

COLCHESTER YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE POLICY

PREAMBLE: This policy is adopted to establish minimum rules of operation for the Colchester Youth Soccer League (CYSL) and as such shall be binding, but not limiting, in procedure and scope. CYSL is the recreational Fall Soccer League organized by the Colchester Youth Soccer Club (CYSC).

POLICY 1 REGISTRATION

The CYSL is open to all Colchester residents who will be in Grades K through 9 during the Fall Season, with the intent that 9th graders in the CYSL will be recreational players who do not play on high school teams. The CYSL is affiliated with the Vermont and United States Youth Soccer Association. Primary registration shall take place in the spring to facilitate team organization and scheduling. Late registration will be admitted to a team if there is room at that grade level and on a first come first serve basis. All participants must complete a registration form with consent/release clause signed by a parent or guardian prior to the first team practice. Players not registered with the league that are discovered to be playing will be asked to leave the field until proper documents and fees have been filed with the organization. Fees will be higher for late registrations without discounts allowed for on time registrations.

POLICY 2 ORGANIZATION

Roster allocations shall be made by the Grade Coordinators elected or appointed as provided in the CYSC bylaws. Grade distribution for participating leagues shall be by single grade or by combination depending on participation, size of teams, and number of teams. This distribution will be handled by the Board of Directors (Board) after registration each year. Teams shall be organized in so far as possible by neighborhoods. An effort shall be made to keep participants on the same team. If any one team is winning or losing most of their games that team may be redistributed based on Board discussions.

In the event of insufficient registrants in any grade level to assure at least four (4) teams for competition, participants may be advanced from the next lower grade. Advancement shall be based in so far as possible on age and ability to adjust to the higher grade level of play. Parental consent shall be sought for such advancements. The number of advancing participants shall be equally apportioned among the team in the high competition level.

Parents of participants may petition the Board at the time of registration to permit their child to compete at the next higher level. Coaches and Grade Coordinators may also petition the Board for a child to compete at a higher level due to skills. No child will be placed outside their current grade level without Board and parental approval. Participation on a lower grade level will not be permitted.

Participants registering after the formal registration period shall be assigned by the Grade Coordinators. Priority shall be given to teams with roster shortages. No participant shall join any team without proper registration and the approval of the Grade Coordinator. Late registrations will be assigned where roster vacancies are available, and cannot be guaranteed placement on their former team or team of choice.

POLICY 3 SEASON

The Fall Season will commence on the Sunday after Labor Day and run for seven (7) weeks. All games in grades 1-9 will be played at Colchester High School or other suitable venue. Kindergarten will be played on Saturdays at the field space between Colchester Middle School and Malletts Bay School or other suitable venue.

POLICY 4 RULES OF PLAY

The rules of play shall be the “Laws of the Game” as published by F.I.F.A (www.fifa.com) with modifications for youth play as stated herein or as adopted by the Board. Provided the principles of these laws are maintained, they may be modified in the application as follows (a) size of playing field; (b) width between goal posts and height of the crossbar from the ground; (c) size, weight, material of the ball; (d) game duration and periods of play; (e) the number of players on the field; (f) the number and frequency of substitutions and (g) such other rules of play as defined elsewhere in this policy or as determined by the Board.

NOTE: For those not familiar with soccer rules, they are different than rules used in other sports. The rules are brief and much is handled in taught procedure. Also not all offenses are called; if there is no advantage gained in doing so. Additionally CYSL rules may differ from fall school soccer or spring soccer rules.

SECTION I SAFTEY EQUIPMENT

Shin guards are mandatory for all players at all practices and games. Shin guards will be worn inside the socks. Mouth guards are recommended, especially for players with orthodontic appliances or braces, but are not required. Jewelry (watches, necklaces, ear rings, etc.) prohibited per POLICY 6 REFEREES, SECTION 1 INJURY PREVENTION.

SECTION II FIELD OF PLAY

The field of play shall be rectangular. Grades 5-9, coed & all girls will use regulation field size (i.e. Varsity or JV field) unless space is not available or unless registration numbers are such that the Board decides to play small sided games on smaller fields.

