

# Colorado State Cup 2023-2024 RULES AND PROCEDURES

## I. Purpose of the Competition

- a. The Colorado State Cup represents the first level in a three-stage competition, known as the US Youth Soccer (USYS) National Championship Series. The second stage is Far West Regionals, and the third stage is the USYS National Championship. This competition is held annually to establish State, Regional, and National Champions. The Colorado State Cup is conducted in a tournament format to establish a State Champion in the 11U-17U and 18/19U age groups.
- b. By winning a State Cup Championship in the 13U-17U and 18/19U age groups, a team concurrently earns the responsibility of representing Colorado at Far West Regionals. By winning a State Cup Championship in the 12U age group, a team concurrently earns the responsibility of representing Colorado at Far West Presidents Cup. The 11U winners are only Colorado Champions.
- c. By winning in the 13U-17U and 18/19U age groups of Far West Regionals, a team earns the responsibility of representing the Far West Region and Colorado at the USYS National Championship.
- d. By entering the Colorado State Cup, the team understands and agrees to participate at the regional level should the team become Colorado State Cup champions and representing the Region at the National level should the team become Far West Regionals champion.

For 2024 regionals in Hawaii: CSA will pay the full amount of the regional entry fee for the Champions. The wild card teams would be responsible for half of the regional entry fee, payable to Colorado Soccer Association.

## II. Authorities and Responsibilities

- a. The following Rules and Procedures shall apply to all Colorado State Cup games.
- b. State, Regional, and National Championship competitions shall take precedence over all other games, whether they are League or Tournament play, including out-of-state play. Games rescheduling for the purpose of allowing a team or members of a team participate in another event will not be permitted. Exceptions are giving to teams participating in the USYS Desert Conference and/or the USYS Elite 64 leagues.
- c. In the event ~~that inclement weather~~ or field closure affects the competition, CSA will reserve the right to suspend and reschedule all matches. Inclement weather and field closures are determined by the City/County/Parks & Recreation Departments that oversee the facilities.
- d. Colorado Soccer Association (CSA) is responsible for developing the schedule of games. Schedules will be played as published by CSA.

## III. Team/Player Eligibility

- a. The USYS National Championship Series shall be open to any age-appropriate youth team that is duly registered with CSA/USYS, providing that such team is in good standing. State Cup competition shall not be open to select teams except for select teams participating in the Elite 64 leagues.
- b. All players shall be registered with CSA affiliated clubs and teams.
- c. The team roster for US Youth National Soccer Championship Series and all levels of Cup Competition for which the team qualifies, shall be the team league roster at the time the roster is frozen. The team roster for this competition shall be frozen no later than 4 calendar days prior to the first scheduled Cup game.
- d. A team must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the league and every level of the USYS National Championship Series by maintaining a minimum of 9 players common to the roster of the team at every level of the competitions.
- e. A club may issue a club pass to any youth player who is a registered youth player of the club before

the team to which such youth player is to be rostered for the State level of Cup competition. Each player with a club pass will be assigned to a team roster competing in State Cup.

- f. Players with a club pass whose team is eliminated from State Cup play are eligible for other teams within the Club advancing from State Cup competition to regional competition.
- g. Players are only eligible to participate in State Cup or Presidents Cup in a seasonal year.
- h. Players with a club pass whose team is eliminated from State Cup and are Premier 2 and lower are eligible for other teams within their club for USYS Regionals Presidents Cup provided their State Cup team does not advance to an elimination round.
- i. The 11-12U teams may have up to 18 players on their roster. (16 players maybe suited up in game day uniform to play at any given game).
- j. The 13U-17U and 18/19U teams may have up to 22 players on their roster. (18 players maybe suited up in game day uniform to play at any given game, the remaining players are **NOT** allowed to sit on the bench). The referee shall cross out those players not participating on the provided gae day roster.

