



Kansas State Youth Soccer Association

www.kansasyouthsoccer.org

Dear KSYSA Members,

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

1. CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR REGISTRATION- EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2016

Effective August 1, 2016 teams at all age groups will be formed using a new 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 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.



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- 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.

COMPETITION FORMATS – WILL BE IN TRANSITION THIS SUMMER.

- 2016 KSUSA Tryout Date
 - Tryouts may not commence any earlier than Friday, June 10, 2016.
 - Advertising may be published and registration may be open starting March 15, 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.
- 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.
- KSUSA Sanctioned Tournaments
 - **CALENDAR BIRTH YEAR** bracketing is required for tournaments sanctioned by KSUSA scheduled on or after August 1, 2016.

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2. 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, Kansas 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)

3. Roster Limits:

As of August 2016 no Competitive roster may exceed the maximum roster limit for the specific age levels except as noted below:

Below are the updated Roster Size Limits that will be implemented in the 2016-2017 seasonal year.

Playing Format	Age Level	Roster Maximum
7v7	U9 & U10	12
9v9	U11 & U12	14
11v11	U13 & U14	18
11v11	U15 & Above	22

- ▮ KSUSA shall allow teams participating in Midwest Regional League and National League to register the number of players as permitted by those leagues.

4. Heading Protocol

As part of the US Soccer Concussion Initiative, KSUSA is prohibiting players 10 years old and younger from heading the ball in practice and games. The intent of this restriction is to protect the safety of children, so it applies to the player and level of competition. Age 10 and younger is specifically cited for the player and U11 is the cited age group to in order to assist with its practical implementation.

- An indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. US Soccer and KSUSA will provide this information in its referee training. US Soccer and KSUSA will also provide this information in

its coaching education courses.

- ▮ Beginning in the 2016/2017 season, since U11 competitions may have players who are 10 years old, it is required that heading be prohibited in U11 competitions and younger. Players that are 11 years old playing U11 are prohibited from heading the ball.
- ▮ If a player is playing up in an older age group (ex: 10 year old playing with a U12 team), please note that players who are 10 and younger should not be heading the ball regardless of the age group in which they play. This requires education and support from the coach and parent to instruct the player accordingly.
 - For players that are 12 and 13 years old, the recommendation is that heading be allowed in games, but that its use in practice should be limited. Since U12 and U13 competitions have players that are 12 and 13 years old, heading is allowed in games but it is recommended that it be limited in practice to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week. US Soccer and KSYSA will provide this information in its coaching education courses.

5. Concussion

As part of U.S. Soccer's Player Safety Campaign, U.S. Soccer unveiled [the U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative](#) that provides guidelines that have been implemented since January of 2016.

The information contained in the initiative is intended to give U.S. Soccer Organization Members, as well as players, parents, team/club staff and coaches and referees, guidance and direction when dealing with head injuries and potential head injuries during soccer participation.

Included in the U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative are specific changes to rules on substitutions and heading for certain age groups. Those changes included:

- Modify substitution rules to allow players who may have suffered a concussion during games to be evaluated without penalty
- Eliminating heading for children 10 and under
 - Please note that U11 is listed in the U.S. Soccer Concussion Initiative document because U11 players can be 10 years old at the beginning of the season
- Limiting the amount of heading in practice for children between the ages of 11 and 13

In addition to the safety initiatives, the following modified rule should be implemented:

When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the penalty area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the penalty area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If a player does not deliberately head the ball, then play should continue.

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 KSYSA State Office.

Sincerely,



Chris Duke
Executive Director