



# Procedures and Rules 2025

## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 100. Name and Purpose.....                                      | 1  |
| 200. Competition Organization: .....                            | 1  |
| 300. Entry Procedure and Fees .....                             | 2  |
| 400. Player Registration, Team Rosters, and Player Passes ..... | 4  |
| 500. Scheduling, Canceling, and/or Terminating Games .....      | 5  |
| 600. Referees & Referee Fees .....                              | 7  |
| 700. Game Procedures .....                                      | 8  |
| 800. Standings, Festivals, Playoffs, Tiebreakers .....          | 10 |
| 900. Protests, Penalties, Suspensions .....                     | 11 |

## 100. Name and Purpose

### 101. Soccer Maine State Cup

Soccer Maine (United Soccer Federation of Maine) conducts the State Cup competition annually for boys and girls teams in the 12-Under (SS) through 18U/19-Under age groups. The Soccer Maine State Cup is a sanctioned qualifying event for the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series. The Soccer Maine State Cup Champions advance to the Eastern Regional Championships. 13-Under to 18U/19-Under age groups can then advance to the National Championships.

**102. USYS National Championship Series Policy:** The US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Policy prescribes the requirements of the Championship Series.

**103. Soccer Maine State Cup Procedures and Rules:** The Soccer Maine State Cup Procedures and Rules supplement the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series Policy. These Procedures and Rules establish the conduct of Soccer Maine's State Cup as part of the National Championship Series.

## 200. Competition Organization:

### 201. Dates

**201.1. Calendar:** State Cup games will potentially start the first weekend of May (2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>) and continue on subsequent Fridays, Saturdays, or other dates as necessary.

# Procedures and Rules 2025

Important dates and deadlines for the State Cup are as follows:

| Action/event                    | Deadline             | Applicable Fees                        |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Team entries due 12U-18U/19U    | January 8, 2025      | \$400/team                             |
| Schedules Posted                | April 15, 2025       | NA                                     |
| Roster Freeze Date              | April 15, 2025       | 12U-19U                                |
| Second payments due             | April 15, 2025       | 12U-19U                                |
| First potential weekend of play | May 2-4, 2025        | NA                                     |
| East Region Championships       | June 27-July 3, 2024 | \$1000/\$600 (April 15 <sup>th</sup> ) |

## 202. Team Eligibility

The Soccer Maine State Cup is open to the competitive youth teams of any Soccer Maine Member Club in good standing. Two additional conditions apply:

**202.1. Select Teams:** A team may not be a Select team. A Select Team is defined as a team comprised of the best players chosen from multiple clubs.

**202.2. Participation in Qualifying League Required:** All teams from the 12-Under to 18-U/19Under age groups must compete in a Soccer Maine sanctioned qualifying league or a USYS Regional league or an out-of-state approved league. The league must consist of at least four (4) teams with the team playing at least three (3) league games against different opponents during the league season. If a team participates in Soccer Maine State Cup and does not complete the required league play prior to **June 1, 2025**, the team will forfeit all Soccer Maine State Cup games played and will not be permitted to participate in the Soccer Maine State Cup the following seasonal year. State Cup standings and winners will be adjusted accordingly.

**202.3 Club Pass:** A club may issue a club pass to any youth player who is a registered youth player of the club before the team to which such player is to be rostered for State Cup has its State Cup roster frozen.

## 204. Age Groups and Divisions Offered

Unless otherwise indicated in the Competition Announcement, the age groups offered in the State Cup will be as follows: 12-Under (SS) to 18U/19-Under boys and girls. State Cup Competition is for players 12-Under and older.

## 205. Administration

The Soccer Maine State Cup is conducted under the direction of the State Cup Committee.

**205.1. Results and Standings:** The State Cup Committee maintains all game results and standings. The results and standings will be posted on the Soccer Maine website in a timely manner for review by participating teams.

