



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

Dear Players, Coaches and Parents,

On behalf of Kentucky Youth Soccer, we are excited to welcome you to the 2026 State Cup!

This event marks the first step in the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series, the country's most competitive and respected youth soccer tournament pathway. The KY State Open Cup champions will now automatically qualify for the Nationals competition to be held in mid-July in Utah (Boys) and Tennessee (Girls). KYSA pays for the champions to enter the competition, but all other costs associated with getting to and staying at these events is up to the individual players/clubs.

As you prepare for two great weekends of soccer, we encourage you to review this Team Information Guide. It includes essential details to help your team navigate the event successfully. We strongly recommend sharing this guide with everyone on your team and bringing a copy with you for easy reference on site.

A heartfelt thank you goes to the staff of Elizabethtown Sports Park and the Elizabethtown Tourism & Convention Bureau for their continued support of Kentucky Youth Soccer and our statewide events.

We appreciate your participation and wish all teams the best of luck. State Cup is more than a tournament – it's an opportunity to celebrate camaraderie, community, and competition through the game we all love.

Best of Luck,

*Kentucky Youth Soccer Staff*



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

### STATE CUP WEBSITE

The [State Cup webpage](#) is the place for the most up to date tournament information.

### TOURNAMENT POLICIES

All teams must be familiar with the [Tournament Policies](#) that are in effect. These policies can always be found on the State Cup webpage.

### TOURNAMENT CHANGE AS OF 2026

Kentucky State Open Cup Champions now automatically qualify for the USYS National Championships. This year, both the boys' and girls' tournaments will take place July 13-23. Boys will play in Salt Lake City, Utah, while the girls will play in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

As always, KYSA pays for the champions to enter the national competition, but all other costs associated with getting to and staying at these events is up to the individual players/clubs.

*\*Failure to send a championship team to the National Championships will result in fines from USYSA and KYSA.\**

For any questions regarding this change or national tournament information, please contact [stevenmurry@kysoccer.net](mailto:stevenmurry@kysoccer.net).

### COMMUNICATION

If you wish to add anyone to future communications through GotSport, you or your club admin should be able to log into your GotSport account and add them.

We suggest that you join the [State Cup BAND](#). We will use this communication tool leading up to and during the event for important updates.

### BAND

We're excited to announce that BAND is the official communication platform for Kentucky Youth Soccer, and we'll be using BAND extensively throughout our tournaments. Stay connected and informed by registering for the official event BAND. Get instant access to important updates, game schedules, and tournament announcements, ensuring you never miss a beat!

[Join the 2026 State Cup BAND – HERE!](#)

### TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS/HEADQUARTERS OFFICE

At Elizabethtown Sports Park, our tournament staff office is located behind the concession area at the main pavilion by Field 5 in the event you may need the assistance of our staff.

### GAME SCHEDULE

Brackets, Schedules and Standing can be found on the [State Cup webpage](#).



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

### LOCATION

Elizabethtown Sports Park  
1401 West Park Road  
Elizabethtown KY 42701

*\*Please see field map on last page of this guide.*

*\*\*Please note the park gates open ONE hour prior to the first game each day.\*\**

### TEAM CHECK-IN INFORMATION

All documents will be created through GotSport. This is REQUIRED for every team, and we will NOT require onsite registration. Team rosters and player cards MUST be brought by each team to every game and will be presented to the referee. No players/coaches will be permitted to participate in any match if they do not appear on BOTH the roster and have a player card.

U13-17 Teams need to clone & confirm the following documents for each team completed in GotSport no later than Friday May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 @ 5:00pm ET. Any team that has not completed their documents by the deadline is subject to an administrative fine of \$250.00.

- State-Approved Team Roster from GotSport
- Coach and Player ID Cards
- Concussion certificates for every coach and team manager listed on the roster per our [concussion policy](#)

If you follow these [online directions](#) (Beginning with Step 4 -Rostering), it will walk you through how to complete this process.

A few notes as you complete online team check-in:

- If you need help locating your official team roster, please contact your club
- KYSA staff will review each document and only contact teams if there are any problems.

### HOTELS

If you need hotel rooms for your team, please visit our hotel partner Away Team. Please direct any hotel accommodation questions to Away Team.

U13-19 Preliminary Weekend: [Click Here for Hotel Information](#)

U13-19 Finals Weekend: [Click here for Hotel Information](#)

Hotel Group Blocks: [Click here for Group Block Form](#)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

During the event, we will be active on social media throughout the tournament, from posting pictures to tournament updates, weather delays, etc. If you are not a follower, please



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

consider giving us a follow and tagging us in your tournament related posts and using #KYStateCup on any of the social media platforms.

