

CLASSIC DIVISION RULES OF COMPETITION

Adopted April 22, 1991

Revisions: February 18, 1995; May 8, 1996; May 17, 1997; May 11, 1998, February 15, 1999, June 1, 2000, May 14, 2001; June 1, 2002, June 1, 2003, March 8, 2004, March 14, 2005, March 13, 2006, May 12, 2008

The Classic Division will represent the highest level of inter-district club play offered by PA West Soccer Association.

The Classic Division is a playing division which:

1. Defines the use of tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any like process to roster players selectively to any team on the basis of talent or ability *as permitted*;
2. Limits the participation of players (per transfer rule) previously roistered to another team.

The Classic Division shall consist of this League:

Classic League

All Region 1 rules supercede PA West Soccer rules regarding acceptance and participation in Region 1 sponsored leagues.

When PA West Soccer offers both fall and spring sessions of a league, teams wishing to qualify for State Cup through Region 1 sponsored leagues must play in both fall and spring sessions of these Region 1 leagues also (Spring only Region 1 leagues will not qualify a team for State Cup if the PA West Soccer requirement is for play in both a fall and spring sanctioned league). Teams are encouraged to play in these leagues and these leagues are recognized by PA West Soccer as qualifying leagues (providing the continuance of session play is adhered to) for the State Cup tournament.

- * Provide an opportunity for advanced players, coaches and teams to compete against and to learn from others of similar abilities
- * Promote programs that will protect the rights and best interests of the players
- * Provide programs that will enhance the development of players and coaches
- * Games or practices on Sunday will be only as authorized in these Rules and other applicable rules of PA West Soccer and its Youth Board of Directors. All tournament travel will be governed by applicable PA West Soccer Travel/Classic Division Policies
- * Publish and enforce a body of rules and regulations under which the Division will operate. The US Youth Soccer National Challenge Cup Rules shall be the basis for the Division. The right to add additional playing rules shall be reserved for the Division provided such rules shall be approved by the Youth Board of Directors (in accordance with PA West Soccer Constitution and By-Laws).

The club sponsoring a classic division team shall assume all responsibility which will include financial obligations to PA West Soccer, disciplinary actions, and such other questions that may arise concerning the team's obligations in operating procedures. The team shall be responsible for activities that are related to forming and operating a team, i.e. fields, referees, players' registration. Clubs may sponsor two teams in any single age group in the Classic Division only if they result from current Classic clubs merging provided each team maintains roster continuity of $N(\text{half}) + 1$. No additional second teams may be added once the merger is approved.

1. Administration

The Classic Division shall be governed by a Board of Directors and Voting Members.

The members will be made up of one (1) representative from each of the PA West Soccer registered Classic clubs in good standing and one voting member for every eight (8) PA West Soccer registered non-classic club teams in the classic league.

The Classic Division Director as well as Classic Division Board of Directors shall be responsible to the PA West Youth Division for proper operation of the Division's leagues. The Classic Division shall meet at least once before each playing session. A quorum at any special meeting or bi-annual meeting of the League shall consist of 50% (rounded up to next higher number) of the voting members in good standing. The Classic Division shall have the following officers:

- Classic Division Director
- Assistant Classic League Director
- Boys Commissioner
- Girls Commissioner
- Secretary
- Hearings and Appeals Chair

The officers shall be elected by the recognized voting Members, shall serve a one-year term, and may be re-elected for subsequent one-year terms. Officers need not necessarily be current Members. Officers shall be elected by the membership at the meeting held prior to the spring playing session. These rules shall not preclude anyone from assuming concurrent offices.

The Membership shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Elect the Classic Division officers;
2. Establish entry fees and other fees necessary for the operation of the Division;
3. Approve the Classic Division budget as required by the PA West Soccer Youth Division;
4. Recommend, administer and enforce Classic Division rules.

The Classic Division Director is charged with the overall administration of the Classic Division leagues. The director shall appoint such committees, as necessary to carry out such function. The director shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the division's leagues. The director shall oversee the financial operations of the division. The Director shall represent the Classic Division on the PA West Soccer Youth Board.

