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# NEW JERSEY YOUTH SOCCER

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2021 Challenge Cup Rules

February 17, 2021  
NEW JERSEY YOUTH SOCCER  
569 Abbington Dr., East Windsor NJ

# 2021 NJ Youth Soccer Challenge Cup Rules



## I. INTRODUCTION

The NJYS Challenge Cup competition is third-tier State Cup competition for travel teams and recreation teams that leads to a New Jersey champion. The winners of the NJYS Challenge Cup do not advance to USYS competitions outside of New Jersey. Currently, this tournament is for NJYS boys and girls teams at the U11 through U18/U19 age groups.

## II. STRUCTURE

- a. The NJYS Challenge Cup features a World Cup tournament format (e.g. group play that precedes a single game knockout for the quarterfinals, semifinals and finals). It is open to boys and girls travel teams at the following age groups 11U and 12U (9v9), 13U to 18U/19U (11v11) age groups. 10U or younger teams are not permitted to play up in the competition.
- b. With the exception of the finals, games will be played at home sites with NJYS determining the home team designations. The home team will be responsible for securing the field and securing the referees through an approved NJYS assignor.
- c. For the semifinals, the higher seeded team will be designated the home team. The home team will be responsible for securing the home field and securing the referees through an approved NJYS assignor.
- d. Players/teams entering the NJYS Challenge Cup are ineligible to enter the NJYS Presidents Cup or National Championship Series at any age level.
- e. NJYS conducts random flighting to determine matchups. Only the previous year's quarterfinalists are seeded and placed into groups (or brackets) as far away from each other as possible.

## III. COMPETITION FORMAT

- a. Provided there are sufficient number of teams registered in each age group and gender, teams will be placed into groups to play group stage game. If there are not a sufficient number of teams registered in a particular age group and gender, NJYS will bracket that tournament as single elimination.
- b. There is no overtime in group stage games. Group stage games tied at the end of regulation will be final.
- c. At the conclusion of the group stage matches, the group winners (and wild cards if needed) will compete in the single-elimination bracket play (e.g. quarterfinals, semifinals, finals).

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- d. Wildcard selection (if needed)
  - i. Once group play winners are determined, wildcard teams may also advance to bracket play; the number of wildcard teams is dependent on the number of teams in that tournament.
  - ii. Team or teams that earn the most points from the group stage (minus the division winners) will advance to single-elimination bracket play.
  - iii. If potential wildcard teams are tied in points, the Challenge Cup Tie Breaker will be used to which team will advance (*see VI. b*).
  - iv. If a wildcard team is scheduled to play a team it already played in the group stage, NJ Youth Soccer reserves the right to adjust the schedule.

### IV. GROUP STANDINGS AND DETERMINATION OF WINNERS

- a. Group Stage points
  - i. Three (3) points for a win (including forfeits)
  - ii. One (1) point for a tie
  - iii. Zero (0) points for loss
- b. Tiebreakers: In the event teams are tied on points earned in group stage games, the following criteria will be used to determine the group's placement. If three (3) or more are tied, skip to the second tiebreaker (goal differential):
  1. Winner of head to head competition
  2. Goal differential from group stage matches; max differential of six (6) goals per match
  3. Fewest goals allowed from all group stage matches
  4. Most shutouts from all group stage games
  5. Least red cards
  6. Least yellow cards
  7. Coin flip between the tied teams

### V. VENUE SELECTION

- a. NJ Youth Soccer will select venues for the NJYS State Cups tournaments finals unless otherwise communicated by NJYS. All other rounds will be played following home and away format with NJYS determining those designations each round.

### VI. REGISTRATION AND TEAM ELIGIBILITY

- a. Travel Team Qualifications for Application
  - a. Teams must compete in at least a 4-team approved league flight during the current seasonal year in a US Youth Soccer affiliated league (e.g., NJ Youth Soccer, USYS Regional League, USYS National League, and/or other USYS state association).
  - b. Leagues are required to schedule a minimum of one game against each of the different teams participating in the flight.
  - c. Notwithstanding this minimum playing requirement, a team must complete their entire league schedule. For example, if a league schedules 10 games during a season, a team must play ten games to qualify. League procedures for

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forfeits must also be adhered to and games postponed (e.g., due to weather will be taken into consideration).

