



We build strong **kids**, strong **families**,  
strong **communities**.

# Soccer League Rules of Play Fall 2008



**U-9, U-10, U-12, U-15**

**CARING    HONESTY    RESPECT    RESPONSIBILITY**

#### **OUR MISSION**

A worldwide charitable fellowship united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ  
for the purpose of helping persons grow in spirit, mind and body

## 1.0 ELIGIBILITY

Participation in the program governed by these rules of play shall be open to all individuals interested in playing soccer. All players will be assigned to teams by the YMCA.

- 1.1 No player may play on more than one YMCA team in this competition.
- 1.2 Division groupings are as follows: Under-9, Under-10, Under-12 & Under-15. A player's assignment to a particular division is determined by his/her age as of July 31, 2008. For example, a player who was 9 years old on July 31 would be assigned to the Under-10 division.
- 1.3 Players may play in an older age group if they so desire, but not in a younger age group.
- 1.4 Penalties – Responsibility for the player's eligibility within his/her respective division rests with his team organization. In the event that the ineligibility is detected for any reason, his/her team may forfeit all games during which the player was ineligible and the player will be suspended from further play for the remainder of that season.

## 2.0 WELFARE OF THE PLAYER

- 2.1 The team coach, or designated "responsible adult," is responsible for the welfare of the players on his/her team.
- 2.2 The referee may stop the game at any time for reasons of injury or player welfare. It is the responsibility of the referee to enforce the laws of the game, and those aspects of these rules designated at his/her responsibility.
- 2.3 All teams will be allowed a maximum of one (1) practice per week during the season. Before the season begins, teams are allowed a maximum of two (2) practices per week, one being their scheduled weeknight practice and the other a Saturday option. These pre season options may not begin until the date prescribed by the YMCA. Any coach that abuses the above rule will be issued a warning in writing by the YMCA Sports Office. Any further abuses will result in suspension of the coach for the rest of the season.
- 2.4 See 19.0 Entering the Field of Play

## 3.0 APPAREL

Prior to the commencement of play the referee shall inspect all players and substitutes for correct apparel.

- 3.1 At the time of inspection, the following equipment is mandatory. Players not fully equipped as specified at the time of the referee's inspection will not be allowed upon the field.
  - A. All players must wear acceptable and nominally identical uniforms, consisting of jersey, socks, shorts, shin guards and suitable footwear (rubber cleats without toe cleats).
  - B. Goalkeepers must wear jerseys distinctively different from the other players on both teams.

### 3.2 Illegal or dangerous apparel

- A. Tennis shoes, baseball/softball cleats, football cleats.
- B. Metal cleats of any type.
- C. Sharp or badly worn cleats, or those that are longer than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch or less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in diameter at any point.
- D. Any cleats that have unnaturally sharp projections. (No toe cleats allowed).
- E. The referee will direct the removal of any dangerous apparel, defined as:
  - 1. Rings
  - 2. Watches
  - 3. Earrings
  - 4. Necklaces or hair accessories with hard projections
  - 5. Metal clips on sweatband
  - 6. Medallions
  - 7. Caps (except stocking caps) See 3.5
- F. Splints or plaster casts are allowed at the discretion of the referee if sufficiently padded.
- G. No jeans or pants with zippers are allowed. (Only sweat pants are allowed.)

3.3 Coaches should advise players who wear glasses to wear sports glasses with eyeglass straps.

3.4 Protective Padding – Only goalkeepers may wear knee pads and elbow pads in addition to regular uniforms. Goalkeepers may not wear any other form of padding other than that contained in regulation goalkeeper's shirt. (Goalkeepers are allowed to wear sweat pants.) Shin guards are required, but no other form of padding is allowed on field players. In the event that player injury demands support of protection, only properly designed support bandages may be used. No form of padding designed for any other type of support may be worn on the field of play.

