

STYSA 2009-2010

SOUTH TEXAS YSA



COACHES HANDBOOK



INCLUDING

- Calendar of Events
- Eligibility Rules
- League and Tournament Info
- State Structure
- Helpful articles, new rules & more!



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Coaches, Managers, Trainers, Assistant Coaches

Welcome to the fifth edition of the STYSA Coaches Handbook. While we realize that some of the information included is "old news" to those of you who have been around for several years, each year there are many first-time adult volunteers for whom this information is new. In addition, we try to balance this standard program information with new articles to provide fresh ideas and a better understanding of various coaching strategies suitable for every level of play. We hope this publication will make your "soccer experience" a positive and rewarding one as you undertake the challenge of teaching youngsters to develop a love of the game.

First, we would like to acquaint you with the "soccer family." Like your family tree, soccer has deep international roots that have grown and expanded into a multitude of branches. A child playing in a small league within their local community is a part of a program that expands to include teams from across the state, the nation and the world. Just as children come in all sizes and with all levels of ability, a state association and their member organizations strive to offer programs that will fit the needs of every player.

Recreational soccer is the foundation of our organization. All players, no matter how skilled they are now, most likely started their soccer careers in the recreational ranks. Without a large, strong, vibrant recreational base to draw from, the competitive and elite player programs cannot be successful. Volunteering as a coach, assistant coach or any other position within the recreational soccer community is what has made our programs successful and has allowed them to continue to grow and expand into more communities. In addition to teaching the technical skills that players need in order to play the game, volunteers play a vital role in the lives of the players by helping them develop a love of the game, build a strong sense of self-esteem, learn respect for authority, learn the value of teamwork, and the value of good sportsmanship. Through this positive environment, you teach your players lessons for life.

Risk Management has become a key issue in recent years in order to ensure the safety and well-being of our players at practices, games and events sponsored by our member associations and clubs. From our KidSafe program, which sprang from the need to do background checks to prevent participation by adults who have committed violent crimes or crimes that may bring an unnecessary risk to our children; to checking the complexes used for practices or games for holes or other hazards in or around the fields that could cause an injury, including the regular inspections of all goal posts to make sure they are securely anchored; it is incumbent on everyone to continually stress the need for safety and to promptly report any unsafe conditions or potential dangers you see at practice and game sites.

Coaching Education has been in the forefront of everyone's mind since enforcement of the coaching license requirements passed by the Member Associations 15 years ago began in earnest in fall of 2007. Coaches are earning their licenses at a faster rate than ever before. This is good for coaches, the game and, especially, the players.

The risk of injury is always present when playing any sport. Insurance coverage is provided for all participants and the State Office can provide assistance for parents having questions on the process for submitting a claim.

Competition is a high priority for players, parents and coaches. STYSA offers players an opportunity to play the game at every skill level, from recreational play to the highest elite level, in both fall and spring competitions. An overview of these competitions is included in this handbook to provide a basic understanding of each competition.

These are just a few of the topics and types of information covered in this book. We hope that you will read it, keep it handy as a reference and share the information included with the parents on your team. I invite you to visit the STYSA website, stxsoccer.org for more information.

Jesse Harrell
STYSA President

Who is “STYSA”?

STYSA, or South Texas Youth Soccer Association, is the organization that governs youth soccer in the southern half of Texas. Affiliated with the US Youth Soccer Association (USYS), the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), our organization offers players age four through 18 an opportunity to experience the game, develop their skills and learn sportsmanship.

US Youth Soccer is the largest member of the United States Soccer Federation and nationwide involves over 600,000 volunteers and administrators and 300,000 coaches (mostly volunteers) who serve more than three million youth players between the ages of four and 19. There are 55 state associations involved in the national program.

All kids have different needs. Social and physical development occurs at different stages — some want to play just to be with their friends, others have a goal of playing professionally. Whatever the reason, each child deserves a safe and healthy environment in which to play. South Texas Youth Soccer Association endorses the philosophy of our parent organization, the United States Youth Soccer Association, that soccer is “The Game for All Kids”.

To accomplish this goal, education programs have been developed and perfected over the years to provide coaches with the training techniques that will aid them in teaching the game and helping the players develop their skills. Competitions are sponsored at each level of play in an effort to afford players an opportunity to compete against their counterparts from around the state, the region and the nation. Educating both the youth participants and the adult sponsors in the fundamentals of soccer, teaching good sportsmanship, and promoting soccer through a variety of activities are the primary objectives of the South Texas Youth Soccer Association.

Founded in 1964 as a non-profit organization, the mission of the South Texas Youth Soccer Association is to promote, coordinate, administer and unify youth soccer through its affiliated organizations. The Governing Board is comprised of representatives from the 32 affiliated Member Associations from across South Texas and meets twice a year – February and July – at varying locations around the state to conduct the business of

the organization and to establish the rules within which the organization's member clubs, leagues and competitions will operate.

The Governing Board elects a seven-member Executive Committee who then oversees the application of the state rules and the management of the day-to-day operation of the state association. Executive Committee members are elected each February and serve two-year terms. Four members of the committee are elected one February with the other three elected the following February.

For the purposes of soccer, Texas is divided into two states – South Texas and North Texas. South Texas stretches from El Paso on the west across the state to Lufkin on the east and from centrally-located Temple all the way south to Brownsville. The geographic area is huge and, as a result, offers many obstacles for both administrators, coaches, parents and players. One of the largest problems faced is the need for travel – there's just no getting around it in a state as large as ours, someone has to travel! Every effort is made to move the competitions to various sites around the state to restrict an area from extensive travel year after year.

A State Office is maintained under the authority of the Governing Board to assist with the administrative aspect of the state program. Located in Manor (near Austin), the State Office has seven full-time staff and one State Director of Coaching.

This office serves as the distribution center for information and materials to the Member Associations and assists the Executive Committee, as well as other Committee Chairs, with the management of the various programs. Permission for teams/players to participate outside the boundaries of South Texas, international travel requests, insurance claims, management of the Olympic Development/StateTeam program, permission to host tournaments, Fall post-season competitions, Spring Cup competitions and the scheduling of coaching education courses are processed through the office. The State Office also maintains the official Player and Adult Registration Database, including the background check status on all registered adult volunteers, and serves as editor and publisher of the Administrative Handbook, the STYSA newsletter (the STYSA Shootout) and the Coaches' Handbook.

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Benefits of Being a Member of SYTSA

Participation

As a member of STYSA, teams and players can register to play at various levels of competition, from recreational to Premier. Players of the appropriate age who are identified as having the necessary skill level are invited to participate in the Olympic Development Program, while those of the appropriate age are encouraged to register for participation in the Developmental Program.

Coaching Education Program

Courses are designed to assist both the beginning coach with NO soccer knowledge, as well as the highly experienced coach. These courses teach coaches how to work with children of each age group and what techniques are appropriate for that particular age. The types of courses available include:

- U6/U8 and U10/U12 Youth Coaching Modules
- USSF State "E" Certification
- USSF State / National "D" Certification
- USSF National "C" Course
- USYS National Youth Course
- Goalkeeping Course

Educational Materials

Various coaching and administrative materials — including booklets, videos, DVDs, workbooks and other training materials — are available from the State Office. A Lending Library is available for those wishing to borrow tapes or books while other publications are available for purchase.

Governing Board Meeting

The STYSA semi-annual Governing Board Meetings in February and July offer coaching demonstrations, informative workshops on topics valuable to local organizations, district meetings to address issues regarding play and competitions, committee meetings to facilitate the workings of the committee, and an annual awards banquet to recognize outstanding volunteers, all in addition to the business meeting.

Risk Management Program

Background checks are conducted on every adult coach, assistant coach, trainer, manager, board member, referee, staff member and volunteer in an ongoing effort to provide our players with the safest possible environment. Adult Participation Passes are issued to every cleared individual and must be visibly displayed at all STYSA-sanctioned events (practices, games, tournaments, playoffs).

Website

A fully functional website, www.stxsoccer.org, provides up-to-date information on events that have happened and will happen, descriptions of the many programs offered, rules, policies, competitions, publications, forms and links to other soccer sites.

Administrative Support

A full-time State Office staff and a Director of Coaching are available to assist with and answer questions on the various services, activities and programs offered.

Tournaments/Event Sanctioning

As the governing body of youth soccer in South Texas, STYSA determines sanctioning requirements to ensure tournaments are conducted in a fair, high-quality manner. A complete listing of all sanctioned events is maintained on the website.

Player Insurance

STYSA provides its members with:

- General Liability Insurance
- Accident/Medical Insurance
- Directors and Officers Liability Insurance

US Youth Soccer and US Soccer Federation Affiliation

As a member of STYSA, you are a part of US Youth Soccer, the largest youth soccer organization in America with over three million players; the United States Soccer Federation; and FIFA, the international governing body of soccer for the world.

Volunteer Recognition

Each year STYSA recognizes outstanding volunteers who have gone above and beyond in their support of the programs and the players. In order to identify those worthy of recognition, it is important that coaches and parents assist us by submitting nominations of individuals who have performed at the highest level.

Coach of the Year

Two individuals are honored – one boys' coach and one girls' coach. The intent of this award is not to honor a winning record, but to recognize an individual who is a good role model for the young people he or she is working with. Do they stress good sportsmanship and fair play? Does the coach continue to learn more about the game so that they can provide more guidance to their players?

Youth Referee of the Year

Two individuals are honored – a female and a male. The nominees for these awards must be under 19 years of age, be certified, and have done a reasonable number of games. Many youth referees are players who love the game and want to help younger players develop a love for the sport. The basis of the award is to recognize their knowledge of the game, the manner in which they conduct themselves both with the players and the adults on the sideline, and what they bring to the game of soccer.

Volunteer of the Year

Volunteers are the backbone of an organization such as South Texas Youth Soccer Association. This award is designed for the individual

who volunteers their time and talents to make the program work. The only requirement is that they not be in a paid or salaried position and that they have been involved for a period of time having served in a variety of roles. Whether they serve as a registrar, committee member, field maintenance person or any number of other positions that are vital to the management of the soccer program, they play an important role in the success of the organization.

Hall of Fame

This honor is reserved for individuals who have served the youth organization for a minimum of 10 years in any capacity at the association or state level. There are currently 12 members of the STYSA Hall of Fame. Each of them has brought to the organization a level of volunteerism and support that has improved the quality of the program. Their outstanding contributions have benefited the youth, maybe not in a way that is visible to them, but the programs they have available are a result of their service.

These individuals are honored at an Awards Banquet held each February in conjunction with the Winter Governing Board Meeting. We need your assistance in identifying people to be considered for these awards. If you have an outstanding coach, volunteer or youth referee in your area, please write up a nomination and send it to the state. Whether or not they are the one chosen, the fact that their performance was noticed and appreciated will serve as a thank you for their dedication to the game. Nomination forms are available on the website at www.stxsoccer.org/Publications/Forms.

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 governing body for soccer around the world
www.fifa.com

CONCACAF
 Confederation of North, Central American
 and Caribbean Federations (CONCACAF)
 Region of world soccer in which U.S. participates
www.concacaf.com

USSF
 United States Soccer Federation (USSF)
 National governing body for soccer in the United States
www.usoccer.com

USYS
 United States Youth Soccer (USYS)
 Governing body of soccer for U.S. state organizations
www.usyouthsoccer.org

Region III
 One of four regions that make up US Youth Soccer
 South Texas is one of the 12 states in Region III
www.usysregion3.org

STYSA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

STYSA Governing Board
 South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA)
 Representatives of the 32 Member Associations
 serve as the Governing Board of STYSA
www.stxsoccer.org

STYSA Executive Committee
 7-Member Committee elected by the Governing Board
 to administer the programs offered by STYSA

STYSA State Office
 Administrative staff for STYSA



STYSA Code of Ethics

COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS

I coach because I want to help young people mature into well-adjusted, productive adults with strong character and because I want these young people to receive a proper exposure to the fun and exciting game of soccer. In short, I want them to enjoy soccer and sports and to grow up well.

My actions and personal manner will be a good example for young people to follow.

- I will treat all players, coaches, administrators, parents and referees with the respect and courtesy I desire for myself.
- Any dissatisfaction I want to express will be stated in a private forum and in a restrained and civil manner.
- I will respect and honor the beliefs and sensitivities of all players, coaches, parents, administrators and referees.

