



# AYSO Region 177 – Board Minutes

Document Ref# Board Meeting Minutes 2025-11-18

Section 11 | Area E

**Date:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025

**Time:** 7:00 pm

**Location:** Board Member Residence

**Meeting Type:** Regular Monthly Board Meeting

## 1. Admin & Financials

### Key Discussion

- Last month's minutes:
  - No questions or comments.
  - Motion to approve passed (motion: Ulani, second: Matt).
- Financials:
  - Question about a ~\$900 "Triad" charge.
  - Clarified: this is for full-size foldable goals for U14/All-Stars.
  - Two goals were ordered instead of one due to miscommunication (Kim requested, Jason involved, Holly and Kim both thought it was okay).
  - One goal currently at Kim's house, one at Eric's.
  - Concern raised that high-dollar equipment is being purchased without:
    - Prior board vote/approval.
    - Clear tracking/sign-out process.
  - Equipment budget likely over plan; overall budget tight this year.

### Decisions

- New spending policy:
  - Motion passed to require a board vote for any purchase over \$500.
  - This is for future purchases (regardless of whether the item fits within a category's budget).
- General agreement:
  - High-value equipment (like the full-size goals) needs better tracking and possibly tech (QR codes / AirTags, sign-out logs, etc.).

### Action Items

- Holly – Provide year-to-date financial summary including:
  - Equipment spending.
  - Field/light permits.
  - Remaining budget by line item.
- Matt – Update Region policies document/addendum to include:
  - "Purchases over \$500 require a board vote" rule.
- Jason (with Kim & Matt) – Implement an equipment tracking/check-out system for:

- The new full-size Triad goals (who has them, where they live, how to request them).
- Consider QR codes / sign-out form / simple log.
- Eric/Holly – Confirm if the Triad goals have a warranty and keep proof of purchase accessible.

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## 2. U8 Format & Age-Group Structure

### Key Discussion

- Current U8 setup:
  - Historically playing 6v6 on a larger field (~45x25) vs. US Soccer 4v4 guidelines (~30x20).
  - Concerns:
    - Too many kids crowding the ball; poor technical development.
    - Difficult for both stronger and more timid players.
- Options discussed:
  - Move to 4v4 for U8 to maximize touches and space.
  - Consider splitting age groups:
    - e.g. U7 and U8 treated separately, both as 4v4, so cohorts move up together more logically.
  - Field layout constraints:
    - Possibly placing U8 fields on U10 or U12 fields (e.g. one U8 on U10 field, two U8s cross-field on a U12).
- Concerns:
  - Coach/volunteer count if we double the number of teams.
  - Communication to families.
  - Need to align with field permits at Stanford/Sterns, timing vs. U10.

### Decisions

- No final format decision tonight.
- Agreement:
  - Form a small committee led by Jeff (U8 DC) to:
    - Draft a concrete proposal for:
      - 4v4 vs 6v6.
      - Whether to split U7 & U8.
      - Field sizes / layouts.
      - Impact on coach count and scheduling.
    - Present at the December board meeting for a vote.

### Action Items

- Jeff (U8 Coordinator) – Lead a U8/U7 format working group (Sam, Jamie, others who participated):
  - Draft formal proposal with:
    - Recommended player count (4v4 strongly favored).
    - Age split (U7 vs U8) and transitional plan for this one odd birth-year cycle.
    - Field layout plan (Stanford/Sterns trials, including December test layout).
    - Coach/volunteer implications and cap policy if coaches are short.
- Jeff & Catherine – Test field layout at Stern in December (U8 fields on U10/U12 pitches) and report findings at next meeting.

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### 3. Belmont Cup: Feedback, Communication & Ref Points

#### Key Discussion

- Overall:
  - Lots of feedback (coaches/parents) about:
    - Confusion on who plays whom (schedule wording).
    - Understanding standings + “play-up one team” logic.
    - How referee/volunteer points affect qualification and seeding.
    - Perception of fairness when teams with high ref points advance over “better” records.
- Communication gaps:
  - Some team managers were not getting emails (not fully registered volunteers).
  - Parents often unaware of:
    - Ref points requirement.
    - That season extends into Belmont Cup weekends.
- Ideas raised:
  - Treat ref points as a ticket to get into Belmont Cup (minimum threshold).
  - Possibly A/B or “Dragon / Phoenix” flights, not explicitly Flight A/B, to soften labels.
  - Dedicated web page on region site for Belmont Cup:
    - Format, rules, how seeding works, ref/volunteer point rules.
    - Simple, shareable link for coaches/managers/parents.
  - Email timing:
    - Early-season email: “Here’s how Belmont Cup works and why ref points matter.”
    - Pre-cup reminder email: “Tournament structure, schedule, and what to expect.”

