



**POLICY
ON
US YOUTH SOCCER
NEBRASKA STATE CUP**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1—GENERAL

1.1. DEFINITIONS	3
1.2. ESTABLISHMENT	4
1.3. TITLES	4
1.4. ADMINISTRATION	4
1.5. PRECEDENCE OF GAMES	4
1.6. LEVELS OF COMPETITION.....	4
1.7. NOTICES	5

PART 2—TEAMS AND PLAYERS

2.1. TEAM APPLICATIONS.....	5
2.2. TEAM ELIGIBILITY.....	6
2.3. ROSTERS.....	7
2.4. FORFEITS FOR FAILURE TO COMPETE	9
2.5. FORFEITS GENERALLY	10
2.6. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY.....	10
2.7. DISCIPLINE	11
2.8. PROTESTS AND APPEALS	11

PART 3 – GAME PLAY

3.1. PASSES AND GAME ROSTERS	13
3.2. PLAYING RULES	14
3.3. GAME OFFICIALS	17

PART 4 —MODIFICATION OF POLICY

4.1. MODIFICATION OF POLICY	17
-----------------------------------	----

PART 1—GENERAL

1.1. DEFINITIONS

Except as otherwise provided, the following definitions apply to this policy:

- a. **“Board of Directors”** means the Board of Directors of Nebraska State Soccer Association
- b. **“Club”** means an organization providing soccer to youth players that is a member of Nebraska State Soccer; provided however, a “club” need not have the word “club” as part of its official name.
- c. **“Club Pass”** means a US Youth Soccer which –
 - i. issued to a registered youth player by a club in compliance with the rules of Nebraska State Soccer.
- d. **“Federation”** means the United States Soccer Federation, Inc.
- e. **“game roster”** means the list of players who will participate in a particular competition.
- f. **“National Championship competitions”** means the competitions provided by US Youth Soccer for the 13 and Under, 14 and Under, 15 and Under, 16 and Under, 17 and Under, 18 and Under, and 19 and Under age groups.
- g. **“Nebraska State Soccer”** means the Nebraska State Soccer Association.
- h. **“region”** means one of those regions established by US Youth Soccer.
- i. **“rostering”** means assignment of a registered player to a team.
- j. **“seasonal year”** means days of play which are August 1 to July 31 of any given year.
- k. **“select team”** means the official select or all-star team of-
 - i. US Youth Soccer;
 - ii. Midwest Region;
 - iii. Nebraska State Soccer
 - iv. a district or geographical subdivision of a Nebraska State Soccer; or
 - v. any league.
- l. **“State Association”** means the administrative body within a territory determined by the US Youth Soccer’s National Council to carry out US Youth Soccer’s programs for youth players.
- m. **“suspension”** means the temporary withdrawal of rights and privileges, such as the right to play, coach, or otherwise administer or participate (directly or indirectly) in soccer, and the suspension is for the entire term of the suspension with all rights and privileges withdrawn unless specifically stated otherwise by the suspending authority.
- n. **“team”** means a group of soccer players playing on the same side in soccer games.
- o. **“team Roster or State Cup roster”** means a list of registered players eligible to play for a team.
- p. **“US Youth Soccer”** means the United States Youth Soccer Association, Inc.
- q. **“youth player”** means an individual who has not reached 19 years of age prior to August 1 immediately before the start of any seasonal year. A player who reaches 19 years of age during a seasonal year is allowed to complete that seasonal year. A player who reaches 19 years of age during August of one seasonal year shall be allowed to complete all of the next seasonal year.

1.2. ESTABLISHMENT

1.2.1. Nebraska State Soccer establishes and shall organize annually Nebraska State Cup competitions This policy applies to those competitions.

1.2.2. There shall be individual, separately conducted Nebraska State Cup competitions for boys and girls in each of the age groups. The purpose of Nebraska State Cup is to determine the teams that will represent Nebraska State Soccer for each boys and girls age group at the National Championship Series competition for Midwest Region.