- d. Teams participating in the USYS National League or in the NL Regional EDP Conference Premier 1, 2, & 3 divisions are **not** eligible to compete in the Challenge Cup.
- b. **Applications**
  - a. Teams must apply through their Sports Connect account or [NJYS website](#).
  - b. An official NJYS state roster and the appropriate entry fee must be received before the application can be accepted.
  - c. These items must be received by NJYS prior to the published deadline date to avoid a potential penalty. The individual team takes responsibility for adhering to this deadline.
- c. **Team Registration**
  - a. \$160 (early registration)
  - b. \$185 (standard registration)
- d. **Dates of Competitions**
  - a. Dates for all rounds of the NJYS Challenge Cup are published on the NJYS website ([www.njyouthsoccer.com](http://www.njyouthsoccer.com)).
  - b. Teams not prepared to play all games on all the scheduled dates should not enter the competition.
- e. **Player Eligibility**
  - a. Each player entering the competition must carry a USYS member pass.
  - b. No player may present or play with a player pass issued by any other US Soccer member organization (i.e., US Club, Super-Y, non-NJYS).
  - c. The USYS member pass, rosters, and any revisions must be processed, and players age verified by NJYS. Any violation of this rule results in fines and/or suspension.

**No Pass – No Play – No Exceptions**

- d. Valid player passes are required for each player in every game.
- e. A player can only be rostered on or play with one team in any level of NJYS State Cups competitions (Challenge Cup, Presidents Cup, National Championship Series) during a seasonal year.
- f. **Club Pass Players**
  1. A team participating in the NJYS Challenge Cup may add a club pass player to the state level competition roster so long as (1) it is before the competition roster freeze date, (2) the player's primary team is not participating and did not participate in NJYS State Cups competition during the current seasonal year, (3) the player is not participating and did not participate as a club pass player with another team in NJYS State Cups competition during the current seasonal year, and (4) the team maintains a continuity of 9 players from the Official State Roster for each match.

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- g. Secondary Permissions for players are ***not*** provided for the NJYS Challenge Cup, even though the team's NJYS league may permit secondary permissions. If a player with a secondary permission appears on an NJYS Challenge Cup roster, that team will be disqualified from the competition.
- h. Guest players are ***not*** eligible to play in the NJYS Challenge Cup. If a guest player appears on an NJYS Challenge Cup Roster, that team may be disqualified from the competition.
- i. Any team using an ineligible player(s) will forfeit all of its tournament games and may be subject to fines.
- j. Any player on a team advancing 1) past the USYS East Region Presidents Cup group stage or 2) into the USYS NCS East Region or National Competition in the prior season is ineligible to play for team within this competition. Teams with such a player on its roster may be disqualified from the competition.
- f. **Coach Eligibility**
  - a. All team officials, coaches, assistant coaches, managers, etc. must also be listed on the official roster, official game card (generated by NJYS online registration system) and have a current valid member pass.
  - b. A maximum of four (4) carded coaches, assistant coaches, or trainers for each team will be permitted on the sidelines.
  - c. The referees are instructed to enforce the NJYS State Cups, "No Pass-No Play rule."
- g. **Rosters**
  - a. NJYS will accept roster additions, releases, and transfers up to the roster freeze date set by NJYS, in conformance with the then-applicable regulations of the NJYS Challenge Cup.
  - b. A team's roster is frozen for the competition.
    - 1. Players can be added to a team's league roster but will not be eligible to play in the NJYS Challenge Cup Competition.
    - 2. A team can add an eligible coach to a frozen roster.
- h. **Bracket Change**
  - a. If a team requests to change its State Cup tournament preference (NJYS National Championship, NJYS Presidents Cup, Challenge Cup) after the registration deadline, but before the brackets are completed, it may incur a \$50 change fee (if approved by NJ Youth Soccer).
  - b. If this request to change occurs after the brackets are posted, the team may incur a \$200 change fee (if approved by NJ Youth Soccer).
  - c. Teams that withdraw prior to the final registration deadline are eligible for a full refund of their registration fee. Teams that withdraw after the registration deadline but prior to the tournament draw may incur a \$50 processing fee. Teams that withdraw after the tournament draw are subject to the Forfeit rules (see section g. of Rules of Competition).

## VII. ROSTER SIZES

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- a. 11U and 12U (9v9) teams can have a maximum of 18 players on the official roster, from which a maximum of 16 are eligible on the game-day roster.
- b. 13U through 18U/19U (11v11) teams can have a maximum of 22 players on official the roster, from which a maximum of 18 players are eligible on the game-day roster.

