

Appleseed Youth Soccer Association – Recreation League Manual

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Disclaimer

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AYSA Recreational Philosophy

The Appleseed Youth Soccer Association (AYSA) was formed to provide an organization within which children could learn and play soccer, the world’s most popular sport. The fact that any size player can be successful at the game and the modest expense required to field a team make it possible for many children to participate in organized competition.

It is the function of AYSA to:

- A. Provide guidance and instructions for participants, and an organizational structure for clubs to have league play and schedule games; and
- B. Prescribe rules and regulations which will promote safe, enjoyable, and fair competition.

A youth recreational program should be, as its name implies, a program for the kids. To win at any cost may be the proper attitude for the highly skilled professional, but it is contradictory to the basic objectives of AYSA. Stacking teams, tryout camps, all-star powerhouses, etc., may produce a climate of excellence for a talented few, but will not in the long run be beneficial to the vast majority of young people involved.

Several of the AYSA regulations presented in this document have been written specifically to implement this aforementioned philosophy, as far as practicable. The overall objective of AYSA is maximum participation within a balanced level of competition at the various age divisions.

Formation of teams shall be done by assignment of players in a manner that should not provide an intentional advantage to any one team over another. Teams shall not be formed by the use of tryouts. All children will be given an equal opportunity to participate.

It is the intent of the AYSA recreational program to assure that every player is allowed maximum participation. In that regard every player, at the very least, shall be given the opportunity to play the equivalent of one-half of every game. However, an emphasis should be placed on providing an equitable distribution of playing time to all players.

Introduction

AYSA Club Manual is intended for information and guidance for all member clubs’ coaches and administrators. The information contained herein recaps the rules under which we play soccer matches in this league. Each item of information is a procedure, rule or group of rules. This Club Manual is not the AYSA Rule Book. The wording of this Manual is not always the precise wording of the applicable rule as it appears in INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION BOARD (“IFAB”), Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Laws of the Game, United States Soccer Federation (USSF) Administrative Handbook, the AYSA Constitution, By-laws, Rules of Play and Resolutions. Furthermore, all information and rules in this Coaches Manual are subject to change without notice.

AYSA plays matches under the rules of IFAB/FIFA and United States Youth Soccer, Association (USYSA) The first rule in the FIFA rule book allows for modification of the Laws of the Game, for various age groups and to suit local conditions. AYSA has chosen to modify many rules of the game as outlined in this publication and other playing rules distributed by AYSA to suit youth players.

Registration

Registering players in the first step all clubs must do to form teams. The AYSA Executive Board will set registration deadlines at the Board of Representatives (BOR) meeting in the spring and fall in the months of September and April. Member Clubs may have their own deadline; however, it may not extend beyond that of the AYSA deadline.

- All member clubs will have a Registrar that will handle this process.
- Club Registrars' will contact the AYSA Registrar with any questions concerning registration.

Requirements for Club Registrars

- Club Registrars must complete and pass the same background check, concussion training and other training required of coaches.

Registration Requirements

- Clubs may conduct their registration via paper forms or an online platform, but players and coaches will not be considered registered with AYSA until they are registered within AYSA's approved registration platform. It is each club's responsibility to ensure this is completed.
- Birth Certificate is required for each player. AYSA has the right to make exceptions to this requirement. Any questions, contact AYSA Registrar.

Note: Any players added after the AYSA deadline will be subject to AYSA Executive Board approval and a \$100.00 fee may be assessed to the club upon approval to be paid to AYSA.

Forming Teams

All players and coaches must be properly registered with their club and AYSA by following our standard registration procedures and paying their fees.

- Player and coach registration is the act of signing up to participate and paying fees to a member club of AYSA.
- Team registration is the act of turning in Team Registration Forms and Waivers, Team Rosters, Field Availability Form and paying fees to AYSA each fall and spring at AYSA registration.
- Coaches registered must be updated immediately if changed at any time, contact AYSA Registrar.
- Team registration can only occur at AYSA registration. No late registration of teams is permitted.
- Players register once a year, with the registration in the fall season.
 - New players in the spring are defined as those who did not play on an AYSA registered team in the fall.
 - All new players are to be denoted on the spring roster.