1.2.3. Nebraska State Cup is an open competition for teams registered in the 13U – 19U age groups.

1.3. TITLES

1.3.1. The title of the Nebraska State Cup competitions for each of the age groups shall be “US YOUTH SOCCER NEBRASKA STATE CUP”.

1.4. ADMINISTRATION

1.4.1. The Nebraska State Cup competitions shall be managed by a Tournament Director appointed by Nebraska State Soccer. The Tournament Director will administer the tournament under the oversight of Nebraska State Cup Committee. Any matters not provided for in this policy shall be decided by the Nebraska State Cup Committee, and its decisions will allow the competition to continue. Any decision, other than judgment decisions, by the committee can be appealed to the Board of Directors at the next scheduled Board Meeting.

1.4.2. There shall be a Nebraska State Cup Committee appointed as provided by the Nebraska State Soccer bylaws. The Committee is responsible for the entire administration of the State Cup competitions subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

1.4.3. The Nebraska State Cup Committee, the State Office Staff and the Tournament Director will work together to determine the site for the competition.

1.5. PRECEDENCE OF GAMES

Nebraska State Cup competitions games shall take precedence over all other youth games.

1.6. LEVELS OF COMPETITION

1.6.1. Each National Championship competition will be conducted at the following levels:

- a. The first level of competitions for all boys and girls age groups is at the State Association level.
- b. The second level of competitions for all boys and girls age groups is at the regional level.
- c. The third level of competitions for all boys and girls age groups is at the national level.

1.6.2. At the state association level only, Nebraska State Soccer shall determine

- a. which age groups, and whether boys or girls, or both, that it will conduct State Association level competitions for
- b. the format for the competitions at the State Association level to determine teams representing the State Association shall be a tournament format established by Nebraska State Soccer. League competition may not be considered a tournament format.

1.7. NOTICES

All notices and other communications required to be given under this policy shall be in writing and shall be addressed to the Board of Directors or a committee designated by it.

PART 2—TEAMS AND PLAYERS

2.1. TEAM APPLICATIONS

2.1.1. Fees and Deadlines -

- a. The Board of Directors shall determine each year the entry fee and date range for the competition.
- b. The Tournament Director will set the deadlines for team entry. Not later than the final deadline for entry established by the Tournament Director, each team wishing to enter the competition shall submit to the state office:
 - i. An on-line entry form indicating the team's intention to compete.
 - ii. A non-refundable fee in the amount set by the Board of Directors for the competition.
- c. Any team wishing to enter the competition after the deadline, but no later than one week after the final deadline, may be accepted at the discretion of the Tournament Director if adding the team will eliminate the need for a play in game. If the team is accepted, a late application fee, as set by the Board of Directors, will be applied.
- d. Teams will not be permitted to play any game of the Nebraska State Cup competition without the team entry and/or State Cup related fines being paid in full.

2.1.2. Teams may only enter State Cup in the age group of their oldest player, based on their roster at the time of entry. After entry, teams may not release players in order to qualify for a

younger age group, nor can teams enter an age group that they do not have at least 1 player rostered of that age at time of entry and at roster freeze.

2.1.3. All teams submitting application agree to be available at all times on scheduled game dates, including dates published for Qualifying Games as needed. No conflicts are accepted for any part of the National Championship Series including the Nebraska State Cup.

2.1.4. Any team or club who withdraws from the competition after the application deadline and prior to the competition start will be subject to a fine:

- a. Withdrawal after schedules are posted requires non-refundable entry fee and an additional \$300 fine;
- b. Withdrawal with less than one week prior to the posted event start date requires the non-refundable entry fee and an additional \$500.
- c. Withdrawal fines may be appealed on the basis of reasons beyond the team's control. Appeals must be done in writing when notice of the withdrawal is given with full explanation of reasons for withdrawal.

