



RULES & REGULATIONS 2026

1 Corinthians 15:58

“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not vain.”

I. GENERAL OVERVIEW & RESPONSIBILITIES

a. RULES ADOPTED

- i. GYS follows the latest IFA/IFAB Laws of the Game, including the IFA U12 amendments, addendums, and the most recent USSF guidelines regarding heading the ball. These rules, along with annual updates from the IFA, apply consistently across the league for players of all ages.
- ii. While GYS may modify certain rules as needed (with any changes clearly noted), the organization aims to prepare players for advancing in soccer at the junior high, high school, club levels, CIF competitions, tournaments, and even NCAA play. Consequently, GYS rules will largely align with IFAB's Laws of the Game.
- iii. The terms IFA, FA, IFAB and FIFA can generally be considered interchangeable herein.

b. OFFICIAL

- i. The terms "Official(s)" and "Referee(s)" are used interchangeably, while "League Official" refers to a separate role.
- ii. Rules will be enforced based on the "Spirit of the Law" rather than the "Letter of the Law." For example, an accidental handball is not considered a foul.
- iii. The Referee is responsible for overseeing the Match, prioritizing player safety, and ensuring a positive experience for all participants, including players, coaches, spectators, and officials.
- iv. Referees shall officiate according to the current IFAB (International Football Association Board) Laws of the Game, along with any specific modifications from Grace Youth Soccer's Rules & Regulations. These regulations are tailored to be age-appropriate while upholding GYS's core values. In cases of conflict, **GYS's Rules & Regulations take precedence, with fair play, intent of fair play, and good conduct guiding their interpretation.**

c. COACH

Coaching consists of SEVEN TASKS and Responsibilities:

Task ONE: Coaches shall act in a manner consistent with that of a Christian mentor and leader. They will honor Christ in their actions, conduct, speech, and coaching techniques while mentoring players both in soccer skills and in the teachings of Christ.

Task TWO: Coaches will Guide players through game situations, making tactical adjustments, and ensuring that the environment is competitive yet supportive. Coaches manage game flow, communicate effectively, and focus on individual and team development during the Match.

Task THREE: Coaches will plan and execute effective training sessions that

align with team goals. This includes designing drills that develop technical skills, tactical awareness, and decision-making in various phases of play.

Task FOUR: Coaches will establish a positive culture, setting clear expectations, and fostering a desire for Christ and unity. Coaches manage relationships, define roles, and create an environment where players feel motivated, valued, and respected.

Task FIVE: Coaches will focus on each player's individual growth and well-being. This includes providing constructive feedback, setting personal goals, and supporting each player's path within the team's broader goals.

Task SIX: Coaches will create the best possible conditions for players to succeed. This includes managing logistics, understanding physical and mental conditioning needs, and balancing training demands with rest and recovery.

Task SEVEN: Coaches will serve as a positive Christian role model both on and off the field. Coaches inspire players through personal example, ethical behavior, and a commitment to learning and improvement, shaping players' character and teamwork skills.

COACHING SPORTSMANSHIP: While there is **NO rule** that states one team may not have a score that is three (3) points greater than their opponent's; this is still a RECREATIONAL league designed to TEACH soccer and INSPIRE interest. There ARE, and will continue to be, winners and losers in every game (except D4). Coaches should highly consider moving any star players "back" if the score becomes "lop sided".

If one player is dominating the game, it may mean they aren't engaging fully with their teammates, creating opportunities for the other players, or building team cohesion and learning the essence of **teamwork**. Encourage all players to work together to find passing lanes and share scoring opportunities.

If a player consistently pushes forward, emphasize the importance of trust, collaboration, and the joy of shared successes. Explain how taking a supporting role can be just as fulfilling as scoring goals and vital for team success.

If the player continues to disregard instructions, consider temporarily sitting them out to help reinforce that soccer is a team sport. Make sure this action is followed by a constructive conversation about sportsmanship and teamwork.

PLAYERS DON'T WIN GAMES – TEAMS DO: A top Premier League Team scores 80-100 goals a season, a top premier PLAYER scores 15-20 in a season. **TEAMS win games, NOT a player.**

Various Examples from the 2023 Season

Player	Team	Goals	Team	Goals
Lionel Messi	Paris Saint-Germain Football Club (PSG)	21	InterMiami	11
Kylian Mbappe	PSG	29	Coupe de France	8
Christiano Ronaldo	Sudi Pro League	34	Arab Club Champions	6
Neymar	PSG	13	World Cup 2023*	2

d. PARENT

Each Parent has a **duty and responsibility** to:

- i. Ensure their player(s) arrive punctually and responsibly for practices and Matches.
- ii. Follow any instructions provided by the Coach.
- iii. Support the team and all players in a positive manner.
- iv. Behave in a way that reflects Christian values.
- v. Show respect for those who demonstrate Christ-like actions, conduct, and speech.
- vi. Keep all sideline comments during GYS Matches positive and encouraging.
- vii. Note that while parents are not required to be Christian, they are expected to act in a Christ-like manner while on campus.

****Special Notice:**** In addition to the above; all Parents **SHALL NOT:**

1. *openly question or communicate directly with an Official or dispute their call during a Match.*
2. *Argue with a Coach, Referee or League Official during a Match or for 24 hours after the conclusion of that Match.*
3. *Demand more playing time for their child/player(s)*
4. *Offer Coaching advice during a Match to anyone.*

e. SPECTATOR

Each spectator is expected to:

- i. Conduct themselves in a way that aligns with Christian values.
- ii. Show respect for those who demonstrate Christ-like actions, conduct, and speech.
- iii. Limit sideline comments during GYS Matches to positive and encouraging remarks.
- iv. Understand that while being a Christian is not required, acting in a Christ-like manner on campus is expected.

****Special Notice:** Additionally, spectators must not:**

1. Openly question or directly communicate with an Official or dispute their call during a Match.
2. Engage with the Coach or Assistant Coach during the Match.
3. Argue with a Coach, Referee, or League Official during or within 24 hours after the Match.
4. Provide coaching advice to anyone involved in the Match.

****Parents & Spectators**:** It's natural to question some officiating calls during a soccer Match. Remember, everyone has a unique perspective, and as a spectator, you're likely rooting for a team with a family member involved. Also, consider that each person watches from a different angle, while the Referee is much closer to the play. Try to give the Referee the benefit of the doubt.

The ****Coach**** is responsible for the conduct of their team's parents and spectators. Officials may issue the Coach (as the Team Official) a Verbal Warning or a Yellow Card (YC) for any inappropriate actions by a parent or spectator.

Parents or spectators who violate any rule that would result in a player or coach receiving a Red Card (RC), will be required to leave the playing area. Refusal to leave will result in the Match being paused. Continued refusal to leave will likely result in the League Director or Head Official (if the League Director is unavailable) forfeiting the game in favor of the opposing team.

RULES, THEIR DEBATE, & A COOLING OFF PERIOD

Decisions by Officials, a Coach, a Division Manager(s), or the League Director are NOT open for debate at the time of the decision.

"Cooling Off" - If, **24 hours after** any decision, you wish to reach out to the Division Manager or the League Director and calmly discuss a decision you are welcome to do so; but not before; and certainly NOT ON THE FIELD OF PLAY.

