

NJYS OPEN CUP

2025-2026 Rules of Competition



ABOUT NJ YOUTH SOCCER OPEN CUP

The **NJ YOUTH SOCCER OPEN CUP** is designed to bring together top tier NJ teams from across diverse youth competitive platforms under one open championship format. The competition creates an inclusive and local tournament pathway where NJ based teams from any USSF affiliated youth soccer league such as USYS National Championship Series, MLS NEXT, ECNL, NPL, and USL Academy can compete head-to-head in a single elimination format.

ABOUT NEW JERSEY YOUTH SOCCER



The vision of NJYS is to establish soccer as the preeminent sport in New Jersey that unites, grows, and inspires a lifelong passion. The mission of NJYS is to connect and empower the youth soccer community. The association governs more than 110,000 players from 5 to 19-years-old; 10,000+ coaches; and thousands of volunteers, operates the NJ Olympic Development Programs (ODP), State Cup tournaments, coach certification programs, and TOPSoccer, a program for children with special needs.

VERSION CONTROL

VERSION	DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPROVED BY
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PART 100 – ORGANIZATION AND ELIGIBILITY

RULE 101. ORGANIZATION OF COMPETITION

- a. The NJ Youth Soccer (NJYS) Open Cup is targeted for the top tier NJ Youth Soccer teams playing in a USSF affiliated youth soccer league.
- b. The NJYS Open Cup is a single elimination tournament with divisions determined by NJYS. For the 2025-2026 inaugural season, the competition is open to boys' teams at the U13, U14 and U19 ages.
- c. A single elimination bracket will be created for each age group.
- d. The flighting of teams will be set by NJYS to ensure a fair competition, and NJYS reserves the right to tier teams to ensure a competitive tournament.

For the 2025-2026 inaugural season, the following tiered flighting rules will be applied:

- i. MLS NEXT Homegrown teams receive a bye for the first round.
- ii. MLS NEXT Homegrown teams that receive a bye for the second round are determined via a random draw.
- iii. The remaining teams (MLS NEXT Academy, ECRL, NAL, USYS NL, EDP) will be placed in the bracket via a random draw with the following caveats:
 - a. When possible, flighting will ensure that teams do not play another team within its league in the first round (e.g. NAL teams will not play another NAL team in the first round).
 - b. NJYS will regionalize the first round to avoid unnecessary long travel.
 - c. Best efforts will be made to place clubs with multiple teams in a bracket (e.g. an MLS NEXT Homegrown teams and an MLS NEXT Academy team) in opposite sides of the bracket so that they could not meet prior to the finals.
- iv. NJYS will create home and away designations with an effort to create a balance. For clubs with multiple teams entered best efforts will be made to balance the number of home vs. away games. No team will be required to have 3 away games in a row, and competing teams are permitted to switch home vs. away if there is mutual agreement.

RULE 102. ADMINISTRATION

- a. The entire administration of this competition is vested in NJ Youth Soccer.
- b. There shall be an Open Cups Advisory Board appointed by NJ Youth Soccer. The Open Cups Advisory Board shall review and advise matters with NJ Youth Soccer.
- c. Any matter(s) not provided for or requiring further interpretation in this policy shall be decided by NJ Youth Soccer.

RULE 103. COMPETITION DATES

- a. Dates for all rounds of the NJYS Open Cups are published on the NJYS website (www.njyouthsoccer.com).

- b. Teams shall be prepared to play all games by the scheduled “play by” date for each round and should not enter the competition if they are unable to make the commitment.

RULE 104. VENUE SELECTION

- a. Each game will have a home and away team designated. The designated home team is responsible for securing and, if necessary, paying any fees for fields.
- b. NJ Open Cup games are required to be played in NJ, unless granted an exception by NJ Youth Soccer.
- c. NJYS will select venue(s) for the NJYS Open Cup Championship matches unless otherwise communicated.

RULE 105. LEVEL OF COMPETITION CRITERIA

- a. The NJ Open Cup is an open competition targeting teams playing in the most competitive leagues at the highest levels of youth soccer in NJ.
- a. NJYS reserves the right to decline any application which it feels does not meet the level of competition criteria.