No matter how selected, I recognize that all players on my team have value, both as players and as a person.

- If I select players for a competitive or select team, I will do so recognizing that players are on the team to play, not to watch.
- If I am assigned players for a recreational team, I recognize that all signed up to play and have fun and, except for health or disciplinary reasons, I am committed to playing each player more than 50 percent of the game and in a manner that seems fair to all players and parents.
- As a coach it is not appropriate for me to teach the players that "life is not fair"; they will learn enough of that on their own. My job is to make the soccer part of their life as fair as possible, no matter what the level of competition.

I will be prepared for each game and practice.

- For practices I will have a practice plan that efficiently uses the time available and teaches the players important skills and strategies for the game of soccer.
- For games I will have a game plan that will utilize the talents of all m players to the utmost while insuring that each player feels needed and respected.

I will be an encourager, not a discourager.

I will follow all the Laws of the Game and will abide by all the administrative procedures of my club, local association, South Texas Youth Soccer Association, United States Youth Soccer and the United States Soccer Federation.

I will do my best to make soccer the fun game for all.

PARENT'S CODE OF ETHICS

A parent plays a special role in contributing to the needs and development of children. Through encouragement and good example, a parent can help assure that all the boys and girls learn good sportsmanship and self-discipline. In soccer, young people learn to work together, to sacrifice for the good of the team, to enjoy winning and deal appropriately with defeat – all while becoming physically fit and healthy. Best of all, they have fun!

I will support my child by:

- Giving encouragement and showing interest in their team.
- Helping my child work toward skill development and good sportsmanship.
- Teaching my child that hard work and an honest effort are often more important than victory – that way my child will always be a winner despite the outcome of the game.

I will always be positive with my child by:

- Working to be a positive role model.
- Applauding good plays by my child's team as well as good plays by the opposing team.
- Supporting all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports activities.

I will remember that my child wants to have fun and ...

- ... is the one playing soccer, not me.
- ... I will let my child establish their own goals – to play the game for themselves.
- ... I will take care not to impose my own standards and goals on them.
- ... I will remember that children play for the fun of playing.

I will reinforce positive behavior.

- Positive reinforcement is the best way to help a child achieve their goals and overcome their natural fear of failure.
- Nobody likes to make mistakes. If my child does make one, I will remember it's all a part of learning.
- Encourage your child's efforts and point out the good things they accomplished.

I won't be a sideline coach or referee.

I will realize that coaches and referees are usually parents just like me. They volunteer their time to help make my child's soccer experience a positive one. They need support, too. I will refrain from coaching or refereeing from the sidelines. As a member of a volunteer organization, there's always an opportunity for me to take an interest in coaching or refereeing to the next level and become one myself.

PLAYER'S CODE OF ETHICS

I will play soccer for the enjoyment of the game!

I will show respect to all involved in the game:

- Referees
- Coaches

- Parents and spectators
- And most of all to the players, both on my team and the opposing team, for without the other players, the game would not be played.

I will conduct myself with dignity and obey the Laws of the Game.

Governing Board Meetings

The Governing Board of the South Texas Youth Soccer Association is made up of representatives of the 32 Member Associations. Each Member Association designates delegates to attend each of the two yearly meetings – a Winter Governing Board Meeting (GBM), held in February, and a Summer GBM, held in July.

The weekend-long events are open to anyone wishing to attend. Only those persons designated by their Member Association as voting delegates are eligible to vote on any issues brought before the Governing Board; however, others are welcome to attend to better understand what and how decisions are reached. The meeting is presided over by the seven-member Executive Committee, who are elected by the Governing Board to manage the day-to-day operations of the state organization.

The GBM meetings are designed to be informative and provide attending delegates with access to a variety of workshops on topics of interest, as well as sessions that will benefit them in making informed decisions during the business meeting. Typically, there are workshops on proposed rule changes to be considered; registration and financial issues; introducing new programs; answering “how-to” questions; coaching techniques and demonstrations; referee certification; and more. All are designed to keep everyone informed and up-to-date with the latest tools and techniques to create a positive winning experience for players at every level. The workshops are free and we encourage everyone interested in youth soccer to attend and participate.

Exhibitors are invited to attend the Friday evening and Saturday portion of the event. Uniforms, equipment, fundraising, software, camps, hotels and awards are just a few of the types of exhibitors generally on hand. The company representatives are available to answer questions from league officials as to what assistance they can offer in properly equipping the league, teams, players and coaches.

The general schedule of events includes:
Friday evening – a social atmosphere is provided to allow attendees to

visit with old and new friends as well as visit the exhibitors. Delegate registration is held that evening to distribute information related to the meeting and name badges.

Saturday

A full schedule of hour-long workshops are offered throughout the day, including a free U6/U8 Youth Module and South Texas registered coach and referee certification workshops. Representatives of the two Districts generally meet with their District Vice President to resolve any issues and to plan for upcoming events. Exhibitors are available throughout the day in the Soccer Expo to meet with those attending.

Sunday

The business meeting. Delegates are provided with the agenda 10 days prior to the meeting so that they are familiar with the topics to be addressed. A Delegate Notebook is provided at registration and includes copies of all documents related to the agenda topics. Primary items addressed in these meetings include a financial report, the proposed budget for the following seasonal year (in February), proposed rule changes, and reports from the various committees and officers.

Delegates from each Member Association cast votes based on the number of registered players in their association. The highest-ranking elected officer in attendance from each association will either cast all votes for the association, or designate the individuals who will have voting authority. Any Member Association failing to attend or cast all votes to which it is entitled in two (2) consecutive meetings is considered to lose good standing and has their voting rights automatically suspended until such time as they are reinstated by the Governing Board.

Information about the Governing Board Meetings – including dates, locations and schedules of events – can be found on the STYSA website at stxsoccer.org.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest arise when one expects some consideration not specifically deserved and not generally available to others in an area of special interest. Special interest does not in and of itself indicate a conflict of interest. If one profits from the special interest situation, but in a way for others to also benefit, there may not be a conflict of interest. The conflict of interest occurs when one individual or a select group of individuals profits from the special interest situation in a way not deserved and not available to others, and possibly to the detriment to others.

Areas of special interest for volunteers in youth sports organizations such as the local soccer club include treatment and promotion of:

- the volunteer’s own child
- the volunteer’s team or the team on which the volunteer’s child plays
- the volunteer’s club

The volunteer should endeavor to avoid all reasonable appearance

of conflict. Such interests of potential conflict certainly include, but are not limited to:

- promotion of a single player at the expense of others;
- promotion of one team or club to the detriment of others, and not on the basis of fair play competition.

Possible inappropriate inducements include monetary or other valuable gifts, special treatment and other possible considerations. The volunteer coach has the opportunity to unfairly promote his or her own child. The administrator can put his or her child on a team in violation of club rules and regulations. The referee assignor can give the best referees to favored teams and the worst to teams he or she dislikes.

The motto “The Game for All Kids” should be helpful in sorting through potential conflicts of interest. This is not the game for coaches, for trainers, for promoters, for profit, etc.; it is “The Game for All Kids.”

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Levels of Play

STYSA offers both recreational and competitive levels of play. Recreational play is available in all age groups, Under-6 through Under-19. Players enter the competitive level of play at Under-11 and have three choices available to them – Division II (introductory level), Super II and Division I (highest level). Rule changes enacted at the July 2006 Governing Board Meeting will allow local clubs to offer new levels of play known as Recreational Plus and Academy in the Under-9 and Under-10 age groups. Complete information in levels of play can be found on the STYSA website at stxsoccer.org.

Division IV - Recreational - Under-6, Under-8 and Under-10

Children learn the basics of soccer through positive, fun training sessions that include short demonstrations and lots of participation. At the recreational level, the primary goal is for every player who wants to participate to have an opportunity to do so. Tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any process designed to identify players on the basis of talent or ability is prohibited. Every effort must be made to see that there is a fair and balanced distribution of playing talent among all participating teams.

In an effort to give these young players more touches on the ball and a better chance to develop their skills, small-sided games are played in the Under-10 and younger age groups. While Under-5 and Under-6 teams play three-a-side, Member Associations and their affiliated clubs are provided two options in the rules for the on-field format for their Under-7 through Under-10 age groups. For more information on the specifications of small-sided games, check the Small-Sided Games Format chart found in this publication.

Division IV recreational teams and players are allowed to receive skills training from a paid professional through a club-sponsored Skills Training Program. All other teams formed in Division IV are prohibited from receiving team training from a paid professional, except through Skills Training Programs or approved Academy Programs for Under-8, Under-9 and Under-10 players.

Division IV - Academy/Recreational Plus - Under-8 through Under-10

The Governing Board of STYSA passed several rule changes in July 2009 that allow local clubs to now offer Recreational Academy Programs that teach individual skills to Under-8, Under-9 and Under-10 players in a team-training format. Clubs interested in developing such programs are required to submit an application at the conclusion of the spring season for approval to operate a Recreational Academy in the following seasonal year. Applications must include an outline of the curriculum and the names/qualifications of staff who will oversee the program. Teams formed to participate through the Recreational Academy participate against other Academy teams in both league play and invitational tournaments.

Division III - Recreational - Under-11 through Under-19

Designed for players who enjoy the sport for the social aspect, as well as developing their skills, recreational teams in these age groups are formed through assignment. Tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any process of identifying players on the basis of talent or ability is also prohibited at this level. League administrators are responsible for identifying a system that will allow for the distribution of players in a manner that will result in fair and balanced teams, with everyone interested in playing being assigned to a team. Coaches are responsible for making every effort to assure that each player participates 50 percent of the time. Effective September 2009, U11 and U12 teams will play small-sided 8v8. U12 teams who played 11-a-side as U11s have the option of continuing to play 11v11; however, there will be no post-season play for U12 11v11 teams. Post-season play will be offered for 8v8 teams in both U11 and U12.

Division II - Competitive - Under-11 through Under-19

This introductory level of competitive play is designed for those who enjoy the social aspect of the game and want to continue to develop their skills through better competition. Tryouts may be held and players may be selected based on their skill level. Division II teams are generally formed from players within a single club; however, clubs that field three or fewer recreational teams in an age group may combine their player pools with those of another club in order to have a larger pool from which to select. Effective September 2009, U11 and U12 teams will play small-sided 8v8. U12 teams who played 11-a-side as U11s have the option of continuing to play 11v11; however, there will be no post-season play for U12 11v11 teams. Post-season play will be offered for 8v8 teams in both U11 and U12. Coaches are responsible for assuring that every effort is made to afford each player at least 50-percent playing time.

Super II - Competitive - Under-11 through Under-19

A higher level of commitment is required from those wishing to participate on Super II teams. Selection of players based on talent and ability is permitted, and generally includes a pool of players from a broader spectrum. Teams participating in each District's Super II league are required to either pre-qualify for the following year based on their performance, or to qualify through a Qualification Tournament during the summer. Teams are scheduled to play other Super II teams from their District, which requires more extensive travel on a weekly basis. Effective September 2009, U11 and U12 teams will play small-sided 8v8. U12 teams who played 11-a-side as U11s have the option of continuing to play 11v11; however, there will be no post-season play for U12 11v11 teams. Post-season play will be offered for 8v8 teams in both U11 and U12. Coaches are responsible for assuring that every effort is made to afford each player at least 50-percent playing time.

Division I - Competitive - Under-11 through Under-19

Recognized as the highest level of play within the state, players may be selected from across the state based on their ability, skill and commitment to the sport. Tryouts and invitations based on demonstrated performance are the general rule of thumb. Teams playing at the Division-I level must qualify in order to play through either of the District Division-I Associations. Effective September 2009, U11 and U12 teams will play small-sided 8v8. U12 teams who played 11-a-side as U11s have the option of continuing to play 11v11; however, there will be no post-season play for U12 11v11 teams. Post-season play will be offered for 8v8 teams in both U11 and U12. Small-sided teams, as well as full-sided teams, will be eligible for post-season play in their respective formats. Roster limits remain at seven minimum and 18 maximum for teams playing 11-a-side; however, Under-16 and older teams are allowed to carry a maximum roster of 22 players. Teams playing eight-a-side must have at least six but no more than 12 on the roster at any given time. There is no play-time requirement at this level of play.

