

US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League

Policies and Rules

(Revised March 6, 2009)

LEAGUE POLICIES

Name

US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League. This league is a fully sanctioned US Youth Soccer competitive league.

Mission

To provide an opportunity for the most competitive play possible for the highest-level teams within US Youth Soccer Region III to aid in the development of the US Youth Soccer players.

Owner

Region III US Youth Soccer.

Management

US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League shall be managed and supervised by the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Committee. The US Youth Soccer Region III Director shall appoint a Director for the Region III Premier League.

Region III Premier League Committee shall consist of each Sub-Region Director, a State Representative from each participating National State Association and the Region III Premier League Director, who shall serve as Chairperson. The Region III Premier League Committee has authority over the Region III Premier League and they shall administer and adopt all Region III Premier League rules and policies.

Region III Premier League Sub-Regions - the Region III Premier League shall be divided into three Sub-Regions, East, Central, and West, as defined by the Region III Premier League Committee. The Region III Premier League Director shall appoint a Sub-Region Director to each of the Region III Premier League Sub-Regions.

Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee shall consist of a State Representative from each participating National State Association and the Sub-Region Director, who shall serve as chairperson. The Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee shall act as the competition authority over all competitions in their Sub-Region and has the authority to manage and enforce all Region III Premier League rules within their Sub-Region, including fines and suspensions.

The Region III Premier League Committee and the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committees have a duty and an obligation to uphold and enforce the rules of the Region III Premier League and the authority to act in the best interest of the league.

Organization

Each National State Association that has team(s) participating in US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League will appoint a representative to sit on the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Committee.

The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League State Representative will supervise all teams from his respective National State Association. The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League will be divided into Sub-Regions to reduce travel and related expenses.

Territories

Any US Youth Soccer National State Association may request entry, but US Youth Soccer Region III National State Associations will have priority.

Divisions

Each US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Sub-Region committee will have authority to select teams to appropriate playing divisions. A division will not be formed with less than six teams for the same age group and gender except for the U-18 age group.

Teams

Each US Youth Soccer National State Association may allow club teams in the following age categories for Boys and Girls; U14, U15, U16, U17, and U18 to apply for acceptance.

The US Youth Soccer National State Association will determine their teams that may apply for acceptance. (Generally it is anticipated that the club teams will be the Winner and Runner-up of the State's most recent Championship tournament, or in the case of an existing competitive league available to all state association teams, the Champion and Runner-up teams based on the teams prior full-year standing.) Participation is open to any properly registered competitive team in good standing with the member of the US Youth Soccer National State Association.

The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League (Region III Premier League) Sub-Region Committee shall have the authority to accept teams for competition that have approved applications from their US Youth Soccer National State Association. The Region III Premier League Committee shall have the final authority to accept teams and reserves the right to refuse admittance of any team based upon the team's prior performance in the Premier League (i.e. repeated failure to play matches, failure to comply with league rules, excessive misconduct, etc.).

Schedule

Each team will play matches scheduled by the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee. The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee will establish sites and match competitions. The overall winners of each age group division may represent their respective US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Sub-Region.

Travel/Hosting

For the purposes of Region III Premier League (Region III Premier League) competition, each team must properly submit “Notification to Travel” to their respective US Youth Soccer National State Association, in accordance with their rules. A seasonal “Notification to Travel” may be issued and considered valid for each Region III Premier League team, for league play only. A permission to host form is not required for Region III Premier League play.

Discipline

Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee - Each Region III Premier League Sub-Region Director shall appoint a chairman to the Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee, whose members shall consist of individuals selected by this chairman, as necessary. The Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee shall have authority over all rules, policies and disciplinary matters arising within their Sub-Region, which may include suspensions, and fines.

Region III Premier League Discipline & Protest Committee - The Region III Premier League Director shall appoint a chairman to the Region III Premier League Discipline & Protest Committee, whose members shall consist of individuals selected by this chairman, as necessary. The Region III Premier League Discipline and Protest Committee shall have final authority over all matters arising from decisions within the Region III Premier League Sub-Regions, which may include suspensions and fines.