RULE 106. APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION

- b. Teams that meet the eligibility criteria as defined in this document may apply for the NJYS Open Cups competition. Applications may be completed and submitted by club or team personnel through the NJ Youth Soccer tournament management software.
- c. The appropriate entry fee must be received by NJYS prior to the published deadline before the application can be accepted, or a team may incur potential penalties.

RULE 107. TEAM ELIGIBILITY

- a. Qualifying League Requirement
 - i. Teams must compete in a USSF affiliated youth soccer league during the seasonal year in which the NJYS Open Cup is being held.
- b. Age Verification Requirement
 - i. Only teams whose players have been age-verified by the governing authority and process for the qualifying league in which the team plays will be accepted.
 - ii. Bio-banded players are only permitted to play in the age group determined by their birthdate as set by NJYS and are not allowed to play down to a younger age.
- c. Age Group Determination
 - i. A team participating in the NJYS Open Cups may only play in one age group of the NJYS Open Cups during a seasonal year and must do so at the oldest age group in which they participate in their qualifying league at the time of NJYS Open Cups.
- d. Teams are required to play their qualifying league home games in NJ and have

their primary practice location in NJ.

- e. Teams who participate in a NJYS State Cup competition are permitted to also participate in the NJYS Open Cup competition.

RULE 108. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- a. Each player entering the competition must carry proof of team membership based upon the criteria set by the qualifying league's governing authority in which the team participates.
 - i. Bio-banded players are only permitted to play in the age group determined by their birthdate as set by NJYS and are not allowed to play down to a younger age.
- b. Valid proof of team membership is required for each player in every game. Proof of membership may be displayed digitally or provided in paper format.
- c. A player can only be rostered on or play with one team in the NJYS Open Cups competition during an entire seasonal year (i.e., Fall and Spring). To consider whether a player is 'rostered', a player that appears on the NJYS Open Cup roster at the time of the team's first scheduled Open Cup game, or any Open Cup game, thereafter, is considered a 'rostered player' – regardless of if the player participated in any matches.
- d. Players who participate in a NJYS State Cup competition are permitted to also participate in the NJYS Open Cup competition.
- e. Club Pass Players
 - i. A team participating in the NJYS Open Cups may add a player from a different team within the same club to the NJYS Open Cup competition roster so long as:
 - 1. it is before the NJYS Open Cup competition roster freeze date,
 - 2. the player's primary team is not participating and did not participate in NJYS Open Cup competition during the current seasonal year,
 - 3. the player's primary team meets the criteria for participation in the same NJYS Open Cup division,
 - 4. the player is not participating and did not participate with another team in the NJYS Open Cups competition during the current seasonal year.
- f. Secondary Permission Players
 - i. A team participating in the NJYS Open Cups may add a player from a different team and club to the NJYS Open Cup competition roster so long as:
 - 1. it is before the NJYS Open Cup competition roster freeze date,
 - 2. the player is listed on the team's qualifying league competition roster as a secondary player,
 - 3. the player's primary team is not participating and did not participate in a NJYS Open Cups competition during the current seasonal year,

- 4. the player's primary team meets the criteria for participation in the same NJYS Open Cup division,
- 5. the player is not participating and did not participate with another team in the NJYS Open Cups competition during the current seasonal year.
- g. Guest players and/or "Additionally Rostered Players" are ***not*** eligible to play in the NJYS Open Cups. If a guest player appears on a game day roster and/or participates in a match with a team, that team may be disqualified from the competition.
- h. Any team using an ineligible player(s) may forfeit the game(s) in the competition and may be subject to further discipline (e.g., fines, suspensions, loss of designation, etc.).

RULE 109. COACH & TEAM STAFF ELIGIBILITY

- a. Each team official, coach, assistant coach, manager, etc. must be listed on the game day roster for the applicable match and present a valid coaching membership (virtual or physical) based upon the criteria set by the qualifying league's governing authority.