Region III Premier League

The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League provides an opportunity for the most competitive teams in Region III to play each other on a scheduled basis. The league is comprised of boys' and girls' teams in the Under-14 through Under-18 age groups, with each participating state association determining the criteria for identifying the teams to be included in the Premier League. Typically, the prior year's Premier League Champion in an age group, the State Cup Champion, or the Champion of an in-state league are potential candidates. Each State Association is invited to identify at least two teams per age group and gender to take part in Premier League Play, with games scheduled in the fall or spring, depending on the local custom in that sub-region or state. The sole intent is to furnish the top teams in the region an opportunity to play a highly competitive schedule for as little cost as possible.



adidas.com/soccer

Is My 10-Year-Old Ready To Be A Doctor?

BY NEAL ELLIS

When we see kids grow up in the game of soccer, we see a realm of coaches and parents from different backgrounds — doctors, lawyers, police officers and teachers, to name a few.

All of you had to learn the basics before you chose your profession. You learned to read, write, solve math problems and other subjects that prepared you for college. When the time was right and your skills were developed, it was time to choose a path.

The game of soccer is no different. There is a process by which to teach the kids in order for them to develop, so that with time, they can choose the path they want to take. The high expectations from parents, coaches and clubs pushes the development of the kids and puts winning above all else. The more they win, the better the chances are that your kid will get a scholarship. For the club, the more they win, the more they can sell their club to other prospects. Meanwhile, the kids are missing important pieces that will help them in the future. So when do we start, where do we start and what do we teach?

Have you ever been out to watch a game of U6s? All you can see is a pile of dust flying and a group of kids chasing the ball everywhere on the field. Parents and coaches screaming on the sidelines, "Pass the ball! Shoot the ball! Dribble, dribble! You are going the wrong way!" You come to notice quickly that the kids do not care about what everyone is yelling — all they care about is getting a hold of that toy and keeping it. Even kicking it in the goal feels dumb to them, since that means that they have to get rid of the toy and now they have to chase it down again.

You almost wonder why you even bother separating them into teams — just throw a ball out there and let them play. They are going to end up scoring on their own goal anyway.

Let's also not forget about the group of kids that are more interested in chasing bugs or talking to other kids on the field than playing the game; they do not care about the ball. They will run next to a friend and talk their ear off, and if someone is not paying attention to them, they move on to the next friend; maybe they will have luck with them. So, when it is all said and done, the game has no resemblance to the game of soccer, other than the ball.

Look at it from a different perspective. Imagine your kids in a pre-

kindergarten class where there is only one crayon and one piece of paper to draw with. What do you think the kids that do not have the crayon or the paper would do? On top of that, add the teacher and parents yelling, "Share the crayon! Pass the paper! Stop fighting over it!" How do you think that would end up? Do you think the kids would share the crayon? I am sure you will have some crying, some that do not care about the crayon and the one that dominates the situation. So why should teaching soccer be any different than the classroom?

As they become older — eight, nine and 10 — the screams on the sidelines do not change, they only get more complicated. You start hearing words like, "Cross it! You are a defender — why are you running up the field? Forwards, you have to stay high, stay in your position!" The kids become so afraid to do anything that they look for the coaches and parents to see what they should do next. At these ages, the impact that the coach has on the kids starts to directly affect their learning. So what are we teaching them with all of those big words from the sidelines? Is that the way the kids will learn to play the game?

Staying with the classroom comparison, just imagine if your teacher starts yelling at his/her second-graders, "You are a doctor, what are you doing playing with colored pencils? Stop reading, you only need to focus on math; you are an engineer!" The positions in soccer are like professions; you have to learn the basics before you become a midfielder, forward or defender.

How would our kids learn if we did not teach what is appropriate? Could we skip teaching the alphabet and go straight in to reading Shakespeare, or teach calculus before two plus two? The game of soccer is no different — dribbling comes before passing and passing comes before shooting. The understanding of how to play the game comes before learning the positions.

Understanding age-appropriate development should be one of the most important factors of coaching. Coaches should have a lesson plan that is age-appropriate, dynamic and fun, to keep the kids engaged during the training session. Everyone should have a ball to play with in order to maximize their learning by repetition.

Then, during the game on Saturday, sit back, relax and cheer them on. With a good environment, the kids will learn to play the game and to enjoy it. And when you are thinking of positions, think of doctors, lawyers, teachers and all the other professions out there, and ask yourself — is my 10-year-old ready to be a doctor?

Publications

Brochures / Books

The State Office maintains an inventory of brochures, books, videos and DVDs. Many of the information brochures provided by US Youth Soccer are free and available in whatever quantity needed for distribution to team or club members. Additional publications are available for purchase. These include both published books and videos or DVDs that provide valuable instruction on coaching techniques for the younger-age-group players. A listing of the materials available can be found on the STYSA website at [www.stxsoccer.org/Publications/Forms/ Publications Order Form](http://www.stxsoccer.org/Publications/Forms/Publications%20Order%20Form).

Lending Library

STYSA also maintains a Lending Library. Both books and videos are available

for rent. The process is simple — the lender chooses up to two books or videos they are interested in borrowing and then places a check on deposit with the State Office. This check is held until the materials are returned. If the materials are not returned, the check will be deposited in order to purchase replacement books or videos. The deposit is \$25 per book or \$50 per video. Books are due back in 10 days while videos must be returned within one week.

Use of the lending library does not require you to visit the State Office — you can order materials by mail. Send a check for the appropriate amount payable to STYSA, along with the name and number of the items you wish to borrow. Please make clear in your request that you are asking for items from the Lending Library. The materials will be shipped to you via UPS and you may return them in the same manner.

Coaches, Are You Prepared This Season?

An athlete complains of feeling nauseous. This could be a sign of a heat-related illness or a possible head injury as nausea is not a normal reaction to exercise. What should you do? Would you know how to respond?

The child should be removed from play and carefully monitored.

We want to help ensure that you know how to recognize and respond to various situations like this that you may face on the playing field. To this end, we have partnered with the National Center for Sports Safety (NCSS)

to offer you the PREPARE online sports safety education course. PREPARE, at a low cost of \$28, educates you on how to prevent common injuries, recognize symptoms of potentially dangerous conditions and respond in emergency situations.

Go to www.SportsSafety.org to get PREPARED. Become sports-safety educated and join in our commitment to make South Texas Youth Soccer the best around!

Coaching Education

The purpose of the STYSA Coaching Education Program is to educate youth coaches on how to teach the game to players. The ultimate goal is to provide coaches with the tools to unlock the game within each child in order that the player can reach his or her full soccer potential. Courses are intended to provide information that will improve the general knowledge of the game, as well as to demonstrate the proper coaching and teaching methods that contribute to the development of youth soccer players. STYSA offers several levels of training, and all courses can be taught in Spanish.

Member Associations are encouraged to host coaching courses locally so that their volunteers will be able to take advantage of the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the sport and the ever-changing teaching methods. If interested in hosting a course in your area, please check with your local organization. Information on the requirements for hosting courses and the procedure for filing an Application to Host can be found on the STYSA website under Coaching Education.

All instructors of STYSA Coaching Education Courses are licensed through the United States Soccer Federation, hold a National Youth License and have experience working with young soccer players. Levels of training available include:

Youth Modules

Offered for the U6/U8 and U10/U12 age groups, these courses provide the most current and advanced information on growth and development of the youth player. The modules will provide coaches with developmentally appropriate activities for children and the use of games as a vehicle to learning. Minimum age for attendance is 14 and each module includes both classroom and field instruction. These are participatory courses and each coach who completes a module will receive a certificate license. Cost per participant for the U6/U8 Module is \$30 and the cost for the U10/U12 Module is \$40.

“E” License

This 18-hour course combines field and classroom instruction in intermediate coaching and teaching methodology. Minimum age for participation is 16. If coaching U12 or younger, the coach must have attended a Youth Module within the previous 6 months. This requirement does not apply to coaches of U13 and older teams. The “E” License targets players ages 9-12 and there is no pre-requisite course necessary for coaches to attend. Cost per participant is \$85.

“D” License

This 36 hour course is the most comprehensive course offered and is preparatory for national licensing. The course requires final testing and those who pass the course are awarded either a National or State license based on their scoring. Participants must provide a copy of their “E” license when signing up for the course or have an approved waiver allowing them entry into the program at this level. Minimum age for participation is 18. Cost per participant is \$135.

Intro to Goalkeeping

The basic techniques of how to teach youth goalkeepers is the primary objective of this four-hour course. Cost per participant is \$30.

WAIVERS

The Youth Modules are age-specific and speak directly to the needs of these players, so it is essential that coaches attend the Youth Module for the age group they will be coaching. Waivers are not granted to individuals coaching U12 and younger players.

Coaches of U13 and older teams may request that the “E” course prerequisites be waived in order to attend the “D” level course. A waiver request form must be in the State Office at least two weeks prior to the start of the course in order to allow sufficient time for review and careful consideration by the STYSA Director of Coaching. Each waiver request is reviewed to determine whether the candidate has sufficient playing and coaching experience and knowledge of soccer to prepare them for the level of coaching course they are requesting to enter. Coaches that are granted a waiver from the “E” License course are advised that the waiver does not award them the “E” License. The waiver from the “E” License course simply permits them to attend the “D” License course without taking the “E” course.

COACHING EDUCATION OVERVIEW

SOUTH TEXAS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION			
Age Group	USYS / US Soccer Course	NCAA Course	Length
Ages 5-8	U-6 / U-8 Module		5 Hours
Ages 5-10		State Certificate	5 Hours
Ages 5-12	National Youth License		5 Days
Ages 5-12		Youth National Diploma	5 Days
Ages 9-12	U-10 / U-12 Module		6 Hours
Ages 9-12	E License		18 Hours
Ages 11-18		Regional Diploma	13 Hours
Ages 11-18		Adv. Regional Diploma	21 Hours
Ages 13 & Up	D License*		36 Hours
Ages 13 & Up	C License*		8 Days
Ages 13 & Up		National Diploma*	50 Hours
Ages 16 & Up	B License		8 Days
Ages 16 & Up		Adv. National Diploma	50 Hours
Ages 16 & Up	A License		8 Days
Ages 16 & Up		Premier Diploma	50 Hours

*Coaches working with recreational players ages 13 & up may take the U-10 / U-12 Module, E License, D License, Regional Diploma, or Adv. Regional Diploma courses to satisfy the STYSA Coaching Education requirement.

Accident Insurance

Did you know that national statistics indicate that up to 25 percent of all children aren't covered by health insurance? Years ago STYSA recognized the need to provide today's soccer players and leagues with the protection of a comprehensive program of insurance coverage.

Coverage is provided to registered players as a part of their registration fee. This policy provides coverage for players, coaches, trainers and other officials during sanctioned events, including regularly scheduled practices and games, as well as while traveling uninterrupted to and from sanctioned practices or games. For players or members who have their own family health insurance, this is a secondary policy. For players or members who do not have health insurance, this is considered a primary insurance. The deductible for this insurance is \$1,000 and it will cover up to \$100,000 per accident for any reasonable and customary charges.

In the event of an injury, the appropriate claim form must be completed by the parent, authorized by the Insurance Commissioner of the Member Association and then forwarded to the State Office for processing through the insurance company. Missing a step in the process, or forwarding claims directly to the Insurance Company, will result in delays as all the appropriate signatures must be in place in order for the insurance company to process the claim. There are several things to remember when filing a claim:

- Claims must be filed within 90 days of the date of the injury.
- Insurance claim forms are available in both English and Spanish on the STYSA website at stxsoccer.org/Publications/Forms.
- Parents must complete the form, attach any bills or statements related to the injury and forward it to their Member Association Insurance Commissioner (see listing available on the website).
- Itemized bills or statements are not required at the time the claim is formed; however, the claim will not be processed until these are received.
- Do not wait until all bills are received to submit the claim. Additional bills can be forwarded directly to the State Office for submission to the insurance carrier. When sending additional bills, please be sure to include the name of the injured player and date of the injury to aid in matching the bills with the appropriate claim.
- Incomplete forms will delay processing. Check the claim form for accuracy before sending, and if you are unsure about some bit of information, make a phone call to your Insurance Commissioner or the State Office before submitting.

Member Association Insurance Commissioners will verify that the player was properly registered and participating in a sanctioned event prior to signing the claim form. The claim and all related bills/statements will then be forwarded to the State Office. Upon verification that all signatures are in place, the State Office will authorize the submission of the claim and forward it to the Insurance Company. If additional information is required, the Insurance Company will contact the parent or claimant directly.

