



National Games 2016

Governing Rules

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AYSO National Games 2016 Governing Rules

PURPOSE OF THE AYSO NATIONAL GAMES

The National Games (“Games”) shall offer an opportunity to bring together different Regions, Areas, and Sections to share in the diverse soccer culture of the AYSO family. This occasion focuses on sportsmanship, team spirit and making new friends through the activities and events that are offered during this weeklong event. The weeklong dates are from July 5th – 10th, 2016. ***The Games should not be interpreted nor represented as any form of an AYSO national championship.***

SCOPE

The National Games consists of two flights for:

- Teams formed by Regions, Areas or Sections consisting of eligible players from within the Region, Area or Section, as described below;

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY POLICY

To be eligible to participate in the National Games, a **player must meet both a registration requirement and a primary program participation requirement**. It is the intent of these rules that participants will not join the organization for the express or singular purpose of participating in the National Games and teams will not be formed with any participants thus joining.

Player Registration Requirement AND Player Participation Requirement Eligibility depends on both

Player Registration Requirement

eAYSO Registration: Eligible players must be either:

1. Registered in eAYSO for the 2015-2016 membership year on or before September 30, 2015
- OR**
2. Registered in eAYSO for **BOTH** the 2014-2015 membership year on or before March 31, 2015, **and** registered in eAYSO for the 2015-2016 membership year on or before March 31, 2016.

Exceptions to the above registration deadlines might be allowed only to the extent that *conclusive documentation* is provided before April 1, 2016 that the player “should have been” properly registered in eAYSO by a Region by the required dates. *Conclusive documentation* means verifiable, dated records created at the time of online registration indicate timely signature of the parent/guardian/majority age player on the Player Registration Form and payment of registration fees to AYSO.

The eligible player list in eAYSO WILL BE FROZEN as of April 1, 2016 and only those players on the list as of April 1, 2016, will be permitted to play in the National Games.

Participation requirement

Players meeting the registration requirement above must also be verified by the Regional Commissioner as having actively participated in a defined AYSO primary program during a Region's split season (program which begins in fall, closes for a while and continues in spring), or in the fall season (when it is the only program offered) or in the two prior spring "seasons (when it is the only season if offered). For purposes of this determination the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Actively participated in" means playing in at least 50% of the scheduled games of any complete AYSO-approved primary program that begins after January 1, 2015. For this purpose only, a primary program that ends after Sunday June 1, 2016 will be deemed "complete" on June 1, 2016.

See AYSO National Policy Statement 2.2, *Participation in Secondary Programs*, for allowed special circumstances that might prevent a registered player from **completing** a program – **NOT prevent them from registering in a program**:

"Special circumstances would include, but are not limited to, an illness; a soccer-related injury; change of address (moved to a new Region); parental custodial rights; conflict with secondary or high school rules of state which prevent the registered player from **COMPLETING** the primary program; If such special circumstance arises within a Region, the Regional Commissioner must request approval, in writing, from the Area Director and/or Section Director prior to adding the child to a secondary season roster."

2. "Scheduled games" shall mean games that were scheduled for play at the beginning of the season and available for play (excludes games not available for play due to field closures or similar).
3. "Primary program" shall mean the entire set of scheduled games (including **BOTH** parts of split seasons) in a Region for which open registration is held, balanced teams are newly formed and all registrants play. It is acknowledged that some Regions may have more than one primary program under this definition. "Primary programs" include both standard primary and approved EXTRATM programs.

Each Regional Commissioner, Area Director and Section Director is responsible for ensuring that the spirit of the eligibility rules is honored. Upon the recommendation of the National Director of Tournaments, the AYSO National Board of Directors or its designee, reserves the right to determine and administer any discipline that they deem appropriate should they find that the participation of any team or player violates this intent. Disciplinary sanctions can include, but are not limited to, removing or rejecting the offending team or player from participation in all or any part of the National Games.

TEAM FORMATION POLICY

Team Selection Method

Each Region (or Area if receiving an Area slot) shall determine the method it uses for team formation, provided that each team member is eligible following the rules listed below. All rostered team members must be eligible players as defined above.

A team roster must also include two coaches, each of whom has met the Coaching Requirements described below.

Only players and coaches listed on the approved roster may participate in the National Games.

Team Roster Numbers and Player Numbers on the Field

- The maximum number of team members allowed in U-19 and U-16 will be eighteen and teams will play 11 v 11
- The maximum number of team members allowed in U-14 will be fifteen and teams will play 11 v 11
- The maximum number of team members allowed in U-12 will be twelve and teams will play 9 v 9
- The maximum number of team members allowed in U-10 will be ten and teams will play 7 v 7

Age Divisions

The following age divisions participate in the AYSO National Games (DOBs for 2016 Games):

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| U-19 girls teams and boys teams | Birthdates August 1, 1996 – July 31, 1999 |
| U-16 girls teams and boys teams | Birthdates August 1, 1999 – July 31, 2001 |
| U-14 girls teams and boys teams | Birthdates August 1, 2001 – July 31, 2003 |
| U-12 girls teams and boys teams | Birthdates August 1, 2003 – July 31, 2005 |
| U-10 girls teams and boys teams | Birthdates August 1, 2005 – July 31, 2006 |

Teams with a mixture of boys and girls are considered to be boys' teams for purposes of the lottery draw and pool placement.

Team Formation Limitations – Regular Flight

- Each team must be comprised of eligible players from the Region(s) that are age-appropriate for the age division selected in the Lottery Draw. ("Age appropriate" shall be judged solely by a player's birth date and not by the player's primary season division.) All eligible players from the hosting Region **MUST** have the first opportunity to participate or, if an Area team, only from the Regions stated in the lottery bid.