The Assistant Classic Division Director shall have the authority to perform the duties of the Classic Division Director in their absence. The Assistant Classic Division Director will have the authority to attend, act and vote (to the extent permitted) at PA West Soccer meetings in the absence of the Classic Division Director.

The Secretary shall be responsible for having a record taken of the minutes of all Committee meetings and keep records of scores. He shall have available at all meetings copies of the minutes of previous meetings and shall act as historian. The Secretary may appoint, with membership approval, an assistant.

The Girls and Boys Commissioners shall be responsible to schedule and track the session games as directed by the membership's competition committee and collect the session game cards. Commissioners may appoint age group assistants to assist in their duties.

The Hearings and Appeals chair shall be responsible for chairing the Disciplinary Committee. The chair shall have the duties and responsibilities provided for in Article 10B of the PA West Soccer Youth Division Playing Rules.

2. Organizational Meetings

The Classic Division Director is required to hold at least two (2) organization meetings per year, one for fall and one for spring. Teams wishing to play in the classic league must have their Classic Division registration forms in the State Office by the deadline set by the division. At the meeting, the Boys and Girls commissioner will lead a discussion as to the best way to schedule and structure each age group to provide the best competition within the guidelines established by the Division. Only teams represented by

recognized voting Members at the meeting may vote on the playing session structure. Non-voting member teams will not have a vote.

3. Eligibility and General Requirements

The Classic Division is dedicated to providing the highest level of competition possible. Entry therefore shall be restricted to teams from Classic Clubs (as defined by PA West Soccer By-Laws Section 23.6.1) provided that provisions are made to allow entry to Non-Classic Club teams consistent with requirements of PA West Soccer By-Laws Section 23.9. Clubs sponsoring Non-Classic Club teams shall agree to abide by the rules of the Classic Division.

Each team wishing to enter the Classic Division will be required to file a team registration form with the State Office by a pre-set deadline to be included in the current league schedule. Any team not filing the registration form by the required date will not be included in the current league schedule. The PA West Soccer stickered roster and any other form prescribed by the State Office Registrar shall be a team's official entry into the Classic Division. Teams will register through the State Office Registrar. The Registrar shall pre-set a date for each session when registrations are due.

All PA West Soccer Club, registration and procedures must be met before a team is eligible to participate in the Classic Division.

For purposes of double rostering, a team is the same as another team when it has seven (7) players or more in common.

For purposes of demonstrating the continuity of a roster, a team is considered the same as the previous team if N+1 of its players where N is half the number of players rostered with the previous team (rounded down to next lower number) at the end of the last playing season.

Players may be rostered only to one team in the Classic Division. (Dual rostering occurs when a player is rostered to a Travel League team in addition to his Classic team). A parent or legal guardian of a player on U12-U14 teams may request a transfer between teams during a transfer window from December 1st and January 10th; All U15 and above transfers must be requested by February 1st. The parents must submit a request in writing with submission of a \$150.00 fee (payable to PA West Soccer) to the state office and must be approved by the Classic Division Director subject to the league guidelines. Should a transfer not be granted by the Classic Division Director a hearing will be set by the Hearings and Appeals chair for the division.

Once the transfer has been granted, the player's original team must present the team roster to the Classic Division Registrar to remove the player within four (4) weeks of the date on the letter.

No team may accept more than five (5) transfers in a playing season. Teams are prohibited from releasing players to add transferred players during the playing season. Abuse of the transfer rule or improper release of a player can result in hearing. If a hearing is requested and the hearing committee finds that, a violation occurred, it may suspend the team coach for a period of one year per violation.

Teams may not transfer from club to club during a playing season (after they have been rostered) until after the State Cup or Regional or National Championship (if they have advanced to such a level).

PA West Soccer Playing Rules shall govern play. Should a violation occur, a disciplinary hearing shall be held in accordance with the Youth Division Playing Rules, PA West Soccer Constitution and By-Laws.