For all the latest on South Texas Youth Soccer, visit stxsoccer.org

Ice or Heat?

When to apply ice to an injury, versus when to apply heat, can be confusing. Since the application of heat in the early stages of an injury can actually cause more swelling, it is important to know when to apply heat or ice to help recover:

ICE

- Causes blood vessels to constrict, reducing swelling and pain in an acute injury and speeding up the healing process.
- Reduces the sensation of pain.
- Reduces muscle spasm.
- Application of ice directly to the skin can be uncomfortable at first.
- After about seven minutes, the area becomes numb and pain is reduced.
- Apply directly to the skin or over a wet towel if too cold.
- Elevate the injured body part over the heart.
- Leave ice in place for 20 minutes.
- Repeat application every one-and-a-half to two hours for the first couple of days following the injury, or as long as swelling, redness or heat/warmth are present around the injured area.
- Do not use ice for people with sensitive skin or those with known skin allergies.
- When using a frozen gel pack, place over a wet elastic wrap or wet towel.
- Never apply a frozen gel pack directly to the skin, as it can cause damage to the skin due to the extremely low temperature of the pack.

HEAT

- Causes blood vessels to enlarge, increasing swelling in an acute injury thus increasing pain and lengthening the healing process.
- Reduces muscle spasm.
- Can be used on chronic injuries when there is no swelling present.
- Heat should be left in place for only 15-20 minutes.
- Apply heat to the injured area using a heating pad with a cover or liquid heating pad with a cover.
- May aid the healing process of chronic injuries by increasing the amount of blood to the area.
- Best treatment for injuries without swelling, redness, warmth, or acute pain.
- Can be used as long as a few days to several weeks after injury, depending on the injury severity.

For additional information on sport safety visit the National Center for Sport Safety at sportssafety.org

The Coach's First Aid Kit

Every coach should be prepared to handle emergency situations during practice or at games. It is essential that coaches have at least one fully stocked first-aid kit on hand whenever athletes are playing. The National Center for Sports Safety has compiled a list of items that should be included in every coach's first aid kit:

- Non-powdered Barrier Gloves
- Resuscitation mask/face shield
- Instant Ice Cold Pack
- Elastic Fabric Flexible Bandages — standard size
- Strip Bandages (Band-Aids)
- Triangular Bandage for sling
- 2" x 2" Sterile Gauze Pads
- 2" King Roller Gauze
- 3" x 3" Sterile Gauze Pads
- Telfa Non Stick Pads
- Large Patch Bandage
- Eye Patch Kit (Eye Patch and Clear Tape)
- Adhesive Tape
- Alcohol Swabs
- Disinfectant Pads
- Iodine-Povidone Prep. Pads
- Insect Sting Swabs
- Antiseptic Pads
- Hydrocortisone Cream
- Q-tip Swabs
- Sun Block (SPF 30)
- Insect Repellent
- Splint
- Tape Cutter
- Scissors

Author: NCSS Information Team

Risk Management

Kidsafe

South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) has adopted the US Youth Soccer KidSafe program as the foundation for STYSA's Risk Management Program. It is our intent to make every reasonable effort to deny from participation any person who has been convicted of a crime of violence or a crime against another's person that would bring unnecessary risk to the health or safety of program participants. In accordance with STYSA Rule 3.12.1, each coach, assistant coach, manager, trainer, volunteer administrator, board member and staff/employee over the age of 17 must have a background check performed prior to each new seasonal year.

Approved individuals must have the Adult Participant Pass visible at all times, whether at practice or games. It is the responsibility of the Member Associations and their Clubs to confirm that all adult volunteers working with players at practice or on the sideline of games have a current background check on file and have been issued an Adult Participant Pass. All adult volunteers will be required to show their Adult Participant Pass in order to secure a Bench Pass for use at a state-sponsored post-season event.

See [stxsoccer.org](#) for full details on the KidSafe Program.

Other Risk Management Issues

There are many other aspects to Risk Management than just background checks. In most cases, it's a matter of using common sense and preventing situations that give another the perception of inappropriate behavior or could place a child at risk. For example:

- Physical contact should be limited to what is necessary and appropriate to teach a skill.
- A volunteer (other than parent or guardian) alone with a player in a one-to-one situation could be misconstrued. Therefore, it is important that an adult volunteer not place themselves in such a situation.
- There is a time and place for expressive actions such as pats on the back or any other form of touching. Volunteers must act in a defensive mode so that there is no perception of impropriety.
- Don't print children's names on their jerseys or bags. This provides an open invitation to a person attempting to lure a child away.

Goal Post Safety

Each year children die from falling soccer goal posts. There are an estimated 500,000 goal posts in the United States. Many of these are unsafe because they are unstable or not properly anchored to the ground. Although every effort should be made to prevent children (or adults) from hanging or climbing on goal posts, volunteers can't be everywhere – and kids will be kids! They don't realize the risk at which they are putting themselves while just doing what comes naturally. Even the most agile child can't get out of the way of a falling goal that may weigh several hundred pounds. Deaths are not limited to children – there have been adults injured and killed because they were doing chin-ups on a goal. Not properly anchored into the ground, the goal post fell suddenly, striking them on the head.

Don't let tragedy strike your community. Be sure that each and every goal post is properly anchored. If using portable goals, anchor them during play and then move them to a secure location to prevent injuries while no one is at the site. Deaths and soccer injuries do not always occur while officials are on or near the fields; as a matter of fact, the majority of the incidents known about occurred when the goals were unattended. There have been injuries that have occurred while a volunteer was tightening the

There are many other aspects to Risk Management than just background checks. In most cases, it's a matter of using common sense and preventing situations that give another the perception of inappropriate behavior or behavior that could place a child at risk.

net, while a child was just playing in the general area, and even when a sudden wind gust shifted the goal.

Remember to secure the goal posts to the ground, preferably at the rear of the goal, and make sure the anchors are flush with the ground. There are several different ways to secure the goal posts. The number and type of anchors needed depend on many factors – soil type, moisture content, and the weight of the goal.

- Securely anchor or counterweight movable soccer goals at ALL times.
- Anchor or chain goals to one another or to a sturdy fixture, such as a fence or building, when not in use.
- Remove nets when goals are not in use.
- Check for structural integrity and proper connecting hardware before every use. Replace damaged or missing parts immediately.
- NEVER allow anyone to climb on the net or goal framework.
- Ensure safety/warning labels are clearly visible (under the crossbar and on the sides of the posts at eye level)
- Fully disassemble goals for seasonal storage if possible.
- Exercise extreme caution when moving goals, allowing adequate manpower to move the goals based on size and weight.
- Do not allow youngsters or other people in the area when goals are being moved.
- Instruct players on the safe handling of and potential dangers associated with movable goals.

Other Safety Issues

The risk of an injury in any sport is always present. Parents know this when they sign their child up to play sports, but they expect and should receive a safe playing environment in which to play. While some leagues play on fields maintained by city or county crews, other fields receive little or inconsistent maintenance. League officials must take the time necessary to check the fields to be used by their teams. Look for depressions, holes, sprinkler heads or miscellaneous debris that may cause a child to trip or fall. While routine inspections should be done by officials, coaches should also be diligent in identifying things that could be dangerous to their players.

Even though every effort is made to keep the environment safe, an injury will still occur. In those cases, it is important that the child receive the best possible attention available. All coaches should have a first aid kit in their possession and basic knowledge of first aid. Coaches attending the education courses offered by STYSA are given basic instructions in first aid, which can be of valuable assistance to coaches.

Invitational Tournaments

There are a wealth of invitational tournaments offered throughout the year within South Texas Youth Soccer Association, as well as in all the other states that make up US Youth Soccer. An "invitational tournament" is an event sponsored by a local entity who invites teams to come and participate. Teams submit their application and fee to the hosting organization.

All such tournaments must be approved by the state association in

which it is being held in order for it to be considered a sanctioned event. More information on the procedures for hosting an event can be found either on the STYSA website at www.stxsoccer.org/Publications/Forms or under "Hosting Instructions" in this handbook.

Teams wishing to travel to tournaments outside the boundaries of South Texas are welcome to do so. Instructions for travel both within the United States and internationally can be found on the STYSA website.

Hosting A Tournament or Games

All tournaments, friendly games and exhibition games involving teams from multiple associations or teams from outside the boundaries of South Texas require permission to host. An Application to Host must be filed in a timely manner and meet all the requirements for the age groups and competition levels to be included.

TOURNAMENT is an event involving several teams, charging an entry fee and maintaining scores/standings for awards presentations. Whether playing small-sided or full-sided games, the event must be properly approved in order to be considered a sanctioned event.

FRIENDLY GAMES are considered practice or scrimmage games played between teams from two or more Member Associations or teams from different state associations. These may also include either small-sided or full-sided games. While a reasonable fee may be charged to offset expenses such as field rental or referee expenses, the objective of friendly games is not to make a profit or identify a winner.

EXHIBITION GAMES are most often events sponsored by a local organization for the purpose of showcasing a visiting team from another state or country.

When completing an application, the hosting organization must designate whether the event will be RESTRICTED or UNRESTRICTED. All events involving foreign teams must be Unrestricted.

RESTRICTED – Only teams from US Youth Soccer affiliates, which include the 55 state associations, will be invited to participate in the tournament. Application fee is \$100.

UNRESTRICTED – Teams from affiliates of the United States Soccer Federation will be invited to participate in the tournament. In addition to US Youth Soccer's 55 state associations, teams from US Club Soccer, American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) and Soccer Association for Youth (SAY) will be eligible to participate. Application fee is \$350.

Once an organization has determined the structure of the event they wish to host, they must complete two primary documents — **Application to Host** and **Hosting Agreement**. One or both forms must be signed by the President of the Member Association through which the hosting club participates. These forms, along with a copy of the Rules of the Competition and the appropriate application fee, must be submitted to the State Office, preferably at least 90 days prior to the event. No fee is assessed for friendly games or exhibition games. Invitations should not be issued to teams until the appropriate permission to host has been obtained.

If teams from outside the United States (including Mexico) are to be invited to participate in the event, additional paperwork and fees are involved. Permission to host teams from outside the US must be given by the United

States Soccer Federation and requires different forms, additional processing time and a fee to the national organization. Requests should be submitted at least 90 days prior to the event. Applications filed with a shorter lead time are possible, but not recommended. Rules of the Competition must be reviewed by FIFA and often changes are required in order to meet international requirements.

Upon receipt of an Application to Host by the State Office, the forms will be reviewed and, if all is in order, approved. A copy will be returned to the person designated as the Tournament Director and to US Youth Soccer for posting on the national tournament listing. Incomplete applications will be returned. All STYSA approved tournaments are posted on our website at stxsoccer.org. Included in the approval packet will be a Post Tournament Report that must be completed and returned within 30 days of completion of the tournament.

