



STATE CUP 2026

ELIGIBILITY, FORMAT AND PLAYING RULES

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1. STATE CUP ELIGIBILITY

Section 1.1 General

IYSA State Cup 2026 is open to any competitively registered teams whose players are registered in the US Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) through IYSA for the 2025-26 seasonal year. Teams must have played a minimum of three games in an IYSA sanctioned league for the 2025-26 seasonal year. Teams in D3 must participate in Idaho State League, not

The age divisions for 2026 State Cup are U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, and U18/19 for boys and girls.

State Cup Entry Deadline is February 15th, 2026. Registration is done through GotSport at this [link](#).

1.2 Roster Freeze

Rosters freeze date will be April 12th, 2026 for U12-U17 and May 1st, 2026 for U19. Coaches and players cannot be added or changed after this date.

1.3 Players Switching Clubs (Transfers)

Once a competitive player is placed on a team roster during the season, the submittal of the roster to IYSA binds that player to that club for the seasonal year unless he/she is granted a transfer or release. Under no circumstances can a State Cup roster have more than five players that have previously played for another club during the seasonal year. Transferred players are eligible to play for their new team in the State Cup.

1.4 Withdrawal from Competition

Any team withdrawing from the competition after the qualifying schedule has been published will not be refunded for the entry fee and can be subject to the forfeit fees listed in the State Cup rule 13.

1.5 Participation in IYSA State Cup/ IYSA Directors Cup Up to four (4) rostered players from an IYSA State Cup team, who was eliminated during the Round Robin weekend, may be rostered and participate in Director's Cup.

2. NON-IDAHO RESIDENT PLAYERS

2.1 There shall be limitations to placing non-Idaho resident players onto an Idaho State Cup roster.

Roster Size	Max non-Idaho resident Players
19-22	5
15-18	4
11-14	3

Any club that wishes to exceed the maximum number of non-Idaho resident players may apply for an exception to the rule.

- The request must come from the club President or Director of Coaching

- Decisions on exceptions will be made by the IYSA Director of Competition in cooperation with the IYSA Executive Director and IYSA Technical Director

All out of state players must be on the LEAGUE roster and not added just for the purposes of State Cup. IYSA must be notified of all out of State players listed on State Cup rosters by April 12th, 2026.

3. QUALIFICATION AND SEEDING

3.1 All application forms must be received in the IYSA office on or before midnight on February 15th, 2026. Based upon the number of entries in each District and Age Group Division, qualification will be scheduled by IYSA Tournament Director using the procedures approved by IYSA membership. An IYSA League game may be used as a qualification game for State Cup if agreed by both coaches 14 days prior to the league contest. Following qualification, the following number of teams from each District will be put into the State Cup seeding draw as distributed below:

- 8 team max
 - 4 – District 3
 - 1 – District 1
 - 2 – District 2
 - 1 – District 4

3.2 Should a District not use one of their seeds, this unused seed will be distributed to another District. The order of this allocation will be determined by a draw. At each age group and gender, Districts will be drawn at random and placed in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th position, producing a draw matrix like the one below:

POS	U12B	U13B	U14B	U15B	U16B	U17B	U18B	U12 G	U13 G	U14 G	U15 G	U16 G	U17 G	U18 G
1st	1	2	3	3	1	2	4	1	4	2	4	2	4	1
2nd	2	1	2	4	4	3	1	3	1	4	2	3	1	4
3rd	3	3	4	1	2	1	2	2	3	1	3	4	2	2
4th	4	4	1	2	3	4	3	4	2	3	1	1	3	3

After the entry deadline, using the matrix as a reference, it will be determined who gets the extra seed(s).

3.3 Once the final District seed allocations have been made to fill brackets up to a maximum of 8 teams, the Executive Director and IYSA Staff shall be responsible for overseeing the creation of the State Cup seeding and brackets of play during a live and/ or video conference meeting on a date to be determined after the entry deadline. The meeting is open to all state affiliates. In those instances where a draw cannot be held publicly due to a change of circumstances, then the draw will be performed by the ED and IYSA Staff with a minimum of two (2) witnesses not having a vested interest in the outcome of the draw.

