EA LEAGUE 2
LEAGUE STANDARDS

★ These standards will be modified from year to year but are in place to preserve the quality of the league.

★ The standards will be reviewed and approved annually by the National Chairs, League Commissioner, and Technical Advisory Group

★ We will need to set the standard and then be the standard.

★ With standards comes accountability and oversight. We have a standards director and will assign and form a standards committee to oversee and implement fines, protocols, and governance to maintain the standards that allow the league to be a top national platform.

★ The standards that are defined below will have a clear consequence if not followed.

Technical Standards & Governance Model
ELITE ACADEMY LEAGUE 2 (EA2)

STRUCTURE

STANDARD AREA	STANDARD	EXPLANATION
Age Group Structure	U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U19 age groups	U13-U19 mandatory for EA2 Clubs U11-U12 Optional
Competition Format	All teams play home and Away within division (Scheduled games Sep – May)	A Showcase will be provided as an option to attend for EA2 teams to be part of the National Event. This will require an extra fee.
Roster Maximum	Roster maximum of 30 players, 18 players max on game day roster	U13-U19
Competition Format	A League break for High School season based on each Division's high school season	
Match Format	Two 45-minute halves with a 15- minute half time	U16, U17, U19
Match Format	Two 40-minute halves with 15-minute half time	U14, U15
Match Format	Two 35-minute halves with 10-minute half time	U13

Match Scheduling Standards	A specific framework should be provided by league regarding order matches	Agreed that all would play youngest to oldest on a given play date.
Match Schedule Standards	A framework establishing an allowable time frame for matches to be scheduled during a given day must be followed.	* See Scheduling section for more info
Match Day Standards	30 minutes of warm-up time on the match field is recommended prior to the start a match	Scheduling guidelines should be reflective of this standard as well as provision for extenuating circumstances.
Match Day Standards	Host clubs are required to provide team benches and EA branded Canopies in technical area for home and away teams	Recommended, Required for EA Clubs
Match Day Standards	Host clubs are required to provide hydration center with water and cups	Recommended, Required for EA Clubs
Match Day Standards	Host clubs are required to secure a turf field, either as a primary or back-up, to ensure ability to host opponents in case of inclement weather.	Recommended, Required for EA Clubs
Match Day Standards	Host clubs are required to provide certified ATC or medical personnel prior to the start of any official league match	Recommended, Required for EA Clubs
Substitution Standards	Unlimited subs per game (Maximum of seven (7)) with ONE re-entry PER HALF over 3 moments per half. Maintain existing head injury substitution policy.	U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U19 U11 and U12 free and unlimited subs

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Player Development Standards	Clubs are recommended to hold a minimum of two (3) training sessions per week during the season.	U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U19
Player Development Standards	Each team is expected to be provided at least one (1) day of rest per week during the season.	U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U19
Player Development Standards	A player can only compete in one (1) game per day with the exception of the goalkeeper.	U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U19
Player Development Standards	Teams/players play one game per weekend.	Recommended one game per weekend but limited exceptions to allow and limit daily travel of a 2-game weekend
Player Development Standards	Teams are permitted to participate in other showcases/tournaments; however, the league must take priority in case of any conflict.	Required to hold to the schedule once it is finalized.
STAFFING STANDARDS		
Staffing Standards	Licensing certification in 1st year	Academy Director: A or B USSF License or accredited foreign equivalent Head Coach C License or foreign equivalent EA will request status by August 30th Each year. (Recommended)
GOVERNANCE STANDARDS		
Governance Standards	EA Technical Advisory Group consists of at least 1 rep from each conference/division. This group helps govern the overall league with Technical Standards and Rules and Regulations for EA and EA2.	The club Academy Director will be the main point of contact for all disciplinary and technical matters

Governance Standards	EA National Committee- Group of people to help oversee the vision and lead the league in the direction that best serves the clubs.	To present/support any administrative issues/updates/support to Technical Advisory Group
Governance Standards	A US Soccer Technical representative is welcome to be part of the group	Help monitor and advise group on agreed league technical principles and standards
Governance Standards	A performance bond is required from each club to participate and all fines will be taken out of this. It is required that a club always has maintained an amount in the bond.	

