



Dear IR Academy Club Members,

Many of you have heard, to some degree, about various mandated changes coming to youth soccer. US Soccer, which is the governing body of all US Soccer leagues (from youth to the National teams) has announced several changes, which will directly impact the way youth soccer will be structured and played beginning in the Spring of 2016.

US Club Soccer is the national association, which sanctions playing leagues across the country. This association sanctions regional "playing leagues". NorCal Premier Soccer is the regional competitive playing league all regional comp clubs (Northern California) participate in during the season(s). Sorry if this seems to be unnecessary information, however, I feel it is important that you understand why our club must make the necessary changes. In other words, the mandated changes originated at the national-level, down through NorCal Premier Soccer, and here to IR Academy (and every other comp club).

Although we plan to follow-up with additional information as we move forward, I have included the key points below, which just became official, announced by NorCal yesterday. If you would like to examine the mandated changes closer, I have included some links below from US Soccer and US Club Soccer. Moreover, I have also included a copy of the 2016 age-group matrix, which designates birth-year classification and the number of players on the field regarding field size standards related to birth year age-groups.

The major mandated changes are:

- **Birth Year Registration:** NorCal Premier competitions will transition from scholastic year (Aug. 1 - July 31) based age groups to calendar year (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31) based age groups in 2016. **Teams will be formed by birth year. For example - 2004s, 2005s, 2006s, etc.**
- **Age Group Classification:** NorCal Premier competitions will transition to the international age group classifications in 2016. Birth year 2003 and younger age groups will transition prior to spring 2016 competitions, while birth year 2002 and older age will transition by Aug. 1, 2016.
- **Small-Sided Games & Field Sizes:** NorCal Premier competitions will begin transitioning to the U.S. Soccer small-sided mandates (4v4; 7v7; 9v9) in our Spring 2016 competitions, based on birth year age-groups .

Spring 2016			Fall 2016		
Age Group	Birth Year	Playing #'s	Age Group	Birth Year	Playing #'s
U8	08	RAC	U8	09	4v4
U9	07	7v7	U9	08	7v7
U10	06	9v9	U10	07	7v7
U11	05	9v9	U11	06	9v9
U12	04	11v11	U12	05	9v9
U13	03	11v11	U13	04	11v11
U14	01/02	11v11	U14	03	11v11
U15	00/01	11v11	U15	02	11v11
U16	99/00	11v11	U16	01	11v11
U17	98/99	11v11	U17	00	11v11
U19	96 - 98	11v11	U19	98/99	11v11

Regarding the impending mandated changes - it is vitally important that coaches and parents maintain a positive outlook as our club shifts to adopt these mandated changes. Our collective optimistic attitude will be very important as we support our players during the 2016 transition season. Understandably, the mandated changes will cause some confusion and uneasiness, especially for the younger players. It is our duty as adults to help guide the players forward in the most positive manner possible. IR Academy intends to support and guide its players and parents through the transition process as we all move forward together.

In the coming days and weeks, club Directors will meet with club coaches to discuss 2016 coaching plans and 2016 team formation procedures based on the new mandated birth-year matrix. Furthermore, IR Academy will soon announce and invite you (and the public) to an "Open House Club Night", when IR Academy will discuss the details of the mandated changes, answer your questions regarding the mandated changes, announce important strategic club developments, and hold a Q&A forum.

Thank you very much for your understanding, patience, and future support as IR Academy continues to move forward, maintaining its continuous focus on player development and Club advancement.

Kind regards,
 Kyle H. Crist
 President, IR Academy

Resources :

- [U.S. Soccer Mandates](#)
- [U.S. Soccer FAQ Document](#)
- [Implementation plan from US Club Soccer](#)
- [US Club Soccer Press Release](#)