**Ultimate Level of Competition:**

11U State; 12U Regional, 13U-17U and 18/19U National

- k. Teams advancing to the regional level may only club pass players that were registered within their club at the time rosters were frozen for the Colorado State Cup.

**IV. Team Credentials**

- a. By entering the US Youth National Soccer Championship Series, each team agrees to appear for and to compete in all scheduled games for whom it qualifies, including all Regional and National Championship games. Each team also agrees to assume full responsibility for the financial and travel requirements associated with competition at the Regional and National levels.
- b. All fees and forms required for State Cup registration must be submitted to the CSA office on or before the due date specified on application documents.
- c. At every State Cup game, photo rosters will be used.

**V. Uniforms:**

HOME TEAM DETERMINATION: The home team is always listed first on the State Cup schedule. If both teams are wearing similar jerseys, the home team shall wear dark jerseys and the visiting team shall wear light colored jerseys. If the visiting team does not carry a light-colored jersey, then the visiting team shall wear an alternate dark color that does not conflict with the home team's colors. Either team's goalkeeper shall change jerseys as the referee directs regardless of home/visitor status.

**VI. Procedures of the Competition**

- a. VENUE: In State Cup Competition, pairings, and format of play shall be determined by CSA.
- b. FORMAT: Teams in each age group will be in brackets of 1/2/3/4/5/6/8/12/16/20/24 teams. Should an odd number of teams register for an age group except for 3 team bracket, play-in games will be played between the lowest seeds to bring the number down to the nearest even number.
- c. FLIGHTING: Structure of the competition shall be as follows:

# of Teams in Flight	# of brackets in Flight	Flight bracket Structure	Play-offs/Knock-out Round Structure*
1	0	0	Team automatic Champion
2	1	1	One game – Winner Champion
3	1	Round Robin	Two games – Highest points Champion
4	1	Round Robin	Top two teams will play final
5	1	Round Robin	Top two teams will play final
6	2	3/3	Play each team in bracket and 1 cross-over game. Top 2 teams in each bracket to semi and then final
8	2	4/4	Top 2 of each bracket to semi and then final
10	3	4/3/3	Play each team in bracket. 3 team brackets will play 1 cross-over game. Top team in each bracket and 1 wildcard to semi's and then final
12	3	4/4/4 **	Top team from each bracket and one (1) wildcard advance to semifinal A1v**WC, B1vC1 If WC from bracket A then A1vC1 and B1v**WC
14	4	4/4/3/3	Play each team in bracket, brackets of 3 teams will play one cross-over. Top team in each bracket will play semi and then final
16	4	4/4/4/4	Top 2 teams from each bracket advance to quarterfinals (1)A1vB2, (2)B1vA2, (3)C1vD2, (4)D1vC2 Semi's- winner of quarterfinal game (1) vs winner of quarterfinals game (4), winner of quarterfinals game (2) vs winner of quarterfinals game (3).
18	5	4/4/4/3/3	Top team from each bracket and 3 wildcards advance to quarterfinals (1)A1vWC3, (2)B1vWC2, (3)C1vWC1, (4)D1vE1.Semi's- winner of quarterfinal game (1) vs winner of quarterfinals game (4), winner of quarterfinals game (2) vs winner of quarterfinals game (3).
20	5	4/4/4/4/4	Top team from each bracket and 3 wildcards advance to quarterfinals (1)A1vWC3, (2)B1vWC2, (3)C1vWC1, (4)D1vE1.Semi's- winner of quarterfinal game (1) vs winner of quarterfinals game (4), winner of quarterfinals game (2) vs winner of quarterfinals game (3).
22	6	4/4/4/4/3/3	Play each team in bracket. 3 team brackets will play 1 cross-over game. Top teams from each bracket and 2 wildcards* will advance to quarterfinals (1)A1vWC2, (2)B1vWC1, (3)C1vF1, (4)D1vE1.Semi's- winner of quarterfinal game (1) vs winner of quarterfinals game (4), winner of quarterfinals game (2) vs winner of quarterfinals game (3).
24	6	4/4/4/4/4/4	Play each team in bracket. Top team from each bracket and 2 wildcards * will advance to quarterfinals. (1)A1vWC2, (2)B1vWC1, (3)C1vF1, (4)D1vE1.Semi's- winner of quarterfinal game (1) vs winner of quarterfinals game (4), winner of

			quarterfinals game (2) vs winner of quarterfinals game (3).
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\*Playoff Structure: The first round of playoffs will be reseeded should it contain a matchup that was played in pool play.

