

# USASA National and Regional Cups:



## State Qualifying Tournaments

### Rules and Regulations

#### A. TEAM ENTRY

1. Teams must register online through the Mass Soccer website. The registration is not considered complete until it is paid in full.
2. Any forfeit determined by the Cup Commissioner/s will be subject to a fine of \$225.00.
3. Any team who withdraws from the competition after it has started will be subject to a fine of \$225.00.
4. Any team and/or league that forfeits will be considered not in good standing and its team/s may not be permitted to play in any future Cup competitions.
5. It is the responsibility of the entering/participating teams to know the rules of the competition. In the state rounds, Mass Soccer Rules and Regulations apply. In the regional rounds, USASA Region 1 Rules and Policies apply. Please click here to review the [USASA Region I Cup Rules and Policies](#).

#### B. SCHEDULING

1. Teams will be scheduled by a blind draw to be held by the State Registrar in the preliminary rounds.
2. Semifinal and final games will follow the published bracket. Mass Soccer will provide a field for the state finals in National Cup Tournaments.
3. In the opening rounds of the competition, the team scheduled as home team, must provide a field.
  - a) Home teams must have a valid field permit in hand for every Saturday or Sunday for the duration of the competition. Not having a home field will be grounds for being denied participation. When scheduling your games, keep in mind that:
    - Saturday games must kickoff at 10am or later.
    - Sunday games must kickoff at noon or later.
    - For games starting at 3pm or later, the field must have lights.
    - Consent from your opponent is needed for games kicking off after 6pm.
    - Mid-week games are welcomed and encouraged if both teams agree.
  - b) Home team must confirm the game details to the Commissioners no less than **7 days prior** to the scheduled game date.

## C. ROSTERS

1. Teams must use their Mass Soccer game day photo roster. Teams are allowed no more than 30 players on their tournament roster.
2. Rosters must be completed 5 days prior to the start of the tournament and will remain unchanged for the entirety of the state competition.
3. All participating team's tournament rosters are available online. It is the responsibility of both teams to review their opponent's rosters before the match.
4. Current Mass Soccer player accounts (in good standing) are mandatory at all levels of the competition. (Mass Soccer IDs may be printed off our website for the state qualifying rounds.) Please contact the [State Registrar \(Registrar@Mass-Soccer.org\)](mailto:Registrar@Mass-Soccer.org) for assistance with player IDs or game day rosters.
5. No more than 18 players may be on the roster and in uniform for a game. Teams must strike through the players on their game day roster who are not going to participate.
6. Players are bound to a team once they play for a team.
7. At each match, the team manager will provide the referee 2 copies of an official Mass Soccer Game Roster. This roster must be presented to the referee and WITHOUT ALTERATION to any of the players' names. (However, alternative shirt numbers may be written on the Game Roster if necessary).

## D. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:

- Players are either classified as professional or amateur in accordance with USSF policies. In the Amateur Cup, players who hold professional status with the USSF are not eligible to participate.
- For the Over-30 and Over-40 competitions, a player is eligible as long as the player will attain the age of that competition within the calendar year of the competition.

## E. COMPETITION FORMAT

### 1. Game Balls

The home team will furnish the game ball(s). If the home team does not supply ball/s, the referee may select a ball provided by the other team.

### 2. Grace Period

It is the goal of the National Cup Committee to have every game decided on the field of play by the two opponents. However, circumstances may not allow this to take place. Teams are expected to be ready to play at the scheduled time of the match. Teams not ready to play at the scheduled start time of any match shall be granted a ten (10) minute grace period. A minimum of seven (7) players constitutes a team.

If either one or both teams are not on the field of play within the ten-minute grace period, the referee shall make a report to the Cup Commissioner of the failure of the team to arrive within the grace period. The Commissioner shall review the

circumstances surrounding the failure of a team to appear and may award a forfeit to the other team if only one team has failed to appear.

Only the Cup Commissioner may decide that a forfeit will be awarded to a team. The Cup Commissioner's decision in this matter is final and not subject to appeal.

### 3. Home Team - Visiting Team

Unless otherwise indicated, the team listed first is the home team. The visiting team will have the choice of jersey colors. If in the opinion of the referee there is a color conflict, the home team shall change jerseys.

### 4. Team Bench - Sidelines

A maximum of four team officials (e.g. coach, assistant coach, manager or trainer) may be on the bench. Spectators will be on the opposite sideline. Players that are not listed on the game roster may not be on the team bench.

