

POLICY FOR U8 and U9

FIELD SIZE:

- 60 yards by 35 yards
- Center line with 8 yard radius circle.
- GOAL AREA - rectangle, 14 yards wide and 5 yards into field of play joined by a line parallel with the goal line.

GOAL SIZE:

- 12 feet wide; 6 feet tall

BALL:

- Size 4 approved by referee.

PLAYERS:

- Maximum number of players on the field is 6 per side at U8 and 7 per side at U9, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. Goalkeeper will wear a different color jersey.
- Minimum number of players to start a game is 5 for both U8 & U9.
- If a team is short players they may borrow players from the opposing team, another team in the same league, or a team from the next younger league until they achieve the maximum number of field players and up to two (2) substitutes. Unregistered players may never be used in games due to liability issues and lack of insurance. Players younger than the next younger league may not be used due to safety concerns. Once the team reaches the maximum number of rostered field players plus two (2) in attendance (8 or 9 in this case) all "guest" players must cease playing. If a rostered player becomes injured then a guest player may be substituted until such time as the injured player can return to the game.

UNIFORM:

- EYO soccer jerseys and socks will be provided. Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn at all times during practice and game play.
- Player's socks shall be pulled up as to cover the shin guards in their entirety.
- Soccer cleats are recommended but not required. If cleats are worn, they have to have rubber spikes. Steel or hard plastic cleats are prohibited (*inspected by referee prior to the game*).
- No hats, watches, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, rings or other jewelry may be worn during games or practices. Earrings may NOT be taped over.
- **Note: no player shall be allowed to practice or play without shin guards.**

REFEREES:

- The Referee Coordinator shall make assignments of referees for play. The referee pool shall consist of USSF Certified referees. If referee is unavailable, both teams will select suitable volunteer(s).
- At this level the game is officiated by a single Center Referee. The referee will usually be a first or second season referee. Coaches and parents will bear this in mind when noticing a call that they disagree with and will refrain from commenting to the referee. Occasionally the game will be officiated by two referees when we are having a more experienced referee train a newer referee.
- Referees are encouraged to explain infractions to the offending player(s), or coaches if asked, in a manner that they will understand.
- Referees shall make every attempt to ensure the safety of the players. See additional information under GOALIE.

DURATION OF GAMES:

- Two halves of 25 minutes with a 5 minute half-time.

START OF PLAY:

- A coin toss will be used to start the game. Winner of the toss may choose to kick-off or choose which goal

to attack. If choosing team takes the kick-off then the other team decides which goal it will attack otherwise the other team kicks-off to start the game. The team that did not kick-off to start the game will kick-off to start the second half.

SCORING:

- Whole ball must cross goal line between goal posts and under bar.
- If the goalkeeper throws the ball directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.
- See additional information under SPORTSMANSHIP.

SUBSTITUTIONS:

- Prior to a throw-in by either team, only **IF** the team who has possession substitutes.
- Prior to a goal kick (by either team).
- After a goal (by either team).
- After an injury (by either team) when the referee stops play.
- **All substitutes must be ready to enter the field, standing at the mid-field line, prior to requesting a substitution from the referee.**
- **Substitutes may not enter the field until the referee acknowledges the substitution request.**

INJURIES:

- Injured players will be quickly assessed by the referee as play continues.
- If the injury warrants the referee may stop play to assess the player.
- The referee may call a team official onto the field to assist with the player.
- If a team official enters the field then the player must be substituted out.
- If deemed fit to play then the player may re-enter the game through a substitution if desired.

OFFSIDE:

- Only called for intentional cherrypicking directed by the coach. Coaches are still encouraged to teach the offside law for preparation into the U11 division.