The club understands that EA will make the final determination if the Club is meeting the technical standards of the EA.

GENERAL

Unless otherwise provided in these Regulations, all the Elite Academy League competitions shall be played in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game in force at the time of competition as provided by the International Football Association Board.

Member clubs are required to comply with these regulations, and in addition, member clubs are encouraged to report pertinent situations to the league staff, which appear to be in non-compliance with the league requirements. Reporting non-compliance on the part of other clubs should not be viewed as a negative, but rather as a positive attempt to maintain consistent standards that ensure professionalism and fairness, both on and off the field.

All member clubs are required to adhere to the league requirements. The league reserves the right to decide how to enforce these requirements. Should a member club be found in violation of any of the requirements outlined in this document, their standing as a member club may be jeopardized. The penalties vary based on the type and frequency of the infraction, and may result in denied participation in specific competitions and programming.

League and Team Fees for the season must be paid in full by the start of the season.

CONDUCT

Each member club shall be responsible for the conduct of its players, representatives and members attending any home fixture as related to all aspects of the league and agree to abide by the FIFA Code of Conduct.

TRAINING AND GAME EXPECTATIONS

1.   Member clubs are responsible for adhering to all game day policies and procedures outlined and explained in the EA Technical Framework.

2.   Member clubs should make efforts to acquire the best facilities possible. Member clubs must train and play home league games within reasonable geographic proximity to their club's home location unless approved by the league.

3.   If a club is unable to provide a home field that meets minimum standards, the club may be required to find an alternate location or may lose the right to host games.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY & REGISTRATION

1.   Registration: All registration will be completed via USSSA through GotSport. The league manager will distribute instructions to each member annually.

2.   League staff shall have the authority to establish additional procedures, including deadlines, for registration of players.

3.   All club staff members and trainers must complete the online registration process through USSSA, by completing Safesport Certification, background check and completing a signed waiver

ROSTERS

1.   General

a.   Each member is required to submit an initial roster by August 15 of each seasonal year.

b.   Rosters will remain open until roster freeze date of each seasonal year, in which rosters will freeze for any team that has qualified for playoffs. Within a club, if a younger team doesn't qualify for playoffs, the older team can pull up a max of 5 players from a younger roster to be part of the 18-player Match Day roster for playoffs.

2.   Player Transfers (only applies to EA players, moving to an EA team in a different club)

a.   May occur with the approval of directors of both clubs and the academy director. Players transferring from one club to another shall not compete against the transferring club except in playoffs, once the regular season is complete. Without both clubs approval, the player is not eligible to compete in the EA for another club that season.

3. Roster Size

   a. The maximum roster size on a Team's Roster is 30

4. Game Roster Size

   a. For U13 through U19 games, **only 18** players from the roster will be eligible to participate in each game, and these players must be placed on the Match Day Card (showing players that will start and players eligible for substitution). **Referees will be required to verify the 18 eligible players.**

   Players from EA x 3 will be allowed to play inside EA2 matches on any given day.

   b. The bench and technical area is reserved for players and a maximum of five (5) registered club staff members, not including a registered Health Care Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC).

5. Game Cards

   a. The official game day roster must be provided on Match Day Cards and shall be presented to the referee prior to the game and should also include team staff. All teams are responsible for verifying the accuracy of rosters provided on all Match Day Cards and signing a completed copy from the referee crew after the game.

   b. It is the responsibility of the **home club** to report scores in GotSport and email the Match Day Card to **MatchCard@eliteacademyleague.org.** These must be submitted within 48 hours of the completion of the match.

   *Post Match Report will be filled out by EA Academy Director by end of the day on game day to provide standards feedback.

   c. The EA Staff will update the rosters weekly on the website to reflect any suspensions or other eligibility issues.