2.1.5. Refunds - Should all or a portion of the Nebraska State Cup be canceled due to just cause or teams do not play three games, then refunds shall be issued as follows:

- a. One game played – Refund 35%
- b. Two games played – Refund 20%
- c. Games shall be considered played when completed in regulation time, shortened time or penalty kicks

2.2. TEAM ELIGIBILITY

2.2.1. The Nebraska State Cup competitions shall be open to any team whose players are registered with US Youth Soccer through Nebraska State Soccer if the team is in compliance with all of the following requirements:

- a. The team must be comprised of properly registered and rostered youth players (as defined by US Youth Soccer).
- b. The team must be in good standing with Nebraska State Soccer and must be in compliance with, and has not violated, any of the bylaws and policies of Nebraska State Soccer or US Youth Soccer.
- c. The team must be entered in the competition of the State Association in which at least 51% of its players are registered.
- d. 14 and Under and younger teams must compete in at least a 4-team approved league during both fall and spring sessions in Nebraska State Soccer, US Youth Soccer Regional Conference or US Youth Soccer National League. U15 through U18 teams must compete in at least a 4-team approved league during fall session of the current seasonal year in Nebraska State Soccer, US Youth Soccer Regional Conference or US Youth Soccer National League. The league competition must consist of a minimum of

one game against each of three different teams participating in the league. U-19 age group for boys and girls are exempt from this rule.

- e. A Team must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the league and every level of the National Championships competitions by maintaining a minimum of 9 players common to the Team Roster at every level of the competitions.

2.3. ROSTERS

2.3.1. Every team participating in the Nebraska State Cup shall have a Team Roster based on this policy and will present a Game Roster for every match or competition.

Team Roster – A Team Roster shall have a minimum of 9 registered players on its roster at all times. The Team Roster may have up to 22 youth players on the roster at any level of the National Championship competitions.

Game Roster – The game roster shall be presented to the referee at the game check-in. The game roster shall have a maximum of 18 players and a minimum of 7 players. Every player listed on the game roster must be included on the team roster.

2.3.2. Roster Freeze

- a. A roster freeze date will be set no more than 2 weeks prior to the first state cup bracket game. This date will be announced and posted by the Tournament Director prior to the entry deadline.
- b. After the roster freeze date all changes to the roster shall be limited in number and meet the following requirements:
 - i. Request for the change sent to the Tournament Director no less than 24 hours prior to the teams first State Cup match
 - ii. Request shall include the reasoning for the change and include all required check-in documents for added players
 - iii. No transfers of previously rostered players shall be permitted
- c. Roster changes after the Roster Freeze date are not permitted. In the event of an emergency beyond the teams or coach's control, the team may appeal to the Tournament Director to make a change

2.3.3. Rostered, Release and Transfer

- a. A club may issue a club pass to any youth player who is a registered youth player of the club before the team to which such youth player is to be rostered for the Nebraska State Cup level of the National Championship competition submits its National Championship Roster for its first competition at the Nebraska State Cup.
- b. Only at the Nebraska State Cup level of the National Championships competition (but not at the regional and national levels of the competitions) –
 - i. a team may roster any player not having a club pass of that team's club if a transfer stating the reason why this action has been requested, has been made and approved by Nebraska State Soccer on the designated form: and

- ii. at the time a team's National Championships competition roster for the Nebraska State Cup level is determined under this rule, the team may not more than 5 rostered youth who were previously rostered during the current seasonal year with a club other than the club of which the team is a member, the rostering of such youth players with such club shall be made in compliance with the rules and policies of Nebraska State Soccer; and
- c. Nebraska State Soccer is not required to consider as a roster player a player on a school team if Nebraska State Soccer administers school programs.
- d. In addition to the application of the club pass provisions of the policy a team participating in the National Championship competitions may release involuntarily a player from its roster if the player has **violated bylaws, policies, or requirements of the Federation, US**
- e. A team may have on its roster only players of the following age groups for the seasonal year in which a team is participating:
 - i. For teams competing at the 13 and Under, 14 and Under, 15 and Under age groups, each player on the teams must be:
 - a. of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating for that seasonal year, or
 - b. of the age in either of the next 2 younger age groups of that age group competition in which the team is participating for that seasonal year.
 - ii. For teams competing at the 16 and Under, 17 and Under, 18 and Under, 19 and Under age groups, each player on the teams must be:
 - a. of the age of the age group competition in which the team is participating for that seasonal year, or
 - b. of the age of any younger age groups, through the Under 14 age group, of that age group competition in which the team is participating for that seasonal year.

