



MICHIGAN STATE YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION

MSYSA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Find all information at michiganyouthsoccer.org

OCTOBER 2025

Welcome to the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association's (MSYSA) monthly newsletter! Stay in the loop with the latest game updates, major announcements from US Youth Soccer, and highlights you won't want to miss. Whether it's big news or key recaps, we've got you covered! Stay informed. Stay inspired. Stay in the game!

WAGS & USCSA SPONSORED B LICENSE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

MSYSA is proud to share that the United States Consortium of State Associations (USCSA) - of which MSYSA is a member - has partnered with Women and Girls in Soccer (WAGS) to launch the first-ever All Female U.S.

Soccer National B License Course for youth soccer coaches. This groundbreaking initiative highlights a continued commitment to empowering women in the coaching community and providing equitable access to advanced education opportunities within the game. The course, which begins in early January 2026, will bring together female coaches from across the 16 USCSA member state associations, including Michigan, to engage in a collaborative, high-level learning environment designed to challenge and strengthen their coaching expertise.

This initiative builds upon WAGS' long-standing dedication to advancing women in soccer and aligns with U.S. Soccer's Growing the Girls Game grant through the Innovate to Grow initiative. Coaches accepted into the course will receive partial financial reimbursement upon successful completion, underscoring the shared goal of removing barriers for women pursuing higher coaching licenses. For Michigan coaches, this is an exciting opportunity to connect, grow, and represent our state in a national effort to expand the presence and influence of female coaches in youth soccer. Pre-registration for the All-Female National B License Course is open through November 14, 2025. To learn more about WAGS and USCSA's ongoing initiatives, visit [here](#).

TOURNAMENT SANCTIONING

Tournament sanctioning for all 2026 events will officially open on Monday, November 3, 2025, and must be completed by February 1, 2026. Clubs and leagues planning to host tournaments in 2026 are encouraged to review the sanctioning process and ensure all materials are submitted before the deadline. For complete details and step-by-step guidance, please visit the [Tournament Sanctioning page](#).

MSYSA ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH NIKE SOCCER

**NIKE
SOCCER**

The Michigan State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA) is excited to announce a new four-year partnership with Nike, officially naming the global sports leader as the exclusive apparel sponsor and outfitter of MSYSA. This new partnership marks the next step in MSYSA's continued commitment to providing players, coaches, and families with high-quality gear and resources that reflect the organization's dedication to excellence. The collaboration follows the conclusion of MSYSA's successful 15-year relationship with Under Armour and comes after careful evaluation of several major brands to ensure the best fit for Michigan's soccer community.



Through this agreement, MSYSA will receive a generous apparel allotment, access to branded materials, exclusive discounted pricing, and a percentage return on retail purchases - creating a partnership that benefits both organizations and their members. "Nike is a global leader in soccer, and this partnership reflects our continued commitment to providing players, coaches, and families across Michigan with the very best in performance and quality," says Tom Faro, MSYSA Executive Director. As the world's most recognized soccer brand, Nike shares MSYSA's vision of fostering growth, opportunity, and excellence in youth soccer. MSYSA looks forward to an exciting and impactful partnership with Nike in the years ahead.

GRASSROOT & D LICENSE COURSES AVAILABLE

MSYSA is excited to announce the upcoming Grassroots and D License Course Schedule for this season! Whether you're beginning your coaching journey or continuing your professional development, these courses provide valuable learning experiences designed to enhance your knowledge and effectiveness on the field. The D License Course begins with an introductory session on November 2, followed by webinars starting November 3. In-person sessions will be held at the UWM Sports Complex on November 23 and November 30, featuring both classroom introduction and field work in the 11v11 and 9v9 formats. After a short winter break (December 21 - January 2, 2026), the second in-person meeting will take place on January 3-4, 2026, with the course concluding in early February.

In addition to the D License Course, MSYSA will offer several Grassroots Courses in Troy, Michigan, this fall, ideal for coaches looking to get started or build foundational skills. The schedule includes the 9v9 course on November 2, 11v11 on November 15, 7v7 on December 7, and another 11v11 on December 13. These in-person Grassroots sessions provide an interactive environment for coaches to learn, collaborate, and gain practical tools to support player development at every level. Whether you're coaching for the first time or advancing your license pathway, these courses are a great opportunity to grow your knowledge and confidence. Register today and join us in shaping the future of Michigan youth soccer!