HANDLING:

- Called only when player is obviously and intentionally playing the ball and not defending him/herself. The rule for a handling includes using any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder. The proper way to look interpret this is that a player cannot "handle" the ball. A ball that is kicked and hits a player's hand or arm is not intentional handling. This means that the referee must use his or her own judgment to some extent in determining whether or not there is accidental contact or a purposeful attempt to gain an advantage. In older leagues hands or arms in an unnatural position may be enough to warrant a handling call. In other words if a player's arms are held straight up and the ball hits the arm, even if the arm doesn't move, intentional handling would be called due to the intentional placement of the arms to cause the impact. Referees will be more lenient with this age group and will only make a call if there appears to be intention on the part of the player – typically judged by the hands moving toward the ball.

FOULS AND MISCONDUCT:

- ALL FOULS, INTENTIONAL AND UNINTENTIONAL WILL RESULT IN AN INDIRECT FREE KICK WITH THE OPPONENT 8 YARDS AWAY. A goal cannot be scored until the ball is touched by another player.
- While slide tackles are a valid part of the game of soccer, the mastery of such moves is believed to be beyond the capabilities the recreational level U8 or U9 age group participant. For this reason all intentional slide tackles, regardless of the contact with the ball or opposing player, will be sanctioned as Dangerous Play and will result in an indirect free kick being awarded to the opposing team. Players who continually violate this rule will be cautioned for Persistent Infringement and MAY be shown the yellow card.
- In order to minimize the potential for head injuries, players in the U8 and U9 leagues are not allowed to head the ball under any circumstances. Coaches will ensure that players do not head the ball during practices. Players who intentionally head the ball during a game will be warned once and then be charged with

Dangerous Play if it occurs again. If the player continues to head the ball after being warned then the referee MAY issue a Yellow Card for Persistent Infringement.

- As always, if a player is cautioned (shown the Yellow Card) twice then that player will be removed from the remainder of the game.

BALL OUT OF PLAY:

- The ball is out of play when the entire ball fully crosses the sideline or end line of the field either in the air or on the ground even if the ball subsequently returns to the field.
 - If the ball crosses the sideline then play will restart with a throw-in from the team opposite the player who sent the ball out.
 - If the ball crosses the end line then play will restart with a goal kick for the defending team if the attacking team sent the ball out. Otherwise play will restart with a corner kick for the attacking team.
- The ball is also out of play when it touches a match official, remains on the field of play, and:
 - a team starts a promising attack or
 - the ball goes directly into the goal or
 - the team in possession of the ball changes
 - In all these cases, play is restarted with a dropped ball
- The ball is in play at all other times when it touches a match official and when it rebounds off a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag post and remains on the field of play.

DROPPED BALL (Modified):

- If the ball was in the penalty area, or was last touched in the penalty area, when play was stopped then the ball will be dropped for the defending goalkeeper in their penalty area. In this case all attacking players must remain outside the penalty area. The ball is in play when it completely exits the penalty area.
- In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent or a match official. All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it touches the ground.

FREE KICKS (Modified):

- Free kicks are awarded as a result of a foul or misconduct. There are two types of free kicks: direct and indirect. In the U8/U9 league all kicks regardless of the infraction will be indirect.
- If the free kick is awarded to the defending team anywhere in their penalty area then all attacking players must remain outside the penalty area. The ball is in play when it completely exits the penalty area.
- If the free kick is awarded to the attacking team anywhere in the other team's penalty area then all attacking players must remain outside the penalty area. The ball is placed on the penalty area line closest to where the infraction occurred. The ball is in play when it is touched and moves.
- In all other cases the ball is placed at the location of the infraction. All opposing players must remain at least 8 yards from the ball until it is in play. The ball is in play when it is touched and moves.

PENALTY KICKS:

- No penalty kicks are to be taken during these games.

THROW-IN:

- Two attempts allowed. Referee will stop play and explain the throwing error of the first throw-in. Play continues after the second throw-in regardless of whether or not it was performed correctly.

GOALKEEPER:

- Allowed six seconds to put ball in play. Keeper has the option to kick, punt or throw the ball.
- The goalkeeper is said to have possession of the ball if they are touching it with any part of their arm, hand, or fingers. Referee should use the whistle to signal stoppage of play if a potentially dangerous situation develops.

