

# **US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League**

## **Policies and Rules**

(Revised February, 2011)

### **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 from each State Association within US Youth Soccer Region III and 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 and each Sub-Region Director.

**Region III Premier League Committee** shall consist of each Sub-Region Director, a State Representative from each participating 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 it shall administer and adopt all Region III Premier League rules and policies.

**Region III Premier League Regional Division** – the Region III Premier League Regional Division will be managed by the Region III Premier League Director, the East Sub-Region Director, the West Sub-Region Director, and the Central Sub-Region Director hereby called the Regional Division Committee.

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

**Region III Premier League Sub-Region Division Committee** shall consist of a State Representative from each participating State Association and the Sub-Region Director, who shall serve as chairperson. The Region III Premier League Sub-Region Division Committee shall act as the competition authority over all competitions in its Sub-Region and has the authority to manage and enforce all Region III Premier League rules within its 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 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 State Association. The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League consists of a Region wide league, the Regional Division, and three other leagues based on a geographical division of Region III, namely the East Sub-Regional Division, the Central Sub-Regional Division, and the West Sub-Regional Division.

## **Territories**

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

## **Divisions**

Regional Division:

The Regional Division will be consist of four teams from the West Sub-Region, four teams from the East Sub-Region, and two teams from the Central Sub-Region in each age group from U-14 through U-17 for both genders, male and female.

(In the initial year the East Sub-Region and the West Sub-Region will each place its top four finishers from the previous year's sub-region competition in each age group and gender from U-14 through U-16 in the appropriate age/gender group in the Regional League. In the initial year the Central Sub-Region will place its top two finishers from the previous year's sub-region competition in each age group and gender from U-14 through U-16 in the appropriate age/gender group in the Regional League.)

Sub-Regional Division:

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. The Sub-Regional Division will also include those teams who play in the Regional Division. Each Sub-Regional Division Committee will determine the format and how many games the teams from the Regional Division play in the Sub Regional Division.

## **Teams**

Each US Youth Soccer 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.

Each US Youth Soccer Region III State Association will be allowed two (2) teams in each of the above age categories to participate in the Region III Premier League Sub-Regional Division. Any state association having any variance from two (2) teams in any of the above age categories will be subject to the parameters set by each Sub Region to handle this situation. For specific parameters set by the Sub-Regions please see the section in the Addendum entitled, Sub-Region Team Variance.

The US Youth Soccer State Association will determine its 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 teams of that state association, 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 applicable US Youth Soccer State Association.

The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Regional Division Committee and the Sub-Region Division Committees shall have the final authority to accept teams for competition that have approved applications from their respective US Youth Soccer State Association. A team may not be accepted to the league 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 Regional Division and Sub-Region Division Committees. The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League Regional Division and each Sub-Regional Division Committees will establish dates, sites and match participants.

## **Travel/Hosting**

For the purposes of Region III Premier League competition, each team must properly submit "Notification to Travel" to their respective US Youth

Soccer 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 direct the activities of a 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 & Protest Committee shall have authority over all rules, policies and disciplinary matters arising with the Regional Division of the Region III Premier League, which may include suspensions, and fines and will be the final appeal level.

The Region III Premier League Discipline and Protest Committee shall have authority to review and confirm, overturn, and/or modify decisions of the Sub-Region Discipline and Protest Committees.

## **Fees**

Each team playing in the US Youth Soccer League Region III will pay the fees established by the appropriate Region III Premier League Committee (Regional/Sub-Regional) with the approval of the Regional Director and the Region III Council of State Associations.

Individual teams are responsible for their own cost of travel, housing, coaching, and uniforms. Each team participating in the Premier League will be required to post a renewable performance bond at the time of registration.

### **Housing**

As part of the right to participate in the competition provided by US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League, Regional League teams 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**

Each team participating in the Region III Premier League shall have all rights and privileges of any team playing in a league within its US Youth Soccer State Association. Teams participating in the Premier League must meet the requirements of the US Youth Soccer National Championships.

## **LEAGUE RULES**

The US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League is a program of 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 for youth soccer and except as otherwise provided below.

### **SECTION 1. APPLICATION AND ADMISSION**

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#### **1) Application for Participation**

- a) Participation of a team requires approval of the team's State Association.

