



4 goal rule

For 3rd/4th and 5th/6th Grade Leagues

What is the 4 goal rule?

If one team is winning by a margin of 4 or more goals (4-0, 5-1 etc), the other team who are losing can add an extra player to the game.

In the 3rd/4th grade league it would go from 7 v 7 to 7 v 8.

In the 5th/6th grade league it would go from 9 v 9 to 9 v 10.

If the goal margin is subsequently reduced to 2 goals, a player must be removed to make the sides equally balanced again (For example 4-2, 5-3 etc).

Why are we doing this?

There has been a lot of talk of unbalanced teams in both divisions. At this stage it is very difficult to rebalance the teams, with players already being organised into their teams for Fall and Spring and already having their uniform's.

We believe this offers a temporary solution (although not perfect) to unbalanced teams without pulling teams apart and getting players to switch their already used uniforms. We will however look again at how teams are organized for next years Fall and Spring seasons.



Won't this be unfair on the team that's winning?

Not at all, at East Side we are focused on development rather than the scoreboard.

It allows the winning team to be tested more and they are likely to gain more in development terms than they would in the current form. Also if the goal margin is reduced to just 2 goals, the extra player has to be removed to make the sides equally balanced again.

This also gives the team who are losing by 4 or more goals an opportunity to have more success in the game, whether that's just getting more possession on the ball or scoring a goal.

Won't introducing an extra player mean that the team who are losing will get even fewer touches on the ball, per player?

Yes there will be more players to share the ball with on one team. However if a team is losing 4-0 more than likely they are getting very little of the ball as it is. Having that extra player will hopefully mean as a team they will have possession of the ball more often and the game will become more equal.



Some teams don't have substitutes, won't that be a problem?

We realise this may be an issue with some teams and have 2 options.

1. A player from the other team can play on the team who are losing by a 4 goal margin. There may be an issue with players not wanting to play on the other team and uniform colors.

Uniform colours can hopefully be solved using a pinnie or by using a spare uniform.

Whilst you could say to players not willing to play on the other team, that they will get a lot more game time by playing on the other team, rather than being a substitute at present.

2. The team winning by 4 or more goals could take a player off which means it will be 6v7 or 8 v9 depending on what division you are playing in. I prefer option 1 because this option punishes the team who are winning by letting less of them play. Which doesn't aid their development.



Is there anything else that we can do if the game is unbalanced?

The introduction of the retreat line, will hopefully mean a reduction in goals straight from goal kicks.

If you are the team winning easily you can do the following.

1. Switch the players into different positions - hopefully you should be doing this anyway.
2. Ask your players to try different skills to beat players or to use their weaker foot.
3. Ask them to make x number of passes before they attempt a shot at goal.
4. Substitute your best players off.

Although I would do number 4 as a last resort, unless it is part of your regular substitution rotation and they are still getting equal playing time. As this is punishing players for being good and won't do anything for their own development. Therefore I would explore the other options first.



Is there anything else that we can do if the game is unbalanced?

If you're the team losing you can do the following.

1. As coaches and parents try and focus on the positives from the game. **Don't focus on the score.** There will be something during the game that the players did well or improved on.
2. Give the players a target that is achievable and focus on these goals rather than the scoreboard. E.g. Can we get a shot on goal? Can you find a team mate with a pass? Can you try and dribble past one of the opposition? Can you try and control the ball when it comes to you?
3. Give players feedback in a constructive way about what they might be able to do to improve.
4. Show good sportsmanship and encourage the players to show persistence.

Don't focus on the other team and what they should or shouldn't be doing or what the referees should be doing. If you start shouting at the other coach or referee, this is telling the players that if you are ever faced with a tough situation you should start shouting and blaming other people, rather than trying to be persistent and working hard to improve. Plus this is totally against the spirit of the league.



Who will be in charge of keeping score and implementing this during the game?

The referees will be in charge of keeping the score and then informing the relevant team that they can add a player or remove a player.

However the score itself will not be made public.