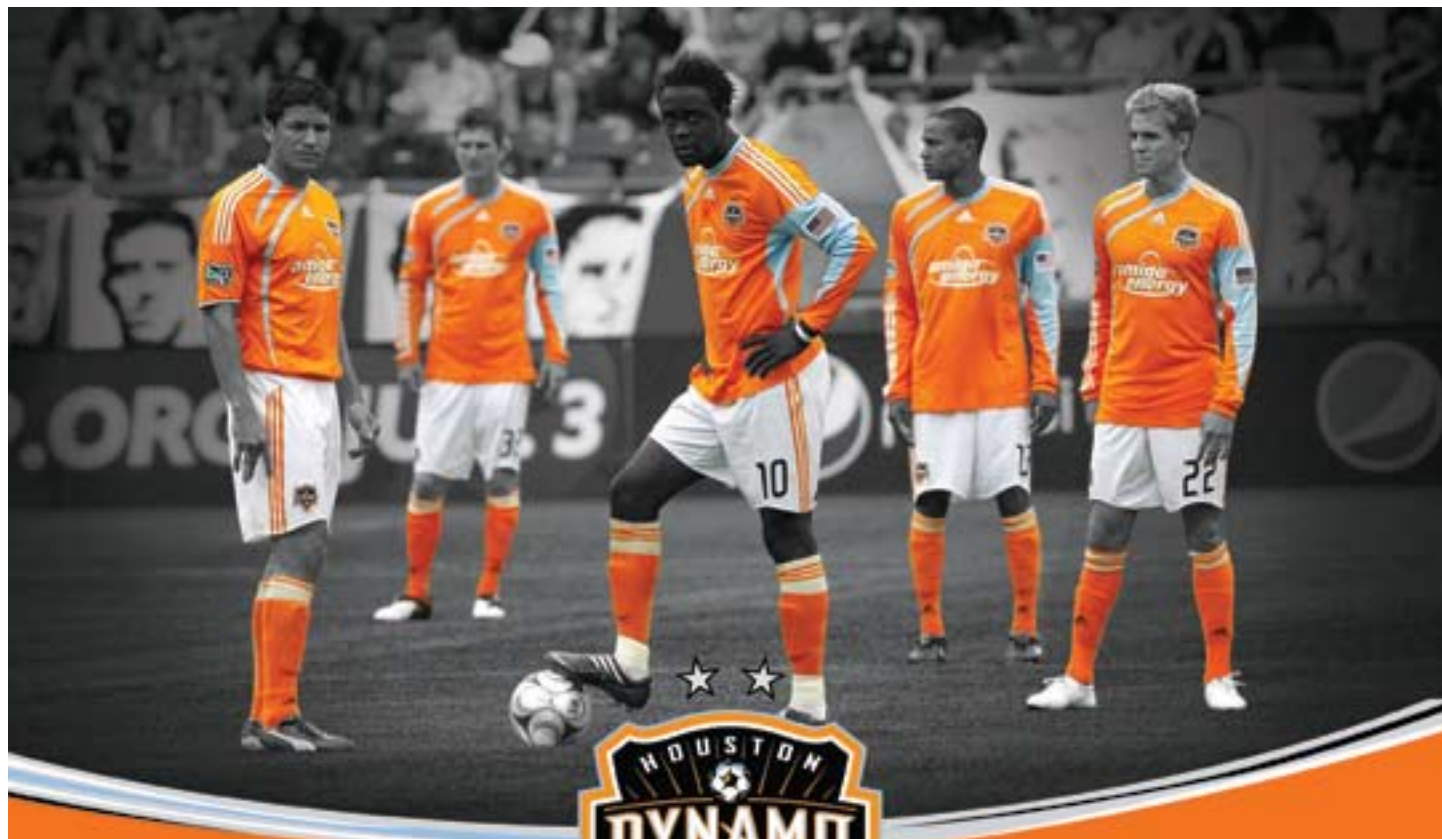
The STYSA Governing Board has adopted a policy prohibiting awards in Under-6 and Under-8. Participation awards may be given, but no scores or results may be kept for these age groups. Applications to Host are only approved for youth age groups Under-6 through Under-19. If adult age groups are to be included, appropriate permission must be obtained from the adult program, Texas State Soccer Association South.

STYSA maintains a friendly game agreement with surrounding states – North Texas, Louisiana and New Mexico – that allows teams to play friendly games back and forth. While a formal application is not required for these games, it is important that someone in your organization or the state be aware that an event is scheduled.

An "invitational" tournament is an event sponsored by a local entity and open to teams wishing to participate. Teams submit their application and fee to the hosting organization and comply with the rules of the competition. There are a wealth of invitational tournaments offered throughout the year within South Texas Youth Soccer Association as well as in other states within US Youth Soccer. South Texas maintains a listing of all approved tournaments on the STYSA website at stxsoccer.org. A listing of events being hosted in other state associations can be found on the US Youth Soccer website at usyouthsoccer.org.

When entering a tournament, coaches should pay attention to whether or not the event is sanctioned through South Texas and/or US Youth Soccer. As a member of US Youth Soccer, participation in all events approved by affiliated organizations is considered a sanctioned event as long as the team is in compliance with STYSA rules/procedures and, therefore, the players/coaches insurance coverage is in effect. If participating in an event not sanctioned through South Texas or US Youth Soccer, coverage is not in effect.

Forms for hosting a tournament and for hosting foreign teams can be found on the STYSA website at stxsoccer.org under Publications/Forms. A listing of all approved events can be found under "Tournaments."



SCORE BIG WITH THESE GAMES!

Discounted tickets for groups of 10 or more!

OPPONENT	DAY	DATE	TIME	GIVEAWAY/SPONSOR
SEATTLE SOUNDERS	SUN.	AUG. 23	7:30 PM	Soccer Ball / Juggling Contest! StatoilHydro
REAL SALT LAKE	SAT.	SEPT. 19	7:30 PM	Dynamo Hat Bud Light
KANSAS CITY WIZARDS	SUN.	OCT. 4	2:00 PM	2009 Scarf The Methodist Hospital System
LA GALAXY	SUN.	OCT. 18	2:00 PM	Replica Style Jersey Amigo Energy

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Assuring Player Eligibility

Although many of these issues will be dealt with by the registrar, it is important for coaches to understand the eligibility requirements for players. Additional restrictions may be put in place by the Member Association or local club. Failure to comply with club, association, state or national rules regarding these issues can result in a team being disqualified, as well as possible suspension for the coach or player involved.

Verification of Age

All players are required to provide proof of age when registering to play. While there are several documents that can be used to fulfill this requirement, the preferred document, and THE one generally provided, is a birth certificate. Registrars will document that they have visually seen the birth certificate to confirm a match of the date on both the certificate and registration form. Some registrars retain a copy of the certificate on file; others only note they have verified the date.

Playing Up

Players are placed on a team in the youngest age group for which they are eligible to play, based on their date of birth. Whether a player is allowed to play up into an older age group is determined by the local association or club. The only restriction that applies to "playing up" is the limit placed on the number of Under-10 and younger players allowed to play on Under-11 or older teams. State rules limit the number of Under-10 or younger players on Under-11 and older teams to a maximum of three (3) if playing 8v8 and four (4) if playing 11v11. Member Associations and local clubs may be more restrictive on this requirement, meaning they may allow fewer, or even zero, play-ups. They may not, however, allow more than the state rule allows.

Playing Down

No player may play in a younger age group than the age group for which they are eligible, based on their date of birth, except as provided for in the rules. In Under-10 and younger or Under-11 or older recreational age groups, a player who has a medical condition (substantiated in writing by a licensed physician) that will prohibit or severely hinder the player from playing in his own age group may seek special permission from their club, association and the state to play down. All requests must be submitted in writing, must include written documentation from the licensed physician, and must be approved by an official of the club, the association and the STYSA Executive Committee before the player is eligible to play down. With an older player on the



team, the team is eligible to play locally but not in tournaments or post-season competitions.

Interstate Permission

Players residing outside the boundaries of South Texas must obtain special permission in order to register or play with any South Texas-affiliated Member Association or team. If the player resides within the United States, this permission is obtained by completing an Interstate Permission Request. South Texas is bordered by three states – North Texas, Louisiana and New Mexico. Although a player may reside in Texas (perhaps as close as Waco), they are still considered out-of-state players if they are outside the boundaries of South Texas.

The Interstate Permission Request form (available on the STYSA website under Publications/Forms) is used by many state associations, especially those in Region III, and is used for several purposes: 1) interstate permission – player resides in one state but wishes to play in another state during league play; 2) relocation release – player has moved out of the area and wishes to register with another state association; or 3) guest play – a player from one state association wishes to guest play with a team from another state association.

The parent completes and signs the form, indicating the category for which they are seeking permission. If this is a guest player request, information regarding the team and tournament must also be included. Coach's signature is not required. Once signed, the form should be forwarded to the State Office of the state within which the player resides. After verifying registration, a state official will sign the form and forward it to the other state association, which will sign as the accepting state association. If a player is seeking interstate permission to play in a state other than the one in which they reside, a new request must be filed at the beginning of each seasonal year.

International Clearance

As a border state, South Texas has associations with players who live outside the United States wishing to participate in their leagues. While the process is slightly different for non-United States residents, it's important that these players comply with state and national rules. A player is not eligible to register or participate until permission has been granted by the appropriate authority.

For players who are 11 and younger and reside in Mexico, a written request to the State Office is required. The parent should submit to the State Office a written statement asking that their child be allowed to register and play in South Texas, along with a copy of the birth certificate.

Players who are age 12 through 16 must complete an International Clearance Waiver form. This form requires the player and parent confirm the player has not received payment for playing or signed any type of professional contract. This request must be forwarded to the State Office and can be approved by the State Registrar.

Players who are age 17 and older must complete an International Clearance Request. Permission for players of this age can only be granted by U.S. Soccer. The form must be submitted to the State Office for signature and forwarding to U.S. Soccer for processing. U.S. Soccer will contact the players' country of residence to obtain a release and issue an International Certificate that permits the player to register with a United States organization. If the player returns to their home country and wishes to play there, they will have to follow the same procedure there in order to obtain a release from the U.S. and be allowed to register in their country. This process also applies to foreign exchange students.

Roster/ID Cards

The Member Association Registrar or their designee (a club registrar) is responsible for providing the coach with a team roster and ID Cards for all players and coaches. These ID Cards serve as proof of registration. While the coach or manager of the team may retain possession of the cards for safekeeping, the card actually belongs to the player. Should the player wish to guest play with another team from South Texas or another state, they will need to get the ID Card from the coach. All ID Cards must have a recent photo of the person identified on the card and must be laminated. A signed roster and ID Card will be required for any team participating in a tournament or advancing to any post-season play. Adults (coaches, assistants, trainers, managers and others) will be issued an Adult Participation Pass in the designated color for that seasonal year. This card will verify that the adult is properly registered and has a cleared background check as required by the rules. A photo must be added to the card prior to it being laminated and the card must be visibly displayed by the adult at all times when at a soccer event.

Penalty Points

It is the responsibility of the coach to maintain control of the players, parents and fans on the sideline of the game. Penalty points are awarded to players and coaches for behavior on and off the field before, during and after games. While league officials are responsible for maintaining these points throughout the year and providing the team with a Penalty Point Report prior to advancement to post-season play, it is also important that the coach maintain a record of any cards received. This serves two main purposes: 1) the ability to confirm that the Penalty Point Report received at the end of the season is correct, and 2) being sure that a player or coach who is required to serve a suspension complies with the requirement.

A yellow card equals three (3) points and a red card equals nine (9) points. Two yellow cards in the same game is the equivalent of a red card (nine points). An accumulation of penalty points results in disciplinary action. A required suspension that results from penalty-point accumulation cannot be served in forfeited matches or invitational tournaments.

9 points = suspension for the next game
actually played by the team

18 points = suspension for the next two games
actually played by the team

24 points = suspension for the next three games
actually played by the team

30 points = suspension for the next four games
actually played by the team

Penalty points carryover from league play to post-season play; however, they do not carry over from one season to another, with the exception of a suspension. Any person who has accumulated a sufficient number of points to require a suspension or received a red card in the final game of the season or post-season play, must serve the suspension at the beginning of the next season.

Penalty points received in an invitational tournament are not included in those accumulated during the season, nor do penalty points received in league play apply to tournament play — unless the player has been ordered to serve a suspension or other disciplinary action that includes tournament play.



If a player transfers to another team during the seasonal year, they retain any penalty points received to that point.

To challenge penalty points, a protest must be filed at, before or just after the game in which the points were issued. The protest cannot be based on a judgment call of the referee. It is important that coaches review the game card at the conclusion of the game to confirm that any penalty points awarded were charged to the correct player. If not, a protest must be lodged at that time by notifying the referee, the opposing coach and the appropriate official. Within 48 hours of conclusion of the game, a written protest must be placed in the mail to the STYSA State Office.

Transfers

The movement of a player from one team to another during the seasonal year is a transfer. There are limits to the number of transfers allowed per team based on the competition in which the team is participating. Be sure to review the rules of the competition to determine what the maximum number of transfers is for your team. Also, keep in mind that the transfer limit is for the entire year. Players can be rostered to teams as of Aug. 1. Once rostered, changing teams requires a transfer. All transfers require a properly completed and signed transfer form and must be processed by the deadline established for that competition. For example, all rosters of teams participating in Fall season competition for possible advancement to post-season District or State Tournaments are frozen as of Nov. 1. To be eligible for Fall Championships, all players must play with the team in two regularly scheduled, regular-season games. Therefore, transfers must be processed prior to the Nov. 1 deadline and in time for the player to meet the two-game requirement. Spring Cup competitions have a designated final roster deadline, at which time the rosters are frozen. Movement of players between teams must occur prior to the deadline indicated for that competition.