- b) Participation is open to any properly registered competitive team which is in good standing with a State Association and which has as rostered players more than 50% of its players from the previous year roster.
  - i.) The intent of the rule is to ensure that participating teams are of the highest competitive quality by returning a majority of players who won the right to play in the Region III Premier League.
  - ii.) In the event of a team fails to meet the 50% Rule at anytime from the team's acceptance into the Premier League until the final match of the Premier League playing season, that team will be declared ineligible. Ineligibility will include forfeit of previously played Premier League matches, prohibition from further participation, loss of performance bond, and exclusion from advancement from the Premier League to the Region III Championship Tournament.
  - iii.) A team that becomes ineligible by failing to meet the 50% Rule will have 48 hours from that point in time that the team fails to meet the 50% Rule to petition the Director of the appropriate Committee (Regional or Sub Regional: West, Central, or East) for reinstatement. If a hearing cannot be made prior to the next played match the match will be played and the team will be subject to any and all the remedies and sanctions at the disposal of the Premier League .
- 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 all forms requested on the Application.
  - ii) A check for the established Premier 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).

## **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**

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### **1) Supervision/Management**

- a) Each age group in the Regional Division will be under the supervision and management of the Regional Division Committee and each age group in the Sub-Region Divisions will be under the supervision and management of their respective Sub-Region Division Committee.

### **2) Age Groups**

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

## **SECTION 3. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

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### **1) Scheduling**

- a) The U.S. Youth Soccer Region III Division Committees (Regional Division, East, West, and Central Sub-Region Divisions) will perform the required scheduling of their respective division for regular league play.

- b) Teams shall be required to play all scheduled dates as assigned by their respective Region III Premier League Division Committee (Regional Division, East, West, and Central Sub-Region Divisions).
- c) The 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 Division Committees (Regional Division, East, West, and Central Sub-Region Divisions). Teams may not reschedule or cancel scheduled matches. Both teams will be fined and forfeit the match. The applicable Region III Premier League Committee may also take applicable disciplinary action.

## **2) Qualifying Matches**

- a) Qualifying matches of a team are those scheduled Premier League matches against other teams in the team's age group. The Premier League Committees will schedule each team to play all teams within its division at least once.
- b) Only qualifying matches will be used to determine Premier League standings.

## **3) Reporting of Scores**

- a) All scores will be reported in accordance with applicable Region III Premier League Regional and Sub Regional Division requirements.
- b) In the event of a forfeit, the forfeiting team shall notify the applicable Region III Premier League Director (Regional or Sub Regional: West, Central or East) within 48 hours of such forfeit. Failure to do so may result in additional sanctions.

## **4) Standings**

- a) The champion of each age group/gender will be the team with the highest number of points upon the conclusion of the season. . 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 at the end of a season, 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. Region III Championship Tournament Slots will be determined thusly:
  - 1) One Region III Championship Tournament slot will be awarded, to each age group/gender to, the team who finishes in the highest position in the Region III Premier League Regional Division who is not a State Cup Champion.
    - (a) In the event that no eligible teams are able to fill the Region III Premier League Regional Divisional tournament slot, then that slot will be filled by the highest finishing team among any of the Sub Regional Premier Leagues that has not earned a slot to the Region III Championship Tournament as a State Champion representative or Sub Regional Premier League representative.
      - i. In the event that there are two teams that qualify for potential selection (ie two teams in 3<sup>rd</sup> place from different Sub Regions), the team will be chosen by a blind draw selection order of the 3 Sub Regions. 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.
  - 2) Each Sub Region will be awarded a Region III Championship slot for each age/group gender. The Sub Region Slots will be determined by the rules enumerated by each Premier League Sub Region Committee described below:

- a. East:  
The highest ranked team who finishes in the RPL in a position no lower than seventh place that is not the RPL Regional Championship representative and is not a state cup representative will be awarded the East Regional Championship slot.

In the event that no RPL team qualifies for the awarded East slot then the highest placed team who finishes no lower than third in the R3PLE and is not a state cup representative will be awarded the East Regional Championship slot.

In the event that no R3PLE team is ranked in the top three positions of R3PLE is awarded the Regional Championship slot then the slot will be awarded to the highest finishing RPL East team in RPL positions eight through ten.

If none of the East teams have been awarded the East Regional Championship slot after applying the above East rules then the highest finishing team in the R3PLE who is not a state cup champion will be awarded the East slot.