\*\*Wildcards: If your flight structure has a wildcard, the team with the next highest points will occupy the wildcard slot. Teams will be reseeded during the first round of play-off/knockout to avoid rematches between teams that have already played in preliminary rounds.

**SEEDING OF FLIGHTS:**

**National champion, National runner up, Regional champion, Regional runner up, State champion, State runner up then latest league standing (please note that teams have to participate in the next competition to be eligible to keep their seeding for the next seasonal year unless this is waived by CSA for acceptable reasons).**

**The 11U age groups will be seeded by conducting a draw (P1, P2 and so on).**

If a team played in an older age group in league play, their seed would come after the seeds listed above.

I. Play-In Games

- a. Play-in games will be held to create flights of 6/8/10/12/14/16/18/20/22/24 teams. The play-in games are played between the lowest seeds at the time of bracketing
- b. Two lowest seeded teams will have a one game competition to establish who will advance to pool play.
- c. CSA will determine the play-in game dates. Any deviation from the dates provided must be agreed upon by both teams. CSA will work with the teams to provide a neutral location and the fee for the field will be split amongst the two teams. If teams do not play on the dates provided by CSA the teams will not be in consideration for the State Cup tournament, and no refund will be given. The teams will play each other in one game at a location determined by CSA.
- d. In the event that both teams are tied at the end of regulation, kicks from the mark will be used immediately to determine the team advancing to State Cup Pool Play.
- e. CSA will provide officials for all Games.
- f. Play-in teams that do not advance to Colorado State Cup Pool Play will be issued a refund of 60% of their registration fee.
- g. The Play-In Game roster will be frozen on a date specified by CSA. The players of the teams that do not advance to Pool Play may be assigned to rosters of teams that are participating in pool play of State or Presidents Cup, so long as it is prior to the tournament roster freeze date and does not violate any Colorado Cup rules.

II. SCORING: Scoring for pool play shall be:

- a. 3 point for a win
- b. 1 point for a draw
- c. 0 points for a loss
- d. In the event of a forfeit, a 3-0 win shall be awarded to the affected team.

Possible 1 point deduction in case of dismissal from technical area.

Possible 1 point deduction in case of dismissal of spectator/s.

III. DETERMINATION OF WILDCARD TEAMS WHEN NECESSARY: When determining the wildcard, the standings from each bracket will be compared. The top wildcard is the team that finished with the most points that did not win the bracket.

