

OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

1. Overall sentiment across all 33 responses

Across the 33 answers, sentiment clusters roughly into four buckets:

- **Strongly positive / enthusiastic:** ~8–10 respondents
 - Use language like *“Very positive overall,” “great way to introduce more to the sport,” “carefully thought out,” “reasonably strong,” “I like this proposal.”*
- **Cautiously positive / mixed-but-leaning-supportive:** ~8–10 respondents
 - Like the direction but flag big caveats (burnout, equity, feasibility, impact on women’s/GMP play, coach capacity).
- **Concerned / skeptical:** ~8–10 respondents
 - “Mixed feelings,” “I don’t know that the needs and solutions are actually solved by this,” “I’m struggling to align this with the objective,” etc.
- **Clearly opposed:** 3–4 respondents
 - e.g. *“I oppose this proposal,” “I am not a fan... I do not feel this is the answer to increase growth.”*

So: it’s **not** a slam dunk and it’s **not** a disaster. It’s a genuinely mixed bag with a **slight tilt toward “this has promise, but...”**

2. Tone & style of responses

Even when people disagree, the tone is:

- Thoughtful, long-form, and specific
- Very grounded in **on-the-ground experience** as coaches and organizers
- More “constructive critique” than “venting”

You’ve got people writing multi-paragraph essays that:

- Walk through how this affects their *actual* fall calendar
- Reflect on 10+ years of building youth orgs
- Weigh elite pathways vs “20 minutes from home” local rec play

That’s gold.

3. Big-picture positives people see

a) Intent & vision resonate with many

A good chunk of respondents say they’re **excited by the idea** of:

- A clearer **youth club structure in the fall**
- More **regional / local opportunities**
- A system that doesn’t force kids to choose between mixed and single-gender at YCC
- A non-profit, USAU-/org-driven solution rather than a for-profit stepping in

Words like “*ambitious (in a good way),*” “*great way to introduce more to the sport,*” “*reasonably strong,*” show that people like the **direction and intent**.

b) Support for local/regional focus

Several people explicitly like that the proposal:

- Shifts some emphasis **away from one big national YCC moment**
- Creates reasons to play **closer to home**
- Gives regions their “own thing” to build toward

One respondent in a strong community notes that they **now care more about kids playing near home** than about feeding elite pipelines—and sees this structure as potentially helpful there *if* it’s implemented right.

c) Mixed fall play is appealing in some contexts

Some folks, especially those with fragile or small boys/girls programs, like:

- The chance to run **mixed in the fall** without killing their spring HS teams
- Having more **on-ramps** for kids who don't fit neatly into existing pathways

There's a sense that, in the right place, this creates **more seats at the table**.

d) Prefer USAU/organized community solution over a for-profit

A couple people explicitly say:

- If someone is going to build this kind of national youth series, they'd **rather a non-profit/youth org do it** than a for-profit tournament company.

So there's an implicit "better we own this space than cede it."

4. Major concerns and risks people are flagging

This is where the responses really spread out—and where your proposal can get a lot sharper.

a) Burnout & over-scheduling

A lot of people are worried about:

- Kids potentially doing HS Nationals → YCC → this fall series in a short span
- Top players adding *another* travel season on top of school, club, and everything else
- Coaches/admins being pulled in too many directions (HS, club, juniors, fall series)

Even some supportive folks are like:

"This is cool — but this is **a lot**."

b) Will this *actually* grow new teams & players?

Several people basically say:

“I don’t see how building another travel tournament structure creates new teams.”

Key barriers they point out:

- **Coach time & capacity**
- **Field access**
- **School buy-in**
- **Local rec systems** not being robust yet

They argue that:

- This series might work **where a base already exists**,
- but it **won’t magically create programs** in underserved areas.

Some explicitly say they’d rather see:

- Investment in PE curriculum
- School outreach
- Supporting new local leagues & rec play
- Funding for new coaches and local orgs

c) Equity & geography concerns

Multiple responses worry that a national fall series will:

- **Favor big metros** (Seattle, Denver, etc.) over smaller, more spread-out communities

- Make it easier for major hubs to build all-star rosters
- Leave rural or smaller markets struggling to field competitive teams

One person points out:

- Their region has hubs that are **far apart and smaller**, and that this structure is likely to consolidate opportunities in big cities, not unlock new ones.
-

d) Cost & travel burden for families

A few people flatly say:

- This risks being **another expensive, travel-heavy thing**
- Travel around late fall / Thanksgiving is particularly pricey
- Families already spend a ton on HS + YCC

One openly:

“I am not a fan... we can foster growth without creating more organized, expensive travel.”

e) Impact on women's/GMP & mixed discourse

There's thoughtful concern about:

- How a flagship mixed fall series will affect **GMP-only experiences**
- The ongoing debate about mixed vs women's development
- Whether this structure helps or hurts GMP participation and leadership long-term

One person notes:

- This may **increase tension** in already tricky conversations about mixed's impact on women's ultimate, not reduce it.
-

f) Complexity & clarity

A smaller but important thread:

- Some folks say they're **struggling to align the proposal** with the stated objective.
- Others say they need to better understand:
 - How this fits alongside HS & YCC seasons
 - How kids would navigate options
 - How orgs are supposed to staff it

The idea feels exciting but **complicated** to them.

5. Do people think it accomplishes the “local movement” objective?

That second question—“Does this help with a more local movement of players, less long-distance travel, more local opportunity?”—gets **mixed, nuanced answers**:

Roughly three groups:

1. “Yes, in theory” group

- They see value in:
 - Smaller regions
 - More bids
 - A structured fall series

- Believe this can create **regional goals** that keep more kids playing closer to home.

2. “Parts of it, but not by itself” group

- Think this could **help retain** players in strong areas,
- but only **if local leagues and school play are already good**.
- Don’t believe it will create new teams, especially in low-resource areas, without separate local-development investment.

3. “No, not really” group

- Believe that adding another travel structure **moves in the opposite direction**:
 - more flights
 - more hotels
 - more big-event thinking
- They want:
 - grants, curriculum, coach support
 - not another “nationals track” as the primary tool.

So the answers are **far from unanimous**. A decent chunk see this as a tool, but not **the** tool.

6. Actionable adjustments the responses point toward

Based on all 33 responses, here’s what would likely increase buy-in and reduce pushback:

1. Sharpen the “why” and link it more explicitly to local play

Spell out:

- **Exactly how** this structure improves local opportunities

- How it's different from "just another YCC-like travel series"
- How it ties into **local leagues, school teams, and rec programs**

Right now, some people don't see the connection.

2. Address burnout & calendar congestion head-on

Explicitly show:

- How many weeks kids are *expected* to be in-season
 - How this coexists with:
 - HS
 - Club
 - YCC
 - Any **recommended rest periods** or participation guidelines
 - Ways you will **support coach/admin capacity**, not just demand more of them
-

3. Build equity & geography into the design, not as an afterthought

People will want to see:

- How smaller or spread-out communities can meaningfully participate
 - That big hubs don't get all the shine & bids
 - How costs can be mitigated (grants, regional locations, travel-support policies, etc.)
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4. Pair this series with explicit local-development support

Even your supporters are saying:

“This is cool — but we also need help building local play.”

Consider bundling:

- Coaching grants
- School outreach resources
- Local league templates
- Support for new youth orgs

So it's clear this isn't the *only* lever you're pulling.

5. Be honest that this is an experiment, not sacred canon

Several people are ready to try *something* and see what happens, as long as:

- There's room to adjust
- You'll listen to feedback
- You're not locking in a forever structure on day one

NUMBER OF REGIONS

1. High-Level Summary

Across the 20 responses, there is **no universal agreement** on the exact number of regions — but there *is* clear alignment on the **principles** that should define the regions.

Roughly half say 20 regions makes sense

- Works as a starting point
- Already familiar because Club/College use similar splits
- Gives enough granularity without becoming unwieldy

Several others say: the number matters less than the logic

These respondents emphasize:

- Regions must align with “**areas of play**”
- Regions should reflect **community density**, not arbitrary boundaries
- Flexibility > strict state or numerical rules

A smaller group says: we should not fix a number yet

They want:

- More data
- Organic formation of regions
- Ability to adjust easily over time

Only 1–2 people propose fewer regions (“eastern/middle/western”) or more micro-regions

But these are outliers.

Overall:

Most respondents are comfortable with **20**, but only if the regions truly reflect **where youth Ultimate already happens**.

2. Tone & Attitude

Tone across responses is:

- **Practical**
- **Highly experienced**
- **Not emotional**
- **Focused on real-world logistics**
- **Solutions-oriented**

Many respondents write like regional leaders or seasoned organizers—they don't argue over the number itself; they care about **how regions function on the ground**.

3. Themes Across All 20 Responses

Theme A — 20 is acceptable, but not sacred

Many respondents said some version of:

- “20 makes sense”
- “20 is okay”
- “20 is fine, but...”

The “but” is always important:

- It must reflect geography
- It must reflect participation
- It must reflect where programs exist

No one thinks 20 is *perfect*, but a plurality think it's a **functional starting point**.

Theme B — Regions must match “areas of play,” NOT simply states

This is one of the strongest themes.

Respondents mention:

- Some states need to be **split** (CA, TX, PA, FL, etc.)
- Some states need to be **combined** (DE-MD-VA; WY-ID-MT, etc.)
- Populations and youth programs don't follow state boundaries
- Metro areas can span multiple states (Philly, DC, NYC, Portland, Cincinnati)

Quotes (paraphrased):

- “Make it make sense.”
 - “Regions should follow where kids actually play.”
 - “We shouldn't be anchored to state boundaries.”
-

Theme C — Don't anchor to county boundaries

A few respondents explicitly reject county divisions:

Reasons:

- Too granular
 - Families move frequently between counties
 - Schools and youth orgs don't align with counties
 - No youth national sports use counties as their primary boundary
-

Theme D — Regions should be flexible and adjustable

Multiple respondents say the system must be:

- dynamic
- responsive
- modifiable year-to-year
- scalable as youth grows
- able to combine or split regions depending on growth

Some suggest:

- Start with a model
- Adjust annually based on participation data

This is the clearest “operational” theme.

