



Michigan State Youth Soccer Association

November 12, 2015

To: MSYSA League Presidents & Delegates
From: Thomas K. Faro, MSYSA Executive Director
Re: MSYSA Programming Changes as a result of USSF Mandates

Dear MSYSA League Presidents & Delegates:

This communication is intended to better assist our teams, clubs, and leagues in understanding and implementing changes, as mandated by US Soccer, as efficiently and effectively as possible.

CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR REGISTRATION – EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2016

Effective August 1, 2016, teams at all age groups will be formed using a new age group cut-off date of January 1.

- The current age group cut-off of August 1 (*players born on or after August 1 are eligible*) was designed to keep teams on a **SCHOOL YEAR** basis so that teams were generally created of players within the same academic grade. For this reason it was referred to as 'SCHOOL YEAR' based registration.
- The new age group cut-off of January 1 (*players born on or after January 1 are age eligible*) is consistent with the dates used internationally in forming youth soccer teams. This cut-off is referred to as '**CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR**' registration.

The move to **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** registration will create multiple changes in youth soccer:

- **Teams will generally consist of players in two different school years.** This is because, generally, players born from January 1 to July 31 will be a year older in school, than the players born from August 1 to December 31. This presents some challenges during the transition from middle school to high school and during the transition from high school to college.
 - Eighth Grade/High School Freshmen (U15, birth year '02): In this age group, U15 (birth year '02) teams formed based on **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** will have some players that are in eighth grade and some players that are freshmen in high school. Clubs could implement this in the following ways:
 - Alternative 1, In Club A, U15 (birth year '02) players that are in eighth grade, while some of their teammates are in high school, may train with a younger team during this 3-4 month period.
 - Alternative 2, in Club B, U15 (birth year '02) players that are freshmen in high school may choose not to play high school soccer during this season in order to stay with their club teams.
 - Alternative 3, in Club C, U15 (birth year '02) players that are in eighth grade, while some of their teammates are in high school, may play in a U15 (birth year '02) non-competitive season of play (Boys in the fall and Girls in the spring) where clubs can 'club-pass-card' players from the age groups below to complete game day rosters.
 - Senior Year/College Freshmen (U19, birth year '98): Teams formed based on **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** will also have roster changes as they become U19 (birth year '98) players. This is because a percentage of the U19 (birth year '98) players will actually be graduating from high school and likely will no longer be participating in youth soccer. Clubs could implement this in the following ways:
 - Alternative 1, In Club A, the U18 (birth year '99) players may play up with U19 (birth year '98) players.
 - Alternative 2, In Club B, the U19 (birth year '98) players may play with older players that are in the same **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** and not playing college soccer.



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COMPETITION FORMATS – WILL BE IN TRANSITION THIS SUMMER.

