

Old Bridge Girls Soccer: Coaches Handbook - A Guide to a Successful Season



Coaches let us first start by saying “**Thank You**” from the board of the Old Bridge Girls Soccer League. This is a big commitment on your part, and we greatly appreciate it. Here are some useful tips and league rules that will help guide you through the season from beginning to end.

1. **First Coaches Meeting** - This is the first of three mandatory meetings that you or your assistant coach must attend. When you attend the first meeting of the season you will receive your rosters and uniforms; within 48 hours of receiving these you **MUST** email or call your parents and introduce yourself. If you do not speak to the parent or guardian, please call again (answering machines and teenage siblings are the same in some ways and sometimes do not relay messages). It is at this time you will schedule your first practice with the parents, at a specified location and time. If you are not assigned an assistant coach you should canvass your parents to see who would be willing to help out with practices and games (VP of Recreation must be notified as soon as an assistant is found; this person must be approved by the board).
2. **Paper Work** - Work bond information needs to be returned to Director of Rec and the Director of Work Bond/Concession. This information will inform the league who is going to be your assistant coach, and your team parent. Upon completion of the season, if each has successfully completed their obligation; their check will be returned to them. A team name also needs to be given to Director of Rec, prior to Opening Day.
3. **Practice Locations** - Finding a location to practice is relatively easy to do although Higgins, Geick, Phillips, Lombardi and Veterans Fields are all off limits. You can pick any one of the public schools or parks for a small practice within the town. Generally, these practices do not require a lot of space and usually you will find other teams practicing as well. Speak to some of the other coaches in your division and see where they are practicing and perhaps you can combine your practices or scrimmage with one another. As always, the league will have weekly training clinics for all age groups, and you can have the girls attend that as well. This is also great for coaches to learn from a professional trainer. Male coaches should have a mom or other adult female at all team functions, since we are an all-girls league this will be helpful for both you and the girls.
4. **Practice** - Please see our website for some simple drills and FUN games for the girls to do. Keep in mind of the ages of the girls in respect to the games, most drills are age sensitive (try to avoid calling them drills. Games or exercises are better words). You cannot expect the mini mites and pee wees to do the same games and exercises as the older girls. It is most important to make sure that they have fun at any age, if they are having fun while learning the game of soccer then you will have a very successful season. If you need help scripting a practice, please feel free to check our website. We have links to many soccer drills for you to choose from. If you feel you need some help, contact the Director of Training, or the Director of Rec and we will stop by the field to see how the practices are being run and to help out in any way we can.
5. **Communication** - A very important part of a successful season is communication. Communicating with the parents as well as the board is a valuable tool. At the first practice

when you find your team mom/dad, this person will be your liaison to the parents. The team parent is vital, and you will communicate your schedules as well as any other information through them. Start a sign in sheet and have all parents fill out their e-mail address, home number and cell number. Do NOT take for granted that the one you have from the initial roster is correct, sometimes it is not up to date. You should ask parents if their child has any medical conditions or allergies that you should know about. *Attached below is a form for example.*

6. **Rules** - Please see attached for rules for your division, keep in mind that rules are different for each division.
7. **Team Names** - Any cute or professional name that you can come up with is fine! You should try and let the girls decide on a name. So pick one that you like best and submit it to the Director of Rec ASAP!
8. **Games** - If you are unable to make a game and you have no assistant coach, or neither of you can attend, please contact the VP or Rec and they will make someone available to coach your team for you that day. All substitutes must be approved by the VP of Rec prior to coaching.
9. **Referees** - At NO TIME will yelling or talking back to a referee be tolerated! You may be suspended immediately (regardless of the reason), and will NOT coach until the board can review your case. The kids that referee for us are exactly that; kids, and they are doing the best they can. We must take this into consideration. They are learning the rules, how to deal with their peers, as well as adult coaches and parents. Just think if they were your daughter or son, how would you feel if someone was yelling at them. Please remember they are kids and some maybe sensitive to the way an adult talks to them, even if you don't raise your voice. It is only a game! Please contact the VP of Rec if you have any questions or concerns.
10. **Team Parent** - This position is as important as the coach, and is another way to work off your work bond - this parent will be the liaison between the coach and the team. You will let this parent know the upcoming schedule and they will coordinate it with the parents saving the coach hours of phone calls and e-mails. They can also organize a snack or orange schedule. Their check will be given back to you at the end of the season.
11. **End of Season Meeting** - This meeting is as important to you as the first meeting. At this meeting we will review the season and go over the remaining schedule. For the Spring season, we will also go over the details for the end-of-season tournament. Hopefully it was a successful one for all and we can discuss how we can make the next one even better! Either the head coach or the assistant coach MUST attend this meeting.