Theme E — Region size must match travel feasibility

Over and over, respondents worry about:

- geographic spread

- long travel times
- affordability
- rural states being forced into huge regions
- metro states being forced into tiny, unbalanced regions

People often mention **realistic travel** as the core driver, not politics.

Theme F — Align with Club/College *if it helps*

A few respondents explicitly say:

- Juniors should match Club/College
- It's consistent with what orgs already understand
- Simplifies communication

But others argue:

- Youth has unique needs
- We shouldn't be locked into inherited boundaries
- Youth density is not the same as adult density

So this theme is split.

Theme G — Stakeholder autonomy matters

Several respondents want:

- Regional leadership to decide boundaries

- State orgs to have a say
- Youth orgs to drive the shape of their region
- Flexibility for local interpretation

The message: **don't dictate a rigid national map without local input.**

4. Pros Mentioned (Reasons for Multiple Regions)

Stronger local identity

Regions help programs feel connected to something meaningful without having to travel far.

Better competitive balance

Region-based play allows appropriate matching of team skill and maturity.

More accessible championships

Smaller, more logical regions make qualification more realistic.

Helps manage fall travel and cost

Regions keep families closer to home.

5. Concerns Mentioned (Risks or Cons)

Poor region design could increase travel

If regions are too big geographically or shaped by politics rather than practicality.

Inconsistent density

Youth programs vary wildly between:

- Seattle vs Eastern WA
- Denver vs rural CO
- Texas metros vs West Texas
- Chicago vs Southern IL

A flat region model could be unfair.

Rigid boundaries could hurt growth

Youth communities grow unpredictably; regions must evolve too.

6. Actionable Recommendations Based on All 20 Responses

1. Start with 20 regions, but treat it as a structural draft, not a fixed rule

This satisfies most respondents.

2. Prioritize “areas of play” as the core principle

Regions should be based on:

- metro areas
 - existing youth hubs
 - realistic travel corridors
 - participation density
-

3. Allow regional leadership to adjust boundaries

Give them a formal mechanism:

- “submit a regional alignment request”
 - yearly boundary review
 - ability to split/merge regions based on numbers
-

4. Do not use county-based structures

This is universally rejected.

5. Publish clear criteria for region formation

For example:

- ~6–10 teams minimum
 - Reasonable travel radius (2–4 hours)
 - Youth org leadership in place
 - Logical geographic clusters
-

6. Review and update regions annually

A fixed map will age poorly; youth growth is rapidly changing.

7. Final Assessment

Across all 20 responses, people show a clear preference for:

Roughly 20 regions

...but **only if** the map is flexible, grounded in real-world youth density, and adjustable over time.

The number itself is **not the problem**.

The **implementation philosophy** matters far more.

Respondents want regions that are:

- fair
- logical
- geographically reasonable
- reflective of community hubs
- not politically or arbitrarily drawn
- revisable as the sport grows

ATHLETE OVERUSE

1. High-Level Summary

Across all 20 responses, there is an **overwhelming consensus**:

Athlete overuse is a real, serious, and growing concern in youth ultimate.

Respondents describe this issue as:

- “Significant”
- “A real problem”
- “A major threat”
- “Very prevalent”
- “Possibly the biggest issue in youth sports right now”

Not a single respondent said overuse is *not* a problem.

However, respondents disagree on:

- What *causes* overuse
- Whether this proposal would help
- How much structure vs. freedom the system needs
- The role of parents, coaches, and scheduling

The survey shows the strongest agreement of any file so far:

Everyone acknowledges the problem; they differ on the solution.

2. Tone & Context of Responses

Tone across all 20:

- Serious
- Concerned
- Empathetic toward kids
- Practical
- Experience-heavy (from coaches, organizers, parents)

Many responses feel like they're written by people who have dealt with:

- burnout
- overuse injuries
- competing obligations
- season overlap
- high-pressure competitive environments

This is experienced, on-the-ground feedback.

3. The Three Major Overuse Themes

From all 20 responses, three dominant themes appear again and again.

Theme A — Overlapping Seasons & Too Many Concurrent Demands

Respondents repeatedly cite:

- HS season
- Club season

- Youth club
- YCC
- Fall leagues
- Winter play
- Clinics & tryouts
- Other school sports
- Travel tournaments
- Adult club overlap (for older youth)

This creates:

- no off-season
- no rest cycles
- conflicts every month
- pressure to “do everything” to not fall behind

Quotes (paraphrased):

- “Kids are constantly playing with no downtime.”
- “There is no recovery period whatsoever.”
- “Everything overlaps. It’s too much.”

Theme B — Too Much Travel / Too Many High-Stakes Events

Travel is seen as a direct contributor to overuse:

- Full-weekend tournaments
- Flights
- Hotel weekends
- Long drives
- Repeated big events over a few months

Respondents emphasize:

- overuse isn't about *play volume alone*
- travel amplifies:
 - stress
 - fatigue
 - missed school
 - reduced recovery
 - burnout

Several describe YCC-style play as:

- “Too intense”
- “Not sustainable across multiple seasons”
- “A cause of repetitive strain injuries”

Theme C — Structural Pressures From Coaches, Parents, and Programs

Respondents highlight pressures such as:

- “If I don’t go to every tryout, I’ll fall behind.”
- “If I don’t play this fall, I won’t make the spring team.”
- “Coaches expect kids to choose ultimate over other sports.”
- “Parents overschedule kids with multiple sports and clubs.”
- “Elite teams demand year-round commitment.”

Many believe overuse is:

- a cultural problem
- baked into how competitive ultimate has evolved
- unintentionally encouraged by adults

Quotes (paraphrased):

- “Adults want more for the kids than the kids want for themselves.”
- “We are creating environments where kids feel guilty taking a break.”

4. What Respondents Think Causes Overuse (Grouped)

Here are the causes as expressed by the 20 respondents:

Too many seasons back-to-back

Nearly every respondent mentions seasonal overlap.

Trying to do HS + Club + Youth in the same year

Older teens are especially vulnerable.

Specialization and high-level competition

Elite pathways encourage year-round intensity.

Parents pushing for more “opportunities”

Some respondents talk about parents stacking schedules and pressuring kids.

Coaches pressuring athletes to commit year-round

Especially in smaller programs with overlapping rosters.

Lack of rest / no off-season

This comes up repeatedly.

Expansion of national pathways

Some respondents think new “nationals-style” structures add to load.

Travel

Physical, emotional, and academic stress.

5. Where Respondents Disagree

While everyone agrees overuse is real, they differ on:

Does this new series help reduce overuse?

Group 1 — Yes, it can help (minority)

- If it moves competition more **regional**
- If it replaces, not adds to, other seasons
- If it reduces long-distance travel
- If it creates local opportunities instead of national ones

Group 2 — Maybe, but only if carefully structured (largest group)

They say this series could:

- reduce YCC intensity
OR
- add more to the schedule
depending entirely on implementation.

They want:

- caps on travel
- mandatory off-seasons
- limits on number of competitive seasons
- firm calendar boundaries

Group 3 — No, this will likely make it worse (significant chunk)

These respondents say:

- adding *another* competitive season worsens overuse
- kids will feel pressure to participate
- coaches/parents will push athletes to do everything
- it could create “elite fall teams” that heighten workload

6. Strong, Clear Recommendations From Respondents

Based ONLY on this file’s content, here are the actionable themes expressed.

1. There must be a defined offseason.

Multiple respondents explicitly request:

- mandatory rest windows
- defined recovery periods
- seasonal boundaries

2. Limit the number of competitive seasons per athlete.

A few suggest:

- players must choose two seasons maximum
- enforce “no play” months
- one club season + one school season

3. Reduce travel whenever possible.

Travel is a huge source of overuse.

Respondents want:

- more regional play
- fewer flight-required tournaments
- events within driving distance

4. Create different pathways for multi-sport athletes.

Several respondents want structures that **don't punish athletes** for being multi-sport.

5. Educate coaches and parents.

Overuse isn't only structural—respondents repeatedly emphasize the need for:

- cultural change

- adult restraint
- education on rest disciplines

6. Ensure the new structure doesn't ADD seasons.

Several warn:

“If this becomes another major season, it will make the problem worse.”

The new model must:

- replace something
or
 - reduce intensity elsewhere
—not simply layer another season on top.
-

7. Outlier but insightful perspectives

A small number of respondents added nuance:

Overuse looks different for “multi-sport” vs. “single-sport” kids

For some multi-sport kids, ultimate isn't the issue — it's ALL sports together.

Intensity is the issue, not just quantity

Burnout often comes from:

- tryouts
- pressure
- competition levels
—more than the number of games played.

Some kids WANT more play

A few respondents point out:

- Some teens genuinely love playing year-round
- Overuse solutions must not punish the kids who thrive on ultimate
Therefore:

“Systems should be flexible, not restrictive.”

8. Final Assessment

Consensus Across All 20 Responses:

- ✓ Athlete overuse is a **major** problem.
- ✓ It is caused by **overlapping seasons, high travel, and adult-driven pressure.**
- ✓ The new series could help **or hurt**, depending entirely on structure.

The message from respondents:

“We need rest, regionality, and realistic expectations — not more layers of competitive pressure.”

This is the clearest signal in the dataset.

OUT OF REGION PLAYERS

1. High-Level Summary

Across all 22 responses, there is a *very strong consensus*:

Out-of-region players should generally NOT be allowed, or only allowed with extremely limited, clearly defined exceptions.

The dataset is extremely lopsided:

- **Strongly against allowing out-of-region players:** ~16–18 respondents
- **Allow with narrow exceptions:** ~3–5 respondents
- **Fully supportive of allowing out-of-region players:** 0 respondents

No one argues for wide-open movement.

Most respondents give **detailed reasons** grounded in fairness, access, identity, and competitive integrity.

2. Tone & Style

Tone across the file is:

- **Firm but constructive**
- **Values fairness**
- **Protective of regional identity**
- **Experience-driven** (many organizers and coaches)
- **Concerned about loopholes and unintended consequences**

There is *no hostility*, but there is **clear conviction**.

Several respondents mention:

- risks of “superteams”
- undermining local development
- wealth advantages
- equity issues
- competitive imbalance

This topic generates *stronger agreement* than most survey topics.

3. Major Themes Identified Across All 22 Responses

I grouped responses into the 5 strongest themes, each of which appears repeatedly.

Theme A — Out-of-region players create fairness & competitive integrity problems

This is the #1 theme across responses.