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- **Exception 1:** If the selected Region is unable to form a complete team from age appropriate eligible players in the Region's primary program, the Region may, with permission from the Area Director, approach Regional Commissioners from other Regions in their own AYSO Area to seek additional eligible players, which requires each Regional Commissioner involved to sign off on the addendum eAYSO team roster.
 - **Exception 2:** Extraordinary circumstances might indicate the need to go to a neighboring AYSO Area to find a team member. This requires agreement by each of the Regional Commissioners, Area Directors and Section Director(s) involved as well as permission from the National Director of Tournaments or designee.
 - **Exception 3:** Team members will be allowed to be added to a team roster not in their age appropriate division only under the circumstances as described in "Playing up."

"Playing Up"

"Playing up" a division by a team member into an older age bracket than his/her birth date indicated in **Age Divisions**, will be permitted only under one of the following circumstances:

- Permitted in all of the age brackets **provided that the team member played up in the 2015-2016 primary program**. Age appropriate team members should be given first priority in the selection process **and it is the responsibility of the Regional Commissioner to verify the eligibility of the "younger" team member to be playing in an older age bracket during the Region's primary program.** Regional Commissioners must NOT play younger children up for the express or singular purpose of participating in the National Games.
- A player born between August 1, 1999 and July 31, 2000 may play U-19
- A player born between August 1, 2001 and July 31, 2002 may play U-16
- A player born between August 1, 2003 and July 31, 2004 may play U-14
- A player born between August 1, 2005 and July 31, 2006 may play U-12
- **U-10 may not utilize players who played in U-8 during the primary program**
- "Playing down" in a younger division than the player's age is not permitted.

Team Rosters

NOTE: Regions must utilize their own Region's age-appropriate registered players prior to asking for "exceptions". All team members' eligibility will be verified by the AYSO National Office. Falsifying information pertaining to eligibility may result in expulsion of a team from the Games prior to its start, or if discovered after the Games commence, forfeiture of games the ineligible team members participated as players and/or substitutes, and zeroing out/ nullifying of sportsmanship points for games in which ineligible team members participated.

The Team Roster and the approved Team Roster Exemption Form (to be provided) must be sent together when requested with all appropriate Regional Commissioner, Area Director and Section Director signatures when submitted to the Games committee.

The Roster Form and all other required documents will be available at www.AYSO.org. **Initial rosters will be due on February 1, 2016, or when a team accepts an invitation to attend the Games if later. A team that does not submit a roster by the due date will be considered to have withdrawn their acceptance and will be replaced by the next eligible team in the lottery.** Directions and due dates for roster revisions will be provided to Regional Commissioners and Coaches in January.

Team rosters, eight lineup cards and player ID cards must be prepared using eAYSO exclusively, including all player information and coach certifications.

Roster changes, including late roster submissions, after the later of May 15, 2016 or 14 days following a team's acceptance of an invitation to the Games, must be accompanied by an administrative fee of \$25 per eligible player or coach added to the roster. **Rosters will be frozen on June 15, and no further changes will be permitted.**

For example, if a complete 14-player roster is submitted for the first time after May 15, the administrative fee would be \$400 (14 players and 2 coaches x \$25 each). If there is a coach change and one player change, the administrative fee would be \$50.

Roster freeze exception. There may be a limited number of **unaffiliated guest** or local players who are available at team check-in; these players will be allocated to teams willing to accommodate them at the discretion of the National Games management. Any such player added to a team's roster will not be subject to the additional administrative fee. There is no guarantee that such players will be available or how many such players (if any) will be assigned to a particular team. Such players will be added from both a highest need and a first come first served bases. While Games management will make every effort to place such players, there is likewise no guarantee that all such players will be successfully placed on a team.

COACHING REQUIREMENTS

All AYSO coaches and assistant coaches (hereafter referred to collectively as coaches) who wish to coach in the AYSO National Games must, at a minimum:

1. Be a registered volunteer in eAYSO for the current AYSO membership year.
2. Have the new AYSO Safe Haven™ certification.
3. Have completed CDC concussion awareness training
4. Be trained per the National Coaching Program Guidelines at the age/skill level of the team they wish to enter/coach. Training must be completed and verified in eAYSO by March 1, 2016.

Following are the required certifications for each of the age levels:

| Division | Minimum Required Certification |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| U-10 | U-10 Coach (complete course) |
| U-12 | U-12 Coach |
| U-14 | Intermediate Coach |
| U-16 & U-19 | Advanced Coach |

Coaches are permitted to be the coach or assistant coach for one team, and one team only.

U-10 Coaches who have taken ONLY the online U-10 course will NOT BE ELIGIBLE to coach. The field portion of that course must also be completed.

Coaches are responsible for checking eAYSO to ensure that all completed courses have been properly credited prior to March 1, 2016.

Each team *must have two coaches and only two coaches*. Each coach must be 18 years of age or older. These two identified and approved coaches are the only people permitted to coach and to be in the coaching areas on the fields. If a trainer is traveling with a team, he/she is will not be permitted as a substitute coach for any reason and is not allowed in the coaching areas. The coaching area is a marked box located one yard off the touchline and centered on the halfway line. It is the length of the center circle and as wide as 3 yards depending upon the space available. No other persons, except for the assistant referee and a fourth official, are permitted in the coaching area. Coaches, substitutes and spectators are not permitted to enter the field of play unless requested to do so by the referee

Substitutes, coaches and spectators are to remain on their designated side of the field within the specified areas behind the coaching area during the game. Spectators are to remain in their designated areas, including between the outside edges of each penalty area for the duration of the game and are not permitted to enter the field of play.

Coaches are responsible for their conduct and the conduct of their players, spectators and guests. Only positive, instructional and encouraging coaching is permitted. **Negative comments towards their own players, opposing players or the referees will not be tolerated. Such behavior will result in the loss of sportsmanship points and, if serious enough, in the expulsion of a team from the National Games.**

PROPER DRESS – STANDARDS FOR UNIFORMS AND PLAYER EQUIPMENT

Players in the 2016 National Games will be required to follow the AYSO Uniform Specifications for the 2015-2016 membership year. The specifications may be found at www.AYSO.org.

