

USCAA TRAVEL SOCCER RULES AND REGULATIONS

(Revised November 2018)

Purpose

The purpose of USCAA's travel soccer program is to provide our youth the opportunity to play soccer at the higher levels of competition necessary for them to develop as skillful soccer players and to do so in a consistent and uniform manner.

While there are not specific playing time requirements, the objectives of the program cannot be met unless the players play. A recommended target is that all players play at least half of each game.

Eligibility of Participants

Players in the USCAA in-house soccer program are eligible to participate. In addition, players on recognized classic league teams who formerly participated in our in-house program and who are current residents of USC are eligible to participate.

From time to time children move into USC after travel teams have been formed. The commissioner may consider adding these children to a team at his/her discretion.

The commissioner registers the players with PA West using PA West team rosters. The first time a player registers with PA West he or she must provide a birth certificate as proof of age and a picture. The player will then be provided with an official PA West player pass.

Age Groups

USCAA boys and girls play on separate travel teams.

USCAA forms teams to play in PA West travel leagues. We adhere to PA West's age cut-off which is December 31st (birth year).

All players must play in the correct age group team.

PA West provides travel leagues for boys and girls in ages under 10 through under 19 and in divisions six through four for boys and girls. USCAA fields boys and girls teams in all age groups through under 15. In addition USCAA fields boys and girls teams in age groups under 16 and under 19 when sufficient interest exists.

The USCAA will field as many teams as we are able given the number of interested participants. In the event that we do not have sufficient interest to field a team for all participants we conduct try-outs. Try-outs are conducted by a third party professional evaluation team of soccer coaches. The results of the try-outs will allow the USCAA to form teams based on merit and only cut when we do not have enough interest to put together a team for all interested players.

PA West's playing year begins on September 1 and extends until August 31. It consists of two playing seasons, fall and spring. USCAA's travel teams in age groups under 10 through under 15 are formed for one playing year. Travel teams in age groups under 16 and under 19 are formed for the spring playing season.

Program Administration

A. Commissioner

The commissioner is appointed by the USCAA Board of Directors to administer the travel soccer program. The commissioner is a member of the Board of Directors and reports to the Board. Among his responsibilities are:

1. Determining in what travel leagues USCAA will enter teams.
2. Forming travel teams to include the selection of the coaches and the players.
3. Preparing an annual budget and determining player fees necessary to operate the program within that budget.
4. Obtaining the use of playing fields from Upper St. Clair Township and the Upper St. Clair School District.
5. Enforcing all rules and regulations of PA West and USCAA.
6. Serving as the USCAA club registrar and as USCAA's official representative to PA West.
7. Determining if field conditions (weather, etc.) are appropriate for play on any given day.
8. Field preparation.

B. Assistant Commissioner

The Commissioner will appoint an Assistant Commissioner, who is a member of the USCAA Board of Directors. He/she will act as Commissioner in the Commissioner's absence and will assist in the discharge of the Commissioner's responsibilities and the administration of the program.

The Commissioner may also appoint a director or directors as needed.

C. Indoor Play

Indoor play is not governed by PA West and is not a required part of the USCAA Travel Soccer Program. Indoor play is very popular however, and many USCAA travel teams participate. Coaches should consider indoor play only after obtaining the consent of the players' parents. Coaches who take their teams indoor must invite all of their players but cannot require them to participate. PA West insurance does not apply to indoor play.

D. Tournaments

Tournaments play by our teams is neither encouraged nor discouraged by USCAA. While tournaments provide unique playing experiences, they often cause conflicts for the players with other activities and are an additional expense for the players and their families. Consequently, coaches should consider tournament play only after obtaining the consent of the players' parents. Coaches who take their teams to tournaments must invite all of their players but cannot require them to participate.

Coaches may not enter a tournament without the consent of the commissioner.

E. Uniforms

Uniforms must be purchased by travel team players when they start participation in our program. They are not required to do so in consequent years so long as their jersey number is still available for their team and/or the travel program still supports the type of uniform being used. The cost of uniforms is separate from the cost of participation.

F. Practice and Game Schedules

Travel teams play in PA West's fall and spring playing seasons. The games are played on Sunday's after 12:00 PM. Travel teams practice 2 times a week typically at a time and location assigned by the commissioner.

- Team practice run by the head or assistant coaches. Some coaches may offer 2 team practices a week to accommodate player schedule conflicts.
- Group training sessions referred to as the USC Soccer Academy (USCSA) involving age and gender specific skill development sessions. USCSA sessions are facilitated by a third-party organization with specialized professional soccer coaches / trainers.

Game schedules are prepared by the PA West league directors. Each playing season consists of 7-8 games, half home and half away.

The first game in the fall season is played the first Sunday in September unless it falls on Labor Day Weekend. The first game in the spring is played the first weekend in April unless it falls on Easter.

USCAA adheres to the following policy to guide players and coaches of the spring sports when conflicts between USCAA athletic events occur. This policy must be followed.

1. A game in one sport has precedence over a practice in another sport.
2. On Sundays, a soccer game has precedence over any baseball/softball activity.
3. On Mondays through Saturdays, a baseball/softball game has precedence over any soccer activity.

G. Referee Coordinator:

The soccer commissioner will appoint an individual on an annual basis to act as Referee coordinator and whose duties will include:

1. Maintaining a list of currently certified USSF referees to officiate the games and scheduling referees for Sunday's games.
2. Ensuring that the performance of referees and linesman measure up to or with the aid of game, reports from coaches.
3. Determining appropriate fees and paying the referees accordingly.
4. Arrange appropriate training for people interested in becoming USSF certified referees.
5. Arrange for recertification of referees.