6. Eligible Player

   a. Players listed on the roster must meet the age requirement for their team, have paid the registration fee and have supplied proof of their age to the club staff in the form of a birth certificate or passport, waiver & medical release must be properly registered with USSSA/EA and not be subject to suspension.

   b. Players can only be approved and made eligible by club registrars and/or staff.

   c. All players must be registered to the club in the league system and approved by the league manager/staff.

2023-2024 Elite Academy League
GROUP ELIGIBILITY
U11 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2013
U12 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2012
U13 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2011
U14 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2010
U15 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2009
U16 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2008
U17 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2007
U19 Age Group: Born on or after 1/1/2006 & 1/1/2005
Note: Players may play for their own age group and for "older" age groups.

7.   Ineligible Player

a.   Players not listed on the roster or any player listed on the roster but not eligible to play, due to reasons such as missing registration forms, awaiting international clearance, serving a league suspension or not on the official game day roster and line-up sheet shall be considered an ineligible player.

b.   Any member club using an ineligible player during any competition may be subject to a fine as determined by the league and a forfeit (by a 0-3 margin) of any game(s) in which the ineligible player participated.

LEAGUE SCHEDULES

League schedules will be organized by EA League Manager with feedback from clubs and with each club having the ability to alter their schedule according to club needs. The benefit to club members is ease of staffing and administration of teams. All regular season conference matches must be completed prior to May 15 to ensure proper determination of postseason qualifiers for the EA Playoffs/Showcase. Cancellations of games not impacting the Playoffs must be approved by and are the discretion of the league.

LEAGUE RESCHEDULES

Following the mutually agreed upon postponement of a league game, the following mandatory items must be included in the communication for the reschedule to be accepted by league manager:

1.   Documented communication between club directors stating the reason for postponement and mutual agreement to the postponement

2.   Documented agreement on the reschedule date, time, and locations of postponed fixtures/games

3.   Completed Schedule Change Form must be completed by the host club for the rescheduled fixture and sent to the league manager for approval by Tuesday at 4:00 PM ET of the given game weekend.

4.   The new game times must subsequently be entered into the official schedule/website.

5.   Once approved by the league manager, in writing, the host club is required to communicate the new fixture/game times to appropriate game day officials (referees, trainers, cameraman, etc.)

***Same-day weather cancellations (Acts of God, etc.) of league games will be considered postponed and the same expectations will apply.

LEAGUE GAME FORFEITS

A game will be determined as forfeited when one team does not show up for a mutually agreed upon fixture (date, time, and location) without proper documented notification (via email) and agreement with the other club or there is an instance when a team is found to have broken one of league rules, policies or procedures. The instances of forfeiture include, but are not limited to:

1.   Use of an ineligible player (no card, DOB, etc.)
2.   Lack of official roster or player cards at the start of a game
3.   More than one re-entry of substituted player in the same half of a game

In cases of game forfeiture, the score shall be 3-0 in favor of the non-forfeiting team. Teams forfeiting games are at risk of being denied participation in the playoffs, however the final determination of eligibility will be made by the league.

SHOWCASE EVENTS

1.   EA will work each year to allow EA2 teams to attend at least one EA National event in the year to help showcase these teams and allow them the opportunity to see the level of EA National Events.

ADVANCEMENT TO EA

- The Club that accumulates the most points in the EA2 with the 6 teams will advance into the EA.

Note: If a club has been fined due to fighting or forfeits games the league or has shown bad standards along the season the EA has the rights to hold back the club from advancing to the EA.

GOVERNING BODY OF THE ELITE ACADEMY LEAGUE

USSSA through GotSport.

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

1.   Elite Academy League coaches must, at all times, treat players with respect and dignity.

2.   Elite Academy League coaches must treat referees and match officials, at all times, with respect and dignity.

3.   Elite Academy League coaches must treat the opposing coaches, at all times, with respect and dignity.

4.   Elite Academy League coaches must treat spectators, at all times, with respect and dignity.

5.   Elite Academy League coaches are expected to dress professional, in proper athletic apparel and shoes, at all Elite Academy League competitions.