(http://www.ayso.org/For_Volunteers/resources/region_toolkit/uniform_specifications.htm#.VRFO0jDfTYk)

Additional Uniform and Equipment Information

1. Jewelry or adornment of any kind is not allowed. Jewelry or adornment includes: earrings, any hard replacement stud or other piercings worn in any visible body part; friendship, rubber sport, braided and other similar bracelets; hard metal or plastic items on clothing or hair, including beading, clips or bobby pins; or ribbons, loops or loose strings in the hair. Taping of these items is not permitted, and does not make them legal to wear.
2. Soft, “scrunchy-type” or elastic hair control items are permitted.
3. Medical alert bracelets are allowed. They should be secured to the player with tape, a cloth wristband or the equivalent taking care to leave the information visible and easily recognizable in case of emergency.
4. AYSO will not prohibit the use of knee braces by players provided that, in the judgment of the referee, the brace is adequately covered and padded so as to eliminate the possibility of its causing injury to the other players on the field of play.
5. The acceptable length and shape or adornment of fingernails is up to the good judgment of the referee. In general, long or fake fingernails are not to be considered dangerous by themselves. However, the use of such as a deterrent should be sanctioned according to the severity of use. Knit gloves may be used by a player to cover nails judged to be dangerous.
6. Goalkeepers may wear a soft brimmed hat or cap. In addition the brim must also be made of a soft material and must be approved by the referee. Baseball-style caps with hard brims are not acceptable even if worn backwards. These items should be a neutral color free of inappropriate design, logo or meaning. They must not constitute a danger to the player or to other players and must be approved by the referee.

Other uniform and equipment issues will be resolved in accordance with the *AYSO Guidance for Coaches, Referees Other Volunteers and Parents* and the *Laws of the Game* for the current year. Questions should be asked prior to attendance at the Games so that any modifications or changes can be worked out in advance.

TEAM CHECK-IN

All coaches must be available at the games site on the first day of check-in and be prepared to check-in at the Games headquarters at their assigned check-in time. Coaches must bring both uniforms the team will be wearing through the tournament. If the team only has one jersey, an acceptable overlays such as pinnies or scrimmage vests in material that allows for the player jersey numbers to be seen or are individually numbered.

All uniforms, including alternate jerseys, will be checked for compliance with the AYSO Uniform Specifications. Teams with improper uniforms must make the necessary corrections before they will be allowed to participate.

Further details and requirements about the team check-in process will be included in the coach's information package which will be sent to participating teams at least 60 days before the start of the games.

SOCCERFEST PARTICIPATION

The Soccerfest event creates the atmosphere Good Sportsmanship, Camaraderie and Stewardship for the Games and is a great kick-off! Soccerfest is a fundamental and integral part of the spirit of the Games and the Games experience. Every player is enriched by interacting with players from other teams across the country; making new friends adds to the excitement for everyone! To make the Soccerfest experience as rewarding as possible, all players and coaches are encouraged and expected to participate in Soccerfest

Travel arrangements need to include arriving in time for Team Check-in and Soccerfest activities.

Rostered National Games players and coaches are automatically registered for Soccerfest. Currently registered AYSO and non-AYSO players who are not playing in the Games but would like to participate must register to play in Soccerfest. Currently registered AYSO players must complete the AYSO Soccerfest Registration form and pay a \$30.00 participation fee. Non-AYSO players must also register for Soccerfest participation (\$30) and in addition, complete and submit the non-AYSO Player Participation Release Form (\$30); a total cost of \$60; \$30 for the Soccerfest registration and \$30 for the non-AYSO Player Participation Release Form.

Pool Play Points Awarded for Soccerfest

A coach may request that a player or rostered coach be excused from Soccerfest due to unusual or special circumstances. This request must be made to National Games management not later than the team's National Games check-in time.

Each National Games team will be awarded six points in pool play standings for full participation of its officially rostered players and coaches in both Soccerfest games (except for those players and coaches excused as noted above), provided that at least one coach and a minimum number of players from the National Games team participate. Participating player minimums are:

U10 – 7 or more players

U12 – 9 or more players

U14 through U19 – 11 or more players

Partial credit will not be awarded.

Soccerfest points will be posted after Soccerfest within a reasonable time as established by the Games Committee. Any challenge to the Soccerfest points awarded or not awarded must be made prior to the end of the last game on the first day of pool play competition, or no later than twenty four (24) hours after the conclusion of the Soccerfest games, whichever is later. Any challenge received after the deadline, no matter the validity of the claim, will not be considered.

Soccerfest Method

- Coaches, team members and additional players who are registered for Soccerfest only, will be scrambled into teams based on the official eAYSO National Games rosters. Soccerfest teams will play two shortened games.
- Complete Soccerfest information will be provided to coaches prior to their arrival

SPORTSMANSHIP

“**Good Sportsmanship**” is one of AYSO’s six philosophies. AYSO strives to create a positive environment based on mutual respect rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our programs are designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

Sportsmanship is how we play the game – how we follow the Laws and show respect for teammates, opponents and officials. This is evidenced in applauding opponents’ good performances, encouraging teammates and courtesy towards the referees.

We expect our coaches, referees, team administrators, parents and spectators to be our Stewards of the Game by modeling good sportsmanship, fair play and age appropriate cheering during the games. Building character, confidence, self esteem and enjoyment in all aspects of a player’s experience in AYSO are primary goals. AYSO is firm in its commitment in providing world class youth soccer programs that not only enrich children’s lives but develop and deliver a fun experience for our families and their players

The competition itself, rather than the outcome, teaches vital life lessons about character and ethics. In AYSO, young people learn to work together, to sacrifice for the team, to enjoy winning and to deal with defeat – while learning soccer skills, becoming physically fit, being healthy and having fun playing the game.

Because of the value that AYSO places on sportsmanship, sporting behavior and sportsmanship points are used to break ties in the standings, and Sportsmanship Awards are the highest honor of the National Games for all teams, including the AYSO Michalski Sportsmanship Cup, which is awarded by the National Games Executive Committee to one team that demonstrates the highest level of sportsmanship out of all the teams participating in the tournament.

