

## Maryland 2020 Cup Season Registration Now Open

**Deadline to register set for 16 December.** (13 November) Registration for the 2020 cup season is now open for the Stewart Cup, the Morton Cup and both of the Maryland Over-30 & Over-40 Cup. The cup season kicks off in January and runs through March. The winners of the Stewart, Over-30 & Over-40 Cups advance to USASA Region I qualifiers.

All teams registered and playing in any MSSA affiliated league are eligible to enter any of the cups. UPSL & NPSL affiliated Maryland teams are eligible to enter the Stewart Cup but must register all of their players with MSSA prior to taking part in the competition. Teams entering the Stewart Cup are not eligible to enter the Morton Cup. Teams playing in non-affiliated leagues are eligible for the Morton, Over-30 & Over-40 Cups but must register all of their players prior to taking part in the competition.

A draw will be held for all of our cup competitions. Matches will be played primarily on Sundays. Teams must enter online through the links below. The deadline to enter the cups is 16 December 2019. The entry fee is \$105 per cup (convenience fee included) and must be paid online. Referee fees for the cups are \$200.00 (\$100.00 per team) and paid at the field by each team.

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## Maryland 2020 Cups Draws Have Been Set

**Schedule in the works, to be published soon.** (23 December) We are set to start a new cup season in a couple of weeks with the Morton Cup kicking it all off on 5 January. Our Cup Commissiner Fran McGrath is putting the schedules together and weather permitting, we will be finished in March. We have a number of teams competing for the Stewart Cup, the Morton Cup and both of the Maryland Over-30 & Over-40 Cup. We also will complete the Maryland Champions League that will award the winner with the Rowland Cup. The winners of the Rowland, Stewart, Over-30 & Over-40 Cups advance to USASA Region I qualifiers.

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## The Fixtures Are Out Morton Starts the Cup Season

**Ambitious schedule with five competitions in play.** (27 December) Our Cup Commissiner Fran McGrath borrowed Santa's elves after the Christmas celebration and has organized our various competitions to bring us into a new decade of Maryland cup play. It starts on 5 January with the Morton Cup and finishes with the Maryland Over-40 Cup in early April. The Morton wil feature 10 teams in two groups that will determine a final four. The Rowland Cup, played this season as the Maryland Champions League, also involves group play with the clubs already 2 or 3 matches played during their league season. Now they go into cross-league fixtures. The winner

of the Rowland moves onto USASA Region I qualifiers for the Werner Fricker Cup. We have 10 sides who will battle it out for the Stewart Cup in a knock out competition. The winner advances to the Amateur Cup. Then finally we finish with the Maryland Over-30 & Over-40 Cup. Those two also sends teams to USASA Region I qualifiers.

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## **We Are in Full Swing** **Morton Match Day 1 Got Played**

**Stewart Cup first round gets into the mix.** (9 January) It was somewhat blustery but we got Match Day 1 of the Morton Cup off and the start of the 2020 Cup season. In Group A action, Academy FC took command of the standings with a 11:0 routing of The Referees. The Baltimore Kickers and Columbia FC played to a 1:1 draw. In Group B, All Stars United defeated JA Raiders 4:2 while Blue Side FC shutout The Difference FC 3:0.

DC Flames and Colombia FC get their season debut as the Flames host the Kickers while Colombia takes on the All Stars at Martin Luther King Park in Silver Spring. At Blandair #1 we Columbia facing Academy and The Difference against the Raiders.

The Stewart Cup has two first round matches with Izee Auto FC taking on Limitless FC followed by the Aegean Hawks FC meeting AFC Dobes. The Stewart Cup is a knock out competition with the winner advancing to the USASA Region I qualifier of the Amateur Cup.

