

III. QUALIFICATION FOR LHGCL

A. Eligibility

The LHGCL is dedicated to providing the highest level of competition possible. Therefore, entrance to the LHGCL is strictly invitational. This invitation to participate can be withdrawn by the LHGCL Board upon a finding that a team or any individual(s) associated with a team has participated in conduct prejudicial to the league or, prior to a team's or individual's acceptance into the league, upon a finding by the LHGCL Board that past conduct of a team or individual(s) gives the Board reason to believe that acceptance of the team or individual(s) in question could be prejudicial to the league.

B. Compliance with Bylaws and Rules. All persons involved in any capacity with a team playing in LHGCL have requested to participate in LHGCL, and by such request have agreed to abide by all Bylaws, Rules, and policies of LHGCL.

C. Playing Formats

1. Maximum Number of Teams in Each Age Group:

<i>AGE GROUP</i>	<i>DIVISION I</i>	<i>DIVISION II</i>	<i>DIVISION III</i>
U11	10	10	10
U12	10	10	10
U13	9	9	9
U14	9	9	9
U15	7	9	9
U16	6	9	9
U17	6	9	9
U19	6	9	9

2. General Definitions for League Playing Format and Qualifying Tournament

- a. Teams are invited back into LHGCL for the next soccer year ("Bye") according to the playing format below. A "team" is determined by the team name and club affiliation. There is no minimum number of players from the previous soccer year that must be retained by a team to keep a Bye for the club for the next soccer year. However, if 75 percent of the players on a team (from the previous year's roster, calculated as of April 1 of the previous soccer year. Fractions will be rounded up to the next whole number.*) leave a team/club to join another team/club, the league Bye will be awarded to that group of players with their new team/club. **Note: If a dispute arises over who has the right to a Bye, the LHGCL Executive Board will determine whether a Bye exists in that particular situation and which team/club will receive the Bye.**

*Examples:

75% of 14 players = 10.5 = 11 players

75% of 15 players = 11.25 = 12 players

75% of 16 players = 12 players

75% of 17 players = 12.75 = 13 players

75% of 18 players = 13.5 = 14 players

- b. A team within a club that changes names will be considered the same team as the previous year for purposes of retaining a Bye as long as the name change is reported to the league by a club official (President, DOC, Executive Director, Club Administrator, etc.) that it is a name change only within the same club and the team

- retains the club's name. The name change must be noted on the team's roster, i.e., ABC 94 Blue (formerly ABC 94 Green).
- c. Teams desiring to change their club affiliation during the soccer year must have completed all required NTSSA paperwork and obtained NTSSA approval for name change prior to December 1, to retain their Bye. If the team changes clubs on or after December 1, all Byes will remain with the club affiliated with the team prior to the club affiliation change. The name change must be noted on the team's roster, i.e., ABC 94 Blue (formerly XYZ 94 Green).
 - d. **Movement of teams between Division I, II and Division III at the end of the soccer year will be done by promotion/relegation as described in the table below. The only exception to promotion/relegation will be in U14's moving into U15, where Challenge games to determine placement in Divisions I & II will be held at the end of the spring season. No mid-year challenge games will be held in any age group.**

Promotion/Relegation Impact on Age Groups

U11 moving into U12 – (i) relegate 2 DI teams to DII; promote 2 DII teams to DI and (ii) relegate 2 DII teams to DIII; promote 2 DIII teams to DII

U12 moving into U13 – (i) relegate 2 DI teams to DII; promote 1 DII team to DI and (ii) relegate 3 DII teams to DIII; promote 1 DIII team to DII

U13 moving into U14 – (i) relegate 2 DI teams to DII; promote 2 DII teams to DI and (ii) relegate 2 DII teams to DIII; promote 2 DIII teams to DII

U14 moving into U15 – (i) 7th place DI team & top DII team in Challenge Games and (ii) relegate 3 DII teams to DIII; promote 1 DIII team to DII

U15 moving into U16 – (i) relegate 2 DI teams to DII; promote 1 DII team to DI and (ii) relegate 2 DII teams to DIII; promote 1 DIII team to DII

U16 moving into U17 – (i) relegate 1 DI team to DII; promote 1 DII team to DI and (ii) relegate 2 DII teams to DIII; promote 2 DIII teams to DII

U17 moving into U19 – (i) relegate 1 DI team to DII; promote 1 DII team to DI and (ii) relegate 2 DII teams to DIII; promote 2 DIII teams to DII
 - e. Each summer, a Qualifying Tournament will be held to qualify teams for the remainder of Division III for the following fall season. The exact playing formats will be set according to the most efficient and expeditious manner possible as determined by the number of teams that enter.
 - f. All returning teams from the previous season will be seeded in the Qualifying Tournament in an effort to prevent returning teams from playing each other when possible.
 - g. Teams who participate in the Challenge Games played after the spring season will be required to turn in their preliminary fall roster, plus the Bye fee as set by the league by the published deadline (which is usually the same deadline in July as the one for teams entering the Qualifying Tournament). Failure to do this can cause a team to lose its Bye back into the league.