FALL STATE CUP QUARTERFINALS & SEMIFINALS RECAP



The Fall State Cup quarterfinals and semifinals delivered an incredible weekend of competition, showcasing some of the best youth soccer talent in Michigan. Teams battled hard across the U14-U19 girls' Elite and Premier Divisions, with every match displaying high energy, skill, and determination. From dramatic goals to strong defensive performances, players gave it their all in pursuit of a spot in the finals - and the level of play truly reflected the depth of talent across the state.

Congratulations to the clubs advancing to the Fall State Cup Finals: MFA GR, Portage SC, Midwest United FC NMFC, Nationals Anchor Bay, Michigan Burn, AYSO United, DBSS, Nationals Union, PASS FC, Midland Fusion, BASA, MI Rangers, Cap City, Nationals Genesee, Legends FC, Midwest United FC SCOR, DCFC Downriver, and DCFC Genesee. These clubs have proven their strength and resilience throughout the tournament and are now set to compete for the ultimate prize. The finals take place October 18-19 at the Legacy Center in Brighton, and we can't wait to see who will rise to the occasion and #ClaimTheCup!

FALL STATE CUP FINAL WEEKEND: CROWNED CHAMPIONS



The Fall State Cup has officially concluded, and after weeks of fierce competition, we're proud to celebrate our newly crowned State Champions! The Elite Division finals showcased incredible talent and determination, with Portage SC, Michigan Burn, Nationals Union, Cap City, and Legends FC rising to the top in their respective age groups. Each match was filled with intensity, skill, and passion, as teams battled for the ultimate prize -

the chance to represent Michigan on the national stage. These champions have earned their place at the US Youth Soccer National Championships in Tennessee, July 2026, where they'll compete against the best teams from across the country.

In the Premier Division, the excitement was just as high, with Nationals Anchor Bay, AYSO United, Midland Fusion, Cap City, and Detroit City FC Genesee claiming State Cup titles after a thrilling weekend of final matches. The competition was tight, and every team displayed remarkable heart and sportsmanship throughout the tournament. These champions will move on to the US Youth Soccer Presidents Cup Regionals in Indiana, June 2026, where they'll have the opportunity to showcase their talents on the regional stage - hopefully moving on to the national stage. Congratulations to all of our champions - and to every team that competed this season - for representing Michigan youth soccer with pride, passion, and excellence.

2025 USYS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

MSYSA is proud to celebrate the incredible achievements of Michigan players who were recognized at the 2025 US Youth Soccer National Championship, presented by New York Life, in Orlando, Florida. These honors highlight the exceptional talent, dedication, and hard work of Michigan's youth athletes competing on the national stage. Players were selected for the Best XI and Golden Ball awards based on votes from team coaches throughout the tournament, while the Golden Boot and Golden Glove were awarded to top goal scorers and goalkeepers, respectively, in each age group.

A huge congratulations to all of our Michigan standouts! Earning Best XI honors were: Jack Mulder, Jacob Snow, and Maleek Abdelaziz (U13B); Alexis Alkidas, Ayla Harris, and Olivia Pritchard (U14G); Kaden Newman and Liam Trimble (U15B); Emmett Vance (U17B); and Lauren Fowler, Audrey Hamilton, Cate Alumkal, Sadie Walsh, and Annie Lawson (U17G). Additional award winners included Liam Trimble (U15B), Levi Rodriguez (U16B), David Pontarelli (U17B), and Lauren Fowler (U17G) for Golden Boot; Zach Chamberlin (U15B) and Kaylee Mitzel (U17G) for Golden Glove; and Jack Mulder (U13B) and Lauren Fowler (U17G) for Golden Ball. These outstanding performances continue to showcase Michigan as a true powerhouse for youth soccer talent - congratulations to all players on this remarkable accomplishment!