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## **Stewart at Final Eight** **Morton Two Days In**

**Champions League/Rowland Cup cross league play kicks off.** (14 January) In an unseasonable warm day for January, we got our second week of cup play completed. Two first round games in the Stewart Cup has us down to our final eight. Izee Auto FC advances with a 7:0 scrubbing of Limitless FC. That sets them up to play Yinz United in two weeks. The Aegean Hawks FC also go forward after shutting out AFC Dobes 3:0. That earned them a match against Steel Pulse FC. The other two quarterfinals pit defending champion Christos FC against K Crew while Starliners FC take on Motorik FC Alexandria. The Stewart Cup winner represents the state in the Amateur Cup.

Academy FC stays on top of Group A of the Morton Cup after edging Columbia FC 2:1. The Baltimore Kickers are two points behind as they drubbed DC Flames 4:0. All Stars United keep their foothold on the Group B perch after a 4:2 battle against Colombia FC. The Difference FC and JA Raiders FC went through shooting drills with each side bagging 6 goals in their draw. This Sunday, All Stars face Blue Side FC followed by The Referees against the Baltimore Kickers at Blandair Park. Martin Luther King Park will host the Raiders against Colombia while DC Flames go against Columbia from Maryland in the second match.

The Maryland Champions League for the Rowland Cup trophy returns to action with our first set of cross league games between the Maryland Major and Washington Premier sides. All will be played at Blandair starting with Brainstorm FC against Maryland Major champion Steel Pulse FC. Washington Premier champ Yinz United is set against Academy FC while Capital City takes on Christos FC. Start times are at 11:00 & 1:00.

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## Yinz & Steel Pulse in the Lead Champions League Enters Cross League Play

**Kickers & All Stars lead their Morton groups.** (20 January) The Maryland Champions League for the Rowland Cup trophy played its first set of cross league matches between the Maryland Major and Washington Premier opponents. Defending Rowland Cup champion Yinz United shutout Academy FC 2:0 with goals from Kjell Crooke and Kareem Najib. Christos FC fell behind before coming away with a 5:1 win over Capital City FC. Nick Gumbs and Jacob Bender contributed braces while keeper Dakota Niedermeier came up with the big saves. Steel Pulse FC were 3:0 victors over Brainstorm FC and share the lead in the standings with Yinz and a game in hand. The next round is scheduled for 2 February.

The Baltimore Kickers took over the lead of Group A of the Morton Cup with a 3:0 win over The Referees. Columbia FC moved into the top three with a 4:0 defeat of DC Flames. All Stars United stay on top of Group B after an putting away Blue Side FC 4:1. The JA Raiders, hurt by injuries, took a beating against Colombia FC 11:2. Match Day 4 has Columbia and The Referees battling it out along with The Difference FC and All Stars at Blandair Park. The other two games at Martin Luther King Park feature Academy FC against the Flames while Colombia challenges Blue Side.

We return to the Stewart Cup with the quarterfinals at Blandair Park. Title holder Christos FC takes on K Crew followed by Starliners FC against Motorik FC Alexandria. The other set has Yinz United facing Izee Auto FC with Steel Pulse FC scheduled against the Aegean Hawks FC. Mark down 11:00 & 1:00 for both sets. Winner of the Cup advances to the Amateur Cup.

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## Stewart Semfinals Set All Stars Clinch Semi Spot in Morton Cup

**Champions League play returns this weekend.** (29 January) We have our final four for the Stewart Cup. Defending champion Christos FC defeated K Crew 2:1 and will meet Starliners FC, 3:1 victors over Motorik FC Alexandria. Yinz United reached the semifinals with a 2:1 win against Izee Auto FC. Their opponent will be Steel Pulse FC who scored 3 goals in extra time to put away the Aegean Hawks FC 6:3. The Cup resumes on 9 February.

All Stars United finished a perfect record in Group B with a 4:2 victory over The Difference FC. They await the final group match day to see who they will meet in the

semifinals. The other Group B match saw Colombia FC move into second with a 5:2 thumping of Blue Side FC. Columbia FC are in a 3-way tie for the Group A lead with their 2:0 shutout of The Referees. They are joined by Academy FC who drew against DC Flames 1:1 and the Baltimore Kickers. The final match day pits JA Raiders against Blue Side, Colombia versus The Difference, the Flames and The Referees with the Kickers and Academy meeting at midweek.

