

## **Michigan Tigers FC Birth Year Teams Go Into Effect in June 2016**

Michigan Tigers Families,

As many of you have heard, U.S. Soccer has made changes to the age group cutoff barriers, mandating a move to birth year (January - December) rather than school year (August - July) teams by 2017. In an attempt to be proactive, the Michigan State Youth Soccer Association, as well as affiliated local leagues such as MSDSL and WSSL, will implement these changes beginning in June 2016.

We strive to balance social and player development with the desire to follow professional-level standards and best practices, and as such, will begin offering birth year teams beginning in June. Doing so will give our players the best environment to compete and develop, as we anticipate clubs from around the area making similar decisions.

In the coming months, we'll hold open age group sessions to aid in making the transition as seamless as possible, and remain available to you as a resource to answer any questions you may have about the change.

We thank you for your continued support of the Michigan Tigers and look forward to an excellent winter training season.

Michigan Tigers FC

### **Player Development Initiatives Birth Year Registration Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Why are these changes being made?**

The current landscape is inconsistent and not as successful as it could be when it comes to player development. Through these initiatives, U.S. Soccer aims to develop players with more individual skill, intelligence, creativity and confidence. These changes also provide a consistent approach across the country while challenging the status quo of our soccer landscape by focusing on the development of the individual versus the success of a team. Parents can also have a better understanding of exactly what they should expect from a soccer program for their children.

#### **Are these changes aligned with the U.S. Soccer Development Academy?**

Yes. These initiatives align the entire youth player development environment with the proven approach and success of the Development Academy program. Clubs, coaches and parents who are in programs external to the Development Academy are encouraged to incorporate these philosophies of player development. These initiatives fully support the existing technical framework of the Development Academy, which serves as the model for development across the country.

#### **How do these changes affect the current soccer landscape?**

U.S. Soccer recommends putting these initiatives into place as a best practice beginning in August of 2016, as they will be mandated in August of 2017. This provides organizations two full years from the announcement in August 2015 to plan on how to best implement the initiatives in the future. Please contact your local soccer leaders for more information on how they plan on implementing these changes.

**Who is required to follow these initiatives?**

All of U.S. Soccer's membership is required to put these initiatives into place no later than August of 2017. This includes, but is not limited to, all youth members and their respective competitions: State Associations, US Youth Soccer, US Club Soccer, AYSO, SAY, etc.

## **Birth Year Registration**

**Why is birth year registration going into effect for all levels of play and all age groups?**

Having players train and play according to their age and developmental stage supports the objectives of the small sided standards by focusing on the physiological and developmental needs of the player. This change is meant to better safeguard the development of youth players at all ages and levels.

**Why can't there be different standards for recreational and competitive teams?**

There is no universal definition of what separates recreational from competitive soccer. In addition to supporting the overall objectives of player development, U.S. Soccer believes that having separate registration systems based on undefined levels of play would create unnecessary confusion, and this would not provide a consistent approach across the soccer landscape. Players should also be provided the opportunity to develop to best of their abilities regardless of the level of play they are participating in.

**Don't you realize that you're breaking up my existing team?**

U.S. Soccer recognizes that making these changes can impact existing teams in the short-term. However, players joining and leaving teams is something that already happens regularly throughout country. There are a variety of factors that require teams to evolve and adapt including players maturity rates, moving away, focusing on new interests or their soccer abilities differentiating from their peers. Again, both small-sided standards and birth year registration support the development of the individual player as a priority over a team success.

**Will a player miss any time playing soccer due to the change to birth year registration?**

No. Players will have the ability to play with their birth year team.

**How do I determine the birth year used for a competition?**

Birth year registration should be based on the year in which the season ends. For example, if a season begins in the fall of 2017 and ends in the summer of 2018 (ex: 2017-18 season), the players would be registered based on their age in the year 2018. Competitions that take place in a single year (ex: fall of 2018 only) should use that year to determine birth year. To simplify determining the age group, just subtract the birth year from the year the season ends.

This chart is organized to demonstrate how players will progress when registering by birth year. It displays the exact same information as the "Birth Year and Season Matrix" found above. Again, please note that when determining the age group for a season, the year the competition ends should be used.

- Ex: 2017-18 = 2018 - U7 = 2011

Age Group	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18	U19
Season														
2016-17	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
2017-18	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
2018-19	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
2019-20	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
2020-21	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
2021-22	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
2022-23	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
2023-24	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
2024-25	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006