



US Soccer Mandates- Changes for 2016/2017 Season

As many of you have heard, some changes are ahead for the club due to two recent mandates from U.S. Soccer, the national governing body for youth, amateur, and professional soccer in the United States. One change will affect the sizes of the fields our younger ages play on and the size of their teams while the other will change the way we break up our players by age.

We realize there will be challenges ahead. These changes are being made by US Soccer in an effort to improve player development and standardize some of what Americans do with the rest of the soccer-playing world.

Our state governing body, the Illinois Youth Soccer Association (IYSA), and our local league, the Central Illinois Youth Soccer League (CIYSL), are adopting these changes for the 2016-2017 season, so Midstate Soccer Club will follow suit.

We as a club must do our best to navigate this process. We will be transparent about these changes and how they will affect our teams, and will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns that parents have. We appreciate your understanding.

In the meantime, please read through all of what follows. The links provide more detailed explanations of each initiative.

[CLICK HERE FOR US SOCCER MANDATES LINK](#)

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW US YOUTH SOCCER LINK](#)

Small-Sided Games

At younger ages, US Soccer is calling for fewer players on the field at a time so each player sees more of the ball & can make more decisions in each game. This develops the player more effectively as they get more repetitions in attack, defense & all over the field. More touches means players are more engaged & learning at a quicker rate.

U6-U8: 4v4, no goal keeper, 30 x 20 yards

U9-U10: 7v7, includes goal keeper, 47 x 30 yards

U11-U12: 9v9, includes goal keeper, 75 x 47 yards

U13 & Up: 11v11, includes goal keeper, 112 x 75 yards

[CLICK HERE FOR FAQ'S ON SMALL SIDED GAMES](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR NEW STANDARDS CHART](#)



Birth Year Registration

US Youth Soccer will begin using calendar years rather than school years to divide teams, following the practice of most if not all of the rest of the soccer world. The age groups we will use, starting with the 2016-2017 season:

U8: Born in 2009
U9: Born in 2008
U10: Born in 2007
U11: Born in 2006
U12: Born in 2005
U13: Born in 2004
U14: Born in 2003
U15: Born in 2002
U16: Born in 2001
U17: Born in 2000
U18: Born in 1999
U19: Born in 1998

[CLICK HERE FOR FAQ'S ON CALENDAR YEAR](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR BIRTH YEAR MATRIX](#)

How will these changes affect Midstate?

There will be no changes to teams during the Spring 2016. All changes will take effect starting with tryouts in June for the 2016-2017 season.

Small Sided Games

Our club already plays small-sided games for the youngest age groups. This mandate will change the numbers slightly, but will not have a drastic impact on team formation. It will help standardize team and field sizes from one club to the next, which will make it easier for our teams when they travel to other states or other parts of Illinois.

Birth Year Registration

Currently, our club uses the school-year calendar to divide players into age groups. We will change to the calendar year beginning with the 2016-2017 season tryouts. This will have a greater impact on our club, as follows:

Will we be able to keep our current teams?

No. This is the biggest change ahead. As always, players will be reevaluated and placed on teams during tryouts. But starting with this summer's tryouts, players on a given team will be born in the same calendar year as indicated by the earlier chart.

Can my son or daughter "play up" with friends?

No. As always, each player must try out at his or her own age group. In rare cases, a player may be moved up an age group based on coach evaluations. As we have done in the past there will likely be times when we combine age groups based on number of players and player skill level;

My player will be an 8th grader next year and was born in 2002, will he or she have a team to play on?

Yes, we will have a team for them to play on year-round. The oldest year-round age bracket for leagues and tournaments will switch from U14 as it is currently to U15 for the 2016-2017 season. We will have two options for 8th graders born in 2002: 1. Form a complete team of 8th graders born in 2002. 2. Combine the 8th graders born in 2002 with the 2003 players and form combo U14-U15 teams. The decision about which option to choose will be made by the Midstate coaching staff after tryouts, based on the number of players in each age group and the skill level of those players. We do NOT plan on combining the 8th graders born in 2002 with high school freshmen born in 2002. Freshman born in 2002 will try out and play with other high school players.

My player will be a HS senior next year and was born in 1998, will he or she have a team to play on?

Yes. The oldest age bracket will switch from the current U18 to U19 for the 2016-2017 season. Currently, many leagues and tournaments offer a U19 bracket for so-called "trapped" high school seniors, those who are too old for U18. Starting in 2016-2017, many leagues and tournaments will offer a U20 bracket for these players.

Why did US Soccer make the birth year age-group changes?

Please read the US Soccer statement [here](#). The two main reasons we have heard for this change is to align ourselves with the rest of the world and how they form teams, as well as to make it less complicated during the team formation process to know which players belong to which age group.