- IV. Officials: The CSA State Referee Assignor shall select the referees for all State Cup Competition games. Every effort will be made to supply (3) three referees. However, club lines shall be used in extreme situations.
- V. Late withdrawals: Teams who are accepted to the competition and then withdraw prior to their first scheduled game will forfeit their entry fee. In addition, the team will be placed on probation for State Cup play (Presidents or National Championship Series) for 2 years. Subsequent withdrawals under these conditions will result in the team being fined and not being accepted into competition.
- VI. NO SHOWS: Any State Cup team failing to appear for a single scheduled State Cup game without the prior approval of CSA will be assessed a forfeit, and CSA shall review the circumstances of the no show for possible disciplinary review and/or a fine of \$1000.00.
- a. A catastrophic event (one regarded as a great misfortune) outside the control of the team will only be considered for rescheduling a missed game. The CSA decision is final upon review of the event.
  - b. Any State Cup team failing to appear for two or more of its scheduled Cup games will be eliminated from the competition, and all game results involving that team will be voided from the standings, whether earned or lost by competition or forfeiture. Should CSA find that the team's "failure to appear" was willful or negligent, the coach and/or club officials of said team would be referred for disciplinary action and fined.
- VII. TEAM EXPULSION: A team removed from Cup Competition for any team fault for one or more games shall be required to post a bond of no less than \$2,000 in certified funds with the CSA office prior to being admitted to any future state championship competitions. The bond will only be refunded after the team has played in all Cup games for whom it qualifies.
- VIII. PLAYER/COACH/SPECTATOR MISCONDUCT
- a. Penalties received by players/coaches in State Cup Competition, be it red or yellow cards, will be served only within the context of Cup play, and will not carry over into League or Tournament play. If applicable, penalties will be served in Regional/National competition or carried over to the players/coaches next State or Presidents Cup enrollment regardless of their team affiliation. If the coach is participating in both State and Presidents Cup, the penalty will be applied to the event in which it occurred.
  - b. If a bench personnel (coach, assistant coach, DOC, trainer, ...) is dismissed from a particular game, he/she needs to sit out at least that particular team's next game and also is not allowed to participate in other club's games in any capacity in State Cup until the sit out is served.
  - c. If a game is abandoned due to coach/spectator/player, the team for which the coach/spectator/player is with shall forfeit the game and the other team awarded points based on the score or a 3-0 victory whichever is greater.
  - d. If a player/coach/spectator is sent off/dismissed for misconduct, the referee will submit the game report to the State Cup Committee or designated alternate. The player/coach/spectator shall be subjected to penalties described below and shall be ineligible until he or she is reinstated by Cup administration.

**IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION FROM CURRENT GAME AND A MINIMUM ONE (1) GAME SUSPENSION FROM NEXT SCHEDULED GAME**

- i. S1: Serious foul play (SFP). Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to: when a player, in a violent or dangerous manner intentionally trips, holds, pushes, charges, or tackles an opponent from behind
- ii. S4: Denial of goal or goalscoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball. This does not apply to a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area (DGH).

- iii. S5: Denial of obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick (DGF).
- iv. S6: Using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures (AL). Examples include but are not necessarily limited to: language uttered in frustration and, in the Referee's opinion loud enough to be heard. Derogatory Language or inappropriate gestures displayed and directed at others. If persistent in obstinate behavior, CSA can enforce additional penalties.
- v. S7: Receiving a second caution in the same game (2CT).

**IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION FROM CURRENT GAME AND A ONE (1) OR MORE GAME SUSPENSION FROM NEXT SCHEDULED GAMES UPON REVIEW**

- vi. S2: Violent conduct (VC). Examples include but are not necessarily limited to: Striking or attempting to strike another player, team official or spectator, unlawfully entering the field of play during an altercation.
  - 1. Pushing in an act of aggression, striking or attempting to strike a Referee, Assistant Referee linesperson or fourth official will result in immediate suspension from all CSA sanctioned activities and, upon CSA Disciplinary Committee review, a potential minimum of one (1) year suspension from all US Youth Soccer sanctioned activities, unless serious injuries are inflicted then the minimum suspension period will be at least five (5) years.
- vii. S3: Spitting at an opponent or any other person (S). Examples include but are not necessarily limited to: spitting or other unseemly acts on or at another person.
- viii. Miscellaneous: Any player, substitute or coach who refuses the Referee's request for their name, or gives a false name, while the Referee is gathering data to report an infringement of the "Laws of the Game", involving them, shall have a minimum of one (1) game added to the suspension that would normally be levied by the CSA Disciplinary Committee. Actions listed above are to be regarded as minimum suspensions.
- ix. Team personnel dismissed from the field of play are guilty of irresponsible behavior (IB). A report written by the Referee will be provided about the incident. A team official will serve a one game suspension at minimum, Based on the severity of the incident, CSA may refer the incident to the CSA Disciplinary Committee for further review and action, which may result in more than a one game suspension.
- x. In specific situations, CSA may place an individual on probation in addition to the suspension. The probationary period is to be served immediately following the suspension period and is intended to monitor the individual's degree of reform. Should an individual on probation be sent off the field of play and shown the red card during the probationary period the matter shall be referred to CSA for evaluation.