II. PLAYING TIME & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

a. PLAYING TIME

- i. All eligible players in attendance must play at **least half of the Match**, excluding overtime. **Such participation is controlled as follows:**

Substitutions

1. Substitutions are allowed only during a regular stoppage in play, and the Match will resume with the appropriate restart (i.e. throw-in, goal kick, corner kick, kick-off, free kick, penalty kick or dropped ball). Only the team **with possession of the ball**, during regular Match play, may request a substitution.
2. Coaches are limited to five (5) substitutions (excluding half time and quarter breaks) during a Match (injured players are exempt).
3. Substitutions may also be made at half-time and at the start of any overtime periods, at the Coach's discretion. During the "quarter" and half times Coaches may substitute as many players (or none) as they wish in the allotted time; as long as all eligible players meet the minimum playing requirements.
4. The Referee shall allow for any time lost due to substitutions or other causes by stopping his/her watch or adding playing time.
5. *Substitute players **MUST enter the field from the Centerline**, where it intersects with the Touchline on its team's side of the field. The exiting player may leave the field from any point on the field.*
6. **Goalkeepers** are an integral part of a team and can literally be the determining factor in the outcome of a game. As such, a player is allowed to play the position for the entire Match; however, a less qualified player MAY NOT BE "relegated" to the position of Goalkeeper.
7. **Any player playing Goalkeeper for three or more quarters MAY NOT be substituted out in the case of a Shoot Out.** (rule updated in 2025).

Substitution for injury:

1. If a player is injured, the Coach may provide a substitute for the player, in which case the injured player may not return until the beginning of the next period.
2. The Coach may choose to not substitute and "play short" thereby allowing the injured player to return during the period in which he or she was injured. The player can return during a dead ball with their team in possession.
3. The returning player must receive a signal from the Referee in order to return to the Match.
4. *Substitute players **MUST enter the field from the Centerline**, where it intersects with the Touchline on its team's side of the field. The exiting*

player may leave the field from any point on the field.

b. PLAYING TIME - Exceptions:

- i. As previously stated, each player is REQUIRED to play at least two quarters of each Match. Under the following exceptions, playing time can be reduced:
 1. **Discipline** – If such reduction in playing time is a result of a caution (TC), sendoff (RC), OR part of a GYS approved discipline (which has been made know to the League Director and the Referee).
 2. **Health and/or Safety** – If a player is injured or if a player has some other type of health problem, i.e. asthma attack, he or she may be removed from a Match. At the Coach’s discretion, and the parent or guardian’s consent, the player may re-enter the Match according to the rules.
 3. **Players arriving Late** - If a player arrives “late” during the first “quarter”, the player must play a minimum of two of the remaining three “quarters”. If the player arrives during the second or third “quarter”, the player must play a minimum of one “quarter”.
 4. **Player/Parent Non-Contact** - Any player, parent or guardian, as a group, fails to show for consecutive practices and games; while also failing to notify the Coach, OR fails to show for three or more consecutive practices and at least one game in the same time period (except for failing to show due to a GYS soccer related injury) are not covered by this Section and shall be allowed to be “sat down” by the Coach for a period of time determined by the Coach. Once a player returns to attending consecutive practices and games, they are then “covered” by Section III.a.1.
 5. **Injury Return** - If the player does not return, as a direct result of an injury, until a point later in the Match, but yet not early enough to still be able to play two full quarters, this player is excluded from the requirement to play half of the Match.

c. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY (REGISTRATION)

- i. A youth player shall mean an individual who has not yet reached his or her 14th birthday by September 1st, of the season’s year date (the year 2024 for the season starting in 2024).
 - a) Division 4 players (4-6) (Micro Division) are between the ages of 4 and have not reached 7 years old. Some players are younger.
 - b) Division 3 (7-8) players are between the ages of 7 and have not yet reached their 9th birthday.
 - c) Division 2 (9-10) players are between the ages of 9 and have not yet reached their 11th birthday.
 - d) Division 1 (11-13) players are between the ages of 11 and have not yet reached their 14th birthday.
- ii. A Player’s parent or guardian who determines that they wish to have their

- player “play up” a division, may consult with the League Director for approval.
- iii. Generally, a player may NOT “play down”
 - iv. A player on the later side of age 13 (ex: 13 and 10 months) **and** is NO LONGER in 6th grade (Elementary School) will be allowed to play on a case-by-case basis.
 - v. The September 1st date is designed so that in the example of the “7-8 Age Group” a player would be a minimum of 7 years old when the league begins, and not yet 9 years old on that same date.
 - vi. Additionally, the maximum age of a player, in a particular age group, may be adjusted to ensure that their age, size, skill level, grade level, aggressiveness, and the potential injury the player may be able to cause another player is considered.

d. PLAYER ROTATION

- i. To ensure that all players experience diverse aspects of the game, enhance skill development, and promote teamwork, coaches are **highly encouraged** to rotate players into different positions throughout each game.
- ii. Coaches SHOULD rotate each player through at least **two different positions** in each game. This can include a mix of offensive, defensive, and midfield roles, providing a balanced experience.
- iii. Every player, regardless of skill level, should have the chance to try different roles.
- iv. **Goalkeeper Rotation:** See: Playing Time, Substitutions #6.

e. TRANSFER OF PLAYERS

- i. After players have been assigned to a team as determined by the Drafts, players may still be reassigned to another team to help accommodate practice schedules, family requests or to create a fairer disbursement of talent.
- ii. Requested transfers are not guaranteed and need to be approved by the Division’s Manager **AND** the League Director

f. MATCH SCHEDULES

- i. **GENERAL MATCH SCHEDULE:** Due to rainouts or other unforeseen circumstances, changes may be made to the Match schedule in order to ensure a balanced rotation throughout the season. These changes will generally be made at the discretion of the League or the League Director. There is no requirement to re-schedule an abandoned or rained out game.
- ii. **PRACTICES:** Due to rainouts, special events, scheduling issues on the campus, and other unforeseen circumstances practices maybe be cancelled by the Coach, League or the League Director with little notice.

g. DURATION OF MATCHES

- i. **QUARTERS VS. HALVES:** Soccer traditionally does not have quarters. Quarters, the dividing of each half into two equal parts, are designed to allow for substitutions, water breaks, and for players positions to be moved around to gain a greater level of experience in various positions.
- ii. The term “quarter” and “water break” can be interchangeable.
- iii. Each Match should be played according to the following chart:

Div	Match	Half ea.	Quarters ea.	Halftime	Quarter Break	TOTAL Match Time
D-1	80 min.	40 min.	20 min.	6 min.	2 min.	90 min.
D-2	60 min.	30 min.	15 min.	6 min.	2 min.	70 min.
D-3	50 min.	25 min.	12.5 min.	6 min.	2 min.	60 min.
D-4	42 min.	Total of 6; 7 min. Segments (games) (6 x 7=42) – No Halftime, No Quarters. GAMES START ON TIME				42 min.

- iv. Except for Division 4 (which has no halftimes or quarters), half-time periods should be a MAXIMUM of six minutes.
- v. There shall be a MAXIMUM break of FIVE MINUTES ONLY between the end of each Match.
- vi. When BOTH COACHES AGREE, the duration of the D4 segments of play may be reduced from seven (7) minutes each to an agreed upon duration, to allow for scheduling or Heat.

h. MATCH START TIMES

- i. **Generally, Matches start ON TIME according to the chart below.**
- ii. Match start times are based on the total duration of a Match, plus 5 min for spectators to leave, new parents to arrive and get situated, and finally for the coaches and their captains to communicate with the officials. COACHES, PLAYERS, & OFFICIALS SHOULD ALWAYS BE AVAILABLE TO START ON TIME.
- iii. Minutes added from the previous Match will push the next consecutive start times accordingly.