2.3.4. Every team participating in the Nebraska State Cup shall have a Team Roster based on this policy and will present a game roster for every match or competition.

Team Roster – A Team Roster shall have a minimum of 9 registered players on its roster at all times. The Team Roster may have up to 22 youth players on the roster at any level of the National Championship competitions.

Game Roster – The game roster shall be presented to the referee at the game check-in. The game roster shall have a maximum of 18 players and a minimum of 7 players. Every player listed on the game roster must be included on the team roster.

2.3.5. A team shall forfeit each game of the team in which –

- a. An unregistered player was with the team at the game in a uniform; or
- b. A player was improperly entered on the team's roster; or
- c. The team no longer has a recognized team official as required by US Youth Soccer Rule 241, sections 1, 2 and 4, on the team bench.

2.3.6. It shall be the responsibility of the State Office and the State Registrar to certify the eligibility of competing teams and to provide the policy online for the teams to review.

2.3.7. Team Check-in will be allowed by online check-in. Teams will be considered checked in once the following documents have been approved:

1. State Cup Roster
2. Proof of Age documents for all players (reference NSS policies III, D)
3. USYS Passes for Players and Coaches
4. Medical Releases for every player

2.3.8. The team may compete in only one National Championship Series state level competition during the seasonal year.

2.3.9. The Champion team and any wildcard team in each age group must attend a meeting for the Midwest Regional event. The State Office will hold the meeting as soon as possible after the completion on the spring Nebraska State Cup.

2.4. FORFEITS FOR FAILURE TO COMPETE

2.4.1. Any team intending to forfeit must give notice of its intention to forfeit to the Nebraska State Cup Committee and must give the notice twenty-four (24) hours prior to the scheduled game. The notice shall include the reason for the forfeit.

2.4.2. Forfeits and failure to compete by a team shall be a matter of review by the Board of Directors that shall have the authority to take action against the team or club that the Board considers appropriate.

2.4.3. Any team or club who forfeits any game in the State cup competition may be fined up to \$250 per game.

2.4.4. A minimum of seven players constitutes a team. A ten (10) minute grace period shall be extended beyond the scheduled kick off time if seven players are not available at the scheduled kick off time. A team of seven players must start the game as soon as seven players are at the field after the originally scheduled kick off time. If at the end of the ten (10) minute grace period the team does not have seven players, the referee shall suspend the game and report the failure of the team to appear to the Nebraska State Cup Committee. The Committee reserves the right to declare a forfeit.

2.4.5. Any team that forfeits a game will not be allowed to advance out of their group to the semi-finals or championship game. In the event of a forfeit, the games that the forfeiting team played in will not be counted in the points for any of the teams they play. Teams in their

bracket will only count the points from the games against the other teams in their bracket or crossed over against.

2.5. FORFEITS GENERALLY

At the discretion of the Board of Directors or its designee, any team proven guilty of violating this policy or of any other requirement of Nebraska State Soccer shall be subject to sanctions including, up to forfeiture of all games and the preceding competition and fines and suspensions.

2.6. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

2.6.1. A player must be properly registered and rostered in accordance with the rules of US Youth Soccer and Nebraska State Soccer.

2.6.2. A player may be rostered to only one team's National Championship Roster at each level of the National Championships competition.

2.6.3. A youth player may be on the National Championships roster of only one team at each level of the National Championships competition during any seasonal year, provided, however, that a youth player who was rostered to a team of a club at a National Championship competition level that does not advance to the next level and who has been issued a club pass of that club in accordance with this policy may be rostered to another team of that club at the next level of the National Championship competitions. Subject to the foregoing, and subject to the provisions of Team Eligibility at each level of the National Champions competitions, a team may add to its National Championship roster for that level as many registered youth players holding club passes of that club of which a team is a member as the team or its club determines so long as the roster does not exceed 22 players. A Team may not change the club of which it is a member at any time after the commencement of the National Championship competition and in event only in compliance with the rules of Nebraska State Soccer.