### VIII. RULES OF COMPETITION

- a. The playing rules of the NJYS Challenge Cup shall conform to the IFAB Laws of the Game, except as provided in this document.
- b. **Home Team:** The Home team must:
  - a. Provide their opponent with confirmation of game time, location, and directions to the home team's venue. This must be sent, via email communication, no less than 72 hours prior to the scheduled kickoff.
  - b. Properly mark the field of play
  - c. Provide a proper game ball
  - d. Provide proper goals and nets that are secured/anchored
  - e. Confirm that a referee has been assigned by a certified NJ State Referee Assignor for any game that has had a change in time, place, or date since originally scheduled and confirmed with the opposing team.
  - f. Inform the away team about the color of their uniform (in accordance with the uniform policy in the rules of competition).
  - g. *If both teams are properly notified per the parameters above and, following a 15-minute grace period, one team fails to show up and/or field a minimum of 7 players; the game may be forfeited to the showing team (extenuating circumstances may be favorably considered by NJ Youth Soccer). The referee at the field will **NOT** make any forfeit determination. Only NJ Youth Soccer can make this determination. Should both teams fail to meet this deadline, and the referee deems the field playable, both teams will forfeit.*
- c. **Score Reporting**
  - a. The winning team and the referee are expected to report the score in Sports Connect within 24 hours after the conclusion of the game. Failure to report your score in a timely manner may result in your team losing the opportunity to host a future home game.
- d. **Results**
  - a. Game results will be posted on the NJYS website within 24 hours after the completion of the game.
- e. **Scheduling**
  - a. NJ Youth Soccer oversees scheduling for all tournament games. The initial determination of home and away teams will be done by random selection. NJYS also has the ability to mandate any game date change.
- f. **Contingency Scheduling**
  - a. A game can be postponed by NJYS, referee, or the home team if, for example, the weather has made the field unplayable.
    1. Every attempt should be made to play the game as scheduled. The

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home team must notify NJYS, the Referee Assignor, and the opposing team by 10:00 AM on the day of the game or at least three (3) hours in advance of the scheduled game time (whichever is earlier).

2. The referee and NJYS will be proactive in declaring a field unplayable due to inclement weather conditions.
- b. Any game canceled due to an unplayable field or adverse weather that prevents a team from traveling to the venue site, NJYS will determine the rescheduling. If the home field is playable, teams should be expected to play.
- c. Any game not postponed by 10:00am shall be considered as *ON* and only the referee shall have the authority at this point to judge the fitness of the grounds.
- d. **Any postponed game must be played by Wednesday immediately preceding the next game date unless otherwise approved by NJ Youth Soccer.**

### g. Forfeit

- a. Any team forfeiting a game must notify NJ Youth Soccer by Tuesday before the game is scheduled and follow up with a written confirmation to the NJYS State Office via [statecups@njyouthsoccer.com](mailto:statecups@njyouthsoccer.com).
- b. If, for any reason, the game is not played by the Wednesday deadline, **BOTH TEAMS WILL FORFEIT.**
- c. The forfeiting team(s) may be assessed a fine according to the following schedule:

#### i.

Group Stage Game	\$150 plus referee costs
Quarterfinal Game	\$200 plus referee costs
Semi-Final Game	\$250 plus referee costs
Final Game	\$350 plus referee costs

- d. All fines must be paid within ten days of notification. Failure to pay any fine may result in a suspension from all affiliated play.

### g. Unfinished Games

- a. Unfinished games due to any cause will **not** be replayed, provided neither team is at fault, and the first half has been completed.
- b. If the first half has been completed and play cannot be resumed and provided neither team is at fault, NJYS and may deem the game complete.
- c. Should play be stopped at any time due to one of the teams being adjudged at fault, it will be at the discretion of NJ Youth Soccer as to whether the game is to be replayed or declared a forfeit.

### h. Substitutions:

- a. For the Challenge Cup, unlimited substitutions may be made, with the consent of the referee, at any stoppage of play.

### i. Protests

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- a. NJYS will hear and decide protests, appeals, and commissions for NJYS Challenge Cup Competition, subject to the following conditions:
  1. A protest must be verbally lodged with the referee and the opposing coach before leaving the game site.
  2. The referee must note it on the game report, and NJYS must be notified of any protest within four **(4)** hours of the game completion or immediately following the game's completion when games are played at a central site.
  3. With regard to the referees at the match, only the misapplication of the **Laws of the Game** is subject to protest. Judgment calls (such as foul and misconduct) are not subject to protest.
  4. A protest must be submitted in writing via email to NJYS ([statecups@njyouthsoccer.com](mailto:statecups@njyouthsoccer.com)) within 24 hours of the game by a team official listed on the roster involved in the game.
  5. The fee for a protest is \$300 and must be either sent to the NJYS State Office. For the events hosted by NJYS (e.g. finals), the protest must be delivered to the NJYS Site Coordinator within two (2) hours of the game's conclusion or sent via mail and postmarked no later than the next working day. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned. If denied, the fee will be retained.
  6. Written complaints can be filed without a fee, but they will not result in a change in the game result.

