

# NorCal Premier League

## Team Handbook



*A US Club Soccer Sanctioned League*



The goal of this handbook is to provide assistance to clubs, coaches and managers to ensure the NorCal Premier League operates smoothly and is a positive experience for all involved – players, coaches, managers, Club officials, referees, and parents.

When competing in NorCal Premier Soccer Programs, a club is responsible for overseeing their coaches, players, parents and club personnel – administratively, on and around the field. Each club is responsible for ensuring all club members involved, players, parents, coaches and administrators, understand and meet the following requirements and follow NorCal League Rules and Code of Ethics when participating in any NorCal Premier Soccer Program.

**Quality** – Clubs and their teams must be committed to striving for excellence with respect to play, sportsmanship, fields, referees and the total soccer experience.

**Director of Coaching** – Clubs must have a named Director of Coaching listed on the NorCal Premier website with a working email address. The Director must be familiar with each team in their club and the team’s involvement in the NorCal Premier Soccer Programs.

**Fields** – Clubs must have at least one high quality field (5 time slots) per eight teams. Teams traveling long distances deserve to play on decent fields! Teams may ask that they play all away games.

**Referees** – Clubs must have enough current year USSF licensed referee’s available to cover their teams entered in competition.

**Administrator** – Clubs must have a NorCal Premier Administrator responsible for helping teams maintain their club and team information, including contact information on the NorCal web site.

**Good Standing** – Clubs must be in good standing with NorCal Premier League.

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## **NorCal Premier Mission Statement**

The purpose of NorCal Premier Soccer shall be to foster the growth and development of selected Soccer Clubs throughout Northern California. We aim to improve the quality of competition, coaching education, player development, referee development and the overall enjoyment of the beautiful game.

**The primary focus of a successful soccer program should be the individual players and their families.**

- We believe the primary focus of soccer coaches, teams and clubs should be the development of children as people first and players second.
- We believe individual player development should be a clubs primary focus and team success a secondary but important goal.
- We believe the players, parents, coaches and clubs who are the exception to the previously mentioned principles will benefit from involvement in a league, which promotes and expects this behavior from its participants.
- We believe the NorCal Premier Soccer League offers a league supporting the players, parents, coaches and clubs in this endeavor.

### **Simple administration**

- We believe a league should be governed by simple administrative procedures which provide players, teams and clubs flexibility in the player development process.

### **High-level competition with multiple divisions of play, promotion and relegation**

- We believe players, teams and clubs seeking high-level competition should have a place to play.
- We believe a league should have promotion and relegation to ensure players and teams are, as much as possible, playing at the appropriate level of competition.

### **Club player passes**

- We believe clubs should have the ability to move players up and down within their club using a club player pass.
- We believe clubs should have the ability to make changes game to game due to illness, injury, vacation, changing ability, practice attendance or commitment.
- We believe having a flexible roster is not only healthy for players, teams, clubs and families but also reflects a realistic understanding of the changes occurring in players, families, teams and clubs over a 12 month period.

### **Year round league play**

- We believe the soccer world has shown that weekly competition combined with weekly practices and appropriate breaks provides players, teams and clubs with the best opportunity for player development.
- We believe it is beneficial, less costly, more enjoyable, more family friendly and better for player development to have players, teams and clubs competing in a year round league.
- We believe playing games each weekend in a league against opponents of similar strength will allow players, teams and clubs to limit costly tournament participation.
- We believe playing two competitive games in a day is not ideal but sometimes necessary given the size of the NorCal Premier playing league.

### **Supporting the pursuit of a high level activity**

- We believe the pursuit of a high level activity should be encouraged and soccer is a healthy choice.
- We believe in and support the studies correlating the pursuit of high level athletics with young people exceling in school, staying fit, avoiding drugs and alcohol and building self esteem.
- We believe encouraging a fuller, more intense involvement with the sport actually increases the likelihood a young person will remain in the sport for the rest of their life.

### **Choices and common sense**

- We believe parents are best suited to choose their children's level and location of participation in any activity including soccer.
- We believe that children, with the support of their parents, benefit immensely from the life lessons offered by participation in a high level soccer learning environment.
- We believe a league, which supports clubs who believe in this concept of player development, is necessary and ethical.

### **Fun**

- We believe soccer is a kick in the grass, a blast, loads of fun, the cats meow, the bee's knees, and the world's favorite pastime and should be played, watched, enjoyed and read about daily.

## Sportsmanship

In a European Championship game Holland vs. Italy, the Dutch team's first goal was offside. If a top referee made a mistake in the Euro Championship – surely we can expect the same in youth soccer.

A few years ago, when visiting Italy we watched a youth game between two rival professional clubs. The game had one center referee – with two linesmen, one from each club. They did not call offside; it was up to the center referee. He made errors, two of them resulted in goals.

After the match, we interviewed the coach from Padova's U15 boys team and asked if he minded losing on two goals, which should have been disallowed. He said he wins some games due to the referee and loses some games due to the referee - so it evens out.

His primary focus was on the team, their effort, the level of their play and how well they focused on his game plan! Remember this is at the professional youth level - the stakes are high - a spot in the Italian Nationals!

We must teach our coaches, players and parents that we want to win games - they are important. But, we also want to teach the players how to behave – when winning, when losing, when under pressure, when wronged, or when lucky and unlucky. The parents and coaches have a responsibility to cheer their players on but, to remain under control, and to keep things in perspective. They need to sit back and relax!

Coaches must see the game as a learning time. They must encourage their team to try to play a style of soccer which will allow their players to develop – possession soccer if possible. They must recognize the most important quality is the effort of their players and how well they play - not the result. Especially in youth soccer, the result should never be the first consideration – the enjoyment and development of the player(s) must be the primary focus!

Of course, the referee's, like all areas of our game, must be improved, but in the meantime players, coaches and parents must behave properly and be strongly encouraged to do so regardless of the events on the field. NorCal is building this Sportsmanship section that will break down every important issue for you, players coaches, managers and parents.

Thank you,

Benjamin Ziemer

NorCal League Manager for the Board of Directors

## NorCal Premier Soccer – Ethics Policy

Membership in any NorCal Premier Soccer League or other competition is considered to be an automatic acceptance of its rules, policies and procedures.

The purpose of this league is to set the highest standards for Soccer Clubs to develop youth players to their fullest potential – both physically, emotionally, ethically. As such, participants must conduct themselves to the highest standard. At all times, adult participants are expected to be role models for the youth involved in this league - exhibiting good sporting behavior in both victory and defeat.

All participants in NorCal Premier Soccer Events are members of US Club Soccer and therefore must adhere faithfully to its stated bylaws, rules and policies as well as to their intent. All coaches, managers, players and spectators will adhere to the NCPS Code of Ethics.

In addition to those stated bylaws, rules and policies, **Adult members of the NorCal Premier Soccer will not:**

1. No coach/player will have in his/her possession, or consume, alcoholic beverages during any NCPS event.
2. Any coach, manager or official found guilty by a NCPS Ethics Committee of knowingly using an ineligible player(s) (over-age, improperly registered, or under disciplinary suspension) will be suspended from participation in all NCPS activities for the current and subsequent seasonal year.
3. Recruit Players – The definition of “recruit” for purposes of this league shall be: Approaching a player who is registered to and actively playing for another team within a NorCal Premier Soccer or US Club Soccer Club and asking them to either try-out, play or guest play for any other team, without first receiving prior written permission from the player’s current club Director Of Coaching or Coaching Coordinator – even for purposes of guest play. (Email is considered acceptable “written permission”).
4. Acquire Teams from outside their Club; to bring into their club.
5. Engage in behavior so as to be suspended, by any NCPS or US Club Soccer disciplinary body, and/or acquire enough accumulated points (see disciplinary point system) so as to be required to stand before any US Club Soccer or NCPS disciplinary body.
6. Unnecessarily hamper the playing of any scheduled match at its originally scheduled time and place, or cause undue hardship should the re-schedule of a match become necessary.
7. Allow players to exhibit unsporting behavior before, during, or after any sanctioned match or practice. This includes, but is not limited to blaming, (or teach players to blame) others in the case of defeat, or to excuse unsporting behavior.

8. Accept players from another club who have outstanding fees to another member of NorCal Premier Soccer or US Club Soccer. (Clubs should have written player/parent agreements for each year)
9. **Select a coach from another club and allow this coach to work in the same age and gender of his/her previous club or academy unless the coach moves his/her residence outside of their current region - without permission of their former club.**
10. Hold try-out related activities in a neighboring Clubs community without contacting the affected neighboring Clubs to receive approval for usage of their home based fields. Any issues will be dealt with first by NorCal's RAC and second by NorCal's BOD.

NorCal Premier Soccer Members alleged to be in violation of these, or any other stated USSF, US Club Soccer or NCPS Codes of Ethics will be required to stand before the NorCal Premier Soccer Ethics Committee (PAD) who will be made up of at least three and no more than seven club members who will act as the League's Ethics Committee.

Allegations of ethics violations will be made in accordance with USSF, US Club Soccer and NorCal Premier Soccer bylaws and operating procedures, with a copy sent to the Chair of the PAD. A written decision of suspension by a NCPS disciplinary body is automatically considered to be a written allegation of a NCPS Ethics Violation.



# **NorCal Premier Soccer Coaches Code of Ethics**

*Note: The NorCal Premier Code of Ethics is currently under review and will be updated shortly. Once it has been approved by the NorCal Board of Directors the new Code of Ethics will be distributed to all members*

Purpose: This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of soccer within the NorCal Premier Soccer and US Club Soccer Organizations.