We hope that this guide was useful will help you to have not only a successful season but most importantly a FUN one!

Player Information Form

Player Name and Jersey Number: _____

Emergency Contacts

Please list emergency contact names and numbers below in the event your child is injured, and a parent or guardian is not present. No one can touch your child without your permission. If you are not reachable a police officer will be called to the scene to make the decision to seek further medical attention if the situation calls for it.

Name: _____ Number: _____

Relationship: _____ Alt Number: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____ Number: _____

Relationship: _____ Alt Number: _____

Email: _____

Medical Conditions/Allergies

Please list any medical conditions or allergies your child has including FOOD allergies this is important since the children to receive snacks at the end of their games.

Medical Conditions: _____

Easy Soccer Rules

1. No Hands, please

I bet you knew that one. Most people who know nothing about soccer still know that you aren't supposed to use your hands, unless you're the goalie.

A couple of points to clarify:

First, the rule for a hand ball includes using any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder.

Second, the proper way to look at this soccer rule is that a player cannot "handle" the ball. A ball that is kicked and hits a player's hand or arm is not a hand ball. This means that the referee must use his or her own judgment to some extent in determining whether a hand ball is accidental contact or a purposeful attempt to gain an advantage.

Believe it or not, there is also a situation in which the goalie cannot use his/her hands. This is sometimes called the back-pass rule. Goalkeepers cannot pick up a deliberate pass that came directly from one of their teammates. In this case, the goalkeeper must use their feet. Infraction of this soccer rule will result in an indirect kick from the point of the infraction.

2. Throw-ins

A throw-in is taken when the ball crosses a sideline and leaves the field. The two basic soccer rules for a proper throw-in are to have both feet on the ground and to throw the ball with both hands over the head.

For teaching purposes, it is common to allow players in the Youth division to take more than one attempt. It's more important that they get it right, than for the other team to gain advantage.

3. Corner Kicks & Goal Kicks

A corner kick or goal kick is taken when the ball leaves the field across the end line – you know, the goal end of the field.

If the offensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a goal kick. If the defensive team kicks it out, play is restarted with a corner kick.

The goal kick is taken from anywhere inside the "goalie box" (6-yard box) as it is affectionately called. It can be taken by any player, not just the goalkeeper.

The corner kick is taken from – yes, you guessed it – the corner nearest to where the ball left the field.

You may be confused at times in youth soccer games to see a goal kick retaken. This is because the FIFA soccer rules state that the ball is not back "in play" until it leaves the penalty area, the large box outside of the "goalie box". No one can touch the ball until it leaves the penalty area, and if the ball is not kicked properly to leave the area, the kick must be retaken.

4. Substitutions

Mini Mites & Pee Wee Divisions - Can be made at any time!

Youth, Juniors & Seniors Divisions - Can be made on any stoppage of play. However, substitutions are not allowed during the final 2 minutes of either half. All substitutions must be one for one.

5. Fouls

The common rule of thumb on fouls is "If it looks like a foul, it probably is." Too true. A player cannot kick, trip, jump at, charge, strike, push, hold, or spit at an opponent.

So, what's the problem?

Soccer can be a physical, contact sport when two opposing players both want the soccer ball and no parent likes it when little Mary loses the ball and ends up on the ground! "*Foul!*" cries the parent. "*Little Mary was pushed!*"

What you need to know as a parent is that bumping or going shoulder-to-shoulder while competing for a ball is *not a foul* until the hands or elbows come up. This is a bit of a judgment call and not all referees will call it the same way. Some soccer rules are actually not black-and-white.