#### Decisions

- No structural change yet, but:
  - Strong consensus that messaging and transparency must improve.
  - Steve Price will attend the next board meeting to:
    - Share additional ideas.
    - Help shape any changes for next year.

#### Action Items

- Eric – Share compiled Belmont Cup feedback:
  - Coach survey results.
  - Common parent questions.
- Matt – Create a Belmont Cup information page on the Region 177 website:
  - Explain:
    - Tournament format.
    - Standings and seeding logic.
    - Ref/volunteer point requirements and minimum to qualify.
    - “Ticket in” concept for qualification.
- Eric & Catherine (with Steve) – Draft an updated communication plan:
  - Early-season “Belmont 101” email.
  - Pre-tournament reminder email.
  - Clear language coaches can copy into their team messages.
- Eric – Ensure emails go to all registered Team Managers and emphasize:
  - Managers must be registered volunteers to receive league communications.

# 4. All-Stars: Coaches, Budget, Trainers & Uniforms

## Key Discussion

- Assistant Coaches:
  - Assistant coach list reviewed (U10G: Colin, U10B: Steve Price, U12G: Joey McCall, etc.).
  - All hold required credentials and experience.
- Budgets & Player Cost:
  - All-Stars intended to be self-sustaining (not heavily subsidized by core).
  - Costs include:
    - Tournament registrations (e.g. Locomotion is expensive).
    - Uniform kit.
    - Possible trainers.
    - Referee deposit (ideally refunded).
  - Some prior All-Star teams had very high per-player costs with low game counts (e.g. 2 tournaments + rain-outs).
- Trainers:
  - Some teams want 6 trainer sessions; others declined.
  - Trainer cost (First Touch) ~\$75/hour, 2-hour minimum.
  - Using trainers for only one team makes it costlier per player.
  - Idea: in future, All-Stars must all use trainers if we decide to subsidize or if AYSO Play is cheaper (around \$40–45/hr).
- Uniforms:
  - New vendor: Equipped Studios:
    - Custom home + third kits with LBC details, All-Star crest, etc.
    - Faster turnaround (3–4 weeks).
    - Pricing better than or equal to Score.
  - This vendor is a candidate for future core uniforms and Spring Academy shirts.

## Decisions

- Assistant coaches approved by board vote.
- For this All-Star season:
  - Trainer use will vary by team based on coach choice and budget tolerance.
  - Extra swag (hoodies, backpacks, etc.) not managed by region:
    - Parents/teams order separately if desired.

## Action Items

- Jason
  - Finalize per-player All-Star budget for each team:
    - Include: uniforms, tournaments, ref deposit, trainers (for teams that opt-in).
    - Clarify whether the previously-mentioned \$45 “region fee” is actually being used.
  - Send cost breakdown to All-Star families with explanation of what’s included.
- Catherine & Holly – Decide and communicate whether:
  - Any field/light costs will be added into All-Star fees (or absorbed by region/Extra).
- Jason & Catherine – Confirm trainer schedule:
  - Get a yes/no from each All-Star coach (especially U10/U12) on trainer usage by the stated deadline.
  - Coordinate with First Touch (or Play if used) to book sessions.
- Jason & Matt – Document a standard cost target for All-Stars (e.g. \$300–\$400 per player) for planning future seasons.

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## 5. Area & All-Star Playoffs Hosting

### Key Discussion

- Area playoffs:
  - December Saturdays only (no Sundays).
  - U12 only, hosted at Region 177 fields.
  - 114 is co-host; their board expected to help.
  - Area assigns center referees; teams provide one AR for the game after theirs.
- All-Star playoffs:
  - January, four Saturdays (no Sundays).
  - Similar hosting expectations.
- Logistics:
  - Need to move U12 goals to the playoff site before events.
  - Need board support:
    - Field marshals.
    - On-site supervision.
    - Possibly snack bar/field support.
  - SignUpGenius or chat polls are acceptable methods to secure volunteers.

### Decisions

- Region 177 will host:
  - Area playoffs (December).
  - All-Star playoffs (January).
- Goal move and field layout:
  - Target date mentioned: Nov 29 for moving U12 goals.