Sportsmanship points will be based upon the Sportsmanship Forms in Exhibit “A” at the end of these rules. One portion will be filled out by the referees, and the other will be filled out by the field monitors, with input from the referees, at the conclusion of each game. As a tiebreaker for the AYSO Michalski Sportsmanship Cup, Games officials may offer additional observations of player, coach and spectator conduct throughout the games.

In each age division, the team that earns the highest total points over their pool play games will be honored for outstanding sportsmanship and all team members and coaches of those teams will receive medals. In the event of a tie, all team members and coaches will receive medals.

Teams proceeding into the medal rounds will have the opportunity to continue to demonstrate excellent sportsmanship, based on the same criteria used in pool play games.

GAME FORMAT

Pool Play

- Girls' and boys' teams within each age group will be organized into separate pools. Co-ed teams will play in the boys' brackets.
- The structure of the age groups will be determined by the number of teams entered. Ideally, each pool will consist of at least six teams, and there will be no more than four pools in each bracket. The make-up of each pool will be determined by a random draw, and the teams will be assigned to provide as much inter-Section play as possible.

Game Schedule

Day 1: Each team plays two pool play games

Day 2: Each team plays two pool play games

Day 3: U10 – U14 plays two pool play games; U16 – U19 plays one pool play game, and a quarterfinal game for those teams that advance.

Day 4: U10 – U14 play one pool play game; U16 – U19 championship and consolation bracket semi-finals and finals.

Progressive Balanced Competition – U10 through U14 Divisions

U10 through U14 teams will play seven games of progressively balanced competition. Teams will initially be assigned to pools of six teams each based on geographic diversity. The teams will play two games within their assigned pool on day 1 of competition. After the first two games, teams will be evaluated and rebalanced to new pools of six teams each. The teams will then play two games within their new assigned pool on day 2. Teams will then again be evaluated and rebalanced to final new pools of six teams each and will play three more games (two on day 3, one on the morning of day 4) in this pool.

The final new pools will use the standard National Games scoring to assign pool play points. Note: Only the last three games will count for this purpose. At the end of final pool play, the highest ranking team in each pool wins first place; the second highest team wins second place. If teams are tied for first or second place, duplicate first or second place medals will be awarded. There will be no overtime or kicks to determine a winner from the penalty mark.

Pool Play and Medal Rounds – U16 and U19 Divisions

U16 and U19 teams will play a 5-game round robin within their assigned pools.

- At the end of pool play, eight teams from each bracket will advance to the medal rounds. If there are four pools, the top two teams in each pool will advance. If there are three pools, the top two teams in each pool plus the two third place teams with the most points will advance. If there are two pools, the top four teams in each pool will advance. If there is only one pool, the top eight teams will advance.
- If there is a tie in total points at the end of pool play, the following tie breaking rules, in the order listed, will be used to determine a winner:
 - Head to head results
 - Sportsmanship points earned
 - Goals against in all games (aggregate)
 - Kicks from the penalty mark
 - In a three-way tie, lots will be drawn to determine which two teams will first take Kicks from the Penalty Mark (KFTPM). The third team has a “bye” and will compete in KFTPM against the winning team of the first round of KFTPM.

Quarter-final competition

- Game 1 1st in pool A vs. 2nd in pool C
- Game 2 1st in pool B vs. 2nd in pool D
- Game 3 1st in pool C vs. 2nd in pool A
- Game 4 1st in pool D vs. 2nd in pool B

Quarterfinal competitions for three-, two- or one-pool divisions may be developed by the Games Executive Committee based on these principles or as described as an appendix to these rules. In all cases, semi-final and final games will proceed as described below.

Championship bracket (Semi-final and final games)

- Game 5 Winner of Game 1 vs. Winner of game 2
- Game 6 Winner of Game 3 vs. Winner of game 4
- Game 7 Winners of Games 5 and 6 play for 1st and 2nd in the championship bracket
- Game 8 Runners-up Games 5 and 6 play for 3rd and 4th in the championship bracket

Consolation bracket (Semi-final and final games)

- Game 9 Runner-up of Game 1 vs. Runner-up of Game 2
- Game 10 Runner-up of Game 3 vs. Runner-up of Game 4
- Game 11 Winners of Games 9 and 10 play for 1st and 2nd in the consolation bracket
- Game 12 Runners-up of Games 9 and 10 play for 3rd and 4th in the consolation bracket

Ties in Medal Rounds

Quarter-final, Semi-final and Final matches tied at the end of regulation time will proceed straight to kicks from the Penalty Mark as described in the FIFA Laws of the Game.

Game duration

Game durations will be as follows, unless the National Director of Tournaments reduces the length of the halves due to playing conditions:

| Age Group | Game Duration – all games |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| U-19 | Two – 30 minute halves |
| U-16 | Two – 30 minute halves |
| U-14 | Two – 25 minute halves |
| U-12 | Two – 25 minute halves |
| U-10 | Two – 20 minute halves |

Half-time periods shall be a minimum of five and a maximum of ten minutes as designated by the referee

Pool Play Points

Points during pool play will be awarded using the following formula:

- Six points for a win
- Three points for a tie (to each team)
- Zero points for a loss
- One point for a shutout
- One point to the winning team for each goal differential (up to 3)
- One point deducted for each player or substitute sent off
- One point deducted for each coach or spectator expelled from the playing area
- Six points for proper participation in Soccerfest (see Soccerfest for requirements)*

Examples:

A 1-0 win equals 8 points for the winning team and zero points for the losing team
A 3-2 win equals 7 points for the winning team and zero points for the losing team.
A 2-2 tie equals 3 points for each team. A 0-0 tie equals 4 points for each team.

- In the event of a forfeit, the winning score shall be 1-0, with the winner awarded eight points.
- In the event a team receives no points for a game in which a send off or expulsion has occurred, a negative point total shall be posted for that team for that game.

PRE-GAME CHECK-IN

Teams should report to their assigned fields at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game start time. The Field Monitor and/or the referees will check player and coach ID cards, Player Registration Forms (emergency medical releases) and uniforms before each game.