MATCH START TIMES				
	DIV 1	DIV 2	DIV 3	DIV 4
Game 1	0800	0800	0800	0800
Game 2	0935	0915	0905	0900
Game 3	1110	1030	1010	1000
Game 4	1245	1145	1115	1100
Game 5	1420 (2:20 PM)	1300 (1 PM)	1220	1200

i. DELAY OF GAME

- i. To maintain fairness, consistency, and respect for all players, coaches, and spectators, the timing rules for each half and quarter are fixed and must be followed as scheduled.
- ii. **PLAYER INJURY:** The Match start will not be delayed due to a player’s injury. The injured player shall be substituted for, and that players return to the game shall be governed by the “substitution” rules herein.
- iii. **MINIMUM PLAYERS:** If due to an INJURY a team will be unable to supply the minimum number of players to **restart the game**; BOTH Coaches and the Head Official on the field SHALL IMMEDIATELY meet at the center of the field and determine the best solution. NO Coach shall use **this situation** to create a differential score of greater than 3 points in any remaining Match playing time.
- iv. Failure to place the MINIMUM NUMBER of players on the field in time to start or restart a Match will result in a DELAY OF GAME warning or penalty.
- v. Delay of game penalty shall be penalized in the same manner as would the cautionable offence of UNSPORTING BEHAVIOR.

j. REFUNDS

- i. Generally, after the Draft is complete, and more specifically after the Uniforms have been ordered, no refunds are offered to players/parents who are unable to continue. There are some minor exceptions (minus the uniform fees) on a case-by-case basis.
- ii. **RED CARD – SEND OFF:** If a parent, guardian, or player chooses to leave the league (GYS) following a send-off (red card) or any disciplinary action, no refund or discount will be provided. This policy applies to all registration fees, regardless of the timing of the withdrawal.

III. TEAMS: PARTICIPATION, SIZE & COLORS

a. TEAM PARTICIPATION

- i. Teams shall participate only in GYS scheduled Matches. No TEAM of the GYS organization may play in any Matches or against any teams outside of the GYS Program.

b. TEAM SIZE (LAW 3)

- i. The following chart shows the maximum and minimum number of allowed players ON THE FIELD to START a game. The League will add more players as available for substitutions to complete a Team's Roster:

PLAYERS REQUIRED (PER TEAM) ON THE FIELD		
Division	Max. Players on Field	Min. Players on Field
1	(11v11) 10 + Goalie	7
2	(10v10) 9 + Goalie	6
3	(9v9) 8 + Goalie	5
4 (MICRO)	(3v3 or 4v4) 2 or 3 + Goalie*	2

- ii. With the exception of Division 4 (micro), teams may compete in a Match with less than the maximum number of players, but with an amount equal to (or greater than) the minimum number of allowable players. In the case of reduced team size, the opposing team is only REQUIRED to reduce the number of players on the field by 1 player.
- iii. At the discretion of the opposing team's Coach, the opposing team may continue to reduce the number of players in an effort to allow for a more even level of play.
- iv. **Substitute players from other teams** within the **same division** may be allowed provided that:
 - 1. The player is a currently registered GYS player, AND
 - 2. The player HAS A MATCHING UNIFORM, AND
 - 3. The Officials have been notified of the NAME and NUMBER "conflict", AND
 - 4. The substitute player's parent(s) have been notified and approve of the request, AND

5. The substitute player has either a bye week for that Match day or has a sufficient time of rest either before or after another Match they are involved in (ex: at least 20 min.), AND
 6. The League Director has been notified AND has not disapproved of the substitution.
 7. ~~The substitute player may only play as a defensive player. They may NOT play as a goalie, mid-fielder or forward. (removed 2025)~~
- v. Play-ups are allowed
 - vi. Play-downs from other divisions are **not** allowed.

*The number of players “on the field” is ultimately determined by the coach, league director and the availability of players as a whole. With the League Director having final authority.

IV. SAFETY

a. INCIDENTS AND INJURIES

- i. All incidents, Reportable Injuries (RI) or property damage involving a GYS participant or occurring at an GYS event shall be reported either immediately or immediately following the conclusion of the Match; to the Division Manager or League Director, or any assigned Safety Director.
- ii. **REPORTABLE INJURY (RI):** is defined as any injury requiring more than minor first aid, general soreness, or the application of “ben-Gay®”.
- iii. **PARENT APPROVAL REQUIRED:** Cases of severe sprains, transportation to a Dr. or hospital, Loss of Conscious (LOC), and severe bleeding are all examples of incidents needing immediate reporting, AND the approval of the Parent BEFORE the payer returns to the field of play. Coaches may ONLY override the decision TO play; and keep the player receiving the above listed injury, out of the Match.
- iv. **DOCTORS APPROVAL (WRITTEN):** Any Reportable Injury where a Concussion or LOC occurred or is suspected, **shall require** the written permission of **both** the parent and a Dr. (General Medicine or better) before the child can resume playing in a Match OR practice.

b. SAFETY: DURING MATCH PLAY

- i. **High Kicking & Side Kicking**
 1. When in the vicinity of another player, players kicking a ball that places their foot above their waistline (and thus their cleats facing an oncoming player) is not allowed.
 2. Unless contact is made the penalty is an Indirect kick awarded at the point of infraction; with contact it may be penalized as dangerous play.
 3. The Official’s ruling is final.
- ii. **Bicycle Kicks**
 1. Players attempting to kick a ball that places their foot above their waistline, in an attempt to kick the ball 180 degrees from the direction they are facing (“over their head”) is attempting a “Bicycle Kick” or a scissors kick.
 2. These kicks are not only dangerous to the neck and spinal column when landing incorrectly; they can also potentially place the player’s cleats in the path of other players; and are thus **prohibited**.
 3. Unless contact is made the penalty is an Indirect kick awarded at the point of infraction; with contact it may be penalized as dangerous play.
 4. The Official’s ruling is final.
- iii. **Heading the Ball**
 1. Consistent with the US Soccer mandates on heading the ball, heading

is banned for all divisions in GYS.

2. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team if any player deliberately touches the ball with his/her head during a Match.
3. Any ball entering the goal as a direct or indirect result of Heading the Ball shall NOT be counted as a goal.
4. A goal kick or corner kick shall be awarded; depending on who headed the ball, and into which goal the ball entered.

iv. Slide Tackling

1. Sliding towards another player, in an attempt to trip the player, get the ball, or attack a player to disrupt a play, is “slide tackling” and is prohibited.
2. The penalty is an Indirect kick awarded at the point of infraction, with contact or injury it may be penalized as dangerous play.

c. SAFETY: UNIFORMS & ACCESSORIES

i. Footwear – Soccer Cleats

1. Appropriate athletic footwear (with or without cleats) is required in all GYS Matches subject to the Referee’s approval regarding their safety.
2. Cleats CANNOT have a single cleat or stud at the toe (see “Toe Cleats”).
3. No metal cleats are allowed (see Metal Cleats).
4. No Sandales, open-toed shoes or Crocks are allowed on the playing field during a Match.

ii. Shin Guards:

1. Players must wear shin guards to participate in any practice or Match.
2. Shinguards are required to be either USSF (United States Soccer Federation), USA Youth Soccer, US Soccer, MLS, or FIFA approved type shin guards.
 - a) Shinguards must be made of a suitable material and be of an appropriate size to provide reasonable protection and be covered by the socks. Players are responsible for the size and suitability of their shin guards

iii. Medical Bracelets:

1. Players may participate in Matches and practices while wearing medical alert bracelets. It is important that this information remains visible. **However**, to ensure the bracelet does not present a danger to the player or other players it must be secured to the player with tape, a cloth wristband or something equivalent taking care to leave the information visible.
2. We recognize that if the bracelet is removed, lost, or hidden in any way,

the child might be put in danger, particularly if the parents are not present to ensure that the medical condition is known.