## **Article I - Responsibilities to Players**

1. The coach shall never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players.
2. Coaches shall instruct players to play within the laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
3. Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
4. Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.
5. Demands on players' time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals or progress.
6. Coaches must never encourage players to violate NCPS recruitment, eligibility or player's rules and policies.
7. Coaches should direct players to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician's instructions regarding treatment and recovery.
8. Coaches should take an active role in educating their players about sports nutrition, fitness and about prevention of tobacco use.
9. Coaches should educate themselves on a constant basis in order to provide their players with the highest level instruction possible.
10. Coaches should always place the individual players development first and place team success second.

## **Article II - Responsibility to NCPS and Member Associations**

1. Adherence to all NCPS, USSF and US Club Soccer rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation and recruiting are mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of each coach to know and understand these rules.
2. Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches or clubs should be referred to the appropriate NCPS committee.

### **Article III - Responsibilities to the Laws of the Game**

1. Coaches should be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate a working knowledge of the Laws of the Game.
2. Coaches are responsible to assure their players understand the intent as well as the application of the Laws.
3. Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the Laws of the Game.
4. Coaches are responsible for their players' actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with intent of causing injury to opposing players.
5. The coach must constantly strive to teach good sporting behavior.

### **Article IV - Responsibility to Officials**

1. Officials must have the support of coaches, players and spectators. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing officials the presence of players or spectators.
2. Professional respect, before, during and after the game, should be mutual. There should be no demeaning dialogue or gestures between official, coach or player.
3. Coaches must not incite players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of the game.
4. Comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the official.

### **Article V - Responsibilities regarding Scouting and Recruiting**

1. All NCPS rules pertaining to recruiting shall be strictly observed by coach, manager or any team representative.
2. It is inappropriate to recruit player(s) actively playing for another team - unless the players club provides written permission. \
3. It is unethical for a player to be recruited or enticed from the Player Development Program setting, either by his PDP coach or any other coach, manager, player, parent or team representative present at said event.
4. When discussing the advantages of his/her organization, the coach has an obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams and organizations.
5. It is unethical for any coach to make a statement to a prospective athlete which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.
6. It is unethical for coaches to attend tryouts for other clubs, unless invited by the club in writing, or to have players attend tryouts at other clubs to recruit players.
7. It is unethical for a team or groups of players to be recruited from one club to another club by a coach working in the teams present club, a coach from another club, or any club representative from inside or outside the club.

## **Article VI - Responsibility of Public Relations**

1. Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public when representing their team, their club, US Club Soccer and NCPS.

## **Article VII - Other Responsibilities**

1. A coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, his organization and the sport of soccer.
2. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.
3. The attitude and conduct of the coach towards officials, players, spectators and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.
4. It is unacceptable for a coach to have any verbal altercation with an opposing coach or bench before, during or after the game.
5. Coaches must use their influence on his/her spectators that demonstrate intimidating and/or unacceptable behavior towards officials, player(s) and opposing team members.

**NorCal Premier League General Rules and Regulations**  
Applies to all State and Regional Leagues and Cups



## **Section 1: Administration/ Management**

### **1.1 – NorCal Premier League**

The NorCal Premier League is run by NorCal Premier Soccer, is a US Club sanctioned league and member of the United States Soccer Federation.

### **1.2 – Governance**

All competition in the NorCal Premier League is governed by regulations approved by the league office.

### **1.3 – Territories**

No club has exclusive territory rights in the NorCal Premier League.

### **1.4 - Club Pass Rule**

Each US Club Player Pass can be used for any age appropriate team in the issuing club. Thus player have the ability to move up and down within their club, giving individual teams the ability to make changes game to game due to illness, injury, vacation or other conflicts.

### **1.5 - Team Management**

Each team must have a team manager that handles the following responsibilities: scheduling, referee payments, travel cooperation, reporting of scores and communication with appropriate league officials. All team managers must have access to email that is checked on a daily basis, and a telephone number connected to a 24 hour answering system during the season.

### **1.6 - Division Formations**

Competitive divisions will be structured according to the playing level of teams as determined by the NorCal Premier League Office, which has final authority on all placement issues. Should the NorCal Premier League determine there are an insufficient number of teams to constitute an age group division the teams affected may be allowed to temporarily or partially compete in a different division of play.

### **1.7 League standings**

Official standings of teams, the keeping of which is the responsibility of the league office, are tabulated on a regular basis and displayed on the NorCal Premier League website.

## Section 2: Scheduling and Communication

### 2.1 - Communication Policy

Communication between teams is vitally important for all NorCal Soccer events. Each team must have at least 2 different contacts listed on your team's page (Demosphere or GotSoccer), and ensure that the contact information is up to date. Team contacts must respond to communication within 48 hours. Listing the wrong email or phone number will not be a valid excuse for not responding to communication, and can result in your team and club being placed on probation if it is a common occurrence.

### 2.2 - Policy for Scheduling Matches

The NorCal Premier League Office will provide dates for all matches along with scheduling deadlines. Teams will be expected to be available to play anytime on the game dates provided, although home teams should take travel time into consideration. Please do not schedule games before 10am if a team is traveling more than an hour away. All games must be scheduled (time and location) by the deadline provided by the NorCal Premier League Office. After the deadline passes, the schedules are locked and games can only be rescheduled if both teams agree. Teams un-willing or unable to attend games will forfeit points from the game. Any un-played games will be documented by league officials and can result in a club being removed from NorCal Premier League.

*Please Note* - If the NorCal Premier League Office feels that a club is responsible for the game not being scheduled or communication to the away teams scheduling requests are not responded to in a timely manner the following will occur:

1. First Warning - Lose home field advantage but still pay for refs and field costs.
2. Second Warning - Forfeit Match
3. Third Warning - Elimination from league

### 2.3 - Cancellation/Forfeit Policy

Teams must give their opponent a 96-hour warning if forfeiting an away match or they will be required to pay field and referee costs. Please remember that this is a club competition and not an individual team competition. The following is a list of common excuses we see for needing to cancel a game. We recommend the following solutions to frequently posed problems: *(Please check NorCal State Cup Section for additional information on forfeits)*

*Too many players missing (ODP, sick, testing, etc)* - Remember that any player from your club is available to participate with your team as long as they are of correct age. In league matches please use 2nd team players or players from younger teams within your club to fill out your roster.

*Missing Coach* - Any coach with a valid pass for your club is able to coach any team in that club. If your coach has several commitments then it is recommended that teams have an assistant coach or another coach from the club available to cover games.

*No Fields Available* - It is expected that if your team is playing in NorCal that your team has a quality field and access to field's. This excuse will not be acceptable for a cancellation of a match.

*Tournaments other games* - NorCal understands that teams will possibly play in a tournament during the League. This will be an acceptable excuse to ask for a reschedule but it must be done and rescheduled by NorCal scheduling deadlines. Please plan your schedule well in advance so your schedule does not become so full that you are unable to fulfill your League commitment.

### **Section 3: Game Officials**

#### **3.1 - Match Officials**

Match officials must be current year USSF licensed Referees. The match officials shall consist of the referee and assistant referees (AR1,AR2) except for U9's and U10's may use one referee and club linesman. No match officials may have family members in the game they are working.

#### **3.2 - Assignment of Match Officials**

Match officials shall be assigned and paid by the home club of each match. Each club is required to have a current year certified USSF Referee Assignor listed on their club pages.

### **Section 4: League Discipline**

#### **4.1 - Violating League Rules**

The NorCal Premier PAD Committee shall have the authority to suspend, fine or disqualify players, team officials or competing clubs for violating league rules, or for any action or conduct not in the best interest of soccer or the NorCal Premier League.

#### **4.2 - Disciplinary Issues/ PAD Committee**

The PAD Committee will be made up of a non-voting administrator, a referee representative, a NorCal Board Member as well as a representative from each NorCal region. This committee shall review and rule on all NorCal disciplinary issues. Any incidents, or breach of the NorCal Code of Ethics should be reported through the PAD report system at [www.NorCalPremier.com](http://www.NorCalPremier.com).

#### **4.3 - Red Cards**

If a straight Red Card is show it will result in a minimum of a one (1) game suspension. A Red Card that is the result of two cautions will result in the player being suspended for the next match. If a player is sent off during the weekend, they may not play the remainder of the weekend. Games sat out that weekend can count against the suspension, as long as noted on the Roster and/or Referee Game Report as such. Any player used during a suspension will be considered an illegal player and the team, coach and club will be punished accordingly. The referee must notify the NorCal Premier League Office within 24 hours by the home team by filling out a Send Off Report at [www.norcalreferees.com](http://www.norcalreferees.com). The player card can be returned to the team as long as the Referee Send Off Report shows the infraction, the players name and number.

