



UNITED SOCCER CLUBS

PLAYOFFS 2019-2020

Veterans Park

College Station, TX

MAY 16-17, 2020

RULES – POLICIES - PROCEDURES



USC 2019 – 2020 PLAY-OFFS

ELIGIBILITY

- a. The USC 2019-2020 PLAY- OFFS is a single round robin competition consisting of a National and Regional Flight made up of 4 teams each.
- b. Participating teams shall consist of U13 (2007) through U18/19 (2002/2001) boy and girl teams whose players and sideline personnel hold valid US Club Soccer Pass-cards.
- c. This is a restricted event open only to Member Clubs, in “Good Standing” that have teams registered with USC that have played in the 2019-2020 USC Champions League or USC Eastern or Western Conference competitions.
- d. Teams wanting to participate must submit their entry application via the USC Play-Offs Team Registration portal on the USC website www.usctx.org by March 31, 2020.
- e. Teams will be notified of their acceptance and flight level at the end of the season.
- f. USC Champions League teams that have qualified for the US Club Soccer NPL Finals or ENPL National Playoffs are ineligible to participate in the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs.
- g. Teams that qualify for US Club Soccer NPL Finals, ENPL National Playoffs, or ENPL National Finals are required to play in the Competition for which they qualify. (see Fees and Penalties)
- h. Teams registering to participate in the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs are required to play if accepted. (see Fees and Penalties)
- i. Any club having a balance due, to USC, for player registration and/or league game fees after May 1st, will be placed in “Bad Standing” and their teams declared ineligible to participate in any of the USC or US Club Soccer Competitions.

FEES AND PENALTIES

- a. The entry fee of \$800 per team. No teams will be charged until accepted.
NOTE: If the event is cancelled, due to inclement weather, the USC Board of Directors will determine any amount deemed refundable based on the time of cancellation.
- b. A \$1,000 penalty will be imposed for any team that does not fulfill the requirements, set forth under ELIGIBILITY paragraphs g.
- c. A \$800 penalty will be imposed for any team that does not fulfill the requirements, set forth under ELIGIBILITY paragraphs h.
- d. Each USC Member Club is responsible for all fees and/or penalties, for their teams.
 - a) Payments can be made in the form of a check or money-order
 - b) Checks and Money-Orders should be made payable to EDDOA and mailed to:
9523 Oakland Lake Way
Missouri City, TX 77459

EVENT AUTHORITY

The Event Director shall have ultimate authority over all Event competitions and discipline matters. The interpretation of the rules and all decisions of the Event Director are final. The Event Director may be assisted by USC BOD and EVENT D&P Committee.

In all matters of discipline, except incidents of misconduct towards a game official, the Event Director shall render a determination or involve the EVENT D&P Committee as necessary.



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COMPETITION FORMAT

The USC National Flight and Regional Flight will consist of round-robin play. The Event Director, in consultation with the Event Committee:

- a. Reserves the right to determine the size of each competitive group, and the right to alter the groups and format to account for larger or uneven numbers of teams if necessary.
- b. Shall determine the schedule and start times of all games and altering the schedule as necessary for inclement weather.
- c. Champions in both USC National Flight and USC Regional Flight will advance to the appropriate US Club Soccer Finals. Please see attachment A, B & C for teams advancing to US Club Finals and the locations thereof.

COMPETITION SEEDING

At any time, there are not enough teams in one flight level to fill the allotted number of positions needed in the 2019-2020 Play-Offs the next flight level will be used.

Since the Champions Flight (Eastern and Western Conferences) consist of teams playing in different zones, Zone 1 (Eastern Conference) and Zone 2 (Western Conference) who do not compete against each other during the Seasonal Year. The goal is to place as close to an equal number of teams from both zones in a flight as possible. The following method is used to try and reach this goal and determines positioning into the Play-Offs for each flight:

- Four (4) teams needed – next 2 highest finisher from each zone
- Three (3) teams needed – next 2 highest finisher from each zone with final position going to the zone with least number of teams.
- Two (2) teams needed – next highest finisher from each zone
- One (1) teams needed – next highest finisher from zone with least number of teams in flight.

NOTE: In the event there are less than the number of teams needed registered into the Play-Offs, the USC Board of Directors will determine the final seeding of the team.