### j. Conduct

- a. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators.
- b. Abuse of the referees will not be tolerated.
- c. Misconduct by parents and/or spectators will be referred to the NJYS Discipline and Appeals Committee for disciplinary action.
- d. All coaches of competing teams are to remain within a ten (10) yard technical area (coaching box) on their side of the field.
- e. At games played at a centralized location, both players and coaches will be on one side of the field as specified by NJYS.
- f. All parents and spectators will remain on the spectator sideline during the match and until such time as the coaches have released the players after the match and referees have vacated the field of play. Failure to remain off the field of play until such time will result in an ejection for the coach and possible forfeit of the match.
- g. For games at a centralized location, A maximum of four (4) carded, coaches, assistant coaches, administrators, trainers who are listed on the team's approved roster will be permitted on the sidelines.
- h. Coaches are not permitted to coach from the spectators' side of the field.
- i. Coaching is only permitted from inside the technical area.

### k. Length of Games, Overtime Periods, and Ball Specifications

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Age Group	Duration	Halftime	Overtime (n/a to group stage)	Ball Size
17U – 19U (11v11)	Two [2]-45-minute halves	10 min	Two [2]-10-minute halves	5
16U, 15U (11v11)	Two [2]-40-minute halves	10 min	Two [2]-10-minute halves	5
14U, 13U (11v11)	Two [2]-35-minute halves	5 min	Two [2]-10-minute halves	5
11U, 12U (9v9)	Two [2]-30-minute halves	5 min	Two [2]-5-minute halves	4

**i. Balls**

- a. At the preliminary stage, quarterfinal and semifinal games, the home team will supply the referee with two (2) game balls.
- b. At the final games, all matches will be played with a ball supplied by NJYS.

**m. Overtime for Quarterfinals, Semifinals, and Finals**

- a. If a game goes into overtime, both overtime periods must be played in entirety.
- b. A brief hydration break will be provided between the overtime halves; however, players may not leave the field of play.
- c. If a game is still tied at the end of overtime, the match will be decided in accordance with the FIFA Instructions Regarding the Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark.

**n. Uniforms**

**a. Logo Rules**

1. No team will wear the logo, insignia, or another identifying mark of a non-US Youth Soccer organization (e.g., US Club, NPL, Super Y) on their uniforms. Teams are expected to remove the marks, cover the marks, or change uniforms to comply with this rule.
2. If a team fails to adhere to these rules, the referee will be asked to report the issue after the game, and the team may be subject to a team fine.

**b. Player Jerseys**

1. Each player must have a unique number on their jersey. The number should be a size of six inches. Each player must have a number affixed to the back of his/her jersey. Duplicate and/or taped numbers are not permitted. A numbered jersey for the goalkeeper is recommended.

**c. Team Colors**

1. In the event of color conflicts as determined by the game officials, the home team will adjust its uniform to that of the visiting team. Each team must have two uniform sets (one light color and one dark color) at each State Cup game. In addition, teams should communicate jersey colors in advance of the game to avoid problems at the game.

**o. Hydration Breaks**

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- a. Prior to the match's start, the referee will make a decision, or the NJ Youth Soccer at a central site, to implement a hydration break.
  - b. The break occurs at the midpoint of each half and at the end of each overtime period (if played).
  - c. The break will be implemented when the heat index is above 85 degrees at game time.
  - d. The break will be given at a normal stoppage of play, and all players must remain on the field.
- p. **Referees**
- a. NJ Youth Soccer will work with the NJ State Referee Committee to assign referees for the finals only (unless otherwise communicated by NJYS).
  - b. Referee fees will be split by teams 50/50 for play dates and quarterfinal rounds. NJYS will assign and pay referee fees for the final round. The established fees are:

Age Group	Referee	AR	Per Team
18U & 19U	\$80.00	\$50.00	\$90.00
15U – 17U	\$80.00	\$50.00	\$90.00
11U – 14U	\$70.00	\$40.00	\$75.00

