



2009 FALL SEASON

GENERAL INFORMATION

The **MIDWEST REGIONAL LEAGUE's (MRL)** mission is to provide the highest standard of competitive play for youth teams that are members of US Youth Soccer Region II (the Midwest Region) and to assure the continued growth and development of elite level players. All of us associated with the MRL strive to provide the absolute best high-level competitive environment for our teams. The MRL offers the absolute best league competition in our area as teams vie for the chance to earn spots into the Midwest Regionals as part of the US Youth Soccer National Championship Series.

LEVEL OF COMMITMENT EXPECTED BY MRL TEAMS

Any team considering participation in the MRL must understand the level of commitment in participating in a League that stretches across the Midwest. All teams understand that this is a Regional League and that teams may travel hundreds of miles to participate in MRL games. The determination of game sites is based in part due to home locations of teams within a division and field availability. Teams understand that they may not play any home games. A limited number of teams are accepted. Team success, with special emphasis on State Cup and Regionals competition results, helps determine qualification for participation in the MRL. The level of competition surpasses any youth team competition within a team's state association. Teams will be competing against the best US Youth Soccer affiliated teams from across the Midwest.

AGE GROUPS OF COMPETITION

Girls competition will take place in the following Girls age groups:

Under 14: born on August 1, 1995 or later

Under 15: born on August 1, 1994 or later

Under 16: born on August 1, 1993 or later

Under 17: born on August 1, 1992 or later

Under 18: born on August 1, 1991 or later

Boys competition will be limited to the Under 14 age group in the Fall Season.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The Team Application deadline is **June 30, 2009**. Contact your State Association office for your State Code in order to enter the secure application website at www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com Your local State Association shall review your application and solely determine if your team shall receive State Association recommendation (approval) to participate in the MRL. A maximum of eight (8) teams* may be recommended by a state association in any one gender age group of MRL competition. Teams participating in the MRL must have competed in their state association's State Cup during the previous year. Only after State Association recommendation, will the MRL review the application and determine if your team shall be accepted into the MRL for the 2009 Fall Season. In completing the application form, teams are required to submit accurate information on team accomplishments. Misrepresentation of team accomplishments may result in the team being disqualified from MRL participation.

Note: Premier Division slots in all age groups were determined based on play from previous MRL seasons. Teams that are reserved a slot, are not automatically entered—that is, the teams must apply via our on-line system. If your team is listed as a Premier Division team be sure to apply by the June 30th deadline. All Premier teams are also subject to review as per MRL Rule 4.06. In situations where teams that do not return to claim their Premier Division slots or are relegated as per Rule 4.06. The MRL has established a procedure to fill Premier Division slots (see 2009 Fall Season Team Selection and Division Placement Criteria document).

**-this number may be increased by the team final selections are made.*

ENTRY FEE

The Entry Fee is \$350 per team and is non-refundable if a team is accepted into the MRL and later drops out of the league. The Team Fee does not include Referee Fees that are paid on a game-by-game basis. Team Fees are paid to your respective State Association and are to be paid by June 30, 2009. The State Association pays Region II for all teams entered from within its State Association for the Fall Season. Teams do not pay entry fees directly to the MRL.

SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

There is a two-step approval process for the MRL. First, each team must be endorsed by its respective State Association. Second, the MRL Technical Committee shall determine the final selection and placement of all teams. Teams shall be notified via e-mail regarding their acceptance and placement into specific divisions within the MRL. **The list of teams accepted into the MRL for the 2009 Fall Season is expected to be posted on our website on or around July 7, although final division assignments may not be made until no later than July 13.** Premier Division Teams are determined based on previous season performance (i.e. promotion/relegation). A list of teams who have earned Premier Division slots for the 2009 Fall Season is posted at www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com. The MRL, in conjunction with respective state associations, will review team applications from slotted Premier Division teams in order to confirm their team composition (MRL Rule 4.02 and MRL Policy in regards to "Ownership" of Premier Division slots).