D LICENSE & GRASSROOT COURSES AVAILABLE

MSYSA is excited to share the schedule for the upcoming U.S. Soccer D License Courses this season! The D License is designed for coaches who are ready to take the next step



in their coaching journey, focusing on developing player-centered training sessions, improving game understanding, and enhancing leadership both on and off the field. The course begins with an introductory session on November 2, followed by webinars starting November 3. In-person sessions will be held at the UWM Sports Complex on November 23 and November 30, featuring both classroom and on-field instruction in the 11v11 and 9v9 formats. After a short break from December 21- January 2, the second in-person meetings will take place on January 3-4, 2026, with the course concluding during the first week of February.

ODP GOALKEEPER STAFF ADDITIONS

MSYSA is excited to share updates on our ODP coaching staff as we head into the next phase of the season. This year, we're thrilled to have Drew Graham join the coaching team. Drew brings a strong coaching background and provides valuable ODP presence on the west side of the state. His dedication is unmatched - often traveling long distances to support our players - and we're incredibly appreciative of his commitment both on and off the field.

We're also pleased to welcome back some familiar and highly respected faces.

Colin Lyman, who missed tryouts this summer due to his USL team's successful playoff run, returns for what marks nearly his seventh year with ODP. Known for his expertise and signature "keeper drip," Colin continues to elevate our goalkeeper training and development. Additionally, Doug Cardosi rejoins the State Program, bringing decades of experience from both Illinois and Michigan ODP - as well as regional-level leadership. Rounding out the team, Zach Shuk has been named Head Coach for an age group and will provide additional support when needed, while Kayla Shuk, who played a key role during summer tryouts, may also assist during the winter season as her college schedule allows. Together, this outstanding staff reflects the strength, experience, and dedication that define Michigan ODP.

ODP PLAYERS CHOSEN FOR THE MLS NEXT ID CLINIC IN CINCINNATI, OHIO

Earlier this month, a talented group of Michigan players represented our state at the MLS Next Talent ID Event in Cincinnati, Ohio, on October 12. This event brought together some of the top youth players from across the region to showcase their skills in front of MLS Next scouts and coaches. For the 2012 and 2013 boys' age groups, the opportunity provided valuable exposure to a professional-level environment while competing alongside and against some of the best young talent in the country.

We're proud to recognize the Michigan players who were selected to participate in this prestigious event. Representing clubs from across the state,

including BC Fire, DCFC, Waza FC, Nationals, Michigan Rangers, Michigan Tigers, Liverpool FC, AYSO Alliance, Legends FC, Monroe United, and Plymouth Reign, these athletes exemplified skill, sportsmanship, and dedication to their development. Congratulations to all the players for their hard work and for representing Michigan youth soccer with pride and professionalism on a national stage!

ODP SEASON STARTING NOVEMBER 11 WITH TRAININGS



Training for the 2025/2026 ODP season officially kicks off on November 11, marking the start of an exciting new cycle of player development and competition. That same day, we'll also host the ODP alternate tryout, giving players who were unable to attend the summer sessions another opportunity to showcase their skills. This year, we're thrilled to see 215 players registered for the alternative tryout - a fantastic turnout that reflects the growing enthusiasm and dedication of youth players across Michigan. We look forward to seeing these athletes take the field, learn from our talented coaching staff, and continue building toward another strong ODP season.

2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING INFORMATION

Mark your calendars! The 2026 MSYSA Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place on Saturday, February 14, 2026, at 8:30 AM. This year's meeting will be hosted at The Henry Hotel, located at 300 Town Center Dr., Dearborn, MI 48126. The AGM is an important opportunity for member clubs and leagues to come together, discuss key initiatives, and help shape the future of youth soccer in Michigan.

A special room rate of \$194 is available for attendees who book a standard room with check-in on February 13, 2026, and check out on February 14, 2026. [Click here to book your room!](#) We look forward to seeing our members in Dearborn this February for another productive and collaborative Annual General Meeting!

ITC/REGISTRATION INFORMATION & INDOOR INSURANCE

As a reminder, MSYSA Fall Registration will officially close at 11:59 PM on October 30, 2025, and will reopen for Winter/Spring registrations on November 5, 2025. Clubs and teams are encouraged to finalize all fall registration updates before the deadline to ensure a smooth transition into the winter season. The reopening period will allow for continued team and player registration for the upcoming months of play and training opportunities.