4. Age Groups and Structure

The Classic Division may establish programs for ages U9-U10-U11 that will follow PA West U9-U10-U11 guidelines. No teams from this program will be able to play in the PA West Open Tournament.

Clubs sponsoring teams participating in the classic division small-sided game may form two (2) teams in

a gender for 8 v 8 play, maximum 14 player roster. This is only in age groups requiring small-sided games.

The Classic Division shall offer all age brackets of play listed in accordance with the US Youth Soccer playing rules. Brackets shall be available to correspond with the Region I Tournament of Champions (single birth years: U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18, U19)

The Classic Division shall consist of two leagues, the Premier League and the Classic League.

Premier League shall be the highest level of play in the Youth Division and shall be limited to teams that qualify, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the following rules.

The Classic League shall be a high level league consisting of teams from community clubs, class “B” or “C” members or teams/clubs relegated from the premier league as set forth by the rules below.

A Premier/Classic membership committee (CMC) is to review all new club applications and recommend to the Classic Division board, entry to the Classic Division. The Classic Division board, made up of one representative from each of the Classic clubs and one voting member for every eight (8) PA West Soccer non-classic club teams in the classic league will then decide to accept, reject or send back to the CMC for more review. Membership is subject to the approval of the Youth Board.

Entry into either league is given below. Except for the entry-level age-group, they shall determine the structure of the competition within each age group.

For these purposes, they shall:

a) A New Club may only apply to the Classic Division if an existing Classic Club drops out or does not maintain the eight (8) team minimum and the Classic Division drops below 12 Classic clubs or if the amount of the general youth players in PA WEST increase by more than 5000 U-12 to U-18 players in one playing season (year).

b) Construct more divisions than A or B if necessary within each league and/or each age group and assign teams to each division

c) Consolidate age groups if necessary to improve competitiveness and/or to comply with national championship game requirements.

Decisions of the Committee regarding the supervision and management of the leagues shall be consistent with the relegation rules provided below. Further, no decisions may be made regarding the structure of the competition except at the meeting preceding an age group’s first playing session per year.

5. Classic League Team Placement

All teams playing in the fall must declare their teams on the PA West Soccer Classic League web site by July 15 and register their teams by August 1. All teams playing in the spring must declare their teams by February 15 and register their teams by March 1.

A. Premier League

Participation in the Premier League shall be restricted to Classic Clubs as of *January 1, 2006* who qualify and Classic league teams that finish as a semi-finalist or finalist (first through fourth place) in the PA West Soccer State Cup National Championship series.

a) All Classic Clubs must field a minimum of eight (8) teams in the U11 – U18 age groups. If a club falls below eight (8) teams, the club is moved in to the Classic league. This would happen once all clubs have declared the number of teams that they will commit for the spring playing session (March 1).

b) At the entry-level age group, PA West Premier League teams shall be placed in one flight. Each premier league team shall have to play each other at least once a season.

c) For age groups playing in both the fall and the spring sessions, team standings shall be determined by the cumulative record. No adjustments shall be made for teams that elect to play in only one session.

- d) U-14 age group may play an exhibition session in the fall.
- e) For age groups playing in the spring session only, team standings from the previous session played shall be used to determine placement.
- f) There shall be a Premier A and Premier B level if there are 8 or more teams in an age group.
- g) Teams that drop out of the Premier League A level for reasons other than for playing in Region 1 leagues PA West State Cup qualifying leagues, shall have to re-qualify by playing in the B premier league. Premier A teams shall be allowed to resume play in the Premier League provided that they observe the continuity rule.
- h) Premier 'A' teams whose roster continuity is broken shall have to re-qualify by being assigned to the B Premier Bracket.
- i) Teams may not transfer from club to club during a playing season (after they have been rostered) until after the State Cup or Regional or National Championship (if they have advanced to such a level).

B. Classic League

Participation in the Classic League will be open to Community Clubs, class "B" or "C" members or teams/clubs relegated from the premier league only. There shall be no restrictions in the number of teams that can apply to the Classic League.