#### **4.4 - Red Card Procedure**

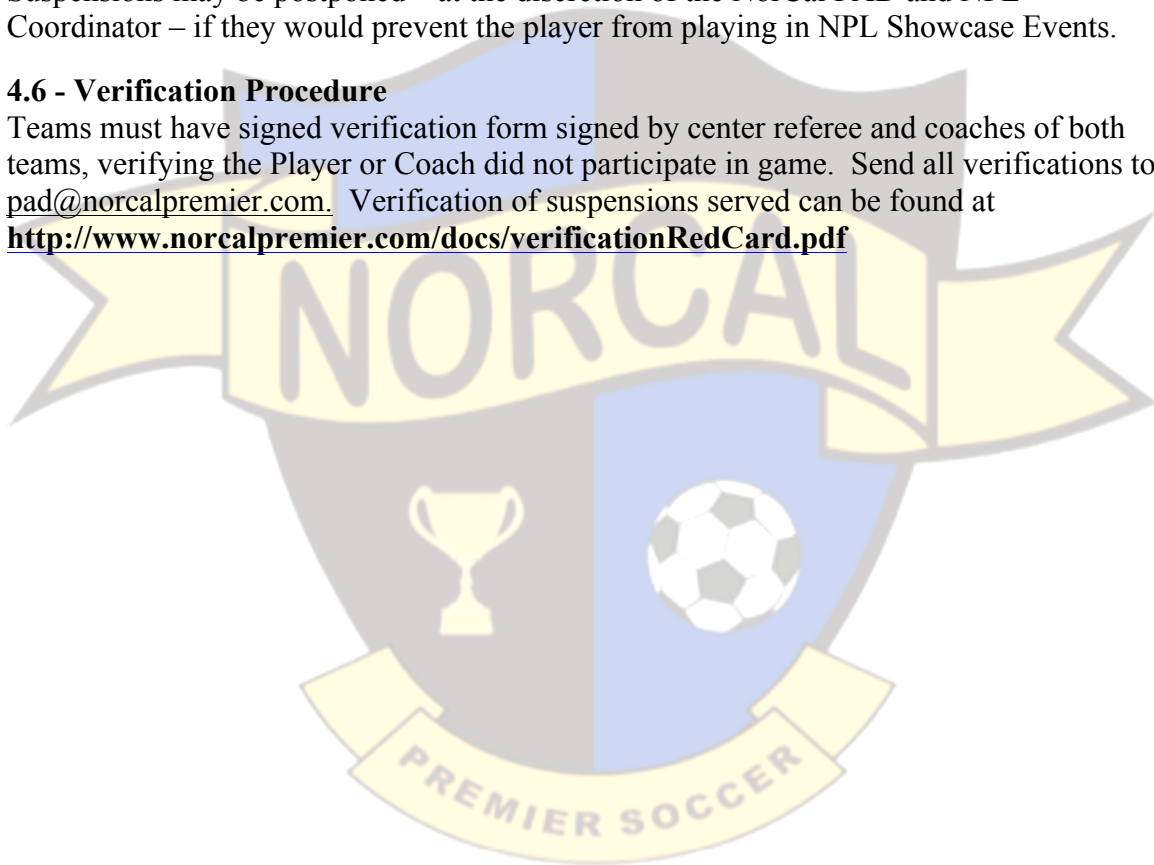
It is the teams' and clubs' responsibility to ensure their Red Carded player/coach serves the minimum 1 game suspension. It is also their responsibility to ensure that their player/coach serves any additional suspension determined by the NorCal PAD committee. A referee report must be sent within 24 hours of the red card being issued. The send off report can be found at [www.norcalreferees.com](http://www.norcalreferees.com). Teams must send in the verification form confirming that suspensions have been served. All reports and forms should be sent to [pad@norcalpremier.com](mailto:pad@norcalpremier.com).

#### **4.5 - Suspensions**

All double yellow cards and red cards will result in a minimum one game suspension. This suspension is effective immediately. Even if the official suspension is not awarded it is the team and clubs responsibility to ensure that the suspension is served. Suspensions may be postponed – at the discretion of the NorCal PAD and NPL Coordinator – if they would prevent the player from playing in NPL Showcase Events.

#### **4.6 - Verification Procedure**

Teams must have signed verification form signed by center referee and coaches of both teams, verifying the Player or Coach did not participate in game. Send all verifications to [pad@norcalpremier.com](mailto:pad@norcalpremier.com). Verification of suspensions served can be found at <http://www.norcalpremier.com/docs/verificationRedCard.pdf>





**NorCal Premier League Rules and Regulations**  
Applies to all Youth Premier Leagues and Regional Leagues



## Section 1: Competition Rules

### 1.1 - Playing Rules

All games under league jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by the NorCal Premier League which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/ U.S. Soccer (USSF) except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA or USSF.

### 1.2 - Point System

The NorCal Premier league shall operate under a point system. The point system shall award three points for a win, one point for a tie and no points for a loss.

### 1.3 - Tie Breakers

In case of a tie in the standings within a league the following will be used as tie breakers:

1. "Head to head" points (win/lose/ draw) between teams
2. "Head to head" Goal Differential between teams
3. Overall Goal Differential (up to 4)
4. Goals for (up to 4)
5. Goals against (up to 4)
6. Most points against highest non-tied team in group
7. Best goal differential against highest non-tied team in group
8. Most shutouts
9. Least red cards
10. Coin toss

### 1.4 - Game Details

| Age     | Game Length             | # of Players | Roster Size | Field Length               | Field Width               | Ball Size | # of Referees |
|---------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| U9-U10* | 2x25 min<br>10 min half | 8v8          | 14          | Min 50 yrd<br>Max 90 yrd   | Min 35 yrd<br>Max 60 yrd  | 4         | 1             |
| U11     | 2x30 min<br>10 min half | 8v8          | 14          | Min 60 yrd<br>Max 90 yrd   | Min 40 yrd<br>Max 60 yrd  | 4         | 3             |
| U12     | 2x35 min<br>10 min half | 11v11        | 18          | Min 80 yrd<br>Max 110 yrd  | Min 50 yrd<br>Max 80 yrd  | 4         | 3             |
| U13-U14 | 2x35 min<br>10 min half | 11v11        | 18          | Min 100 yrd<br>Max 130 yrd | Min 55 yrd<br>Max 100 yrd | 5         | 3             |
| U15-U16 | 2x40 min<br>10 min half | 11v11        | 18          | Min 100 yrd<br>Max 130 yrd | Min 55 yrd<br>Max 100 yrd | 5         | 3             |
| U17-U19 | 2x45 min<br>10 min half | 11v11        | 18          | Min 100 yrd<br>Max 130 yrd | Min 55 yrd<br>Max 100 yrd | 5         | 3             |

\* U10 teams will play 2x30 min halves in the spring season

### 1.5 - Fields

The playing field used by each team must be lined according to FIFA standards with goals nets and flags. The goal of each club shall be to provide an enjoyable experience for the fans, players, officials and everyone involved with the staging of a soccer game.

### **1.6 - Substitutions**

Substitutions are at the referee's discretion. A substitution can take place for either team at the following times:

- Prior to a kick-off
- A goal kick
- A throw-in
- After the referee stops play for an injury or yellow card

*Unlimited substitutions are allowed but NorCal Premier Soccer reminds all coaches that it is their responsibility to handle their substitutions in a professional manner so as not to detract from the game.*

### **1.7 - Ties in Group Round**

If a League game is tied after regulation, the tie stands and will be posted as a tie.

### **1.8 - Playoffs for League**

For matches that need a winner, the team with the most goals after regulation time will be awarded Champion. If the match is tied after regulation for U9-U19 teams, two golden goal 5 minute periods will be played. Teams will have a 5 minute break before the first overtime. After 5 minutes, teams will change sides, with no break, and play the remaining 5 minutes. If the game is still tied after the two overtime periods, then penalty kicks per FIFA will determine the Champion.

*Please note: Please make sure you arrive for your game knowing if the game can end in a draw or if a winning team is required. (READ RULES OF COMPETITION OR CONSULT WITH YOUR REFEREE ASSIGNOR/COORDINATOR).*

### **1.9 - Incomplete games**

In the event a game cannot be completed, the game will stand if half the game was completed. If there is no result and the match is suspended prior to the expiration of one half, the game shall be repeated at a time agreed upon by the competing teams in consultation with the league office. Any team directly responsible for the termination of the game due to poor sportsmanship towards a referee, opposing fans, or opposing players will result in that team forfeiting the match. This could also lead to other possible sanctions set forth by the NorCal league office.

### **1.10 - No-Shows**

A no-show occurs when a team willfully does not show up at a game agreed to by the teams. The penalty for a no-show shall be a forfeit to the opposing team and a loss of an additional three league points, as well as a \$300 fine imposed on the club. One no-show may result in the offending team being terminated from the league. Two no-shows in a single season shall result in the offending team's termination from the league

### **1.11 - Forfeits**

A forfeit will occur when a team is unable to attend a scheduled game and is unable to come to terms on a time to reschedule the match (after the scheduling deadline has passed). A forfeit will result in a 3-0 win to the team not at fault. Forfeiting club will be fined \$300 to cover all referee and field costs if they inform the opponent with less than 96 hours to the scheduled game time. A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident, weather or act of god should immediately notify the opponent and the league office. Each situation shall be reviewed by the league office, which shall enter a decision.

### **1.12 - Protests**

Protests regarding the match conditions (ie: field condition, etc) must be made prior to the start of the match and be clearly written on the official game card. Protests regarding the use of illegal players may be made prior to or following the match and be clearly written on the game card. Specific referee decisions can not be protested. No match condition protests will be allowed at NorCal hosted events. All protests must be sent to [pad@norcalpremier.com](mailto:pad@norcalpremier.com)

### **1.13 – Fines**

The NorCal League Office may impose the following fines.