6.   Elite Academy League coaches must not discriminate against players based upon race, nationality, religion or sexual orientation.

LAWS OF THE GAME, DISCIPLINARY MATTERS, DISPUTES, PROTESTS & APPEALS

1. Laws of the Game

a.   Unless otherwise provided in these Regulations, all games shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in force at the time of the competition and as laid down

by the International Football Association Board. In the case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the Laws of the Game, the English version shall be authoritative.

2. Disciplinary Matters

 a. Disciplinary incidents are dealt with by the league league manager and technical committee

 b. The players and members clubs participating in the EA agree to comply with the Laws of the Game, the USSF Bylaws and Policies, these Regulations and the Disciplinary Code. The Players, Coaches, Representatives and Clubs agree to comply with all further directives regarding the EA.

3. Disputes

 a. Parties shall try to resolve all disputes in connection with the EA by negotiation. In compliance with USSF Bylaw 707, member clubs, players and other officials may not take disputes to an ordinary court of law. If a decision is subject to appeal, it shall be submitted to the jurisdiction of the league league manager.

4. Protest & Appeals

 a. Overview

For the purpose of these regulations, protests are objections of any kind related to events or matters that have a direct effect on games, including, but not limited to, the eligibility of players, the state of the field, accessory game equipment, crowd behavior and stadium installations.

 b. Time

Unless otherwise stipulated in this article, protests shall be submitted in writing to the league league manager and board of directors within 12 hours of the conclusion of the game in question and followed up immediately with a full written report, including a copy of the original protest, to be sent in writing to the EA; otherwise they will be disregarded.

 c. Eligibility

Protests regarding the eligibility of players for games shall be submitted in writing to the league league manager no later than 24 hours after the game.

 d. Field Conditions

Protests regarding the state of the field, its surroundings, markings or accessory items (e.g. goals, flag posts or soccer balls) shall be made in writing to the referee before the start of the game by the coach or administrator lodging the protest. The league league manager must also be notified of the protest prior to kick-off. If the field's playing surface becomes unplayable during a game, the referee shall consult the league league manager and both parties shall have the joint right to determine whether to delay, postpone or cancel the game.

e.   After a Game

Protests against any incidents that occur during the course of a game shall be made to the league league manager immediately following the completion of the game.

f.   Referee's Decisions

No protests may be made about the referee's decisions regarding facts connected with a game result. Such decisions are final.

g.   Frivolous Protests

If an unfounded or irresponsible protest is lodged, the EA may dismiss the protest.

h.   Game Fixing Policy

The EA prohibits game fixing of any kind.

STANDINGS

The standings in the Elite Academy League shall be determined at the end of the Elite Academy League Regular Season.

1.   Points
In each Elite Academy League Competition during the Elite Academy League Regular Season and the Elite Academy League Playoffs, teams shall be awarded three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie, and zero (0) points for a loss. A forfeit shall be considered a 3-0 loss for the forfeiting team and a 3-0 win for the non-forfeiting team.

2.   Tie Breakers
In the event that two teams are tied in (points per game) ppg upon the completion of the Elite Academy League Competition, the following will apply.
        a.   Head to Head Results
        b.   Head to Head Goal Differential

c.   Full Season Goal Differential up to 4 per game
d.   Least Goals Allowed
e.   Most Goals Scored
f.   Coin toss

HEAD INJURY

Any player suspected of suffering a head injury may be substituted for an evaluation without the substitution counting against the team's total number of allowed substitutions during the game.

1.   However, a team must be in possession of at least one (1) substitution to implement this temporary substitution.

2.   If the player is deemed by the HCP or ATC to not have suffered a concussion, the player may re-enter the game at any stoppage of play and must replace the original substitute; this head injury evaluation substitution will not count as a used substitution.

3.   Furthermore, the temporary substitute will be able to re-enter the game at a later time.

4.   If the player is not cleared to return to play by the HCP or ATC, the replacement player will no longer be considered a temporary substitution and the team will be charged a substitution.