NOTE: Teams receiving a Bye must pay a Bye fee as set by the league and turn in their official team roster for the upcoming season to the age division commissioner on or before the Qualifying Tournament entry deadline. Any “Bye” team failing to comply with this rule may lose their Bye and be required to play in the Qualifying Tournament for entry into Division III of the league.

- h. In order to participate in the Qualifying Tournament, each team must complete all paperwork required by the league, submit their fall roster, and pay the required fee to the league by the published deadline and according to the published guidelines before they will be scheduled to play in the Qualifying Tournament. No guest players are allowed. All players must be registered to the team for the upcoming season and all teams must be registered with their home association prior to participating in the Qualifying Tournament.
- i. Rosters turned in by teams that have 75% of the players from a previous team and obtained the previous team’s Bye back into the league will be checked to establish that the 75% requirement has been met. If the team did not keep 75% of the players from the previous team, the team will not receive the Bye and will be required to play in the Qualifying Tournament to regain entry into the league. (In this case the previous team will retain the Bye.) Any such team that retains a Bye into the league by virtue of this 75% rule that falls below the 75% requirement at any time after the Qualifying Tournament has started and before the beginning of the first game of the fall season, will be disqualified from the league for the fall season.

NOTE: The spirit of this rule will be followed. Coaches found guilty of intentional manipulation of this rule for purposes of retaining their Bye will be dealt with severely, up to and including suspension from LHGCL for no less than 1 year.

- j. NO GUEST PLAYERS ARE ALLOWED. Any players that are deleted between the Qualifying Tournament and the first game of the season will be investigated to insure that the player was not playing with the team as a guest player simply to enhance the team’s possibilities of qualifying for the league. Violations of this rule will result in the team being disqualified from participation in the LHGCL for that soccer year. A report of such activities will be reported to the North Texas Soccer Youth Commissioner for further action.
 - k. Any team that participates in the Qualifying Tournament or Challenge Games and qualifies for the league, but decides not to participate in the league that season will not be eligible to participate in the LHGCL for a minimum of one (1) year from the end of the season in which they decided not to participate.
 - l. All teams must participate in their proper age division. No team will be allowed to “play up” during the soccer year unless special scheduling for the age division is provided by the Age Division Commissioner. All special scheduling must be approved by the LHGCL Executive Board.
 - m. All teams will pay the current league fee by the published deadline and according to the published requirements prior to each season. Under 19’s will pay a discounted league fee for the spring season.
- 3. Under 11 Playing Format**
- a. The top 30 U11 teams will be identified through play in the Qualifying Tournament. The teams will be ranked (1 through 30) based on the Qualifying Tournament results.

- (1) The top 10 teams in the ranking will play in Division I;
 - (2) The next 10 teams in the ranking will play in Division II, and the remaining teams in the ranking will play in Division III.
 - (3) Each team will play the other teams in their division twice (18 games/team) during the soccer year.
 - (4) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in each division based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- b. Moving Into U12:
- (1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
 - (2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League in either Division I, II or III.
 - (3) The 1st through 8th place U11 Division I teams and the 1st and 2nd place U11 Division II teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U12 Division I. The 9th and 10th place U11 Division I teams, the 3rd through 8th place U11 Division II teams and the 1st and 2nd place U11 Division III teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U12 Division II. The 9th and 10th place U11 Division II teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U12 Division III.
 - (4) The Qualifying Tournament will identify the remaining 8 teams to play in U12 Division III in the fall.

4. Under 12 Playing Format

- a. Division I = 10 Teams, Division II = 10 Teams, Division III = 10 Teams
- (1) Each team will play the other teams in their division twice (18 games/year) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in each division based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- b. Moving Into U13:
- (1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
 - (2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League in either Division I, II or III.
 - (3) The 1st through 8th place U12 Division I teams and the 1st place U12 Division II team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U13 Division I. The 9th and 10th place U12 Division I teams, the 2nd through 7th place U12 Division II teams and the 1st place U12 Division III team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U13 Division II. The 8th through 10th place U12 Division II teams and the 2nd place U12 Division III team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U13 Division III.
 - (4) The Qualifying Tournament will identify the remaining 5 teams to play in U13 Division III in the fall.

5. Under 13 Playing Format

- a. Division I = 9 Teams, Division II = 9 Teams, Division III = 9 Teams.
- (1) Each team will play the other teams in their division twice (16 games/year) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in each division based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- b. Moving Into U14:

- (1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- (2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League in either Division I, II or III.
- (3) The 1st through 7th place U13 Division I teams and the 1st and 2nd place U13 Division II teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U14 Division I. The 8th and 9th place U13 Division I teams, the 3rd through 7th place U13 Division II teams and the 1st and 2nd place U13 Division III teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U14 Division II. The 8th and 9th place U13 Division II teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U14 Division III.
- (4) The Qualifying Tournament will identify the remaining 7 teams to play in U14 Division III in the fall.