3. We recognize that it is unlikely that a medical alert bracelet, when properly covered, will pose a danger to the other players. Medical alert sports bands with a snug fitting **soft, polyester ribbon band** are available and should be permitted without modification.

iv. **Knee Braces**

1. Metal types are not allowed. Wetsuit or Compression types are OK, pending Officials approval. GYS does not prohibit the use of knee braces by players, only that the brace **contains no metal** and shall be primarily black in color. The Official shall determine if the brace could cause injury to other players on the field of play, and if so, it shall not be approved.

v. **Glasses:**

1. Players who require prescription glasses are to be allowed to wear them during practices and Matches. For the greatest safety, retaining straps should be worn or rubber bands may be used for this purpose. Prescription goggles, such as the type used by racquetball players, are also permitted subject to the approval of the Referee prior to the start of the Match. Spectacle guards made of plastic or other hard material are not permitted.
2. Regular “everyday” Glasses with sharp corners or “dangerous” edges may be disallowed by the Officials. Sports appropriate glasses should be considered by parents prior to play.

vi. **Jewelry:**

1. Jewelry, **including earrings** and any visible body piercing or any **hard replacement stud** used when the jewelry is not worn, must be removed before the player is allowed to participate in a practice or Match. **Covering the jewelry** or hard replacement stud with tape, padding or bandage **is not sufficient.**
2. Coaches have the responsibility of not allowing players wearing jewelry to participate in practices or Matches.
3. Subject to approval of the Referee, various **soft, flexible materials that present no danger** to the player or other players may be used to keep recent body piercings open for participation during Matches.
4. Sometimes the Officials’ opinion on jewelry on one field MAY DIFFER from that of another, even on the same day. PARENTS AND COACHES SHALL NOT use the example of one Official to debate with another. The decision of the Official on the field is FINAL. Coaches or Managers CAN NOT Overrule this decision.

vii. **Toe Cleats:**

1. Cleats with a center cleat (ex: baseball or US football cleats) are prohibited.

viii. **Metal Cleats:**

1. Metal Cleats of any kind (ex: baseball cleats) are prohibited.

ix. **Headbands / Scarfs**

1. Supplemental items worn for adornment are not permitted (ex: bows in the hair) (D4 can wear bows).
2. **Sweatbands:** Items the Referee believes are not dangerous to the player or to other players AND serves the purpose of hair control and/or perspiration absorption are permitted. These items should be black and free of any inappropriate design, logo or meaning.
3. The Referee is the sole and final judge of whether or not such items may be worn.

x. **Ponytails:**

1. Ponytails MUST be held back with a **soft** rubber band or scrunchies (no hard objects, hair bands with beads or colored balls, or banana clips)
2. Scrunchies shall be either black or of a color Matching the primary color of the uniform jersey.

xi. **Cast or Splint:**

1. Players shall not be allowed to practice or participate in any Match with any type of cast or splint.
2. The intentional removal of any type of cast or splint on the field or surrounding area in order to participate shall disqualify the player from practice or Match participation for a period of 48 hours and **require** a Dr.'s note to be presented to the League Director prior to the Players return to the next practice or Match.

xii. **Other Equipment:**

1. **Non-dangerous protective equipment:** for example, goalkeeper gloves, headgear, face masks and knee and arm protectors made of soft, lightweight padded materials are permitted. Additionally, goalkeepers' caps and player's sports spectacles. Goalkeepers may wear black tracksuit bottoms.
2. All colors worn should be of a type Matching the uniform item it is covering (Black shorts would be covered by BLACK track suit pants).

V. EQUIPMENT USED IN GAME

a. SIZE OF BALL (See also LAW 2)

- i. The ball size for each division shall be as follows:

Division	Size	Circumference	Weight
1	5	26.5-28.0 inches	14-16 oz.
2	4	25.0-26.5 inches	12-14 oz.
3	4	25.0-26.5 inches	12-14 oz.
4	3	23.0-25.0 inches	10-12 oz.

- ii. The ball shall have a MINIMUMS PSI (pounds per square inch) of 8.5 psi (eight point five). Size 5 balls can be filled to a maximum of 13 psi. (note: less expensive balls may burst over 9 PSI).

b. UNIFORMS (see also SAFETY EQUIPMENT)

i. ISSUED:

1. **TO PLAYERS:** GYS will provide each player, and each player is required to wear a Matching team uniform consisting of a jersey, shorts, and socks. The player is REQUIRED to wear this uniform during Match play.
2. **TO COACHES:** GYS will purchase, and issue to the Head Coach and Assistant Coach a jersey Matching the team colors, with the word "COACH" printed on the back.
 - a) This jersey is required to be worn while Coaching a Match.
 - b) Coaches may be the Coach or Assistant Coach for more than one team; but must wear the appropriate color during the Match.
 - c) Coaches MAY NOT coach unless their attire Matches their team and is readily identifiable to the Officials.
3. **THE CAPTAIN ARM BAND (new 2025) (See also LAW 4):**
D1, D2, and D3 teams shall have a Capitan on the field to start a Match. The team captain of each team shall wear the armband issued by GYS & it shall be a colored armband with either the word 'captain' or the letter 'C' embossed in a single color.

CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a) Pray for the BOTH teams at center field (if each team Capitan prays before the Match – even better).
- b) Carry the line-up card and deliver it to the Match officials.
- c) The Capitan shall introduce him or herself to the Match officials, shake hands with the Officials, AND introduce his or her Coach to the Officials.
- d) The Capitan is the only player allowed to speak to the Referee and shall do so for clarifications of incidents in a calm and respectful manner.

ROTATION OF CAPTAINS: Each week, a new player will be chosen as team captain, giving everyone the opportunity to experience leadership on the field. This rotation ensures that all players have a chance to practice responsibility and represent their team. By rotating captains, each player contributes to team dynamics and unity, fostering a shared sense of ownership and accountability.

WHY CAPTAINS: Serving as captain promotes communication with coaches, referees, and teammates. It encourages players to engage confidently with authority figures. Players gain exposure to public speaking and interpersonal skills. It helps players appreciate the challenges of leadership and builds empathy and respect within the team.

SELECTION CRITERIA: The selection of each week’s captain should be randomized or based on positive contributions, teamwork, or effort shown during practice. Coaches are encouraged to provide guidance and support to each new captain, helping them feel prepared for the role. Each player should be Capitan at least once.

4. PLAYER REQUIRED (PARENT SUPPLIED) EQUIPMENT:

- a) **Shinguards** – See Safety – Uniforms and Accessories
- b) **Cleats** – See Safety - Uniforms and Accessories
- c) **Hydration** – Some sort of bottle or container to bring water to the player at a game or practice.