- b. Central:

The highest ranked team from the Central Sub-Region who participated in either RIII PL Regional Division or RIII PL Central Division, who is not a State Champion or the RIII PL Regional Division representative to the Region III Championship Tournament, will receive a Region III Championship Tournament slot. In age groups where there is not a RIII PL Regional Division the results of RIII PL Central Division will be used to determine the rankings. The ranking of Central Sub Region teams for determining the order of eligibility to be awarded the Region III Championship Tournament slot and for

participation for the next year in the RIII PL Regional Division league will be determined as follows and known as:

#### Central Team Rankings (CTR)

- 1) CTRF1 (Central Team Ranking Format 1)
  - a) The top two teams in the RIII PL Central Division standings (current year) play the two RIII PL Regional Division teams from the Central. Based on the results of the games played with each other these teams will be ranked from #1 through #4 for CTR. The game played against each other in either RIII PL Central Division and RIII PL Regional Division will also count in the calculation of the points. Hence the maximum amount of points one of these teams could have is 9 (if they won all 3 matches). Tie Breakers as defined in Region III Premier League Rules will be used if necessary, unless the tie is between two teams that played in the same league (for example the RIII PL Regional Division or the RIII PL Central Division) then the first tie breaker will be order of finish in the league.
  - b) The remaining RIII PL Central Division teams will be ranked #5 through #12 for CTR based on their finish in the RIII PL Central Division.

- 2) CTRF2 (Central Team Ranking Format 2)
- a) The highest finishing team from the Central in the RIII PL Regional Division, will be CTR #1
  - b) The RIII PL Central Division 1<sup>st</sup> place finishing team will be CTR #2
  - c) The lowest finishing team from the Central in the RIII PL Regional Division, will be CTR #3
  - d) The RIII PL Central Division teams finishing #2 - #10 will become, ranked in the same order CTR #4 – 12.

- 3) CTRF3 (Central Team Ranking Format 3)
- a) The highest finishing team from the Central in the RIII PL Regional Division, will be CTR #1
  - b) The lowest finishing team from the Central in the RIII PL Regional Division, will play a game against the RIII PL Central Division 1<sup>st</sup> place team or the RIII PL Central Division 2<sup>nd</sup> place team if the 1<sup>st</sup> place team elects not participate in the game.

The winning team of the game will be CTR #2.

The losing team of the game will be CTR #3.

- i) If any of the above teams elect not to participate in the game, they will automatically be ranked CTR #4.
- ii) If both the RIII PL Central Division 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams

elect not to participate they will retain their order of finish, and be CTR #3 and CTR #4 respectively and the RIII PL Regional Division 2<sup>nd</sup> place team will be CTR #2.

- c) The RIII PL Central Division 2<sup>nd</sup> place team will be CTR #4, unless either the lowest finishing Central team in RIII PL Regional Division or the RIII PL Central Division 1<sup>st</sup> place finishing elects not to play the game defined in #2 above and then that team will be CTR #4.
  - d) The RIII PL Central Division teams finishing #3 - #10 will become, ranked in the same order CTR #5 – 12.
- 4) In Boys age groups where there is a RIII PL Regional Division, the ranking to determine the order of eligibility to be awarded the Region III Championship Tournament slot will be determined as follows:
- a) CTRF1 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(1)
  - b) If the games in CTRF1, cannot be played as determined by the RIII PL Central Division Committee, due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control, the rankings will be determined by CTRF2 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(2).
- 5) In Girls age groups where there is a RIII PL Regional Division, the ranking to determine

the order of eligibility to be awarded the Region III Championship Tournament slot will be determined by CTRF2 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(2) .

c. West

The West slot to the US Youth Soccer Region III Tournament will go the winner of a match between the highest finishing Region Premier League team that is not a Region Premier League tournament representative and not a State Cup Champion and the highest finishing team in the Premier League West that is not a State Cup Champion.

- b. 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, during, or after the Premier League Competition) will not be eligible to be awarded the Region III Championship Tournament slot.
- c. In order to be eligible to represent the Premier League at the Region III Championship Tournament a team may not have forfeited 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.
- d. In the event that no eligible teams are able to fill the Region III Tournament Championship slot in a Sub-Regional Division then that slot may be filled by an eligible team from one of the other Sub-Regional Divisions 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. 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 may substitute another eligible team in accordance with the rules regarding filling the Region III Championship Tournament slot.
- f. The number of eligible teams in a division defined by age group, gender, and sub-region is determined by the number of teams who complete the season with no forfeits and no teams will be counted in the division defined by age group, gender, and sub-region who withdraw from the competition prior to completing the season.