RULE 110. COMPETITION ROSTERS

- a. The Competition Roster is derived from the official qualifying league roster of the team, in which the combination of primary players, club pass players and secondary carded players, as well as team staff are listed.
- b. Maximum Roster Sizes
 - i. Teams can have a maximum of 26 players on the competition roster, from which a maximum of 18 players are eligible on the game-day roster. A maximum of four (4) team staff for each team will be permitted in the technical area.
- c. Competition Roster Freeze
 - i. The team's roster submitted for the competition will be frozen for player additions and removals prior to the start of the competition. NJYS will publish the roster freeze date at the time of team registration.
 - ii. ***Once a cup roster is frozen, all rostered players and club pass players are "cup tied" to the team and may not participate with any other team in the NJYS Open Cups for the duration of the seasonal year.***
 - iii. Requests for exceptions to the roster freeze must be made in writing to NJ Youth Soccer.
 - 1. Exceptions may be granted in cases of administrative oversight **by the competition** or unique circumstances not previously considered. Exceptions are not intended for circumstances brought on by injuries or illness that occur after the freeze date (e.g., player or goalkeeper replacements).
 - 2. Teams are strongly encouraged to include a replacement goalkeeper and/or replacement players on the roster prior to the roster freeze.

RULE 111. CHANGES TO A TEAM APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION

- a. NJYS will post preliminary tournament flighting prior to releasing the schedule. Teams may submit a flighting appeal up until the deadline communicated by NJYS.
- b. Flighting Appeal Requests made after the posted deadline will not be reviewed, except in cases of administrative oversight by NJYS.
- c. Teams that withdraw prior to the final registration deadline and flighting release are eligible for a full refund of their registration fee.
- d. Teams that withdraw after the flighting release and before the schedule release may incur a \$50 administrative fee.
- e. Teams that withdraw after the schedule release are subject to the Forfeit rules in the Rules of Competition.

RULE 112. TITLES & AWARDS

- a. The champion team for each age group shall be awarded the champion title for their applicable year, age group, and tournament level.
- b. NJYS defers to a club's policy to determine the rights and obligations to property awarded by the competition (e.g., the championship trophy).
- c. A team subject to forfeit of the championship match after the Title & Awards have been conferred upon the team are subject to returning the Awards provided by NJYS and removal of the champion title at the discretion of NJYS.

PART 200 – PROCEDURES

RULE 201. SCHEDULING

a. Completion of Games

- i. All games shall be completed by the posted play-by date of the round. **Matches may only be played past the play-by date with the expressed written consent from NJ Youth Soccer.**
- ii. Any game not completed by the posted play-by date is subject to review by NJYS, where additional penalties and sanctions may be applied to either or both teams, including forfeiture.

b. Scheduling Guidelines and Procedures

- i. The Home Team shall contact the opponent within 48 hours of the receipt of the match opponent from NJYS.
 1. In the event the Home Team does not contact the opponent within the appropriate timeframe, the Visiting Team shall attempt to contact the Home Team no more than 72 hours from receipt of the match opponent from NJYS.
 2. In the event either team is unresponsive after 72 hours, a team shall contact the NJ Youth Soccer Open Cups.
- ii. The Home Team shall offer no less than three (3) diversified scheduling options to the opponent (e.g., a combination of varied dates, weeknight options, and weekend options). Upon consultation with the opponent, additional dates may need to be offered to accommodate game schedules by the posted play-by date.
- iii. In the event the teams cannot reach an agreement after no less than 3 attempts to schedule a match, NJ Youth Open Cups shall be notified.
- iv. NJYS can mandate any game-date change in the event both teams cannot agree.

c. Contingency Scheduling

- i. A game can be postponed by NJYS, referee, or the home team if, for example, the weather has made the field unplayable.
 1. Every attempt should be made to play the game as scheduled. The home team must notify NJYS, the Referee Assignor, and the opposing team on the day of the game in advance of the scheduled game time. Any game not postponed by the referee's arrival to the venue shall be considered as *ON* and only the referee shall have the authority at this point to judge the fitness of the grounds.
- ii. NJYS will review rescheduling for any game postponed due to an unplayable field or adverse weather that prevents a team from traveling to the venue site.
- iii. Any postponed game must be played by Wednesday immediately following the posted play-by date unless otherwise approved by NJYS.