2.6.4. A player who has been suspended may play after the player's term of suspension has expired.

2.6.5. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs - Players in State Cup Competition are prohibited from consuming alcohol or using illegal drugs. Players are also prohibited from using any form of tobacco at the playing site of State Cup Competition. Penalty for violation by player participants is disqualification from the State Cup competition.

2.7. DISCIPLINE

2.7.1 Ejections and Send-offs

- a. Players ejected or team officials sent-off from a match shall be automatically suspended for the next Nebraska State Cup match. No substitution shall be permitted for a player who has been ejected from a match. The Nebraska State Cup committee will review all such dismissals and may impose additional penalties, suspensions or other punishment depending on the circumstances and severity of the infraction
- b. Players ejected from a match may continue to sit in the technical area unless removed by the referee for inappropriate behavior after they have been ejected.
- c. Players who are serving a disciplinary suspension may sit on the team bench while dressed in street clothes and will be held responsible for their actions the same as any other participant. If additional disciplinary situations occur in which a suspended player is involved, the Nebraska State Cup Committee will impose additional penalties, suspensions or other punishment to be served.
- d. Any team official sent-off from a match must leave the vicinity of the field before the match will be restarted. The team official may not have any contact with the team until the referees have left the field after the match.
- e. Team officials serving a disciplinary suspension may not attend matches. A dismissed team official that is rostered to more than one team in the competition will serve the suspension at the next scheduled match for the team with which the send-off occurred.
- f. A player who is ejected from their teams' final Nebraska State Cup game for that seasonal year is at least prohibited from participating in the next National Championship Series game for which the player is rostered. A team official who is sent-off from a teams final Nebraska State Cup game, will have their suspension carry over to the teams next National Championship Series scheduled game, including a game in the following season if necessary.

2.7.2. It is the responsibility of the Tournament Director to investigate a properly protested violation immediately following its receipt. Failure to cooperate with that investigation shall result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

2.7.3. Any team found guilty of using an ineligible player is not eligible to compete further in the Nebraska State Cup competition in the current seasonal year. Any coach, manager, or official found guilty of knowingly using an ineligible player is not eligible to compete further in the Nebraska State Cup competitions in the current and subsequent seasonal year. A player found guilty of submitting falsified birth information is prohibited from competing further in Nebraska State Cup competitions in the current and subsequent seasonal year.

2.7.4. Coaches and other team officials shall be subject to all rules pertaining to misconduct contained in this policy, including cautions, ejections, and standard suspension. Suspension lengths will be communicated to the coach by the Tournament Director following the game.

2.7.5. Any other individuals who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team, such as relatives and spectators, are also subject to the jurisdiction and authority of Nebraska State Soccer. Any coach or team official shall be held responsible for the actions of any individual at any game that, in the opinion of the referee, is a supporter of that team. Nebraska State Cup, Nebraska State Soccer and the Tournament Director have the authority and responsibility to remove any person(s) from the tournament for abusive or unsportsmanlike behavior.

2.8. PROTESTS AND APPEALS

2.8.1. All questions relating to the qualifications of competitors, to interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest concerning the Nebraska State Cup competition, shall be referred to the Nebraska State Cup Committee regarding games at the state level.

2.8.2. Eligible and Type –

- a. To be valid and eligible for consideration, each protest –
 - i. Must be orally lodged with the referee and with the opposing coach at the game site before entering the field of play or leaving the game site, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section; and
 - ii. Must be filed with the Nebraska State Cup Committee within 2 hours after the completion of the game being protested, accompanied by –
 - a. A fee of \$100.00;
 - b. 3 written copies of the protest, which must include full particulars of the grounds on which the protest is lodged; and
 - c. 3 written copies of any information to be presented by witnesses.
- b. Any protest relating to the grounds, goal posts, bars, or other appurtenances of the game shall be entertained only if a written objection has been lodged with the referee and the opposing coach prior to the start of the game.
- c. Any protest relating to a judgment call of a referee or assistant referee will not be considered.
- d. The Chairperson of the committee with which the protest is properly lodged shall immediately on receipt of the protest notify the team against which the protest is made and shall send a copy of the protest and all particulars to that team, which will then have the right to defend its case, with or without witnesses.