Fees

Each team playing in the Region III US Youth Soccer League will pay the fees established by the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Committee.

Individual teams are responsible for the cost of travel, housing, coaching, and uniforms. Each team participating in the league will be required to post a renewable performance bond at the time of registration and provide playing fields that meet the minimum requirement per age group.

Housing

As part of the right to participate in the competition provided by US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League the team may be required to lodge in a hotel selected by US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Committee while attending US Youth Soccer Region III events away from home.

Rights

Any club team in this league shall have all rights and privileges of any team playing in a league within their US Youth Soccer National State Association. Club teams participating in this league must meet the requirements of the US Youth Soccer National Youth Soccer Championship.

LEAGUE RULES

The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League is owned and operated by the US Youth Soccer Association Region III. Participation in the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League is governed by the rules adopted by the United States Soccer Federation (US Soccer), US Youth Soccer and the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) except where modified below.

SECTION 1. APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

1) Application for Participation

- a) Participation of teams requires approval from the team's National State Association.
- b) Participation is open to any properly registered competitive team in good standing with a member National State Association and is returning more than 50% of its players from the previous year roster.

- c) All applications for participation must be received by the deadline dates established for each season.
- d) A complete application package **MUST** include:
 - i) A completed US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Team Application along with play dates form.
 - ii) A check for the established League entry fee made payable to US Youth Soccer Region III.
 - iii) Bond entry checks made payable to US Youth Soccer Region III (only to be cashed if team forfeits a game(s) or fails to abide by the rules of the league).
 - iv) Field availability form.

2) Acceptance of Teams

- a) Deposit of the Entry Fee does not constitute acceptance. Teams not accepted will receive a full refund of the entry fee with a letter of notification within 30 days of the entry deadline.

SECTION 2. FORMATION OF DIVISIONS

1) Supervision/Management

- a) Each age group in each division will be under the supervision and management of the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee.

2) Age Groups

- a) Age Groups as defined by US Youth Soccer (i.e. Under 16) will be divided into single birth year divisions whenever there are sufficient teams participating in the League.

SECTION 3. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

1) Scheduling

- a) The U.S. Youth Soccer Region III Sub-Region Committee will perform the required scheduling of each division for regular league play.
- b) Teams shall be required to play all scheduled dates as assigned by the Region III Premier League Sub-Regions.
- c) Premier League will make every effort to schedule between 7 – 12 games for each team. The schedule listed on the Premier League web page is the OFFICIAL schedule.
- d) Rescheduling of matches is at the sole discretion of the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee. Teams may not reschedule or cancel scheduled matches. Both teams will be fined and forfeit their match. The Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee may also take disciplinary action.

2) Qualifying Matches

- a) Qualifying matches are those scheduled league matches against teams in your own age division. Premier League will schedule you to play all teams within your division at least once.
- b) Only qualifying matches will be used to determine league standings.

3) Reporting of Scores

- a) All scores will be reported in accordance with Region III Premier League Sub-Regions requirements.
- b) In the event of a forfeit, the forfeiting team shall notify the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Director within 48 hours of such forfeit. Failure to do so may result in additional sanctions.

4) Standings

- a) The team with the highest points will be judged the winner of the division. Points will be awarded as follows:
 - i) Three (3) points for a win.
 - ii) One (1) point for a tie.
 - iii) Zero (0) point for a loss.

- b) In the event two teams are tied on the basis of points the following tiebreakers will be considered in order until the tie is broken.
 - i) Winner of head to head competition. (This criterion is not used if more than two teams are tied.)
 - ii) Most wins.
 - iii) Team with greatest net goal difference (NGD) which is computed as goals for minus goals against with a maximum of four NGD in each game.
 - iv) Team with least goals against. (There is NO limit on the number of goals that will be counted to determine this tiebreaker.)
 - v) Team with the most goals (maximum of four goals in each game).