With the winter season approaching, MSYSA Indoor Insurance coverage is also available for sanctioned indoor participation. This includes practices, scrimmages, matches, training, and futsal activities that are either hosted, coordinated, or endorsed by MSYSA-affiliated leagues. Leagues must submit written sanctioning requests via email to [Tom Faro](#) and request Certificates of Insurance (COIs) online through the MSYSA website prior to participation. All coaches, team managers, and officials must also be registered, Risk Management cleared, and SafeSport trained to ensure full compliance and coverage. Additional details about winter indoor insurance will be shared soon via email, so stay tuned for updates!

MSPSP



Get ready for another exciting season of competitive play - the MSPSP Spring 2026 season kicks off March 6 and runs through June 12! Team registration opens in GotSport on November 17, with the registration deadline set for January 17 and the player and roster deadline on January 24. The registration fee is \$475 per team, and boys' age groups will include U13 - U18/19, while girls' age groups will include U13, U14, and U15 supplemental. Each team can expect an average of 8 matches, depending on division size. An enrollment guide and registration overview will be shared with MSYSA members as the registration period begins.

MSPSP's division structure ensures every team finds the right balance of competition and travel through its promotion and relegation format. The league offers five competitive tiers - from Great Lakes Premier League (Tier 1) and Premier 1 (Tier 2), which feature statewide play, to Premier 2, Classic 1, and Classic 2, which operate regionally. This format helps teams compete at the appropriate level while supporting player growth and development. For teams that need early documentation for tournaments, Early Passcards are available for \$50 per team once all registration and compliance requirements are met.

All MSPSP and GLPL players are also required to have league patches on their jerseys - free of charge and available upon request. The new patch design matches the high-quality product used in the English Premier League, offering a professional look for all teams. Clubs can contact [Tyler Zbik](#) to order patches in bulk for home and away kits.

This season, MSPSP continues its exciting partnership with Trace, providing free AI-powered cameras (a \$495 discount) to teams across the league. Trace technology automatically films matches, creates player highlights, and offers free live-streaming for families and clubs. Parents and players can access personalized highlight reels and analytics through Trace's subscription plans - perfect for sharing memories or supporting college recruitment. Learn more on the [MSPSP website](#).

Finally, don't forget - MSPSP is now on Facebook! Follow the league to stay updated on news, registration deadlines, and community highlights throughout the season. For questions about joining MSPSP or registration, contact [Tyler Zbik](#). Whether you're a returning team or a club new to the league, we can't wait to see you this spring for another season of top-tier competition and player development.

MSYSA COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS & REC. GRANTS OPEN!

MSYSA is proud to continue supporting student-athletes and member organizations through its college scholarships and recreational grant program.

Six \$2,000 college scholarships are available to graduating seniors who demonstrate excellence in academics, active community involvement, and a passion for giving back to the game. These scholarships recognize players who not only excel on the field but also embody the values of leadership, teamwork, and service that define Michigan youth soccer.

In addition, the MSYSA Recreational Grant is open to all affiliated clubs and leagues to help strengthen grassroots soccer programs across the state. Funds can be used for a wide range of initiatives, including school outreach, player and coach development, tournament organization, long-range planning, equipment purchases, and more. This program is designed to empower local organizations to enhance their impact and create more opportunities for players at all levels. For full details and application links, please visit the [MSYSA website](#) under the 'Member Services' tab.

Soccer Parenting Blog: When Letting Go Is the Win

In "When Letting Go Is the Win: Why I Allowed My Child to Quit a Team," Melissa Pierson reflects on how rigid expectations - like "never quitting" - can sometimes do more harm than good. She shares the moment she realized her child was no longer enjoying the experience: sidelined, criticized, and disheartened under a shifting coaching mindset that prioritized winning above all else. Rather than force continued participation, she chose to step back and protect her child's emotional well-being - a choice that became a turning point for her family.