- c. The USSF approved referee assignment policy is preferred when assigning referees:
    - 1. Referee and two neutral uniformed assistant referees.
    - 2. Referee and two club linesmen.
    - 3. One referee is working alone.
  - d. In the event that no assigned referee appears at the field within 30 minutes of the scheduled game time, two choices are available:
    - 1. The game may be played with a mutually acceptable substitute referee.
    - 2. Both teams may elect to play the game at another time but before the following Wednesday. NJ Youth Soccer must be notified. The home team will lose the home-field advantage.
    - 3. Failure of a referee to show up will not be the cause for canceling or protesting a game. Please see Section IV, Part P for more details.
- q. **Before the start of each game**
- a. Each team will give the referee an official NJYS computer-generated game card. ***Handwritten information on the game card with the exception of jersey numbers is not permitted.***
  - b. The referee will inspect all players and coaches passes and hold all passes until the end of the game.
    - 1. The home team shall be inspected first
    - 2. Any challenges by either team will be noted on the game report by the referee, and the player will be allowed to play.
    - 3. Challenges of players must be made at the time of player pass inspection.
    - 4. NJ Youth Soccer, through the State Registrar, shall address the challenges

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of players.

5. The referee will determine the field's suitability for play, noting any improperly prepared fields on the game report.

### r. After the Game

#### i. Game Reporting

1. The referee will report the score, red cards, yellow cards, the game cards by emailing it to [statecups@njyouthsoccer.com](mailto:statecups@njyouthsoccer.com) within 24 hours of the game start time.
2. Red Cards
  - a. Referees will submit a supplemental report to their assignor and to NJYS by email ([statecups@njyouthsoccer.com](mailto:statecups@njyouthsoccer.com)) within 24 hours of the game, and preferably the same day.
  - b. Details of the player name, pass #, team, club, and the reason for the dismissal should be included.
  - c. The pass of a player/coach who is sent off the field (red carded) will be given back to the coach.
  - d. For games hosted at a central location (e.g., finals), the red card will be reported on the game card. The game card will then be given to the onsite NJYS representative to be recorded in the NJYS reporting system. All other passes will be returned to the coach at the conclusion of the game.
  - e. *NJYS will record the pass numbers of any player or coach sent off for the duration of the penalty. Penalties for individuals sent off will be carried over to the next NJYS State Cups competition (e.g., Challenge Cup, Presidents Cup, or National Championships) where applicable. The suspended player or coach will be noted on the game card for the period of the penalty.*

Red Card Violation	Minimum Penalty
Second Caution in the Same Match <sup>1</sup>	Remainder of the game
Denying a goal an Obvious goal Scoring Opportunity by Offense other than Handling	Remainder of the game
Denying a Goal or an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity by Handling	1 game/1 week
Serious Foul Play	2 games/2 weeks
Offensive, insulting, abusive language, and/or Gestures	2 games/2 weeks
Violent Conduct <sup>2</sup>	3 games/ 3 weeks
Spitting or Biting	3 games/ 3 weeks
Entering the Video Operation Room	3 games/ 3 weeks

<sup>1</sup>The minimum suspension is one additional match if two cautions are:

- a) Two Dissent
- b) Two Unsporting Behavior
- c) one each of Dissent and Unsporting Behavior

<sup>2</sup> If the Violent Conduct is either referee assault or referee abuse, the minimum suspension is one calendar

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*year, plus a referral to the NJYS Discipline and Appeals Committee for further review and sanctions.*

3. The referee will record any game protested by either coach on the game report and email NJYS ([statecups@njyouthsoccer.com](mailto:statecups@njyouthsoccer.com)).

### s. **Game Report and Roster**

- a. Before the game, each team will give the referee an official NJYS computer-generated game card. *Handwritten information on the game card with the exception of jersey numbers is not permitted.*
- b. Coaches will be permitted on the sideline provided they possess a valid (up to date) coaches pass.
- c. Only players on the game card may compete in the game.
- d. Players not eligible must remain on the parents' side of the field and may not be dressed in uniform.
- e. For games at the centralized location (e.g. finals), the game roster will be produced by NJYS and generated by the roster frozen before tournament flighting.

## IX. **PROPER BEHAVIOR ON THE SIDELINES**

Teams waiting for their match **cannot** warm up or congregate along the goal line of an active field or between fields. For games hosted by NJYS, NJYS will designate an area for teams waiting for their match and teams are expected to stay within the area for their warm-up activities. Teams not adhering to this requirement will be subject to disciplinary action and may be fined.

Proper behavior is required on the sidelines. Your cooperation and that of your players and spectators will be greatly appreciated.