- c) In the event more than two teams are tied on the basis of points the following would be used to break the tie:
 - i) The sequence of tie breakers will begin with 5)b)ii) and be followed until a team is eliminated.
 - ii) Once a team has been eliminated the sequence of tie breakers will begin again with 5)b)ii) and be repeated starting over after each team is eliminated until one team remains.

- d) In the event that after having applied the tie-breaker rules above teams remain tied the winner of a coin toss will be adjudged to have placed higher in the standings than the loser of the coin toss.

5) Regional Tournament Slots

- a. The regional tournament slot for each playgroup will be awarded to the team who finishes in the highest position in the US Youth Soccer Premier League standings who is not a state cup champion.

- b. Any playgroup that is awarded more than one regional tournament slot will award the additional slot to the team who finishes second highest in the US Youth Soccer Premier League standings who is not a state cup champion.
- c. A team that participates in the Boys or Girls Under 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 Region III Premier League and does not participate in their State Association's US Youth Soccer State Cup Competition (either prior to or after the Premier League Competition) cannot be an automatic selection for the regional tournament slot.
- d. In the event that no eligible teams are able to fill the regional tournament slot in a Sub-Regional bracket then that bracket may be filled by an eligible team from one of the other Sub-Regional brackets of the same age group and gender. An initial selection order will be established by blind draw of the Sub-Regions. From that point forward the selection order will alternate after having filled a region slot by the first Sub-Region becoming last and continuing in order until all region tournament slots are filled by eligible teams or returned to the region tournament.
- e. A team that captures the Boys or Girls Under 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 Region III Premier League Championship and has forfeited a game(s) either in their State Association's US Youth Soccer State Cup Competition and/or in their regular season play for the Region III Premier League Competition cannot be eligible for an automatic selection for the regional tournament slot in US Youth Soccer Region III Championships.
- f. Should a team chosen to participate in the US Youth Soccer Region III Tournament Championship fail to participate in the aforementioned tournament the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Committee reserves the right to substitute another eligible team in accordance with the rules regarding filling the regional tournament slot.

- g. The number of eligible teams in a division is determined by the number of teams who complete the season with no forfeits and no teams will be counted in the division who withdraw from the competition prior to completing the season.

SECTION 4. MATCHES

1) Dates/Times

- a) It is the intent to schedule one match per day.

2) Failure to Play as Scheduled

- a) Scheduled matches may not be played due to inclement weather otherwise all matches must be played as scheduled.
- b) Failure to play a match as scheduled will result in forfeiture of the match for league standings. The opposing team will be awarded a 3-0 win.
- c) Any team that forfeits a scheduled match shall be fined \$500 per match plus the entire referee fees for each scheduled match, payable within five business days to their Sub-Region Director.
- d) Any team that surrenders their bond due to failure to comply with league rules will not be allowed to continue in league play until another \$1,000 bond is posted with the Region III Premier League. Teams may also be subject to further discipline by their National State Association. A Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee may award all or part of a forfeited bond to teams whose opponents have forfeited a match. Also, the Sub-Region Committee may issue further sanctions including but not limited to banning coaches, teams, and/or clubs/associations from further participation in the league subject to the right of appeal.
- e) Any team which fails to play two or more officially scheduled games

shall be considered to have abandoned the competition. Its games will not count to determine league standings nor shall they be considered in the standings as forfeits. The team is not eligible to receive awards, shall not advance from the league into other competitions nor shall it be considered in the league standings for other teams in the league.