- 2016 MSYSA Tryout Date
 - Tryouts may not commence any earlier than Saturday, June 18, 2016.
 - Advertising in the 'Michigan Soccer' Publication occurs February 22, 2016 through April 4, 2016 (Mailed in May 2016)
 - All team, club and league try-out advertisements must advertise **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** tryouts.
 - E.g. Birth Year 2004 (U13), Birth Year 2003 (U14), etc.
- State Cup (Boys & Girls)
 - The MSYSA State Cup for boys and girls teams is currently organized on a School Year based age group competition structure. This will remain the same for the 2016 MSYSA State Cup, but beginning in the Fall of 2016 (for the 2017 State Cup), it will be organized on a **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** basis. To ease the transition, several competition rules/policies will change:
 - Current teams (2015-2016) compete to earn a seed in State Cup for the age group two years above (in 2016-2017).
 - Commencing August 1, 2016, for teams competing in the U13-U15 (birth years '04-'02) age groups, each player on the team must be (A) of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year, or (B) of the age in either of the next two younger age groups of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year. For the teams competing in the U16-U19 (birth years '01-'98) age groups, each player on the team must be (A) of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year, or (B) of the age of any younger age group, through the U14 (birth year '03) age group, of that age group competition in which the team is participating in that seasonal year. *(This is consistent with current US Youth Soccer Rules.)*
 - Commencing August 1, 2016, teams will initially be seeded based on the age group implementation (e.g. U13 (birth year '04) team in 2015-2016 competing for U15 (birth year '02) State Cup seeds in 2016-2017). However, MSYSA will take into consideration D.O.C. feedback on State Cup seeding for the 2016-2017 season only.
- Jr. State Cup
 - The Jr. State Cup for U10, U11 and U12 boys and girls teams is currently organized on a School Year based age group competition structure. This will remain the same for the Jr. State Cup, but beginning with the 2017 Jr. State Cup, it will be organized on a **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** basis. To ease the transition, several competition rules/policies will change:
 - Commencing August 1, 2016, all players must be true to the age group that the team was playing in during the competition or have birthdates that fall into one of the next two younger age groups.
 - Commencing August 1, 2016, U12 (birth year '05) will play 9v9 (18 person team roster, 16 people eligible to compete in any one given game). *Referee pay for this new format was also adjusted accordingly.*
- Director's Academy
 - The Director's Academy for U11 and U12 boys and girls teams is currently organized on a School Year based age group competition structure. This will remain the same through the 2016 spring season of the Director's Academy Program, but beginning with the 2016 Fall season, it will be organized on a **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** basis. Note that beginning in the 2016-2017 seasonal year, age groups offered in the Director's Academy will be U11-U13 (birth years '06-'04). To ease the transition, several competition rules/policies will change:
 - Commencing August 1, 2016, all players must be true to the age group that the team was playing in during the competition or have birthdates that fall into one of the next two younger age groups.
 - Commencing August 1, 2016, U12 (birth year '05) will play 9v9 (18 person team roster, 16 people eligible to compete in any one given game). *Referee pay for this new format was also adjusted accordingly.*



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- Midwest Regional League
 - The MRL for U13-U18 boys and girls teams is currently organized on a School Year based age group competition structure. This will remain the same through the 2016 spring season of the Midwest Regional League, but beginning with the 2016 Fall season, it will be organized on a **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** basis. Note that beginning in the 2016-2017 seasonal year, age groups offered in the Midwest Regional League will be U14-U19 (birth years '03-'98). To ease the transition, several competition rules/policies will change:
 - Current teams (2015-2016) compete to earn a spot in MRL for the age group two years above (in 2016-2017). This will allow for greater flexibility during the transitional year and will allow clubs to grandfather teams if they so choose.
 - MRL endorsement at U14 (birth year '03) will take into account results from the U12 (birth year '05) First Division (DA Division) of the 2016 Jr. State Cup.
 - Clubs who change to **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** teams and do not have an earned MRL spot in a given age group may submit an application based on player composition.
 - MSYSA Sanctioned Tournaments
 - **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** bracketing is required for tournaments sanctioned by MSYSA scheduled on or after August 1, 2016.

SMALL-SIDED GAMES – STARTING AUGUST 1, 2016

As communicated on July 27, 2015, our national governing body, US Soccer, has announced that the following formats of play are to be adopted as a best practice by August 2016 and will be mandated of all youth member organizations with US Soccer by August 2017.

However, Michigan and other US Youth Soccer State Associations are proceeding with implementation in August 2016.

- U6-8 (birth years '11-'09) is 4v4 (no GK)
- U9-10 (birth years '08-'07) is 7v7 (including a GK)
- U11-12 (birth years '06-'05) is 9v9 (including a GK)
- U13 (birth year '04) and above is 11v11 (including a GK)

MSYSA Director's Academy:

- U11 (birth year '06) & U12 (birth year '05) will utilize the mandated 9v9 format with maximum field sizes.

MSYSA Jr. State Cup:

- U10 (birth year '07) will utilize the mandated 7v7 format with offside rule and build out lines.
- U11 (birth year '06) and U12 (birth year '05) will utilize the mandated 9v9 format with maximum field sizes.

These changes, as described above, will stay in effect for a period of 3 years to assist clubs through the implementation and transition period. Should you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the MSYSA State Office.

Sincerely,

Thomas K. Faro
Executive Director