Olympic Development Program

The Olympic Development Program (ODP) is a national program to identify and develop youth soccer players who have the potential to represent the United States in soccer competitions as members of the US National Teams. ODP is not an individual entity, but is a program licensed to organizations by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) through the governing body of soccer, the United States Soccer Federation (USSF).

The function of STYSA ODP is the identification, selection and opportunity for development of the state's top players through a high level of training and competition, to provide the means by which these players are prepared to compete for selection for regional, national, collegiate and professional opportunities.

The primary responsibility for the development of players belongs to the clubs; thus, ODP should not interfere with regular club play. It is the responsibility and function of the state association to supplement that development by selecting the state's best players to compete with and against each other at the higher levels of competition. For ODP to be a true success, STYSA must work with the club coaches and officials, as well as the parents, in reaching the primary goal of identifying the best players for a higher level of competition.

The benefits of participation in the ODP Program include:

- the opportunity to play and train with the best players in one's age group at the state and regional level;
- the opportunity to receive training from nationally licensed coaches;
- the opportunity to represent one's state, region or country in competitions.

For ODP to be a true success, STYSA must work with the club coaches and officials, as well as the parents, in reaching the primary goal of identifying the best players for a higher level of competition.

INTRODUCTORY LEVEL

The Introductory level of ODP is open to all players of the appropriate age group. Open registration is offered each fall for players who were born in the calendar year of the initial age group eligible. Training sessions are typically conducted in January, February and March.

Developmental training sessions are conducted by STYSA State Staff and are geared toward exposure to the next level of the program. Three training sessions are held during which players are evaluated. Participants must attend all three sessions in order to be eligible for selection to the Developmental Pool. This pool of players attends a Sub-Regional Camp involving teams from four of the western states of Region III.

STATE POOLS/TEAMS

In all age groups, the selection to the ODP program is through tryouts, with every South Texas player eligible to tryout. Tryout sessions are typically conducted in January or February.

More information about the STYSA Olympic Development Program can be found on the STYSA website at www.stxsoccer.org.

Permission to Travel

On Sept. 1, 2006, the process by which teams wishing to travel to tournaments or friendly games hosted by other State Associations within the United States, but outside of boundaries of South Texas, became a Notification process rather than a Permission process. A flat fee of \$25 is assessed for each e-Travel Notification form submitted for travel within the United States, but outside the boundaries of South Texas.

Teams wishing to travel out of the country (including to Mexico) will still be required to submit all the same documents as in the past to the State Office and obtain permission to travel from the US Soccer Federation prior to leaving the country.

One of the most confusing things for coaches when traveling within the United States is the fact that, in some cases, travel within Texas will require submitting an e-Travel Notification form. This is because, for the purposes of soccer, Texas is divided into two states – South Texas and North Texas. South Texas teams can travel to tournaments or friendly games anywhere within the boundaries of South Texas without having to notify the State Office. However, travel to North Texas (i.e. Waco, Dallas, etc.) is considered out-of-state and the team must submit an e-Travel Notification form to the State Office just like they would when traveling to any other U.S. state.

So, once you've decided to go to an out-of-state tournament or friendly game, log-on to your team account in Affinity, click on "Travel Roster", click on "Create a New Request" and complete the Travel Form. After you have entered the necessary information and clicked "Save & Continue" you can create a Travel Roster that will include any guest players that may be traveling with you. Creating a Travel Roster is optional but not required. Once you are ready, click "Review & Submit" to review the accuracy of the information that you entered, select your fee payment method and submit the notification.

If you opt to pay the travel fee via credit card, enter your credit card

information and click submit. You can print your Travel Request Notification right out of the Travel Request section of your team account. You are all set to travel!

If you opt to mail in your payment, print the completed form, attach a check or money order for the fee to the form and mail it to the STYSA Office for processing. Once the form with payment is received and processed, you will be able to print your Travel Request Notification right out of the Travel Request section of your team account, and you are all set to travel. Please allow 14 business days for processing mail-in Travel Notifications.

Teams traveling within the United States should have the following documents with them and available for inspection at Check-in:

- e-Travel Notification Confirmation form
- Standard League or Tournament Team Roster
- Player Cards/Coach Card
- Medical Release Forms as required by the host event
- Any other documents or forms required by the host event

For teams traveling outside the United States (including to Mexico), permission must be secured from both South Texas Youth Soccer Association and the US Soccer Federation. Forms for international travel must be submitted to the State Office at least six weeks prior to the departure date to allow sufficient time to process the form and for the team to receive final approval from USSF. The specific forms required by the US Soccer Federation for foreign travel include:

- US Soccer Application for Foreign Travel
- US Youth Soccer Application for Travel

Continued at right:

Know Your Goals Before the Season

BY MIKE PARSONS

STYSA DIRECTOR OF COACHING

PLEASE CHECK YOUR PREFERENCE IN THE BOX BELOW:

- Championship
- Scholarship

Which box did you check? For many soccer parents and coaches, it could be a tough choice. But from a practical standpoint, consider the following:

1. None of the players will remember the U-6, U-8 or U-10 league championship 10 years from now

If you disagree, then try to recall and explain to me what you did each day in first grade! Second? Then, name all of the players on your U-10 team — if there was a U-10 team in your day!

2. There are no “teams” in soccer until the age of 14 or older

By the time adults become familiar with youth soccer by watching kids play from ages five through 12, it becomes apparent that successful teams are dependent upon individual physical maturity.

Under-6 players can't define the word team, because there will always be an “I” in team for them. “I” want the ball, “I” am not going to give her the ball, “I” am hungry! I am an island — not a team!

The eight-year-old whose feet can actually do what his mind is thinking will surely have the ball more often and probably will be the “Ball Hog” that Soccer Mom despises (he also wears an adult medium t-shirt). He will never pass — because he doesn't need to. He will win every ball he decides he wants — because he can. He will score goals at will — because he is bigger, stronger and faster than all of the rest. This is not a team — this is a physical specimen!

Under-10 teams that win do so because of the two “soccer rats” that are the best of friends. One wins the ball and gives it to his friend to score at will. Then they reverse the roles. The rest of the team is along for the ride and have the ball only when the “rats” say they can have it.

The U-12 championship is sponsored by Gillette, because the winning team has the six-footer who is already shaving. His athletic ability has the coach contacting Division-I college programs and promising he will convince this player to sign with the school that offers the best deal (of course there will also have to be a guaranteed assistant's position for the youth coach). Opponents do not defend this one-man show — they get out of his way. These games resemble Wile E. Coyote chasing the roadrunner — no chance to catch him, three steps to one.

3. “Winning” is not the primary goal in youth sports

Learning to set realistic and attainable goals is an integral part of athletics and life. Setting goals and attaining them is an important process shared by most of the successful people in all professions. If the goal is winning, then we set the players up to fail more often than not. Instead, we should look at winning as a by-product of individual player development. If we all become better individually, we have a better chance of being successful as a group — winning.

4. Once upon a time, youth soccer was not for profit

We all know that whenever people start a business, competition is inevitable. Youth soccer started with competition and now it has become a business. Winning in business is defined by those who make the most money. The one that makes the most money usually finds shortcuts in the business.

In youth soccer, these shortcuts to winning affect the business decisions — Do we spend more time developing each player, or take more time to find another player to take their place? Do we play against lesser competition to achieve more wins? Do we play more games, instead of paying for more training? Do we pay more for quality coaches or pay less and have less-experienced staff? Do you really want your son/daughter to make someone's business more profitable (winning), or do you want them to become better and enjoy playing the game?

5. “Teams” are not recruited for scholarships

When was the last time you read this type of news release:

XYZ Team Signs Letter of Intent

(Dobbin) The 2009 state championship XYZ Team from the relatively obscure town north of Houston has become another in a long line of teams to sign at the Division-I level, signing with the University of ABC. Head coach Sammy Soccer has been quoted as saying that this team could be part of his best freshman class ever. His other recruits include additional teams that were part of the USYS Nationals, including teams from Ohio, Massachusetts, and the outstanding Juneau, Alaska, team coached by Sarah Palin. Coach Palin will also be hired as an assistant coach at the university.

OK, so you Democrats say there is a correction — Palin would never be hired! You guys always want to argue — I know you get the point. Now, which box did you check?

Permission to Travel, Continued...

- USYS/STYSA Travel Roster
- Copy of the pamphlet or brochure from the event
- Signed Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act Compliance Statement
- Required fees - \$25 travel fee payable to South Texas Youth Soccer and \$50 international travel application fee payable to US Soccer

After verifying that the team is in good standing and all players are properly registered, STYSA will forward the documents to the United

States Soccer Federation for approval. A copy of the approved application will be returned to your team coach or manager by US Soccer Federation.

Please note that the USSF does NOT notify the State Office whether a request for international travel was approved or denied, so it is the responsibility of the Coach or Manager of the team to follow-up and insure that they have the proper approvals in hand prior to leaving the country.

The responsibility for complying with STYSA, USYS, USSF, and Tournament rules and certifying that the team and team officials have and will comply with all established rules and guidelines lies solely with the Coach and Team Manager. If a Coach or Team Manager violates established STYSA, USYS, USSF or Tournament rules, they will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

Fall Championships

STYSA sponsors Fall District Championship Tournaments for Division III (U11 to U14) and Division II (U11 to U19) at the conclusion of the fall season. State Tournaments follow the next weekend for the competitive levels of play (age groups to be determined).

DISTRICT TOURNAMENTS

Member Associations determine the format for play during the fall season and report to the State Office by Oct. 10 how many teams they have in each age/competition level that are both eligible and interested in advancement to the playoffs. Team counts provided are used by the District Vice-President to prepare allocations.

Using the number of associations participating and the total number of teams per age group, the District Vice-President determines the tournament size for each age within each competition level, with a maximum size of 16 teams. Using a mathematical formula, each participating association is allocated a percentage of the teams. Any association reporting an eligible team is assured an allocation. Allocating more than three teams to any one association is left to the discretion of the District Vice President based on need. An entry fee is assessed for each participating team, payable by the Member Association by a specified date.

Allocations are sent to Member Association Presidents and posted on the STYSA website in late October. Hosting sites are then able to begin developing their schedules based on the allocations and seedings. Although the host site will determine game times and field assignments, the playing order is determined by seedings prepared by the District Vice President. Member Associations will provide information on advancing teams to the State Office early in the week of the District Tournaments.

District Tournaments are held the first weekend in December at local sites within the District. Member Associations submit requests to host specific age groups or competition levels to the District Vice President at the Summer Governing Board Meeting. As soon as the site information is received, the State Office will begin posting information on the website, and will provide updates as more information becomes available.

All teams advancing to Fall District Tournaments are required to have the following documents in their possession when arriving at the tournament:

Roster — list of all players eligible to participate with the team, signed by an officer of the Member Association.

ID Cards — signed, with a photo, and laminated for all players and coaches. Coaches must have an Adult Participation Pass that includes their KidSafe Number:

Penalty Point Report — report identifying players and coaches having received penalty points during the fall season, including clarification that a player or coach needing to serve a suspension has done so, and when.

Guest players are not permitted in playoff tournaments and roster changes must be made prior to the date upon which rosters are frozen. The state freezes all rosters on Nov. 1; however, the local club or association may establish an earlier date in order to comply with the state deadlines.

Awards are presented to first- and second-place teams in each age group and competition level.

STATE TOURNAMENTS

State Tournaments are held the second weekend in December for Super II and Division II. In Super II, advancement is based on the order of finish during fall season league play. Although bracket playoffs may be required when multiple brackets or zones are involved in the schedule, these are viewed as the continuation of season play. In Division II, the first- and second-place finishers from each District Tournament advance.

El Paso receives a bye in the Super II and Division II levels of play, meaning they don't participate in the District Tournaments. They are eligible to send one team per age group and competition level directly to the State Tournament, but are required to provide notification in early November of the age groups and competition levels in which they will participate.

All State Tournaments for a competition level are held at a single site — boys in one District, girls in the other. The schedule is defined in the rules, based on which District is hosting and whether or not an El Paso team is participating.

Information on advancing teams is provided by the Member Association as soon as it becomes available. Entry fees for the teams are paid by the Member Association by the established deadline. Awards are presented to all teams taking part in a State Tournament.