## **6) Promotion and Relegation**

In order to qualify for the US Youth Soccer National League a team must have played in the highest level of competition offered by a US Youth Soccer Region. The highest level of competition in Region III is the RIII PL Regional Division of the Premier League. Teams will be recommended for promotion to the National League based on the order of finish in the RIII PL Regional Division.

- a) The RIII PL Regional Division teams who finish in the top four positions of the season end standings will be invited to participate in the next seasonal year's RIII PL Regional Division competition provided the team meets all of its state association and US Region III Premier League's requirements and subject to the Sub-Region rules for promotion and relegation. Please see your applicable Sub-Region rule below.
- b) The teams that have finished fifth through tenth in each age/gender of the RIII PL Regional Division are eligible for relegation as determined by each of its respective Region III Premier League Sub-Region Committees as enumerated below:
  - i) East:
    - (1) The two lowest ranked RPL East teams that finishes in positions 8, 9, or 10 will be relegated to the R3PLE. The two

highest finishing teams in the R3PLE will be promoted to the RPL.

- (2) If the higher of the two lowest ranked RPL East teams finishes in either position six or seven of the RPL then that team will participate in a home/away playoff against the R3PLE runner-up (with away goals counting double) to determine relegation and promotion. The winner of the playoff will be awarded the slots in the RPL. The team that finished in either 8, 9, or 10 will be relegated.
- (3) If the two lowest ranked RPL East teams finishes in positions six and seven then the sixth ranked RPL East team will play the R3PLE runner up and the seventh ranked RPL East team will play the R3PLE champion in a home/away playoff (with away goals counting double) to determine relegation and promotion. The winners of the playoffs will be awarded the slots in the RPL.
- (4) If the lowest ranked RPL East team finishes in either position six or seven then that team will play the R3PLE champion in a home/away playoff (with away goals counting double) to determine promotion and relegation. The winner of the playoff will be awarded the slot in the RPL.
- (5) If no RPL East team finishes lower than the fourth position no RPL East teams will be relegated and no R3PLE teams will be promoted.

ii) Central:

- (1) Only one team from Central Sub Region can qualify for an automatic invitation back in to the following year's RIII PL Regional Division. If all teams from the Central Sub Region that participated in the RIII PL Regional Division finish in the top four, end of the season standings, and qualify for an automatic invitation back to the RIII PL Regional Division, only the team that finished the highest in the RIII PL Regional Division standings will be automatically invited to participate in the following season of the RIII PL Regional Division.

(2) Teams not qualifying for an automatic invitation back to the following year's RIII PL Regional Division would determine their order of invitation into the RIII PL Regional Division by their **Central Team Ranking** as defined above in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b).

(a) In Boys age groups the order of eligibility will be determined as follows:

- i) CTRF1 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(1)
- ii) If the games in CTRF1, cannot be played as determined by the RIII PL Central Division Committee, due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control, order of eligibility will be determined by CTRF3 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(3)
- iii) If the games in CTRF3, cannot be played as determined by the RIII PL Central Division Committee, due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control, order of eligibility will be determined by CTRF2 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(2)

(b) In Girls age groups the order of eligibility will be determined as follows:

- i) CTRF3 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(3)
- ii) If the games in CTRF3, cannot be played as determined by the RIII PL Central Division Committee, due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control, order of eligibility will be determined by CTRF2 as defined in Section 3(5)(a)(2)(b)(2)

iii) West:

- (1) Teams not finishing in a ranking that would automatically invite the team back into the following year's Regional Premier League would play matches against an equal number of top finishing teams from Premier League West to determine the Premier League West's representatives to the Regional Premier League the following year. Teams would be seeded in their order of finish in the Regional Premier League and Premier League West with the Regional Premier League teams being seeded ahead of the Premier League West teams. The higher seeded team will play the lower seeded team, i.e. 1 vs. 8, 2 vs. 7, 3 vs. 6, 4 vs. 5; or 1 vs. 6, 2 vs. 5, 3 vs. 4; or 1 vs. 4, 2 vs. 3; or 1 vs. 2; depending on the number of slots available.
- (2) If all teams from Premier League West that participated in the Regional Premier League finish in the top four and qualify for an invitation back to the Regional Premier League then the lowest placed Regional Premier League West team will play the highest finishing Premier League West team for the slot in the next year's Regional Premier League.