Coaches shall provide to the Field Monitor and/or the referees, the complete, pre-printed game cards with the players listed in numerical order. Complete team information including uniform color must be filled in. In the event of any handwritten notations on the card, the handwriting MUST be legible.

The home team is listed first on the schedule and shall occupy the North or West side of the field, while the visiting team shall occupy the South or East side of the field. Teams must remain on their designated side of the field. Coaches and substitutes must remain in the designated technical area with players behind the technical area. Spectators must remain behind the spectator line, behind the players, and between midfield and the penalty area.

The home team will be required to wear their alternate uniforms/jerseys in case of a color conflict with the other team.

SUBSTITUTIONS AND PLAYING TIME

Except as described in this section, the AYSO substitution rules found in section I.C of the National Rules and Regulations and reproduced as an appendix to these rules shall be used in all age divisions. Every player must play at least half of each game. All coaches are strongly encouraged to give every player the opportunity to play three quarters before any player plays four quarters. Injury and illness will be taken into account, but must be verified on the game card by the referee.

WITHDRAWAL OR DISQUALIFICATION FROM COMPETITION REPLACEMENT POLICY

The AYSO National Games gives players the opportunity to meet and compete against players from across the country in an enhanced and different environment from their primary season experiences. The Games are based on the cultural experience of making new friends while playing soccer. All players and teams want to do their best in this fun and fair environment, whether in a Soccerfest or a competitive match.

National Games activities and games span an entire week and can, on occasion, conflict with pre-determined family obligations or other events. When conflicts arise they pose difficult decisions for both the teams as well as for the Games, which desire that teams fully participate.

Teams with known commitment or attendance issues which attend the Games, and the Games' decision of how far a team that intends to withdraw early should be allowed to advance, must be fair and consistent. The disruption or unfairness caused to the remaining team or teams which would have advanced if not for another team's early withdrawal must be carefully considered and the solution fairly and consistently applied.

There can also be unfortunate instances in which teams are disqualified from continuing due to disciplinary or other technical issues. This can leave openings in matches that need to be filled by a pre-determined method.

In the National Games with medal rounds, upon completion of pool play (see generic Game Schedule), the top two teams from each pool advance to the play-offs and play an additional three games – Quarter Finals on the afternoon of Day 3 and Semi-Finals and Finals on Day 4. The winning and losing teams of Quarter Final games advance to the Championship bracket and the Consolation bracket, respectively. Any team that is unable to complete all three games of the medal rounds for any reason must notify the National Games Venue Chairperson (or designee) **as soon as they are aware of that eventuality – whether prior to the Games beginning or during pool play or in one of the playoff rounds** so that an alternate team may be invited to fill the spot.

Replacement Policies

The following policies will be in effect for replacing teams that withdraw (or are disqualified), whether or not the Games has been notified in advance of their intention.

POOL PLAY: If a team withdraws or is disqualified in pool play, the pool will still send its top two point earners (other than the withdrawn or disqualified team) into the Quarter Finals. In pools with progressive balanced competition, withdrawn or disqualified teams will not be placed in subsequent pools and will not be eligible for first place, second place or sportsmanship awards.

QUARTER FINALS: If a team which wins their Quarter Final withdraws or is disqualified after that game, there will be Kicks From the Penalty Mark (KFTPM) process, as set forth in the Rules, between the team which lost to the withdrawing team in the Quarter Finals and the next highest point earner (in the event of a tie, the tie breaker process set forth in the Rules shall be applied) across the pools of that division. If that team does not/cannot participate, the next team in descending order of points earned will be invited to participate in the KFTPM and so on until an opponent is found. The team which wins the KFTPM will move forward into the Semi-Finals of the Championship bracket, the losing team will continue in the Consolation bracket.

SEMI-FINALS: If a team which wins their Semi Final withdraws or is disqualified, the team which has lost that semi-final match will go forward into the Final.

FORFEITS

There will be a five-minute grace period at the start of each game. The grace period may be extended if circumstances warrant. The game will be declared a forfeit only after the referee and Field Monitors have confirmed with the Venue Chair or designee that the circumstances warrant. A 0-1 forfeit loss will be assigned to the forfeiting team. If a referee must suspend or terminate a game, the Games Executive Committee will determine the outcome of the game.

No game shall start or continue if either team has fewer than five players in U-10, six players in U-12 and seven players in U-14 through U-19 present and ready to play.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Team members

- Any team member who is sent off must leave the field of play and the immediate area (place to be determined) before play is restarted and must be accompanied by a parent or Safe Haven trained adult. The team may not substitute for that player for the remainder of the game. If there is no qualified adult to accompany the team member, he/she will remain silent on the sideline under the auspices of the team's coaches and may not participate in the hand shake at the end of the game.
- Any team member who is sent off before, during or after a game, will be ineligible to participate in the team's next scheduled game. Depending on the severity of the action that resulted in the send off, the Games Executive Committee may review the circumstances and issue greater sanctions against the offending team member.
- Any team member receiving two send offs during the Games shall have the infractions reviewed by the Games Executive Committee and may be denied further participation in the Games.

Coaches

A coach who is expelled by the referee must leave the field of play and the immediate area for the remainder of the current game and for the next scheduled game. Depending on the severity of the action that resulted in the send off, the Games Executive Committee may review the circumstances and issue greater sanctions against the offending coach. Player Registration Forms must be in the possession of the remaining registered coach. If the coach refuses to leave, or there is no remaining coach or assistant coach, the referee will abandon the match. In an instance where the game is terminated, the Games Executive Committee will decide the outcome of the game. Any coach expelled from more than one game will be suspended for the balance of the National Games.

Spectators

A spectator or other guest who is asked to leave the field by the referee, assigned field monitor or other Games official must do so immediately. If a spectator or guest refuses to leave, the referee, in consultation with the Field Monitor, may terminate the match, in which case, the Games Executive Committee will be responsible for determining the outcome of the match. A forfeit win may be awarded to the opposing team.