At A KOHL'S American Cup Event, The Key Ingredient Is FUN!

Four years and counting ... that's how long South Texas has been hosting the KOHL'S American Cups across South Texas. These fun-filled festival events are open to all recreational teams registered with South Texas or any US Youth Soccer affiliate and have added a new dimension to recreational soccer in South Texas. This past season, KOHL'S American Cups were held in Houston, Corpus Christi, Harlingen and El Paso. Each of these events continues to see a year-to-year increase in the number teams and players participating.

The KOHL'S Interactive Tour, which boasts a huge KOHL'S kick wall and other inflatable targets for players and spectators to test their soccer skills, has been in attendance at all of the KOHL'S tournament sites so far and will make additional appearances in South Texas for the 2010 Houston



KOHL'S American Cup events.

The focus of the KOHL'S American Cups is, "Let's have fun playing soccer!" Each KOHL'S American Cup participant receives a participation award and a "goody" bag containing stickers and other fun items — and gets to play soccer as well.

US Youth Soccer and the team at Promotion Solutions continue to play a big role in making the South Texas KOHL'S American Cups positive experiences for our players, coaches and parents.

In the upcoming months, South Texas Youth Soccer Association will begin planning for the 2010 events and will post information about the dates and locations as it becomes available on the South Texas Youth Soccer website at stxsoccer.org/Kohl's Cup

Spring Cup Competitions

Each spring, South Texas Youth Soccer Association hosts a series of Spring Cup Competitions designed to:

Determine a STYSA State Champion who will, in the U14 through U19 age groups, represent STYSA at the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Southern Regionals.

Determine a Presidents Cup Champion who will, in the U13 through U17 age groups, represent STYSA at the Region III Presidents Cup Regional Competition.

Provide a format where a team doing above average in one level of play may test itself against teams at the next-higher level of play.

Provide a format where teams may enter a STYSA-sponsored competition in order to play with teams they may not normally play against.

Provide a quality competition during a period of the year when other sports may decrease the number of teams playing soccer.

Participation in these competitions is a matter of choice and requires a commitment from the coaches, players and parents. A team is only eligible to play in one Spring Cup competition. Players may be rostered to only one team entered in a Spring Cup at any given time. Due to the number of teams participating and the short time frame available, the schedule can be demanding. Games are not generally scheduled Easter weekend and efforts are made to accommodate Spring Breaks; however, there are many different Spring Breaks making it difficult to avoid some conflicts. Rescheduling of games is only permitted with the approval of the District Vice President and there must be a valid reason for the request – participation in an invitational tournament is not considered a valid reason.

Information regarding the entry process and deadlines will be posted on the STYSA website during the fall season. Each competition is different with regard to eligibility and requirements. It is important that coaches and managers read the specifics carefully and comply with all deadlines. Failure to do so can result in elimination from the competition. Competitions offered each spring includes:

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series

Of the South Texas Youth Soccer Association spring cups, USYSNC State Cup is the highest level of competition. Teams compete to determine a State Champion. In Under-14 and older, the State Champion will represent the state at the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Southern Regionals to play for an opportunity to advance to the US Youth Soccer National Championship Tournament later in the summer.

The STYSA USYSNC State Cup is an open-entry competition for all Under-11 through Under-19 boys' and girls' teams registered with an STYSA Member Association, and in good standing. An open-entry competition means that any team in the appropriate age group is eligible to enter; however, only the best Division-I teams are encouraged to enter this competition. USYSNC and STYSA rules govern play in this competition and there is not a minimum-play requirement.

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series rules allow teams in Under-16 through Under-19 age brackets to carry a roster of 22 players; however, the team may only have 18 players on the team sideline of any game. Teams competing in the USYSNC competition will be allowed to roster 22 players to their team by the final roster deadline established by their District. STYSA will follow the USYSNC Rules by allowing only 18 players to be on the team sideline at any game played during the spring season or at the USYSNC State Cup on Memorial Day Weekend.

Presidents Cup

Presidents Cup is recognized as the second highest level of competition in STYSA. The Presidents Cup Champion in Under-13 through Under-17 will represent STYSA at the US Youth Soccer Region III Presidents Cup

Competition.

Presidents Cup is an open-entry competition for Under-11 through Under-19 boys' and girls' teams registered with a registered with an STYSA Member Association, and in good standing. Again, an open-entry competition means any team is eligible; however, STYSA strongly recommends that only Division-I teams not competing in the USYSNC State Cup, and Super-II teams finishing in the top half of their fall league standings, enter this competition. Regional and state rules govern play in this competition and there is not a minimum-play requirement.

Director's Cup

The Director's Cup is an intermediate-level state competition with no advancement beyond the State Tournament at the conclusion of the competition.

A restricted-entry competition is one in which entry is limited to STYSA-registered teams who qualify based on their level of play in the fall. Super II teams that are not playing Presidents Cup and Division II teams finishing in the top half of their fall league are encouraged to enter this competition. To be eligible, teams must be registered with an STYSA Member Association and be in good standing. STYSA minimum-play rules requiring each player to play a minimum of 50 percent of each game apply to this competition.

South Texas Cup

South Texas Cup is a developmental-level State competition with no advancement beyond the State Tournament held at the conclusion of the spring season.

A restricted-entry competition, this event is open to only Division-II and Division-III teams from the Fall season. Including the Under-11 through Under-19 age groups, it is strongly recommended that Division-II teams not participating in Director's Cup and Division-III teams who finished in the top half of their fall league play enter South Texas Cup. Under-10 teams are not eligible to participate at the Under-11 level until May 1, or the day after their Under-10 spring season concludes. To be eligible, teams must be registered with an STYSA Member Association and be in good standing. STYSA minimum-play rules requiring each player to play a minimum of 50 percent of each game apply to this competition.

Kohl's American Cup

Although listed with the Spring Cup competitions, the key ingredient to this level of play is fun. Open to recreational teams only, the Kohl's American Cup/Soccer Festival is offered for Division-III and Division-IV recreational teams registered with a Member Association and in good standing. Member Associations around the state will request permission from the state to host these events for the teams in their area, and will determine the age groups to be included. Based on the past years' events, the primary interest falls within the Under-6 through Under-14 age groups.

A Festival format will be offered for the U8 and younger teams. In this format, games will be scheduled between participating teams, but no scores will be recorded and standings will not be kept. All participants will receive "goodies" for participating and will have an opportunity between their games to have fun in the Festival area that will include games designed to test their skills while having fun. Under-9 and older teams may play a tournament format, with first- and second-place awards being presented. All participants will receive "goodies" for being a part of the event and will be encouraged to also have fun in the Festival area.

The intention of the Kohl's Cup is to create a festival atmosphere around a day of games. If possible, the Kohl's Interactive Games area will be on site. If unavailable, other activities such as skills competitions, moon walks or similar games will be provided. In all games played, there will be a requirement that players participate a minimum of 50 percent of each game.

Why Small-Sided Games?

US Youth Soccer has thought long and hard about the answer to the question, "Why Small-Sided Games?"

What does "Small-Sided Games" mean? These are soccer games with fewer players competing on a smaller sized field. These are fun games that involve the players more because fewer players are sharing one ball. All ages can play "Small-Sided Games", but it has a definite developmental impact on our younger soccer players. US Youth Soccer recommendations for "number of players" at the various age groups are as follows:


- U6 | 3v3, no goalkeepers
- U8 | 4v4, no goalkeepers
- U10 | 6v6, with goalkeepers
- U12 | 8v8, with goalkeepers
- U13+ | 11v11, with goalkeepers

Here are some of the reasons why we believe, as soccer coaches, that administrators and parents must guarantee that our young soccer players play small-sided games:

1. Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become more skillful with it! (Individual technical development)
2. Because we want our young soccer players to make more, less-complicated decisions during the game! (Tactical development)

3. Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically efficient in the field space they are playing in! (Reduced field size)
4. Because we want our young soccer players to have more individual teaching time with the coach! Less players on the field and less players on the team will guarantee this! (Need to feel worthy and need to feel important)
5. Because we want our young soccer players to have more involved playing time in the game! (More opportunity to solve problems that only the game presents)
6. Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunity to play on both sides of the ball! (More exposure to attacking and defending situations)
7. Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunities to score goals! (Pure excitement)

These are the reasons why we adults must foster "Small-Sided Games" in our youth soccer programs. The "Small-Sided" environment is a developmentally appropriate environment for our young soccer players. It's a FUN environment that focuses on the young soccer player. It just makes sense doesn't it?



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Small-Sided Games Format

Age Group	U5 / U6 3v3	U7 Option 1 - 7v7 Option 2 - 4v4	U8 Option 1 - 7v7 Option 2 - 4v4	U9 Option 1 - 8v8 Option 2 - 6v6	U10 Option 1 - 8v8 Option 2 - 6v6	U11 / U12 Option 1 - 11 v 11
Implementation	Fall 2003	Fall 2006	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2007	Fall 2009
Field Size W x L in Yards	15/20 x 20/30	40/50 x 60/70 25/40 x 35/60	40/50 x 60/70 25/40 x 35/60	40/60 x 60x80 30/50 x 40/60	40/60 x 60x80 30/50 x 40/60	55/70 x 110x130 40/70 x 60/90
Center Circle In Yards	3-yard radius	8-yard radius 5-yard radius	8-yard radius 5-yard radius	8-yard radius 7-yard radius	8-yard radius 7-yard radius	8 yard radius
Goal Area In Yards	None	6 x 19 3 x 3	6 x 19 3 x 3	6 x 19 4 x 16	6 x 19 4 x 16	6 x 19 4 x 16
Penalty Area In Yards	None	14 x 35 None	14 x 35 None	14 x 35 12 x 25	14 x 35 12 x 25	14 x 35
Penalty Arc	None	None None	None None	8 yard radius 7 yard radius	8 yard radius 7 yard radius	8 yard radius
Penalty Mark	None	None None	None None	9 yards 8 yards	9 yards 8 yards	9 yards
Goal Sizes In Feet Alternative 1 Alternative 2	4 x 6 Cones 6' apart Hockey Goals	15 / 18 x 5 / 6 6 x 12 Hockey Goals	15 / 18 x 5 / 6 6 x 12 Hockey Goals	21 x 7 or 18 x 6	21 x 7 or 18 x 6	21 x 7 or 18 x 6
Ball Size	#3	#3	#3	#4	#4	#4
Roster Size Single Field Dual Field	6 10	12 or 8 8 12	12 or 8 8 12	10 or 12	10 or 12	12
Field Players	3	7 or 4	7 or 4	6 or 8	8 or 6	8
Goal Keepers	None	Yes None	Yes None	Yes	Yes	Yes
Play Time Required	All Players 1/2 of Game	All Players 1/2 of Game	All Players 1/2 of Game	All Players 1/2 of Game	All Players 1/2 of Game	All Players ½ of Game
Game Length	4-8 minute Quarters	4-10 minute Quarters	4-10 minute Quarters	2 - 25 minute Halves	2 - 25 min halves	2 – 30 min halves
Quarter Breaks	2 minutes	None	None	None	None	None
Half Time	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
Referee	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recommended Coach License	U6/U8 Certificate	U6/U8 Certificate	U6/U8 Certificate	U10/U12 Certificate	U10/U12 Certificate	U10/U12 / E Certificate

What's All That Noise From the Sidelines?

BY DR. ALAN GOLDBERG

Loud adult noise from the sidelines: "Shoot the ball! Kick it! Come on Billy; for God's sake shoot it!" The 10-year-old who's related to the voice nervously tries to pass the ball to his nearest teammate but instead, it awkwardly dribbles off the side of his foot out of bounds.

The boy's father now yells: "Billy, what the heck's wrong with you, son? Are you that stupid? I said shoot it! Do it like I showed you! Now don't be lazy! Move your butt and go get that ball back!"

The boy looks miserable and quickly glances over to the sidelines at his father before he hangs his head and runs after the ball. A few minutes later, an opposing player cleanly tackles Billy and takes the ball away from him. The referee's whistle is silent. The father explodes at the official: "Are you blind, or what? Where's the foul? How can you not call anything there? That's a yellow card, ref! How can you not see that?"