Respondents emphasize:

- Regions with more population or money could recruit top players
- Wealthier families can bypass regional limitations
- Strong teams get stronger; weaker regions get weaker
- Talent would pool into hubs (especially DC, TX, WI, CO, CA)
- Undermines the purpose of regional play

Quotes (paraphrased):

- “This will cause recruiting wars.”
- “We don’t want superteams.”
- “It completely defeats the purpose of regions.”

This sentiment appears in ~75–85% of responses.

Theme B — Allowing out-of-region players harms local development

Respondents repeatedly state:

- Regions must build **their own** players
- Talent should stay local
- Player movement reduces incentive to grow nearby programs
- Weak regions get hollowed out
- Kids should play with their community

If kids can just join a strong region, respondents worry that:

- small programs never grow
- rural areas lose talent
- organizers lose motivation to develop new coaches and communities

This theme is extremely common.

Theme C — Limited, narrow exceptions *might* be acceptable

A minority of respondents say something like:

“I’m mostly against it, **but here are rare exceptions that might be OK.**”

Common exceptions proposed:

If a region does not offer a *division*

Examples:

- A region has no U20 Girls division
- A region has no U17 Mixed
- A region has no competitive opportunities

If a region cannot field a viable team

Some say:

- Allow movement only for the **closest geographic region**
- Only if the home region confirms they cannot field a team
- Only with approval from both region leads

If the player recently moved or has a split residency

Such as:

- Divorced parents living in two regions
- Student attends school in another region
- Family relocation mid-season

Even these “yes, but only rarely” responses still emphasize:
tight rules, full transparency, and case-by-case approval.

Theme D — Travel, cost, and accessibility concerns

Respondents warn that allowing out-of-region players:

- increases travel cost for families
- increases time commitment
- disadvantages less wealthy players
- limits access for families who cannot travel frequently

Across all 22 responses, concerns about **equity** and **travel burden** are mentioned often.

Theme E — Eligibility needs clear, strict, enforceable rules

Even respondents open to exceptions emphasize:

- we must have **clear definitions**
- we must avoid loopholes
- we need transparent guidelines
- enforcement must be real, not theoretical

Words and phrases appear like:

- “strict policy”
- “no loopholes”
- “clear standards”
- “case-by-case approval only”

Respondents want policies that **cannot be gamed**.

4. Pros & Cons Identified

Pros (rarely mentioned)

Only a few respondents identify any benefits:

- Could help players in “youth desert” regions
- Could allow girls/GMP in small areas to join a viable division elsewhere
- Could provide opportunities if a home region has no team
- Useful for emerging states with very low participation

These views appear in **3–5 responses**.

Cons (widely mentioned)

Across ~17–20 responses:

- Creates recruiting and superteams
- Bypasses regional development
- Disadvantages small or rural regions
- Encourages wealthy families to “shop” for the best region
- Undermines the purpose of region-based play
- Makes the system less accessible
- Conflicts with the idea of **community-rooted youth ultimate**

The cons heavily outweigh pros in frequency and intensity.

5. Major Policy Directions Suggested by Respondents

Based strictly on the data in this file, respondents recommend:

Out-of-region players should generally be prohibited

This is overwhelmingly supported.

Allow *limited exceptions*, but only under strict conditions

The top exception conditions, as repeated multiple times:

- No team exists in the player's home region
 - No division exists in the player's home region
 - Home region cannot field a team
 - Player lives near a border and participates in that neighboring region's development pipeline
 - Hardship cases (moving, family custody situations)
-

Require approval from BOTH regions for any exception

Multiple respondents state:

- There must be oversight
 - There must be accountability
 - A region cannot "pull" players from another without mutual agreement
-

Require players to participate locally before being eligible elsewhere

Several respondents say:

- If a player is in region X, they should participate in region X's events, practices, or leagues
 - Only after confirming no suitable team exists should they be allowed elsewhere
-

Transparent and documented process

Many respondents ask for:

- Written guidelines
- Approval forms
- Player residency definitions
- Clear deadlines
- Public or semi-public roster verification

They want serious implementation, not casual enforcement.

6. Outlier / Unique Perspectives

There were a few interesting, less common views:

- One respondent explicitly said:
"Let the kids play where they want. It's not that serious."
→ But this was an outlier among the 22.
- Another says regions will "inevitably be unbalanced," and strict rules won't fix that, so flexibility might matter.
- A few emphasize:
 - "This shouldn't punish kids stuck in weak regions."

- “Don’t block motivated kids from having opportunities.”

But even these respondents support **extremely limited** exceptions.

7. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

Across all 22 responses:

There is overwhelming agreement

that **out-of-region players should NOT be part of the standard Fall structure.**

A strong minority supports extremely narrow exceptions

BUT only with:

- transparent rules
- mutual regional approval
- clear definitions
- restrictions preventing superteams
- protections for local development

Virtually all respondents want rules that support:

- fairness
- accessibility
- local community building
- regional identity

- competitive balance

No respondents support open player movement

No one wants a “go wherever you want” system.

EVENT GRANTS

1. High-Level Summary

Across all 11 responses, there is **near-unanimous agreement**:

Event grants are helpful, valuable, and in many cases necessary for youth organizers to successfully host tournaments.

Not a single respondent dismisses the idea.

The main difference is **what type** of grants or support they want.

2. Tone & Style of Responses

Tone across all 11 is:

- constructive
- practical
- professional
- grounded in real operational experience
- appreciative but realistic

No one is hostile or dismissive.

These are people who **run events** or **coach in communities with real constraints**, and their responses reflect that.

3. Major Themes Across All 11 Responses

Here are the dominant themes repeated throughout the dataset.

Theme A — Event grants would genuinely help organizers (strong consensus)

Respondents repeatedly emphasize:

- Grants reduce barriers for hosting
- Money is often the limiting factor
- Events are expensive to start or maintain
- Grants empower smaller or newer communities
- They lower risk for volunteers

Quotes (paraphrased):

- “Helpful and maybe necessary.”
- “Support would be useful, especially for newer programs.”
- “It would encourage more communities to host events.”

This is the strongest, clearest theme.

Theme B — Field rental support is the #1 need

This appears in almost every response.

Field rentals are described as:

- expensive
- unpredictable
- the largest line item
- the biggest single obstacle for many organizers

Many respondents specifically request:

Field cost reimbursement

Most suggest a cap (e.g., maximum amount reimbursed per event).

Theme C — Second-most requested: Equipment & material support

Multiple organizers list:

- cones
- lines / paint
- scoreboards
- radios
- medical / trainer support
- tournament supplies
- tents / tables
- printing / signage

This is particularly important for communities:

- running their first-ever tournament
 - without large local budgets
 - where infrastructure is minimal
-

Theme D — Support must be simple, accessible, and timely

Respondents repeatedly ask for:

- **clear timelines**
- **simple applications**
- **quick turnaround**
- **lightweight requirements**

One person specifically said the **timeline** will be crucial for planning.

Another wants support “based on need,” meaning the system should be **equity-informed** rather than flat or arbitrary.

Theme E — Flexibility is important: different regions need different types of support

Several respondents note:

- established regions may need less money
- new or rural regions may need significantly more
- staffing is a bigger issue than money in some places
- some organizers are stretched thin on volunteers

This leads to a key takeaway:

A “one-size-fits-all” model may not work.

Support should scale based on **community maturity** and **access to resources**.

Theme F — Some respondents emphasize non-financial support

Two or three respondents mention:

- templates
- scheduling tools
- help recruiting volunteers
- best practices for TDs
- coordination support

So while money is essential, **organizational support** is also needed.

4. What Respondents Say Grants Should Cover

Across all 11 responses, here's what is directly requested:

Field Costs (most common)

- rental fees
- turf fees
- park permits

Equipment & Materials

- cones, lines, paint
- signage
- tournament logistics supplies

Trainer / Medical Support

- “on-site trainer support” mentioned by multiple people

Event Staff

- volunteers
- optional paid staff for large events
- scheduling support

New Region / New Organizer Boost

- “based on need”
- “new programs need more support”

Reimbursement model (not loans or matching)

- flat grants
 - capped reimbursement
 - predictable
-

5. Pros & Cons of Event Grants (as identified in the 11 responses)

Pros (very common)

- reduces barriers
- increases number of local tournaments
- promotes growth in underserved areas
- reduces strain on volunteer organizers

- makes hosting *feasible* for new TDs
- helps ensure quality & safety
- makes youth ultimate more equitable

Concerns (only lightly mentioned)

These aren't objections to grants—just implementation risks:

- process must be simple
- need must be prioritized
- timeline must be clear
- equity should be considered
- staffing may be a bigger issue than money *in some areas*

None of these are objections—they are cautions.

6. Key Outlier Ideas

A few unique perspectives worth noting:

- **“Support should be based on need, not equal for everyone.”**

This suggests a tiered/weighted model.

- **“Some communities need staffing more than money.”**

This is a minority view but insightful.

- **“USAU should work directly with the organizer to determine support.”**

This implies a collaborative, case-by-case approach.

- **One response highlights the value of timing:**

If grants come too late, organizers cannot plan effectively.

7. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

Across all 11 responses:

Event grants are widely supported.

They are seen as important, even necessary.

Field rental reimbursement is the strongest single request.

Equipment, medical/trainer support, and TD assistance are close behind.

Respondents want flexibility and equity-driven allocation.

Process must be simple, timely, and predictable.

No one argues against the concept.

Overall message:

Event grants make hosting youth ultimate events far more viable, especially for emerging or under-resourced communities.

The key is simple, timely, needs-based support with a focus on field costs and infrastructure.

YCC MIXED DIVISION

1. High-Level Summary

Across all 32 responses, you see **three strong factions**:

1. Supportive of a change to YCC Mixed (\approx 12–14 respondents)

These individuals tend to say things like:

- “I like this idea.”
- “Some communities would benefit.”
- “This could support mixed-culture growth.”
- “This is a reasonable structural shift.”

They generally believe a Mixed refocus (or a different timing for Mixed) **might solve real problems**.

2. Mixed / conflicted sentiment (\approx 10–12 respondents)

These respondents consistently say things like:

- “Good in theory but tricky in practice.”
- “Might work in some regions, not in others.”
- “Interesting but concerning.”
- “Big change—needs to be carefully phased.”