Roster Size

Players may be registered and added to a team's roster up through the deadline, set and announced each season by the Executive Board. Maximum roster size is determined by the AYSA Board. If you have any questions, contact your club registrar.

Players may be rostered on multiple (up to 2) AYSA recreational teams if the teams are in different divisions. **Players may only play for the team on which he/she is rostered.** No athlete will be allowed to be double rostered to more than one club within AYSA. In case of a violation, the player must return or remain with their originally rostered team, and both clubs may be fined \$100.

An accurate listing of names and addresses of all coaches must be registered and updated throughout the season as needed.

Competitive Players

AYSA recreational soccer is not intended for competitive (carded) style teams or players. The following guidelines are intended to help level the playing field for all teams as best that we can. Our goal is to attempt to provide a fun and safe environment for the children to enjoy the game of soccer.

A Competitive Player is defined as a player carded to play competitive soccer through organizations such as OSA (Ohio Soccer Association), Saving Grace, Appleseed Premier, Akron Canton Force, and similar clubs. This includes, but is not limited to players from NOGSL, AASL, State League, Pennine, etc.

- Roster Limits:
 - U7 & U8 – 3 carded players
 - U10 – 4 carded players
 - U12 – 5 carded players
 - U13-U15 (Jr. High) – 6 carded players

Any violation may result in a suspension of the offending head coach for one calendar year (the remainder of the current season and the following season), a \$250 fine to the club, and/or that team being excluded from the end of season tournament.

Teams with more than 2 Competitive players may automatically be placed in the A division. Ultimately, ensuring a balanced competitive experience for all players should be the goal when aligning teams in divisions. If a team's end of season summary from the prior season shows a sub .500 record, consideration will be given to place that team in a lower division at the discretion of the AYSA alignment committee. Exceptions may be made by AYSA Executive Board vote.

AYSA's Executive Board retains the right to determine if there is an unfair competitive advantage for teams with multiple carded players, as a direct result of those carded players, and may require that team to move divisions or possibly reorganize the roster for the following season to lessen the number of carded players.

Exceptions can be made to the aforementioned guidelines at the discretion of the AYSA alignment committee.

List of Age / Gender Divisions Offered by AYSA

U7 (girls, boys, co-ed) Player must not be 7 before Jan 1st of the year they are playing

U8 (girls, boys, co-ed) Player must not be 8 before Jan 1st of the year they are playing

U10 (girls, boys, co-ed) Player must not be 10 before Jan 1st of the year they are playing

U12 (girls, boys, co-ed) Player must not be 12 before Jan 1st of the year they are playing U15 (girls, boys, co-ed) Player must not be 13 before Jan 1st of the year they are playing

- This is considered a Jr High Division. High school students will not be permitted to play in this division.
- AYSA may authorize players that are 15 years of age to play provided they are not in high school.
- Playing up more than two years is only allowed in this division with AYSA board approval and a waiver will be required.

The AYSA BOR has the power to approve special needs players according to the rules and regulations set forth and in accordance with United States Youth Soccer, USSF Constitution By-laws, Rules, and Policies. Special needs players are defined as mentally or physically challenged players who need special provisions for playing outside their age group. The Executive Board will investigate and determine on a case-by-case basis any athlete seeking special needs status which will result in the player playing outside their age group. The Executive Board will then present the case before the BOR and a determination will be made by a majority vote from the BOR.

Note: Contact AYSA Registrar, and medical documentation by a health provider will be required.

Divisions/Alignment

AYSA has many divisions available for teams at all levels of ability. For youth teams, there are competitive divisions available if there are at least 4 teams in a division. For the sake of fair competition and clarity, gender of a registrant is determined by the gender/sex at birth. Youth girls may play on youth boy's teams. These divisions are Co-ed and considered to be boy's teams. Youth girls may play on youth girls-only teams and this is considered a girls' team. Youth boys may only play youth boy's teams.

Each level of play offered increases in difficulty, and/or the level of skill of the players. Divisions are named A, B, C, etc. A is considered the highest division. The number of divisions offered depends solely on the number of teams entered. Teams with players that are carded or play for a competitive soccer club will be placed in accordance with 'Competitive Players' guidelines above.