## 300. Entry Procedure and Fees

### 301. Team Entry

Clubs must enter teams in the State Cup in the manner prescribed by Soccer Maine in the Competition Announcement. Soccer Maine will not consider entry of any team complete until clubs

# Procedures and Rules 2025

submit the Club Team Entry form, pay the entry fees and enter the team on-line as their Commitment to Play. The State Cup Committee will review the entry applications and, if an application is not accepted, will notify the club immediately. The entry deadline is January 8<sup>th</sup> of the current seasonal year.

**301.1. East Region Championships Commitment:** In accordance with USYS National Championship Series Policy and Guidelines, Soccer Maine will notify the East Region of the age groups in which Soccer Maine will send a State Cup Champion to compete in the East Region Championships based on the State Cup entries received by the deadline. Teams are subject to fines of up to \$3000 if they rescind their commitment to play in the East Region Championships. A team **must commit to represent Maine at the East Region Championships** in order to participate in the State Cup.

**301.2. Runners-Up Commitment: RUNNERS-UP IN ANY AGE BRACKET ARE ALSO OBLIGATED TO REPRESENT MAINE AT THE EAST REGION CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE EVENT THAT THE STATE CHAMPION WITHDRAWS FROM THE EAST REGION CHAMPIONSHIPS.**

## **302. Team Entry Fees**

All team entry fees are due with entry application.

**302.1. 12-Under to 18U/19-Under Entry Fee:** \$400.00 per team, plus a second payment up to \$600 per team for U12, and \$1,000 per team for U13 and up. Second payment due on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Second payment is determined by how many teams have entered in that age group.

## **303. Player Registration Fees**

The premier player registration fee is \$15.25/player. All player registration fees are due by February 15<sup>th</sup> for all teams that are competing in our State qualifying league. If players are competing in State Cup, and playing in an out-of-state qualifying league, player fees are due for those players by March 1<sup>st</sup>, or earlier depending on roster dates for their league.

## **304. Team Withdrawal**

Notice of intent to withdraw from the State Cup must be made to the State Cup Director in writing or by e-mail.

**304.1. Team Withdrawal after Age Group Submission Date:** If a team withdraws from the State Cup, or in lieu of no other teams in State Cup, from its Regionals commitment any time prior to May 25<sup>th</sup>, the team shall forfeit its entry fee.

**304.2. Team Withdrawal after May 25<sup>th</sup>:** If a team withdraws from the State Cup, or in lieu of no other teams in State Cup, from its Regionals commitment after May 25<sup>th</sup>, the team shall forfeit its entry fee and be fined \$1,500, which will become due and payable within 7 days to the East Region. If that withdrawal is after June 15<sup>th</sup>, the fine would be increased to \$3,000.

**304.3. Team Status after Withdrawal:** If a team withdraws from the State Cup after rosters are frozen, a team and its players are considered to have competed in the State Cup, whether or not they actually play in a State Cup game. A team or players that withdraw after rosters are frozen,

# Procedures and Rules 2025

or at any time thereafter, are ineligible to compete in any other NSA State Cup competition during that seasonal year.

**304.4. Withdrawal from East Region Championships:** Fines for withdrawal from the East Region tournament will be as follows: \$1,500.00 for withdrawal after May 25<sup>th</sup>; an additional fine of \$1,500.00 for teams that withdraw less than ten (10) days prior to the start of the East Region Championships. Clubs will be responsible for paying any fines incurred.

## 400. Player Registration, Team Rosters, and Player Passes

### 401. Player Registration

All players must be properly registered with Soccer Maine and USYS.

### 402. Team Rosters

All teams must have an official Roster verified by Soccer Maine to participate in the State Cup. Teams will use the official Roster for all State Cup, Regional, and National level competitions and must have a copy of the Roster available for inspection at all competitions. The rosters must have a minimum of nine (9) players.