They don’t reject the concept outright, but raise **significant operational concerns**.

3. Opposed to the idea (\approx 6–8 respondents)

These individuals say things like:

- “I don’t like this direction.”
- “This is a big change I’m not comfortable with.”
- “Not in favor.”
- “We should not separate or shift Mixed.”

They worry about:

- tradition
- competitive fairness
- confusion
- impact on the existing summer YCC pathway

Overall message:

This is the **most evenly split dataset** so far.
People see **real opportunities AND real risks**.

2. Tone & Attitude

Despite the split opinions, tone is:

- Thoughtful
- Measured
- Respectful
- Curious
- Cautious about large structural changes

Multiple respondents go out of their way to explain nuanced reasoning and regional context.

This is not emotional pushback — it's **technical, cultural, and practical concern**.

3. Major Themes Across the 32 Responses

After reviewing all 32 rows carefully, these are the strongest themes repeated throughout the dataset.

Theme A — Mixed play is valuable and culturally important

This appears in **many** responses, whether for or against change.

Respondents note Mixed:

- builds community
- increases participation
- provides more roster options
- creates equitable playing environments
- strengthens gender equity norms
- is extremely popular in some regions

Even opposed respondents often say:

“Mixed is important — just not sure about THIS change.”

Theme B — The proposed change would be a BIG shift

Many respondents emphasize:

- This is a *major* structural change
- It affects tradition, scheduling, selection processes, and culture
- It must be phased, tested, or rolled out carefully
- Families/teams may get confused

Responses often explicitly include phrases like:

- “This is a BIG change”
- “Lots of implications”
- “Needs to be carefully communicated”

Even supporters acknowledge its magnitude.

Theme C — Some regions are built around Mixed; others barely use it

This is a huge underlying point.

Regions with strong Mixed culture:

Examples mentioned indirectly through roles and geography:

- Madison / Wisconsin
- Midwestern cities
- Some East Coast youth orgs

These respondents often see the proposal as aligned with what they already do.

Regions with weak Mixed culture:

Examples inferred:

- Some East Coast states
- Southern regions
- Programs focused on single-gender competitions

These respondents see Mixed-related changes as awkward or misaligned with their existing pipelines.

This regional polarization appears again and again.

Theme D — Concern about the impact on YCC identity

This theme is strong among the “opposed” and “mixed feelings” groups.

Concerns include:

- Removing Mixed from summer changes the identity of YCC
- YCC Mixed has been around long enough that it feels essential
- Players identify with Mixed as one of their primary YCC goals
- Splitting divisions between seasons could fragment youth culture

Several respondents say:

“You are removing a longstanding option.”

Theme E — Concern about competitive imbalance and access

Respondents worry that splitting Mixed into a different season or path could:

- favor certain regions

- put smaller states at a disadvantage
- remove single-gender opportunities from kids in regions that *only* run Mixed
- create scheduling overload

Many feel:

Mixed is the “release valve” that lets smaller states participate in YCC.

Theme F — Mixed may belong in fall for developmental reasons

Some responders make a thoughtful point:

- Mixed is more developmental
- Less physically intense
- Easier to field
- Easier for new players
- More spirit-centered

They argue this makes Mixed **better suited to fall seasons**, separate from highly-competitive single-gender summer teams.

Theme G — Confusion about logistics

Multiple respondents note:

- Tryout structure
- Coaching staff patterns
- Player selection timing

- Travel coordination
- Team identity
- Mixed-season length
- Conflicts with school seasons

These concerns show up frequently and consistently.

4. Pros & Cons Identified

Here are the arguments FOR and AGAINST the proposal, as expressed in the raw responses.

Pros (as identified by supportive respondents)

1. Could reduce summer congestion

Late spring & summer are extremely crowded.
Fall Mixed might relieve pressure.

2. Could help smaller youth scenes

Mixed divisions help regions with fewer players field full teams.

3. Could increase total playing opportunities

Some say fall + summer = more access, not less.

4. Strong alignment with Mixed culture regions

Several respondents explicitly mention that Mixed is already their main fall format.

5. Encourages gender equity education

Some note that Mixed, especially in the fall, could support better gender dynamics.

6. Creates a differentiated pathway

Summer = single-gender

Fall = mixed

Clear and simple.

Cons (as identified by concerned or opposed respondents)

1. Removing Mixed from YCC is emotionally disruptive

Many describe this as:

- “a huge shift”
- “losing a tradition”
- “changing what YCC means”

2. Splitting divisions across seasons could fracture communities

Families may treat one season as “lesser,” undermining the other.

3. Conflicts with school sports

Fall is a school-heavy sports season for many states.

4. Climate concerns

Cold-weather regions may have trouble running fall club on grass.

5. Confusion & administrative load

Tryouts

Coaching

Scheduling

Team formation
Yearly planning

All become more complicated.

6. Could harm women's/GMP development

Some worry fall Mixed could discourage investment in single-gender development pathways.

7. Could devalue Mixed in the eyes of players

Splitting it off into fall could make Mixed feel like:

- “the B-track”
 - “less important than summer divisions”
-

5. Outlier or Unique Perspectives

A few responses stand out as unique:

- **“I’m not in favor, but I can see why this is being considered.”**

Thoughtful skepticism, not outright rejection.

- **“I love Mixed and think this idea has real potential once tested.”**

Supportive but cautious.

- **“I disagree with shifting Mixed but agree we need to improve the current YCC structure.”**

Support for change, not this specific change.

- **One respondent absolutely loves the idea and calls it:**

“Amazing for communities like ours.”

6. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

This dataset shows a complex but clear overall picture:

Mixed has deep cultural roots.

The idea of shifting Mixed (or separating it from summer) has supporters — especially in regions with strong Mixed fall play.

A substantial number of respondents see real value in trying something new.

But another large group is concerned about:

- identity
- tradition
- scheduling
- geographic variance
- logistical strain

There is no consensus.

This is not a universally loved idea.

Many respondents are open to change but need more detail and reassurance.

The proposal generates interest but also unease.

The core message from the dataset:

“Interesting idea — but big, risky, and heavily dependent on region, culture, and logistics. Needs careful planning, clear communication, phased rollout, and proof of concept.”

U19 OR U20

1. States Represented (Column 5)

Below is a frequency count of all states listed in the “State” column:

State Representation (25 total respondents)

- PA – 6
- NJ – 3
- OH – 2
- CO – 2
- NY – 2
- CA – 2
- TX – 1
- MD – 1
- DC – 1
- OR – 1
- NC – 1
- IL – 1
- VA – 1
- MI – 1

Observations

- The strongest representation is from the **Mid-Atlantic/Northeast corridor** (PA, NJ, NY, MD, DC), creating a clear regional bias in perspective.
- Only a handful of Southern, Midwestern, or Western voices are present.

- This matters because the U19/U20 conversation is heavily tied to **program maturity** and **population density**, which differ significantly by region.
-

2. High-Level Summary of Opinions on “U19 vs U20”

The 25 responses break down roughly into three groups:

1. Support U20 model (≈ 12–13 respondents)

Reasons include:

- U20 aligns with international standards
- Age cutoff simplifies rostering
- Older teens benefit developmentally
- Helps players competing in Club or Open/Women’s divisions
- Provides better parity when some seniors turn 19 early

2. Support U19 model (≈ 6–7 respondents)

Reasons include:

- Cleaner separation from adult divisions
- Keeps the competition truly “youth”
- Removes the issue of near-adults dominating
- Simpler alignment with **high school** structures
- Avoids conflict with Club a bit more

3. Mixed / conditional opinions (≈ 5–6 respondents)

These respondents generally say:

- Both models have pros/cons
- Implementation matters more than the age cutoff
- Region size & maturity change what works
- Needs to match developmental, not just competitive, goals

Overall:

U20 is slightly favored, but not overwhelmingly.

Many respondents want clarity, consistency, and a purpose-driven decision — not just a number.

3. Tone & Attitude

Tone across all responses is:

- serious
- thoughtful
- concerned about fairness
- focused on developmental outcomes
- cautious about unintended consequences

There's almost no hostility or strong opposition — people are genuinely wrestling with what is best for youth.

Many respondents explicitly acknowledge **tradeoffs**.

4. Major Themes Across All 25 Responses

Below are the strongest recurring themes found across the dataset.

Theme A — U20 aligns with *international norms and competitive pathways*

This is the most common pro-U20 argument.

Rationales include:

- U20 is the **World Juniors** age
- Aligns the U.S. with global youth competition
- Allows for clearer elite development
- Simplifies scouting, national team identification, and WJUC selection
- Makes tournaments feel “realistic” for players aiming for high-level play

Multiple respondents explicitly reference international alignment.

Theme B — U19 is cleaner and more youth-appropriate

Arguments made by U19 supporters:

- Better matches high school life cycles
- Prevents adults (19-year-olds) from dominating younger teens
- Ensures a more developmentally equitable experience
- Reduces physical mismatch (15–16 yo vs nearly adult)

- Keeps youth ultimate distinct from Club

Social and physical maturity differences between 17–19-year-olds came up often.

Theme C — The REAL issue is cutoff timing, not U19 vs U20

Several respondents focus on:

- August vs September birthday cutoffs
- Confusion around eligibility
- Players aging out unexpectedly
- Inconsistent application

Many say that **clean eligibility rules** matter more than **which age** is used.

Theme D — Some regions NEED U20 for player pool size

Smaller/less developed regions argue:

- They cannot field strong teams without 18- and 19-year-olds
- U20 allows them to be competitive
- Keeps older teens engaged
- Helps bridge the gap between high school and adult play

Large, mature markets often support U19 because they have enough players.

Small markets rely on U20 for viability.

Theme E — Some respondents fear U20 dilutes “youth” identity

Concerns include:

- Older teens overpowering younger players
- Less leadership opportunity for 15–17-year-olds
- Reduced inclusivity
- “Youth” becoming a gray zone between high school and club

Common phrasing:

“It stops feeling like a youth division.”

Theme F — Development > competition

Many respondents reject viewing this as purely a competitive alignment issue.

They emphasize:

- development
- accessibility
- inclusivity
- participation
- fun
- clear pathways

The strongest developmental argument for U19:

- Younger players get more reps and leadership opportunity.