VI. THE 17 LAWS OF THE GAME (“The Rules of the Game”)

The Laws of the Game, or the 17 Laws of Soccer are currently 230 pages long, and their spirit, intent and meaning are listed here. NOT all nuances, actions, explanations or interpretations are listed here. Download or study the Laws at: www.theIFAB.com

LAW 1 - The Field of Play

This is the basic layout of a soccer field. The size of the field will vary from league to league, usually depending on the age of the players. Maps available during field Prep. Not shown here for space considerations.

LAW 2 - The Ball

- i. A soccer ball must be spherical in shape and made of leather or another comparable medium. Its circumference must be in the range of 27 to 28 inches. This rule is only applicable for Official sanctioned Matches, as youth leagues often employ the use of a smaller ball that is better suited to children. (see Size of Ball).
- ii. Popped or burst balls, or balls determined to be popped or burst when recovered by the goalie cannot score a goal. A regulation size soccer ball is a No. 5 ball. Youth leagues may use different size balls, such as a No. 3 ball or a No. 4 ball, depending on the age of the children.
- iii. **ADDITIONAL BALLS:** Additional balls which meet the requirements of Law 2 may be placed around the field of play and their use is under the referee’s control. Coaches as a group shall deliver three (3) game balls to the officials. One ball for center field, and one to be placed by each goal. Coaches are responsible for the delivery AND return of these balls.

LAW 3 - Number of Players

- i. There must be no more than 11 players on the field of play for either team. The minimum number of players is usually 7. Some youth leagues encourage Matches with less than 11 players to help in the development of young players.
- ii. **GOALKEEPER:** One player from each team must be designated as a goalkeeper. The goalkeeper must wear a different color shirt from his teammates so that everyone can easily distinguish the goalie. The goalie can only use his hands inside the penalty area.
- iii. **TEAM CAPTAIN:** Each team must have a captain on the field of play who wears an identifying armband. The team captain has no special status or privileges (see also Uniforms) but has a degree of responsibility for the behavior of the team.
- iv. See Also SUBSTITUTIONS.

LAW 4 - Player's Equipment

Players must wear the same-colored jersey or shirts. Players are required to wear shin guards. If your players will be wearing cleats, they must be soccer cleats.

TEAM COLORS: Generally, the team colors will be chosen at the first Coaches meeting based on what is available from the vendor. The two teams must wear colors that distinguish them from each other and the Match officials

GOALKEEPER COLORS: Each goalkeeper must wear colors that are distinguishable from the other players and the Match officials. If the two goalkeepers' shirts are the same color and neither has any other shirt, the referee may allow the Match to be played.

UNDERSHIRTS: Undershirts must be a single color which is the same color as the main color of the shirt sleeve OR a pattern/color which exactly replicate(s) the shirt sleeve.

UNDERSHORTS/TIGHTS: Undershorts/tights must be the same color as the main color of the shorts or the lowest part of the shorts – players of the same team must wear the same color.

TEAM NAMES: Generally, the Coach will have the team vote on a team name at the first practice. Prior to that the team's name will be designated as either "Team 1", or "Team + Coach's Name". Once the name is decided upon, TeamSnap® will be updated. When allowing the players to vote on a name the Coach should keep Grace's Statement of Faith and the leagues Christian values in mind. "Blue Lightening", "Bumble Bees", "Red Warriors" and the like would all be acceptable names. Names such as "Red Devils", "Satan's Marauders", "The Blue Demons" and the like would not be acceptable. Coaches should guide their players appropriately.

LAW 5 - Referees

- i. The Referee enforces the 17 Laws. The Referee is the authority on the field, and his word is law.
- ii. If you question a Referee's decision, you can be disciplined further simply for dissent.
- iii. **ADVANTAGE:** There is one difference between soccer and most other sports played in America. In soccer, the **Referee may let play continue and not call a foul** if he or she thinks that stopping play would give an advantage to the team committing the foul. This is **called the "advantage**

clause". The Referee should say "play on" when this occurs.

- i. **Per the IFBA 2024/2025** *"allows play to continue when an offence occurs and the non-offending team will benefit from the advantage, and penalizes the offence if the **anticipated advantage** does not ensue at that time or within a few seconds"*

LAW 6 – Other Match Officials (Assistant Referees)

- i. Two linesmen (Assistant Referees or AR's) **may** assist the Referee in controlling the Match. The linesmen's duty is to signal to the Referee when the ball is out of play; to indicate a corner kick, a goal kick or to designate which team is entitled to the throw-in. The linesmen may also signal offsides, fouls or misconduct if a goal has been scored or when substitution is desired.
- ii. The Referee on the playing field makes the Official and final decisions. The linesmen are there to assist the Referee; the Referee may or may not act upon their advice.
- iii. Coaches should not expect to have linesmen at their youth soccer Matches.

LAW 7 - Duration of the Match

The duration of the Match will depend on the age of the children. Older children will more than likely have two halves. Younger children often play four quarters. The league will determine whether quarters or halves are played and how long each will be.

PERIODS OF PLAY: A Match lasts for two equal halves, which may only be reduced if agreed between the referee and the two teams before the start of the Match and if in accordance with competition rules.

HALF TIME INTERVAL: Players are entitled to an interval at half-time, not exceeding 6 minutes.

ALLOWANCE FOR TIME LOST: Allowance is made by the referee in each half for all playing time lost in that half through:

- i. substitutions
- ii. assessment and/or removal of injured players
- iii. wasting time
- iv. disciplinary sanctions
- v. medical stoppages
- vi. any other cause, including any significant delay to a restart

PENALTY KICK: If a penalty kick has to be taken or retaken, the half is extended until the penalty kick is completed.

LAW 8 – The Start and Restart of Play.

A kick-off starts both halves of a Match, both halves of extra time and restarts play after a goal has been scored. Free kicks (direct or indirect), penalty kicks, throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks are other restarts (see Laws 13–17). A dropped ball is the restart when the referee stops play and the Law does not require one of the above restarts. If an offence occurs when the ball is not in play, this does not change how play is restarted.

KICK-OFF: The referee tosses a coin and the team that wins the toss decides which goal to attack in the first half **or** to take the kick-off. Depending on the above, their opponents take the kick-off or decide which goal to attack in the first half.

The team that decided which goal to attack in the first half takes the kick-off to start the second half.

For the second half, the teams change ends and attack the opposite goals.

After a team scores a goal, the kick-off is taken by their opponents

i. EVERY KICK-OFF

- a) all players, except the player taking the kick-off, must be in their own half of the field of play
- b) the opponents of the team taking the kick-off must be at least ten (10) yards from the ball until it is in play.
- c) the ball must be stationary on the center mark.
- d) the referee gives a signal to start.
- e) the ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves
- f) a goal **may be scored** directly against the **opponents** from the kick-off; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents.
- g) **NOTE:** The ball **DOES NOT** have to be kicked forward to begin play, simply move one full rotation, in any direction.

DROP BALL: The Drop Ball is generally a result of the Official stopping play due to an incident other than a foul (ex: an injury).

- i. **GOALKEEPER:** The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in their penalty area if, when play was stopped:
 - a) the ball was in the penalty area, or
 - b) the last touch of the ball was in the penalty area.

