.
- A team that withdraws from the state cup after the deadline to withdraw as set by the Tournament committee.

B. Deadlines/Withdrawals. The official application deadline and withdrawal for each season will be published in the ASA Calendar. A team that withdraws its application at any time after will forfeit its entry fee and bond.

C. Forfeits. A forfeit during the competition shall be considered a withdrawal and subject to the appropriate fines and penalties.

Should a team in round-robin competition forfeit any match, official game scores for all that team's games shall be recorded as 4-0 losses. A team that forfeits a match will be considered to have withdrawn from the tournament.

IV. Scoring & Tiebreakers

A. Scoring/Tiebreakers.

1. For winners of a round robin group will be determined on a point basis as follows:

- Three (3) points for a win,
- One (1) point for a tie,
- Zero (0) points for a loss.

Tie games will be allowed with no overtime played during the round robin portion of the tournament.

2. Tiebreakers

In the event teams are tied based on points, the following tiebreakers will be considered in order until the tie is broken:

- A. Winner of head-to-head competition. (This criterion is not used if more than two teams are tied.)
- B. Most wins.
- C. Team with greatest net goal difference (NGD) which is computed as goals for minus goals against with a maximum of 4 NGD per game.
- D. Team with least goals against (there is NO limit on the number of goals that will be counted to determine this tiebreaker).
- E. Team with most goals (maximum of 4 goals per game).
- F. Kicks from penalty spot per FIFA law.

3. More than Two Teams Tied

- A. If more than two (2) teams are tied, the sequence will be followed until a team is eliminated. The remaining teams will then restart the sequence at 2B above, until the tie is broken.
- B. If three teams are still tied after computing the listed tiebreakers and FIFA Kicks must be taken, there will be a draw by the tournament committee. The first team drawn will receive the bye; the next team drawn will be the home team against the remaining team in the first contest of FIFA Kicks. The winner of the first contest will then compete against the bye team in FIFA Kicks to determine the winner. The bye team will be the home team.
- C. If four teams are still tied after computing the listed tiebreakers and FIFA Kicks must be taken, there will be a draw conducted by the tournament committee. The first team drawn (home team) will compete against the 2nd team drawn (away team) in the first contest of FIFA Kicks. The third team drawn (home team) will compete against the

fourth team (away team) in the second contest. The winners of these two contests will then compete to determine the winner. The winner of first/second draw will be the home team.

4. In elimination, semi- or final-round matches, tie games will not be permitted. Overtime and kicks from the penalty mark, if necessary, will be used to determine a winner in each match.

V. Game Sites

As a condition of acceptance into the competition, applicants must agree to play anywhere they are scheduled within the State of Alabama.

VI. Club or Association and Team Obligations

Pursuant to US Youth Soccer rules, State Cup games take precedence over all other games. State Cup game dates will be published in advance, but due to weather contingencies, these must be regarded as subject to change. Teams should plan to be available every day from the start of the competition until the final match.

VII. Game Officials

- A. Three (3) officials shall be assigned for each State Cup match by a registered Alabama USSF Assignor designated by the State Assignor Coordinator and State Youth Referee Administrator. The Tournament Director shall be responsible for notifying the SYRA of requirements for officials.

VIII. Rules of Play

Applicable Documents include:

- FIFA "Laws of the Game" as amended annually
- USYSA National Championship Rules (current revision)
- ASA Constitution and Bylaws • ASA Annual Calendar
- ASA Policy and Procedures
- ASA State League Guidelines
- ASA General Membership Rules

Except as modified herein, the FIFA Laws of the Game with ASA modifications shall govern all State Cup play.

A. General Rules of Play

Both teams and a maximum of four (4) team officials for each team shall take the same side of the field. Spectators shall take the other side of the field.

No artificial noisemakers are permitted & home team shall provide the game ball.

The home team will wear a light color jersey. The visiting team will wear dark colored jerseys. The team in the incorrect color will have to change.

The home team shall make available on request a copy of these Rules and Procedures for the referee.

B. Pre-Game Procedures

Each team must have in its possession at the game site, and must make available on request of the referee, or a State Cup official, its original, current, approved ASA State Roster and a current year US Youth Soccer Player Pass for each player/coach/manager. All teams entering State Cup are required to have in their possession their US Youth Soccer Player Passes laminated with pictures affixed prior to the first match of the tournament.