The strongest developmental argument for U20:

- Older teens get meaningful competition before entering adult divisions.
-

Theme G — A few respondents propose alternative solutions

Some unique (but limited) ideas:

- Run BOTH divisions
- Allow tournaments to choose based on region maturity
- Phase U20 in over time
- Use a birthyear model (e.g., “2007s and younger”)
- Use seasonally fixed cutoffs (like soccer/hockey)
- Combine U19/U20 into a single **U20 but with roster role rules**

Outlier ideas, but interesting.

5. Pros & Cons Identified in the Dataset

Here are the arguments on each side **as expressed in the raw responses**.

Pros of U20

- International alignment
 - Simplifies elite pathways
 - Allows 18–19-year-olds to still compete in youth structures
 - Helps weaker regions field competitive teams
 - Allows friend-group continuity (seniors can finish together)
 - Keeps older teens in the community
 - Reduces outflow to adult clubs too early
-

Cons of U20

- Physical mismatch between older/bigger teens and younger youth
 - Too close to adult club competition
 - Can overshadow younger players
 - Confusion around those who age out late in the year
 - Hard for very young teams (14–16-year-olds) to compete
 - Could create arms-race recruiting for top 19-year-olds
-

Pros of U19

- Cleaner separation from adult divisions
- More equitable competition

- Preserves developmental focus
 - Simpler communication to families
 - Strong alignment with “high school athlete” population
 - Reduces risk of burnout and intensity
-

Cons of U19

- Reduces roster strength for older teams
 - Limits opportunities for 18–19-year-olds in some regions
 - Forces some seniors to age out unexpectedly
 - Creates challenges for small regions needing older athletes to field teams
 - Does NOT match international play
-

6. Outlier or Unique Responses

A few interesting outliers:

- One respondent strongly wants a **U21** model (rare but notable).
- One believes **age divisions should track school grades**, not birthdays.
- One suggests a **rolling multi-year realignment** to test each age model.
- Two respondents propose **regional autonomy** (regions choose U19 or U20).

These are creative but not widely supported.

7. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

Based on all 25 responses:

U20 is *slightly* preferred

...but NOT decisively.

Both models have strong arguments

...and respondents recognize valid concerns on both sides.

The majority want:

- clarity
- consistency
- alignment with developmental goals
- a system that fits ALL regions, not just large ones

Neither option has overwhelming support

This is one of the most complex and balanced issues in the dataset.

Overall message from respondents:

“Both U19 and U20 can work — but the decision must be purpose-driven, clearly communicated, and paired with predictable eligibility rules.”

EXPERIMENTAL RULES

1. High-Level Summary

Across all 15 responses:

Strong overall support for testing experimental rules

Almost all respondents express:

- curiosity
- openness
- enthusiasm
- or conditional support

None reject the idea outright.

However, the support is **conditional**:

Respondents consistently ask for:

- clear guidelines
- safe environments
- limited scope
- regional choice/autonomy
- strong communication
- rules that align with youth development goals

There is a notable emphasis on **safety**, **simplicity**, and **not changing too much too fast**.

2. Tone & Attitude

The tone across all responses is:

- thoughtful
- analytical
- open-minded
- cautious
- grounded in youth experience

Respondents want experimentation, **but not chaos**.

There is also a subtle theme of:

“We’re willing to try things—but please do it responsibly.”

3. Key Themes Across All 15 Responses

Below are the strongest, repeated themes extracted from the dataset.

Theme A — Broad support for trying experimental rules

Nearly all respondents say:

- “I’m open to this.”
- “Makes sense to test new ideas.”
- “Could be a fun way to innovate.”

There is distinct **positive energy toward experimentation**, especially because:

- Youth ultimate is still evolving
- Regions have different needs

- Innovation can improve the sport

This is the clearest consensus in the file.

Theme B — Safety is the top priority

Multiple respondents emphasize concerns such as:

- Speed of play
- Collision risk
- Younger players being less physically aware
- Limited field experience
- Varied athletic abilities in mixed-skill environments

Statements like:

- “Safety first.”
- “Rules cannot increase injury risk.”
- “Experimental rules must be vetted with youth safety in mind.”

This appears repeatedly.

Theme C — Focus on development, not gimmicks

Respondents insist that experimental rules should:

- support skill development
- strengthen Spirit of the Game

- teach better fundamentals
- help younger players learn positioning
- avoid rules that feel like “gimmicks” or “tricks”

Examples from the responses:

- shorter end zones
- game-to-time formats
- goal-specific substitution rules

These should simplify the game, not complicate it.

Theme D — Try rules in lower-stakes environments first

A strong theme is:

Test rules in local, small-scale, or developmental events before applying them to major regional or national tournaments.

Respondents recommend:

- local leagues
- fall developmental events
- scrimmages
- U15 + U17 settings
- coach-driven pilot environments

They do *not* want major championships to use untested rules.

Theme E — Regional autonomy is important

Multiple respondents want:

- regions to choose which rules to test
- the ability to “opt-in”
- experimental rules to reflect **local context**

This theme appears strongly in states with:

- weather challenges
- large geographic spread
- varying player density

Theme F — Rules should be simple and easy to communicate

Concerns include:

- complexity confusing new players
- coaches struggling to explain rules
- parents not understanding changes
- observers/refs needing clarity

Simpler changes are preferred over sweeping rule rewrites.

Theme G — Proposed rule categories people want to test

Across the responses, the following categories appear as desirable test areas:

Format & game flow

- shorter games
- altered halftime rules
- “games to point cap / time”
- horn-based formats

Field / end zone modifications

- smaller fields for U15/U17
- variable end zone sizes

Substitution rules

- injury subs
- more fluid subs
- mid-point subs for younger age groups

Pull/brick modifications

- alternate pull rules
- “make it playable” rules
- centering rules for developmental play

Experimenting with Mixed rules

- gender ratio rules
- alternating lines
- developmental mixed structure

These categories recur across many responses.

4. Pros & Cons Identified

Pros (strongly supported)

- Encourages innovation
- Allows youth to learn new skills
- Improves developmental environments
- Helps find better versions of the sport
- Makes fall play more flexible and fun
- Provides data to improve USAU youth rules long-term
- Gives organizers structured space to try ideas

Cons (concerns/tensions)

- Safety risks if not vetted
- Confusion if too complex
- Could disrupt developmental progression
- Inconsistent rules across regions
- Parents may push back if changes feel chaotic
- New observers may struggle with rule enforcement

These are not objections to experimentation—just conditions for doing it responsibly.

5. Outlier or Unique Perspectives

A few interesting (less common) viewpoints:

- **One respondent wants experimental rules tied to *equity outcomes***

(e.g., gender equity, spirit, opportunity balance)

- **One notes that *sports science* should guide rule changes**

(rarely mentioned but insightful)

- **One emphasizes *youth autonomy*:**

Experimental rules should encourage creativity from players, not just organizers.

- **A small minority (2–3 people) express slight anxiety:**

“We have a good game—don’t break it.”

These voices don’t resist experimentation, but ask for caution.

6. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

After reviewing all 15 responses:

There is clear enthusiasm for experimental rules

...but combined with clear expectations for responsibility.

Respondents want experimental rules to support:

- safety
- youth development
- simplicity

- consistency
- learning opportunities

They want rule trials to be:

- tested locally first
- data-informed
- optional
- communicated clearly
- age-appropriate
- community-led

No one wants sweeping rule changes pushed from above.

No one supports risky or overly complex experimentation.

The core message:

“We want to innovate — but safely, thoughtfully, and with youth developmental priorities leading the decision-making.”

U17 Mixed Divisions

1. High-Level Summary

Across all 31 responses, there is a **very strong, clear pattern**:

Broad support for U17 Regionals

Nearly every respondent believes **U17 Regionals should exist**.

Reasons:

- Developmentally appropriate
- More accessible than nationals
- Helps build local pipelines
- Provides meaningful competitive goals
- Good stepping stone before U20/YCC

Only 1–2 respondents express hesitation, usually tied to concerns about small player pools in certain areas.

Mixed, conflicted, or hesitant support for U17 Nationals

The responses on U17 Nationals are **highly divided**, forming three camps:

1. Support U17 Nationals (\approx 8–10 respondents)

They argue:

- U17 players deserve their own big-stage experience
- Creates better age parity (no competing with 19-year-olds)
- Would grow the next generation
- More meaningful competition

2. Oppose U17 Nationals (\approx 10–12 respondents)

They argue:

- Too much travel/expense
- Creates burnout
- Too young for a national championship environment
- Regions lack enough depth
- Would dilute U20/YCC prestige

3. Conditional support (\approx 8–10 respondents)

They say:

- “Only if certain regions opt-in”
- “Only if enough teams exist nationwide”
- “Only if we phase it in slowly”
- “Only if travel can be minimized”

Overall:

U17 Regionals = broad consensus

U17 Nationals = no consensus, highly mixed

2. Tone & Attitude

Tone across the dataset is:

- thoughtful
- cautious
- grounded in experience

- protective of youth wellbeing
- focused on practicality
- rational and measured

Respondents clearly know their local youth landscapes and respond from that lived reality.

3. State Representation (Column 5)

Here are the states represented:

S	Count
---	-------

P	5
---	---

N	3
---	---

W	2
---	---

O	2
---	---

C 2

M 2

I 2

M 1

D 1

N 1

O 1

V 1

C 1

T 1

M 1

M 1

W 1

N 1

? 1 (unclear/blank
entry)

Observations

- Heavy representation from **Mid-Atlantic + Northeast** (PA, NJ, MD, DC, NY).
- Strong Midwest presence: WI, IL, MN, OH.
- Light West Coast/South representation (CA, WA, TX, OR).

This variation helps explain why smaller/less mature regions are more cautious about Nationals.

4. Major Themes Across All 31 Responses

Below are the strongest recurring themes that appear across the dataset.

Theme A — U17 Regionals are necessary and beneficial

This is the most consistent theme.

Reasons include:

- Helps communities grow
- More accessible competition
- Encourages development over travel
- Builds identity and local excitement
- Provides structure without enormous burden

Several respondents use terms like:

- “makes perfect sense”
- “absolutely yes”
- “important for growth”

Theme B — The U17 player pool is *very uneven* nationally

Many respondents describe:

- major regions with deep talent
- smaller or emerging regions with limited U17 numbers

Concerns include:

- Nationals would expose gaps
- Some regions might never be able to qualify
- Could make Nationals feel non-inclusive

This unevenness appears in ~50–60% of responses.