AYSA considers each request to place a team in a given division, based on our estimate of the team's ability and our past experiences with the team and/or coach. AYSA has the final say on which division a team is placed in and reserves the right to move any team up or down in order to balance the level of play and number of teams in each division. If information becomes available to AYSA after the season has started, AYSA reserves the right to move a team for the end of the season tournament.

- The team movement policy allows coaches and/or clubs to request placement in specific divisions to meet their own team development goals, but also allows the Executive Board to preserve the balance of each division and smooth out scheduling.
- AYSA assumes every team is the same from one season to the next, especially within a seasonal year.
- Coaches are not permitted to force a player off a recreation team roster unless the player:
 - Moves too far away to participate with that team
 - Is injured to such an extent that he can no longer participate
 - Disciplinary reasons

Such matters must be brought to the attention of the coach's club, and they must approve of any action affecting the eligibility of a player.

If a team is roughly 65% the same from season to season, AYSA will treat this as an unchanged team regardless of the ability of the players who have come or gone. Standings are used for alignment of teams for the following season, not to establish a playoff seed. The decision of the AYSA Board in placing your team is final and may not be appealed or challenged.

Note: AYSA is permitted to make rules governing its age groups, divisions and team eligibility. Most of these differences govern level of play and player movement between teams.

Insurance

By virtue of affiliation and registration with AYSA, liability and secondary coverage medical insurance is available for every player, coach, club officer, and league official as long as they are properly registered. There are certain rules used to monitor and control coverage and/or claims, which pertain to insurance. To file a claim, contact your club officials so this can be routed through the proper channels.

Certificate of Insurance for Fields

Many entities that own or control your fields (park boards, school boards, etc.) may require a certificate of insurance before they will allow you to play or practice. The purpose of this document is to prove that you belong to an organization that carries sufficient liability insurance, and to add the name of the entity that owns the field to the coverage. Any AYSA club may obtain a certificate of insurance by directly contacting their club BOR.

Scheduling

Forms are available to list conflicts and every effort will be made to accommodate reasonable requests. These forms are due to AYSA (available through your club BOR and due at the alignment meeting). School and religious functions will be honored if it is at all possible. Special requests will NOT be honored after the completion of schedules. **Except for extreme weather conditions and field closings games cancellations must be made at least 72 hours before the scheduled game start time.**

All regular season game cancellations and reschedule requests are subject to AYSA's Regular Season Game Cancellation & Rescheduling Policy.

Playoffs

Participation in AYSA playoffs is assumed for age divisions U7 and up except in the instance of:

- Outstanding club fees or fines in excess of \$500
- Disciplinary action
- Completion of all games in the playoffs cannot be guaranteed (teams must be available to play on all scheduled dates of the playoff's)
- The league scheduler is notified at least two weeks in advance of the playoffs in writing. There may be a \$25 fine per team for any game forfeited by no-show.
- Playoff games may be conducted in a single elimination or round robin format.

Awards are given by AYSA to the 1st and 2nd place teams. Detailed rules addressing playoffs will be provided by AYSA to all clubs. There are no reschedules of playoff games performed by the individual teams or clubs. Any team or teams that attempt to reschedule playoff games may be banned from the playoffs.

Cancellation Due to Field Shutdown

- Person(s) that will be reporting field closings must be established with AYSA prior to the start of the season
- Notify AYSA by texting or calling the number (will be provided)
 - Before 7:45am on Saturdays
 - Before 3:30pm on weekdays
- Clubs are responsible for announcing field closures to their club members by 8:00am on Saturdays and 4:00pm on weekdays. Any club that fails to report field closings by the designated times may be responsible for any and all referee fees.
- Rescheduled games must be handled according to the schedule/reschedule policy.

AYSA Weather Policy

The safety of players and participants is of utmost importance. Soccer fields can be a dangerous place during severe weather.

SEVERE WEATHER

All games will be cancelled or suspended if a severe weather warning is in effect the day of the scheduled game(s), regardless of the time the warning goes into effect.

LIGHTNING

You are in danger if you can see lightning.

You are in danger from lightning if you can hear thunder.

Lightning often travels sideways as far as 10 miles and can strike away from any rainfall even when skies are blue.