3.5 Head Gear – Head gear other than sweatbands may not be worn except stocking caps in inclement weather.

### 4.0 REGULATION FIELD MARKINGS AND DIMENSIONS

The field size shall be approximately as follows: Under 9/10: 60x40 yards;  
Under 12: 80x50 yards; Under 15: 85x55 yards.  
The goal size shall be approximately as follows:  
Under 9/10: 6'6"x18'6"; Under 12: 7'x21'; Under 14/15: 8'x24'.

### 5.0 LAWS OF THE GAME

All divisions will play strictly by the Laws of the Game as defined in these rules of competition and by FIFA.

5.1 Adult in Authority – Each team must be accompanied by an adult (18 years of age or older) at all scheduled games and practices. This adult is responsible for the conduct and well being of all players on his/her team and may not leave area until children are picked up.

### 6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOME AND VISITING TEAMS

- A. Abide by the rules of the league
- B. Demonstrate good sportsmanship and fair play
- C. Remove all debris from field after game
- D. Help develop a spirit of cooperation and good will for the program as a whole
- E. There shall be no use of tobacco or alcohol on or near the practice or playing field

## 7.0 RAIN POLICY

- 7.1 **PRACTICES at the YMCA Fields:** Practices at the YMCA, will be held if the Head Coach deems that field conditions are satisfactory. If a practice is to be cancelled the Head Coach will be notified by phone at least 45 minutes before their practice by the YMCA Sports Office. Practices that are cancelled will not be made up.

**GAMES at the YMCA Fields:** Unless field conditions are extremely unsuitable games will be played. If a game is cancelled the Head Coach will be notified by phone at least 45 minutes before their game by the YMCA sports office. Games that are cancelled by the YMCA will generally be made up during the week. The YMCA Sports Office will notify each Head Coach regarding rescheduled games.

**Please do not call the YMCA to check on practice or games.  
Call your Head Coach.**

- 7.2 **PRACTICES & GAMES at Crockett Park Fields:** Call the Crockett Park hotline at 373-7752. The City of Brentwood determines field availability. The Sports Office will notify each head coach of the time and location of the rescheduled game. Practices that are cancelled will not be made up. Games that are cancelled by the City/YMCA will generally be made up during the week. The YMCA Sports Office will notify each Head Coach regarding rescheduled games.

**Please do not call the YMCA to check on practice or games.  
Call your Head Coach or the Crockett Park Hotline.**

- 7.3 In case of bad weather during a game in which the YMCA staff or referee calls a stoppage of play, the game will be rescheduled on another date by the YMCA Sports Office, unless the first half is already completed. If the first half is completed, the score at the time of the stoppage of play will stand as a completed regulation game. (See also 8.1 and 8.2)

## 8.0 ABANDONED GAMES

The referee reserves the right at any time to abandon a game (call stoppage of play and leave the field) under the following conditions:

- A. Failure by a coach, player, or spectator to heed the warnings given by the referee regarding improper conduct. (See 17.0)
- B. Extreme climatic conditions in which the playing conditions have become unsuitable or the possibility of danger exists to players, coaches, spectators, etc.

- 8.1 If a game is abandoned after the first half is completed, the score at the time of abandonment stands.
- 8.2 If a game is abandoned due to climatic conditions before the first half is completed, the score of "0-0" will be recorded, regardless of the score at the time of abandonment. The game will be replayed.

- 9.0 LATE ARRIVAL – Game time is forfeit time for all teams.

## 10.0 NUMBER OF PLAYERS

**Under 15: Maximum** - Teams shall field eight (8) players, one of whom must be a goalkeeper.  
**Minimum** – An official game may start with five (5) players. Teams should still play and unofficial game if there are less than five (5) players, the coaches shall meet before the game to decide how many will play in such cases.

**Under 12: Maximum** - Teams shall field eight (8) players, one of whom must be a goalkeeper.  
**Minimum** – An official game may start with five (5) players. Teams should still play and unofficial game if there are less than five (5) players, the coaches shall meet before the game to decide how many will play in such cases.