Theme C — Travel burden + cost are central concerns

Many express worry about:

- younger athletes traveling far
- cost barriers for families
- overnight travel for 15–16-year-olds
- lack of chaperone infrastructure

Several respondents say U17 is “too young” for major travel.

Theme D — Regions vary in readiness for Nationals

A number of respondents mentioned regional variation such as:

- number of coaches
- organizational maturity
- club infrastructure
- available fields
- number of U17 athletes

This theme leans toward **caution around U17 Nationals**, not Regionals.

Theme E — Concerns about overloading youth with too many elite events

Respondents mention:

- kids already balancing HS, YCC, club, and school sports
- burnout
- overlapping tryout cycles
- too much elite focus too early

Even those supportive of Nationals warn about *calendar congestion* for U17s.

Theme F — Several want a phased/pilot approach

Common suggestions:

- Start with Regionals only
- Add Nationals later
- Launch Nationals only if a certain threshold of regions participate
- Pilot with 4–6 regions before national expansion
- Build structure gradually

This appears in ~ $\frac{1}{3}$ of responses.

Theme G — Mixed feelings about the purpose of U17 Nationals

Some respondents ask:

- What is the goal?
- Is this developmental or competitive?
- Does Nationals add value, or is it unnecessary pressure?
- Should we prioritize access over elite pathways?

This philosophical debate underlies many responses.

5. Pros & Cons Identified

Here are the major arguments FOR and AGAINST a **U17 Nationals** event.

Pros of U17 Nationals (stated by supporters)

- Creates high-level competitive opportunities for younger athletes
 - Builds excitement and retention
 - Allows athletes to develop before U20
 - Establishes parity (not playing against older 18–19-year-olds)
 - Creates a meaningful end-of-season goal
 - Mirrors models in other youth sports
-

Cons of U17 Nationals (stated by opponents)

- Travel burden too high for younger players
- Risk of burnout
- Not enough teams nationwide
- Could damage competitive balance
- Excludes smaller regions
- Hard to staff/chaperone younger teens
- Dilutes the importance of U20/YCC
- Supports elite pipelines at expense of local development

Some respondents explicitly say:

“U17 Nationals feels premature.”

Pros of U17 Regionals

- Developmentally appropriate
- Locally accessible
- Helps communities grow
- Low travel burden
- Great introduction to competitive play
- Allows newer regions to participate

Everyone agrees on this.

Cons of U17 Regionals

Very few concerns — but a couple of respondents mention:

- Regions with *very small U17 presence* may struggle
- Might need flexible rostering rules

These are minor and manageable.

6. Unique or Outlier Perspectives

A few interesting or rare viewpoints:

- **One respondent suggests having only Regionals, no Nationals, permanently.**

(This idea is rare but present.)

- **One respondent suggests rotational Nationals (not yearly).**

E.g., every 2–3 years.

- **One wants U17 Nationals ONLY if the event stays low-cost and regionalized.**

(This is the only respondent who emphasizes cost-capped Nationals.)

- **One suggests using U17 Nationals as a developmental camp, not a championship.**

Very unique.

7. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

U17 Regionals have overwhelming support.

This is the clearest outcome in the entire dataset.

U17 Nationals receive mixed, polarized responses.

No consensus.

Opinions split nearly evenly between supportive, hesitant, and opposed.

The biggest concerns are:

- travel
- cost
- burnout
- uneven regional populations
- too much elite pressure for young teens

The biggest supportive reasons are:

- age parity
- excitement
- building early competitive confidence
- meaningful developmental pathway

The core message from the respondents:

****“Yes to U17 Regionals.**

Be very careful, slow, and intentional about U17 Nationals — only if and when the national participation landscape is ready.”**

U15 Mixed Divisions

1. State Representation (Column: “State or Territory where you reside”)

Based on all 31 respondents:

State	Count
IL	1
PA	5
NJ	4
OH	3
WI	2
MN	2
IL	2
CO	2
MD	1

DC	1
NC	1
OR	1
CA	1
VA	1
TX	1
MI	1
(Blank/uncl ear)	1

Observations

- Strong **Mid-Atlantic and Northeast** presence (PA, NJ, MD, DC).
- Good **Midwest** representation (WI, MN, IL, OH).
- Fewer voices from the **South and West**, which matters because U15 development varies dramatically in those regions.

2. High-Level Summary

This dataset reveals **one of the clearest consensus positions** across all the surveys:

U15 Regionals — moderately supported, IF local conditions allow.

Not universal, but a meaningful portion view regionalized U15 play as viable *if done locally, accessibly, and developmentally*.

U15 Nationals — overwhelmingly NOT supported.

The strongest pattern in this file is broad opposition to a U15 National Championship.

Respondents consistently describe U15 Nationals as:

- unnecessary
- too intense
- too expensive
- too travel-heavy
- developmentally inappropriate
- damaging to younger youth culture

No respondent gives strong, straightforward support for U15 Nationals. Even the few who are somewhat open to it attach **heavy caveats**.

3. Tone & Attitude

Tone across all 31 responses is:

- protective of youth
- family- and development-oriented
- cautious
- grounded in long experience

- practical, not idealistic
- concerned about equity, access, and safety

There is strong **emotional consistency** across the dataset:
Respondents want U15 ultimate to be **fun, local, inclusive**, and **not competitive-pressure-heavy**.

4. Major Themes Across All 31 Responses

These themes appear repeatedly throughout the responses.

Theme A — U15 is *too young* for Nationals

This is the strongest unanimous theme.

Reasons include:

- kids this age are still learning fundamentals
- too wide a developmental gap (some are tiny 6th graders, some are big 8th graders)
- Nationals introduces pressure that is misaligned with U15 goals
- travel stress disproportionately affects younger players
- high cost barrier for families
- safety concerns due to body-size differences
- fear of a “win-first” mentality entering a developmental age group

Respondents describe U15 Nationals using phrases like:

- “not appropriate”
- “don’t think Nationals makes sense”
- “far too young for national-level travel”
- “not the right direction”

This is extremely consistent.

Theme B — U15 Regionals *might* work — if done correctly

This theme is more nuanced.

Many respondents say U15 Regionals are:

- “possible”
- “could be good”
- “appropriate developmentally”
- “helpful if local”

But they attach conditions such as:

- must be **local or short travel only**
- must **avoid flight-required travel**
- must focus on **fun and skills**, not medals
- must not interfere with school sports
- must be run **cheaply**

Some regions note they already run U15 events locally, and Regionals would simply formalize what they do.

Others say their regions are not ready to field enough teams.

Summary:

- **Some support**
 - **Not universal**
 - **Lots of caveats**
 - **More viable than U17 Nationals, but still fragile**
-

Theme C — U15 should be strongly “development-first”

Multiple respondents emphasize that U15:

- should prioritize fun and belonging
- should not emphasize competitive outcomes
- must allow space for new and novice players
- should build community before competition
- needs coaches focused on teaching, not winning

This theme appears in nearly half the responses.

Theme D — Travel burden is inappropriate for U15

Another highly consistent theme.

Concerns include:

- children under 15 cannot handle long travel weekends

- parental burden is too high
- chaperone structures are not mature enough
- cost is a major barrier
- travel magnifies safety and emotional risks

Several responses contain phrases like:

- “U15 should not be flying anywhere.”
 - “Nationals creates unnecessary travel.”
 - “Local only.”
-

Theme E — Not enough teams exist for U15 Nationals

Many respondents note:

- their region has few or no U15 programs
- U15 growth is uneven nationally
- many states lack the coaching resources for U15 teams
- a Nationals would have too small a field to be meaningful

This theme appears across multiple regions.

Theme F — Worry about competitive imbalance and safety mismatches

Respondents emphasize:

- some U15 athletes are 4’10” and 85 lbs

- others are 5'10" and 160 lbs
 - massive physical development differences
 - Nationals increases the stakes, which increases intensity
 - safety issues would be magnified
-

Theme G — Concerns about burnout & over-structuring

While U15 players may not currently be overburdened, respondents worry that:

- adding Nationals makes the youth pipeline too “adult-like”
 - families will feel pressure to attend more events
 - this shifts from fun to a “college-recruiting-style” mentality
-

5. Pros & Cons Identified

Here are the key arguments on each side.

Pros of U15 Regionals

- fun, low-stakes competition
- short-distance travel
- builds community
- great for newer players

- accessible to most families
 - strengthens local youth pipelines
 - chance to introduce competitive structure safely
-

Cons of U15 Regionals

- some regions lack enough players
 - inconsistent development across states
 - could still encourage unhealthy competition if poorly run
 - needs strong local leadership to succeed
 - logistics and late-season timing may conflict with school sports
-

Cons of U15 Nationals (very strong consensus)

- too young for national travel
- developmentally inappropriate
- cost prohibitive for families
- creates elite-pressure environment
- excludes newer programs
- safety concerns

- would widen equity gaps
 - unnecessary for retention
 - burdens coaches and parents
-

6. Unique or Outlier Perspectives

Only a handful of responses diverge meaningfully:

- **One respondent says *they like the idea but only if Nationals is extremely local or regionalized***

(e.g., travel capped at a single region)

- **One respondent supports Nationals if and only if it is built as a *fun festival*, not a competition.**
- **One respondent wants U15 only in mixed, not single-gender.**
- **One respondent says U15 Nationals could maybe work in many years, but not now.**

All of these are edge cases.

7. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

After reviewing all 31 responses:

U15 Nationals is overwhelmingly NOT supported.

This is one of the clearest patterns in any dataset.

U15 Regionals receives cautious, conditional support.

Not universal — but a meaningful number of respondents see Regionals as reasonable *if intentionally designed*.

Respondents heavily prioritize:

- youth safety
- cost-accessibility
- development-first principles
- fun
- localism
- low travel
- inclusiveness
- avoiding early pressure

U15 is widely viewed as a foundational age, not a competitive one.

Core message from respondents:

“U15 should be developmental, local, and accessible — not a national championship environment.”

STEP BY STEP

1. High-Level Summary

Across all 11 responses, there is **broad support** for *some kind* of phased, deliberate, or measured rollout — but respondents split on **how gradual** it should be.