2.8.3. Appeal –

- a. An appeal of a decision regarding a protest may be appealed as provided by US Youth Soccer Bylaw 703. Any such appeal must be filed within 2 hours of receiving the decision of the Nebraska State Cup Committee, with the Chairperson of that Committee who shall immediately notify the Chairman of the National Championships Committee; or
- b. Each appeal filed under subsection (a) of this section must be accompanied by –
 - i. a fee in an amount determined by the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors; and

ii. 5 written copies of the appeal.

2.8.4. Any party to a protest or appeal shall be accorded the right to be assisted in the presentation of the party's case at the protest or appeal proceeding.

2.8.5. A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the Nebraska State Cup competition is not sufficient grounds for a protest or appeal. Violators may expect appropriate action by Nebraska State Soccer.

2.8.6. Decisions made on protests and appeals by the Nebraska State Cup Committee are binding and allow that competition to proceed.

Part 3 - Game Play

3.1. PASSES AND GAME ROSTERS

3.1.1. At the Nebraska State Cup competition, each player and team official listed on a National Championship Roster must carry the US Youth Soccer member pass. The member pass issued to a player shall be a club pass identifying the club by name. The US Youth Soccer member pass must carry a current photograph of the player or team official.

3.1.2. Each player at Nebraska State Cup competition must be listed on the National Championship Team Roster. All information listed on the Team Rosters, US Youth Soccer Player Passes and Medical Release and any additional forms required by any state programs must be verified by the appropriate official of the Nebraska State Soccer at Team Check-in.

3.1.3. Game Check-in –

- a. The US Youth Soccer member passes must be checked prior to each game. The National Championships Roster must be available at all games sites at all times.
- b. Each player shall have a number on the player's jersey. The number shall be permanently affixed to the back of the jersey and shall be clearly visible. Each player on a team must wear a number different from the number of every other player on the team. Numbered jerseys for goalkeepers are optional.
- c. Goalkeepers must wear colors that distinguish them from other players and game officials.
- d. At every level of the National Championship competitions, a player or team official at a game site to participate in a game of the competition may only have outer wear of the player or team official a name, logo or other identifying mark of a youth soccer organization that is US Youth Soccer, A State Association or other member of US Youth Soccer, a member of a State Association or an organization that is a member of an organization that is a member of a State Association. A name, logo or other identifying mark of any other youth soccer association must be removed, replaced, or covered

before the player or team official may continue to remain at the game site for the game.

3.2. PLAYING RULES

3.2.1. The playing rules of the Nebraska State Cup competition shall conform to the FIFA “Laws of the Game” except as provided by this rule.

3.2.2. The home team will be responsible for wearing an alternate color jersey, if necessary, as determined by the referee. Generally, the home team shall wear a light jersey and the away team shall wear a dark jersey. The team listed first in all rounds shall be the home team. Teams use the side of the field with team benches (when available) and spectators shall use the opposite side of the field.

3.2.3. Seeding Procedures –

- a. At all age groups: All teams will be seeded off each teams’ body of work in the Nebraska League as determined as best as possible by the Tournament Director, Nebraska State Cup Committee, and State Office Staff. In the event that a team changes clubs or name a team must demonstrate continuity of rosters between the old team and new team by maintaining a minimum of 9 players common to the Team Rosters to maintain their spot in seeding. If a team loses their spot they will be seeded according to rules above.
- b. Body of work, including but not limited to results from other USYS events where match ups may have taken place, may be submitted if requested by the Tournament Director to better compare teams.
- c. Appeals of seeding placement must be made in writing by the club Director of Coaching or President within 48 hours of seedings being published.