Players who continue to attack the ball when in possession of the goalkeeper should be advised to stop by the referee. Repeated attacks should be cautioned as unsporting behavior. Players who charge recklessly at the goalkeeper causing a collision should be warned and then cautioned for unsporting behavior if they persist.

- The attacking player has equal right to play the ball if that attacker is under control and is not playing in a dangerous manner or using excessive force.
- An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, commits any of the following offences:
 - Controls the ball with the hands/arm for more than six seconds before releasing it
 - Touches the ball with the hands/arm after releasing it and before it has touched another player
 - Touches the ball with the hand/arm, unless the goalkeeper has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after it has been deliberately kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate or the goalkeeper receives it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate
- Each child should be offered the opportunity to play goalkeeper at least once during the season.

GOAL KICK (Modified):

- May be taken from any point inside the goal area.
- The ball is in play when it has been kicked and completely leaves the penalty area.
- Players from either team may not play the ball until it has cleared the penalty area.
- If the ball does not exit the penalty area, or is touched by any player before leaving the penalty area, or goes over the defending team's goal line (even in the goal) without first exiting the penalty area, then the kick is retaken.
- All attacking players must be outside of the penalty area at the time of the kick.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

- Coaches are encouraged to shake hands before the game. Players will shake hands with the opponents after the game.
- When a team has scored four (4) goals more than the opposing team that team is required to remove a player from the field prior to the restart of play. Once the margin is reduced to less than four the player may be substituted back in at the next stoppage. If a team in the U9 league has scored five (5) goals more than the opposing team that team will remove an additional player from the field prior to the restart of play. Once the margin is reduced to less than five the player may be substituted back in at the next stoppage. Teams in the U8 league may remove no more than one (1) player regardless of the score differential. This rule will be applied as the margin increases for up to a maximum of two (2) players removed in U9 and one (1) in U8. In other words if the winning margin is four goals then the game will be 7 v 6, five goals = 7 v 5. Coaches are encouraged to employ other strategies to prevent a large goal differential such as moving key scorers back, requiring players to complete a certain number of passes prior to scoring, instructing players to shoot from outside of the goal area lines, moving weaker players up front, etc.

PLAYING TIME:

- Each player should expect to play at least one-half of each game. However, a coach may refuse playing time for particular game to a player who has not attended or participated in practices during the two-week period preceding the game.

SPECTATORS/SIDELINES:

- All spectators, including parents and siblings of players, must stand or sit in designated areas. Where spectator bleachers are provided it is recommended that they be used. If a fence surrounds the field then all spectators must be outside the fence. On fields where no fence is present they must be at least six feet (6') back from the sidelines. Spectators may not stand or sit along the sideline between the goal line and the line marking the top of the penalty area. Spectators may not stand or sit behind the goal lines.
- All players and coaches must stand away from the touchline to allow the referees a clear view of the entire field and unobstructed movement along the sidelines. A minimum distance of two feet from the touchline should be observed where possible. On Rockburn Park fields #9 and #10 the minimum distance is one foot.
- Players, coaches and spectators should not interfere with play by kicking or touching any balls that are coming

near to, or crossing, the touchlines.

- No one is permitted to play behind the goals while a game is in progress.
- Photographers must get the permission of the referee prior to moving behind the goal for limited periods of time.
- Parents or guardians are not allowed to enter the field of play unless invited by the referee.

PUBLICITY:

- Normally, there will be no post game publicity, and any publicity that may be issued shall not contain the win-loss record of any team.

AWARDS:

- All players will receive participation awards at the conclusion of the last season. Standings will not be maintained.

*Coaches should inform their players and parents of these guidelines and encourage support for the referees and players. The game is for the players! We want them to learn, and most of all, **HAVE FUN!!!***

*FIFA Laws can be found www.fifa.com at the bottom of the page by clicking on Laws of the Game.