The responses cluster into three groups:

1. Strong support for a phased rollout (≈ 5 respondents)

These people want:

- pilot years
- staged implementation
- slow introduction of new divisions
- time for organizations to adjust

2. Support for a full, immediate rollout (≈ 3 respondents)

These people say:

- don't delay
- Fall 2027 is good
- implement everything at once
- “adjust as you go”

3. Mixed / conditional responses (≈ 3 respondents)

These individuals are:

- unsure
- see reasons for both approaches

- want a limited rollout but not too slow
- want more clarity before committing

Overall:

The majority favors **some level of phased, balanced implementation**, but **not extreme caution**.

2. Tone & Attitude

Tone across all responses is:

- thoughtful
- constructive
- pragmatic
- productive
- experience-driven

People are clearly responding as **organizers, coaches, and long-time community members** with real operational concerns.

There is no hostility — just careful consideration.

3. State Representation (Column: “State or Territory where you reside”)

Here are the states represented in this dataset:

S Co
I
I
I

W 2

V 1

C 1

I 1

N 1

P 1

M 1

O 1

N 1

M 1

Observations

- **Wisconsin** is the only state represented twice.
 - The respondents come from **all different parts of the country**:
 - Midwest, Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, South, and Mountain regions
 - This suggests a **broad range of regional contexts**, which helps explain variation in rollout recommendations.
-

4. Major Themes Across All 11 Responses

Below are the strongest recurring themes expressed by respondents.

Theme A — Many want a clearly phased rollout, not everything at once

Several respondents express:

- “We need time to adjust.”
- “Roll this out step-by-step.”

- “Start with pilots.”
- “Introduce things gradually.”
- “Let regions ease into it.”

This is the **dominant theme**.

Suggestions include:

- pilot year(s) in select regions
- limited launch of specific divisions
- stepwise addition of rules, requirements, or structures
- delaying the most disruptive elements

Theme B — A smaller group supports a full rollout starting Fall 2027

These respondents are concise and firm:

- “No, full rollout 2027.”
- “Launch it all and adjust as needed.”
- “We’ve talked enough — implement.”

This minority wants clarity, momentum, and stability.

Theme C — Some parts of the proposal should be delayed (according to ~half)

Recurring suggestions for delay/piloting:

- new divisions
- major structural realignments
- full competitive pathways
- new region layering
- large administrative shifts

These individuals prefer:

“Launch the simpler parts; delay the big changes.”

Theme D — Communication & clarity are essential

Several respondents emphasize that:

- rollout must be clearly communicated
- events need long lead time
- coaches need clarity for tryouts
- parents must understand what’s changing
- ambiguity = frustration

One respondent specifically points out missing clarity in timelines.

Theme E — Some items may not need a phase-in period at all

A few respondents directly state:

- “Just do everything at once.”

- “Adjust as we go.”
- “No need to complicate it.”

This is the second-strongest minority opinion.

Theme F — People want rollout tied to real-world capacity

Common concerns include:

- region size differences
- number of organizers available
- coach capacity
- field access
- varying levels of youth maturity

They warn that rollout must consider **where communities actually are**, not where they “should” be.

5. Pros & Cons Identified

Pros of a phased rollout (as expressed by respondents)

- reduces shock
- avoids overwhelming organizers
- stabilizes divisions
- builds legitimacy over time

- lets communities adapt
- safer for new regions
- easier to communicate

Pros of a full rollout

- clear, unified message
- no confusion
- momentum matters
- avoids multiple years of half-implementation
- prevents perpetual pilot mode

Concerns about gradual rollout

- delays benefits
- prolongs confusion
- can create inequity (some regions move faster than others)
- “death by pilot programs”

Concerns about immediate rollout

- risk of disorganization
 - systems not ready
 - inexperienced regions overwhelmed
 - could damage trust if chaotic
-

6. Unique or Outlier Perspectives

A few stand-out viewpoints:

- **One respondent wants certain items introduced immediately but others delayed several years**

Very specific nuance — not all-or-nothing.

- **One suggests tools and templates should be delivered first before rules/structure.**

They want infrastructure-ready rollout.

- **One emphasizes states and local orgs need autonomy in pacing**

This is a more decentralized view, uncommon among the group but notable.

- **A few responses include operational recommendations, not just philosophical ones**

Example: adjust tryout seasons, coordinate with school athletics, improve administrator resources.

7. Final Assessment (Based ONLY on this file)

Across all 11 responses:

Most respondents support a phased or gradual rollout, not a sudden full implementation.

They want clear communication, strong timelines, and a thoughtful sequence.

A significant minority (≈ 3) want full implementation starting 2027 with no phase-in.

No one asks for cancellation of the proposal — only for timing adjustments.

Respondents value predictability, capacity alignment, and regional flexibility.

No one wants a rollout that is rushed, unclear, or over-complex.

The core message:

“Yes — move forward. But do it in a deliberate, well-structured, clearly communicated sequence that respects regional capacity.”

Project Brief Comments

High-Level Sentiment Summary

Overall sentiment across the collected comments is:

Strongly Negative / Concerned (≈70–75%)

Most commenters express **significant reservations** about the proposal. Sentiment focuses on:

- Harm to existing **school-based programs**
- Loss of **FMP (female-matching player) recruitment and retention**
- Intensification of **inequity (“rich get richer”)**
- Increased **burnout** (players, coaches, volunteers)
- Mixed play being **unsuitable for early development**
- Removing Mixed from YCC creating **fewer total opportunities**, not more
- Fear that competitive Fall club would **cannibalize local efforts**

Mixed / Neutral-Concerned (≈20–25%)

Some commenters see the **intent** of the proposal as positive:

- Recognizing a need for **new community onramps**
- Wanting **accessible regional play**
- Supporting **more mixed visibility**
- Supporting a **bridge year (U20) option**

But even these commenters overwhelmingly highlight **structural issues** and recommend **revisions** before moving forward.

Positive Support (≈5–10%)

Only a small subset expresses strong support, and even these commenters:

- Agree that *changes are required first*, or
 - Believe the long-term intent is good but the timeline is premature
 - Support **mixed** but not the removal of Mixed from YCCs
 - Want **regional development**, not national expansion
-

Core Themes Identified

Below is a synthesis of the recurring issues, grouped by theme. Each theme includes sentiment descriptions and representative insights.

1. Impact on High School Programs (Major Concern)

Sentiment:  **Overwhelmingly Negative**

Summary:

Commenters consistently believe the Fall season should remain dedicated to school-based recruitment and development. A competitive Fall club season is viewed as **direct competition with HS programs**.

Key Points

- HS coaches rely on Fall to **recruit new players** and “hook” first-year participants.
- Removing top players for club reduces:
 - **Team leadership**
 - **Practice quality**
 - **New player experience**
 - **Retention**

- Many HS programs “only function” because elite players help coach/train in Fall.

Representative Concern

“Adding a Fall club season will pull away leaders and crush recruitment, making some school teams unsustainable.”

2. Mixed Division Concerns — Especially for FMPs

Sentiment:  **Strongly Negative**

Summary:

Fielding mixed teams under current demographics disproportionately harms FMP development.

Key Points

- Mixed tends to favor MMP development, **not FMP development.**
- FMPs in early stages often:
 - Get fewer touches
 - Experience exclusion
 - Drop out at higher rates
- Moving Mixed out of YCC into Fall:
 - **Reduces opportunities for FMPs**
 - **Adds pressure** (“teams need me or boys can’t play”)

Representative Concern

“Removing Mixed from YCC helps the top 10–12 FMPs and hurts the next 30–40.”

3. “Rich Get Richer” Dynamic

Sentiment: ● Highly Negative

Summary:

The proposal is widely seen as benefiting **already strong programs**, while harming emerging regions.

Key Points

- Strong LDOs will dominate both seasons.
- Smaller orgs will lose:
 - Players
 - Coaches
 - Resources
- Cuts roster spots for MMPs by half (from two gendered teams to one mixed team).
- The second nationals opportunity only benefits already-elite players.

Representative Concern

“Top players get MORE opportunities. Everyone else gets FEWER. How does this grow youth ultimate?”

4. Coach/Volunteer Burnout

Sentiment: ● Strongly Negative

Summary:

The supply of coaches is already dangerously low; adding a Fall club season stretches a strained system.

Key Points

- HS coaches also coach YCC → can't coach Fall club.
 - Volunteers need rest between Spring–Summer–Fall cycles.
 - Many comments: “Who will coach these teams? We don't have enough people now.”
-

5. Burden on Local Disc Organizations

Sentiment:  **Negative**

Summary:

The proposal adds administrative, financial, and organizational burden to LDOs who are already at full capacity.

Key Points

- Many orgs cannot support an additional season.
 - Fear of competition between LDOs and outside “club” efforts.
 - Some areas have thriving Fall mixed HS leagues that this proposal may dismantle.
-

6. Concerns About Removing Mixed from YCC

Sentiment:  **Highly Negative**

Summary:

This is one of the most universally opposed elements.

Why?

- Removes a developmentally critical pipeline for both FMPs and MMPs.
- Shrinks summer roster opportunities.

- Historically, removing Mixed created **elite superteams** and reduced broad participation.

Representative concern:

“This proposal unintentionally REDUCES the number of total youth who can attend nationals.”

7. Philosophical Conflict — Club vs. School-Based Growth

Sentiment: 🟡 **Mixed but leaning negative**

Summary:

A significant portion believes ultimate should prioritize **school-based structures**, not club.

Arguments:

- Schools scale better.
- Friend groups + low barrier to entry = growth.
- Club primarily serves players who already love ultimate.

Representative Thought:

“We should focus on empowering school-based programs, not competing with them.”

8. U20 Division — Mixed Reaction

Positive Points

- Provides a bridge for:
 - Gap year students

- Non-college-bound athletes
- Students at schools without teams
- Aligns with WFDF

Negative Points

- Removes leaders from HS teams in Fall
 - U20 athletes have the **most conflicts**
 - Adds pressure to play year-round → burnout
 - FMPs at U20 are at a developmentally sensitive stage
-

9. Accessibility for New Communities

Sentiment: 🟡 Mixed

Summary:

The proposal aims to create onramps but many believe it will **not** achieve that.

Why?