3.2.4. Bracketing -

- a. 1-Team Bracket: Team is declared the winner.
- b. 2-Team Bracket: The two teams will play in the Championship match.
- c. 3-Team Bracket: Each team will play round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket. The two high point teams will advance to the championship game. High point team will be the home team for the Championship.
- d. 4-Team Bracket: (one four-team bracket): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket. The two high point teams advance to the Championship match. The championship game will be a re-match and a semifinal or consolation game will not be played. High point team will be the home team for the Championship.
- e. 5-Team Brackets There will be no 5 team bracket. All teams will be seeded #1 - #5. The 4th and 5th seeded teams will play a play-in game to determine the #4 seed to form a 4 team bracket.

- f. 6-Team Brackets (two three-team brackets): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket and a crossover game with a team from the other bracket. The semifinal will match high point teams in each bracket versus second high team in other bracket. The format may result in matches that are a re-match in the semifinal or Championship. No consolation game will be played. The 1st and 2nd high point teams will be the home teams for the semifinals. High point team will be the home team for the Championship.
- g. 7-Team Brackets – There will be no 7 team bracket. All teams will be seeded #1 - #7. The 6th and 7th seeded teams will play a play-in game to determine the #6 seed to form a 6 team bracket.
- h. 8-Team Brackets (two four-team brackets): Bracket play is round robin games with each of the other teams in the bracket. The semifinal will match high point teams in each bracket versus second high team in other bracket. The Format may result in matches that are a re-match in the Championship. No consolation game will be played. The 1st and 2nd high point teams will be the home teams for the semifinals. High point team will be the home team for the Championship.
- i. 9-Team Brackets - There will be no 9 team bracket. All teams will be seeded #1 - #9. The 8th and 9th seeded teams will play a play-in game to determine the #8 seed to form a 8 team bracket.
- j. 10-Team Brackets There will be no 10-team brackets. Teams will be seeded #1-#10 and two play-in games will be played between #7 and #10 and #8 and #9 to determine the #7 and #8 seed to form a 8 team bracket.

3.2.5. Game Length and Overtime –

- a. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the length of games, overtime play periods, ball size, ball circumference, and ball weight for each age group shall be as follows:

Age Group	Game Length	Overtime Play	Size	Circumference/Weight
Under 19	Two 45' halves	Two 15' periods	#5	27-28 in. 14-16 ozs.
Under 18	Two 45' halves	Two 15' periods	#5	27-28 in. 14-16 ozs.
Under 17	Two 45' halves	Two 15' periods	#5	27-28 in. 14-16 ozs.
Under 16	Two 40' halves	Two 15' periods	#5	27-28 in. 14-16 ozs.
Under 15	Two 40' halves	Two 15' periods	#5	27-28 in. 14-16 ozs.
Under 14	Two 35' halves	Two 10' periods	#5	27-28 in. 14-16 ozs.
Under 13	Two 35' halves	Two 10' periods	#5	27-28 in. 14-16 ozs.

- b. Tie games at the end of regulation playing time will stand except for each semi or final game in each age group.
- c. If a game is tied at the end of regulation play and overtime periods are to be played to determine a winner, two complete overtime periods as provided in subsection (a) of this section will be played after the end of regulation play. If the game is still tied after the end of the two overtime periods, FIFA “Kicks from the Penalty Mark” rules will apply in order to determine the winner.

3.2.6. Substitutions –

- a. For the Under 14 and younger age groups unlimited substitutions shall be allowed
- b. For all other age groups a maximum of 7 substitutions for each team shall be allowed in each game during each half of play and during overtime play. After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game.
- c. Substitution may occur on any stoppage of play with the approval of the referee.
- d. If a player is suspected of suffering a head injury they may be substituted for evaluation without the substitutions counting against the Teams total number of allowed substitutions during each half or overtime period. If the player with the suspected head injury has received clearance from the events' Health Care Professional, the player may re-enter at any stoppage of play. The evaluated player must replace the original substitute and will not count as a substitution. The temporary substituted player may re-enter the game as a regular substitute. A Team may only make a temporary substitution if they have a substitution available.