ROSTER RULES

Any player registered with USC and have been issued a pass-card for a US Club Soccer member club, academy or sanctioned league team, who is a member of the designated age group or younger, is eligible to be placed on the Event roster. All rosters will be frozen at noon the Wednesday prior to the Event. No changes to a roster shall be allowed after this time.

- a. Maximum Roster Size: Up to 26 players. To be placed on an Event roster a player must be a registered with the team's Club and USC two weeks prior to the roster freeze date.
- b. Playing on more than one team: A player may play on only one team during the Event.
- c. Coaching staff and team managers: A least 1 adult must be listed on the official roster and have the appropriate US Club Soccer adult pass-card.
- d. Game roster size: Up to 18 players may be selected from the Event roster of up to 26 players.
- e. Players on the Event roster that are not listed on the game day roster must be in plain clothes on the team sideline or watch from the spectator sideline.



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PLAYERS AT US CLUB SOCCER NATIONAL CUP FINALS

After the US Club Soccer Regional competitions and qualifying state cups (USC Play-Offs), for teams qualifying to the US Club Soccer Finals, players may be dropped or added without limitation up to the maximum roster size, as long as any new players to be added were registered with the member club or league team at the start of the team's National Cup XVII Regional competition or qualifying state cup (USC Play-Offs). If the club has had tryouts since the US Club Soccer Regional, they may add up to three new players from such tryouts that have committed to and registered with the club for the next registration year. Any other roster emergency requests shall be determined by the National Cup Tournament Director on a case-by-case basis.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following documents must be available at each game.

- a) Valid US Club Soccer player pass-cards and a USC official roster.
- b) Valid US Club Soccer adult pass-cards will be required for any adult to be on the team sideline - Maximum four (4).

GAME AUTHORITY AND DISCIPLINE

- a. Any player ejected from a game that hasn't served their suspension must sit out the first game played by the team they are participating with in this Event. The player's name must be stricken from the game report and their pass-card must be surrendered to the Event HQ before the game is played.
- b. Any Adult ejected from a game that hasn't served their suspension will not be allowed to be participate in the Event until after game 1 of each age group has been played.
- c. The referee's decision in all matters related to the field and the game itself shall be final. There shall be no protests of any referee's decision or game result.
- d. Red cards issued to players or substitutes during an Event game shall result in that player being suspended for the next Event game, or games, for their team based on the type card issued.
- e. Players issued a red card will be removed from the field and taken to the designated Red Card Area for the remainder of the game. The pass-card for the player issued a red card will surrendered and taken to the USC Event HQ. The coach may pick up the pass-card after the suspension is served.
- f. Team officials or spectators sent off from a match by the referee must leave the facility and cannot return or attend any other USC sanctioned game for the rest of that day. The Event Director and the Event D&P Committee shall have the authority to take further disciplinary action should it be deemed necessary. The pass-card for the team official sent off will be returned to the Club after the conclusion of the Event.
- g. Coaches are responsible for controlling the conduct of their players, bench area, parents, family and friends.
- h. If in the opinion of the referee it is necessary to terminate a game due to the misconduct of a team or others associated with that team, the game shall be forfeited to the opposing team and the matter shall be referred to the EVENT D&P Committee, which may, among other penalties, suspend the team for the remainder of the Event.
- i. If in the opinion of the referee the termination is the result of substantially equivalent misconduct by both teams or by persons associated with both teams, the matter will be resolved by the Event Director and the Event D&P Committee.
- j. At the end of each game, the completed game report, initialed by the referee and both teams' reps, shall be submitted to the Event HQ.



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- k. For serious discipline matters with the potential to incur penalties beyond the issuance of a red card or staff ejection, a Competition Incident Report and a USSF Referee's Report shall be completed and given to the USC Event HQ. The pass-cards for the players and/or team officials involved will be surrendered and taken to the USC Event HQ.
- l. Discipline for the USC National and Regional Event shall be under the jurisdiction of EVENT D&P Committee.