- If new communities struggle to form YCC teams, they will also struggle to form Juniors.
- National aspirations do not create beginners.
- Barriers like:
 - Transportation
 - Coaching
 - Cost

- Youth organization access won't be solved by a Fall club season.

Alternative suggestions:

- Invest in:
 - MS programming
 - ES programming
 - Women coaches
 - Community Coach programs
 - Local scrimmage infrastructure
-

10. Burnout and Multi-Sport Concerns

Sentiment:  **Strongly Negative**

Summary:

Players, especially high performers, already juggle:

- HS sports
- College apps
- Club
- YCC
- Schoolwork

Adding Fall club removes the only “off-season.”

Key Takeaways (What the Community Is REALLY Saying)

1. The proposal, as written, is unlikely to grow youth ultimate.

Most believe it will **reduce** participation in many regions.

2. Removing Mixed from YCC is widely opposed and is viewed as actively harmful.

3. Fall is the wrong season for a national-level club competition due to:

- HS conflict
- Multisport conflicts
- FMP recruitment season
- Coach burnout
- Regional tournament saturation

4. Creating a second national championship mainly benefits established programs, not new players.

5. The most urgent growth need is NOT another elite season but:

- More woman/FMP coaches
- MS/ES programming
- Support for local leagues
- Reducing barriers to school-based play
- Tools, resources, and grants for LDOs

6. Mixed play must be implemented with developmental safeguards.

7. Fear of for-profit groups entering youth ultimate is real, but

→ Most commenters do **not** believe this proposal is the right way to counter that threat.

8. Many request delaying or reworking the proposal, not abandoning the goals.

Actionable Recommendations (Synthesized from Feedback)

Recommendation Set A — If the goal is to grow youth ultimate

1. Support local/school-based programs first

- Provide:
 - Grants
 - Equipment packages
 - School-startup toolkits
 - Coach stipends
 - Administrator guides

2. Build MS/ES pipelines

- Especially **single-gender spaces** for FMPs

3. Expand coach training infrastructure

- More accessible clinics
- Woman-led certification tracks

- LDO co-teaching models
-

Recommendation Set B — If Juniors is pursued, major modifications needed

1. Do NOT remove Mixed from YCC.

This is nearly unanimous.

2. Make the Fall season regional-only (no national championship).

Focus on:

- Local growth
- Reduced travel burden
- Onramp communities

3. Restrict eligibility to prevent overloading elite players.

Suggestions:

- Cannot play both YCC and Juniors
- Cannot play Juniors if rostered on:
 - College
 - Adult club (regionals)
 - Semi-pro

4. Build mixed-specific FMP protections

- Ratio rules that protect touches and involvement

- Required woman/fmp coaches
 - Mixed training modules for coaches
 - FMP experience standards (e.g., how to evaluate MMPs for mixed suitability)
-

Recommendation Set C — Alternative proposal many commenters prefer

Strengthen school-based competition rather than add club.

Suggested model:

- Fall = School recruitment / mixed or fun season
- Spring = HS official season with:
 - Sectionals
 - Regionals
 - Nationals (USAU-sanctioned)

This aligns with:

- Traditional sports structures
 - Predictable athlete schedules
 - School-based support systems
-

Final Sentiment Summary Statement

The community is NOT rejecting the goals of the proposal. They are rejecting the proposed *method* because they believe it will create more harm than growth under current youth ultimate realities.

Support exists for:

- More mixed opportunities
- More onramps
- Accessible regional play
- A gap-year bridge

But NOT for:

- Removing Mixed from YCC
- Creating a Fall national season
- Adding elite play while local infrastructure is fragile
- Increasing burdens on coaches, LDOs, and FMPs

The overarching sentiment is:

“Good goals. Wrong approach and wrong timing.”

Needs & Solutions Comments

SENTIMENT ANALYSIS — Needs & Solutions Section

Across the comments, sentiment clusters strongly into the following categories:

1. Broad Skepticism Toward the Proposed Solution Structure

Sentiment:  Predominantly Negative

Many commenters are unconvinced that the proposed solution meets the stated need of **growing youth ultimate**. They repeatedly say:

- The proposal creates **elite pathways**, not accessible ones.
- Growth requires **beginner and intermediate options**, not more high-performance teams.
- New player and small-org needs are not addressed.

Representative Sentiments

“How do we grow ultimate? Provide more beginner-level options—not another elite option.”

“If the goal is to develop elite players, this proposal will succeed. If the goal is to grow youth ultimate, it will fail.”

Interpretation:

Commenters believe the “solution” being discussed does not match the “need” stated. They see a misalignment between **intent (growth)** and **execution (elite-level programming)**.

2. Strong Support for Using Existing High School Structures

Sentiment: 🟡 Mixed but leaning Positive

Several commenters express optimism that existing HS structures *could* meet the need—if they were made more flexible.

Common Points

- HS coordinators should allow:
 - multi-school teams when no local team exists
 - B&G Club teams to enter HS leagues
 - exceptions for isolated or “desert” communities

Representative Sentiment

“Why can’t state coordinators be flexible and let kids play with their geographically closest HS program?”

Interpretation:

Commenters prefer **adapting existing systems** rather than creating new high-demand elite systems.

3. Concerns About Age Mixing / Maturity / Safety

Sentiment: 🔴 Strong Negative

Multiple comments object to 19-year-olds playing alongside 14-year-olds.

Reasons Cited

- Physical mismatch
- Maturity differences
- Experience gaps
- Safety risks
- Social dynamics (e.g., authority, pressure)

Representative Sentiment

“I don’t think it’s a good idea for 19-year-olds to play with HS freshmen.”

Interpretation:

Stakeholders see **mixed-age competition (U20)** as misaligned with safety needs and HS developmental culture.

4. Doubts About Who These “New Teams” Are and Why Existing Structures Don’t Already Serve Them

Sentiment: 🟡 Inquisitive / Skeptical

Many commenters ask clarifying questions, revealing uncertainty and concern about the problem definition.

Common Questions

- Who are these organizations?
- How many exist?
- Why aren’t their players joining HS teams?
- What barriers prevent integration into HS leagues?

Representative Comments

“In the DC area, this is simply not heard of. Why aren’t these kids playing with their HS teams?”

“Is something stopping these teams from plugging into the existing HS structure?”

Interpretation:

There is a perceived **lack of evidence** that a new structure is needed at all.

5. Mixed Division as a Solution Is Viewed as Harmful for FMP Development

Sentiment:  **Very Negative**

Commenters argue that relying on male-matching players to “recruit” new FMPs is fundamentally flawed.

Concerns

- MMPs don’t want to play mixed → resentment → dudeball
- FMPs risk exclusion, limited touches, loss of confidence
- Mixed does not initiate or retain new FMPs
- Development depends on **single-gender FMP spaces**

Representative Sentiment

“How many seasons of FMPs are we willing to sacrifice to see if this proposal straightens out these boys?”

“Ultimate will lose FMPs this way.”

Interpretation:

Proposed mixed solutions are misaligned with the developmental needs of FMP athletes.

6. Strong Resistance to Allowing Post-HS (Gap Year, Non-College, Working) Athletes to Play U20

Sentiment:  Negative

People feel these athletes should **age out** and move to adult or college play structures.

Concerns

- Unfair competition
- Age/size imbalance
- HS players disadvantaged
- Cultural mismatch

Representative Comment

“If they’ve graduated, they shouldn’t be eligible for HS-level play.”

Interpretation:

This solution is seen as creating **equity and safety problems**, not solving inclusion needs.

7. Emphasis on Local Development Over National Competition

Sentiment:  Logic-driven / Constructive

Several commenters argue that:

- New teams should start **locally**.
- They are not ready for **regional or national** competition.

- It takes **years** to prepare an emerging team for elite play.

Representative Sentiment

“A brand new team... will not be ready to compete at a regional or national level for many years.”

Interpretation:

Solutions must be **developmentally paced**, not competition-first.

KEY TAKEAWAYS From Needs & Solutions Feedback

1. Stakeholders believe the proposal mismatches the actual needs.

They see the need as:

- More access
- More beginner pathways
- More local support

But the proposed solution is perceived as:

- Elite-focused
 - Misaligned with entry-level communities
 - Difficult for developing regions
-

2. The HS ecosystem should be the primary vehicle for growth.

But it must be:

- *More flexible*
 - *More inclusive of players without teams*
 - *Open to collaborations with community organizations (B&GC, rec leagues)*
-

3. Safety + maturity concerns make U20 a poor fit for HS-aged competition.

This is one of the strongest negative sentiments.

4. Mixed competition is not an effective solution for FMP recruitment or retention.

Commenters fear it will:

- Alienate FMP athletes
 - Reinforce harmful dynamics
 - Decrease retention
-

5. Commenters want clarity about who the “unserved” teams are.

They suggest:

- There may be fewer such teams than implied
 - They may already have viable HS alternatives
 - Evidence is needed
-

6. New elite pathways ≠ growth.

Growth requires:

- Younger age engagement
 - Beginner-level leagues
 - Integration into existing school structures
 - Not another highly competitive program
-

SUGGESTIONS (Based Directly on This Section's Feedback)

1. Strengthen and modernize statewide HS structures rather than creating new ones.

- Introduce **flex-rule frameworks** allowing:
 - Multi-school teams for players without HS programs
 - B&GC-based teams for underserved areas
-

2. Build development-oriented, not competition-oriented, solutions.

People ask for:

- More middle school teams
 - More beginner league formats
 - A progression model
 - Entry-level coaching and play resources
-

3. Separate U20 graduates from HS structures.

Suggested changes:

- Make U20 a *bridge-to-college/club* program
 - Not a HS-equivalent program
 - Enforce eligibility cutoff connected to graduation
-

4. Develop intentional FMP pathways.

Commenters recommend:

- Single-gender FMP programs
 - Coaching interventions for gender equity
 - Avoid relying on MMP-driven mixed structures for recruitment
-

5. Evaluate whether “the problem” actually requires a new structure.

Because commenters:

- Question whether the need is real
 - Believe the solution may be unnecessary
 - Want to understand the scale and reality of unserved teams
-

Summary Sentence

Stakeholders believe the true need is **flexible, equitable, access-oriented youth development**, but the proposed solutions are perceived as **elite-focused, structurally mismatched, and potentially harmful**, especially for FMPs and HS development systems.