In the event of a storm, games and/or practices must be stopped and suspended until the danger has passed using the following minimum criteria:

The sighting of a lightning flash or the hearing of a sound of thunder shall be reason enough to immediately stop and suspend a game or practice session.

Do not try to reach the end of a period or the end of the game.

Coaches shall take their players to a safe location upon suspension of a game and/or a practice session.

Following suspension of a game, the Referees shall promptly leave the field to a safe location.

Play and/or practice shall not be resumed prior to 30-minutes after the last sighting of lightning, or the last sound of thunder heard.

Dropped Teams

Any club, which has a team(s) suspended or dropped after registration may be fined \$100.00.

Coach Requirements

- Must be properly registered with their respective clubs and AYSA.
- Must demonstrate successful completion of AYSA required background check, concussion training, Lindsey's Law training, and other training as required.
- Only coaches who are:
 - Approved by AYSA; and
 - Listed on the current AYSA roster of the team present at any contest; or
 - Possess a valid AYSA Coach Pass for the current season;are permitted on the team sideline during any AYSA contests.

- If no approved coach is available at any point during a game, due to reasons such as illness, injury, ejection, or other circumstances, the team must forfeit that game.

Coach Responsibilities

Coaches are responsible for the behavior of the players, spectators, and themselves. Each coach is responsible for the conduct of every person, including guests on their side of the field. A coach is recognized by AYSA as a participant in the match and may receive yellow or red cards from the referee. The referee is not required to warn coaches before issuing either yellow or red card.

Coaching is restricted to the team area only, which may be marked by the home team during field preparation, and which extends 10 yards to either side of the mid-field line. If a club fails to provide lines marking the designated area, it is implied.

No person may move up and down the length of the touchline for the purpose of coaching, instructing, players or shouting encouragement.

Expect the referee(s) and players in the game, NO OTHER PERSON IS ALLOWED ON THE FIELD unless, and until, authorized by the referee.

Spectators, coaches and substitute players are required to remain at least 5 feet back from the touchline on their side of the field.

Fighting by any persons, either in the game on the sidelines, and/or loud verbal abuse or physical/verbal assault of the referee, shall be grounds to immediately suspend the match if the referee chooses. Such a decision is that of the referee alone. The coach will be held responsible by the league. The league also has the right to begin disciplinary proceedings in the event league officers witness such actions, even when the referee does not choose to take action. If a referee suspends a play, or if a match is interrupted for any reason, the outcome of suspended matches will be decided solely by the AYSA disciplinary committee based on the referee's report and game reports.

Poor conduct by a team, leading to suspension of a match, may be grounds for forfeiting a match, and AYSA has the right to impose harsher penalties.

Game Roster

Each coach must be ready to present the referee with the official AYSA approved game roster at the start of each and every game. Each coach must cooperate with the referee at player check-in and have the team ready to check- in whenever the referee desires. Any questions of the validity of the roster must not be addressed at the field (other than playoffs). Contact the League registrar after the game. At least one approved coach is required for each team. The roster is not to be used by anyone for any other purpose than to check the eligibility of players listed.

Referees & Fees

Referee fees will be established by AYSA and are subject to change each season. Each team will pay the referee the required fee at the field prior to the start of a game.

U7 – Coaches are responsible to act as referees and should be prepared to do so. Referees will be scheduled for tournament games, but coaches should be prepared to referee games if needed.

U8 and up – It is the intention of AYSA to have a referee scheduled for all matches; however, this is often not feasible. In the absence of a scheduled referee, both coaches should decide on an amicable solution.

Options may include:

- Picking 1 coach to referee

- Having the home coach referee half the game and the away coach referee the other half

- Agreeing on a competent team parent to referee

In any case, whomever is chosen to referee should be paid according to AYSA's established referee fee schedule. A referee may refuse to referee the game unless paid.