**Under 9/10: Maximum** - Teams shall field six (6) players, one of whom must be a goalkeeper.  
**Minimum** – An official game may start with four (4) players. Teams should still play and unofficial game if there are less than four (4) players, the coaches shall meet before the game to decide how many will play in such cases.

## 11.0 PLAYING TIME

Each member of each team must be allowed to play a minimum of half of each game as long as said player(s) shows up on time and is properly uniformed. The team coach is responsible for the above and will be subject to expulsion if found not in compliance. Players shall be rotated so that the same players do not play only the minimum throughout the season.

## 12.0 SUBSTITUTIONS (Same for Boys & Girls)

Substitutions are allowed on own team's throw-in, either team's goal kick, after a goal has been scored, at the half, and for an injured player, all with the referee's approval.

12.1 When the play is stopped for an injury, subject to the referee's authorization, a player maybe substituted for the injured player.

12.2 A goalkeeper may switch with any player presently on the field when the ball is out of play and the referee has been notified.

## 13.0 DURATION OF GAMES

Under 15 boys & girls..... Two (2) .....35 minute halves

Under 12 boys & girls..... Two (2) .....30 minute halves

Under 9/10 boys & girls..... Two (2) .....25 minute halves

There will be a five (5) minute interval between halves.

## 14.0 GAME BALLS

Game balls must be leather or other approved material, according to the following:

Under 15.....Regulation Size 5 Ball

Under 9, 10, 12.....Regulation Size 4 Ball

Coaches will be responsible for providing a game ball. It is recommended that players purchase a ball to practice with at home and bring to practices.

15.0 SCHEDULED KICK-OFF TIMES

Scheduled kick-off times shall be designated by the YMCA Sports Office.

16.0 FAILURE OF REFEREE TO APPEAR

In the event an assigned referee fails to appear, the coaches must agree upon a referee. Games played under these conditions are considered valid.

17.0 IMPROPER CONDUCT

A player or coach may be found guilty of improper conduct. In the event the referee determines improper conduct by either a player or coach, he/she will be given one warning via a yellow card. The yellow card, to be recorded by the referee, will include the player's or coach's name and the team name. Two such yellow cards in one game will call for suspension for the rest of the game (red card). The player or coach shall also be suspended for the next game following the red card offense. (See Code of Conduct in the YMCA Coaches Manual for details on suspensions.)

18.0 SPECTATOR CONDUCT

Spectators should remain on the opposite side of the field from their respective teams. Positive team support is encouraged. Offensive language or behavior will not be tolerated. Each coach is responsible for the conduct of all persons on his/her team or supporting his/her team.

A spectator(s) may be yellow carded by the referee at which time the official will also notify the coach that a warning has been given to one of his/her team supporters. Further disruptive behavior or improper conduct after a second warning may result in abandonment of the game (See 8.0 & 17.0)

19.0 ENTERING THE FIELD OF PLAY

No member of the coaching staff may enter the playing area, once play is underway, unless invited by the referee. The only exception to this rule will be in an emergency situation created by player injury.

20.0 PROTESTS

No protests are allowed. Register your complaint, in writing, to the YMCA Sports Office.

21.0 TEAM COACHES

Each team is allowed to have only one (1) head coach and one (1) assistant coach on the sidelines with the team. All parents who are not coaching should remain on the opposite side of the field.

## 22.0 POSSESSION BY THE GOALKEEPER

Possession or control of the ball includes when the goalkeeper has the ball trapped by either or both hands. Outside the penalty area, the goalkeeper has no more privileges than any other player. It is an offence for a player to prevent a goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands. A player must be penalized for playing in a dangerous manner if he kicks or attempts to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing it. It is an offence to restrict the movement of the goalkeeper by unfairly impeding him at the taking of a free kick or corner kick.

## 23.0 POST GAME ACTIVITY

At the conclusion of every game, both teams shall line up at the center of the field for a congratulatory handshake.