**IX. CONCUSSION PROTOCOL**

- a. If a player is evaluated by medical trainers present at the field and is found to exhibit concussion-like symptoms, Colorado State Cup will adhere to the USYS Concussion Procedures and Protocol.
- b. The player will be evaluated by on-site medical trainers and if a suspected head injury is determined, the player's pass will be pulled and given to a CSA State Cup designated staff member. The player and parents will receive information documents from the medical trainer and will need to be evaluated and cleared by a medical profession before participating in any further League or Cup matches. Once the clearance paperwork is sent to the CSA office, the player pass will be provided to the club via USPS Mail so the player can resume participation in League and Cup games.

- X. **KICK OFF AND WAITING TIME:** Kick off will be at the time shown on the tournament schedule. A 15-minute grace period will be allowed from the scheduled kick off time. If a team is not ready for play at the end of the grace period and/or cannot produce passes, the game is a FORFEIT.
- XI. **THE TECHNICAL AREA (SIDELINES):** The technical area is a designated area for rostered substitutes and no more than four (4) Technical Staff members.
- a. No more than four (4) rostered Technical Staff members are allowed in the designated area during the game. Team or Club Medical or Sports Management Trainers are considered one of the four Staff members on the sideline. Clubs are responsible to ensure that Medical or Sports Management Trainers are certified in their expertise.
  - b. The occupants of the Technical Staff in the bench area must have a club coach or team coach pass for the respective bench or to be on the photo roster.
  - c. Technical Staff occupants of the technical area shall be identified to the Referee by presenting a US Youth Soccer Coaches pass with current picture during team check in or be on the photo roster.
  - d. Both teams shall be located on the same side of the field. Spectators of both teams shall occupy the opposite side of the field from their respective teams and coaches. Teams and spectators will not occupy a common side of adjacent fields.

Video cameras such as the Veo must be placed on the spectators' side with the beet or base no closer than 4 yards to the touchline.

XII. **DURATION OF THE GAME:**

**11-12U 60 minutes (half-time 5 minutes) (overtime ONLY at FINALS 2x10 minutes)**  
**13-14U 70 minutes (half-time 5 minutes) (overtime ONLY at FINALS 2x10 minutes)**  
**15-16U 80 minutes (half-time 5 minutes) (overtime ONLY at FINALS 2x15 minutes)**  
**17-19U 90 minutes (half-time 5 minutes) (overtime ONLY at FINALS 2x15 minutes)**

- a. No Overtime Periods for Play-In Games or Pool Play Games or quarterfinals or semifinals. If a play-in matchup is tied, the winner will be determined by FIFA kicks from the mark immediately after regulation play, same as for quarterfinals and semifinals. If a pool play game ends in a tie after regulation, the result will be recorded as a draw.
- b. Overtime Periods for FINALS: If a final game is tied at the end of the second regulation period, there shall be two full overtime periods. If a final game is still tied at the end of the second overtime period, the winner shall be determined by FIFA kicks from the mark.

XIII. **TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES:** Should there be a tie at the completion of a round that determines advancement, the tie will be broken by the following order of criteria:

Head-to-Head results

*Note:* If more than two teams are tied, the sequence will be followed beginning with the second tiebreaker until a team is either advanced or eliminated. The remaining teams will then be compared, beginning with the second tiebreaker to determine final placement

Cumulative goal differential between goals scored and goals allowed.

Least goals allowed.