Field Preparation and Dimensions

| AGE GROUP | LENGTH (yards) | WIDTH (yards) | GOAL SIZE |
|------------|----------------|---------------|---|
| U7 | 30-35 | 20-25 | Height: 4ft minimum / 6ft maximum Width: 8ft minimum / 12ft maximum |
| U8 | 30-40 | 20-30 | Height: 4ft minimum / 6ft maximum Width: 8ft minimum / 12ft maximum |
| U10 | 55-65 | 35-45 | Height: 6ft minimum / 7ft maximum Width: 14ft minimum / 18ft maximum |
| U12 | 70-80 | 45-55 | Height: 6ft minimum / 7ft maximum Width: 18ft minimum / 21ft maximum |
| U13 and UP | 100-120 | 55-75 | Height: 8ft Width: 24ft |

Goal Safety Policy

All goals must be secure before a practice/match can begin. Supervision is critical to prevent horseplay on or around goals. Parents and coaches must remind children not to climb on goals and tell any child fooling around a goal to get off! Coaches must make goals “off limits” as a part of their pre-season speech

about keeping safe. US Youth Soccer Goal Safety Standards can be found at

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/assets/115/6/goal_safety.pdf

and the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s Guidelines for Movable Soccer Goals can be found at <https://www.cpsc.gov/safety-education/safety-guides/sports-fitness-and-recreation/guidelines-movable-soccer-goals>

Player Equipment

- Cleats must be soccer cleats, cleats designed for other sports will not be allowed.
- All players will wear shin guards with socks covering the shin guards.
- Field players will wear a jersey with a permanently affixed number.
- Shorts must be of athletic type (no snaps, buttons or zippers)
- Goalkeepers will wear a jersey or pinnie that is a different color than all field players (number not required).
- Any other clothing worn will be at the discretion of the referee.
- Jewelry will not be allowed. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Earrings (covering earrings is not permissible)
 - Hair pins or barrettes
 - Hair beads
 - Watches, bracelets, chains or necklaces
- Cast and other support equipment such as braces must be padded and approved for play by the referee.

There is no appeal on the decision of each referee; the fact that an item was allowed in one game shall not be grounds for that same item to be used in a different game by a different referee.

Game Ball

The HOME team is responsible to supply a suitable game ball, which must be acceptable to the referee. Ball sizes are as follows:

U7 – U8: size 3
U10 – U12: size 4
U13 and up: size 5

Length of game

| AGE | HALF TIME | LENGTH OF GAME |
|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| U7 | 5 Minutes | 8 Minute Quarters |
| U8 | 5 Minutes | 20 Minute Halves |
| U10 - U12 | 5 Minutes | 25 Minutes Halves |
| U13 and Up | 5 Minutes | 30 Minute Halves |

Playing Time

It is the intent of this rule to assure that every player is allowed maximum participation. Every player MUST be allowed to play, or given the opportunity to play, at least the equivalent of approximately one-half of every game, as closely as possible. However, an emphasis should be placed on providing an equitable distribution of playing time to all players.

Every player present at the start of the game shall play at least the equivalent of approximately one-half of the regulation game (i.e. this is not intended to apply to any overtime portion of an extended game) – unless a player is injured and is unable to participate.

Any player arriving after the start of the game shall play at least the equivalent of approximately one-half of the game remaining (i.e. this is not intended to apply to any overtime portion of an extended game) – unless a player is injured and is unable to participate.

An AYSA or Club Representative should investigate all allegations of violation of this rule.

PUNISHMENT: It is the intent of AYSA to bring concerns about playing time to the club's attention. The Club shall discuss reported concerns with the Coach and explain the importance of equal playing time. If consistent infringement of this rule exists, AYSA may deem it necessary to suspend the offending coach.

Running up Scores

Soccer is a GAME. It is intended to be fun for ALL participants, not just the winning team. Without a worthy opponent, no purpose is served in playing any game; running up the score to embarrass an opponent is pointless and shows poor sportsmanship. AYSA recognizes that there will be times when opposing coaches will not cooperate with the established guidelines voted on and adopted by the Board of Representatives. When such a time occurs, please do not confront anyone on the field. Continue the match if you wish and contact your club BOR IMMEDIATELY. AYSA tries to ensure that teams are put in the correct division at the time of registration. However, it may occur where a team appears to be in the wrong division due to players being dropped or added to the team after alignment, or failure of the team to properly represent themselves. This is no excuse for teams who consistently and intentionally run up the score on their opponent.