SECTION 5. RULES OF PLAY

1) Games

- a) Games will be played under the applicable rules of US Youth Soccer. Teams are responsible for obtaining and being familiar with the US Soccer Federation Official Administrative Handbook and the FIFA Laws as they govern League play with the modifications noted below:

2) Substitutions

- a) Unlimited substitutions may be used. A player may leave the field, and be substituted for, and then return to replace another player an unlimited number of times.
- b) Substitutions may be made when the team is in possession of the throw in, or by either team when there is a goal kick, or after a goal is scored, or there is an injury situation.
- c) If a player is removed from the game and no substitute enters the game for the player (team plays short), the original player may reenter the game. Entry shall be at a normal substitution point (with approval of the referee) or at any point during game if the referee signals for the player's reentry.

3) Match Length, Ball Size

Match Length / Ball Size		
<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Length of Half</u>	<u>Ball Size</u>
U-17 & 18	45 min.	5
U-15 & 16	40 min.	5
U-14	35 min.	5

- a) Teams will use their age group as defined by US Youth Soccer for the current seasonal year in determining length of match and ball size.

4) Fields

- a) Fields for all age groups must meet the FIFA requirements of full size fields. Minimum 100 x 60 and Maximum 130 x 80

5) Official Match

- a) A match shall be considered official after one full half of play (the second half does not have to start). If less than one half is completed and the match is called, the entire match must be replayed to become an official match.
- b) The Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee will decide the disposition of the match if called for gross misconduct by either team, coaches, or parents.
- c) Scheduled matches are to wait a minimum of 1 hour before a forfeit can be assessed.
- d) Failure to appear will result in a forfeit.

6) Player Passes/Rosters

- a) Each team must present their laminated and pictured US Youth Soccer player pass signed by both player and an official of their current National State Association and a copy of their official stamped

National State Association roster to the match officials prior to the start of each match. In addition for U16, U17, and U18 matches a team official will provide the match officials prior to the start of each match a roster of no more than eighteen players from their current National State Association roster. The players who are not participating in the match must be “lined out” on the official state roster to get the required roster size of eighteen. All team players not on the game roster may sit on the team bench in street clothing.

- b) If a team does not have their US Youth Soccer player passes and a copy of their official stamped National State Association roster present at the field prior to the end of the match, the opposing team will be awarded a 3 - 0 win. However, the match will not count as a forfeit for the losing team.
- c) The roster used for play in Region III Premier League matches must comply with National Championship Series Rule 221.
- d) **NO GUEST PLAYERS ARE ALLOWED. DUAL ROSTERED PLAYERS** must be designated as a primary player for their Premier League team.
- e) Playing of an ineligible player will result in automatic forfeiture of the match and possible suspension of the coach possible expulsion of the team from the League with forfeiture of all bonds and fees and notification to the team’s National State Association.
- f) US Youth Soccer Player passes shall be presented to the referee upon entering the field of play. Passes will be returned to the players at the end of the match.
- g) A National State Association official state roster must be made available to the opposing team coach/manager upon request.

7) Other

- a) Uniform Color Conflict
 - i) When there is a conflict in uniform color, the team listed first on the schedule must change.

- ii) The referee's judgment is final.
- b) Coaching from Sidelines
 - i) Limited coaching is permitted only from one touch line from the center-line to the 18 yard line
 - ii) Coaches may not enter the field without permission from the referee. Violation of this rule may result in a caution.

8) Inclement Weather

- a) Once a referee has jurisdiction of a game, the game may be terminated only by the referee as provided by the FIFA “Laws of the Game”.
- b) Each hosting association or club member is responsible for notifying all participating teams as soon as possible if their fields are closed due to inclement weather.
- c) All reasonable efforts must be made to complete the match on the scheduled date.
- d) If a match is called after one full half of play for inclement weather, the final score will be the score at the time the match is called. If fields are closed and/or games are cancelled and the referees are not notified prior to their arrival at the site, the officials will be paid for their first scheduled match only.