3.2.7. At the Nebraska State Cup competition unfinished games due to any cause shall be replayed if neither team is at fault nor play has not begun in the second half. If play is stopped during the second half and play cannot be resumed and if neither team is at fault, the Nebraska State Cup Committee may deem the game complete. However, if play is stopped at any time due to one of the teams being adjudged to be at fault, it shall be at the discretion of the Nebraska State Cup Committee whether the game is to be replayed or declared a forfeit.

3.2.8. Irrelevant Matches: In the event that weather or unforeseen circumstances prohibit a match from being played, and the outcome of the match does not impact a bracket's scoring or a quarter/semi/final seeding, it may be determined by the Nebraska State Cup committee and/or Tournament Director that the match will not be played.

3.2.9. Ball - All teams shall play each game with a ball that will be provided by Nebraska State Soccer.

3.2.10. Scoring Method and Bracket Winners - Bracket winners will be determined by the following point system: Maximum points per game are 3 (three).

- Win ----- 3 (three) points
- Tie ----- 1 (one) point
- Loss ----- 0 (zero) points

3.2.11. Tiebreakers - If at the conclusion of bracket play, two or more teams have the same point total, advancement to the semi-finals or championship will be determined using the following tiebreakers in the order listed until a team is eliminated. Once a team is eliminated, advancement among the remaining teams shall again be determined by the tiebreakers in the order listed starting with head to head competition.

Winner of Head to Head (this criteria not used if more than two teams tied).

Winner of Most Games in your bracket.

Goal Spread with a maximum of four goals per game.

Example: Game score of 7-1 would be scored as 5-1 for Goal Spread

Fewest goals allowed.

Kicks from the penalty mark.

Note: If Kicks from the Penalty Mark are to be taken by three (3) teams, there will be a draw by the State Cup Committee. The first team drawn will receive the bye. The next team drawn will be the home team against the remaining team in the first contest of penalty kicks. The winner of the first contest will then compete against the bye team in Kicks from the Penalty Mark to determine the winner. The bye team in the second contest of penalty kicks will be the home team. This process is only used when three (3) teams remain tied after going through the Tie Breakers

3.2.12. In a tie-breaker situation where both teams have earned a spot in the next round and a tie-breaker is needed only for seeding in the next round, seeding may be decided by a coin flip.

3.3. GAME OFFICIALS

3.3.1. For Nebraska State Cup competition, the Nebraska State Cup Committee shall contract with a State Game Assignor.

3.3.2. Game Assignment -

- a. Any referee appointed to officiate in any Nebraska State Cup competition game may not be a past or present member of either of the competing teams.
- b. Any player or coach that is participating in the Nebraska State Cup will not be allowed to referee during the State Cup.
- c. Assignors and referees must recognize that when officiating, familiarity or family relationships must be avoided. Also Assignors should limit the number of games a referee officiates for any team or club.

3.3.3. The Nebraska State Cup will use the current Pay Scale approved by the Board of Directors.

3.3.4. The referee shall have the power to decide on the fitness of the ground in all games. In other respects, the duties of the referee and assistant referee are as defined in the "Laws of the Game."

3.3.5. In the event the referee appointed fails to appear the Referee Assignor will determine who will replace the referee. The same procedure will apply in the event of a referee becoming ill during the process of a game. In both cases, if the Referee Assignor has no one to

replace the referee the crew will use a club lineperson that will be recruited by the Referee Assignor.

3.3.6. The referee has the power during the game to deal with players guilty of violent conduct or using threatening or abusive language. The referee shall forward the name and US Youth Soccer Pass to the Nebraska State Cup Committee or its designee immediately after the game.

3.3.7. The referee must forward to the Nebraska State Cup Committee or its designee on the official game card, the results of the game and all issues related to the game.

PART 4 - MODIFICATION OF POLICY

4.1. MODIFICATION OF POLICY

This policy shall only be modified by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.