### Pre/Post-Game Prayer

The coaches should take the opportunity to bring their team and parents together prior to or at the conclusion of each game to recite this prayer. This is part of the YMCA philosophy and we feel it should also be a part of our Youth Sports programs. If someone would like to offer their own prayer we would be happy for them to share. Here is an example of a team prayer:

Win or Lose,  
I pledge before God to do the best I can,  
to be a team player,  
and to respect my teammates,  
my opponents, and officials,  
and to improve myself in **spirit, mind, and body.**

If an occasion arises that is not fully covered by these rules of competition or interpretation thereof, the YMCA Sports Office will decide such cases. Any rule changes will be sent in writing to all coaches after approval by the YMCA of Middle Tennessee Youth Sports Cabinet.

**HAVE FUN!**

## TERMS USED IN SOCCER

**Advantage** The referee shall “refrain from penalizing in cases where he is satisfied that, by doing so, he would be giving advantage to the offending team.”

**Direct Free Kick (DFK)** A direct free kick is awarded to the opponent when a player:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent
7. Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
8. Holds an opponent
9. Spits at an opponent
10. Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area)

A goal may be scored directly from a DFK. If a defender commits one of the above in his penalty area, the result is a penalty kick which is taken by the opponent at the penalty spot in front of the defender’s goal. (12 yards for Under 13 & up, 10 yards for Under 12 & 8 yards for Under 9 & 10)

**Indirect Free Kick (IDK)** An indirect free kick is awarded to the opponent when a player:

1. Plays in a dangerous manner
2. Impedes the progress of an opponent
3. Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands

*An IFK is also awarded when a goalkeeper, inside his penalty area, commits one of the following:*

1. Takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his hands before releasing it from his possession
2. Touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player
3. Touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate
4. Touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate

A goal may not be scored directly from an IFK. It must touch another player, from either team, before it enters the goal. An IFK is used to put the ball in play after an offside call, inappropriate conduct and suspensions of the game for cautions, ejections and infractions of the laws.

**Free Kicks** DFK’s, IFK’s and Goal Kicks - when taken by a defender from within his own penalty area, the ball must clear the penalty area before it can be played by another player.

**Goal Kick** A free kick taken from anywhere within the goal box. A player cannot be put off-side directly from a goal kick.

**Corner Kick** A free kick taken from the corner of the field on the side where the ball crossed the goal line and was last played by a defender. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick since the ball is in play when it has moved. A player cannot be put off-side directly from a corner kick.

**Throw In** When the ball passes completely over the touch-line whether on the ground or in the air, it is thrown in by a player opposite to the team which last touched the ball. When throwing the ball in, the player must:

1. Keep both feet in contact with the ground when the ball is released
2. Throw the ball, from behind the head, evenly with both hands

An infraction of the above results in a throw-in for the opposing team. The ball may not be thrown directly into the opponent's goal.

**Off-Side** Off-side Position - It is not an offence in itself to be in an offside position.

A player is in an offside position if at the moment the ball is played by a teammate:

- He is nearer to his opponents' goal line than the ball and the second last opponent.

A player is not in an offside position if at the moment the ball is played by a team mate:

- He is in his own half of the field of play, or
- He is level with the second last opponent, or
- He is level with the last two opponents.

Offense - A player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, he is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in play by:

- Interfering with play, or
- Interfering with an opponent, or
- Gaining an advantage by being in that position

No Offense - There is no off-side offense if a player receives the ball directly from:

- A goal kick, a throw-in or a corner kick.

If a player is declared off-side, the referee shall award an indirect free kick, which shall be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the infringement occurred, unless the offence is committed by a player in his opponents' goal area, in which case the free kick shall be taken from a point anywhere within the goal area.

### **Yellow Card & Red Card**

Caution given to a player or coach who is guilty of a severe infraction of the Laws.

Ejection given to a player or a coach who is guilty of violent conduct, serious foul play, a second cautionable offence, or using foul or objectionable language.

Note: These are general meanings and do not include exact definitions of the Laws of the Game or all official interpretations of FIFA, soccer's governing body.