Team drops out of the league before 1<sup>st</sup> game is scheduled: \$250

Team drops out of the league after 1<sup>st</sup> game is played: \$100/ per game missed

No-show to a scheduled game: \$300

Forfeit within 96 hours of the scheduled game time: \$300

## **Section 2: Rosters**

### **2.1 - Player Registration**

Players shall be registered according to US Club Soccer rules.

### **2.2 - Game Roster**

Each team must create their official NorCal roster on your team's online account (Demosphere or GotSoccer). Only players who are listed on the official Game Card will be eligible to play in NorCal Premier League matches. Player's names may not be handwritten on the NorCal Game Card. If any player is not listed on the NorCal Game Card, he/she must be added electronically to the roster before the player is eligible to play. Individual teams may contain up to 26 players, and there is no limit to the number of changes that can be made to the roster provided the players are active in the team's club, or have not played for another club in the League and are not on that club's US Club Roster. Only 18 (14 if U11 or younger) players may be used for NorCal Premier League matches. Each of those players must be on the NorCal Game Card given to the match officials and opposing team before the game.

### **2.3 - US Club Soccer Player Pass**

All players and coaches must present their US Club Player Identification Card to the referee prior to the match. If the individual picture is not on the ID card and the card is not laminated, the individual will not be eligible for the match.

### **2.4 - Forgotten US Club Player Credentials**

If a team forgets their US Club player passes for a NorCal Premier League game the game should be played under protest. Any players that wish to play must have a picture taken prior to the game and submitted to the PAD committee ([pad@norcalpremier.com](mailto:pad@norcalpremier.com)) to verify that the players were eligible to participate. If this is a continuous issue with a team or club then the NorCal PAD committee will make a recommendation that the team is removed from the league.

### **2.5 - Guest Players**

No guest players are allowed in the NorCal Premier League

### **2.6 - Illegal Players**

Any player who does not appear on the official NorCal game card or have a valid US Club Soccer Player Pass issued by the same Club at the time of the match shall be considered an illegal player. Any team using an illegal player shall forfeit the game, the coach of the team using the illegal player will be suspended from the NorCal Premier League for one year, and the Club of the illegal player will incur a \$500 fine.

### **2.7 - In Season Transfers**

Players may only play for one club during the NorCal Premier League calendar year, unless the NorCal League Office grants a transfer. Once a transfer request is granted, a transferred player must sit out 4 games before being eligible to play for his/ her new team. If the player's transferring club DOC gives permission, the player sits out one game. Any player not sitting out will be considered an illegal player. The NorCal League Office has final say on all transfers.

## **Section 3: Game Day Procedures**

### **3.1 - Pre-Game Procedures**

#### Home Team Responsibilities

1. Contact away team to insure proposed game time works for both teams
2. Schedule and post agreed game time on website
3. Provide properly lined field
4. Provide and pay current year certified USSF referees
5. Provide NorCal Game Card (with both teams rosters) to center referee
6. Provide referee with current year US CLUB SOCCER player passes for each player and team official.

#### Visiting team responsibilities:

1. Provide referee US CLUB SOCCER player passes for each player and team official
2. Have a copy of official NorCal Game Card if needed by center referee

### **3.2 - Game Day Procedures**

Each manager should have the following at every game

1. NorCal Game Card
2. US Club Medical Release forms
3. US Club Soccer roster of team
4. US Club Soccer passes for its players and team officials

### **3.3 - Post-Game Procedure**

Home team Responsibilities:

1. Coach or manager sign the game sheet following the game
2. If no red card is given the home team holds onto the game report until the end of the season
3. If a red card is given see red card procedure below – this requires immediate action from the center referee and manager
4. Post score within 24 hours

Visiting team responsibilities:

1. Coach or manager must sign the Referee Game Report following the game
2. Fill out NorCal Game Report online

### **3.4 - Personnel on the bench**

A maximum of 3 team officials are allowed on each team bench. Team officials must have a US Club pass in order to sit in the technical area. It is highly recommended that teams have several credentialed coaches or managers with passes for the team just in case something happens to the head coach. A US Club pass makes a person eligible to coach any team in the Club that a coach or manager is credentialed.

### **3.5 - Score reports**

The home team will post the score on the NorCal website within 24 hours of the game. The home team will keep and file the game card for possible future reference.

### **3.6 - Game Card**

Both teams must have a copy of the NorCal Game Card. The home team will supply the Game Card to the match officials before the match. The away team should have a copy of the Game Card in case it is needed. Following the match, the Officials and each coach need to sign the Game Card. The home team will keep and file the game card for future reference.



## NorCal National Premier League (NPL) Rules and Regulations



*The NorCal NPL serves as the National Premier Leagues (NPL) Division of the NorCal Premier League. The NorCal NPL Division is one of 19 leagues across the United States that are part of the NPL, which has been created to provide a national developmental platform with the highest level of competition in given geographic areas, and to elevate and change the competitive youth soccer landscape based upon fundamental principles in US Club Soccer's 10-year vision. The champions of each NPL (including the NorCal NPL) are awarded a spot in the US Club National Premier League Champions Cup.*

## **Section 1: Competition Rules**

### **1.1 - Playing Rules**

All games under league jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by NorCal Premier League which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/USSF except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA or USSF.

### **1.2 - Point System**

The NorCal NPL shall operate under a point system. The point system shall award three points for a win, one point for a tie and no points for a loss.

In case of a tie in the standings within a league the following will be used as tiebreakers:

1. "Head to Head" points between teams
2. "Head to Head" Goal Differential (up to 4) between teams
3. Overall Goal Differential (up to 4)
4. Goals for (up to 4)
5. Goals against (up to 4)
6. Most points against highest non-tied team in group (i.e. if the 2<sup>nd</sup> place and 3<sup>rd</sup> place team are tied best record vs. 1<sup>st</sup> place wins tiebreaker)
7. Best Goal Differential against highest non-tied team in group
8. Most Shutouts
9. Least Red Cards
10. Coin Toss

If more than two teams are tied, the tie-breaking process will be used until a winner is determined. The tie-breaking procedure does not revert to previous criteria if one team is eliminated.

### **1.3 Game Lengths**

All NPL matches will be played in full. All games will be played 11v11 with a size five ball. The following is the list of game lengths for each age group:

- U14 – play 2x35 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U15 – play 2x40 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U16 – play 2x40 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U17 – play 2x45 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U18 – play 2x45 minutes; 10 minute half time

### **1.4 Fields**

It is expected that all Club Fields be of the highest quality for NPL competition. It is expected that fields are properly lined, mowed, and have nets and corner flags. In case the above conditions are not met, the game will be played under protest (view section on protests). If NorCal finds that a field is not to the standards of the NorCal NPL, clubs may be asked to move their matches to another field. The NPL Committee must approve all league fields.



Expected field dimensions for NorCal NPL matches:

- U14 – Maximum 120 yards x 90 yards; Minimum 100 yards x 55 yards
- U15 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards
- U16 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards
- U17 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards
- U18 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards

All goals are expected to be regulation size 8' height x 24' width.

### **1.5 Substitutions**

Substitutions are allowed at the referee's discretion. A substitution can take place for either team at the following times:

- prior to a kick-off
- a goal kick
- a throw-in
- after the referee stops play for an injury or yellow card

In the U14 and U15 age groups there are unlimited substitutions. *Coaches are reminded that it is their responsibility to handle their substitutions in a professional manner so as to not detract from the game.*

In the U16, U17, U18/19 for Field Players, substitutions are permitted as follows:

- First Half No Re-Entry
- Second Half one Re-Entry

**There will be 1 re-entry per half for an injured GK (no field player re-entry).**

### **1.6 Incomplete Games**

In the event a game cannot be completed, the game counts if half the game was completed. If there is no result and the match is suspended prior to the expiration of one half, the game shall be repeated at a time agreed upon by the competing teams in consultation with the NorCal NPL Committee.

Any team directly responsible for the termination of the game due to poor sportsmanship towards referee, opposing fans, or opposing players will result in that team forfeiting the match. This could also lead to other possible penalties set by the NorCal NPL committee.

### **1.7 No-Shows/Forfeits**

A no-show occurs when a team willfully does not show up to a game agreed to by the teams. Penalties for no-shows are as follows:

- A forfeit to the opposing team – 0-3 loss
- See fines for additional repercussions

A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident, weather, or act of god should immediately notify the opponent and the league office. Each situation shall be reviewed by the NorCal PAD committee, which shall enter a decision.

### **1.8 Protests**

Protests will be allowed prior to the start of a match. A protest must be clearly written on the official Game Card prior to the match in regards to field quality and any other issues in regards to match conditions not being of the highest quality. Protests in regards to eligible players or the playing of illegal players may be made prior to or following the match. Protests must be sent to [pad@norcalpremier.com](mailto:pad@norcalpremier.com). Specific referee decisions shall not be protested.

No Protests will be allowed at NorCal hosted matches except in regards to the possibility of playing illegal players.

### **1.9 - U19 Spring Opt Out**

Due to scheduling issues for some U19 teams in the past, the NorCal NPL will allow U19 teams to “opt out” of NPL Spring League play. Teams must “opt-out” by February 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **Section 2: Rosters**

### **2.1 - Personnel on the Bench**

A maximum of 3 non-playing personnel are allowed on each team bench.

### **2.2 - Game Roster**

Create your official NPL roster online on your team’s GotSoccer team account. Players’ names may not be hand written onto the NorCal Game Card. Only players listed on the official Game Card will be eligible to play in NPL matches. Exceptions during the first weekend of the season may apply – player must have a pass issued by the same club as the team (s)he is playing for.