## **SECTION 4. MATCHES**

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### **1) Frequency of Play**

- a) It is the intent of the Premier League 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 Premier League standings. The opposing team will be awarded a 3-0 win.
- c) Any team that forfeits a scheduled match shall be fined \$500 plus the entire referee fees for that match, payable within five business days from the scheduled date of the match to the Region III Premier League.

- d) Any team/club that surrenders its bond due to failure to comply with Premier League rules will not be allowed to continue in Premier League play until a performance bond in the amount established by the Premier League is posted with the Premier League. Teams may also be subject to further discipline by their State Association. A Premier League Sub-Region Committee or Premier League Regional Committee may award all or part of a forfeited bond to the team's opponent(s) in the forfeited match(es). Also, the Sub-Region Committee or Premier League Regional Committee may issue further sanctions including but not limited to banning coaches, teams, and/or clubs/associations from further participation in the Premier League.
- 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.

## **SECTION 5. RULES OF PLAY**

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### **Matches**

Matches will be played under the applicable rules of US Youth Soccer. Teams are responsible for obtaining and being familiar with these Policies and Rules, the US Soccer Federation Official Administrative Handbook and the FIFA Laws

### **1) 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 a match and no substitute enters the match

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.

## 2) 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

## 3) 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.

## 4) 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 applicable Discipline and Protest Committee will decide the disposition of any match which is terminated for gross misconduct by either team, coaches, or parents.
- c) Scheduled matches are to wait a minimum of one (1) hour before a forfeit can be assessed.

## 5) Player Passes/Rosters

- a) In addition to a state association roster of as many as twenty-two players each team playing in the PL may have a 'Club Pass Roster' that is approved by the team's state association.

- b) A Club Pass Roster may have up to eight players listed who are eligible for participation in the team's PL matches. An eligible player is one who is properly rostered to a team that is from the same club.
- c) Players once listed on the Club Pass Roster may not be removed until the PL season of play is declared complete.
- d) A participating PL team may list players on the Club Pass Roster at anytime during the PL season but must do so no later than the close of business three days prior to the scheduled match or the close of business Wednesday prior to the match, whichever is earlier, so that the team's state association has the opportunity to approve the roster or the roster change.
- e) Once a player participates in a PL match that player may not participate on another PL team until the end of that team's play in that current PL event. In other words, a player may not play on a different PL team on the same day, weekend, or event in the case of more than two consecutive days of play.
- f) Each team must present at the match site its laminated and pictured US Youth Soccer player pass for each participating player, signed by both the player and an official of his or her current State Association and an approved game day roster of no more than eighteen Team players not on the game roster may sit on the team bench in street clothing.
- g) If a team does not present its US Youth Soccer player passes and a copy of its approved game day roster as provided in 6)a) above 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.
- h) **NO GUEST PLAYERS ARE ALLOWED.** Only players who are properly registered with the same club and are listed on either the official state association roster or a player who is properly rostered to the Club Pass Roster are eligible to participate.
- i) 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 State Association.

- j) 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.
- k) A copy of the roster described in 6)a) above must be made available to the opposing team coach/manager upon request.

## **6) 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.

## **7) 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 its 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.
- e) 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**

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### **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 (after 10 minutes have elapsed from the time scheduled to begin the match), a certified official must be found to officiate the match. If no substitute certified official is found to officiate the match, then the competition will not count as an official Premier League match even if played with uncertified officials officiating. The referee may appoint replacements for assistant referees who fail to appear 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 terminate matches for lack of crowd control, poor team behavior or other unsportsmanlike circumstances. (Note - each coach is responsible for the behavior of his or her players. Each coach is responsible to assist the referees, when asked, in the control of parents, fans, and spectators).
- b) The Referee shall issue a written USSF Referee Report for any match which is terminated to the Chairman of the applicable Discipline and

- Protest Committee within 48 hours of the time the match ends.
- c) The applicable 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**

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### **1) Ejections and Removals**

- a) Except as provided in 1)b) below any player ejected from a Premier League match will be suspended from his or her next Region III Premier League match. If the Region III Premier League season has ended, he or she will be suspended from his or her next State or National Cup competition, whichever comes first.
- b) Any player ejected for “Violent Conduct” shall be suspended from his or her next two Region III Premier League matches or his or her 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 coach, player, or trainer 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 State Association Disciplinary Chairperson of the team

and player involved by the Chairman of the applicable Discipline and Protest Committee.