The next cross league set of matches in the Maryland Champions League for the Rowland Cup trophy has league powers Christos FC facing Yinz United, Academy FC battling the Fighting B.O.B.s and Steel Pulse FC taking on Capital City FC.

Blandair Park in Columbia and Martin Luther King Park in Silver Spring will show all of our Cup action this weekend.

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### Morton Group Play Almost Done Stewart Semifinals this Weekend

**Two rounds left in Champions League group matches.** (4 February) We have been on a good run with the weather as we stay on schedule and go into this weekend with double semifinals for both the Stewart and Morton Cups. One last group match between the Baltimore Kickers and Academy FC will determine who will face All Stars United and Colombia FC in the Morton semifinals. That match will be played Wednesday evening, 5 February, 7:00 at Howard High School. The semifinals will take place at Blandair Park on Sunday.

Blandair will also be the site for the Stewart Cup semifinals. Both pit the Maryland Major and Washington Premier powerhouses against each other with the first game featuring Yinz United against Steel Pulse FC. That is followed by Christos FC versus Starliners FC. The final will take place on 1 March with the victor representing Maryland in the Amateur Cup.

The Maryland Champions League for the Rowland Cup trophy has Steel Pulse, Christos and Yinz in the lead with 9 points each. Yinz with an extra match on hand. Steel Pulse was shut out by Capital City FC 1:0 for their first loss in the competition. Christos took care of Yinz 7:2 while Academy FC was crushed by Fighting B.O.B.s 8:1. Group play resumes in two weeks.

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### Christos & Yinz in Stewart Final All Stars & Academy for the Morton

**Champions League returns this weekend.** (10 February) Two familiar rivals will once again meet for a title match, this time for the Stewart Cup to determine who represents Maryland in the Amateur Cup. Yinz got goals from Kjell Crooke and Nick Tait to erase a 2 goal deficit to draw even 2:2 with Steel Pulse FC in regulation. After 30 minutes of extra time, they edged their Maryland Major opponent 3:2 in penalties to advance to the finals. Their opponent will be Christos FC who shutout Starliners FC

3:0. Jamie Merriam, Nick Gumbs and Jacob Bender tallied for Christos. The final will be played at Montgomery Blair High School on 1 March.

The Morton Cup comes to its conclusion with All Stars United and Academy FC reaching the final. Academy won 2:1 against last year's winner Colombia FC in its semifinal. All Stars and the Baltimore Kickers played to a 2:2 draw. United made good on all five of their penalties to get to the title match that will be played Sunday at Blandair Park at 11:00.

We return to the Maryland Champions League for the Rowland Cup trophy with Christos hosting Brainstorm FC while Steel Pulse take on the Fighting B.O.B.s. Both games will be at Blandair Park.

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### All Stars Lift Morton Cup Defeat Academy for the Title

**Three way tie for Champions League in final round.** (17 February) The ninth edition of the Morton Cup came to an end with All Stars United taking honors after edging Academy FC 1:0. Frederick Atta-Wiredu had the game winner while Eduafo Yeboah earned the shutout. Darwin "Lefty" Morton was a former Vice President of the Maryland State Soccer Association who was not only an administrator but coach for many years. Every Sunday he could be found at a soccer pitch watching the local action.

Only one match in the Maryland Champions League for the Rowland Cup with Marie Bell getting the lone goal for Steel Pulse FC in their 1:0 shutout of Fighting B.O.B.s. After four rounds, Steel Pulse, Christos FC and Yinz United lead the pack with 9 points each. We get into the last round this Sunday at Montgomery Blair High School with Fighting B.O.B.s taking Christos while Yinz will face Steel Pulse.

Plenty of cup action in Maryland and you find it all of it here. Keep up to date with all of the results & schedules on this site and on Twitter [@marylandsoccer](https://twitter.com/marylandsoccer). Keep track of the entire cup season on our [Cup Archives](#) page.