3.4 During the seeding meeting, each age group and gender will be drawn separately using the following slot orders. Teams from the same club can't be drawn in the same bracket unless there is no place to put them. Should a team from the same club be drawn then they will be placed at the next slot number to be drawn. 1st through 4th placed teams from the previous year's ISL/ State Cup, who have been accepted to the current year IYSA State Cup will be seeded as follows:

- Four and five team brackets—previous year 1st placed finisher placed as team #1, previous year 2nd placed finisher placed as team #2, previous year 3rd finisher placed as team #3, previous year 4th place finisher placed as team #4.
- Six team brackets— previous year 1st placed finisher placed as team #1, previous year 2nd placed finisher placed as team #2, previous year 3rd finisher placed as team #4, previous year 4th place finisher placed as team #3.
- Seven team brackets— previous year 1st placed finisher placed as team #2 (in pool of 3 teams), previous year 2nd placed finisher placed as team #1, previous year 3rd finisher placed as team #3, previous year 4th place finisher placed as team #4.
- Eight team brackets— previous year 1st placed finisher placed as team #1, previous year 2nd placed finisher placed as team #2, previous year 3rd finisher placed as team #4, previous year 4th place finisher placed as team #3

8-Team Bracket

Bracket A		Bracket B	
1		2	
3		4	
5		6	
7		8	

7-Team Bracket

Bracket A		Bracket B	
1		2	
3		4	
5		6	
7			

6-Team Bracket

Bracket A		Bracket B	
1		2	
3		4	
5		6	

5-Team Bracket

Bracket A	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

4-Team Bracket

Bracket A	
1	
2	
3	
4	

3-Team Bracket

Bracket A	
1	
2	
3	

2-Team Bracket – No draw necessary as it is head-to-head

3rd and 4th placed teams will only be seeded when 3rd place games were played in the previous year’s State Cup.

3.5 In order to qualify for one of the two (4) seeds based on the previous year’s results, each team would be required to show a continuity of roster consisting of nine players from that previous year. Any team that has changed its affiliation since the previous year’s State Cup will not be eligible for seeding purposes based on the previous year’s results. The only exception would be any team of an affiliate involved in a merger during the current seasonal year. Any seeded team that does not have continuity will no longer be seeded.

4. GAME SCHEDULING, SEMI-FINAL & FINAL, 3rd PLACE FORMATS

4.1 Age Group Divisions will be scheduled in in the following formats based upon number of teams:

- 4.1.1-- 8-team bracket: Round Robin Play in each bracket (3 games), top two teams from each bracket advance
- 4.1.2-- 7-team bracket: Round Robin Play in each bracket (3 games Bracket A, 2 games Bracket B), top two teams from each bracket advance; 3A vs 3B weekend 1 for third game
- 4.1.3-- 6-team bracket: Round Robin Play in each bracket (2 games), top two teams from each bracket advance; 3A vs 3B weekend 1 for third game
- 4.1.4-- 5-team bracket: Round Robin Play in only bracket (4 games), top four teams advance
- 4.1.5-- 4-team bracket: Single Weekend Round Robin (3 games), Final, Third Place Match
- 4.1.6-- 3-team bracket: Round Robin Play in only bracket (2 games), Top two teams advance to Final, no third place match
- 4.1.7-- 2-team bracket: Two game aggregate, if tied on aggregate after two games, OT and Kicks from the Mark
- 4.2 Semifinal, Final, and Third Place games will be scheduled using the using this legend: 1A= 1st in Bracket A, 1B= 1st in Bracket B, 2A= 2nd in Bracket A, 2B= 2nd in Bracket B, 3A= 3rd in Bracket A, 4A=4th in Bracket A, WS1= Winner 1st Semifinal, WS2= Winner 2nd Semifinal, LS1= Loser 1st Semifinal, LS2= Loser 2nd Semifinal.

Semifinal and Third Place game formats:

- 4.2.1-- 8, 7, and 6-team brackets-- Semifinals: 1A vs. 2B, 1B vs. 2A, Final: WS1 vs. WS2, 3rd Place Game= LS1 vs. LS2
- 4.2.2-- 5 team brackets-- Semifinals: 1A vs. 4A, 2A vs. 3A, Final: WS1 vs. WS2, 3rd Place Game= LS1 vs. LS2

5. MEDALS AND ADVANCEMENT

5.1 Medals will be awarded for 1st & 2nd place

5.2 Advancement:

- The first placed team will advance to the USYS National Championships (NCS)
- Second placed team will advance to President's Cup
 - If the first placed team declines NCS, they will not be eligible for President's Cup participation
- **The highest placing team that does not decline NCS will be representative at NCS**

6. PLAYING RULES

6.1 Roster Size

6.1.1 Roster sizes for all ages shall be a maximum of 22 players in U13-U18 and 18 players for U12.

6.1.2 Game Roster sizes for all ages shall be a maximum of 18 players for U13-19 and 16 players for U12.

6.1.3 The minimum number of players to begin or continue a game shall be 6 players in the U12 age group and 7 players in the U13-U19 age groups.