Suggested methods to control the score:

- Switch players around to different positions
- Establish a minimum number of touches by the team and/or each player.
- Limit players from the winning team to the defensive half of the field
- When there is a 5-goal difference, the losing team may add a player to the field (a player may also be added for each goal thereafter).
 - **For example, the team losing 5-0 may add another player. If the score becomes 6-0, another player may be added.**
 - If the goal differential reverses extra players must be removed from the field accordingly.
 - **This method of controlling the score is suspended for tournament games.**
- Have your team attempt to hone their foot skills and passing skills when you are ahead by a few goals.
- Have players use their weaker foot.
- Do not let your players shoot from inside the penalty box.

CONCUSSION POLICY

All coaches will be required to complete a concussion training course every two (2) years.

This training must be completed prior to being able to participate in any AYSA or club-related activity, whether it be a practice or a game situation.

This policy outlines the “Removal-From” and “Return-to-Play” procedure.

Any athlete that exhibits signs and symptoms of concussion either during a practice or during a game, **MUST** be immediately removed.

This athlete **MAY NOT** return to play nor participate in any AYSA or club-related activity on the same day that the player has been removed (even if a written medical clearance is provided).

The athlete is not permitted to return to play nor participate in any AYSA or club-related activity until they have been assessed and received written clearance by a physician or by another licensed health care provider.

Official Game

Any game ended at the end of the first half, no matter what reason, other than behavior problems, will be considered official. AYSA will make a determination whether or not the game will be replayed. The game score will be reported as the official score. Any game abandoned by the referee prior to the second half kickoff for other reasons (such as lack of discipline) will be reported to AYSA, which will make the final determination as to the outcome and final score of the game based on the referee’s report.

Overtime

There is no overtime except for tournament games where a winner is needed. Regular season games that end in a tie will be recorded as a tie. Overtime for tournament games may be suspended at the discretion of AYSA prior to the start of the tournament each season.

Failure to Report to a Game

Failure of a team to show up or field a minimum number of players at a scheduled or rescheduled game by the expiration of the 15-minute grace period will result in the no-show team forfeiting and paying the total referee fee and the team may be fined \$25. These games will **NOT** be rescheduled.

Game Reports

It is the responsibility of the coach to complete the AYSA End of Season Summary. Due by the November and June AYSA meetings, this report is needed for alignment of the next season. There may be a \$10.00 fine assessed for each End of Season Summary not turned in. This form is the only accepted form and to be filled out completely and turned in to your club representative. This form is available at aysasoccer.org and provided to all club officials.

Local Modifications to “FIFA Laws of the Game”

Breakaways and “Professional” Fouls

Referees are required by FIFA Laws to deal harshly with fouls against the game. Fouls which are intended to replace soccer skill with brute force. In particular, referees are required to issue red cards to any players who intentionally commit so-called “professional” defensive fouls, no matter how forcefully, in order to stop play of the game, and/or breakaways, when there is a clear scoring opportunity.

Slide Tackling

Slide tackling is **NOT ALLOWED** in any recreational game. Slide tackling may result in an immediate yellow card or red card, depending on the severity of the offence, from the referee.

Heading the Ball

In order to promote a safer playing environment, all players in the U10 and younger age divisions are PROHIBITED from deliberately striking a soccer ball with any portion of their head (a.k.a. heading) in both games and practices.

It is the responsibility of the coaches to restrict any heading activity during practice sessions and to

If a player in a U10 or younger division game deliberately heads the ball, the Referee is to stop the game and award an indirect free kick (IFK) to the opposing team.

In the U12 and older age divisions, there are no restrictions or limitations for heading the ball during the course of a game. Coaches should limit deliberate heading in practice sessions to a maximum of 5-10 headers and a maximum of 30-minutes total during any 7-day period.

Coaches should always instruct, teach, and emphasize the importance of proper techniques for the heading of soccer balls.

Substitutions

Substitutions for U7 are outlined in the rules for each age division. For all others, U8 - U15

The referee must authorize all substitution by making a direct and unmistakable sign to the coach that he has permission to substitute. Play will not begin until all players leaving the game are off the field.