COMPETITION RULES

The following rules shall govern all USC Event competitions:

- a. All games shall be played pursuant to FIFA Laws of the Game, unless stated otherwise in these rules.
- b. Game Lengths: All games 35 minutes halves with a 10 minutes halftime.
- c. In excessive heat conditions, water breaks can be allowed by the referee at his/her discretion, after prior consultation with the Competition Director. U.S. Soccer Federation Heat Guidelines will be used to define procedure during excessive heat conditions.
- d. Ball size: Size 5 for all Ages
- e. All players must wear shin guards. All other equipment rules shall be pursuant to FIFA Laws of the Game.
- f. The home team shall be listed first. The home team shall wear dark-colored uniforms and the away team shall wear light-colored uniforms. In case of uniform color conflicts, the team not following these instructions and shows up with the wrong colors will change uniforms as required.
- g. All injuries should be evaluated by training staff onsite. Head injuries will be evaluated with extreme precaution. In the Event a serious head injury occurs during the Event, the referee or trainer will pull player's pass-card and bring it to the Event HQ. Player will only be allowed to return to play after written clearance is provided by a medical doctor and the onsite trainer has given the approval.

HARD CAST

No player will be allowed to play with a hard cast or metal brace without it being properly padded with a minimum ½ inch of high-density foam or the manufactures recommended protective coating. The referee will determine if the padding is enough to allow the player to play. All other casts will be up to the discretion of the referee and the Competition Director.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- a. Limited Substitutions: ALL AGES... Once a player is substituted in one half of any game, the player may not re-enter the game for the duration of the half. There shall be a maximum of seven (7) substitutions in any half.
- b. In case of a suspected head injury or serious injury, the team can only bring in a player temporarily if they have a remaining substitute. If the injured player comes back on the field after being cleared, the player that previously can in will come off the field and can still be used as an eligible sub and will not count against the team's total number of allowed substitutions during the game provided all the allowed substitutions have not been used.
- c. Substitutions may occur at any stoppage. However, the referee shall have discretion over all substitutions, and may refuse to allow any substitution if, in his/her opinion, the purpose is to disrupt the game.
 - a) Procedure:
 - Coaches or players should give the referee their player card prior to entering the game.
 - Starting 11 players' cards taken prior to kick off.
 - When sub enters the game, their card is taken.
 - Referees return cards to coach at half time.



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- Beginning of second half starting 11 players' cards taken prior to kick off.
- When sub enters the game, their card is taken.
- Cards returned after the game; match reported reviewed and signed.

SCORING

- a) Game Points: Regulation time - 3 points awarded for a win; zero (0) points for a loss. A forfeit shall be recorded as a 1 – 0 win, with one goal being credited. Note: In the Event a game is in progress and is abandoned during the play for any reason, the team getting the forfeit win will be credited with either the forfeit score or the score at the time play concluded, whichever is in their benefit.
- b) Games tied at the end of regulation time will proceed directly to shootout. No overtime period will be played. The winner of the shootout will be awarded 2 points and a bonus goal. The loser will be awarded 1 point. (Example: At end of regulation time the score was 2–2, at the end of penalty kicks the score would be recorded 3-2 in favor of the winner)

TIE-BREAKERS

For teams tied in points at the end of a round-robin competition, tiebreaker criteria shall be:

1. head to head competitions (but not in the case of a three-way tie);
2. goal differential;
3. total goals for;
4. fewest goals allowed; and
5. coin toss.
6. In a case where three teams are tied in points, but one team has defeated the other teams tied in points, the winner of the two games will advance.
7. In addition, once a tiebreaker is used to eliminate one team (i.e. head-to-head, goal differential, etc.), the next tiebreaker in line will be used to determine the winner or team that advances.
8. Only the National and Regional flight winner and 2nd place team in each age group should report to the specific award area after the completion of the team's final game.

GAME START TIMES AND RESCHEDULING

- a. All games shall start at the designated time. A forfeit shall be declared if a team cannot field a minimum of eight (8) at the start time of the game. However, the Event Director shall have the authority to adjust the schedule in cases where a team's arrival has been delayed due to unforeseen travel or weather conditions or other circumstances beyond the control of the team.
- b. Every reasonable effort will be made to complete a game as long as the safety of the participants and spectators is not jeopardized. Should a game not be able to be started or should a suspension of play be required due to safety concerns or unplayable conditions, the referee, coaches, Event Director shall consult, but the referee shall have the ultimate authority to either suspend or terminate the game.
- c. If it is not possible to complete a game for the reasons set forth in this section, if the first half is completed, the results shall stand. If the first half is not completed, or if the game is tied, the Event Director shall determine whether it shall be rescheduled, or another resolution of the matter shall be implemented. The schedule of remaining games shall be a factor in that determination. The teams involved shall be consulted, but the ultimate decision on such resolution shall rest with the Event Director and that decision is final. No protests or appeals will be allowed.