### **2.3 - Eligibility**

All players and coaches must present their US Club Player Pass to the referee prior to the match. If the individual picture is not on the ID card and the card is not laminated, the individual will not be eligible for the match. All players must be named on the game card presented to the referee at beginning of each game. Players may only play for one Club, their club, during any NPL match. All players from a Club are eligible to participate in NPL matches within the age eligibility limits.

Only 18 players may be dressed for a match. The 18 players must be on the official game card given to the match official and opposing team before the start of the game. Any players listed on the roster that will not play must have a line through their name on the Game Card.

### **2.4 - Guest Players**

No Guest Players will be allowed.

## **2.5 - Illegal Players**

Any player who does not appear on the NorCal Game Card or have a valid US Club Soccer Player Pass issued by the same Club at the time of the match shall be considered an illegal player. Any team using an illegal player shall forfeit the game. In addition, the coach of the team using the illegal player will be suspended from NPL competition for one year. It will also result in a \$500 Club fine.

## **2.6 - In Season Transfers**

Transfers are only allowed with permission from the NorCal NPL committee. Once a transfer request is submitted to the NPL committee, a transferred player must sit out 5 games before being eligible to play for his/her new team. An exception to the rule is if the players transferring club DOC gives permission, the player only sits out 1 game. Any player not sitting out will be considered an illegal player. The League Office has final say on all Transfers.

# **Section 3: Game Day Procedures**

## **3.1 - Pre-Game Procedures**

### Home Team

- Schedule and post game time/location on website
- Provide quality field equipped with goals, nets, flags and properly lined
- Assign qualified current year certified referees

### Visiting Team

- Respond to any communication requests from the home team in regards to match.

## **3.2 - Game Day Procedures**

At each NPL match both teams must to have possession of:

- Game Card - home team provides a copy for the center referee
- US CLUB SOCCER player passes for each player

### Required Pre-Game Procedure

Approximately five minutes prior to each NPL match teams will conduct an International "Walk-Out." Following the Walk-Out the teams should shake hands with the referees and the opposing players. It is our hope to bring camaraderie and respect between the teams and referees prior to the start of the match. In case of a highly impacted game schedule the walk-out can be waved in order to help games start on time.

### Recommended Pre-Game Procedures

NorCal highly recommends that the host club of an NPL match provide the following for their opponent/referees:

- 1) Benches for both teams.
- 2) Easy-up or bench cover set up for both Home and Away team.
- 3) Water for both teams and referees

### Other Pre-Game Possibilities

Some clubs have the ability to go above and beyond. If possible clubs may provide the following:

- 1) Play music prior to the match or at halftime.
- 2) Play the National Anthem prior to the match after the team's walk-on and before they shake the referee and opponents hands.

### **3.3 - Post-Game Procedures**

#### Home Team

- Coach or Managers signs the NorCal Game Card following the game.
- Home team posts score within 24 hours – instructions can be found on the website.
- Report goals and assists for home team scorers.
- Coaches or DOC fills out the NorCal NPL Online Game Report.
- Report any red card (home or away) to NorCal PAD within 24 hours.
- Failure to post the score within 24 hours may result in a fine.

#### Visiting Team

- Coach or Managers signs the NorCal Game Card following the game.
- If Home team did not post the score within 24 hours, Away team posts the score and informs the NPL Coordinator.
- Report goals and assists for home team scorers.
- Fill out NorCal NPL Online Game Report.

## **Section 4: Club Bond, Fines, and Penalties**

### **4.1 - Bond Intent**

The primary intent of the bond is to insure the clubs; coaches and managers fulfill their responsibilities when playing in the NorCal NPL. Bond money will be used to cover fines accumulated by the Club's teams during the season. Club fines are not limited to the Bond amount.

All fine money collected will be used as travel money to help NorCal NPL Champions teams attend the US Club NPL National Finals.

### **4.2 - Fines**

- A. Team dropping from league after NPL acceptance - \$350 per team
- B. Forfeits, no-shows or Cancellations under 96 hours notice - \$300 (used for field and referees)
- C. Forfeits, no-shows or Cancellations with 96 hours notice - \$100 per game
- D. Playing illegal players - \$500.00 per instance
- E. Failure to schedule matches by the league scheduled deadline - \$50 per game
- F. Failure to reschedule a cancelled match within 48 hours - \$50 per game
- G. Home team failure to report score within 24 hours - \$20 per game (each club will receive a warning before being fined for score reporting)
- H. Failure to Provide three current year certified referees - \$50 per missing referee

### **4.3 - Other Penalties**

Accumulation of two no-shows for a club in NPL shall result in the Club's termination from NPL.

NorCal State Cup Younger (U9-U13) Rules and Regulations



## Section 1: Competition Rules

### 1.1 – Playing Rules

All State Cup games shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by NorCal Premier League which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/USSF except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA or USSF.

### 1.2 – Point System

The NorCal State Cup(s) U9 to U13 shall operate under a point system. The point system shall award six points for a win, three points for a tie, one point for a shutout (no shutout points will be earned for a 0 – 0 tie), 1 point for each goal up to three, and no points for a loss.

### 1.3 – Tie Breakers

In case of a tie in the standings within a flight the following will be used as tie breakers:

1. “Head to head” Points (win/lose/draw) between teams
2. “Head to head” Goal Differential between teams
3. Overall Goal Differential (up to 4 per game)
4. Goals for (up to 4 per game)
5. Goals against (up to 4 per game)
6. Coin toss

If more than two teams are tied, the tie-breaking process will be used until a winner is determined. The tie-breaking procedure does not revert to previous criteria if one team is eliminated.

In case of a tie in the standings between teams in different flights the following will be used as tie breakers:

1. “Head to head” Goal Differential between teams
2. Overall Goal Differential (up to 4 per game)
3. Goals for (up to 4 per game)
4. Goals against (up to 4 per game)
5. Coin toss

### 1.4 – Game Details

| Age     | Game Length             | # of Players | Roster Size | Field Length               | Field Width               | Ball Size | # of Referees |
|---------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| U9-U10  | 2x25 min<br>10 min half | 8v8          | 14          | Min 50 yrd<br>Max 90 yrd   | Min 35 yrd<br>Max 60 yrd  | 4         | 2             |
| U11     | 2x30 min<br>10 min half | 8v8          | 14          | Min 60 yrd<br>Max 90 yrd   | Min 40 yrd<br>Max 60 yrd  | 4         | 2             |
| U12     | 2x35 min<br>10 min half | 11v11        | 18          | Min 80 yrd<br>Max 110 yrd  | Min 50 yrd<br>Max 80 yrd  | 4         | 3             |
| U13-U14 | 2x35 min<br>10 min half | 11v11        | 18          | Min 100 yrd<br>Max 130 yrd | Min 55 yrd<br>Max 100 yrd | 5         | 3             |



### **1.5 – Fields**

The playing field used by each team must be lined according to FIFA standards with goals (U9 –U11 recommended goal size is 7’x21’ but game can be played as long as both goals are the same size) nets and flags. The goal of each club shall be to provide an enjoyable experience for the fans, players, officials and everyone involved with the staging of a soccer game.

### **1.6 – Substitutions**

Substitutions are at the referee’s discretion. A substitution can take place for either team at the following times:

1. Prior to a kick-off
2. A goal kick
3. A throw-in
4. Or after the referee stops play for an injury or yellow card

Unlimited substitutions are allowed. NorCal reminds all coaches that it is their responsibility to handle their substitutions in a professional manner so as not to detract from the game.

### **1.7 - Ties in Group Round**

If a NorCal Cup First or Second Round match is tied after regulation, the tie stands and will be posted as a tie.

### **1.8 – Matches Needing a Winner**

For matches needing a winner, the team with the most goals after regulation time will be the winning team. For U9 – U13 teams, if the Quarter-final, Semi-final or Championship NorCal Cup match is tied after regulation - two 5 minute “Golden Goal” periods will be played. Teams will have a short break before the first overtime. After 5 minutes, teams will change sides, with no break, and play the remaining 5 minutes. If the game is still tied after the overtime periods, standard Penalty Kicks will decide the winning team. All Pk’s, for all ages, in all situations, should be taken from the standard spot- 12 yards.

*Please note: Please make sure you arrive for your game knowing if the game can end in a draw or if a winning team is required.*

### **1.9 - Incomplete games**

In the event a game cannot be completed, the game counts if half the game was completed. If there is no result and the match is suspended prior to the expiration of one half, the game shall be repeated at a time agreed upon by the competing teams in consultation with the league office.

### **1.10 - No- shows/forfeits:**

Until the Quarter-finals, all forfeit situations in the Younger ‘Cup(s) are handled by the Tournament Director to make sure that the gaining or losing of points by forfeit does not elevate or lower teams into Divisions that will have a harmful impact on the event. As an



example, it would not help the overall tournament to have a #1 seed lose a game by forfeit to the #48 seed. This is why it is critical for all games to be played to assure the seeding process is accurate.

A no-show occurs when a team willfully does not show up at a game agreed to by the teams. Penalties for no-shows are as follows:

- A “no show” for a home team game results in the team having to pay for the fields and referees as an away game.
- A “no show” for an away team results in the team having to pay for the fields and referees and to return to play the game; and again pay for the fields and the referees.
- A report for all teams who have a “no show” will be sent to the PAD Committee for further action. A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident, weather or “Act of God” should immediately notify the opponent and the Tournament Director. Each situation will be reviewed by the league office, which will enter a decision.