In the event that the number of accepted teams in the Girls Under 15, 16, 17 and/or 18 age groups exceeds 20, the MRL may at its option create a third level of competition (i.e. a so-called Second Division). Promotion and relegation from the so-called Second Division may also be developed for advancement into the First Division in future seasons. The determination as to which teams qualify for the First Division and those placed in a Second Division shall be solely made by the MRL Technical Committee using past MRL results as the first criteria for selection and placement.

COMMUNICATION FROM/WITH MRL

E-mail will be the primary means of communication within the MRL. It is the responsibility of each team to ensure that accurate contact information is on file with the MRL.

REFEREES

The three-man system shall be used for all games. Each team is responsible for one-half of the total referee fees per game and payment is to be made in cash prior to each game. Referee fees are as follows:

Under 14:	\$50 per game per team;
Under 15 and Under 16:	\$60 per game per team;
Under 17 and Under 18:	\$70 per game per team.

TEAM ROSTERS

Teams may utilize 25 players during the course of a season. 22-player rosters with a maximum 3-player guest roster shall be utilized for the Under 16, 17 and 18 Age Groups. For the Under 14 and 15 Age Groups, an 18-player roster and a maximum 7-player guest roster are expected to be permitted. Guest players may only come from within a team's club, provided that the player is a US Youth Soccer member. See MRL Rules for further information.

MRL RULES AND INFORMATION

Additional information on the MRL is available on the league website: www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com. Click on the "Administration" tab for the MRL Charter, Rules and Policies. Any questions can be directed to Paul Luchowski at MRLCommissioner@Region2.com

COMPETITION FORMAT

All competitions in every age group and sub-division shall be round robin in nature. There will be no end of season playoffs to determine Regional Wild Cards or teams that earn promotion into the Premier Division. Based on the number of teams placed into divisions, teams may play up to a total of 11 MRL games during the course of the Fall Season (each team will be scheduled for a minimum of six MRL games). **Please be aware of the number of games that teams will be required to play. MRL teams are required to fulfill their commitment by playing out their entire MRL schedule of games.** The MRL Commission shall determine the penalty for failure to fulfill a team's schedule.

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LOCATION OF GAMES--HOSTING MRL GAMES

In addition to sites secured and hosted by the MRL (expected to be in Rockford IL on September 12-13; in Hebron IN on September 19-20; and in Muscatine IA on September 26-27), teams are offered the opportunity to host their Division games at their home sites. To qualify, a team must submit an APPLICATION TO HOST MULTIPLE MRL GAMES, which can be downloaded from the MRL website. Multiple field locations are preferred. The MRL shall review applications and have the sole authority in determining if a team shall host MRL games at their proposed site.

PERMISSION TO TRAVEL

Teams are not required to complete Permission to Travel permits/forms for games played outside of their State Association as permission is automatically granted by State Association approval of the team for MRL play.

MUST BE AVAILABLE TO PLAY WEEKENDS

Fall Season MRL teams must be available to play on September 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27. Teams are excused from MRL play during these weekends only for State Cup play. Those teams that are unavailable to play due to state cup conflicts in September must also be available to play on October 3-4 and 17-18. Historically, teams avoid playing MRL games on Labor Day and Columbus Day. **All teams must also be available to play on October 31 and November 1 (make-up games weekend subject to State Cup play) in the event that any games are postponed during the August 15 through October 25 time period.**

SCHEDULING

Fall Season play may begin on August 15, 2009. All games must be scheduled to be played on or before October 25, 2009. See additional information on scheduling under Boys and Girls Age Group Information.

ATTENTION ALL UNDER 15, 16, 17, 18 TEAMS

A mandatory Scheduling Meeting for all Under 15, 16, 17 and 18 Fall Season teams will take place on Saturday, July 18, 2009 in the Chicago IL area. Teams will have the opportunity to finalize their schedules, face-to-face, with other teams within their division. Information on the meeting will be distributed to teams once they are accepted into the MRL. The MRL shall distribute scheduling procedures and policies prior to the meeting. Teams that are not represented at the scheduling meeting waive all rights in finalizing their schedules. This is for all Premier, First and Second Division (if applicable) teams.

Teams should understand that due to the nature of scheduling of games for teams from across the region that scheduling games for the benefit of a single coach who coaches multiple teams should not be expected.