Substitution is allowed with permission:

- Prior to throw-in in your favor, or the other team's throw in IF THEY ARE ALSO SUBSTITUTING
- Prior to a goal kick by either team
- At any injury time-out
 - If the injured player is being subbed out the opposing team may also make 1 substitution.
- After a goal is scored by either team
- When a player has been cautioned (only the yellow carded player may be replaced)
- At half-time
- At any other time, at the referee's sole discretion

U8 - Jr. High, substitutes must be at midfield in order to be allowed to enter the field.

Policy on Fair Play, Sportsmanship and Referee Abuse/Disrespect

This policy has been adopted to assure all persons involved in AYSA soccer matches understand the manner in which the League will address such incidents and understand that their participation in the League subjects them to the rules contained in the policy. Participation in AYSA is a privilege, not a right. By taking these steps, we are not trying to find ways to punish the great people involved in our soccer programs but are simply trying to maintain a sense of fair play.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is defined by AYSA as unwelcome touching, striking, spitting or the verbal threat to do so. The league will not tolerate this conduct. Any physical abuse of a referee, coach, player or spectator by a coach, player, referee or spectator, whether it occurs before, during or following a game will result in an immediate ban of the offending person from future AYSA games and participation in AYSA programming. In addition, the incident will be referred to OSA for consideration of further disciplinary action.

Verbal Abuse

Verbal abuse is defined by AYSA as a verbal attack of sustained, excessive, obscene or offensive nature and will not be tolerated. It is not intended to include mere dialogue or question by or among coaches and/or referees.

Spectators

Upon any **initial incident** of verbal abuse directed toward a referee, any player, any coach or any other spectator, the referee should **stop the match** (if it is going on) or wait until the next stoppage. The referee will warn the coach and allow the coach to advise his spectator(s) of the warning and counsel the spectator(s) to cease immediately, if such incident occurs **before a match**, the referee will similarly warn the coach and instruct the coach to warn his spectator(s). If such incident occurs **following a match**, the referee will notify the League immediately and/or call law enforcement if necessary.

A **repeat offense** occurring during the same match will be cause of stoppage of the match, at the sole discretion of the referee. The team associated with the offending spectator(s) will forfeit the match and may be immediately fined \$25.00. Such team will immediately provide the name(s) of the abusive spectator(s) to the referee. If the team refuses to do so, it will be suspended immediately from all AYSA matches until the offending person(s) is identified in writing to the President of AYSA. The AYSA Executive Board will notify the club of its decision and disciplinary action. Spectators do not have appeal rights and there will be no hearing. Spectators that violate the Executive Boards decision or choose to ignore said decision will jeopardize the standing of the team and entire club. Fines and sanctions will apply.

A **second incident** of abuse occurring at a future match by any spectator(s) from the same team during the same season will result in suspension of that team the remainder of the season, or for the entire next season. An automatic fine of \$100 may be imposed on that teams' parent club. Any future incidents involving spectator(s) from the same team will jeopardize the clubs' standing within AYSA. The team will be disbanded.

Continued abuse from the club will be cause for disciplinary action up to and including removal from AYSA. The League will maintain records of spectator offenses from season to season.

Referee Authority

Every referee, including emergency volunteers in no-show cases, has complete and total authority for the conduct of the match and to enforce discipline from the moment he arrives at the field until he leaves. This includes all pre- game and post-game activities. The referee is responsible for starting each match as close to the scheduled time as possible.

THE REFEREE AUTHORITY AND JUDGEMENT SHALL NOT BE CHALLENGED, NOR MAY HIS JUDGEMENT BE APPEALED.

Referee No-Shows

The referee has 10-minutes after the start of the game time to show up to the field of play. Both teams must remain at the field during this 10-minute grace period. It is the intention of AYSA to have all matches start at their scheduled times. Coaches should agree on a referee and start the match on time. If the referee shows up within the 10-minute grace period, the assigned referee shall take over the match at the next available opportunity and be entitled to receive payment of the full fees due.

Referee Misconduct

Upon any initial of verbal abuse by a referee directed towards any player, coach, or other spectator, the coach observing the behavior shall report it to the League President. Matters, including the conduct of officials, brought to the attention of AYSA, will be subject to review or submission to the Referee Association for review, but remedies will never include changing the result of a match.