RULE 202. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOME TEAM

- a. Prior to Game Day
 - i. Once the game details are agreed upon by both teams, the home team must enter the relevant details in the NJYS tournament software.
 - ii. Confirm the game-time, location, venue directions, and uniform colors with the opponent no less than 72 hours prior to the scheduled kickoff.
 - iii. Inspect the field of play (e.g., ensure the venue is the appropriate size for play, has anchored goals, suitable nets, and visible lines)
 - iv. For evening games, the hosting team shall secure a venue capable of lighting the field for a reasonable period. The host team shall consider the game's total duration and potential for overtime and kicks from the mark.
- b. On Game Day
 - i. Provide two (2) game balls to the referee crew.
 - ii. Inspect the field of play and ensure goals are anchored.
 - iii. For evening games, confirm that the venue lights will be configured for the appropriate time.
- c. After Game Day
 - i. In the event a score has not been reported within 24 hours by the referee, the home team shall notify NJYS.

RULE 203. CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

- a. Each team shall review the digital game day roster (e.g., team sheet) in the NJYS tournament software app prior to the match.
- b. The referee utilizes the NJYS tournament software app to access the digital game day roster, marking players in attendance.
- c. The referee shall inspect the players/coaches passes to verify the individual's identity against the digital roster in the software.
 - i. Any challenges of players listed on the roster will be noted through the game report by the referee, and the player will be allowed to play.
 - ii. Challenges of players on the roster must be made at the time of player inspection and will be addressed by NJYS.
 - iii. Only players on the Game Day Roster may compete in the game. **Players and coaches that are not listed on the digital roster accessed by the referee are not eligible for participation.**
- d. Coaches will be permitted on the sideline provided they possess a valid coaches pass and are listed on the Game Day Roster.
- e. Players listed on the roster and are otherwise not participating in the match (e.g., injured), may sit in the technical area, so long as they present a valid member pass and are not dressed in uniform.

RULE 204. GAME REPORTING

- a. The referee shall report the score within 24 hours utilizing the NJYS tournament software app.

- b. Referees are responsible for reporting any misconduct, apparent serious injuries, and/or unusual incidents that the competition authority should know about through the NJYS tournament software app within 24 hours of the match completion.

RULE 205. FORFEITS

- a. Prior to Game Day
 - i. Teams shall notify NJ Youth Soccer and the opponent immediately upon the intent to forfeit.
- b. Failure to Show on Game Day
 - i. If both teams are properly notified per the parameters above, and following a 15-minute grace period, one team fails to show-up, the game may be forfeited to the showing team.
- c. Failure to Field the Minimum Number of Players
 - i. If both teams are properly notified per the parameters above, and following a 15-minute grace period, one team fails to field a minimum number of players or coaches, the game may be forfeited to the showing team.
 - ii. If during a match, a team falls below the minimum number of players or coaches due to injury or sending off discipline, the game may be forfeited to the opposing team.
- d. Extenuating circumstances may be favorably considered by NJ Youth Soccer. If both teams fail to adhere to deadlines, show on game day, or field the minimum number of players, NJ Youth Soccer may determine a forfeit for both teams.
- e. The forfeiting team(s) may be assessed a fine, payable within 10 days of notification, according to the following schedule:
 - i. Play-In Game, Round of 64, Round of 32, Round of 16
 - 1. \$150 plus referee and field costs
 - ii. Quarterfinal Game
 - 1. \$200 plus referee and field costs
 - iii. Semifinal Game
 - 1. \$250 plus referee and field costs
 - iv. Final Game
 - 1. \$350 plus referee and field costs

RULE 206. PROTESTS AND APPEALS

- a. NJYS will hear and decide protests, appeals, and commissions for NJYS Open Cups matches subject to the following conditions:
 - i. Protests
 - 1. A protest must regard a clear misapplication of the Laws of the Game or the NJ Youth Soccer Open Cups Policies and Rules of Competition. Judgment decisions are not subject to protest.
 - 2. The protest must be verbally lodged with the referee and the opposing team's coach before leaving the venue.