Points Deducted in Standings

For each send off issued to a team member or any coach or spectator that is expelled, one point will be deducted from the team's pool play standings and sportsmanship points will be adversely affected.

Reporting Disciplinary Actions

All send offs, expulsions and cautions issued during a match will be recorded on the back of the game card of the offending team. The referee shall also complete a Game Misconduct Report at the conclusion of the match. In the event that violence or the threat of violence has occurred, the assistant referees must also sign the Game Misconduct Report.

- All send offs, expulsions and cautions will be reviewed by the Games Executive Committee, which may decide to issue greater sanctions.

-
- Violent, abusive, threatening or destructive conduct before, during, or after any Games related event may result in the individual(s) being denied further participation in the Games.
 - All send offs for team members and all expulsions of coaches or spectators will be reported (via copy of the Game Misconduct Report) to the applicable Regional Commissioner, Area Director and Section Director of the offending player, coach or spectator within 14 days of the conclusion of the Games.

REFEREE INFORMATION

Requirements

All referees must be currently registered AYSO volunteers and must have AYSO Safe Haven Certification. Referees must also have evidence of AYSO referee training or a certification resulting from submission of an AYSO/USSF cross certification application. The diagonal system of control, utilizing a referee and two assistant referees will be employed on all matches. Referees will be scheduled for matches based upon their training, unless supporting information supplied by an Area Referee Administrator or Section Referee Administrator is presented to the Games Referee Administrator in advance. All referees are subject to observation during pool play games to assist the Games referee staff with assignment of referees to medal round play games. Every effort will be made to avoid assigning a referee to a game involving one or both teams from the referee's own Region or Area.

Players in the Games may not act as referees.

Check-in and Assignments

- All referees must check in with the venue referee coordinator at the referee administration tent or other designated location at least thirty (30) minutes to the start time of each match to which they are assigned.
- The Games Referee Administrator (or his/her designee) will be available and will make assignment adjustments as necessary. All referee game assignments will be posted. Referee teams shall report to their assigned fields at least 20 minutes prior to game time.
- Referees shall officiate each game in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game except as modified by AYSO in the AYSO National Rules and Regulations or these Games rules.
- The game scores as recorded on the game cards shall be the official scores. Referees shall submit all game cards as instructed at the end of each game. The game cards will be available for completing any paperwork or reports at the Games headquarters.
- Referees shall submit a written report in the event of:
 - 1) Any cautions or send offs issued to a player or and expulsions of a coach, spectator or guest
 - 2) Any conduct by coaches, spectators, or other guests that interfered with the match
 - 3) Abuse of substitution and/or minimum play rules noted or brought to the referee's attention
 - 4) Any other action that the referee determines merits a notation or report

No protests of games, official rulings or judgment calls shall be allowed. The Games Executive Committee shall have the final say in any complaint or issue that arises. All decisions are final.

GAME STOPPAGE FOR LIGHTNING, HEAT and OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

The Games Executive Committee shall develop a safety plan for dealing with lightning, heat or other environmental hazards. The safety plan may provide for delaying the start of play, halting or suspending play, shortening the length of games or eliminating overtime periods as may be appropriate to the circumstances.

The referee will have the authority to take appropriate action for any game-specific conditions or events which, in the opinion of the referee, endanger the safety of the players; the Games Executive Committee or its designee will have the authority to order appropriate action for any site-related conditions or events that endanger the safety of the players.

If thunder is heard or lightning observed, lightning is close enough to be within striking distance and the referee or other official will immediately suspend the game and all persons should seek shelter immediately. Games officials may also suspend play and instruct participants to seek shelter immediately in accordance with local lightning detection and tornado warning system rules. Activities may resume only when a Games official gives the approval. In most cases, activities may be resumed only after lightning or thunder has NOT been observed for thirty minutes.

DISPOSITION OF ABANDONED OR TERMINATED GAMES

If any pool play games cannot be played due to circumstances beyond the control of the Games, the final standings of the pool will be determined by applying the following winning percentage (WP) formula:

$$WP = \frac{PoolPlayPts + SoccerfestPts}{(NumberOfGamesPlayed \times 10) + 6}$$

where *PoolPlayPts* is the total points earned in all games played; *SoccerfestPts* is the number of points earned for participation in the Soccerfest (either 6 or 0); *NumberOfGamesPlayed* is the number of games each team had the opportunity to play and includes any games that were won or lost by forfeit; 10 is the maximum points that can be earned in a game, and 6 is the maximum points that can be earned by Soccerfest participation. Note: This does not apply to games which were shortened due to a late start. Only the Games Venue Director or designee can declare a game to be not played due to circumstances beyond the control of the Games.

The Games Executive Committee will decide on accounting for the games which could not start or be rescheduled due to adverse weather conditions or other circumstances. They will endeavor to reschedule or resume games that are incomplete due to weather related reasons. However, due to situations that cannot be predicted in advance, it may not be possible to finish incomplete games. All questions regarding rescheduling, including decisions on forfeits will be at the discretion of the Games Executive Committee whose decision shall be final.

Finalized rules will be communicated to all coaches four weeks prior to the Games. Schedules will be posted at a minimum 2 weeks prior to the games. Coaches should check the website daily during the Games for any schedule changes or updates.

AWARDS

All Games participants will receive an official Games T-shirt and pin as well as entrance to the Youth Event. All players advancing to the quarter final round will receive a Games medal. Medals shall be awarded to the first through fourth place teams from the championship round and first through fourth place teams from the consolation round. For divisions playing the progressive balanced competition format, all players on the first or second place team in the final pool will receive a medal.

MEDICAL TREATMENT AND PARTICIPATION RELEASES

Any player who receives medical examination or treatment by medical personnel other than medical personnel directly connected with the Games must submit to the Games Executive Committee an AYSO Player Participation Release Form signed by the parent/guardian before resuming play. The player ID card of any player transported from the venue by emergency medical personnel for medical examination or treatment will be held by the Games Executive Committee and returned only upon receipt of the AYSO Player Participation Release Form signed by the parent/guardian. This form can be signed by a parent/guardian who is not present at the Games and submitted via e-mail or fax.