Pierson's story is a reminder that youth sports should foster growth, joy, and confidence - not pressure. She argues that when competition overtakes development, it can erode self-worth and alienate kids from the game. She encourages parents, coaches, and clubs to keep perspective, advocate for fair environments, and always prioritize the child over the result. To read more, [click here!](#)



Soccer Parenting Blog: Score Big with Nutrition

Nutrition is a crucial component in helping young athletes perform at their best, recover strongly, and stay healthy through the season. In the Soccer Parenting blog, registered dietitian Ann Dunaway Teh offers practical strategies such as emphasizing a balanced breakfast full of complex carbohydrates and lean proteins - think oatmeal, whole-wheat toast, eggs, or yogurt - to carry players through early games and practices. She also highlights the importance of staying hydrated, snacking wisely before and during games (fruits, granola bars, yogurt), and refueling afterward with a combination of protein and carbs to help muscles recover.

Beyond the day of the game, Dunaway encourages families to be proactive: packing healthy snacks, planning meals around training schedules, and avoiding sugary, processed options. She also suggests that parents consider working with a registered dietitian if they want personalized guidance for their child's energy needs or food preferences. This approach helps players get the most out of their bodies - in performance, growth, and overall well-being. To read more, [click here!](#)

USYS Coaching Articles: Creating Community & Connection Among Coaches

In the U.S. Soccer Learning Center article "Guiding: Creating Community & Connection Among Coaches", the author underscores the importance of fostering relationships and support systems within coaching communities. Coaching can sometimes be isolating - long hours, solo decisions, and the pressure to perform can leave even experienced coaches feeling disconnected. But by intentionally building a network where coaches talk, share challenges, offer feedback, and support each other, we create an environment where everyone can grow stronger together. The article encourages coaching leaders to prioritize connection over isolation and to see mentorship, collaboration, and genuine dialogue as essential parts of coaching - not just add-ons.



This philosophy aligns beautifully with MSYSA's values. When our coaches feel part of a supportive community, they bring that collaborative spirit back to their clubs, teams, and players. A strong coaching culture nurtures better decisions, mental health, and innovation. As you progress through your coaching pathway - whether in grassroots, youth, or advanced licensing - look for opportunities to reach out, mentor, or be mentored. The connections you build don't just help your own growth - they strengthen the entire soccer ecosystem in Michigan. To

read more, [click here!](#)



USYS Coaching Articles: What Makes Soccer Fun - And How Parents Can Help

In the U.S. Soccer Learning Center article "What Makes Soccer Fun & How Parents Can Help," the focus is on preserving the joy of the game for young players by understanding what drives them and how parents can nurture that. The article highlights how children often count the game as "fun" when they feel a sense of belonging, have opportunities to improve, experience autonomy on the field (making choices), and receive encouragement - especially from the sidelines. Parents play a key role by reinforcing positive effort, avoiding overemphasis on outcomes, and shifting their focus from wins and losses to fun, development, and emotional safety.

When parents support coaches, trust the process, and encourage their players in ways that prioritize growth, the entire youth soccer ecosystem benefits. The article encourages parents to ask simple, positive questions like, "What was fun today?" rather than fixating on stats or results. In doing so, they help sustain motivation, strengthen player confidence, and bolster long-term participation. A reminder: parents who actively contribute to a positive, pressure-reduced culture help ensure soccer stays enjoyable for players, coaches, and families alike. To read more, [click here!](#)

MSYSA PARTICIPANT SAFETY

All MSYSA members must adhere to the [MSYSA Athlete and Participant Safety Program](#). If you become aware of any alleged violations by an MSYSA participant, you can use this [reporting form](#). Additionally, any allegation of child abuse, sexual misconduct, or retaliation must be reported to the U.S. Center for SafeSport [here](#) or by phone at (833) 587-7233 within 24 hours. Allegations of child abuse must also be reported to law enforcement.



All respective Adult Members, including Adult Athletes (18+), are required to take the SafeSport training each year and receive a background check clearance. The process for Adult Athletes is different than what is required for Adult Team Officials. Instructions for both groups can be found on the [Risk Management Resources](#) page of our website.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The goal is not to be better than anyone else. It's to be better than you were yesterday."

-Unknown

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