- e) Any coach, trainer, or other person in the technical area who is removed or “sent-off” from a Premier League match by a match official shall receive a minimum one match suspension from his or her next Region III Premier League match. If his or her Region III Premier League season has ended, he or she will be suspended from his or her 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 his or her team’s next scheduled Region III Premier League match. If that team’s Region III Premier League season has ended, he or she will be suspended from the team’s next scheduled State or National Cup competition, whichever comes first.
- g) A player is allowed to serve his or her suspension at the game on the team bench, provided he or she 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 his or her suspension.

## **2) Discipline**

- a) The Team Manager or Coach of a team whose parent or spectator 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 applicable Discipline and Protest Committee, who may impose additional penalties.

- c) A team failing to submit an Ejection Report as defined in 2)a) above, within 5 days of the match in question, may be subject to the loss of all or a portion of its performance bond. And must post another performance bond before the next match is played, as determined by the applicable Discipline and Protest Committee.
- d) A team that falsifies information on an Ejection Report shall forfeit its performance bond 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 the individual to participate in a match shall forfeit that match and the opposing team shall be awarded a 3-0 win. The team will also forfeit performance bond and must post another performance bond before the next match is played and the individual will sit out his or her next scheduled match as noted in Section 7 (1).

### **3) AUTHORITY**

Any violations of this Section 7 shall be reported directly to the applicable Region III Premier League Director and may be considered by the applicable Region III Premier League Committee or the applicable Discipline & Protest Committee for adjudication.

## **SECTION 8. PROTEST & APPEALS**

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### **1) Filing of Protest**

- a) A protest to a match (a “Protest”) must be registered, in writing, with the referee of the match and the coach of the opposing team at the match site. In addendum, the Protest must be mailed within 48 hours of match completion with a certificate of mailing to the applicable Chairman of the Region III Premier League 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.
  - 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 allege violation of these US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League 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
- b) The applicable Region III Premier League authority shall issue a written decision within thirty (30) days of its 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 appropriate authority listed in 4) below.
- 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.
- 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 allege violation of these US Youth Soccer Region III Premier League 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
- 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 US Youth Soccer Association, 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) 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 of the Committees (Regional and each of the Sub Regions: Central, East and West).

- 2) State Representatives of the State Association at which a match site is located are responsible for seeing that there is a site coordinator at the site on match days. The site coordinator is responsible for collecting funds from the opposing teams and paying the referee fees prior to the match. Officials are to be paid only for their work. If there is only one assistant referee, he or she shall receive only his or her payment. The other assistant referee fee may be paid to a club assistant referee, if he or she is a registered USSF official.
- 3) Local hosting clubs should pay for field fees if possible.

### **APPENDIX CENTRAL:**

## **Region III Central Sub Regional Premier League Policy**

### **Region III Premier League Central Sub Region**

#### League Composition:

There are two leagues that teams from Central Sub Region can participate in:

-RIII PL Regional Division (2 teams per age group/gender, where league is offered)

-RIII PL Central Division (up to 10 teams per age group/gender)

Up to a total of 12 teams per age group/gender in which the RIII PL Regional is offered.

Up to a total of 10 teams per age group/gender where the RIII PL Regional Division is not offered

Each state in the Central Sub Region is guaranteed 2 slots for teams to participate, in either the RIII PL Regional Division or the RIII PL Central Division league. These slots can be all in one of the league's or in a combination of both leagues.

### **RIII PL Central Division**

League Composition will be U14-U18 Boys & Girls.

Team Selection:

- 1) Each state should submit two applications (or more if there are qualified teams) per age group/gender, comprised of teams that are not participating in the RIII PL Regional Division from their state.
- 2) Each of the five states in the Region III Central Sub Region will be allocated 2 slots per age group/gender for teams from their state to participate in the RIII PL Central Division unless they have teams participating in the RIII PL Regional Division in that age group/gender. The state's automatic allocation of two slots per age group/gender will be reduced by the number of teams from their state participating in the RIII PL Regional Division in the age group/gender.

In determining the teams that will participate in the RIII PL Central Division, if a state has teams participating in the RIII PL Regional Division and their automatic allocation of two teams is reduced, the remaining slot or slots will be filled by the most competitive teams from the Central Sub Region that are not automatically placed in the RIII PL Central Division by their home state's methodology.