Grade K-4 both coed and girls shall use reduced length and width fields as determined by the Board.

SECTION III GOALS

Grades 5-9 shall use goals of regulation width and height (8 yards wide at the inside of the vertical posts and 8 feet high to the bottom of the horizontal crossbar) unless number of available goals does not permit this. In the event that not enough regulation goals are available the younger grade will use a smaller goal. Every attempt will be made to supply teams with regulation goals. Grades 1-4 shall use reduced width and height goals as determined by the Board. Grade 1 and 2 shall use PVC MINI GOALS ARRANGED WITH 4' x 12' OPENING. Grades 3-4 shall use the MINI GOALS with 6' x 12' OPENING. This policy is for both coed and all girls league.

SECTION IV BALL

The size of the ball shall be as follows:

- (a) Grade 7-9 Size 5
- (b) Grade 3-6 Size 4
- (c) Grade K-2 Size 3

*If grades are mixed (i.e. 5-8) ball size may vary depending on the combination of the grades and number of participants in each grade.

SECTION V GAMES

The duration of games shall be:

- (a) Grade 5-9 Two equal halves of 25-30 minutes
- (b) Grade 1-4 Two equal halves of 20-25 minutes
- (c) Kindergarten Two equal halves of 10-15 minutes

*Each game shall have (1) intermission not to exceed 5 minutes. For grades 1-9 end exchange shall take place at halftime. For kindergarten end exchange will be at the discretion of the coaches and may be eliminated to avoid confusion.

Games must be played as scheduled and start promptly at the time scheduled. Cancellation of games due to inclement weather or field conditions shall be at the discretion of the Grade Coordinator, unless given specific instruction by the President or Vice President. There will be no play if thunder is heard for at least (30) minutes with another occurrence. Absolutely no play when lightening is seen. In the event of a cancellation due to inclement weather/unplayable field conditions, coaches may schedule

make-ups at their own discretion. Make up games will be played as informal pickup games and played on practice fields only. The use of CHS fields on any other day except Sundays is totally prohibited. Referees will not be supplied by the league for make up games.

SECTION VI PLAYER

The number of players on the field including the goalkeeper shall be:

- (a) Grade 5-9 (11, unless small sided play is in effect)
- (b) Grade 1-4 (7)
- (c) Kindergarten (4 or 5, with no goalkeepers allowed)

In the event of absences creating a player shortage on one team, both teams will play equal sided in number of players on the field. By agreement of the two sides, short-handed teams may "borrow" players from the opposing side. Borrowed players should be rotated frequently, such that the majority of play will be with their own team.

Exceptions to playing equal sides:

- (a) A team may intentionally plays with less players to keep the game competitive.
- (b) If any player receives a red card, the team of the offending player will play with one less player on the field.

Roster size and number of teams will be determined by the Board and recommendations of the Grade Coordinator based on registration numbers and the number of teams necessary for effective competition. Each player must play at least one full half of each game. Coaches must allow equal playing time to all participants regardless of skill level or game situations. It will be at the discretion of the coach to sit a player based on discipline problems only. In the event of such a discipline problem the Grade Coordinator will be notified in writing.

SECTION VII SUBSTITUTIONS

Except as indicated below, there shall be no limit to the number of substitutes allowed during a game. Substitutions are permitted at the following times:

- (a) Prior to a throw in by the throwing team, or by either team if team in possession subs.
- (b) Prior to a corner kick if in possession, or by either team if team in possession subs.
- (c) Prior to a goal kick by either team.
- (d) After a goal by either team.
- (e) After an injury, the injured player may be substituted, with a corresponding number by the opposing team.
- (f) At half time.

(g) Grades K-2 at any whistle.

A substitute may not enter the field of play until signaled to do so by the referee.

One Goal Keeper substitution per period is allowed.

Exceptions: Injury to goal keeper

No substitutions allowed during penalty kick or corner kick situations.

SECTION VIII SLIDE TACKLES

Forbidden in grades K-4 and discouraged in grades 5-9. Baseball style, cleats first, slide tackles are against the rules of soccer and forbidden in all grades.