**402.1. 13-Under to 18U/19-Under Roster Size and Continuity:** 13-Under to 18U/19-Under age group teams may have up to twenty-two (22) players on their Rosters for the State Cup. All teams must have a continuity of players between qualifying league play and State Cup by maintaining a minimum of eleven (11) players common to the rosters of both competitions.

**402.2. 12-Under (SS) Roster Size and Continuity:** The 12-Under (SS) teams playing 9v9 must not have more than sixteen (16) players on its roster. All teams must have a continuity of players between qualifying league play and the State Cup by maintaining a minimum of nine (9) players common to the rosters of both competitions.

**402.3. Rosters Frozen:** The Rosters of every team 12-Under to 18U/19-Under entered in the State Cup competition are frozen on April 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 P.M for Maine's competition. After the State Cup roster is frozen:

- a. no changes are allowed to the Roster (no "adds" or "transfers") for the State Cup competition;
- b. a team and its players shall be considered to have competed in the State Cup competition for that seasonal year, whether or not the team or players actually play in a State Cup game.  
Teams and players may compete in only one (1) State Cup competition in a seasonal year.

### 403. Player Passes

All players must have a valid Player Pass to play in any State Cup game. The valid player pass must be available prior to the start of the game for inspection by the referee and by State Cup officials. In order for a player pass to be considered valid, it must meet the following standards:

**403.1. Current Photo:** The player pass must have a current head shot photo that identifies the player clearly.

# Procedures and Rules 2025

**403.2. Signature:** Pass must be signed by the State Registrar/Executive Director.

**403.3. Pass Laminated:** The player pass must be laminated by the first State Cup game played.

There are no exceptions to these requirements. Players without a valid player pass will not be permitted to play in State Cup games.

## **404. Player Eligibility Rules**

A player must be properly registered and rostered in accordance with the rules of US Youth Soccer and Soccer Maine. A player may only play for one team in the USYS National Championships Series competition at each level of the competition during the seasonal year.

**404.1. Rostering.** Any player rostered to another team with the same club, whose team does not advance to the next level, may be rostered to another team of that club at the next level of the National Championships Series competition, as long as the roster does not exceed the number of players specified in this policy for that age group.

**404.2. The team coach and the club are ultimately responsible for verifying player eligibility.** Soccer Maine will not be responsible if a player is found to be ineligible.

## **500. Scheduling, Canceling, and/or Terminating Games**

### **501. Scheduling**

The State Cup Director of Soccer Maine will create the State Cup competition schedule, once the team entry process is complete.

**501.1. Home and Away Designations:** All home and away designations will be determined at random at the time of the State Cup draw. In the semi-final and final games, the team holding the higher seed position shall be the home team.

**501.2. Team Availability:** Pursuant to USYS rules, State Cup games take precedence over all other games. Teams and their respective leagues must arrange league schedules to avoid conflicts with State Cup game dates. State Cup game dates will be published in advance, but due to unforeseen circumstances such as bad weather postponements, teams must regard the State Cup game dates as subject to change. Except as noted below in rule 501.3, teams should plan to be available every weekend from the start of the State Cup until the final match. It is the responsibility of clubs and team coaches to inform players of these schedule requirements and expectations.

**501.3. Game Sites:** Teams agree, by entry into the State Cup, to play scheduled State Cup matches at any venue in the State of Maine. The State Cup Committee encourages Club officials to inform their teams and players of this requirement prior to entering the competition. The State Cup Committee assigns game sites based on field availability, referee availability, weather considerations, scheduling efficiency, and when possible, home and away designations. A team with a "home" designation may or may not be assigned to play in its home region.

# Procedures and Rules 2025

**501.4. Schedule Changes:** The State Cup Committee reserves the right to make changes to the State Cup schedule for any reason. Such changes might include venue, date, and/or time. Teams must abide by the schedule decisions of the State Cup Committee.