6.1.4 Teams and team officials (maximum of four (4), e.g. coach, assistant coach, manager, trainer) will be on one sideline. Parents and spectators will be on the opposite sideline across from their team

6.2 Uniforms

- (1) 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.
- (2) After an initial warning pursuant to e(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 and replaced with the US Youth Soccer name or logo before the player, team or team official may enter or continue in the competition.

6.3 Alternate Jersey

6.3.1 The home team will wear a light-colored kit. The visiting team will wear dark colored kit. The team in the incorrect color will have to change. The referee has the authority to remedy the situation as he/she sees fit.

6.4 Unsafe Equipment

6.4.1 Matters of safety are left up to the discretion of the referee. Equipment which may be considered unsafe includes the following but not limited to: jewelry (including taped/ untaped earrings, nose rings, watches), head, arm, thigh or hip pads containing sole leather, fiber, metal or any unyielding material, hard casts of any material and knee braces made of hard unyielding material and may be made safe by applying an appropriate amount of padding. The dangerous use of any equipment previously approved by the referee during the game may be cause for removal of the player from the game until the equipment is made safe. Players can receive approvals for equipment from the State Youth Referee Administrator; however, the match official must approve the safety of the equipment.

6.5 Duration & Ball Size

6.5.1 Play will be conducted in accordance with the Policy of the USYS NCS. The length of games are as listed below:

Age	Half Length	Ball Size	Game Format	Minimum Players to Start/ Continue
U12	30	4	9v9	6
U13-14	35	5	11v11	7
U15-16	40	5	11v11	7
U17-19	45	5	11v11	7

At all ages there will be a 10-minute halftime.

During round robin / bracket play ties will stand. (See Tiebreaker Guidelines)

6.6 Semi-Final and Final Tiebreaking Procedures

6.6.1 If a game is tied at the end of regulation, games will proceed directly to Kicks from the Mark (Penalty Kicks). No extra time will be played.

6.7 Substitutions

6.7.1 U12-U14 Age Groups: **Unlimited** substitutions over **three moments per half** plus halftime.

6.7.2 U15-U19 Age Groups: **Unlimited** substitutions over **four moments** per *match* plus halftime.

6.7.3 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.

6.7.4 If a player is suspected of having a concussion, they may be temporarily replaced so they can be evaluated by a **from IYSA's onsite Health Care Professional**. The temporary substitute does not count toward the team's normal substitution limits. If the player is cleared, they may return to the match, and the temporary substitute player must come off. No substitution is charged to the team. 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.

6.7.5 Stoppage/ Allowance for time lost is allowed at the referee's discretion according to FIFA laws. Per 7.3 in IFAB Laws of the game these situations include: substitutions, assessment and/ or removal on injured players, time wasting, disciplinary sanctions, medical stoppages (drink/ cooling breaks), goal celebrations, any other cause including any significant delay to a restart.

6.8 Inclement Weather/ Official Game Policy

6.8.1 The IYSA Environmental Policy will be applied in all State Cup games. Link to the policy can be found [here](#).

6.8.2 In the event that a game is abandoned due to inclement weather, the following procedures will be followed:

- *If the game had at least reached half time then the score stands as is.*
- *If the game had not reached half but one team was 3 or more goals ahead then the score stands as is*
- *If the game had not reached half and there was less than a 3 goal difference then kicks from the mark will determine the winner and a 1-0 score will be recorded. Any game rostered player can participate in the kicks from the mark. Should either time, light or severe weather prevent the shootout from taking place, then the game will be declared a tie. If this occurs in a championship round then the Director of Competition will determine the procedure as conditions permit.*
- *If severe weather results in some games not being able to even start due to time constraints then the tournament committee will have full discretion over determining a result*

7. POINT SYSTEM

7.1 All State Cup qualifying and round robin games will be scored using the following system:

Three Points (3) – Win, One Point (1) – Tie, Zero Points(0) – Loss

8. TIEBREAKERS

1. Results of head-to-head competition within the Round.
2. The cumulative difference between goals scored and goals allowed within the Round with a maximum difference of four (4) goals per game.
3. The least number of goals allowed within the Round (max 4 per game).

4. The most goals scored within the round (Max 4 per game). For a team with forfeit wins, goals scored in forfeited games shall be equal to its average goals allowed in its other games within the Round.
5. Kicks from the Penalty Mark

NOTE: If more than two teams are tied, the sequence will be followed until a team is eliminated/advanced. The remaining teams will then restart the sequence at #2 above.