ATTENTION ALL UNDER 14 TEAMS

There is no scheduling meeting for teams in this age group (both boys and girls). All Under 14 Schedules will be determined by the MRL (see age group section for more information).

Once schedules are developed, schedule changes are permitted in accordance with MRL Scheduling Policy (see 2009 Spring Season Scheduling Policy for the most recent policy).

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BOYS U-14 AGE GROUP INFORMATION

Competition: The MRL's 2009 Fall Season features competition in one Boys Age Group (U14). All Boys U14 teams entering and accepted into the MRL for the Fall Season shall be split into sub-divisions based on geographical location of teams with a minimum of six sub-divisions expected based on the expected number of entries. For examples of geographic sub-divisions, please review the divisions from previous MRL seasons. Based on the results of the Fall Season, it is expected that no more than 16 teams will earn the right to participate in the Boys U14 Premier Division for the 2010 Spring Season. **U14 Teams must participate in the 2009 Fall Season in order to qualify for the Premier Division in the 2010 Spring Season.** Top finishers (the number shall be determined by the number of teams entering the competition for the Fall Season) in the respective 2009 Fall Season sub-divisions will earn Premier Division slots for the 2010 MRL Spring Season. Remaining teams shall be placed in Non-Premier Divisions (i.e. First and Second) for the Spring Season.

Scheduling: Scheduling will be coordinated by the MRL. Teams are required to submit weekend playing availability to the MRL by no later than Sunday, July 19. The MRL shall develop the schedule. Fall Season play may begin on August 15, 2009. All games must be scheduled to be played by October 25, 2009. Teams will be required to submit availability for all Fall weekends on or before July 19. Fall Season MRL teams must be available to play on September 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27. Teams are excused from MRL play during these weekends only for State Cup play. Those teams that are unavailable to play due to state cup conflicts in September must also be available to play on October 3-4 and 17-18. Historically, teams avoid playing MRL games on Labor Day and Columbus Day. **All teams must also be available to play on October 31 and November 1 (make-up games weekend subject to State Cup play) in the event that any games are postponed during the August 15 through October 25 time period.**

GIRLS U-14 AGE GROUP INFORMATION

Competition: All Girls U14 teams entering and accepted into the MRL for the Fall Season shall be split into sub-divisions based on geographical location of teams with a minimum of five sub-divisions expected based on the expected number of entries. For examples of geographic sub-divisions, please review the divisions from previous MRL seasons. Based on the results of the Fall Season, it is expected that no more than 16 teams will earn the right to participate in the Girls U14 Premier Division for the 2010 Spring Season. **U14 Teams must participate in the 2009 Fall Season in order to qualify for the Premier Division in the 2010 Spring Season.** Top finishers (the number shall be determined by the number of teams entering the competition for the Fall Season) in the respective 2009 Fall Season sub-divisions will earn Premier Division slots for the 2010 MRL Spring Season. Remaining teams shall be placed in Non-Premier Divisions (i.e. First and Second) for the Spring Season.

Scheduling: Scheduling will be coordinated by the MRL. Teams are required to submit weekend playing availability to the MRL by no later than Sunday, July 19. The MRL shall develop the schedule. Fall Season play may begin on August 15, 2009. All games must be scheduled to be played by October 25, 2009. Teams will be required to submit availability for all Fall weekends on or before July 19. Fall Season MRL teams must be available to play on September 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27. Teams are excused from MRL play during these weekends only for State Cup play. Those teams that are unavailable to play due to state cup conflicts in September must also be available to play on October 3-4 and 17-18. Historically, teams avoid playing MRL games on Labor Day and Columbus Day. **All teams must also be available to play on October 31 and November 1 (make-up games weekend subject to State Cup play) in the event that any games are postponed during the August 15 through October 25 time period.**

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GIRLS U-15, U16, U-17 and U-18 AGE GROUP INFORMATION

PREMIER DIVISIONS

Competition: The Premier Division for the U15, U16, U17 and U18 age groups shall be comprised of teams that have earned their placement through results from the 2008-09 season. The list of the teams that have earned placement into the Girls Premier Division for the 2009 Fall Season is posted at www.MidwestRegionalLeague.com. A round robin competition of all teams in the Premier Division may result in up to nine (9) MRL games this Fall. The top-finishing team in the Premier Division that is not a State Cup Champion or drawn State Wild Card shall earn the MRL Wild Card slot into the 2010 US Youth Soccer Midwest Region Championships.