Facebook: [kyyouthsoccer](https://www.facebook.com/kyyouthsoccer)

Instagram: [@kyyouthsoccer](https://www.instagram.com/kyyouthsoccer)

Twitter: [@kyyouthsoccer](https://twitter.com/kyyouthsoccer)

*We ask that if you have a tournament related question, please email our staff or come to the tournament headquarters on site, rather than communicating through social media.*

### **TOURNAMENT MERCHANDISE**

The Official Tournament Merchandise Partner is Simax. They will have a mobile trailer where you can purchase personalized tournament merchandise during both Preliminary and Finals weekends.

### **SIDELINES**

Benches: Elizabethtown Sports Park will provide team benches.

Tents: Teams/Spectators may bring tents, but they cannot be staked into the ground. Please bring something to weigh your tents down. *Note: Some team sidelines do not have enough space to accommodate a tent.*

*Kentucky Youth Soccer and Elizabethtown Sports Park reserve the right to request that any tent be taken down at any time, for any reason, including but not limited to safety or space concerns.*

### **AWARDS**

Awards will only be given to the Champion and Finalist placing teams in each age group. After the Championship game concludes, please send one team representative to the tournament headquarters to pick up the trophy and medals for distribution.

Team photo backdrops will be available near the pavilion by Field 5. KY Youth Soccer Staff will be on-site to capture photos of the championship teams for KYSA marketing purposes – we appreciate your cooperation in allowing our staff to get the photos they need and quickly stepping out of the way so you can enjoy your celebrations!

### **ADAPTING TO THE WEATHER**

Prepare your team for playing in warm temperatures and/or humidity. The tournament is held when high temperatures and conditions can be present, so we suggest that players begin to hydrate their bodies a minimum of 1 week proper to the event to help prevent heat related illnesses.



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

### PLAYER/COACH PASSES

Each player and team official listed on the official team roster must carry a current US Youth Soccer member pass, commonly referred to a “player card”. Team passes must be laminated, in alphabetical order by last name, players first following by team managers and coaches.

### MATCH DAY PROCEDURES

Referees will review rosters and collect player/coach ID cards from both team prior to the match. Any coach or player that does not appear on both the roster and the ID cards MAY NOT participate in any way during the tournament match. A maximum of 18 players may be listed on the roster form and in uniform for each match. A maximum of 4 team personnel is allowed on the sidelines at any time.

Kentucky Youth Soccer will provide adidas soccer balls for each game. We ask that each team bring a game ready ball in case the provided game ball disappears, goes into a creek, lake, etc.

All players in the bench area during the game **MUST** wear pinnies, a jacket, or something different than the players on the field. This pertains to those players on the bench and to players warming up prior to entering the match.

If a player is sent off by a referee, that player may remain on the team bench. Should that player’s behavior become a disturbance, a credentialed team official must escort that player away from the field. If a team official is dismissed by a referee, they must leave the vicinity of the field before the match restarts.

After each game, please ensure that your bench area is clean and your team vacates the bench area as quickly as possible, so the next team playing can get settled in.

### MEDICAL RELEASE FORMS

Medical Release forms for players are not required, however, it is strongly recommended to have completed and signed [Kentucky Youth Soccer Medical Release](#) forms for each player available and accessible if needed throughout the tournament.

### UNIFORMS

Each team MUST have two (2) uniform sets (one light color and one dark color) at each game during the event.

- The HOME team is required to wear their light color jersey
- The AWAY team is required to wear their dark color jersey

If, in the opinion of the referee, there is a color conflict, the team causing the conflict must change. The referee's decision is final. Uniform numbers must be a minimum of six (6) inches in size. Each field player must have a number affixed to the back of their jersey which must



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

be clearly visible. Duplicate numbers are not permitted. Numbered jerseys for goalkeepers are optional but recommended.

*From the US Youth Soccer Policy on Players and Playing Rules – Rule 304, Section 2: A team member is not prohibited by US Youth Soccer from having a mark or name, or both, on any part of the team member's uniform being worn at the game, if the mark or name is related to an item or service that is appropriate for youth. Any inappropriate mark or name on a team member's uniform must be removed, replaced, or covered before the team member may continue to participate.*

An example of an inappropriate mark or name would be, but is not limited to, any alcoholic beverage. If there is any question about a logo, marking, or sponsor, it is strongly suggested that you inquire well before the start of the event.

### **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

Kentucky Youth Soccer expects exemplary behavior from everyone participating in the event, including parents and spectators. Above all, we expect and demand the proper respect for an opponent on the field. This also includes sportsmanlike conduct on the field, respect for the referees and opposing coaches, tournament staff and volunteers.

### **TEAM & PLAYER BEHAVIOR**

Players and team officials are expected to adhere to the following standards of conduct. Violation of these standards can jeopardize continued participation in Kentucky Youth Soccer tournaments. Teams are expected to be present on the field at the designated time for all matches. Players shall conduct themselves in a mature manner when in public areas both at and away from the playing fields. No alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or other intoxicants shall be in the possession of players.