If FIFA penalty kicks must be taken, there will be a draw by IYSA with at least two impartial witnesses. First team drawn will receive a bye. The next team drawn will be the home team against the remaining team in the first contest of PK'S. The winner of the first contest will then compete against the bye team in PK'S to determine the group winner. The bye team will be the home team. This is only used if there are more that two (2) teams tied after going through the Tie Breakers.

9. TEAM BREACHES OF RULES

9.1 Player Send Off: A player that has been sent off during a match must remain in the team bench area until the conclusion of the match. Players that remain with their credentialed team rep. in game/bench area must remove their player jersey. If a sent off player continues to be disruptive or a distraction to anyone in the bench area, they will be escorted from the area to Headquarters and the suspension may be increased by the Tournament Committee upon review of incident. The Tournament Committee has the right to modify and change the player sendoff policy/rule at any time during the competition.

9.2 Coach Send Off: A coach or team official that has been sent off during a match must leave the immediate sight and sound vicinity of the playing field. Non-compliance with immediate exit of sight and sound will be reviewed by the Tournament Committee and the suspension may be increased.

9.3 Any ejected player who has been asked to leave the game by the referee will automatically be suspended for the next game. Coaches and assistant coaches sent off the field for an infringement of the "laws of the game" shall be suspended for the next game. "Club" coaches or coaches listed on multiple rosters who are suspended will serve their suspension during the next scheduled game(s) involving the team they were coaching at the time of their suspension.

9.4 When serving a suspension, a coach shall not attend nor be involved in any manner with the game being played. This includes any form of communication with the team immediately prior to or during the game. If the coach or team official should show up at the game site, and in any way attempt to participate in the game, his or her team will automatically forfeit the game.

9.5 **Review:** The Tournament Director will review all red cards and will have the ability to recommend further sanctions on any disciplinary action, to the Tournament Appeals and Discipline Committee. The State Cup Tournament Committee has the right to impose additional penalties including, but not limited to, suspension for more than one game. The referee headquarters tent shall retain the player pass of the ejected player until such time as he/she becomes eligible to play. Protests of an ejected player or coach being asked to leave the game shall be filed with the State Cup Tournament Committee per rule 14.

10. CUMULATIVE YELLOW CARDS

10.1 A player (or team official) who receives a total of three (3) yellow cards during qualifying will not participate in the team's next State Cup game, including if that next game is in the Round Robin weekend.

10.2 A player (or team official) who receives a total of three (3) yellow cards during the tournament, beginning with Round Robin play and extending through the end of the event will not participate in the team's next tournament game, including if that game is in the W2 knockout round. Exception: If the first two cautions were received in a single game and resulted in a "red card" in which the player could not participate in the team's next tournament game. If the player was required to "sit out" due to a 2nd caution red card offense, this rule will be extended to four (4) yellow cards during the tournament. If said player receives four (4) yellow cards during the tournament, he or she will not participate in the team's next tournament game. In both instances, each additional yellow card will result in an additional game suspension.

10.3 Coaches are responsible for enforcement of suspensions. If a player or coach participates in a game in which they should have been suspended, the team will be deemed to have used an ineligible player and will forfeit the game and be fined \$800.00, due to IYSA due within thirty (30) days of the end of the tournament. The forfeiting team's home affiliate will be held responsible for insuring the fine is paid within the 30 day period or it may face additional sanctions by the IYSA Board of Directors.

11. SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT & TERMINATED GAMES

11.1 All participants must adhere to the IYSA Code of Conduct, US Youth Soccer Code of Conduct, IYSA referee abuse policy, IYSA Zero Tolerance addendum, and Boise Parks and Rec Code of Conduct Policy.

11.2 Unsportsmanlike behavior, by participants or spectators, including dissent towards referees or opponents, will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. Please refer to IYSA's Referee abuse policy and Zero Tolerance policy.

11.3 NOISE-MAKING DEVICES (I.E. DRUMS, HORNS, COWBELLS, TRUMPETS, ETC.) AND WEAPONS OF ANY KIND ARE PROHIBITED.

11.4 If a referee terminates a game for reasons other than weather or field conditions, the IYSA Tournament Committee will decide the results of the game.

12. IYSA/BOISE PARKS & REC CONDUCT POLICY

12.1 Per the License agreement between IYSA and Boise Parks & Rec, all spectators must also abide by the following conduct policy. While it is impossible to list every type of conduct that is unacceptable, the following are examples of behavior that violate this policy:

- Harm or threat of harm to any City employee, member of the public, City government, or City property, *regardless of location.*
- Physical violence against persons or property.
- Sabotage of City property or processes.