## **Section 2: Rosters**

### **2.1 – Player Registration**

All players shall be registered according to US Club Soccer rules.

### **2.2 – NorCal Cup Team Roster**

Each team must create their official NorCal Roster on their team’s official online account. *Rosters will be capped at 26 players, and once frozen teams may only use players off this 26-player roster. Roster freeze dates will be posted on the NorCal State Cup Younger Calendar. There will be a window from December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 to January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 during which time White, Blue and Green players will be allowed to be added to the Red teams for Cup play in January and February, 2014.* These days may be adjusted due to scheduling of games.

### **2.3 – Game Roster**

Only players who are listed on the official Game Card will be eligible to play in NorCal Cup matches. Player’s names may not be handwritten on the NorCal Game Card. If any player is not listed on the NorCal Game Card, he/she must be added electronically to the roster before the player is eligible to play. Only 18 (14 if U11 or younger) players may be used for NorCal Cup matches. Each of those players must be on the NorCal Game Card given to the match officials and opposing team before the game.

### **2.4 – US Club Soccer Player Pass**

All players and coaches must present their US Club Player Identification Card to the referee prior to the match. If the individual picture is not on the ID card and the card is not laminated, the individual will not be eligible for the match.

### **2.5 – Guest Players**

No Guest Players will be allowed. Only players who are registered with the Club the team represents may compete on behalf of the Club in the NorCal State Cup(s). A player

may not be registered for two NorCal Clubs during the NorCal Cup(s) or League play.

## **2.6 – Illegal Players**

Any player who does not appear on the official NorCal game Card or have a valid US Club Soccer Player Pass issued by the same Club at the time of the match shall be considered an illegal player. Any team using an illegal players shall forfeit the game, the coach of the team using the illegal player will be suspended from the NorCal Premier League and all of it's events for one year, and the Club of the illegal player will incur a \$500 fine.

## **2.7 – “Cup Tied”**

Players may only compete for one Club in the NorCal State Cup(s). A Club may place players on more than one 26-player team roster in different age divisions. However, players may not play on two different teams in the same age group. For example, they may not play for a first team in the Gold Division and the second team in the Silver Division. A player may play up in an older age group while also competing in their true age group.

## **2.8 – Transfers**

For U9 - U13 teams, there will be no transfers allowed from one Club to another Club after August 15th, 2014 for the purpose of competing in the 2014 NorCal State Cup(s) unless permission is given by the NorCal State Cup(s) Committee.

# **Section 3: Game Day Procedures**

## **3.1 - Pre-Game Procedures**

### Home Team Responsibilities

1. Contact away team to insure proposed game time works for both teams
2. Schedule and post agreed game time on website
3. Provide properly lined field
4. Provide and pay current year certified USSF referee's
5. Provide NorCal Game Card (with both teams rosters) to center referee
6. Provide referee with current year US CLUB SOCCER player passes for each player and team official.

### Visiting team responsibilities:

1. Provide referee US CLUB SOCCER player passes for each player and team official
2. Have a copy of official NorCal Game Card if needed by center referee

## **3.2 - Game Day Procedures**

Each manager should have the following at every game

1. NorCal Game Card
2. US Club Medical Release forms
3. US Club Soccer roster of team
4. US Club Soccer passes for its players and team officials

### **3.3 - Post-Game Procedure**

Home team Responsibilities:

1. Coach or manager sign the game sheet following the game
2. If no red card is given the home team holds onto the game report until the end of the season
3. If a red card is given see red card procedure below – this requires immediate action from the center referee and manager
4. Post score within 24 hours

Visiting team responsibilities:

1. Coach or manager must sign the game sheet following the game
2. Fill out NorCal Game Report online

### **3.4 - Personnel on the bench**

A maximum of 3 team officials are allowed on each team bench. Team officials should have a US Club pass in order to sit in the technical area. It is highly recommended that teams have several credentialed coaches or managers with passes for the team just in case something happens to the head coach. A US Club pass makes a person eligible to coach any team in the Club that a coach or manager is credentialed.

### **3.5 - Score reports**

The home team will post the score on the NorCal website within 24 hours of the game. The home team will keep and file the game card for possible future reference.

### **3.6 - Game Card**

Both teams must have a copy of the NorCal Game Card. The home team will supply the Game Card to the match officials before the match. The away team should have a copy of the Game Card in case it is needed. Following the match, the Officials and each coach need to sign the Game Card. The home team will keep and file the game card for future reference.

## **Section 4: Number of Games/ Divisions/ Rankings**

### **4.1 - Number of Games**

All teams will play a minimum of seven (7) games and a maximum of nine games.

### **4.2 - State Cup(s) Championship/Rankings/Divisions/rounds**

Only the “NorCal State Division” Champion will be considered State Champion in each age group. All other Championship teams must affix the divisional category in front of their Championship.

### **4.3 - Rankings**

The NorCal Seeding Committee seeds all NorCal State Cup teams. The NorCal Seeding committee has the final say on the ranking of teams. Every effort will be made to reduce travel; however, the major focus will be to maintain the integrity of the seeding that has enabled the NorCal Cup(s) to avoid having higher ranked teams knock each other out in

the early rounds. Teams are ranked for Group Stage based on the following, in order of importance:

1. Previous years state cup finish
2. Fall league results
3. Spring league results
4. Seeding committee review and final recommendations

#### **4.4 - Divisions**

There will be a minimum of 3 divisions per age group. Divisions will be created according to level of ability of how they are ranked. As NorCal State cup grows, additional divisions will be added:

1. Red Division: consists of 48 to 64 teams- top division-
2. White Division: consists of 48 to 64 teams
3. Blue division: consists of 24 to 48 teams
4. Green division: consist of 20 to 48 teams

#### **4.5 - Description of Rounds:**

*1<sup>st</sup> round games:* Each team will play 3 games within a flight in the division they have been placed into (Red, White, Blue, Green). Every effort will be made to keep these games local, but approximately 5% of teams will have to travel to maintain the integrity of the event. NorCal's main goal is to ensure that each flight is balanced with a 1, 2, 3 and 4 seed.

*2<sup>nd</sup> round games:* After the completion of the 1<sup>st</sup> round, teams will be re-ranked and re-distributed within their divisions. For the U9 and U10 age groups, the 2<sup>nd</sup> round games will be played at central sites. For the U11-U13 age groups clubs will schedule the 1<sup>st</sup> game, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> games will be played at central sites. Central sites are TBD. Check the calendar for more information.

*3<sup>rd</sup> round games:* The 3<sup>rd</sup> round, which consists of quarter-finals, semi-final and finals will all be played at central sites.

## Section 5: Fines

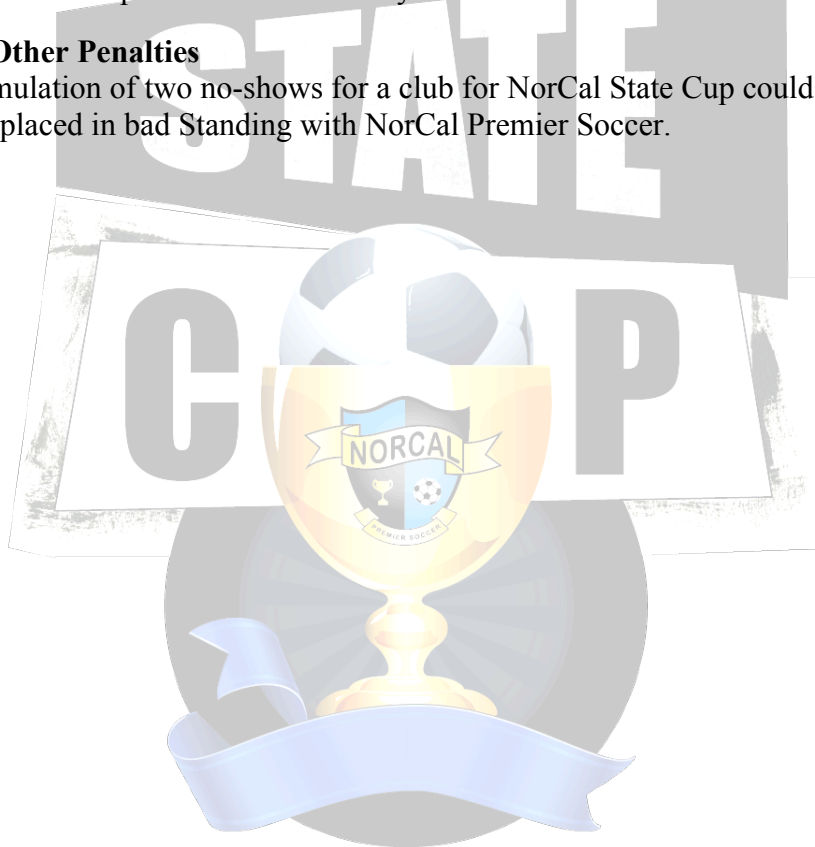
### 5.1- Fines

1. Team dropping from event after schedules posted - \$250 per team. In addition, could forfeit registration fee as well.
2. Forfeits, no-shows or Cancellations under 96 hours notice - \$300 (money used to pay for field and referees). Game will still need to be played.
  - A “no show” for a home team game results in the team having to pay for the fields and referees as an away game. Game will be rescheduled and home team will have to travel to the away team field
  - A “no show” for an away team results in the team having to pay for the fields and referees and to return to play the game; and again pay for the fields and the referees.