FEES

The registration fee for the National Games is as follows:

U-10 - \$750 per team

U-12 - \$850 per team

U-14 - \$900 per team

U-16 - \$900 per team

U-19 - \$900 per team

Registration fees are due when a Region accepts a lottery invitation for a team to attend the National Games.

In addition, as noted in the **Team Rosters** section, roster changes submitted after May 15, 2016 will be subjected to a non-refundable administrative service fee.

REFUND POLICY

In the very unlikely event that the National Games are cancelled, all registered teams will receive full refunds of their team registration fee. Memorabilia that is pre-ordered and paid for by teams will be distributed.

For any team that withdraws before January 31, 2016 **and** within 30 days of accepting a lottery invitation, a full refund of the registration fee will be provided. If a team withdraws after January 31, 2016 **or** after the expiration of the 30-day period, and prior to April 1, 2016, there will be a refund of one-half the registration fee. For teams that are invited on or after February 1, 2016, the 30-day period begins on the date the invitation is extended, rather than the date the invitation is accepted. If a team withdraws after April 1, 2016, there will be no refund.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COACHES AND SPECTATORS

- Weapons, alcohol, tobacco (including “vapor” or “e-cigarettes”), other controlled substances and noise makers are not allowed at the facility.
- All trash must be picked up on a daily basis and put in receptacles provided.
- Pets are not allowed on any fields or common areas in any facilities.

RULES INTERPRETATION

The National Games Rules Committee will decide any situations or subjects not covered by the aforementioned Rules. The National Tournament Advisory Commission reserves the right to change these rules prior to the National Games with notice to all coaches and team members at the event.

Questions about these Rules should be addressed to nationalgames@ayso.org.

EXHIBIT "A" SPORTSMANSHIP FORM

Referee's Sportsmanship report (to be printed on the back of line-up cards)

| | Instructions: check the appropriate box for how often you observed the sporting behaviors described below over the course of the game. Use your best judgment to determine what weight, if any, to give to misconduct when evaluating each of the categories. Multiply the number of checks in each column x pts shown to get total points. | Always or almost always (X3) | Mostly (X2) | Some (X1) | Rarely or not at all (0) |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Players | Respect for Opponents - Acknowledges good plays and sporting gestures, before, during and after game. Plays with skill and not force. Wins with humility and grace/accepts defeat with dignity. | | | | |
| | Respect for Officials - Respects referee calls and decisions. Thanks referee/field monitors at end of game. | | | | |
| | Respect for the Game - Knows and plays by the Laws of the Game (No free kick infringement, time wasting, etc.) | | | | |
| | Respect for Officials - Respects referee calls and decisions and encourages spectators to do the same. Remains in team area unless asked onto the field by the referee. Cooperates with National Games officials. | | | | |
| Coaches | Respect for Players - ONLY positive, instructional and encouraging comments. Allows players to play and think for themselves. | | | | |
| | Respect for the Game - Knows and encourages playing by the Laws of the Game. Players are organized and ready to play. Substitutions are organized and take < 30 seconds. Encourages self-control and fair play of players. | | | | |
| | Total points | | | | |
| | Did any non-injured player sit two quarters? (circle one) | Yes | No | | |
| | Did any player play four quarters? (circle one) | Yes | No | | |
| | Misconduct summary - provide # of cautions / # of send-offs / ejections details separately | # of cautions | # of send-offs / ejections | | |
| Additional Comments | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Field Monitor's Sportsmanship and AYSO Philosophies report

| Instructions: check the appropriate box for how often you observed the sporting behaviors described before, during and after the game. You may wish to have the referees' advice when completing this form. Multiply the number of checks in each column x pts shown to get total points. | | Always or almost always (X3) | Mostly (X2) | Some (X1) | Rarely or not at all (0) |
|---|--|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Players | Respect for Teammates and Coaches - On time and properly equipped. Cooperates with teammates and coaches (No arguing, negative comments). Concentrates on best efforts, team play and encouraging teammates | | | | |
| | Respect for the Game - Follows AYSO uniform code. Cleans team area of all debris and garbage | | | | |
| Coaches | Respect for Players - ONLY positive, instructional and encouraging comments. Encourages and supports players' best and fair efforts. | | | | |
| | Respect for Opponents - Acknowledges good plays. Maintains and encourages sporting behavior of self, supporters and players through words and actions. Wins with humility and grace/accepts defeat with dignity. Congratulates / thanks opposing team and coaches at game end. | | | | |
| Spectators & Supporters | Respect for Players and Coaches - Cheers positively for efforts of both teams. Encourages teamwork and fair play at all times. Supports coach decisions with silence or positive comments. (No coaching of players - lets coach do the coaching). | | | | |
| | Respect for Officials - Respects referee calls and decisions. Cooperates with National Games officials. Remain in designated spectator areas. | | | | |
| | Respect for the Game - Maintains self control and decorum at all times. Acknowledges that soccer is a GAME and that best efforts of all are to be applauded. Shows by actions and words that the purpose of the National Games is understood /supported. Cleans area of debris and garbage. | | | | |
| Total points – field monitor | | | | | |
| Total points from Referee's Card | | | | | |
| +6 if Referee's card shows no red cards / ejections, otherwise 0 | | | | | |
| Grand total all sportsmanship points | | | | | |
| Additional Comments | | | | | |

Appendix 1– AYSO National Rules and Regulations on Substitutions

Article I.C. PLAYING TIME AND SUBSTITUTION

1. Except as noted in Article I.C.3 all eligible team members in attendance at AYSO games must play at least half of the game..