## 502. Cancelling Games

As a general rule, State Cup games are not cancelled. Teams are required to play all State Cup games that they have been assigned by the State Cup Committee.

**502.1. Seventy-Two Hours Notice:** In the event that the State Cup Committee must cancel a game, it will make reasonable attempts to inform participating teams at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled date and time of the game. The State Cup Committee will inform the referees and the Game Site. The State Cup Committee will reschedule any cancelled games as promptly as possible.

**502.2. Unforeseen Circumstances:** If severe weather or other extenuating circumstances would prevent a game from being played safely, and if the game must be postponed, the State Cup Committee is responsible for informing the participating teams and the officials. The State Cup Committee will reschedule the game. In the event that the game would have no impact on outcome of group play, the State Cup Committee reserves the right to cancel the game. The State Cup Committee will inform the teams involved in such circumstances of any such cancellation by e-mail.

**502.3. No Shows:** In the event the minimum number of players necessary to start a game [seven (7) players for 11 v 11; five (5) players for 9 v 9, does not arrive at the venue (“no show”) within ten minutes of the scheduled start time, the game is considered a forfeit and will be recorded as a 0-4 loss. Any team which forfeits a game incurs a \$250 fine. The team’s Club must pay the fine to Soccer Maine within seven (7) days. It is the responsibility of the assigned referees to notify the State Cup Committee by e-mail of any team who forfeits a game as a result of a “no show.” If a team forfeits a second game, the Club will be assessed another \$250 fine and must pay the fine within seven (7) days to Soccer Maine. Failure by a Club to pay fines shall result in the Club’s not being in good standing and thus all of its teams ineligible to compete in any Soccer Maine sanctioned game and/or event (e.g. sanctioned tournament, end of season festival, or playoff tournament) until the fine is paid in full.

### ***Bad Weather***

*In the event of bad weather, the State Cup Committee will assess playing conditions and make a determination as to whether the conditions will allow for safe and fair competition and safe travel to and from the venue. Heavy rain, lightning, high winds, snow cover, extensive standing water, and/or a soaked playing surface are some examples of conditions under which a game could be postponed due to bad weather. The State Cup Committee will attempt to make this decision **2 hours** in advance of kick-off in order to inform teams and referees.*

## 503. Terminating Games

Once a referee has jurisdiction of a game, the game may only be terminated by the referee as provided for in the FIFA Laws of the Game.

# Procedures and Rules 2025

**503.1. Game Termination First Half:** If a game is terminated before the second half of the game has begun, and the termination is not due to the conduct of one of the teams, the game shall be replayed in its entirety.

**503.2. Game Termination Second Half:** If a game is terminated after play has begun in the second half of the game, but before the end of the second half, and the termination is not due to the conduct of one of the teams, the game is considered complete, and the score at the time of termination will stand.

**503.3. Games Terminated due to Misconduct:** If a referee terminates a game based on the conduct of team, its coaches, officials, or spectators, the State Cup Committee will hold a hearing to determine penalties, including forfeiture of the game. If a team terminates a game before the referee signals the game ended, the team will forfeit the game and the State Cup Committee will hold a hearing to determine any additional penalties.

## 600. Referees & Referee Fees

### 601. Certified Referees and Assigning

All State Cup games must use currently certified USSF Referees. The State Cup Referee Assignor will assign all referees to State Cup games.

### 602. Number of Referees

**602.1. 12-Under to 19-Under Age Groups:** All preliminary State Cup games will have three (3) officials, a center referee and two assistant referees for all preliminary games

**602.2. 15-Under to 19-Under Age Groups:** 15-Under to 18U/19-Under State Cup Semi-final and Final games will have four (4) officials, a center referee, and two assistant referees, and a 4<sup>th</sup> official.