3. The referee shall notify NJ Youth Soccer through the game report within four (4) hours of the game completion, or immediately after the game's completion when games are played at a neutral site.
4. A team official listed on the Game Day Roster must submit the protest in writing via email to NJ Youth Soccer (statecups@njyouthsoccer.com) within 24 hours of the game's completion.

ii. Appeals

1. Appeals regarding administrative decisions (e.g., forfeits) may be made in writing within 24 hours of the decision.
2. The individual to whom the decision was communicated must submit the appeal in writing via email to NJ Youth Soccer (statecups@njyouthsoccer.com) within 24 hours of receipt of the decision.
3. Red Card Suspensions
 - a. A red-card suspension may only be appealed when the sanction is *greater than* the minimum for the offense. The appeal shall argue why the suspension should be reduced to the minimum penalty.
 - i. For example, a 3-game suspension issued for Violent Conduct is not appealable because a 3-game suspension is the minimum penalty for Violent Conduct. A 4-game suspension for that offense can be appealed to a 3-game suspension (i.e., the minimum).
 - ii. Appeals arguing for 'no penalty' or less than the minimum will not be heard. Red cards by the referee are a matter concerning the Laws of the Game and shall be addressed in accordance with the Protest procedure above, not the appeals process.
- iii. A fee of \$300 must be submitted to NJ Youth Soccer within 24 hours of the protest or appeal submission(s). If the protest or appeal is upheld, the fee will be returned. If denied, the fee will be retained.
- iv. For events hosted by NJYS, the protest or appeal, along with the fee, must be delivered to the NJYS Site Coordinator within two (2) hours of the game's conclusion.
- v. Written complaints can be filed without a fee, but they will not result in a change in the game result.

RULE 207. REFEREES

- a. Referee fees are to be paid prior to the match and will be split by teams 50/50. Referee assignor fees are paid by NJYS through the team entry fee. The established fees are:

Age Group	Referee	AR (x2)	Per Team
17U - 19U	\$110.00	\$55.00	\$110.00
15U - 16U	\$100.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
13U - 14U	\$90.00	\$45.00	\$90.00
11U - 12U	\$80.00	\$40.00	\$80.00

- b. **Referees are assigned to all NJYS Open Cup matches by NJ Youth Soccer. NJYS shall use USSF Referee Assignors.**
- c. Teams are encouraged to schedule games at least seven (7) days in advance and shall not schedule games less than five (5) days in advance to ensure adequate time to assign a referee. Games scheduled with less than five (5) days' notice may impact referee assignment.
- d. If within 72 hours of the scheduled kick-off time, a match date or time is substantially changed; the team(s) responsible for the change shall pay the referee fees. This shall exclude weather cancellations and contingency scheduling, where referees shall be paid if the weather or safety related cancellations occur less than two hours prior to the game.
- e. The USSF approved referee assignment policy is preferred when assigning referees:
 - 1. Referee and two neutral uniformed assistant referees.
 - 2. Referee and two club linespersons.
 - 3. One referee is working alone.
- f. If no assigned referee appears at the field within 30 minutes of the scheduled game time, two choices are available:
 - 1. The game may be played with a mutually acceptable substitute *certified* referee.
 - 2. Both teams may elect to play the game at another time but before the following Wednesday. NJYS must be notified.
 - 3. Failure of a referee to show up will not be the cause for canceling or protesting a game.

RULE 208. DISCIPLINE

- a. Players and/or coaches may be sent off from a match for offenses listed in the Laws of the Game. Players and/or coaches sent off from a match are automatically suspended for a minimum of one game. Offenses are reviewed by NJYS for additional discipline beyond the minimum suspension (e.g., Violent Conduct, Serious Foul Play, Spitting, Biting, etc.).
- b. Unserved Suspensions
 - i. A player may not participate with any team in the NJ Open Cups competition until the entirety of the suspension is served, or the conclusion of the next seasonal year is reached.