Such participation, for all divisions, is controlled as follows:

a. Approximately midway through each half the referee shall permit substitution. This normally occurs during a regular stoppage in play, and the game is resumed with the appropriate restart (i.e. throw-in, goal kick, corner kick, kick-off, free kick, penalty kick or dropped ball). On occasion the referee may need to stop play for substitution while the ball is in play, in which case the game is resumed with a dropped ball.

b. Substitutions may also be made at half-time and at the start of any overtime periods.

c. When the referee signals for substitution, the coaches should have all substitutes entering the game immediately report to the referee or the designated assistant referees, who shall note on the lineup cards those team members substituting.

d. During such stoppages, the coach of each team may substitute as many team members, or none, including previously substituted team members, as long as all eligible team members meet the minimum playing requirements.

e. The referee shall allow for any time lost due to substitution or other cause by stopping his/her watch or adding playing time. (See Article I.B.3. regarding reducing the length of halves to permit proper substitution.)

2. Substitution for injury:

a. If a player is injured, the coach may provide a substitute for the player, in which case the injured player may not return until the beginning of the next "quarter". Only the player who is injured is credited with a "quarter" played regardless of the actual time played.

b. The coach may choose to not substitute and "play short" thereby allowing the injured player to return during the "quarter" in which he or she was injured.

c. The player must receive a signal from the referee in order to return to the game.

3. Late arriving team members shall be substituted as follows:

a. If the team member arrives during the first "quarter", the team member must play a minimum of two of the remaining three "quarters".

b. If the team member arrives during the second or third "quarter", the team member must play a minimum of one "quarter".

4. Signed lineup cards must be completed by the referee and forwarded to Games Officials

Appendix 2 – Additional Quarterfinal Seeding

In general, the Games are intended to have four pools of six teams each in each division; however, the four-pool format can be adapted to accommodate between 20 and 32 teams in a division if having more or less than 24 teams in a division is deemed desirable by Games management. If there are more than four pools in a division, they will be divided into approximately equal groups, with each group participating in its own pool play and elimination bracket. For example, 6 pools of 6 teams each (36 teams) will be divided into two separate three-pool tournaments, each with its own championship round. Quarterfinal seeding for each tournament will proceed as described below.

If there are three pools, the top two teams in each pool plus the two third place teams with the most points will advance as follows:

| Quarterfinal Game # | Third place teams come from pool | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| | A and B | B and C | A and C |
| 1 | A1 v B3 | A1 v B2 | A1 v C3 |
| 2 | C2 v B2 | C1 v B3 | B1 v C2 |
| 3 | B1 v A3 | C2 v A2 | A2 v B2 |
| 4 | C1 v A2 | B1 v C3 | C1 v A3 |

If there are two pools, the top four teams in each pool advance as follows:

| Quarterfinal Game # | |
|---------------------|---------|
| 1 | A1 v B4 |
| 2 | B2 v A3 |
| 3 | A2 v B3 |
| 4 | B1 v A4 |

If there is only one pool, the top eight teams advance as follows:

| Quarterfinal Game # | |
|---------------------|---------|
| 1 | #1 v #8 |
| 2 | #4 v #5 |
| 3 | #2 v #7 |
| 4 | #3 v #6 |

Appendix 3 – Progressive Balanced Competition

Objective: begin with random assignment emphasizing geographic diversity, and use the game results to gradually balance the competition over the course of the tournament. The overall objective is to have good competition for the final three games, not to determine a “tournament winner.”

1. Assign teams to 6-team pools. (A-D for 24-team divisions) Maximize geographic diversity across A/B and C/D pairs
2. Day 1 schedule in each pool
 Game 1: 1 v 5 2 v 4 3 v 6
 Game 2: 6 v 4 5 v 2 1 v 3
 Rank teams according to the standard National Games scoring for pool play, except that Soccerfest points are not counted at this stage. Flip a coin if there are any ties.
3. Assign teams to new pools for Friday based on the following:

| Pool E | | Pool F | |
|---------------|------|---------------|------|
| Pool Position | Team | Pool Position | Team |
| 1 | A1 | 1 | A4 |
| 2 | A2 | 2 | A5 |
| 3 | B1 | 3 | B4 |
| 4 | B2 | 4 | B5 |
| 5 | A3 | 5 | A6 |
| 6 | B3 | 6 | B6 |

Where A1 is the top ranking team in the A pool, etc.

Construct pools G and H similarly from pools C and D; Day 2 games (as per draft schedule dated 6/10)

Game 1: 4 v 1 3 v 5 6 v 2

Game 2: 2 v 3 1 v 6 4 v 5

(Note: the intention here is that Day 2 games pair up teams that originated in different pools on Day 1).

4. Note that the playing time on Day 2 can be determined by the original pool on Day 1, thus you can tell the teams up front what time to show up on both Day 1 and Day 2 (even though they won't necessarily know who their opponents will be until the seeding is completed.)
5. After Day 2 play, rank teams according to the standard national games scoring based on day 2 performance only, except that Soccerfest points are not counted at this stage. If there are ties, add in goal differential points from day 1. If there are still ties, flip a coin.
6. Assign teams to new pools for Day 3 and Day 4 play as follows:

| Pool I | | Pool K | |
|---------------|------|---------------|------|
| Pool Position | Team | Pool Position | Team |
| 1 | E1 | 1 | E4 |
| 2 | G3 | 2 | G6 |
| 3 | E3 | 3 | E6 |
| 4 | G2 | 4 | G5 |
| 5 | E2 | 5 | E5 |
| 6 | G1 | 6 | G4 |

Where G1 is the top-ranked team in the G pool (not the #1 pool position) etc.

Construct pools J and L similarly from pools F and H.

Game 1 (Day 3): 5 v 6 4 v 3 2 v 1

Game 2 (Day 3): 2 v 3 1 v 6 4 v 5

Game 3:(Day 4): 1 v 4 2 v 5 3 v 6

Note that playing time on Day 3 is determined by pool placement on Day 2, so teams will know what time to show up the morning of Day 3.

- 5) Score points according to standard national games scoring, including the Soccerfest points.
Only the last three games are counted. Award 1st, 2nd and participation place medals based on the final standing in the last pool.
- 6) Division sportsmanship awards are based on all 7 games. Use average points per game or percentage of max for comparing to other teams for the Michalski cup.