All fines are imposed and collected by NorCal Premier Soccer.

### 5.2 - Other Penalties

Accumulation of two no-shows for a club for NorCal State Cup could result in the Club's being placed in bad Standing with NorCal Premier Soccer.



**NorCal State Cup Older (U14-U19) Rules and Regulations**





## Section 1: Competition Rules

### 1.1 Playing Rules

All games under league jurisdiction shall be played according to the rules and regulations recognized by NorCal Premier League which shall be the same rules set by FIFA/USSF except for those exceptions authorized by FIFA or USSF.

### 1.2 Point System

The NorCal State Cup Group Phase shall operate under a point system. The point system shall award three points for a win, one point for a tie and no points for a loss.

In case of a tie in the standings within a group the following will be used as tiebreakers:

1. "Head to Head" points between teams
2. "Head to Head" Goal Differential (up to 4) between teams
3. Overall Goal Differential (up to 4)
4. Goals for (up to 4)
5. Goals against (up to 4)
6. Most points against highest non-tied team in group (i.e. if the 2<sup>nd</sup> place and 3<sup>rd</sup> place team are tied best record vs. 1<sup>st</sup> place team would win tiebreaker)
7. Best Goal Differential against highest non-tied team in group
8. Most Shutouts
9. Least Red Cards
10. Coin Toss

If more than two teams are tied, the tie-breaking process will be used until a winner is determined. The tie-breaking procedure does not revert to previous criteria if one team is eliminated.

### 1.3 Game Lengths

All NorCal State Cup Group Phase and Knockout Phase matches will be played in full. All games will be played 11v11 with a size five ball. The following is the list of game lengths for each age group:

- U14 – play 2x35 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U15 – play 2x40 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U16 – play 2x40 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U17 – play 2x45 minutes; 10 minute half time
- U18 – play 2x45 minutes; 10 minute half time

#### **1.4 Fields**

It is expected that all Club Hosted Fields are of the highest quality for NorCal State Cup competition. It is expected that fields are properly lined, mowed, and have nets and corner flags. If you feel a field is not of proper quality please play the match under protest (view section on protests). If NorCal finds that a field is not to the standards of the NorCal State Cup, clubs may be asked to move their matches to another field and the match would be replayed.

Please view the expected field dimensions for NorCal State Cup Club Hosted matches:

U14 – Maximum 120 yards x 90 yards; Minimum 100 yards x 55 yards

U15 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards

U16 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards

U17 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards

U18 – Maximum 130 yards x 100 yards; Minimum 105 yards x 60 yards

All goals are expected to be regulation size 8' height x 24' width.

#### **1.5 Ties in Group Phase**

If a NorCal State Cup Group Phase match is tied after regulation, the tie stands and will be posted as a tie.

#### **1.6 Ties in Preliminary Round, Qualifying Round, and Knockout Phase**

For matches that need a winner, the team with the most goals after regulation time will be the winner. If the match is tied after regulation, two full-time 5 minute overtime periods will be played. If the game is still tied after the two overtime periods, then kicks from the mark per FIFA will determine the Champion.

**Please note: Make sure you arrive for your game knowing if the game can end in a draw or if a winning team is required.**

#### **1.7 Substitutions**

A team may have no more than 18 players dressed for each game. Substitutions are allowed at the referee's discretion. A substitution can take place for either team at the following times:

- 1) Prior to a kick-off
- 2) A goal kick
- 3) A throw-in
- 4) After the referee stops play for an injury or yellow card

Unlimited substitutions are allowed but NorCal Premier Soccer reminds all coaches that it is their responsibility to handle their substitutions in a professional manner so as not to detract from the game.

#### **1.8 Personnel on the Bench**

A maximum of 3 non-playing personnel are allowed on each team bench.



## **Section 2: Roster Rules**

### **2.1 - Eligibility**

All players and coaches must present their US Club Player Pass to the referee prior to the match. If the individual picture is not on the ID card and the card is not laminated, the individual will not be eligible for the match. All players must be named on the game card presented to the referee at the beginning of each game or have a written exception from the NorCal State Cup Coordinator.

Players may only play for one Club, their club, during any NorCal State Cup match unless the NorCal State Cup Coordinator approves a transfer in writing (email). Individual teams may contain up to 26 players for the NorCal State Cup. Rosters will be frozen, and players may only be used if they are on the NorCal State Cup roster. Only 18 of 26 players may be used for matches. The 18 players must be on the official game card given to the match official and opposing team before the start of the game. The eight players not being played must have a line through their name on the roster.

### **2.2 - Official Roster**

Create your official State Cup Roster online in your teams GotSoccer account for each round of the NorCal State Cup event.

Player's names may not be hand written onto the NorCal Game Card. Only players listed on the official Game Card will be eligible to play in NorCal State Cup matches. Any team that does not submit a roster by the September 5, 2013 deadline will not be able to participate until their roster is submitted. Teams submitting rosters late will not be able to add any players that registered with US Club Soccer after September 5, 2013.

### **2.3 - Guest Players**

No Guest Players from other clubs will be allowed.

### **2.4 - Illegal Players**

Any player that does not appear on the NorCal Game Card or have a valid US Club Soccer Player Pass at the time of the match shall be considered an illegal player. Any team using an illegal player shall forfeit three points for each game to the opposing team against whom the illegal player was used. In addition, the coach of the team using the illegal player will be suspended from NorCal State Cup.

### **2.5 - Cup Tied – Player Transfers**

Players may only compete for one team per age group in the NorCal State Cup. A club may place players on more than one 26-player team roster but players may not play on two different teams in the same age group. A player may play up in an older age group while competing in their true age group. Once a player plays for a team in a specific age group that player is “Cup Tied” to that team in that age group. The player may not play for any other team in that age group for the remainder of the NorCal State Cup.

## Section 3: Game Day Procedures

### 3.1 - Pre-Game Procedures

#### Home Team Responsibilities

1. Contact away team to insure proposed game time works for both teams
2. Schedule and post agreed game time on website
3. Provide properly lined field
4. Provide and pay current year certified USSF referee's
5. Provide NorCal Game Card (with both teams rosters) to center referee
6. Provide referee with current year US CLUB SOCCER player passes for each player and team official.

#### Visiting team responsibilities:

1. Provide referee US CLUB SOCCER player passes for each player and team official
2. Have a copy of official NorCal Game Card if needed by center referee

### 3.2 - Game Day Procedures

#### Each manager should have the following at every game

1. NorCal Game Card
2. US Club Medical Release forms
3. US Club Soccer roster of team
4. US Club Soccer passes for its players and team officials

### 3.3 - Post-Game Procedure

#### Home team Responsibilities:

1. Coach or manager sign the game sheet following the game
2. If no red card is given the home team holds onto the game report until the end of the season
3. If a red card is given see red card procedure below – this requires immediate action from the center referee and manager
4. Post score within 24 hours

#### Visiting team responsibilities:

1. Coach or manager must sign the Referee Game Report following the game
2. Fill out NorCal Game Report online

### 3.4 - Personnel on the bench

A maximum of 3 team officials are allowed on each team bench. Team officials must have a US Club pass in order to sit in the technical area. It is highly recommended that teams have several credentialed coaches or managers with passes for the team just in case something happens to the head coach. A US Club pass makes a person eligible to coach any team in the Club that a coach or manager is credentialed.

### 3.5 - Score reports

The home team will post the score on the NorCal website within 24 hours of the game. The home team will keep and file the game card for possible future reference.

### **3.6 - Game Card**

Both teams must have a copy of the NorCal Game Card. The home team will supply the Game Card to the match officials before the match. The away team should have a copy of the Game Card in case it is needed. Following the match, the Officials and each coach need to sign the Game Card. The home team will keep and file the game card for future reference.

## **Section 4 – Number of Games/ Division/ Rankings**

### **4.1 - Number of Games**

All teams will play a minimum of four games and a maximum of nine games. Most teams will play between five and seven games.

### **4.2 - Number of Cups**

There will be a minimum of two Cups and a maximum of nine Cups awarded per age group.

### **4.3- State Champions**

Only the “NorCal State Division” Champion will be considered State Champion.

### **4.4 - 2014 US Club National Cup**

The U14-U17 Boys and Girls NorCal State Cup Champions (State Division) will be automatically accepted into the 2015 US Club Soccer National Cup Finals. Champions will still need to apply for the event if they plan to attend.

### **4.5 - Preliminary Round**

The Preliminary Round consists of a one game playoff played before the Group Stage. The winner of the Preliminary Match will move into the State/Premier/Gold Division Group Stage and the loser will move into the Silver/Bronze/Copper Division Group Stage. The Preliminary Round game is only played in divisions that are very large and need the early game in order to ensure proper competition in the Group Stage. The higher seeded teams will host the preliminary matches.

### **4.6 - Group Stage**

The Group Stage is played in every age group of the NorCal State Cup. This stage is used to determine a team’s placement for the final rounds of the Cup. The top two teams in each group will be placed in the highest Qualifying/Knockout Phase brackets. The bottom two teams in each group will be placed in the lowest Qualifying/Knockout Phase brackets. NorCal Groups are determined based on:

- 1) High School Season of Play (U15-U18)
- 2) NorCal State Cup Ranking
- 3) Travel Considerations

The scheduled Home Team will host these matches as well as provide and pay the referees.