### Action Items

- Eric & Jeff (with Juan) – Coordinate moving U12 goals on/around Nov 29:
  - Confirm who is physically able to move them (Juan has knee surgery).
  - Recruit additional helpers from board.
- Eric – Set up SignUpGenius (or similar) for:
  - Board shifts: field marshals, site support.
  - Ref support/supervision as needed.
- Ralph – Confirm qualifying teams and communicate by Friday so playoffs structure can be finalized.
- Catherine – Confirm with Area:
  - Which responsibilities Area covers (ref assignor, supervision).
  - Any additional requirements for host region.

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## 6. AYSO Play vs. First Touch & Spring Academy Quality

### Key Discussion

- AYSO Play:
  - New AYSO-branded paid training arm (similar in concept to AYSO United).
  - Focused on camps and outreach; still figuring out community engagement model.

- Estimated trainer cost ~\$40–45/hr, cheaper than First Touch.
- Current vendor (First Touch):
  - Mixed trainer quality.
  - Spring Academy had examples of:
    - Trainers on their phones.
    - Too many large-sided games (6v6, 8v8) instead of small-sided.
  - Some improvements noted after feedback.
- Needs:
  - Clear standards and expectations for trainer behavior and session structure.
  - Stronger board presence at Spring Academy.
  - Possibly a dedicated Spring Academy Coordinator.

## Decisions

- Spring 2026:
  - Stick with First Touch for Spring Academy (too late to overhaul fully).
- Longer term:
  - Use AYSO Play for a pilot:
    - Possibly a winter or All-Star/Extra camp.
    - Evaluate trainer quality before committing Spring Academy.

## Action Items

- Catherine & Eric – Work with AYSO Play to:
  - Arrange a pilot camp (winter or early spring) focused on:
    - All-Stars and/or Extra players.
  - Collect feedback from those coaches.
- Jason – Clarify and communicate Spring Academy expectations to First Touch:
  - Emphasis on:
    - Small-sided games.
    - Consistent engagement (not on phones).
    - Age-appropriate activities.
- Board – Establish a Spring Academy Coordinator/rotation:
  - Create a simple schedule so a board member is present each session to:
    - Monitor trainer quality.
    - Field parent feedback in real time.

## 7. Spring Academy 2026: Registration & Fees

### Key Discussion

- Goal:
  - Open registration early to capture families while the fall season is still fresh.
- Pricing discussed vs. historical losses:
  - Historically, Spring has run at a loss.
  - Break-even analysis suggested higher fees (~\$200/player).
- Final fee structure:
  - U6 & under: \$149.99
  - U8 & above: \$199.99
  - Early-bird discount:

- \$22 off for registrations completed during the early window (consensus: December + January).
- Age grouping:
  - Continue to align Spring divisions with upcoming fall age group (i.e., play the age you'll be in the fall).
- Session schedule:
  - Include scrimmages even on Expo weekend instead of taking that week off.

## Decisions

- Fees:
  - U6 and younger: \$149.99
  - U8 and older: \$199.99
  - \$22 early-bird discount:
    - Applies to both fee levels.
    - Valid for registrations in December and January.
- Registration open date:
  - December 1.

## Action Items

- Sam – Open Spring Academy registration on SportsConnect by Dec 1:
  - Configure:
    - Correct age group mappings (based on next fall).
    - Fee + discount structure.
- Matt – Update:
  - Website Spring Academy page.
  - Interest list messaging.
  - Any flyers/marketing materials with:
    - Dates.
    - Fees.
    - Discount window (Dec–Jan).
- Catherine & Matt – Clarify and communicate:
  - Spring schedule (no skip for Expo weekend).
  - Basic program description for marketing.

## 8. Expo (AYSO Section Meeting)

### Key Discussion

- Location & timing:
  - Pasadena, late March.
- Benefits:
  - Administrative, coaching, safety, and marketing tracks.
  - Can knock out training and certifications.
  - Good networking and learning from other regions.
- Costs:
  - Region covers:
    - Registration fee.
    - Meals up to ~\$15/meal.
  - Hotel:

- For Pasadena, generally not covered (commutable).
- Early-bird registration deadline:
  - Dec 31.

## Decisions

- Region will support board members attending:
  - Pay registration.
  - Reimburse meals within policy.
- No hotel reimbursement anticipated for Pasadena.

## Action Items

- Catherine – Confirm and send to board:
  - Exactly what costs are reimbursed (registration, meals).
- Interested board members – Register for Expo before Dec 31 to lock in lower rate.