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### Christos & Steel Pulse for Champions League Maryland Major Rivals to Play for Rowland Cup

**Stewart Cup final to be played this Sunday between Yinz & Christos.** (24 February) It will be a replay of the Maryland Major fall final as Christos FC and Steel Pulse FC took the top two spots in the Maryland Champions League standings. Christos finished first with 4 victories and a single loss to earn 12 points after a 6:1 trashing of Fighting B.O.B.s. Jamie Merriam, Brian Graham & Chris Panian contributed braces while Brad Benzing took care of the other end in front of the net. Steel Pulse and Yinz United played to a 1:1 draw that saw both sides finish with 10 points. Steel Pulse edged out Yinz on goal differential with an extra goal. The final will be played on 8 March at

Long Reach High School with the winner not only taking the Rowland Cup but honors to represent the state in the Werner Fricker Cup qualifiers.

This Sunday, Yinz and Christos will face each other in the Stewart Cup final at Montgomery Blair High School. The winner moves forward to the USASA Region I qualifier of the Amateur Cup. The title match kicks off at 11:00.

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### **Christos Defeats Yinz for Stewart Cup Makes it Five in the Row for Amateur Title**

**Now seek Maryland double as they face Steel Pulse for Maryland Champions League/Rowland Cup.** (3 March) Once again it was Christos FC lifting the Stewart Cup, for the fifth straight year. In a hard fought match against Yinz United, Jamie Merriam put in the match winner in the 70th minute on an assist from Chris Panian. Christos will meet LOKO FC of Metro-DC/Virginia in April for the quarterfinals of the USASA Region I qualifier of the Amateur Cup.

On Sunday, Christos will look to pull the Maryland double with the Maryland Champions League final for the Rowland Cup against Steel Pulse FC. After five rounds of group play that included both league and cross league action between sides from the Maryland Major Soccer League and the Washington Premier League, the two finished on top to reach the title match. It will be 11:00 at Long Reach High School with the winner advancing to the USASA Region I qualifier of the Werner Fricker Cup.

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### **Another Cup Double for Christos Rowland Added to Stewart Title**

**Maryland Champions League goes to Maryland Major power side.** (10 March) Last week it was the Stewart Cup. This past Sunday, Christos FC took the Maryland Champions League to lift the Rowland Cup for the Maryland Double, the fourth time in five years it has done so. The Maryland Champions League started with regular fall season play from two leagues, the Maryland Major Soccer League and the Washington Premier League. League results of teams in the competition counted twice, for regular league play and for the Champions League. Then this winter, cross league action commenced. The top two advanced to the final, which was a replay of the Maryland Major final of last fall seeing Steel Pulse FC taking the league title after a 4:3 victory.

The regular season match between these two was also intense with Steel Pulse edging Christos 1:0. The Rowland final was not as Christos poured it on with two goal efforts from Jamie Merriam and Alex Lee. Tommy Madden scored the fifth while Dakota Niedermeier earned the shutout. Christos moves forward to their second USASA Region I qualifier representing the state in the Werner Fricker Cup.

With three cups complete for the season, we now start the Maryland Over-30 Cup. At Laytonia Park in Gaithersburg, Fighting B.O.B.s/Yinz Legends O30 will face the Baltimore Kickers followed by Christos FC Bays against Colombia FC. The winners meet for the title match on 22 March.

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### **Cup Season Came to a Halt** **COVID-19 Ends Cups for State & Region**

**We did get three of our cups played.** (1 June) We held hope for as long as we could but government authorities kept everything shut down, including fields, that forced us to end the cup competitions prematurely. We were able to complete the Rowland & Stewart Cups with Christos FC lifting both trophies. All Stars United had earlier won the Morton Cup. We were ready to kick off the Maryland Over-30 Cup followed by the Over-40 competition but that is when we got orders to shut down. So it was an incomplete season. Worst, our leagues were never able to launch their spring season. Let's all hope for a better fall.