Four (4) approved club representatives may be present on the bench. Should representative not be available, the match is forfeited.

C. Grace Period

Games must start when scheduled except:

A fifteen (15) minute grace period is given to each team to present its US Youth Soccer player and coach passes to the referee for inspection. Failure to comply will result in the cancellation of the match by the referee. The Tournament Director will determine if the team shall forfeit the match with no right of appeal.

A fifteen (15) minute grace period is given to a team which cannot field the maximum number of starting players per rules at game time. After fifteen (15) minutes, the game will start provided that the team has at least the minimum number of players required per rules. If less than the minimum number of players are present at the end of the grace period it will result in the cancellation of the match by the referee. The Tournament Director will determine if the team shall forfeit the match with no right of appeal.

D. Game Duration, Overtime, and Ball Requirements

Games shall consist of two halves of equal duration in accordance with the Age Group Specifications appearing below.

In elimination, semi-final, and final games, if tied at the end of regulation time, following a five (5) minute rest period; the teams shall play 2 complete overtime periods. The duration of the overtime will be in accordance with the Age Group Specifications appearing below. The teams will change ends between halves. No rest period is allowed between overtime halves.

If a game is tied at the end of overtime, the tie shall be resolved by a contest of penalty kicks in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Round robin games may end in a tie with no overtime to be played.

Ball sizes and specifications shall be in accordance with the Age Group Specifications appearing below.

Age Group	Length of Regulation ½	Length of Overtime ½
19U	45 minutes	10 minutes
18U	45 minutes	10 minutes
17U	45 minutes	10 minutes
16U	40 minutes	10 minutes
15U	40 minutes	10 minutes
13-14U	35 minutes	5 minutes
12U	30 minutes	5 minutes
11U	30 minutes	5 minutes

13U – 19U age groups use a #5 size ball; 11U-12U shall use a #4 size ball.

E. Substitutions

Division A

The number of substitutions shall be unlimited for 11-14U. For all other age groups, a maximum of 7 substitutions shall be allowed in each game during each half of play, the substituted player may not reenter the game during that same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game.

All other divisions

Unlimited substitutions will be permitted for all age groups.

If a player is suspected of suffering a head injury, they may be substituted for evaluation without the substitution counting against the Teams total number of allowed substitutions during each half or overtime period. If the player with the suspected head injury has received clearance from the events Head Care Professional, the player may re-enter the game as a regular substitute. A Team may only make a temporary substitution if they have a substitution available.

F. Ejections

If a player or coach is dismissed from any match, the player or coaches' pass, together with the game report of the incident shall be turned over to the Tournament Committee. Players or coaches ejected from a State Cup game are prohibited from participation in the next following US Youth Soccer National Championship game, whether it is the next Alabama State Cup match, the first match of Regional competition, or the first Alabama State Cup match of the following seasonal year. (State Cup suspensions are served only in connection with US Youth Soccer National Championship games and have no bearing on league play.) Ejections and cautions issued in connection with State Cup play may be referred to the ASA Tournament Committee for further disciplinary action. The player's pass shall be returned to the player's coach/manager following the disciplinary period.

Note: Since some coaches coach more than one team, game suspension(s) will apply to the team for which the coach received the ejection.

G. Cautions

Cautions, unlike ejections, do not accumulate nor do they have any effect on a player's eligibility at the next level of play (Region III Championships).

H. Terminated Games

Games terminated due to inclement weather, darkness, or for other reasons (assuming neither team was at fault), even during FIFA penalty kicks, may be re-played in their entirety. If a match is abandoned for cause due to actions of a team, coach or spectators, the Tournament Committee shall determine whether to allow the score at the time of termination to stand, to forfeit the match in favor of the non-offending team, or to replay the match in its entirety. The referee shall report, with explanation, all abandoned games to the Tournament Committee within one hour of the termination. The final decision to replay a game rests with the Tournament Director.

I. Post-Game Procedures

The Game Report will be completed by the referee including cautions and ejections, if any. The completed report must be signed by the referee and assistant referees as well as the team coaches and or managers.

J. Protests

Protest will only be accepted for misapplication of the FIFA rules or misapplication of ASA rules. Protest will not be accepted for Referee Judgment calls. Protest must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director at the Tournament site, no more than 1 hour after the game with a protest fee of \$250.00 cash. The protest fee will not be refunded regardless of the result of the protest.