**602.3. Club Linesman:** If an assigned assistant referee fails to appear at a State Cup game within 15 minutes of the scheduled kick-off time, and the coaches agree to a Club Linesman, the game may be played. The Club linesman will only signal the ball out of play and will not signal any fouls or offside nor enforce any other Laws of the Game or State Cup rules. If the game is played using a Club Linesman, the results shall be official and no protest will be honored regarding the use of a Club Linesman.

**602.4. Semi-Finals and Finals:** If an assigned referee fails to appear for a semi-final or final match, the State Cup Committee or designated Site Administrator will provide a substitute referee.

### 603. Referee Fees

Soccer Maine will cover all referee fees and directly assign the referees.

**604. Referee Responsibilities:** The referee is responsible for the conduct of the game. The referee keeps the time of the game. The referee is the sole judge of the suitability of the field at game time and its equipment, and the players' uniforms and equipment.

# Procedures and Rules 2025

## 700. Game Procedures

### 701. General

Both teams and a **maximum of three (3) team officials (coaches)** listed on the roster for each team shall take the same side of the field. Spectators shall take the other side of the field. The home team shall choose which side the teams will take. The Site Administrator, or the referee if no Site Administrator is present, shall decide upon other arrangements if required by site contingencies.

**701.1. Game Ball:** The home team shall provide the game ball.

**701.2. Jersey Colors:** The away team shall have choice of jersey colors. In the event of a conflict, the home team must change if so directed by the referee.

**701.3. Availability of Procedures and Rules:** Coaches are required to have a copy of these Procedures and Rules with them for any clarifications.

### 701.4. Pre-Game Procedures

- a. These Procedures MAY NOT be waived by the referee or the coaches under any circumstances.
- b. Each team must present for inspection by the referee a copy of its approved and Frozen Roster and the Player Passes. The referee must verify the identity of the players against the Player Passes and against the Frozen Rosters, and verify player jersey numbers against the roster. The referee will verify that all documents are in good order.
- c. The referee may prohibit the participation of a player whose identity cannot be verified or whose documents are inconsistent or otherwise deemed improper.
- d. In the 13-Under to 19-Under age groups, teams will note on the Roster presented to the referee the players that will participate in the match during that game on that day. Any players listed on the roster but not playing in the game may sit on the team's bench. Player must still participate in Check-in, with valid player pass, and must be wearing street clothes, (No part of team uniform!). At the time of the kick-off, the roster of the participating 18 players will be set and no changes can be made.
- e. The State Cup roster and the laminated USYS player passes must be available during the entire State Cup game.

**701.5. Post-Game Procedures:** The referee will submit a Game Report including results and noting any cautions (yellow cards) or ejections (red cards) to the State Cup Director and to the State Cup Referee Assignor within 24 hours of completion of all State Cup games.

### 702. Coaches

All coaches must be listed on the Frozen Roster and have registered and been approved in the Soccer Maine Risk Management database. Coaches must have their valid and correct USYS identification pass available for inspection by the referee and State Cup officials.



# Procedures and Rules 2025

**702.1. Coaching License:** At least one coach on the sideline must have a USSF “E” coaching license or Grassroots 9v9 Coaching Certification for the 12-Under age group. At least one coach on the sideline must have a USSF “E” coaching license or Grassroots 11v11 Coaching Certification for 13-Under to 14-Under age groups at minimum. For 15-Under and older age groups, a USSF “D” license (or NSCAA National Diploma) is required at minimum. Coaching Licenses must be verified by a Soccer Maine official. Clubs will be required to submit proof of licensure for all premier coaches.

**702.2. Coaching Games:** At all times, a minimum of one USSF licensed and Soccer Maine rostered coach must coach a team and be present in the team area. A maximum of three (3) Soccer Maine licensed coaches may be in the team area during games. Coaches are restricted to the technical area and cannot coach from any other area of the field. They must refrain from loud, persistent, or intrusive coaching of players from the touchline.