- ii. **IN ALL OTHER CASES:** The referee drops the ball for **one player** of the **team that last touched** the ball at the position where it last touched

- a player, an outside agent or a Match official.
- iii. All other players (of both teams) must remain at least (5 yds) from the ball until it is in play
 - iv. A dropped ball may not be played until it touches the ground.
 - v. A dropped ball **MAY NOT** score a goal until the ball has been touched by at least **TWO** Payers. A dropped ball crossing the goal line, without being touched by two players first, will be placed as either a Goal kick or Corner kick; depending on who touched the ball last.

LAW 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play

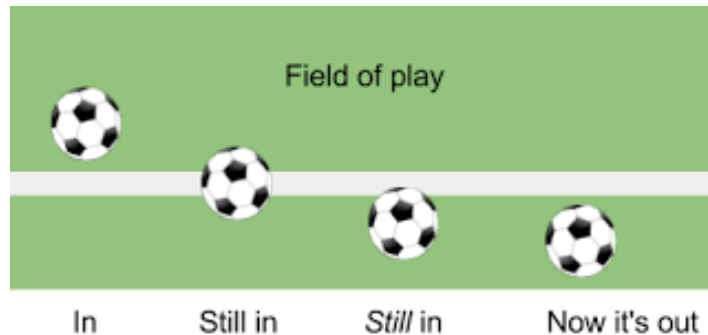
BALL OUT OF PLAY:

The ball is out of play when:

- i. It has wholly passed over the goal line (a goal, a GK, or a CK) or the touchline (throw in) on the ground or in the air, **OR**
- ii. Play has been stopped by the referee, **OR**
- iii. It **touches a Match official**, remains on the field of play and:
 1. a team starts a promising attack **or**
 2. the ball goes directly into the goal **or**
 3. the team in possession of the ball changes

BALL IN PLAY:

The ball is in play at all other times when it touches a Match official **AND** when it rebounds off of a goal post, cross bar, corner flag, linesmen or referee **and remains on the playing field**.



LAW 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match.

GOAL SCORED:

A goal can only be scored if the entire ball goes completely over the outside edge of the goal line, under the cross bar **and** between the goal posts while it is in play. Any player may score goals, including the goalie. At the end of the Match, the team with the most goals is the winner, barring the circumstantial necessity for extra time

EXCEPTION: When taking a free kick, throw-in, goal kick, penalty kick or kick off, a ball played by a player directly into his own goal is a score for the opposing team.

PENALTY SHOOT-OUT: A Penalty shoot-out (aka “shoot-out”) are taken after the Match has ended and unless otherwise stated, the relevant Laws of the Game apply. A player who has been sent off during the Match is not permitted to take part; warnings and cautions issued to players and team officials during the Match are not carried forward into penalties (penalty shoot-out).

Before penalties (penalty shoot-out) start:

1. Unless there are other considerations (e.g. ground conditions, safety etc.), the referee tosses a coin to decide the goal at which the kicks will be taken, which may only be changed for safety reasons or if the goal or playing surface becomes unusable.
2. The referee tosses a coin again, and the team that wins the toss decides whether to take the first or second kick . With the exception of a substitute for a goalkeeper who is unable to continue, only players who are on the field of play or are temporarily off the field of play (injury, adjusting equipment etc.) at the end of the Match are eligible to take kicks.
3. Each team is responsible for selecting from the eligible players the order in which they will take the kicks.
4. The referee is not informed of the order placed.
5. If at the end of the Match and before or during the kicks one team has a greater number of players than its opponents, it must reduce its numbers to the same number as its opponents and the referee must be informed of the name and number of each player excluded.
6. Any player who has been sent off (Red Card) during this Match, is **not** eligible to take part in the kicks (except as outlined below).

A goalkeeper who is unable to continue before or during the kicks may be replaced by: (1) a player excluded* to equalize the number of players or, (2) if their team has not used its maximum permitted number of substitutes, a named substitute. The replaced goalkeeper may take no further part and may not take a kick.

*a player excluded by a previous Red Card, is still NOT allowed to play.

If the goalkeeper has already taken a kick, the replacement may not take a kick until the next round of kicks.

During penalties (penalty shoot-out):

1. Only eligible players and Match officials are permitted to remain on the field of play.
2. All eligible players, except the player taking the kick and the two

- goalkeepers, must remain within the center circle.
3. The goalkeeper of the kicking team must **remain on the field of play**, outside the penalty area, on the goal line where it meets the penalty area boundary line.
 4. An eligible player may change places with the goalkeeper.
 5. The kick is completed when the ball stops moving, goes out of play or the referee stops play for any offence; the kicker may not play the ball a second time.
 6. The referee keeps a record of the kicks.
 7. If the goalkeeper commits an offence and, as a result, the kick is retaken, the goalkeeper is warned for the first offence and cautioned for any subsequent offence(s).
 8. If the kicker is penalized for an offence committed after the referee has signaled for the kick to be taken, that kick is recorded as missed and the kicker is cautioned.
 9. If both the goalkeeper and the kicker commit an offence at the same time, the kick is recorded as missed and the kicker is cautioned.

Subject to the conditions explained below, both teams take five kicks

1. The teams alternately take the kicks.
2. Each kick is taken by a different player, and all eligible players must take a kick before any player can take a second kick.
3. **Goal Advantage:** If, before both teams have taken five kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks are taken
4. If, after both teams have taken five kicks, the scores are level, kicks continue until one team has scored a goal more than the other from the same number of kicks.
5. The above principle continues for any subsequent sequence of kicks, but a team may change the order of kickers.
6. Penalties (penalty shoot-out) must not be delayed for a player who leaves the field of play. The player's kick will be forfeited (not scored) if the player does not return in time to take a kick.

LAW 11 - Offside

OFFSIDES vs. OFFSIDES POSITION: Offside position and offside are not the same. It is NOT against the rules to be in an offside position. It IS against the rules to be offside (an Offsides Offense).

THE OFFSIDE POSITION:

A player **is** in an **Offside Position** if:

- i. Any part of the head, body or feet is in the opponents' half (excluding the diameter

- of the halfway line) **and**
- ii. Any part of the head, body or feet is nearer to the opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second-last opponent
 1. The hands and arms of all players, including the goalkeepers, are not considered.
 2. For the purposes of determining offside, the upper boundary of the arm is in line with the bottom of the armpit.
 3. A player is not in an offside position if level with the:
 - a) the second to last opponent **or**
 - b) the last two opponents

THE OFFSIDE OFFENCE: A player in an offside position at the **moment the ball is played** or touched **by a team-mate** is only guilty of the OFFENSE of Offsides (and potentially) penalized by **becoming involved in active play** by:

- i. **interfering with play** by playing or touching a ball passed **or** touched by a team-mate or
- ii. **interfering with an opponent** by:
 1. preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by clearly obstructing the opponent's line of vision or
 2. challenging an opponent for the ball or
 3. *clearly attempting to play a ball which is close when this action impacts on an opponent* or
 4. making an obvious action which clearly impacts on the ability of an opponent to play the ball, or
- iii. **gaining an advantage** by:
 1. **playing the ball** or interfering with an opponent when it has: **rebounced** or been **deflected** off the goalpost, crossbar, Match Official or an opponent, or
 2. **been deliberately saved** by any opponent.

NOTE: The Offense of "Offsides" is Re-Set as soon as the ball is touched by an opposing player, if the player has since moved to an "on-side" position.