- Theft or unauthorized removal or possession of the City’s property or another person’s property from City premises.
- Speech or conduct with the public that violates commonly accepted standards and that, under present circumstances, has no redeeming social value, including the use of profane, indecent, or abusive language.
- Speech or conduct deemed rude, disrespectful, aggressive, intimidating, harassing or otherwise inappropriate when conducting licensee’s business.
- Making malicious, vindictive, false, and/or harmful statements about others or engaging in verbal abuse, altercations or outbursts.
- Any conduct that obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with City business, service, work environment or administrative functions, including City sponsored events.
- Untruthfulness related to use of the license which could hinder or jeopardize the City's interests.
- Use, possession, distribution, or sale of illegal drugs, paraphernalia, or controlled substances not prescribed to the user by a physician, on City property or at City sponsored events, including the use of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances while working in accordance with the license.

13. FORFEITS

13.1 In the event of a forfeit, the forfeiting team and coach shall be disqualified from further competition in the current tournament and may face further sanctions from the State Cup Tournament Committee or the IYSA Board of Directors.

13.2 In the event that a team forfeits one of its qualifying or round robin games, the following procedure will be followed:

The non-forfeiting team shall be awarded: (1) 3 points for a win (2) 4 goals for (3) Zero goals against

The forfeiting team shall be awarded: (1) Zero points for the loss. (2) Zero goals for. (3) 4 goals against

The outcome of all prior games with the forfeiting team will stand. The forfeiting team will be fined \$800.00 per game, due to IYSA within thirty (30) days of the end of the tournament.

13.3 The forfeiting team’s home affiliate will be held responsible for ensuring the fine is paid within thirty (30) days or it may face additional sanctions by the IYSA Board of Directors. Any abandoned game(s), including consolation matches, shall automatically be considered a forfeit and result in the fine being imposed.

14. PROTEST AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

14.1 The State Cup Tournament Committee, explained in rule 15 of the State Cup rules, shall hear all protests and appeals arising from the State Cup competition and shall serve as a discipline committee and as a credentials committee, if necessary. All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors, to interpretation of the rules, to suspensions or any dispute or protest whatever shall be referred to the Committee. Decisions of the Committee shall be final and binding and cannot be appealed. A plea of ignorance of the rules and regulations of this competition is not sufficient ground for appeal or protest. Any protest relating to the grounds, goal posts, bar or other appurtenances of the game shall be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the referee and the opposing coach prior to the start of the game.

14.2 The committee shall immediately notify the team against which such protest is made. A copy of the protest and all particulars will be delivered to that team, which will then have the right to defend its case, with or without witnesses.

14.3 All protests must be accompanied by the fee of \$250.00 ***cash*** and shall be submitted in writing to the Tournament Headquarters within one-hour (1) of the conclusion of the game being protested. No personal checks will be accepted. The Committee shall call a meeting to order within one hour of receipt of the written protest. The hearing of any protest shall be in closed session and shall be chaired by the Director of Competition, or their designee, who may invite testimony. Any protest relating to “judgment calls” by the referee is not sufficient grounds for appeal or protest.

14.4 To be valid and eligible for consideration, each protest:

1. Must be verbally lodged with the referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field or before leaving the game site.
2. Must be filed with the committee, including:
 - a. Fee in the amount prescribed in cash; and
 - b. Five (5) written copies of the protest, which must include the details on which the protest is being lodged; and
 - c. Five (5) written copies of any information to be presented by witnesses.

14.5 A plea of ignorance to the rules and policies of the US Youth National Championship Series and/or the IYSA is not sufficient grounds for protest. Judgement decisions of the referees are not subject to protest. The Protest Administrator shall compile the necessary information to hear the protest from all available sources before the protest is heard. This shall include, but not limited to, coaches, field marshals, referees, assessors, witnesses, if necessary, etc. All materials will be treated with confidentiality.

15. TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE AUTHORITY

15.1 The IYSA State Cup Tournament Committee will have full authority on making decisions regarding interpretation of these rules. The IYSA State Cup Tournament Committee will also have full authority to make decisions as they see fit, in instances where the rules do not cover a given situation.

15.2 Committee must operate in the best interest of all parties to find solutions to any issue that falls in line with IYSA and USYS policies.

15.3 Members of the Appeals and Discipline (IYSA State Cup) Committee will be one of each of the following:

- IYSA Staff Member
- Idaho State Referee Committee (ISRC) Member
- IYSA Board Member

16. USE OF THE COURT SYSTEM

16.1 US Youth Soccer Bylaw 704, Section 1 states that, “No member of US Youth Soccer, official, league, club, team, player, coach, administrator, 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, and as provided within US Youth Soccer.”