SECTION IX OTHER SPECIAL RULES

For Grades K-4 the following rules have been adopted by the Board.

- (a) All free kicks will be indirect. NO PENALTY KICKS will be awarded.
- (b) Off sides will not be enforced. However, coaches and players are encouraged not to take unfair advantage of this rule and should be teaching awareness of off sides.
- (c) Illegal or improper throw-ins will be re-taken from the touchline by the same person of the same team. Coaches and/or referees should instruct the player taking the throw in on proper technique.
- (d) Heading the ball is to be avoided, discouraged.
- (e) Slide tackles are prohibited.

SECTION X CARDS

The object of this league is first safety, second fun, third skill development and last competitiveness. There are many other competitive leagues soccer players can participate in if this is the objective. As such cardable offenses do not have a place in this league. Any red cards are to be reported to the Board by the official. If there is a second red card in a game the game is to be suspended immediately. The Board reserves the right to ban any player, coach, or spectator who does not participate in the spirit of the league.

SECTION XI REFERENCES FOR OTHER RULES

CYSL policy takes precedent, but for more details see US Youth Soccer (<http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/>), and the Laws of the Game as published by F.I.F.A. (<http://www.fifa.com>).

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play
Law 10 – The Method of Scoring
Law 11 – Offside
Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct
Law 13 – Free Kicks
Law 14 – The Penalty Kick
Law 15 – The Throw-In
Law 16 – The Goal Kick
Law 17 – The Corner Kick

POLICY 5 COACHES

Parents and High School Soccer Students whose attitudes and philosophy toward the game of soccer are in keeping with the objectives of the CYSL are encouraged to volunteer as coaches during the registration period. It is within the scope of these objectives to teach, promote and develop proper techniques; to develop body and character; to instill good sportsmanship; and to have fun while doing all these.

Head coaches and assistant coaches will be appointed by the Board. Coaches are encouraged to seek guidance from other coaches, the board or high school players for skill and techniques that will be beneficial for their players.

All coaches and assistant coaches must successfully complete a background check process as a prerequisite to coaching. (see attached policy)

Duties and responsibilities of the coaching staff of each team are as follows:

- (a) Maintain copies of team rosters.
- (b) Attend mandatory coach informational meetings and clinics.
- (c) Notify all players as to team selection as soon as possible after team rosters are available and no later than (6) days prior to the start of the season.
- (d) Act as a liaison between the team, the Grade Coordinator and the Board.
- (e) Notify the Grade Coordinator of any dropouts or potential late registrations.
- (f) Handle or direct problems to the Board as they arise.
- (g) Be on time for all practices and games. Last to leave the field.
- (h) Schedule at least one (1) practice per week. At least two adults (coaches or team parents) should be present at each practice. It is recommended that each team have basic first aid supplies (tape, gauze, band aids, ice pack) at all practices and games.
- (i) Leave no player at the field unless attended by responsible adult after game or practice.
- (j) Notify parents, Grade Coordinator, and President of injuries to players during practices or games. (fill out injury sheet or written summary of event for Grade Coordinator)

- (k) Instruct players and parents in the proper procedure concerning their attitudes toward and discussions with referees and opponents. (Go over the “Player Code of Conduct and Parent Code of Conduct” at the first practice with team and parents.)
- (l) Set a good example at all times and maintain a standard of conduct for all members of the team (See Coaches code of Conduct)
- (m) Maintain team equipment (ball, pinnies, cones, whistles, first aid kit)
- (n) Ensure that playing fields, school and town facilities are treated with respect and cleaned up after practices and games. Do not let children hang on nets.
- (o) Notify team members of game or practice cancellations in a timely manner.
- (p) Assure that payers wear shin guards at all practices and games.
- (q) Coaches are not allowed on the field during games. (Exception: if no referee is present. If this occurs, there will be NO coaching while refereeing on the field). Let the kids play. Coaching techniques should be done during practice. Correcting errors should be done quietly when the child is substituted, during breaks or at the next practice.
- (r) Chain of command: (a) Coach to Grade Coordinator, (b) If you can not reach your Grade Coordinator, you may go directly to the President.