#### **4.6 - Qualifying**

Qualifying consists of a one game playoff. Following the Group Stage, the game is played in divisions that teams cannot qualify directly for a Round of 16 game. The Qualifying game determines a team's final placement for the NorCal State Cup Knockout Phase. The higher seeded teams as determined by the Revised NorCal State Cup Rankings, hosts Qualifying Matches.

#### **4.8 - Knockout Phase**

The Knockout Phase is the final portion of the NorCal State Cup and takes place in every age group. The Knockout Phase consists of the Round of 16, Quarterfinals, Semifinals, and Finals. Once a team is beaten in the Knockout Phase they are eliminated from NorCal State Cup play. The higher seeded team will have hosting rights for their Round of 16 match, however, NorCal may move games to a Central Location if necessary or if agreed upon by the teams. All Quarterfinal, Semifinal, and Final matches will be hosted at a NorCal Hosted Site.

#### **4.9 - Group Stage Rankings**

The NorCal Seeding Committee seeds all NorCal State Cup teams. Every effort will be made to reduce travel; however, the major focus will be to maintain the integrity of the seeding that has enabled the NorCal Cup(s) to avoid having higher ranked teams knock each other out in the early rounds. Teams are ranked for Group Stage based on the following, in order of importance:

- 1) State Cup Placement
- 2) Fall League Placement
- 3) Spring League Placement
- 4) Other Events

#### **4.10 - Qualifying/Knockout Phase Re-Rank**

Following the Group Stage teams will be re-ranked and placed into brackets for the Qualifying and Knockout Phase based on the re-ranking. The following criteria is used for the re-rank:

1. Group Stage Placement (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>)
2. Initial State Cup Ranking

Teams from the same group are moved to opposite sides of the bracket resulting in some shuffling of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place teams

# NorCal Player Development Program (PDP)



## **Section 1 - PDP Mission & Information**

### **1.1 - Objective of the Player Development Program**

The Objective of the PDP is to identify, develop, and showcase the top motivated and talented players in Northern California, provide specialized training and games with experienced coaches, and offer opportunities for US National team, International Professional Soccer Clubs, and College exposure. In addition, the PDP seeks to recommend some of its most talented players to attend U.S. Club Soccer's id2 Player Identification Program Training Camps.

### **1.2 - PDP Player Profile**

All recommended players should be motivated and amongst the top players in your region. In addition, they should be players who are dominating due to their soccer ability rather than size. We would like to be clear, while there are some players who may be the best in their age group due to their size and athleticism, there are others who are smaller, and talented but may not be as effective at this time. We are very interested in those players who have talent and are motivated, but due to their size and physical immaturity are not necessarily as effective at this time as those larger and more physically mature players. Finally, we are looking for players with a feeling and a vision of the game, extremely well developed skills and a passion for playing their sport. The type of player that should be recommended will vary according to the age group and program. For example, when we host a Professional Club Coach we may ask to a doc or coach to recommend only the top players from the state, while in our Regional Training Program we are looking for top, motivated players who are representative of the top players per region.

## **Section 2 – PDP Programs Overview**

### **2.1 - Regional PDP**

*Birth Years:* 2002, 2003, 2004 (Boys & Girls)

*Season:* August - June

*Selection Process:* By DOC recommendation during appropriate recommendation windows

\*Note all recommendations are subject to an evaluation with our PDP staff, not everyone recommended will be invited to continue with the program and only the top players in the region should be recommended.

*Overview:* These groups (one in each region) will train once per month, on Mondays. Selected players will get the opportunity to participate in playdates against other regions and the International Development program (IDP boys only).

### **2.2 - State Pool PDP**

*Birth Years:* 2001, 2000 (Boys & Girls)

*Season:* August-July

*Selection Process:* By PDP scouting and performance at Regional PDP trainings



*Overview:* This group train once per month at a state wide central location, on Wednesdays. Selected players will get the opportunity to participate in a residential State camp and an out of state camp, where they compete against other state PDP programs. They will also be evaluated and recommended if suitable for ID2, US Training Center and National Team programs.

### **2.3 - NPL PDP**

*Birth Years:* 1999, 1998 (Boys & Girls of NPL clubs only)

*Season:* January - July

*Selection Process:* By Scouting and strong DOC recommendations during window (early December)

*Overview:* This group will train once a month with combined regions in central locations, on Wednesdays. Selected players will get the opportunity to participate in a state camp and play in college showcase games through the year.

### **2.4 - IDP**

*Birth Years:* 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 (Boys only)

*Season:* September - June

*Selection Process:* By scouting and performance in State and Regional trainings.

*Overview:* A very top selection of boys born in 2001-02-03-04 of about 100-120 players from the current PDP pool. Group will train two Mondays a month with combined regions. Selected players will get the opportunity to play games and tournaments throughout the year and potential trial opportunities with professional International clubs.

## Section 3 – Program Calendars

### Yearly Calendar for each PDP event & age group (season 2014-15)

Note: PDP adopts calendar year for players' selection (Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>)

| Event                          | Age Group  | Boys' Calendar  | Girls' Calendar   | Objective  |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Regional Pool-Team (Nor Cal)   | B. & G. -2002-2003 & 2004  | August-June<br>( Break in December & July)  | August-June<br>(Break in December & July)   | Once a month specialized training specific to age group. Regional Play Dates and Informal games between regions.   |
| State Pool (Nor Cal)           | Boys & Girls. 2000<br>Boys & Girls 2001                            | August-June<br>Break in December<br>July 2 day summer camp  | August-June<br>Break in December<br>July 2 day summer camp  | Once a month specialized training. Identify & Recommend players to ID2 and "TC". Overnight Camp, Play games , Form teams to attend tournaments.                                    |
| IDP (Nor Cal)                  | Boys only<br>01,02,03,04   | September-June<br>Working with Fiorentina and other professional clubs.                                 | Not available yet.  | Train twice a month. Mini camps and game-tournament. Showcase top talented players to be invited to train with (International) Professional Clubs (pre-season or during the year). |
| State Pool Older (Nor Cal NPL) | Boys & Girls. 99-98  | December-June<br>State Camp in July   | December-June<br>State Camp in July   | Regional training twice a season (Fall – Winter) State training twice Summer camp and college showcase games.  |
| ID2 (US Club)                  | Boys 2001<br>Girls 2000  | Id2 selection – twice a year<br>February & late July-early Aug.<br>Regional Camp TBA.<br>(Spring, Fall) | Id2 selection – twice a year<br>February & late July-early Aug.<br>Regional Camp TBA (Spring, Fall) | Identify & select top 10-12 players to recommend to Regional Camp.<br>Regional Camp -Identify top 18 players for International traveling team (boys only)                          |
| US Training Center (TC) (USSF) | Boys<br>1998-99-00-01-02<br>Girls<br>1996-97-98-99-00<br>-01-02-03 | Jan. to Dec. (once a month)   | Jan. to Dec. (once a month)   | Once a month specialized training. Identify and recommend players to US Youth National team camp (specific age groups) Showcase games for selected players.                        |

"Id2" Player identification program organized and run by US Club Soccer. For more information go to:

[http://www.usclubsoccer.org/main.aspx?sec\\_id=16&guid=f264502d-c128-47d4-8cdb-f1426d0023eb](http://www.usclubsoccer.org/main.aspx?sec_id=16&guid=f264502d-c128-47d4-8cdb-f1426d0023eb)

"TC " National scouting program run by USSF. Hugo Perez & Andres Deza are the USSF National technical directors for NorCal Region. They will identify & recommend players to National Camp for possible National Team participation.

"IDP"- International development program provides opportunities for a very selected group of Nor Cal players to train and work with International professional clubs.



## Frequently asked Questions

**Question:** *May I use a player from another club in a NorCal League/Cup if that club is not competing in the event?*

**Answer:** You may only use players who are registered with your club. If the player is transferred into your club before the roster deadline they may compete with your club's team. However, you may not list the player as a guest player for competitions, they must be a player for your club.

**Question:** *We have a class three team and a class one team. We would like to have some of the class three players on our NorCal Cup roster even though they play on a different team. May we do this?*

**Answer:** As long as the players are registered with US Club Soccer in your club, they are on your approved 26-player roster, and they are not playing with their team in your age group, you may allow them to compete with your team.

**Question:** *We have a player who plays up on the U11 team but the club would like her to play in her own age group as well. Is this allowed?*

**Answer:** As long as the player is registered in your club, is the proper age and is on the teams 26 player roster, they may play with your team.

**Question:** *May a U12 player play for their team as well as for a U13 team?*

**Answer:** Yes, a player may play in their own age group as well as an age group up.

**Question:** *We have a player who plays for a rival club but would like to play for us in the NorCal Cup. He/She is attending a US Club tournament in October. His/Her club does not want to release him to our club. May we put him on our roster?*

**Answer:** No, the player must be registered under US Club Soccer with only one club. We recommend the player attends the tournament as a guest player.

**Question:** *We are having trouble scheduling our match with our next opponent. What can we do?*

**Answer:** Try to send an email to another officer in the club that you are trying to contact. Make sure all your communication is documented in the comments box for your game so NorCal can view the communication record. If you are still unable to get a response, contact the proper NorCal League or Cup coordinator so they can assist you in scheduling the match.

**Question:** *We had a game scheduled and a team emailed to cancel the match the day before. We had referees and fields already lined up. What is the policy?*

**Answer:** If a team cancels or forfeits a match, they must notify opponents 72 hours in advance or they will be charged with field and referee fees.