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# 9. Beach Classic Tournament

## Key Discussion

- Paperwork:
  - Beach Classic permit paperwork has been submitted.
- Fees:
  - Tournament fees appear in line with other events (e.g., Fountain Valley, Torrance, Locomotion).
  - There is a referee deposit component and some confusion historically over:
    - How it's collected.
    - How refunds are processed.
  - Discussion about whether to increase fees:
    - General consensus to keep the same fees for this year and reassess with real data later.
- Priority entry:
  - Idea that teams with a full referee crew should be prioritized.

## Decisions

- Keep Beach Classic team fees the same as last year.
- Clarify:
  - Referee deposit amount.
  - Refund process.
- Add website language:
  - Teams that bring a full ref crew get priority acceptance.

## Action Items

- Matt – Update Beach Classic web page:
  - Add note that teams supplying full referee crews get priority acceptance.
- Holly & Eric – Define and document:
  - Exact referee deposit amount.

- How/when deposits are refunded.
- How this applies to home All-Star/Extra teams.

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## 10. Extra Program (Competitive)

### Key Discussion

- Retention risk:
  - Last year some strong players left for club because Extra tryouts were too late (April).
- New timing:
  - Plan to run first Extra tryout in January:
    - Align with club tryout calendar.
    - Give players clarity early.
- Process:
  - Maintain third-party eval model:
    - First Touch or AYSO Play evaluators.
    - Tiers: "must select", "qualified pool", "not ready".
  - Use Spring Academy as a development and evaluation space.
  - Have a watch list and possibly a second tryout in March/April if needed.
- Coach selection:
  - Need Extra coach applications out soon and voted on in December.
- Logistics:
  - Prefer turf but want to manage costs (Stanford/Sterns might be enough).
  - Could schedule tryout after All-Star sessions.

### Decisions

- Move Extra tryouts to January (first tryout).
- Keep:
  - Third-party evaluation model.
  - Final selection by region/coach from the qualified pool.

### Action Items

- Jeff –
  - Draft and send Extra coach application to potential candidates.
  - Prepare a coach slate for December board vote.
- Jeff & Catherine –
  - Pick January tryout dates (weekday + Saturday) and secure field permits.
  - Arrange third-party evaluators (First Touch or AYSO Play).
- Matt – Add Extra tryout announcement to:
  - Website.
  - Emails (especially to current All-Star and Extra families).

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## 11. Board Succession & Recruitment

### Key Discussion

- RC role:
  - Current RC stated that next year will be their last year.
  - Doesn't plan to stay on beyond that.
- Importance:
  - Having someone familiar with the region and board is strongly preferred.
  - If no successor, Area Director could be forced to run the region, which is not ideal.

## Decisions

- Start a deliberate succession plan now, rather than waiting until late in the term.

## Action Items

- All board members:
  - Identify and approach potential successors/backups for:
    - RC.
    - Other key roles (registrar, coach admin, ref admin, etc.).
- Catherine – Explicitly include board recruitment / succession as a standing agenda item.

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# 12. Merchandise & Logos

## Key Discussion

- Interest in:
  - Online store for Region 177 merchandise (shirts, beanies, etc.).
- Need:
  - Clean, official artwork:
    - Shield logo (dark blue outline).
    - Roundel (circular) logo.

## Decisions

- Proceed with exploring a store setup using correct brand assets.

## Action Items

- Matt – Locate and share:
  - Official shield and roundel logo files with vendor (Josh).
  - Ensure they come from the region's artwork folder (not outdated green-outline versions).
- Eric / Josh – Start building online merchandise store mock-up once logos are in hand.

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# 13. Coach Survey Raffle

## Key Discussion

- Coach survey:
  - ~30 responses.

- One free player registration offered via drawing.
- Drawing:
  - “Wheel of Destiny” spin done live.
  - Winner: Coach Abdulla.

## Decisions

- One free core registration awarded to Mo Abdulla.

## Action Items

- Eric – Notify Abdulla of the free registration and:
  - Coordinate application of credit in SportsConnect.

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# 14. Next Board Meeting & Social

## Key Discussion

- December meeting:
  - Idea to host at John’s tiki bar as a holiday/social meeting + business.
  - Backup options: inside at current facility or another location.

## Decisions

- Tentative plan to hold December meeting at John’s place, pending his confirmation.

## Action Items

- Jon – Confirm whether he can host the December board meeting (inside/outside).
- Catherine – Once confirmed, send out:
  - Final date, time, location.
  - Any “holiday” details (potluck, etc.).

Notes taken by: Matt Beckerdite