A team that wishes to join the league in a particular age group shall be allowed to play in the Classic League only upon approval of the Classic Division membership committee (CMC)

- a) At the entry-level age group, all teams shall be placed in one flight. Each team shall have to play each other at least once a season.
- b) For age groups playing in both the fall and spring sessions, team standings shall be determined by the cumulative record. No adjustments shall be made for teams that elect to play in only one session.
- c) There shall be a Classic A and Classic B level if there are 8 or more teams in an age group. For age groups playing in the spring session only, team standings from the previous season played shall be used to determine placement.
- d) Teams may not transfer from club to club during a playing season (after they have been rostered) until after the State Cup or Regional or National Championship (if they have advanced to such a level).

C. Relegation

- a) Premier A and B flight teams that finish the season within the relegation zone.
 - 1. The last ranked team in the A flight will be placed in the B flight as the top ranked B flight team.
 - 2. The top ranked team in the B flight will become the last ranked team in the A flight.
- b) Any Classic league team finishing as a semi-finalist (third or fourth place) in any State Cup National Championship Series will be automatically placed in the B group and any Classic League team finishing as a finalist (first or second) in any State Cup National Championship Series will be automatically placed in the A group (if there are two groups) of the Premier League allowing that team the same relegation zone as the premier clubs.
- c) The CMC committee shall review the Classic teams that finish the season with less than 2 wins or ties with the possibility of being removed from the Classic league.

PA West Soccer Classic League Club Evaluation Form

At the end of the current PA West Soccer/Regional playing season and by July 1 of the year, each Classic Club president or director must submit a club evaluation form for their respective club. This form must be submitted to the Classic League Membership Committee for review for their club teams. The Classic Membership Committee will review each club's evaluation and make a determination as to the overall club/team strength.

6. Points for Season Play

WIN	=	Three (3) Points
TIE	=	One (1) Point
LOSS	=	Zero (0) Points

These points will be used to determine standings for the season.

End of Season Tie Breakers: If two or more teams are tied in the number of points the tie will be broken as follows:

- 1) Winner of head to head competition (not be used for multi-team ties);
- 2) Goal differential (goals scored all season minus goals allowed all season). Team with highest differential wins higher position in the standings;
- 3) Most goals scored in all League season games;
- 4) Fewest goals allowed in all League season games;
- 5) The team with the fewest yellow and/or red cards (A red card shall be considered to correspond to two yellow cards)

In the event that a game(s) has (have) been forfeited, if any other tied teams played the opponent that forfeited to the other tied team(s), then all the games against the opponent will be omitted before applying the above tie breaker rules.

If three or more teams are tied for a position then the tie breaking rules will be applied to determine the first position among the teams tied and then the tie breaking rules will be reapplied amongst the remaining teams to determine the second position, etc.

7. Number of Games in the Season

- a) Teams in the entry-level age group should play each other at least once during either the fall or the spring sessions subject to the minimum number of games as established by PA West Soccer (see Article 3.1).
- b) Teams in the other age groups shall play at least the minimum number of games as established by PA West Soccer (See Article 3.1).
- c) Doublerheaders and mid-week games are permitted.
- d) All teams must have their season schedule of game times and locations in to the proper division Age Group Commissioner by the second week of the session. Failure to do so could result in the loss of all home games. The original scheduled home team remains responsible for all field rental and referee fees incurred by the original away team.

8. Forfeiting of Games

Teams that forfeits a regular season game will be referred to the Classic Division Discipline Chair for review and recommendation to the Membership for action by a majority vote of the Members present at a duly called meeting of the Classic Division in which a quorum is present. Member Clubs that cannot control their teams will also be referred to the Discipline Chair for review and recommendation to the Membership for action by a majority vote of the Members present at a duly called meeting in which a quorum is present. Actions taken toward a team can be a fine of up to \$100.00 per game to a suspension from the league for multiple offences. Actions taken toward a Club for multiple team offences are fines up to \$500 and or a One (1) year club suspension.

9. Sunday Play

Single Rostered Players - Any team having 100% single rostered players, shall be permitted to travel, play, or practice at any time provided they fulfill their scheduled league game requirements. Team having

dual rostered players shall not be permitted to play or practice on Sunday after Noon. Under no circumstances shall Sunday practice or games interfere with Sunday League travel games.