Disregard for the “Laws of the Game” or Policy of CYSL (verbal or physical abuse of players or referees, loud and profane language etc... shall be grounds for review by the Board for possible dismissal from CYSL.

Any parent, player or spectator has the right to contact a Board Member to report any such incident. At the discretion of said Board Member written notification must be done for Board review. Upon Board review final decision will be made and notification to the party by the President.

POLICY 6 REFEREES

The referee is a necessary part of the game. He or she has authority over players, coaches and spectators before, during and after the game. CYSL referees are parents, high school players and middle school players at the lower grade levels. These people have volunteered their time and interest in the league. Respect them for their opinion and use them for their knowledge and experience. All referees shall be thoroughly familiar with the Laws of the game at the grade level they are refereeing and the Policy of CYSL.

The referee’s authority is explicitly defined in the “Laws of the Game”. In addition to enforcing the Laws and Policy of CYSL, the referee is charged with three main responsibilities. In order of priority they are:

1. Prevent Injury
2. Prevent unfair advantage
3. Keep the game moving and on time

SECTION I PREVENT INJURY

The referees on the field are the sole judges of what actions or infractions are likely to cause injury. Their authority in this regard shall extend to players clothing, equipment or accessories (jewelry, religious medals outside the uniform, splints or casts, untied shoelaces, etc...) that may cause injury to the player or to others. Referees have the authority to stop the player, even if it produces unfair advantage, to correct an unsafe condition.

Lack of skill and coordination in young players can lead to unintentional contact, sometime resulting in injury. This type of contact may be penalized in order to impress upon players the importance of playing under control at all times. Players are responsible for avoiding this type of contact. Coaches are responsible for helping to enforce these rules. Deliberate or flagrant contact fouls will always be punished in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

SECTION II PREVENT UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

The “Laws of the Game” are again explicit on this point. The referees are the only judge of what constitutes unfair advantage. The referee is allowed to ignore a foul if stoppage of the game would take advantage away from the fouled team. The referee may indicate the “play on” sign when this occurs and caution the offending player late, but is not obliged to do so.

Offside is probably the least understood law of soccer. A player in an offside position need not be penalized unless, in the opinion of the referee, he or she is interfering with the play of an opponent, or is seeking to gain an advantage by being in the offside position. Off Side is a judgment call and depends on whether or not the player has intentionally placed himself/herself in an unfair position of advantage.

SECTION III KEEP THE GAME MOVING

The “Laws of the Game” are intended to provide that the games are played with as little interference as possible. In this view, it is the duty of the referee to penalize only deliberate violations of the Laws. Constant stoppage of play for trifling or doubtful infractions spoils the flow of the game and confuses players, coaches and spectators. Exception to this is to be taken when unsafe conditions are detected, or in the case of unintentional contact as provided in Section I above.

Referees are not obligated to explain decisions to the satisfaction of players, coaches or spectators. However, since an objective of the CYSL is to teach the game of soccer, referees are encouraged to sufficiently explain to a player why he/she is being penalized to prevent repeat offenses.

Unsportsmanlike behavior by players, coaches or spectators will not be tolerated. Referees have the authority to deal with such incidents when they arise, including ejection of offending players without caution. Profanity, vulgarity, foul, abusive or harassing language by players, coaches or spectators shall be reported to the Board for appropriate disciplinary action. Such action may include reprimand or suspension to the offending player, coach or spectator. Repeat offenses will result in dismissal from the CYSL.

POLICY 7 BACKGROUND CHECKS

In order to protect the youth of the CYSL a criminal background check is mandatory for all Board Members and team coaches (head and assistants) as outlined in the background check information form. An “official” Assistant Coach is any coach designated by the head coach as an assistant, or any coach who will be alone with the players, or responsible for a team during a game or practice. This background check is required every 3 years. Volunteers under the age of 18 are exempt from this requirement.

POLICY 8 AMENDMENTS

This policy may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at any scheduled Board meeting.

Revised:

8/11/83
8/8/88
8/3/94
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