SECTION 6. MATCH CONTROL

1) Three Person System

- a) Matches must be officiated by the three person FIFA/USSF Referee System.
- b) In the event the assigned referee fails to appear (within 10 minutes of the match time), a certified official must be found to officiate the match. If no certified official is found to officiate the match then the competition will not count as an official league match even if played

with uncertified officials officiating. The referee may appoint replacements for assistant referees who fail to show up by the match time. In the event certified USSF officials are not available, the referee may appoint club assistant referees. Club assistant referees shall be limited to decisions only on touchlines and possession as specified by FIFA.

2) Payment of Referees

- a) Referees and assistant referees appointed under the provisions of these League Rules shall be paid by the Region III League Director or his designee.
- b) Referee match fees will be paid for all completed games AND ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACHES 50/50 SPLIT.

3) Termination of Matches

- a) Referees may suspend matches for lack of crowd control, poor team behavior or other unsportsmanlike circumstances. (Note - each coach is responsible for the behavior of his players. Each coach is responsible to assist the official, when asked, in the control of parents, fans, and spectators).
- b) The Referee shall issue a written USSF Referee Report concerning the suspension to the Region III Premier League Chairman of the Discipline and Protest Committee within 48 hours.
- c) The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Discipline and Protest Committee shall ascertain the facts and determine appropriate disciplinary action.
- d) Disciplinary action may include:
 - i) Reprimand
 - ii) Forfeiture
 - iii) Suspension from one or more matches or

- iv) Recommendation of a more severe penalty.

SECTION 7. EJECTIONS AND DISCIPLINE

1) Ejections and Removals

- a) Any player ejected from a Region III Premier League match will be suspended from their next Region III Premier League match. If the Region III Premier League season has ended, they will be suspended from their next State or National Cup competition, whichever comes first.
- b) Any player ejected for “Violent Conduct” shall be suspended from their next two Region III Premier League matches or their next two State or National Cup competitions (or combinations, thereof, whichever comes first).
- c) The referee shall file a USSF Referee Supplemental Report with the Chairman of the Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee within 48 hours of the match for every person ejected or sent-off during the match.
- d) All player passes of red carded players will be returned to the team at the end of the match and a copy of the referee’s report will be sent to the National State Association Disciplinary Chairperson of the team and player involved by the Chairman of the Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee.
- e) Any coach, trainer, or other person in the technical area who is removed or “sent-off” from a Region III Premier League match by a match official shall receive a minimum one match suspension from their next Region III Premier League match. If their Region III Premier League season has ended, they will be suspended from

their next scheduled State or National Cup competition, whichever comes first.

- f) Any spectator who is removed or “sent off” from a Region III Premier League match by a match official shall be barred from their team’s next scheduled Region III Premier League match. If their Region III Premier League season has ended, they will be suspended from their next scheduled State or National Cup competition, whichever comes first.
- g) A player is allowed to serve their suspension at the game on the team bench, provided they are not in uniform.
- h) Any coach, trainer, or other person ejected or “sent-off” from the technical area, who is not a player, as noted in Section 7- 1-e) is not allowed at the complex while serving their suspension.

2) Discipline

- a) The Team Manager or Coach of a person who has been asked to leave the match area shall complete the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League - 'Ejection Report'. The Team Manager or Coach must forward a copy of the 'Ejection Report' to the Chairman of the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee within 48 hours of the end of the match.
- b) All ejections of players and removal of coaches, assistant coaches, managers, or spectators from the match area may be reviewed by the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee, who may impose additional penalties.
- c) Teams failing to submit an Ejection Report as defined in sub-section (a), within 5 days of the match in question, may be subject to the loss of their performance bond of \$1,000 (or a portion thereof) and must post another performance bond before the next match is played, as determined by the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee.
- d) Teams that falsify information on their Ejection Report shall forfeit

their performance bond of \$1,000 and must post another performance bond before the match is played.

- e) Any team that does not “sit-out” a suspended individual for the required suspension period and allows this individual to participate in a match shall forfeit that match and the opposing team shall be awarded a 3-0 win. This team will also forfeit their performance bond of \$1,000 and must post another performance bond before the next match is played and the individual will sit out their next scheduled match as noted in Section 7 (1).