**702.3. Coaches’ Responsibilities:** Coaches are responsible for their own conduct and for the conduct of their players and fans at all games. Abusive or obscene language, violent play, violent conduct or other behavior detrimental to the game will not be tolerated. Parents and other spectators must remain on the opposite sideline. Failure of a coach to control his/her players and spectators may result in action against him/her by the referee and by Soccer Maine. Coaches and managers who are ejected must leave the vicinity of the playing field and remain completely away from the playing field for the duration of the game and immediately afterwards. Failure to abide by this rule may result in additional disciplinary action.

## **703. Field and Ball**

The State Cup Committee is responsible for ensuring that the game field is ready and safe for play at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled kick-off. Ready and safe for play includes but is not limited to: smooth and stable playing surface, proper field markings, corner flags, goals, goal nets, all according to FIFA Laws of the Game, and goal anchors. If reasonable corrections are required by the referee, the game shall not commence until the referee’s concerns have been adequately addressed.

Home teams will provide a suitable game ball to the referees prior to the start of the game.

## **704. Game Oversight**

Once the designated Site Administrator and/or the referee are on site, he or she/they is/are responsible for ensuring that the game is played to completion per the rules and regulations being applied to the game. The referee has the exclusive right and corresponding responsibility to terminate and/or abandon a game. Should this occur, the referee will provide a written game report within 24 hours to the State Cup Committee and to the State Referee Administrator.

## **705. Laws of the Game**

Except as modified herein, the FIFA Laws of the Game shall govern all State Cup play. Any modified rules of play shall be as determined by US Youth Soccer for the National Championship Series.

**705.1. Game Duration, Overtime Period, and Ball Size:** The length of games and overtime periods and the ball size shall be as follows:

# Procedures and Rules 2025

| Age Groups           | Length of game | Overtime periods | Ball size |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------|
| 12-Under             | Two 30' halves | Two 10' periods  | Size 4    |
| 13-Under to 14-Under | Two 35' halves | Two 10' periods  | Size 5    |
| 15-Under to 16-Under | Two 40' halves | Two 15' periods  | Size 5    |
| 17-Under to 19-Under | Two 45' halves | Two 15' periods  | Size 5    |

**705.2. Group Play Tie Games:** If a game is tied at the end of regulation time, the tie shall stand for all Group Play games.

**705.3. Substitutions:** The State Cup will observe the following modifications to the Laws of the Game regarding substitutions:

- 12-Under to 14-Under teams will have unlimited substitution.
- 15-Under to 19-Under teams will have **LIMITED** substitution as they would have at the Regional Championships. A maximum of seven (7) substitutions for each team shall be allowed in each game during each half and during any overtime play. After leaving the game during a half of play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game during the same half of play. After leaving the game during overtime play, the substituted player may not re-enter the game.
- Substitutions may be made by either team at any stoppage of play with the referee's permission.

## 800. Standings, Tiebreakers

### 801. Group Play

In age-groups with three or more teams, the State Cup competition will commence with Group Play. Each team in a Group plays every other team in the Group once. Group Play games which end in a tie score stand as a tie game and do not require overtime. The standings after Group Play determine the winner.

**801.1. Points System:** A points system determines the standings of each Group.

Win = 3 points

Tie = 1 point

Loss = 0 points

**801. 2. Tie Breakers:** In the event that the standings in a Group are tied at the conclusion of Group Play, the following Tie-Breakers will determine which team advances:

- Head-to-Head Competition
- Goal Differential—Goal differential is defined as the total number of goals scored minus the number of goals conceded in Group Play. A maximum of +4 per game count toward the overall goal differential. For example, if a team wins 6-1, only 4 goals count toward the total number of goals scored. Thus, there is no benefit to running up the score in order to improve goal differential once +4 has been reached.
- Fewest Goals Given Up
- Coin toss conducted by Soccer Maine officials.

# Procedures and Rules 2025

In the event of a three-way tie, start with item (b) and proceed to (c) and (d).