The referee trots over to the father and tells him to calm down. The father doesn't back down: "I wouldn't be complaining if you just did your job!" The referee glares at the man and warns him to keep his mouth shut, otherwise he will have him removed from the game. Suddenly, it has become very quiet on the field, as the game has come to an abrupt halt. Billy and a number of players from both teams stop and watch the altercation. Billy seems to be cringing in embarrassment, looking for a way to disappear ... just another FUN day on the soccer field!

In theory, soccer is supposed to be an enjoyable "game" organized for and played by kids. Its purpose is to teach game skills, tactics and a love for physical activity. In addition, and when in the hands of appropriate adults, soccer provides its young participants with a whole host of valuable learning experiences, including hard work as a vehicle for success, teamwork, good sportsmanship, healthy competition, mastering adversity in the pursuit of a goal and utilizing failure constructively, all of which are geared towards building self-confidence and leaving the child feeling better about himself. In theory!



Unfortunately, as the above scenario all-too-commonly illustrates, the reality of today's youth soccer experience is vastly different. Misguided adults — both parents and coaches — are inadvertently and selfishly distracting the child-athlete from what's really important and, in the process, killing his/her joy for the sport. Parents like Billy's, who become too caught up in the game's outcome, pressure their kids to perform and are overly critical and demeaning when their children make mistakes, ensure that their child will consistently play well below their potential. In addition, they seriously jeopardize the parent-child relationship and increase the likelihood that their child will soon become a sports dropout statistic.

There's no question that the vast majority of parents mean well and want their children to be happy and successful. Towards this end, they are willing to sacrifice their time, energy and financial resources taxiing their kids to and from practices, finding them additional training, volunteering for team and club functions and spending countless hours on the sidelines at tournaments and games. Unfortunately, far too many parents do not know exactly what they should and shouldn't be doing to be the most helpful. Despite having positive intentions and their child's best interests at heart, these parents say and do things before, during and after games that distract the child from focusing on the actual game, increase his/her anxiety level and, as a consequence, sabotage his/her overall level of play.

So just how important is it for you as a parent that your child has a positive, enriching experience in this sport? Do you really want your son or daughter to perform to his/her potential? Are you truly interested in seeing smiles out there during games, instead of tears and unhappiness? If your answer to these questions is a resounding "YES!" then there are specific things that you can do as a parent to make these things happen. Your role in relation to your child's soccer experience is absolutely critical in determining the quality of that experience. If you adopt the appropriate behaviors and play the right role, then you will ensure that soccer brings a smile to your child's face and joy to his heart. If you play the wrong role and act like Billy's dad, then you'll end up making a significant contribution to your child's unhappiness and heartache.

So what's the right role? First and foremost, your main "job" is to be your child's best fan. You need to be unconditionally supportive. If your child is having a bad game, then she needs your love and support far more than when she's playing out of her mind. After a tough loss or a poor outing, she needs you to be positive, compassionate and loving. Providing feedback on what she did wrong or expressing your disappointment in her play is NOT what she needs and will only serve to make a painful situation much worse.

Along these lines, love and support does NOT mean that you coach from the sidelines. In fact, the WORST THING that you as a parent can do is to "coach" from the sidelines. What's coaching? Offering "helpful" advice and strategy before and during the game, telling your child what to do and where to go, criticizing their play and becoming angry with them when they make mistakes are all examples of off-limit, exceedingly destructive parental behaviors. Post-game critiquing is another example of destructive parental coaching behavior.

Understand that you are NOT helping your child when you coach. You will NOT get them to play better. You are NOT motivating them, even if you know the game and that's your intention! On the contrary — coaching and critiquing from the sidelines will distract your child from the flow of the game, make him more nervous, kill his enjoyment and, as a consequence, ensure that he will consistently play poorly. In addition, keep in mind that your "helpful" sideline comments are most often experienced by your child as an embarrassment! Coaching behaviors are only appropriate from the coaches, NOT the parents.



Instead, parents should smile from the sidelines, cheer for good execution regardless of which side it comes from, and encourage fair play and good sportsmanship. This means that you as a parent need to model appropriate, mature behaviors during the game. Yelling at your child, his teammates or the opponents is NOT mature, appropriate behavior. Loudly critiquing the officiating is also NOT mature or appropriate. It is NOT your job to critique the referees. Regardless of how well you may know this game, your calls are not better than the referees'. Excuse me, but you are just a tad bit biased in this situation! Loudly complaining to the ref every time he makes a "bad call" is not only an embarrassment to your child, but it's quite selfish on your part. It takes the focus of the game off of the kids where it belongs and puts it on YOU. Remember, soccer is about the kids, NOT the adults.

Along these same lines, it is NOT appropriate for you to spend your sideline time grumbling to other parents about your team's coaches and the playing or tactical decisions that they make. If you have a problem with the coaches, deal with them at an appropriate time and place, NOT just before, during or right after a game. Most coaches are volunteers or are grossly underpaid for their time, and are doing the best job that they know how. What they need from you is your support and help, NOT your disdain and criticism.

Finally, try to act on the sidelines in a way that would make your son or daughter proud to have you as a parent. Remember, your child is not the only one that's performing during the game. You are also a performer, and the quality of their experience is in your hands. Conduct yourself in such a way that you clearly communicate to your child and those around you that this is a game for children, played by children. That is, you need to keep the proper perspective at all times. If there are other parents around you who are unable to maintain this kind of perspective, notify the team's coach or league officials. It's not your job to get in the face of another parent for misbehaving. Let the coach or parent board educate them at the next parents' meeting.

Remember, soccer is a wonderful vehicle to help your children learn valuable life lessons. Do your part to insure that the lessons that they learn are constructive and positive.

Dr. Alan Goldberg is a nationally known expert in the field of applied sports psychology and the former sports psychology consultant for all of the teams at the University of Connecticut. He specializes in helping athletes overcome performance fears, blocks and slumps and perform to their potential.

Getting the Most Out of a Director of Coaching

BY SAM SNOW

INTERIM TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, USYS

Over the years, more of our 6,000 youth soccer clubs have become increasingly professional. The clubs are paying more attention to facilities, staff and programming. Among the staff some clubs have hired are coaches.

A number of clubs have the coaches do administrative work, as well as coaching. That can be good practical use of employees, as long as the scales don't tip too far toward office work. After all, the coach was hired because of his or her expertise in developing players.

Once a club makes a decision to hire coaches, it must also decide how to use them. This step includes the club deciding its identity. What kind of soccer club will it be? Visionary leadership is necessary to answer that question. A critical role among the club leaders is the Director of Coaching. The Director of Coaching should not coach if he or she wants to do a good job for everyone.

Why such a statement?

Presently, in most cases, the Director is the head coach of one or more teams, and may also be the assistant coach with other teams. Or, the Director could be the coaching coordinator, administrator or educator in the club. While clubs need those jobs to be done, the primary goal of a club Director is the mentoring of the club's coaches. By positively influencing the club's coaches, the Director impacts the players.

The Director of Coaching should not coach if he or she wants to do a good job for the club. The Director must see the teams play and train, as well as seeing the coaching. This is only possible if the Director is on the field with all the teams rather than with one team, or off the field coordinating. This objective requires an investment from the club, since many clubs subsidize the Director's salary with fees from coaching teams or being the soccer operations coordinator. The tradeoff is a Director who does not and cannot influence every team, coach and player.

Does the club want to spend its money on soccer or administration?

Many people can administer. A coordinator organizes, supports and coordinates. American soccer clubs should choose the soccer. Many do not, and the Director of Coaching becomes a club coordinator — coordinating much that could be done by administrators.

A Director of Coaching is a coach and an educator of coaches — not many people can do that. Of course, the state and national coaching schools may also assist with the education of the club's coaches. Managing the education of the coaches with the state association Technical Director is a wise move. Yet, the club Director must follow up those formal coaching courses with clinics and mentoring. Those clinics could include model training sessions with various teams in the club.

The Director needs to give the coaches guidance on running a training session, season objectives, match management and how to interact with parents and club officials. Furthermore, the Director of Coaching needs to assign coaches to appropriate teams and levels of play. In this vein, the Director also helps the coaches grow in their craft by helping them move into coaching either gender, different age groups or perhaps various levels of play. The Director must oversee the inclusion of good coaches into the club.

Of course, impacting the development of the players is a core objective for any Director. The Director of Coaching must help to write and implement a player development model, so use the "U.S. Soccer Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States" (downloadable at usyouthsoccer.org) as a primary reference for the club model.

The list of ways the Director of Coaching can influence the club goes on, including scouting opponents at elite levels of play, or recruiting coaches as examples. That influence extends outside the club with a truly visionary Director becoming involved in meetings at the local, state and national levels to speak up on matters concerning the players and coaches.

In the end, though, get out on the field and do what the job title depicts — direct the coaches!

Calendar of Events

STYSA maintains a Perpetual Calendar identifying the timing of specific events/deadlines that recur on a yearly basis. While the exact date and location may change, the fact that the event will be held that time of year is definite. There are many other activities that occur each year for which dates are determined based on availability and need.

2009

SEPT. 1

Seasonal Year begins

OCT. 1

Initial Fall Registration Deadline — Each Member Association must submit to the State Office: Fees for all players registered for the upcoming Fall season, along with a report of the number of players per age group
Goal Post Inspection Report for each facility being utilized by the Association and their affiliated clubs

OCT. 10

A final count of teams per age group and competition level eligible for consideration for allocation to the Fall Championship District Tournaments

OCT. 15

Allocation of teams to Fall Championship District Tournaments will be prepared by each District Vice President and distributed to the Association Presidents and posted on the STYSA website.

NOV. 2

Final Fall Registration — Each Member Association must submit to the State Office: Fees for all players registered after the submission of Initial Fall Registration

NOV. 2

Member Associations must confirm in writing to the State Office that they will be able to fulfill the allocations made to their Association for the Fall Championship Tournaments.

NOV. 18

Fees are due in the State Office from all Member Associations for the teams allocated a slot into the Fall Championship District Tournaments and competitive teams advancing directly to State Tournaments.

NOV. 30

(Monday prior to District Tournaments)

Information on teams advancing to Fall Championship District Tournaments is due from each Member Association and must include team name, seeding, team contact person, phone number and email address.

DEC. 5-6

Fall Championship District Tournaments will be held for:

Division II Under-11 through Under-19 teams
Division III Under-11 through Under-14 teams

DEC. 12-13

Rainout date for the Fall Championship District Tournaments

DEC. 7

(Monday prior to District Tournaments)

Information on teams advancing to Fall Championship State Tournaments is due from each Member Association and must include team name, seeding, team contact person, phone number and email address.

DEC. 12-13

State Tournaments will be held for:
Super II Under-13 through Under-19
Division II Under-11 through Under-19 teams

DEC. 19-20

Rainout Date for State Tournaments

2010

JANUARY

(DATE TBD)

Entry Deadline for teams wishing to participate in US Youth Soccer National Championship Series, STYSA Presidents Cup and STYSA Director's Cup — Dates will be posted on the STYSA website during the Fall 2010 season

FEBRUARY

STYSA Governing Board Meeting, Austin

FEBRUARY/MARCH

(DATE TBD)

Final Roster Deadline for teams entered in US Youth Soccer National Championships, Presidents Cup and Director's Cup

APR. 6

Member Associations will provide the number of teams per age group interested in participating in the South Texas Cup District Tournament in order for the

District Vice Presidents to prepare allocations.

APR. 7-10

UIL High School State Soccer Tournament

APR. 15

Fees are due in the State Office from all Member Associations for all newly registered players for the spring season

APR. 26

South Texas Cup Team Information and Team Fees — Each Member Association allocated teams to the South Texas Cup District Games must provide a copy of the team's final roster; Penalty Point Report and Entry Fee to the State Office.

MAY 1-2

South Texas Cup District Tournaments — sites TBD

MAY 15-16

South Texas Cup State Tournament, to be hosted by Western District

MAY 15-16

STYSA Director's Cup State Tournament, to be hosted by Eastern District

MAY 22-23

STYSA Presidents Cup State Tournament, to be hosted by Western District

MAY 29-31

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series/ STYSA State Cup, to be hosted by Eastern District

JUNE 11-14

Region III Presidents Cup Tournament — Tulsa, Okla.

JUNE 18-24

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Southern Regionals — Baton Rouge, La.

JULY

(DATE TBD)

STYSA Summer Governing Board Meeting — Houston

For all the latest on South Texas Youth Soccer, visit
stxsoccer.org

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