6. Under 14 Playing Format

- a. Division I = 9 Teams, Division II = 9 Teams, Division III = 9 Teams.
 - (1) Each team will play the other teams in their division twice (16 games/year) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in each division based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- b. Moving into U15:
 - (1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
 - (2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League in either Division I, II or III.
 - (3) The 1st through 6th place U14 Division I teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U15 Division I. The 8th and 9th place U14 Division I teams, the 2nd through 6th place U14 Division II teams and the 1st place U14 Division III team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U15 Division II. The 7th through 9th place U14 Division II teams and the 2nd place U14 Division III team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U15 Division III.
 - (4) Challenge games played after the spring season between the 7th place Division I team and the top Division II team (based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year) will determine division placement for these teams for the fall season. The top team in the Challenge Games will be qualified for Division I for the next fall; the other Challenge Game team will be qualified for Division II for the next fall. The Challenge Games will consist of two complete games with the combined score used to determine a winner.
 - (5) The Qualifying Tournament will identify the remaining 5 teams to play in U15 Division III in the fall.

7. Under 15 Playing Format

- a. Division I = 7 Teams.
 - (1) Each team will play every other team in their division three times (18 games/team) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division I based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- b. Division II = 9 Teams.

- (1) Each team will play every other team in their division twice (16 games/team) during the soccer year.
- (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division II based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- c. Division III = 9 Teams.
 - (1) Each team will play every other team in their division twice (16 games/team) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division III based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- d. Moving Into U16:
 - (1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
 - (2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League in either Division I, II or III.
 - (3) The 1st through 5th place U15 Division I teams and the 1st place U15 Division II team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U16 Division I. The 6th and 7th place U15 Division I teams, the 2nd through 7th place U15 Division II teams and the 1st place U15 Division III team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U16 Division II. The 8th and 9th place U15 Division II teams and the 2nd place U13 Division III team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U16 Division III.
 - (4) The Qualifying Tournament will identify the remaining 6 teams to play in U16 Division III in the fall.

8. Under 16 Playing Format

- a. Division I = 6 Teams.
 - (1) Each team will play every other team in their division three times (15 games/team) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division I based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- b. Division II = 9 Teams.
 - (1) Each team will play every other team in their division twice (16 games/team) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division II based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- c. Division III = 9 Teams.
 - (1) Each team will play every other team in their division twice (16 games/team) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division III based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- d. Moving into U17:
 - (1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
 - (2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League in either Division I, II or III.
 - (3) The 1st through 5th place U16 Division I teams and the 1st place U16 Division II team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U17 Division I. The 6th place U16 Division I team, the 2nd through 7th place U16 Division II teams and the 1st and 2nd place U16 Division III teams from the previous soccer year

will have earned a Bye into U17 Division II. The 8th and 9th place U16 Division II teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U17 Division III.

(4) The Qualifying Tournament will identify the remaining 7 teams to play in U17 Division III in the fall

9. Under 17 Playing Format

a. Division I = 6 Teams.

(1) Each team will play every other team in their division three times (15 games/team) during the soccer year.

(2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division I based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.

b. Division II = 9 Teams.

(1) Each team will play every other team in their division two times (16 games/team) during the soccer year.

(2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division II based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.

c. Division III = 9 Teams.

(1) Each team will play every other team in their division two times (16 games/team) during the soccer year.

(2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division III based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.

h. Moving into U19

(1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.

(2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League in either Division I, II or III.

(3) The 1st through 5th place U17 Division I teams and the 1st place U17 Division II team from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U19 Division I. The 6th place U17 Division I team, the 2nd through 7th place U17 Division II teams and the 1st and 2nd place U17 Division III teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U19 Division II. The 8th and 9th place U17 Division II teams from the previous soccer year will have earned a Bye into U19 Division III. (See 10.d.(2) below)

(4) The Qualifying Tournament will identify the remaining 7 teams to play in U19 Division III in the fall.

10. Under 19 Playing Format

a. Division I = 6 Teams.

(1) Each team will play every other team in their division three times (15 games/team) during the soccer year.

(2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division I based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.

b. Division II = 9 Teams.

(1) Each team will play every other team in their division two times (16 games/team) during the soccer year.

(2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division II based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.

c. Division III = 9 Teams.

- (1) Each team will play every other team in their division two times (16 games/team) during the soccer year.
 - (2) Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded to the top two teams in Division III based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
- d. Moving back into U19
- (1) Byes will be based on total points earned throughout the entire soccer year.
 - (2) All Division I & II teams plus the 2 best Division III teams get a Bye back into the League if they return N+1* players from their previous year's roster for the next soccer year. These teams will be placed in Division I, II or III as determined by a vote of the Executive Board of LHGCL. The promotion and/or relegation of teams moving from U17 to U19 may be adjusted by a vote of the Executive Board of LHGCL to accommodate returning U19 Bye teams.

*The N+1 formula is $\frac{1}{2}$ of a team's players plus 1 from the previous year's roster, calculated as of April 1 of the previous soccer year. Fractions will be rounded up to the next whole number.