A player or team personnel found using, providing, or in the possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, or in violation of any Kentucky Youth Soccer or US Youth Soccer rule, may result in disciplinary action up to and including disqualification from the event. A player or team personnel who displayed violations of local ordinances (including, but not limited to, theft or willful destruction of property) may result in disciplinary action up to and including disqualification from the event.

A player, team personnel or spectator who physically or verbally attacks another player, team personnel, spectator, referee or other event official may result in disciplinary action up to and including the disqualification from the event. Players and team personnel are expected to cooperate with and be courteous to all tournament personnel and dignitaries. This includes referees, field marshals, and other event volunteers.

A maximum of four (4) team personnel will be allowed on the team bench during games. Team officials are expected to cooperate with game officials and to follow all established



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

protocols and/or procedures. Degrading remarks directed towards players, opponents or game officials in any language may result in disciplinary action. Team personnel would be a head or assistant coach along with team managers.

### **SPECTATOR CONDUCT**

The parents and/or spectators affiliated with a team are considered part of the team, and the actions of these individuals are the responsibility of the credentialed team personnel that appear on the roster.

The spectator area is located on the opposite side of the field from the technical/bench area. No spectators are permitted anywhere behind the goal line during a match. The spectator area is behind the line clearly marked 3 yards (9 feet) beyond the touchline and extends from a point 3 yards (9 feet) from the center line down to the corner flag. Spectators must remain in this area, in the half of the field directly across from their team's bench.

Technical instruction from any part of the spectator area, or provocative or unsportsmanlike behavior by any spectator may result in their removal from the complex. Any spectator asked to leave by a referee or tournament official must immediately depart the field area and remain out of sight and sound of the match until the teams have departed from the field of play and are no longer the responsibility of the referee. Any individual removed may not return to the field at the end of the game.

Whistles, air horns, megaphones and any music devices are prohibited at all Kentucky Youth Soccer competitions. Air horns are used solely by tournament officials to signal when fields must be cleared due to inclement or dangerous weather conditions.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If severe weather is imminent, tournament personnel will blow an air horn. At that time, all players, coaches, and spectators must immediately leave the field of play and seek shelter in their vehicles. Please note that the soccer pavilion and concession area are not considered safe shelters during severe weather and should not be used. Remain in your vehicle until an "all clear" signal is given by tournament staff.

*Please note: if there is thunder or lightning in the area, we must wait a minimum of 30 minutes after each thunder or lightning occurrence. We will blow the air horn three (3) consecutive times once the weather is all clear and send an update on the official event BAND.*

### **CONCESSION STANDS**

The concession stands within the Elizabethtown Sports Park will be open during the event. They offer a variety of food and beverage options for purchase. The concession stand is wholly operated by the Elizabethtown Sports Park, Kentucky Youth Soccer is not responsible for any issue related to the concession stand.



## 2026 State Cup Team Information Guide

### INCORRECT SCORES

Score will ONLY be updated online via GotSport. We do make mistakes though and if a score looks incorrect online, please have ONE person per team (preferably the team manager or coach) email [stevenmurry@kysoccer.net](mailto:stevenmurry@kysoccer.net) and KYSA staff will check on the information received by the referees and update as needed.

### SPORTS MEDICINE INFORMATION

Soccer is an endurance sport consisting of moderate activity levels interspersed with brief high intensity bursts. This type of activity leads to a high rate of heat production within the body. Heat related illnesses occur when the body generates more heat than is released. Generally, this happens when the body temperature rises too high. The heat related illness can take on one of three forms: heat cramps (mildest and most common), heat exhaustion (serious, could lead to more severe problems) or heat stroke (very serious, could result in death).

- **Heat cramps** are muscle cramps that occur during or immediately following heavy exertion in hot or humid weather. These cramps can occur in one or several different muscles, with the leg muscles being the most common site. Heat cramps are warnings that more severe heat related problems are possible but can be avoided if appropriate actions are taken,
- **Heat exhaustion** is an indication that the body's cooling system is not working properly. This will produce varied symptoms, but most often a person will feel nauseated, disoriented, and/or weak. The skin is usually cold to the touch and clammy. When either of these conditions occur, one should move to a cool, shaded area, drink plenty of water, and rest. Avoid any activity for 24 hours and seek medical attention if symptoms continue.
- **Heat stroke** occurs when there is a complete shutdown of the body's cooling system and requires immediately medical attention. The victim will often go into shock or even lose consciousness. Additionally, the skin will generally be hot and dry. If the person's body temperature is not lowered immediately, heat stroke may cause death. Cool the person's body rapidly and call for emergency medical assistance.

Ensure all players are hydrating their bodies a minimum of 1 week prior to the tournament (longer is better) and that they eat a nourishing meal before each game.

Kentucky Youth Soccer will have certified athletic trainers on-site during the duration of all tournament events.