Coaches and Players with Red Cards

Players, coaches and spectators (anyone receiving a red card or sent off) will be reported to AYSA by the referee for review and possible disciplinary action by AYSA. Coaches will NOT allow any red-carded player to play in the next AYSA scheduled game. Coaches that are sent off will NOT coach at the next AYSA scheduled game. Any coach or spectator who receives a red card or is ejected from the game, must leave the field area and either leave the premises or come no closer to the fields than the parking lot. Generally, yellow and red cards will be shown when given but it is not necessary for the referee to show a card or to verbally warn any person before taking a stronger action, or to directly notify any person that he has been sent off from the match. Current rules concerning yellow/red card procedures apply. Coaches and players have the right to a hearing and have the right to appeal to the AYSA Executive Board.

Protests and Appeals

Disputes, Protests, Appeals and Disciplinary Action

Disputes, protests and appeals are to be directed to the appropriate organization. The goal of any dispute, protest or appeal is to reach a mutually agreeable settlement or corrective action when necessary. Either party to a dispute, protest, or appeal is encouraged to settle the matter between parties whenever possible.

A dispute, protest, or appeal in regard to referee conduct/performance or match issues **are not** to be submitted to the Appleseed Youth Soccer Association. These disputes, protests, or appeals are to be submitted through the home club of the individual protesting via their club BOR.

A dispute or protest which violates the Appleseed Youth Soccer Association Coaches Manual should first be submitted to the appropriate Club BOR. Disputes or protests submitted directly to the AYSA President will be referred to the appropriate Club BOR representative for attention. The Club BOR is encouraged to resolve the matter with assistance from their Club organization.

In the event that either party to a dispute or protest is not satisfied by the corrective or disciplinary action or address of their dispute or protest they may submit an appeal to the Appleseed Youth Soccer Association. An appeal must be signed and submitted in writing and describe in detail the grounds for the appeal. (Appleseed Youth Soccer Association,) The Executive Board will review the protest and act in the best interest of the safety of our participants, the spirit of the game, the Appleseed Youth Soccer Association and affiliated Club organizations.

Decisions of the Executive Board may include but are not limited to the following:

- That the Executive Board will enforce the rules established by AYSA.
- That no dispute or protest is warranted.
- That the dispute or protest **should be addressed** by an affiliated Club.
- That the dispute or protest **has been addressed** appropriately by an affiliated Club.
- That the dispute or protest **has not been addressed appropriately** by an affiliated Club and suggest further corrective or disciplinary actions.
- That the dispute or protest **warrants further corrective or disciplinary actions** on behalf of Appleseed Youth Soccer Association.

Decisions or recommendations of the Executive Board are not subject to repeated appeal. Failure to follow the recommendations of the Executive Board in regard to disciplinary or corrective actions may result in loss of membership or affiliation with Appleseed Youth Soccer Association.

If an AYSA Member Club Disciplines Any Player, Coach, Parent or Spectator

If an AYSA member club disciplines any player, coach, parent, or spectator; AYSA will uphold the decision of that club. In addition, all other AYSA clubs must follow the disciplinary action taken against any of those listed within the action. If it is found that the disciplined member or spectator's disciplinary actions were not justified AYSA may not uphold the actions taken by the member club. Other member clubs will not solely go against the actions of the disciplining club.

Lines of Communication

It is important that coaches, parents and club officials honor the lines of communication established by the AYSA Executive Board for efficient handling of concerns. Except for direct violation of the "Parents Code of Conduct", "Coaches Code of Conduct" or the violations of AYSA rules and regulations, each club is responsible for addressing questions and discipline of violations within their club. If a coach or parent must contact the league for any reason, contact will be made through your club representative. Questions or complaints received directly from parents, coaches, etc. to AYSA may be disseminated to the appropriate club to investigate and respond to.

Rule Variations

Where these RULES mandate a particular procedure by use of the words “must”, “shall” or “will”, no variation shall be permitted without prior written consent of AYSA Executive Board.

Where these RULES are presented in the form of guidelines, recommendations or suggestions, such as when the word “may” is used, each Club may adopt the procedure suggested or modify it to suit its own needs or special circumstances – provided that the procedure chosen satisfies the intent and spirit of the AYSA RULE.

Procedures not specifically covered by the AYSA RULES are relegated to the AYSA Executive Board for decision.