



State Cup Qualifying Procedures

Introduction

Idaho Youth Soccer Association, in collaboration with the Technical Advisory and State Cup Committees has limited the total number of teams allowed at the IYSA State Cup Round Robin weekend to 8 teams. Those 8 teams, based upon population and number of clubs are allocated as follows:

District	Teams
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	1

If the total number of entrants is 8 or less, all teams will be accepted.

In the event more than 8 total teams enter in a specific age group/ gender combination AND the total number of entries from a District is greater than their allocated teams, a process must be established for determining which teams qualify for the State Cup Round Robin from that District. Qualifying will only be played in Districts where it is required. Regardless of qualifying format, teams will be charged the ISL rate per game, as shown below:

Age Group	Per Team
U12	\$108.00
U13-14	\$119.50
U15-16	\$140.00
U17-19	\$149.00

Once qualifying has concluded, seeded teams from the previous year's State Cup who have qualified will be seeded into Round Robin round per State Cup rule 3.4. The options for in District qualifying are below:

Option #1—ISL League Play

All State Cup teams in age group/ gender/ district combinations where qualifying is required will be entered into Idaho State League for the purposes of qualifying.

Teams will then play a single round robin format, where each team plays the other applied teams. The top finishers (based upon the District's allotted teams) advance to State Cup Round Robin.

In this format, EACH team would play the following number of games prior to the required deadline (April 12, 2026 for this seasonal year):



Teams in District	# of games per team
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	5
7	6
8	7
9	8

IYSA, in conjunction with the District teams/ Commissioner, will assist in scheduling these required games and ensuring they were complete prior to the deadline.

Pros/ Cons: This format requires teams to play more matches on a tight timeline going into the Spring season, but provides the most fairness, as all teams would play every other entrant from their District. Games could be scheduled any date beginning March 1st and ending April 12th.

Option #2—Mini In District Tournament

All State Cup teams in age group/ gender/ district combinations where qualifying is required will be entered into a mini-tournament over April 3-5 and/ or April 10-12, 2026.

Any seeded teams are pre-seeded into a bracket and all other teams are drawn into a double elimination bracket. The tournament is played over one or two weekends depending on number of entrants in that District.

Seeded teams are placed (up to number of seeded teams in District) are placed in bracket, including byes where applicable. All other then drawn into the bracket. Tournament is then played until the number of qualifying teams has been determined.

Pros/ Cons: Teams play a max of 4 games (double elimination) in this format and the dates are set, but all teams entered must be available for these dates and games must be played in a single or very near locations.

Option #3—Hybrid (International Qualifying)

All State Cup teams in age group/ gender/ district combinations where qualifying is required will be entered into groups as laid out below depending on number of teams and allocated teams to Round Robin Weekend:

District 2 (two teams qualify)



3-5 entrants-- Same format as option #1 (true round robin amongst entrants) with the top 2 teams advancing to State Cup Round Robin

6 teams—Teams are broken into two brackets (three teams) and any seeded teams from the previous year are placed into different brackets. For example, if two seeded teams, they would be entered as A1 (1st seeded team) and B1 (2nd seeded team). All other teams are then drawn into remaining slots. Teams play the other two teams in their bracket with the winner of each bracket advancing to the State Cup Round Robin Weekend.

7 teams-- Teams are broken into two brackets (one of four and one of three) and any seeded teams from the previous year are placed into different brackets. For example, if two seeded teams, they would be entered as A1 (2nd seeded team) and B1 (1st seeded team, in bracket of three). All other teams are then drawn into remaining slots. Teams play the other teams in their bracket with the winner of each bracket advancing to the State Cup Round Robin Weekend.

8 teams-- Teams are broken into two brackets (four teams) and any seeded teams from the previous year are placed into different brackets. For example, if two seeded teams, they would be entered as A1 (1st seeded team) and B1 (2nd seeded team). All other teams are then drawn into remaining slots. Teams play the other three teams in their bracket with the winner of each bracket advancing to the State Cup Round Robin Weekend.

9 teams and above—IYSA will determine format in these scenarios.

District 1 & District 4 (one team qualifies)

2-5 entrants-- Same format as option #1 (true round robin amongst entrants)

6 or more entrants will use District 2 formats above, with an additional game added between the two bracket winners. The winner of that match advancing to Round Robin Weekend.

District 3 (four teams qualify)

5 teams-- Same format as option #1 (true round robin amongst entrants) with the top 2 teams advancing to State Cup Round Robin

6 teams—Teams are broken into two brackets (three teams) and any seeded teams from the previous year are placed into different brackets. For example, if two seeded teams, they would be entered as A1 (1st seeded team) and B1 (2nd seeded team). If three seeded teams, #2 and #3 will be placed in the same bracket. If four seeded teams #1 and #4 will be placed in bracket A and #2 and #3 will be placed in bracket B. All other teams are then drawn into remaining slots. Teams play the other two teams in their bracket with the top two (2) each bracket advancing to the State Cup Round Robin Weekend.

7 teams-- Teams are broken into two brackets (one of four and one of three) and any seeded teams from the previous year are placed into different brackets. For example, if two seeded teams, they would be entered as A1 (2nd seeded team) and B1 (1st seeded team, in bracket of three). If three seeded teams, #2 and #3 would be seeded in bracket B. If four seeded teams #1 and #4 will be placed in bracket B and #2 and #3 will be placed in bracket A. All other teams are then drawn into remaining slots. All other teams are then drawn into



remaining slots. Teams play the other teams in their bracket with the top two (2) each bracket advancing to the State Cup Round Robin Weekend.

8 teams-- Teams are broken into two brackets (four teams) and any seeded teams from the previous year are seeded into different brackets. For example, if two seeded teams, they would be entered as A1 (1st seeded team) and B1 (2nd seeded team). If three seeded teams, #2 and #3 would be seeded in bracket B. If four seeded teams #1 and #4 will be placed in bracket B and #2 and #3 will be placed in bracket A. All other teams are then drawn into remaining slots. Teams play the other three teams in their bracket with the top two (2) each bracket advancing to the State Cup Round Robin Weekend.

9 teams and above—IYSA will determine format in these scenarios.

Pros/ Cons: This format limits the number of qualifying games required prior to the deadline, while also taking the previous year seeding into account when determining bracketing during qualifying. Any league (ISL, SRL, etc.) game where two teams are scheduled to play each other could also be counted as a qualifying match, as long as IYSA was notified and it was agreed upon ahead of time. This format also matches several confederations qualifying events for international tournaments. Games could be scheduled any date beginning March 1st and ending April 12th. However, this format is draw dependent for non-seeded teams and a single game can have a large impact on a team's ability to advance.

IYSA Recommended Path Forward

IYSA is recommending a tiered system, where each District follows one of the options above, based upon the number of entrants from their District. This tiered system would be as follows:

D2 (two teams qualify)

- 3 entrants— Round Robin format (option #1), top two advance
- 4-5 entrants— District choice between option #1 & #2 (feasibility of getting 3-4 games in prior to deadline to be considered)
- 6 or more entrants— Hybrid (option #3) to be used.

D1/ D4 (one team qualifies)

- Given the number of clubs in these areas, Round Robin format (option #1) to be used.

D3 (four teams qualify)

- 5 entrants— District choice between option #1 & #2 (feasibility of getting 4 games in prior to deadline to be considered)
- 6 or more entrants— Hybrid (option #3) to be used.