DELIBERATELY PLAYING A BALL: A player in an offside position receiving the ball from an opponent who **deliberately played the ball**, including by deliberate handball, is **not considered to have gained an advantage, unless** it was a **deliberate save by any opponent**.

***** Coaches & Players: note the specific differentiation between the words "PLAYED" and "SAVED" in the Law's definitions. *****

DELIBERATE PLAY: “Deliberate play” (excluding deliberate handball) is when a player has control of the ball with the possibility of passing the ball to a team-mate; gaining possession of the ball; **or clearing the ball** (e.g. by kicking or heading it).

NO OFFSIDE OFFENCE: There is no offside offence if a player receives the ball directly from:

- i. a goal kick
- ii. a throw-in
- iii. a corner kick

LAW 12 - Fouls and Misconduct

Direct and indirect free kicks and penalty kicks can only be awarded for offences committed when the ball is in play.

DIRECT FREE KICK: A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits any of the following offences against an opponent in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless, or using excessive force:

- i. Charges jumps at
- ii. kicks or attempts to kick
- iii. pushes
- iv. strikes or attempts to strike (including head-butt)
- v. tackles or challenges
- vi. trips or attempts to trip

If an offence involves contact, it is penalized by a direct free kick.

Careless is when a player shows a lack of attention or consideration when making a challenge or acts without precaution. No disciplinary sanction is needed.

Reckless is when a player acts with disregard to the danger to, or consequences for, an opponent and must be cautioned.

Excessive force is when a player exceeds the necessary use of force and/or endangers the safety of an opponent and must be sent off.

A direct free kick is awarded if a player commits any of the following offences:

- i. a handball offence (except for the goalkeeper within their penalty area),
- ii. holds an opponent,
- iii. impedes an opponent with contact,
- iv. bites or spits at someone,
- v. throws an object at the ball, an opponent, a Match official, or makes contact with the ball with a held object

HANDLING THE BALL: For the purpose of determining handball offences, the upper boundary of the arm is in line with the bottom of the armpit. Not every touch of a player's hand/arm with the ball is an offence.

It is a **Handling the Ball** offence if a player:

- i. deliberately touches the ball with their hand/arm, for example moving the hand/arm towards the ball.
- ii. touches the ball with their hand/arm when it has made their body unnaturally bigger. A player is considered to have made their body unnaturally bigger when the position of their hand/arm is not a consequence of, or justifiable by, the player's body movement for that specific situation. By having their hand/arm in such a position, the player takes a risk of their hand/arm being hit by the ball and being penalized.
- iii. scores in the opponents' goal:
 - a. directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper
 - b. immediately after the ball has touched their hand/arm, even if accidental.

The goalkeeper has the same restrictions on handling the ball as any other player outside the penalty area. If the goalkeeper handles the ball inside their penalty area when not permitted to do so, an indirect free kick is awarded but there is no disciplinary sanction. However, if the offence is playing the ball a second time (with or without the hand/arm) after a restart before it touches another player, the goalkeeper must be sanctioned if the offence stops a promising attack or denies an opponent or the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity.

INDIRECT FREE KICK: An indirect free kick is awarded if a player:

- i. plays in a dangerous manner.
- ii. impedes the progress of an opponent without any contact being made.
- iii. is guilty of dissent, using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s) or other verbal offences.
- iv. prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from the hands or kicks or attempts to kick the ball when the goalkeeper is in the process of releasing it.
- v. initiates a deliberate trick for the ball to be passed (including from a free kick or goal kick) to the goalkeeper with the head, chest, knee etc. to circumvent the Law, whether or not the goalkeeper touches the ball with the hands; the goalkeeper is penalized if responsible for initiating the deliberate trick
- vi. commits any other offence, not mentioned in the Laws, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player

GOALKEEPER PENALTIES: An indirect free kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, commits any of the following offences:

- i. controls the ball with the hand/arm for **more than six (6) seconds** before releasing it
- ii. touches the ball with the hand/arm after releasing it and before it has touched another player
- iii. **touches the ball with the hand/arm**, unless the goalkeeper has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after:
 1. the ball has been **deliberately** kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate.
 2. receiving the ball **directly from a throw-in** taken by a team-mate.

A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball with the hand(s) when:

- i. the ball is between the hands or between the hand and any surface (e.g. ground, own body) or by touching it with any part of the hands or arms, **except** if the ball rebounds from the goalkeeper or the goalkeeper has made a save.
- ii. holding the ball in the outstretched open hand.
- iii. bouncing it on the ground or throwing it in the air.

A goalkeeper **cannot be challenged**, by an opponent, when in control of the ball with the hand(s).

PLAYING IN A DANGEROUS MANNER: Playing in a dangerous manner is any action that, while trying to play the ball, threatens injury to someone (including the player themselves) and includes preventing a nearby opponent from playing the ball for fear of injury.

A “scissors” or bicycle kick is **NOT** permissible and is considered “dangerous play” by default.

IMPEDING THE PROGRESS OF AN OPPONENT WITHOUT CONTACT:

- i. Impeding the progress of an opponent means moving into the opponent’s path to obstruct, block, slow down or force a change of direction when the ball is not within playing distance of either player.
- ii. All players have a right to their position on the field of play; being in the way of an opponent is different from moving into the way of an opponent.
- iii. A player may shield the ball by taking a position between an opponent and the ball if the ball is within playing distance and the opponent is not held off with the arms or body. If the ball is within playing distance, an opponent may fairly charge the player.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION: The referee has the authority to take disciplinary action from entering the field of play for the pre-Match inspection until leaving the field of play after the Match ends (including penalties (penalty shoot-out)).

ADVANTAGE PLAYED: If the referee plays the advantage for an offence for which a caution/sending-off could have been issued had play been stopped, this caution/sending-off must be issued when the ball is next out of play. However, if the offence was denying the opposing team an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, the player is cautioned for unsporting behavior; if the offence was interfering with or stopping a promising attack, the player is not cautioned. Advantage should not be applied in situations involving serious foul play, violent conduct or a second Cautionable offence.

CAUTIONABLE OFFENSES: A player or substitute player is **cautioned** (issued a Yellow Card) if guilty of:

- i. delaying the restart of play
- ii. dissent by word or action
- iii. entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission
- iv. failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a dropped ball, corner kick, free kick, or throw-in
- v. being an ongoing problem, having a pattern of offenses
- vi. unsporting behavior

Where two separate cautionable offences are committed (even in close proximity), they should result in two cautions, for example if a player enters the field of play without the required permission and commits a reckless tackle or stops a promising attack with a foul/handball, etc.

CAUTIONS FOR UNSPORTING BEHAVIOR: There are different circumstances when a player must be cautioned for unsporting behavior, including if a player does any of the following:

- i. attempts to deceive the referee, e.g. by feigning injury or pretending to have been fouled (simulation)
- ii. changes places with the goalkeeper during play or without the referee's permission
- iii. commits in a reckless manner a direct free kick offence
- iv. handles the ball to interfere with or stop a promising attack, except where the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence
- v. denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick for a non-deliberate handball offence
- vi. commits any other offence which interferes with or stops a promising attack, except where the referee awards a penalty kick for an offence which was an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball
- vii. denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing an offence which was an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball and the referee awards a penalty kick
- viii. handles the ball in an attempt to score a goal (whether or not the attempt is successful) or in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent a goal

- ix. makes unauthorized marks on the field of play
- x. plays the ball when leaving the field of play after being given permission to leave
- xi. **shows a lack of respect for the game**
- xii. initiates a deliberate trick for the ball to be passed (including from a free kick or goal kick) to the goalkeeper with the head, chest, knee etc. to circumvent the Law, whether or not the goalkeeper touches the ball with the hands; the goalkeeper is cautioned if responsible for initiating the deliberate trick
- xiii. verbally distracts an opponent during play or at a restart

CELEBRATING A GOAL: Players can celebrate when a goal is scored, but the celebration must not be excessive; choreographed celebrations are not encouraged and must not cause excessive time-wasting.