- 3) The RIII PL Central Division Committee, which is made up of the representatives of the states participating in the Central Sub Region, will determine the teams that will participate in the RIII PL Central Division. The decision of the committee is final. All teams eligible to participate must have been approved by their state association. The selection process will be completed as follows.
  - a) The teams participating in the RIII PL Regional Division that are from the Central will be deducted from their home state's allocation of the 2 slots per age group/gender. After this deduction it will be known how many slots each state will fill through their state methodology for ranking teams (State Champion, Finalist etc. determined by their state policy) to compete in the RIII PL Central Division and the slots will be filled accordingly.
  - b) After the above process has been completed, any unfilled slots in the RIII PL Central Division will be filled by the most competitive team/teams, from any of the five states in the Central sub region, that have applied and that have not been already selected to participate in RIII PL Central Division. In addition to the competitiveness of the team, consideration for acceptance will be given to pairing teams for travel.

TN girl's teams will generally not be chosen to fill unfilled slots in the RIII PL Central Division if they are not available to play in the fall due to their high school season. As TN Girls club season does not have enough play weekends that match the other states' club season, there are not enough weekends to play the additional matches and allow for makeup issues.

Playing Season for RIII PL Central Division:

The season will be played in the Fall with the exception of games against the TN girls which will be played through Winter/Spring.

League Schedule:

- 1) Travel costs and time may be considerable due to the distances of our great sub-region. The goal of the league will be to generally not have travel exceed 6 – 6 ½ hours. It is possible that during one or two weekends the travel time could slightly exceed that.
- 2) In this league there are no “home” games or even a guarantee that you will play games in your home state.
- 3) If a team fills a slot originally allocated to a state other than their home state, they will follow the schedule play dates of the state whose slot they have filled. However, even in this case, the goal will be that travel for teams filling other state’s slots will generally not exceed 6 – 6 ½ hours.
- 4) Where a team fills a slot originally allocated to a state other than their home state, the State v State games will be in a location central to both teams. Or if both teams involved agree, the game can be played on one of the other scheduled play weekends as the 2nd game on Sunday.
- 5) Where a girls team fills a slot originally allocated to a state other than their home state, and a scheduled play date for that state is scheduled during their high school season, the game will be scheduled on either the designated play date for their home state against TN or on one of the designated make up dates outside their high school season.
- 6) By nature of the participation of different states, scheduling is naturally inflexible. In an attempt to help teams who wish to participate in the league, dates for play in the fall and spring, where applicable, are chosen and announced with the application. An attempt is made to omit weekends that have large regional and national tournaments. The league cannot schedule around local club tournaments.
- 7) Every effort will be made to schedule game times so that a team will only have a one night hotel stay.
- 8) Games that can’t be played due to weather, field or referee issues will be made up on the assigned Make Up Dates shown on the application. Teams should not make commitments to attend tournaments or play games on the assigned Make Up Dates.
- 9) If all make up dates have been utilized and there are remaining games to be played, a makeup date not originally shown on the application will have to be

- determined to complete the games. This date will be determined by the PLC Committee.
- 10) With regard to ACT/SAT test dates, the league will try to schedule games later in the afternoon (after 2:00) for U17 and U18 age groups; however that cannot be guaranteed. So if players are scheduled to take ACT/SAT test on play dates, please consider testing in the location of the games.
  - 11) Any Girls team accepted to WAGS tournament, that has a scheduled league play date on the WAGS tournament weekend, will play their scheduled games on one of the Make Up Dates as determined by the PLC Committee.

**APPENDIX EAST:**

**To Be Announced**

## **APPENDIX WEST:**

### **Premier League West Additions to Region III Premier League Policies and Rules (August 2010)**

#### **League Policies**

##### **Teams**

Premier League West (PLW) will accept club teams from each of the PLW State Associations (State) in even numbers up to a maximum of four teams from State. If a State should desire to send an odd number of teams, the State must request and receive an exception to this rule from the PLW Sub-Region Committee (PLW Committee).

#### **League Rules**

##### **Section 1. Application and Admission**

- d.i) Applications for participation must be submitted through the State in which the team is registered. PLW will require application forms from all teams submitted to PLW by their State.
- ii) The State will issue one check for the entry fees for all teams from that State.
- iii) The State may issue one check for the bonds of all teams from that State.
- iv) Field availability form is not required by PLW.

- v) States may charge a supplemental fee, in addition to the Region's fee, to the teams from their State for participation in PLW.

### **Section 3. Operational Procedures**

- 6) Game related fees will be responsibility of the hosting State. Each State will include the fees for games to be hosted in their State into the supplemental fee that the State may charge the teams from that State.