### 5. NOISE-MAKING DEVICES (I.E. DRUMS, HORNS, COWBELLS, TRUMPETS, ETC.) ARE PROHIBITED.

### 6. Apparel-Uniforms

Each player MUST wear an official uniform with a six-inch minimum size number on the back of the shirt (this includes goalkeepers). Duplicate numbers are not permitted. Teams MUST bring an alternate jersey with a six-inch minimum size number on the back.

### 7. Equipment

The wearing of shin pads will be MANDATORY for all players. A player will not be allowed to play without wearing them at all times during the games. There are no restrictions as to the tape color to be used if needed for shin pads and or socks.

### 8. Tie Breakers

All games are single elimination and will require a winner. If a game is tied at the end of regulation play, two complete overtime periods will be played at the end of normal playing time. The time of the overtime periods will be 2 full 15 minutes halves. If a game is still tied after the end of overtime play, FIFA "Kicks from the Penalty Mark" rules will apply in order to determine the winner.

## **F. TEAM AND PLAYER BREACHES OF RULES**

### 1. Player Send Off

A player that has been sent off during a match must leave the vicinity of the field of play, as determined by the referee. A player who has been sent off shall not be permitted to play in the next scheduled game within the State Cup, Regional and/or National Cup competition. If the team has been eliminated from the Cup competition before the suspension has been served, the player shall be suspended for the next game played within any Mass Soccer Cup Competition or sanctioned league game or event, as determined by the Cup Commissioner. This penalty may also be increased at the determination of the Cup Commissioner. Any appeal of an increased suspension by the Cup Commissioner MUST be submitted in writing to the Cup Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours of notification of increased suspension.

### 2. Cumulative Yellow Cards

If a player is given 3 or more yellow cards during a competition, he/she must serve a one game suspension in the next game. If the team is eliminated before the suspension is enforced, then that player will serve the suspension in the next Mass Soccer Cup competition or sanctioned league game or event, as determined by the Cup Commissioner.

3.If the team of a sent-off player allows the player to participate in the next scheduled game, that team will automatically forfeit the game.

4. Coach or Credentialed Team Official: If a Coach or Team Official is dismissed from any game, they MUST leave the bench area and the vicinity of the field, as determined by the referee.

## **G. RULES OF PLAY**

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, the FIFA “Laws of the Game” shall apply.

2. Substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee, at any stoppage of play.

3. A maximum of 7 substitute players for each team may be named in each game. A player who has left the game may not re-enter the game, with the exception of the Mengel Cup and O40 State Cup competition which allows unlimited substitutions.

## **H. PROTESTS**

Questions relating to the qualifications of the competitors or interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest, shall be referred to the Cup Commissioner. The decision of the Cup Commissioner shall be binding on both teams, and may not be appealed. If the protest is upheld or the game must be replayed, it will be up to the Cup Commissioner to schedule the game as it sees fit.

1. The referee and the opposing coach shall be notified of the intent to protest while at the game site either before entering the field of play or prior to leaving the game site.

2. The fee to file a protest shall be \$200, payable to Mass Soccer. The protest must be submitted in writing to the Cup Commissioner, and shall include the following:

- It must state the grounds of the protest and/or rule violation on which the protest is based.
- The filing fee must be sent via PayPal.
- Any information to be presented by witnesses must be in writing.

3. Any protest based on a player ineligibility (see Section D) MUST be filed with the referee before the kickoff and in writing to the Cup Commissioners ([NationalCups@Mass-Soccer.org](mailto:NationalCups@Mass-Soccer.org)) no more than 3 hours after the conclusion of the match.

4. Any protest relating to the grounds, goalpost, bars or other appurtenances of the game shall not be entertained if the Referee had approved them.

5. The Cup Commissioner shall immediately upon the receipt of a protest notify the team against which the protest is made and shall give a copy of the protest and all particulars to that team, which will then have the right to defend its case, with or without witnesses.

6. A team may not engage the services of an attorney at the hearing of a protest.

7. A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the Cup is not sufficient grounds for protest.

8. Judgment decisions of the referee are not subject to protest.

## **H. Cup Champions**

Mass Soccer reserves the right to recognize and award the winning team.

1. The winner of any National Cup State Qualifying Tournament will advance to the USASA Regional Rounds of Competition and represent Mass Soccer in regional play.

2. A travel stipend will be awarded to assist the team in the regional rounds of competition. This stipend is proportional to the team's travel or hosting requirements.