- ii. In the event a player changes clubs or teams during or between seasonal years, the suspension must be served with the new team participating in the NJYS Open Cups in which the player attempts to participate with.
- iii. A coach may not participate with the team in the NJYS Open Cups competition until the entirety of the suspension is served at such competitions, or the conclusion of the next seasonal year is reached.
- iv. In the event a coach changes clubs or the team ceases to exist or participate in the NJYS Open Cups, the suspension will be applied to the next NJYS Open Cups match(es) in which the coach appears. This applies across seasonal years.
- v. New Jersey Youth Soccer Open Cups may refer suspensions for more severe offenses to the New Jersey Youth Soccer Discipline & Appeals Committee and therefore may be shared with other applicable competitions.

c. Conduct

- i. Coaches are responsible for their own conduct and that of their players and spectators. At the request of the referee, the team coach is responsible for removing a spectator from a venue.
- ii. Misconduct Toward Game Officials (e.g., Referee Abuse, Assault, and Gross Mistreatment) is not tolerated and will be referred to the NJYS Appeals and Discipline Committee for sanctions.
- iii. All parents and spectators will remain on the spectator sideline during the match and until such time the coaches have released the players after the match, and referees have vacated the field of play. Failure to remain off the field of play until such a time will result in a send-off for the coach and possible forfeiting of the match.
- iv. Coaching is only permitted from inside the technical area. Coaches are not permitted to coach from the spectators' side of the field and may not use electronic communication during the match.
- v. Spectators found responsible for poor conduct prior to, during, or after a match may be subject to sanctions from NJYS (e.g., completion of related conduct education materials, reviews of codes of conduct, inability to attend matches for a period, etc.).

RULE 209. MATCH MANIPULATION

- a. Teams and clubs failing to compete in the spirit of the competition or are involved in the manipulation of a game result (e.g., an intentional result) are subject to forfeiture and disqualification from all levels of the competition and referral to the NJYS Appeals and Discipline Committee.
 - i. At a neutral site, if failing to compete is actively observed and confirmed, the competition authority representative will give notice to the offending Team or Teams.

- ii. If corrective action is not taken, the Team or Teams will be subject to disqualification.

RULE 210. ABANDONED AND TERMINATED MATCHES

- a. Should the match be abandoned at any time due to one of the teams being adjudged at fault, it will be at the discretion of NJYS as to whether the game is to be replayed or forfeited.
- b. First Half Completed – Neither Team at Fault
 - i. Abandoned (i.e., unfinished) matches will **not** be replayed, provided neither team is at fault, the Laws of the Game and Rules of Competition are correctly applied, and the first half has been completed. If any of these conditions are not met, NJYS will determine the appropriate action.
- c. First Half Not Completed – Neither Team at Fault
 - i. If the first half has not been completed and provided neither team is at fault, NJYS will determine the appropriate action.
- d. Tied Matches
 - i. If a match is tied in any period of play and provided neither team is at fault, NJYS will determine the appropriate action.
 - ii. In the event a match is tied at the conclusion of regulation and overtime is not played, NJYS may determine that only the overtime and kicks from the mark (if applicable) need to be played.

RULE 211. MATCH REPLAYED IN ITS ENTIRETY

- a. NJYS may deem it necessary that a match be replayed in its entirety for one or more matter(s) concerning a misapplication of the *Laws of the Game, NJYS Open Cup Policies & Rules of Competition*, or other circumstance(s) not previously considered.
- b. Such matter(s) are brought to the attention of NJYS by the means afforded to teams within the *Policies and Rules of Competition* (e.g., protest) or through a referee report.
- c. The following rules will be utilized in the matter of a match replayed in its entirety:
 - i. Referee Assignment
 1. The referee crew assigned to the original match must not be assigned in any capacity to the replayed match.
 - ii. Player & Coach Eligibility
 1. Teams may only utilize players to which they were entitled to use at the time of the original match unless the player has been transferred/released from the team.
 2. No new additional players may be added to the game day roster (e.g., new club pass players, new secondary pass players, or new roster additions). For example, a player listed on the game day roster who did not partake in the match is still eligible to participate; however, a club pass player or newly registered or transferred player not listed on the roster at the time is not eligible to be added.
 3. Misconduct and Suspensions