### **Section 5. Rules of Play**

- 5.c) Matches are to be played as scheduled. Teams must be present and ready to begin play at the scheduled start time of the match (unless previously officially notified of a change in the scheduled date and time). If a team causes the start of a match to be delayed by more than fifteen (15) minutes, a forfeit may be assessed by PLW.
- 6.d) NO GUEST PLAYERS ARE ALLOWED. DUAL ROSTERED PLAYERS must be designated as a primary player for their Premier League team. A PLAYER MAY PLAY FOR ONLY ONE PLW TEAM DURING THE PLW SEASON.

### **Section 6. Match Control**

- 2.b) Referee match fees will be paid for all completed games. The referee match fees are the responsibility of the hosting State and the manner in which the referee match fees are paid will be determined by the hosting State.

### **Section 7. Ejections and Discipline**

- 2.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 West - "Ejection Report". The Team Manager or Coach must forward a copy of the "Ejection Report" as directed by PLW within forty eight (48) hours of the end of the match in which the person was asked to leave. The Team Manager or Coach must also complete the PLW "Sit Out Verification Form", have this form signed by the coach and the match referee, and forward a copy of this form as directed by PLW within forty eight (48) hours of the end of the match in which the person sat out his suspension. If a person was required to sit out more than one match, a "Sit Out Verification Form" is required for each match that the person sat out.
- c) Teams failing to submit an "Ejection Report" and/or a "Sit Out Verification Form" as defined in sub-section (a), within five (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 (or replenish the portion lost) before their next match is played, as determined by the PLW Discipline and Protest Committee.

- d) Teams that falsify information on their “Ejection Report” or “Sit Out Verification Form” shall forfeit their performance bond of \$1,000 and must post another performance bond before their next match is played.

### **Appendix:**

- 2) State Reps are responsible for seeing that there is a site coordinator at the site of multiple games on game days. Payment of officials will be done in the method decided by the hosting State.
- 3) Game related fees will be the responsibility of the hosting State.

### **PLW Procedures and Additions:**

- 1) Travel Permits are not required for PLW play.
- 2) Teams will be required to enter all team related data into the program chosen by PLW to facilitate the operation of the league.
- 3) The Game Report is to be printed by each team immediately prior to each game and brought to the game by each team. Each team will present the Game Report to the referee of the match who may chose which Game Report to use. The Game Report will print all players rostered to each team for PLW play. Players not playing in a game are to be lined out on the Game Report with an indication as to why the player is not participating. Teams allowed twenty two (22) players must line out all but eighteen (18) players for each game (players sitting out ejections must be included in the 18 players for the game, as and example; if one player is sitting out an ejection there will only be 17 players eligible to play in the game).
- 4) If a team has U19 players on their State approved roster, U19 players are not eligible to participate in PLW games.
- 5) A representative of the team (as shown in the PLW team data) is to sign the completed Game Report at the conclusion of the game. This signature verifies the accuracy of the Game Report as completed by the referee.
- 6) The signed Game Report is to be turned into the PLW site coordinator by the referee. In the event that there is not a PLW site coordinator present at the complex, the team from the hosting State will be responsible for emailing (preferred) or faxing a copy of the completed Game Report to the hosting State’s PLW representative within 24 hours of the game. The original completed Game Report is to be delivered to the hosting State’s PLW representative as rapidly as possible after the conclusion of the game (immediate mailing is acceptable for the

- delivery of the original Game Report). A copy of the Game Report should be kept until receipt of delivery is verified.
- 7) Each team is to report the data from their games directly into the management program on the PLW website.
  - 8) Teams will occupy the same side of the field. Teams are to remain on their half of the field between the halfway line and eighteen yards from the goal line if a “technical area” is not marked off. There is a limit of four (4) adults that will be allowed with each team on the sidelines during the game. All adults on the sidelines with the team must have a proper pass issued by their State for adult participation.
  - 9) Spectators will occupy the opposite side from the teams and on the same end of the field as their team’s bench area. Teams may be held responsible for their spectator’s behavior.
  - 10) Official information on PLW will be posted in the Premier League and PLW areas of the US Youth Soccer Region III website. Each team is responsible for checking the website for information including schedules and re-schedules. Each team, and all adults on the sidelines with the team, is responsible for reading and being familiar with the Region III Premier League rules, policies and procedures including the PLW additions to the Regions rules.