6. Direct and Indirect Kicks

The simple difference between the two is this: on a direct kick you can score by kicking the ball *directly* into the goal. On an indirect kick you cannot score. An indirect kick must be touched by another player before it can go into the goal – that is the kicker and a second player.

As a parent on the sideline, you can tell whether the kick is direct or indirect by looking at the referee. For an indirect kick, the referee will hold one arm straight up in the air until the second person touches the ball. No arm up, it's a direct kick.

There are many soccer rules around what causes a direct or indirect kick:

- Tripping – Direct
- Striking or attempting to – Direct
- Jumping at – Direct
- Pushing – Direct
- Contact with an opponent before the ball – Direct
- Holding – Direct
- Hand ball – Direct
- Spitting at – Direct

In general, a direct kick comes from a contact foul or a hand ball.

- Keeper holding ball for longer than 6 sec – Indirect
- Keeper rolling ball and picking it back up without touching another player – Indirect
- Keeper picking up an intentional pass back to goalie (header pass ok) – Indirect
- Dangerous play (high kick, playing ball on ground with opponent next to them) – Indirect
- Obstruction – Indirect
- Delay of game – Indirect
- Off sides – Indirect
- Double touch by same player – Indirect

7. Penalty Kick

A penalty kick results from a contact foul or hand ball by the defending team within the penalty area - the large box on either end of the field. So, it's a type of direct kick as well.

The ball is placed on the penalty spot, 12 yards in front of the center of the goal.

All players must remain outside the penalty area and the penalty arc until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked.

If after the ball is kicked, if it rebounds off of the goal or the keeper and stays on the field, the ball is "live" and anyone can play it.

8. Two-touch Rule

A player cannot touch the ball twice in a row when putting the ball in play. You will see this called many times in youth soccer. It applies everywhere. You will see it frequently on kick-offs or direct and indirect kicks. If a kid barely hits the ball and decides to take another swipe at it, that is a two-touch.

This also applies to throw-ins. A kid cannot throw the ball in and then be the next to kick it. Nope. No way. No can do.

9. Yellow and Red Cards

This is the way punishment is given in soccer. The FIFA soccer rules give the guidelines for when to give a yellow card to a player and when to give a red card. We are not going to get into the specifics here.

If a player is given two yellow cards in the same game, that is equal to a red card. In some extreme cases a red card can be given without the player first receiving a yellow card first. When a player gets a red card, they must leave the game and their team must play short. An ejected player cannot be replaced. A player on your bench or a coach also may be carded.

10. Offside

We decided to leave the best for last. This is without a doubt the least understood rule by parents and coaches alike.

The first thing to know is that you cannot be offside on a corner kick, throw-in, or in your half of the field. Don't ask why, just accept it and go on. The explanation is too long.

Also, it is not an offense for a player to be in an offside position. The player must be involved in active play as determined by the referee to be called offside.

As quoted from the FIFA soccer rules:

A player is in an offside position if: *she is nearer to her opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent.*

Clear yet? Didn't think so.

Try this. An offensive or attacking player cannot be ahead of the ball or beyond the second to last defender (last defender being the keeper) and involved in the play when the ball is kicked.

Or, you can't hang out at the other team's goal waiting for the ball.

A few other butts. You can't be offside if you are standing on your half of the field. Also, the offside rule applies *when the ball is kicked*, not when the player receives the ball.

To be honest with you, this can be a hard rule to understand. You can view a video on our website under "Coaches Corner" - Video: Explanation of the "offside" rule.

A few odds-and-ends:

By the Numbers

Number of Players

- Seniors will play 11v11 *
- Juniors will play 9v9 *
- Youth will play 8v8 *

All numbers include the goalie

* These numbers may be changed by the VP of Rec, depending on the number of players on each roster. Any changes will be reviewed during the First Coaches Meeting. If you cannot field a full team, then the other team must play down to an approved, equal number of players.

Forfeits

If you cannot field the minimum number of players in your age group, you must forfeit the game. The other team is declared the winner, with a score of 1-0. But by all means please play the game and have some fun. The other team can even give you players.

Please Remember

If you have any conflict with parents, coaches, a referee, or a player please bring it to a board member's attention immediately. Do not make a bad situation worse. Come get a board member.

Oh, and one last time, HAVE FUN!