3) AUTHORITY

Any violations of Region III Premier League Rule Section 7 Ejections & Discipline can be reported directly to the appropriate Region III Premier League Sub-Region Director and may be considered by the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee or Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline & Protest Committee for adjudication.

SECTION 8. PROTEST & APPEALS

1) Filing of Protest

- a) Notice of intent to protest a competition must be registered, in writing, with the game official and the parties involved at the game site. The Protest must be mailed within 48 hours of match completion with a certificate of mailing to the Chairman of the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committee.
- b) Judgment decisions of the referee are not subject to protest.
- c) All protests must include the following before they will be considered:
 - i) A non-refundable fee of \$250.00 (certified check, or money order, payable to the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League.
 - ii) A written statement describing the specific grounds for the protest.

- iii) All information necessary to make a fair and just decision on the protest.
- iv) A clear and concise statement of the relief or action sought by the protesting party.
- v) Five (5) copies of all documents relevant to the protest.

2) Consideration of Protest

- a) A protest may not be allowed if the protest:
 - i) does not deal with the violation of US Youth Soccer Region III rules and policies;
 - ii) concerns a matter of “referee judgment”;
 - iii) is incomplete or does not contain the required information;
 - iv) is not filed in a timely or proper manner; or
 - v) does not deal with either the application of these rules or the qualifications of the opposing team.
- b) The proper Region III Premier League authority shall issue a written decision within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the Protest.

3) Filing an Appeal

- a) All appeals must be properly submitted within ten (10) days of the notification of the decision being appealed to the proper Region III Premier League hearing authority.
- b) Judgment decisions of the referee are not subject to appeal
- c) All appeals must include the following before they will be considered:
 - i) A non-refundable fee of \$300.00 (certified check, or money order, payable to the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League.
 - ii) A written statement describing the specific grounds for the appeal.
 - iii) All information necessary to make a fair and just decision.
 - iv) A clear and concise statement of the relief or action sought by the appealing party.
 - v) Five (5) copies of all documents relevant to the appeal.

4) Consideration of an Appeal

- a) An appeal may not be allowed if the appeal:
 - i) does not deal with the violation of US Youth Soccer Region III rules and policies;
 - ii) concerns a matter of “referee judgment”;
 - iii) is incomplete or does not contain the required information;
 - iv) is not filed in a timely or proper manner; or
 - v) does not deal with either the application of these rules or the qualifications of the opposing team.
- b) Decisions of the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committee may only be appealed to the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline & Protest Committee.
- c) Decisions of the Region III Premier League Sub-Region Discipline & Protest Committee may only be appealed to the Region III Premier League Discipline & Protest Committee.
- d) The decisions of the Region III Premier League Discipline & Protest Committee may only be appealed to the USSF Appeals Committee, if applicable.
- e) The proper Region III Premier League hearing authority shall issue a written decision within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the appeal.
- f) There shall be no more than two appeals within the authority of the Region III Premier League.
- g) An appeal does not defer the action or stay the decision of any Region III Premier League authority.

APPENDIX:

- 1) Referee fees: Fees to be determined by each sub region.
- 2) State Reps are responsible for seeing that there is a site coordinator at the site on game days. The site coordinator is responsible for paying the referee fees prior to the match. Officials are to be paid only for their work. If there is only one assistant referee, they receive only their payment. The other assistant referee fee may be paid to a club assistant referee, if he is a registered USSF official.
- 3) Local hosting clubs should pay for field fees if possible.
- 4) Rule changes must be submitted thirty days prior to annual US Youth Soccer Workshop.
- 5) These rules and policies may be temporarily modified when extenuating circumstances or justified compelling considerations exist by a 2/3 vote of the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Committee.
- 6) Due to time and distance the US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Committee may conduct its business, including voting on league matters, via email or teleconference.