10. Recruitment Rules

A team may advertise for players to the public through the media or by poster, flyer, or the like, at any time of the year.

A player nor his family neither may be offered nor be provided financial inducement as an incentive to tryout for or join a Classic Division team. This section shall not prevent a team from forgiving fees and expenses in a true financial hardship case if an approval is obtained from the Classic Division Director. There shall be no recruitment of a player rostered to a Classic Division team by another Classic Division team or its representative from August 1st until the conclusion of the State Cup Tournament. Violation of this rule can lead to disciplinary action against the offending team coach and/or soccer club representatives. If a hearing is requested and the hearing committee finds that a violation occurred it may suspend the team coach and/or soccer club representative for a period of up to one year per violation. If more than one player is involved, each player recruited will be considered a separate infraction. Parents may apply for a player transfer to an open roster spot on any team during the mid-season transfer window subject to the Classic Division rule number 3.

Clubs may only consider a transferred player during the mid-season transfer window when a roster contains an open position. No player may be released from any team in order to accept a transfer player. Refer to Classic Division rule number 3 for penalties for misuse of this rule.

Clubs participating in the classic division may form U11 teams for 8 v 8 play, maximum 14 player roster. The State Office will publish try-out schedules at the request of all properly registered clubs playing in the Classic Division.

These rules are not intended to place a limitation upon the many times at which a player not rostered or no longer rostered to a Classic Division team may be recruited.

11. Miscellaneous

All teams must have their season schedule of game times and locations in to the proper division Age Group Commissioner by the second week of the session. Failure to do so could result in the loss of all home games. The original scheduled home team remains responsible for all field rental and referee fees incurred by the original away team.

No Classic Division team is permitted to play on Sundays, excepted as otherwise expressly provided. Under no circumstance shall Sunday practice interfere with Sunday League travel games. Doubleheaders and mid-week games are permitted.

12. US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Information

The US Youth Soccer has a national team championship program called the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series. Any team who participates in an approved four (4) team league is eligible to participate. Upon entry into the Classic Division, each team/club will be provided information on the PA West Soccer State Cup that is part of the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series. Violation of the Travel Policy may make a team ineligible for the State Cup.

13. Incomplete Games

The decision of the International F.A. Board interpreting FIFA Law VII states as follows with respect to incomplete games: "If the match has been stopped by the referee, before completion of the time specified in the rules, for any reason stated in Law V, it must be replayed in full unless the rules of the competition concerned provided for the result of the match at the time of such stoppage to stand.

The following rules of competition shall apply to Classic Division Games:

1. If the game is terminated in accordance with Law V (d) prior to the half time, the game shall be replayed in full;
2. If the game is terminated under Law V (d) following the commencement of the second half, the result of the match at the time of the termination shall stand;
3. If the termination is due exclusively to serious misconduct attributable solely to the coach and/or players of one of the teams, the non-offending team may petition the Classic Division Director to have the game declared as a victory in the standings for the non-offending team;
4. If a team withdraws from the match prior to its completion, the result shall be declared as a forfeit in favor of the opposing team;
5. A team is found to have played a player ineligible under Classic Division, PA West Soccer or US Youth Soccer rules, shall have the match declared as a forfeit in the favor of the non-offending team;
6. A team which appears for a scheduled match with an insufficient number of players to play the match under applicable rules or without the proper credentials (roster and player passes) for the game to commence, shall have the result declared as a forfeit in favor of the non-offending team;
7. Should a match be terminated once begun due to the inability of a team to continue to field the required minimum number of players, the result shall normally be governed by Rules 1 and 2, however, upon petition by the non-offending team, the circumstances will be reviewed and the Classic Division Director may award a victory by forfeit in favor of the non-offending team when it appears that the offending team did not make reasonable efforts to field a representative number of players;
8. A forfeit shall be considered a non-played game as to the offending team;
9. Should a team break any of the above rules, a hearing can be requested by contacting the Discipline Chairperson.