**801.3. Two Teams Entered:** In the event only two teams enter the State Cup in an Age Group, the competition will be conducted as follows: the teams will play one game, with the winner advancing to the East Region Championships.

**801.4. One Team Entered:** If only one team enters an Age Group, Soccer Maine will make a decision on whether or not that team will be chosen to advance to the East Region Championships.

## 900. Protests, Penalties, Suspensions

### 901. Insufficient Grounds for Protest

A plea of ignorance to the rules and regulations of the National Championship Series Policy and/or the Soccer Maine State Cup Procedures and Rules is not sufficient grounds for a protest or appeal. Playing in the USYS National Championship Series, whether at the State, Regional or National level, is a privilege. The National Championship Series Policy can be found on line at [www.usyouthsoccer.org](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org). Other insufficient grounds for protest include:

- a. schedule changes will not be grounds for protest;
- b. game sites shall not be grounds for protest;
- c. decisions of the referee shall not be grounds for protest.

### 902. Initiating a Protest

To be valid and eligible for consideration, the protest of a game regarding a matter not excluded in Rule 901 must be communicated and received in the manner below:

- a. verbally inform the referee and the opposing coach before departing from the game site of intention to file a protest;
- b. Inform the State Cup Director by e-mail within twenty-four (24) hours of the kick-off time of the game being protested.

### 903. Protest Documents and Fee

The protest must be delivered in writing, by hand, e-mail or mail to the State Cup Director within forty-eight (48) hours of the game being protested. Written protests must adequately describe the issue or incident under protest and the circumstances that apply. The protest fee of \$300 must be by cash or by certified check or money order payable to Soccer Maine. The fee must be sent by overnight delivery to the Soccer Maine Office to arrive on the first possible business day after the protest is lodged. The State Cup Director will provide a copy of the protest to the coach of the opposing team.

### 904. Protest Decisions

All questions relating to the qualifications of the competitors or interpretation of the rules or any dispute shall be referred to the State Cup Director/Committee, and in their absence, the Executive Director. A plea of ignorance to the Procedures and Rules of the League is not sufficient grounds for

# Procedures and Rules 2025

a protest or appeal, nor are decisions of the referees. The State Cup Committee shall not hear game protests.

## **905. Appeals**

Some matters pertaining to qualifications for the East Region Championships or National Championships may be appealable. For more information contact the State Cup Director.

## **906. Cautions and Ejections**

If a player or coach is cautioned or ejected in connection with a State Cup game, the caution or ejection is to be recorded on the Game Report by the referee. Ejections must also be reported immediately by e-mail or by telephone to the State Cup Director and to the State Cup Referee Assignor.

## **907. Suspensions**

Players or coaches ejected from a State Cup game are prohibited from participation in the next USYS National Championship Series game, whether it be the next Soccer Maine State Cup game, the first game of the East Region Championships, or the first game of the National Championships Series of the following seasonal year (State Cup suspensions are served only in connection with USYS National Championship Series games and have no bearing on league or other tournament play.) Each season the coach of each team must verify the eligibility of the players on his/her roster and determine if a sit-out is necessary. Ejections and cautions issued in connection with State Cup play may be referred to the Soccer Maine Board of Directors for further disciplinary action.

## **908. Regional and National Obligations**

Teams representing Soccer Maine at the East Region Championships and the National Championships must observe all USYS rules and guidelines for those events. If it is determined that a team or its players have violated these rules and guidelines, a fine of up to \$500 may be imposed by Soccer Maine.

## **909. Penalty for Violations of State Cup Rules**

Violations of player or team eligibility rules will result in the forfeiture of any games in which an ineligible team or player has participated. Any coach or team official found to have rostered an ineligible player is, together with the team, ineligible to compete further in State Cup competition in the current seasonal year. Any coach, manager, or official found guilty of knowingly using an ineligible player is not eligible to compete further in National Championship Series competitions in the current and the subsequent seasonal year.