



## **US Youth Soccer South Atlantic Conference to Offer Option of 10-month Season**

**FRISCO, Texas (July 31, 2020)** — US Youth Soccer announced today that the USYS South Atlantic Conference, managed by EDP Soccer, will provide the option for participating teams and clubs to play a 10-month season, beginning with the 2020-21 seasonal year. In addition, a Spring season will also be offered.

As one of 13 Conferences within the USYS National League, the South Atlantic Conference serves top level boys and girls teams and clubs from the State Associations of Delaware, Maryland, Eastern Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

“Offering a 10-month season, in addition to the traditional Spring season, allows coaches the flexibility to decide what is best for their players when they consider both developmental and competitive factors,” said Marley Wilson, US Youth Soccer Director of Leagues and Competitions. “This move will help to ease potential overload on players, which has traditionally been a factor for those playing both club soccer and in the varying high school soccer seasons across the region.

“Additionally, the ongoing COVID-19 situation, which led to a pause in youth soccer in the first half of the year, remains a factor. Consequently, US Youth Soccer wants to provide as much scheduling flexibility as possible for teams and clubs competing in the South Atlantic Conference. A 10-month season helps accomplish that goal.”

[Applications](#) for the South Atlantic Conference will be accepted now through Sept. 3, 2020. Following the application period and team acceptances, competitive brackets will be published by Sept. 9, and play can begin for the 10-month option by Sept. 26. During the 2020-21 season, the South Atlantic Conference anticipates more than 300 teams to compete in the league.

The USYS National League Conferences provide regional team-based and club-based league competition for boys and girls teams in the 13U to 19U\* age groups. Participation in the Conferences provides teams with access to the USYS National League Showcase Series, where they can compete in cross-conference matches. Top performing teams in the South Atlantic Conference also have a pathway to qualify for the annual USYS Eastern Regional Championships, as well as the new USYS National League Playoffs — which provide teams with a chance to advance to the USYS National Championships.

“We consulted with all the State Associations in the region, plus many of the clubs that have already participated in the South Atlantic Conference and clubs that want the opportunity to participate,” said Jen Marcella, League Manager for South Atlantic Conference. “With the desire to avoid overloading players — and the recognition of the need to increase scheduling possibilities and flexibility as COVID-19 influences remain — there was overwhelming support for the 10-month option. USYS and EDP Soccer are excited to be able to provide it.”

See what some club leaders are saying about the 10-month season option and competing in the South Atlantic Conference:

“The St. James FC Virginia plans to participate in the South Atlantic Conference during the fall and spring seasons. We appreciate the flexibility and understanding that US Youth Soccer and EDP Soccer are demonstrating with respect to the events of the past several months and the fact that many of our 15-to-18-year-old players participate in high school soccer in the Spring and need to play more of their club matches in the Fall. We are most grateful for their support.” – *Doug Homer, Director of Soccer, The St. James FC Virginia*

“We are humbled and excited to be able to participate in the US Youth Soccer South Atlantic Conference, managed by EDP Soccer. It gives our teams a great level of competition every weekend and access to different pathways. SYC can’t wait to get back on to the fields again and compete in this exceptional Conference this fall.” – *Esteban Maldonado, Technical Director, Springfield South County Youth Club (SYC)*

For more information on the South Atlantic Conference, [click here](#).

For more information on all of the National League Conferences, the National League Showcase Series, and the National League Playoffs, [click here](#).

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### **About US Youth Soccer**

From its humble beginnings in 1974 with just more than 100,000 registered players to its current registration around 3,000,000 players between the ages of 5 and 19, US Youth Soccer has always been recognized as a leader in youth sports organizations. US Youth Soccer is the largest member of the United States Soccer Federation, the governing body for soccer in the United States, and is made up of over 600,000 volunteers and administrators and over 300,000 dedicated coaches; most of whom also are volunteers. For more information on US Youth Soccer and its programs, visit [USYouthSoccer.org](http://USYouthSoccer.org). Connect with US Youth Soccer on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

### **About EDP Soccer**

Founded in 1999, Elite Development Program (EDP Soccer) is one of the largest organizers of youth soccer leagues and tournaments in the U.S. EDP Soccer operates youth leagues for boys and girls ages 9-19, conducts a Futures program for players ages 7-11, and operates U20/23 men’s and women’s leagues. EDP Soccer also runs over 20 tournaments each year. One of the major priorities of EDP Soccer’s leagues and tournaments through its Pathway to College™ programming is to enable youth soccer players to reach their full potential, with an emphasis on attending college. More than 4,500 teams participate in EDP Soccer’s leagues and more than 170,000 players compete in EDP Soccer tournaments annually. For more information about EDP visit: [www.edpsoccer.com](http://www.edpsoccer.com).