- a. Players or coaches serving a suspension at the time of the original match are not eligible to participate in the replayed match, even if the suspension is considered served at the date of the replayed match.
- b. In the event a player/coach is issued a red card during the original match, they will be suspended from the replayed match, and the team will not be able to replace the player/coach on the roster. The player/coach will not be able to sit on the bench for the replayed match. For clarity, the team does not play-down a player on the field for the replayed match.
- c. In the event a player/coach is issued a second yellow card during the original match, they will be suspended from and not be eligible to participate in the replayed match, and the team will not be able to replace the player/coach on the roster. The player/coach will not be able to sit on the bench for the replayed match. For clarity, the club does not play-down a player on the field for the replayed match.
- d. All other yellow cards and warnings are removed and will not be applied to the replayed match.
- e. If a player/coach receives supplemental discipline from NJYS after the date of the original match and in effect at the time of the replayed match, the player/coach will serve the discipline during the replayed match.

iii. Score

- 1. The reported score of the original match will be cleared, unless deemed otherwise by NJYS.

RULE 212. UNIFORMS

- a. Player Jerseys
 - i. Each player shall have a unique jersey number affixed to the back of his/her jersey. Duplicate numbers are not permitted. In the event of an emergency, a taped number is permissible; however, the referee will report it to the competition authority.
 - ii. A numbered jersey for the goalkeeper is recommended.
- b. Team Colors
 - i. In the event of color conflicts as determined by the game officials, the home team will adjust its uniform to that of the visiting team.
 - ii. Each team must have two uniforms sets (one light color and one dark color) at each NJYS Open Cup game.

PART 300 – GAME PLAY RULES OF COMPETITION

RULE 301. GAME PLAY DURATION AND BALL SPECIFICATION

a. The table below indicates the duration of the match, halftime, overtime periods, and size of the ball by age group.

Age Group	Duration	Halftime	Overtime	Ball Size
17U, 18U/19U (11v11)	Two [2]-45-minute halves	10 min	Two [2]-10-minute halves	5
15U, 16U (11v11)	Two [2]-40-minute halves	10 min	Two [2]-10-minute halves	5
13U, 14U (11v11)	Two [2]-35-minute halves	5 min	Two [2]-10-minute halves	5

b. Only NJ Youth Soccer can decide to reduce the duration of the match, halftime, and/or overtime. The referee and/or coaches cannot independently agree or decide to do so without permission from NJ Youth Soccer.

c. Procedures to Determine a Winner (Overtime and Kicks from the Penalty Mark)

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

RULE 302. SUBSTITUTIONS

a. 13U and 14U

- Unlimited substitutions can occur at any stoppage in play with the permission of the referee.

b. 15U through 19U

- A maximum of 7 substitutions for each team shall be allowed per half of play and during the entire overtime play with the permission of the referee.
- After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during that same half of play.
- After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game.
- Temporary Substitutions Due to Head Injury Evaluation
 - If a player is suspected of suffering a head injury, the player must be evaluated.
 - The player may be substituted for evaluation without the substitution counting against the team's total number of allowed substitutions during each half or overtime period, *if and only if*, the team making the temporary substitution has a substitution available.

- iii. If the player with the suspected head injury has received clearance from the events' Health Care Professional, the player may re-enter at any stoppage of play.
- iv. The evaluated player must replace the original substitute and will not count as a substitution.
- v. The temporary substituted player may re-enter the game as a regular substitute.

RULE 303. SUSPECTED HEAD INJURIES

- a. If a player is suspected of suffering a head injury, the player must be evaluated.
- b. Should a Health Care Professional not be available at a match, NJYS requires the player receive professional medical clearance prior to returning to play.
- c. The referee must report all suspected head injuries as an apparent serious injury through the appropriate game report.
- d. At a neutral NJYS venue, a player must receive clearance from the events' Health Care Professional prior to re-entering the match.

RULE 304. HYDRATION BREAKS

- a. Prior to the match's start, the referee will decide, or the NJYS at a central site, to implement a hydration break.
- b. The break occurs at the midpoint of each half and at the end of each overtime period (if played).
- c. The break will be implemented when the heat index is above 85 degrees at game time.
- d. The break will be given at a normal stoppage of play, and all players must remain on the field.