Kicks from the penalty mark per IFAB Laws of the Game:

*Note:* If two teams are tied on all tiebreakers and the two teams in question are playing each other the final pool play game, the game will go straight to kicks from the mark. No overtime periods will be played.

#### XIV. PROTEST AND APPEALS:

- a. To be valid and eligible for consideration, protests shall be lodged verbally with the referee and the opposing coach at the game site immediately after the end of the game, except protests relating to the grounds, goal posts, bars, and their appurtenances of the game must be in writing and submitted to the Referee and opposing coach prior to the start of the game.
- b. All protests must be made in writing within two hours after the end of the game in which the protest incident occurred, accompanied by a non-refundable \$200.00 protest fee to the CSA State Cup Committee or the State Cup Committee's designated representative.
- c. The judgment decision of a game official cannot be protested, only the misapplication of the Laws of the Game.
- d. If these conditions are not met in full, the protest will not be considered.
- e. Upon receiving a properly filed protest, the CSA State Cup Committee or designate will determine the time and location of the protest hearing and shall designate the members of the ad hoc protest committee. This committee will meet in a closed meeting to make a ruling on the protest. A hearing will be held immediately upon receiving filed protest and protest fee if it requires immediate action. Otherwise, a decision will be rendered within 48 hours.
- f. A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the State Cup competitions is not sufficient grounds for a protest or appeal. Violators may expect appropriate action by CSA.
- g. In State Cup competitions at the State Association level, decisions made on protests and appeals by the CSA ad hoc protest committee and appeal authority are binding and allow the competition to proceed.
- h. Video evidence will not be considered.

#### XV. UNFINISHED GAMES:

- a. Any game that is stopped for any cause except team fault will either be restarted at the time of stoppage on same day or rescheduled and played from the time of stoppage.
- b. If a game is abandoned due to coach/spectator/player behavior, the team for which the coach/spectator/player is with shall forfeit the game. The other team will be awarded 3-0 or the game score whichever is greater.
  - d. RULES OF PLAY: IFAB Laws of the Game as modified by CSA will be in effect.
  - e. SUBSTITUTIONS: Unlimited at any stoppage with permission of the referee. For 15U and above age groups, a maximum of 7 substitutions for each team shall be allowed in each game during half of play and during overtime play. After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game. Substitution cards will be used by the referees to keep track of substitutions. All subs must exit and enter the field of play from the half way line on the bench side.
  - f. Add in case of concussion, temporary substitution can enter if available and it will not count as one of the 7 substitutions.
  - g. Awards: CSA provides awards for teams finishing as Champions and Runners-Up. Both teams in the final should plan to stay at least one hour after the final whistle for an awards presentation. The Champions of each age group will receive an award to keep in their possession. The Runners-up of each age group will receive an

award to keep in their possession. Each rostered player and coach will receive a medal for their placement in Colorado State Cup. The coach of each team in the final will provide one State Cup Finals Most Valuable Player's (MVP) name to a tournament staff member. The State Cup Finals MVP from each team will receive an award during the awards presentation.

h. MATTERS NOT COVERED:

- a. Any matter not addressed in these rules, or the US Youth Soccer National Championship State Cup Rules will be decided by CSA. Decisions in such matters specific to State Cup Rules will be final and binding.
- b. If a party has reasons to appeal a decision made by CSA other than what is covered within these rules, an appeal may be filed with the CSA Board of Directors which must follow the Appeal process as described within CSA Rules and Procedures.

Proposed for CSA Board Review

Drafted May 11, 2011

Revised June 7, 2011

Revised June 8, 2011

Revised June 28, 2011

Revised August 9, 2011

Revised January 18, 2012

Revised July 2012

Revised August 2012

Revised October 2012

Revised March 2013

Revised August 2013

Revised November 2013

Revised July 2014

Revised August 14, 2015

Revised August 10, 2016

Revised August 2017

Revised August 2018

Revised July 2019

Revised June 2020

Revised July 2020

Revised July 2022

Revised July 2023