Note: Teams that qualify to play in the 2009 Fall Season and 2010 Spring Season Premier Divisions may only compete for the Regional Wild Card during one of the two seasons. Teams that qualify for Premier Division play in both seasons must designate their Season of choice for Wild Card competition prior to the first game played in the respective division. Thus teams may be competing in the Premier Division but will be ineligible for the Wild Card slot for that particular season (and age group).

Relegation: based on the number of teams, the MRL Commission shall determine the number of teams (in no case shall it be less than two) to be relegated down to the First Division level for the 2010 Fall Season.

Scheduling Meeting: A mandatory Scheduling Meeting for all 2009 Fall Season U-15, U-16, U-17 and U-18 Division teams will take place on Saturday, July 18, 2009 in the Chicago IL area. Teams are provided the opportunity to develop and finalize their schedules, face-to-face, with other teams within their division. Information on the meeting will be distributed to teams once they are formally accepted into the MRL (around July 7). In the Under 16, 17 and 18 Premier Divisions, teams are encouraged by the MRL to play only one game per day. Every effort should be made to schedule teams for two games per weekend although team philosophies and field availability may dictate otherwise. Teams will be required to submit availability for all Fall weekends on or before July 13. Fall Season play may begin on August 15, 2009. All games must be scheduled to be played by October 25, 2009. Teams will be required to submit availability for all Fall weekends on or before July 19. Fall Season MRL teams must be available to play on September 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27. Teams are excused from MRL play during these weekends only for State Cup play. Those teams that are unavailable to play due to state cup conflicts in September must also be available to play on October 3-4 and 17-18. Historically, teams avoid playing MRL games on Labor Day and Columbus Day. **All teams must also be available to play on October 31 and November 1 (make-up games weekend subject to State Cup play) in the event that any games are postponed during the August 15 through October 25 time period.**

GIRLS U-15, U16, U-17 and U-18 AGE GROUP INFORMATION

FIRST (and if applicable- SECOND) DIVISIONS

Competition: In the U15, U16, U17 and U18 age groups, any first-year teams in the MRL or teams that did not earn a spot in the Premier Division that qualify for the MRL shall be placed in Non-Premier Divisions (First and Second), the levels of which to be determined based on the number of team entries.

Promotion: A total of two (2) teams from the First Division in the U15, U16 and U17 age groups shall be promoted to the Premier Division for the 2010 Fall Season. In the event that a Second Division is created in an age group, then promotion and relegation will take place between the First and Second Divisions.

Scheduling Meeting: A mandatory Scheduling Meeting for all 2009 Fall Season U-15, U-16, U-17 and U-18 Division teams will take place on Saturday, July 18, 2009 in the Chicago IL area. Teams are provided the opportunity to develop and finalize their schedules, face-to-face, with other teams within their division. Information on the meeting will be distributed to teams once they are formally accepted into the MRL (around July 7). In the Under 16, 17 and 18 Premier Divisions, teams are encouraged by the MRL to play only one game per day. Every effort should be made to schedule teams for two games per weekend although team philosophies and field availability may dictate otherwise. Teams will be required to submit availability for all Fall weekends on or before July 13. Fall Season play may begin on August 15, 2009. All games must be scheduled to be played by October 25, 2009. Teams will be required to submit availability for all Fall weekends on or before July 19. Fall Season MRL teams must be available to play on September 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27. Teams are excused from MRL play during these weekends only for State Cup play. Those teams that are unavailable to play due to state cup conflicts in September must also be available to play on October 3-4 and 17-18. Historically, teams avoid playing MRL games on Labor Day and Columbus Day. **All teams must also be available to play on October 31 and November 1 (make-up games weekend subject to State Cup play) in the event that any games are postponed during the August 15 through October 25 time period.**