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- d. In all cases, the Event Director has the ultimate authority to adjust the schedule of any or all remaining games, including shortening the length of games, to arrive at an equitable result and in consideration of the overall integrity of the competition.

WEATHER ISSUES

Weather information lines will be posted on our website. Each field complex will decide if the fields are playable. Information lines and the website will be updated as fast as possible. The health and safety of our players is always our top priority. Event HQ will watch the weather and use weather apps to determine the distance lightning is from the fields. Any time lightning is within 10 miles of the fields play will be stopped and the fields will be cleared. Games delayed by lightning may not be re-started for a minimum of 30 minutes from the last observed lightning or thunder. Event HQ will make decisions to continue the game based on the time of delay. Every effort will be made to play the games and delay start times if fields, referees and lights are available. If fields, referees, lights, etc. are not available, the game must be played during the allotted time slot so that the games scheduled later in the day can be played. In the event the game cannot restart, the board of directors of the USC will determine if the game should be replayed or if the game result will stand. Games that make it to half time will count in the standing as a complete game.

AWARDS AND ADVANCEMENTS

Medals will be awarded to the 1st and 2nd Place teams of both National and Regional Flights.

Teams will be seeded into the US Club Competition based on their end of the season League standing. See Attachment A (“Girls”) and Attachment B (“Boys”) respectively.



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ATTACHMENT A

The Girls teams in the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs will come from either the USC Champions League, Eastern or Western Conferences, or the USC CL U13 Qualifying or U13 Qualifying flights. A total of eight (8) teams will be accepted into the play-off event and will be seeded based on the League finish.

The 1st place finishers in the USC Champions League and USC CL U13 Qualifying flight advance directly to the US Club Soccer NPL Finals and are ineligible to participate in the USC 2019-2020 Playoffs. Seeding of eligible teams into the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs will exclude these teams. Teams qualifying for the NPL Finals are required to participate.

The next top eight (8) USC Girls teams in the U13 and older age groups that register, will be accepted and seeded into the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs National or Regional Flights based on their league finish with the highest four (4) finishers seeded into the National Flight and the next highest four (4) finishers seeded into the Regional Flight.

Girls NPL and USC 2019-2020 Playoffs						
Girls	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U19
Seed 1	NPL Finals	NPL Finals	NPL Finals	NPL Finals	NPL Finals	NPL Finals
Seed 2	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight
Seed 3	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight
Seed 4	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight
Seed 5	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight
Seed 6	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight
Seed 7	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight
Seed 8	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight
Seed 9	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight



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ATTACHMENT B

The Boys teams in the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs will come from either the USC Champions League, Eastern or Western Conferences, or the USC CL U13 Qualifying or U13 Qualifying flights. A total of eight (8) teams will be accepted into the play-off event and will be seeded based on the League finish.

The number of teams accepted into the US Club Soccer Boys ENPL National Playoffs varies by age. (See Chart below.) The 1st place U19 USC Champions League and U13 CL Qualifying teams and the 1st and 2nd place U14 through U17 USC Champions League teams qualify to advance to the Boys ENPL National Playoffs are ineligible to participate in the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs. Seeding of eligible teams into the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs will exclude these teams. Teams qualifying for the ENPL National Playoffs are required to participate.

The next top eight (8) USC Boys teams in the U13 and older age groups that register, will be accepted and seeded into the USC 2019-2020 Play-Offs National or Regional Flights based on their league finish with the highest four (4) finishers seeded into the National Flight and the next highest four (4) finishers seeded into the Regional Flight.

Boys ENPL and USC 2019-2020 Playoffs						
Boys	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U19
Seed 1	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs
Seed 2	National Flight	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs	ENPL Playoffs	National Flight
Seed 3	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight
Seed 4	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight
Seed 5	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight
Seed 6	Regional Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	National Flight	Regional Flight
Seed 7	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight
Seed 8	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight
Seed 9	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight
Seed 10		Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	Regional Flight	