5.   Any discipline issued to the temporary substitute will count for the remainder of the game

RED CARDS (PLAYERS/COACHES)

Any Elite Academy League Registered Player/Coach receiving a red card in an Elite Academy League Competition will be suspended for the remainder of that Elite Academy League Competition and also for the next day on which any Elite Academy League Competition is played by Elite Academy League Member Club for that age group and/or any other age group. For purposes of clarification, if an Elite Academy League Registered Player/Coach receives a red card in an Elite Academy League Competition, the Elite Academy League Registered Player/Coach will not be eligible to participate in any Elite Academy League Competition on the next day of Elite Academy League competition for any team or age**.** Coaches will not be eligible to coach any other EA teams until Red card is served with the team you received it with.

CARD ACCUMULATION

There shall be no yellow card accumulation policy for Elite Academy League Competitions

MATCH CARDS

Both home and away must provide match reports for each match in the Elite Academy League. Match Cards must list all rostered players, coaching staff and volunteers. Any players not participating in the match, due to injury or suspension, must be scratched off.

Note: Any player serving a suspension must be scratched off and it must be noted on the Match Card.

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

The host club is recommended to provide the visiting club with all match day details at least (5) days prior to the competition. Match day details would include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Facility address, directions, weather forecast, fixture schedule, field numbers, etc...
2. Sample of game day communication will be provided by the league to all clubs.

SCHEDULING

1. No matches shall be scheduled prior to 9:00 AM unless visiting club agrees
2. All matches must be scheduled to end at least 30 minutes prior to sunset, unless lights are provided and the visiting club agrees to later start time.
3. All clubs are expected to schedule matches with professionalism and goodwill, meaning not to place any club at a competitive advantage or disadvantage.
4. All matches played on the same day are expected to be played at the same facility, unless the visiting club agrees to multiple facilities being utilized.

GAME DAY

Match Field
The match field provided for Elite Academy League matches must be of highest quality in the geographic area. Turf or natural surface are both acceptable.
Note: If inclement weather is expected during an Elite Academy League match weekend, it is expected for member clubs to have a turf field back-up.

Home Team Field Setup
1. Team sideline requires both the home and away team have adequate benches
2. Team sideline requires both teams to have matching EA Branded team tents.

3. Team sideline requires a minimum of (1) trash can
4. Team sideline recommends a minimum of (1) table providing both water or sports drink.
5. All match fields are marked properly in accordance to the FIFA rules
6. All match fields must have (4) matching corner flags
7. (3) match balls must be provided at each Elite Academy League match.

Facility
Each Elite Academy League facility must have permanent or portable restrooms on site and available to players and spectators.

Athletic Trainer
An athletic trainer is <u>recommended</u> to be provided for all matches, beginning approximately (1) hour prior to the first match and continuing until the end of the final match.

Referees
The EA league manager will handle all referees and work with the referee assignor. Referee fees will be paid for by the home team.

Video
Recommend for all Elite Academy League matches U15 and above to film and upload to HUDL within 48 hours of the match.

All member clubs are required to adhere to the league requirements. The league reserves the right to decide how to enforce these requirements. Should a member club be found in violation of any of the requirements outlined in this document, their standing as a member club may be jeopardized. The penalties vary based on the type and frequency of the infraction, and may result in denied participation in specific competitions and programming

FINES FOR VIOLATING STANDARDS

All fines will be deducted from the performance bond. If any amount is deducted from the Performance bond it will need to be replenished and always current. Any delay in payment will result in the team not being able to play until all is resolved.

Game Day/League Games Fines:

If you do not field a team for a league game and forfeit: **$500 Fine**

Ineligible player: **$500 Fine**

Fighting:

No Fighting acceptable on any level/ Zero tolerance

A player that strikes another player will be banned from the EA league permanently.

A team consisting of 5 or more players that fight with another team will be removed from the EA League and the club fined: $3000