H. Disciplinary Committee:

The Disciplinary committee will consist of the Soccer Commissioner as Chairman, the Assistant Commissioner as Vice Chairman, the Rec Soccer Commissioner, the Assistant Rec Soccer Commissioner, and the Referee Coordinator.

The committee will resolve any incident relating to player, coach, fan or team misconduct either before, during or after a game. Any abuse of officials, including protracted and continuing dissent of officials, by any participant in the soccer Program will also be reviewed by the Committee.

The Disciplinary committee will determine the appropriate action to be taken against any participant who exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior or whose conduct is detrimental to the purpose and objectives of the USCAA Soccer Program. Such action could include suspension or ejection from the program, and recommendation of further disciplinary action by the Board.

I. Rules and Regulations:

PA West is an official state association of the United States Youth soccer Association and administers and governs youth soccer in Western Pennsylvania. PA West forms travel leagues for boys and girls in established age groups and competitive levels and establishes rules and regulations for league play. PA West provides liability and secondary medical insurance.

USCAA is a member club of PA West and forms teams for the benefit of the youth of Upper St. Clair to play in PA West travel leagues on Sundays.

PA West rules of competition and USSF Laws of the Game govern play.

PA West has a functioning disciplinary committee responsible for resolving incidents of misconduct and PA West rules violations. In certain matters, PA West permits member clubs to deal with rules violations by its members. In these instances, and in instances of a violation of USCAA's rules and regulations and Code of Conduct, the above mentioned disciplinary committee will be responsible.

J. Coaches/Assistant Coaches:

Coaches are selected by the commissioner for one playing year, subject to USCAA Board approval, and may be dismissed by the commissioner. The coaches are responsible for the administration of their teams, and in this regard, they enjoy considerable latitude. Coaches must adhere to the USCAA Code of Conduct for Managers and Coaches and the rules and regulations of the USCAA and of PA West.

Coaches are the official representatives of USCAA when their teams travel to other communities to play and are the hosts when teams from other communities travel to Upper St. Clair to play.

Coaches are responsible for the actions of their players, assistant coaches, players' parents and fans at league games.

Coaches may not add players to or drop players from their teams.

Coaches are responsible to collect the appropriate fees and remit them to the Commissioner on a timely basis.

Coaches may have two official assistant coaches, approved by the Commissioner, who are part of the bench at games. They are selected by the coach and are rostered members of the teams.

Coaches are selected by the Commissioner based on the following criteria:

- A. Have demonstrated good sportsmanship and mature behavior in handling young people.
- B. Have exhibited a proper understanding of and support for the purpose and objectives of the travel soccer program.
- C. Have the potential to enhance the travel soccer program and contribute to the positive development of the players.

All head and assistant coaches are required by Pennsylvania law to submit background clearances and by PA West policy to complete training requirements in order to coach a travel team.

The 3 required clearances are:

- 1) Act 114 FBI Criminal Background Check
 - a. If a resident of Pennsylvania for 10 years or more, coaches can submit a notarized ACT 153 Volunteer Affidavit
 - b. If a resident of Pennsylvania for less than 10 years, coaches require a fingerprint clearance
- 2) Act 151 Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Report
- 3) Act 34 Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Check

As an affiliate of the US Soccer Federation (USSF), PA West adheres to USSF's training requirements for all coaches. Coaches are required to complete the minimum online and/or classroom training courses to be approved to coach travel soccer.

USCAA will reimburse coaches for the cost of their background checks (i.e., FBI Fingerprint report) and any minimum required training courses (online or classroom). Coaches that complete coach training courses above the minimum required course are not reimbursed by USCAA.

K. Players:

The USCAA has established and administers an evaluation system for the fair selection of players. This system,

in the under 1- through under 14 age groups, includes formal tryouts. Players invited to the tryouts will be identified from the in-house program coaches' ratings. Players already on a travel team will be automatically invited to the tryout for that age group.

Formal tryouts normally occur in late May/early June. Players selected will be a member of the travel program for one year beginning September 1. Tryouts consist of speed and skill drills and an on field scrimmage. Evaluators are selected who are accomplished players and/or coaches and who have no relationship to the players being evaluated.

Under 16 and under 19 teams consist of travel team players who continue to be interested in playing soccer at this level.

Uniforms worn by all USCAA travel team players will be identical. It will be selected by the Commissioner and will be available to be purchased through an approved vendor.

Nothing, including players' names, may be affixed to uniforms.

L. Additional Programs:

Classic League

The Classic League, formerly called the Cup League, is a PA West soccer league that plays games on Saturdays and Sundays. This league culminates each June with tournaments at which time PA West's representatives to the Regional Tournament are decided.

Since the days when USCAA and the soccer clubs of Bethel Park, Mt. Lebanon and Peters Township jointly operated the South United Soccer Club in the Classic League, USCAA, through the travel soccer commissioner, has maintained a close working relationship with classic league clubs. Although USCAA no longer fields classic league teams a large number of USC soccer players play on them. In fact, the Classic League is becoming the league of choice for many of them.

It is the natural progression in youth soccer for players to advance, depending on their ability and desire, from in-house programs to the travel programs to the Classic League and to the Olympic Development program and beyond.

Classic League teams are formed without respect to community boundaries and selection to these teams is very competitive. Membership on a team requires a high degree of commitment to that team which may impact adversely on the players' other activities. Membership on a team provides significant benefits to a dedicated soccer player. Classic League teams play at a higher level of competition and often provide an advanced level of coaching expertise that USCAA cannot provide.

Historically, USCAA, like other community soccer clubs, has supported the Classic League by providing a limited amount of field time for classic league activities when available.