Leaving the field of play to celebrate a goal is not a cautionable offence but players should return as soon as possible.

A player must be cautioned, even if the goal is disallowed, for:

- i. Climbing onto a perimeter fence and/or approaching the spectators in a manner which causes safety and/or security issues.
- ii. Acting in a provocative, derisory or inflammatory way.
- iii. Covering the head or face with a mask or other similar item.
- iv. Removing the shirt or covering the head with the shirt.**
- v. Delaying the restart of play.
- vi. Referees must caution players who delay the restart of play by:
 - a. Appearing to take a throw-in but suddenly leaving it to a teammate to take.
 - b. Delaying leaving the field of play when being substituted.
 - c. Excessively delaying a restart.
 - d. Kicking or carrying the ball away or provoking a confrontation by deliberately touching the ball after the referee has stopped play.
 - e. Taking a free kick from the wrong position to force a retake.

SENDING-OFF OFFENSES: A player, substitute or substituted player who commits any of the following offences is sent off:

- i. denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a deliberate handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- ii. denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offence outside their own penalty area
- iii. denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick (unless as outlined below)
- iv. serious foul play
- v. biting or spitting at someone

- vi. violent conduct
- vii. using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s) receiving a second caution in the same Match

A substitute or substituted player who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area.

DENYING A GOAL SCORING OR AN OBVIOUS GOAL-SCORING OPPORTUNITY (DOGSO):

Where a player commits an offence against an opponent within their own penalty area which denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offender is cautioned if the offence was an attempt to play the ball or a challenge for the ball; in all other circumstances (e.g. holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.), the offending player must be sent off.

Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a deliberate handball offence, the player is sent off wherever the offence occurs (except a goalkeeper within their own penalty area).

Where a player denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by committing a non-deliberate handball offence and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offender is cautioned.

A player, sent-off player, substitute or substituted player who enters the field of play without the required referee's permission and interferes with play or an opponent and deny the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity is guilty of a sending-off offence.

The following must be considered:

- i. distance between the offence and the goal.
- ii. general direction of the play.
- iii. likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball.
- iv. location and number of defenders.

SERIOUS FOUL PLAY:

A tackle or challenge that endangers the safety of an opponent or uses excessive force or brutality must be sanctioned as serious foul play. Any player who lunges at an opponent in challenging for the ball from the front, from the side or from behind using one or both legs, with excessive force or endangers the safety of an opponent is guilty of serious foul play.

VIOLENT CONDUCT:

Violent conduct is when a player uses or attempts to use excessive force or brutality against an opponent when not challenging for the ball, or against a team-mate, team official, Match official, spectator or any other person, regardless of whether contact is made.

In addition, a player who, when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the force used was negligible.

TEAM OFFICIALS: Team Officials are defined as coaches, assistant coaches, and managers. Where an offence is committed by someone from the technical area (substitute, substituted player, sent-off player or team official) and the offender cannot be identified, the head coach in the technical area will receive the sanction.

WARNING: The following offences should usually result in a warning; repeated or blatant offences should result in a caution or sending-off:

- i. entering the field of play in a respectful/non-confrontational manner
- ii. failing to cooperate with a Match official e.g. ignoring an instruction/request from an assistant referee or the fourth official
- iii. minor/low-level disagreement (by word or action) with a decision
- iv. occasionally leaving the confines of the technical area without committing another offence

SIN-BIN (BLUE CARD): A blue card in soccer is a proposed new card that would send a player to a "sin bin" for 10 minutes as punishment for certain offenses. This Card is NOT approved by the FA for use globally, and thus is NOT approved for use in GYS Matches.

CAUTION (YELLOW CARD): Caution offences include (but are not limited to):

- i. clearly/persistently not respecting the confines of their team's technical area
- ii. delaying the restart of play by their team
- iii. deliberately entering the technical area of the opposing team (non-confrontational)
- iv. dissent by word or action including:
 - a. throwing/kicking drinks bottles or other objects
 - b. action(s) which show(s) a clear lack of respect for the Match official(s) e.g. sarcastic clapping
- v. excessively/persistently gesturing for a red or yellow card
- vi. excessively showing the 'TV signal' for a VAR 'review
- vii. acting in a provocative or inflammatory manner
- viii. persistent unacceptable behavior (including repeated warning offences)
- ix. showing a lack of respect for the game

SENDING-OFF (RED CARD): A sending-off offence includes (but are not limited to):

- i. delaying the restart of play by the opposing team e.g. holding onto the ball,

- kicking the ball away, obstructing the movement of a player
- ii. deliberately leaving the technical area to:
 - 1. show dissent towards, or remonstrate with, a Match official
 - 2. act in a provocative inflammatory manner
- iii. entering the opposing technical area in an aggressive or confrontational manner
- iv. deliberately throwing/kicking an object onto the field of play
- v. entering the field of play to:
 - 1. confront a Match official (including at half-time and full-time)
 - 2. interfere with play, an opposing player or a Match official
- vi. physical or aggressive behavior (including spitting, biting kicking, tripping, jumping at, striking, hitting (or attempting to do any of the previous)) towards an opposing player, substitute, team official, Match official or any other person.
- vii. Charging from behind, holding, grabbing or committing any intentional violent act resulting in a player receiving an injury – including oneself.
- viii. receiving a second caution in the same Match
- ix. using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s)
- x. violent conduct
- xi. Offences where an object t (or the ball) is thrown

MISCONDUCT BY A PARTY OTHER THAN A TEAM OFFICIAL OR PLAYER:

Additionally, ANY actions listed in LAW 12 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT committed by a party other than a Player, Coach, Assistant Coach or Team Official; and that party can be identified; the COACH of the corresponding team shall be issued the Caution or Send Off.

LAW 13 - Free Kicks

TYPES OF FREE KICK

Direct and indirect free kicks are awarded to the opposing team of a player, substitute, substituted or sent-off player, or team official guilty of an offence.

INDIRECT FREE KICK SIGNAL:

The referee indicates an indirect free kick by raising the arm above the head; **this signal is maintained until the kick has been taken** and the ball touches another player, goes out of play or it is clear that a goal cannot be scored directly.

An indirect free kick must be retaken if the referee fails to signal that the kick is indirect, and the ball is kicked directly into the goal.

BALL ENTERING THE GOAL: (Direct and Indirect Kicks defined)

The ball entering a goal as the direct result of a FREE KICK is scored in the following manner:

- i. if a direct free kick is kicked directly into the **opponents' goal**, a goal is awarded
- ii. if an **indirect free kick** is kicked directly into the **opponents' goal**, a goal kick is awarded
- iii. if a **direct or indirect free kick** is kicked directly into the team's **own goal**, a corner kick is awarded

On a **direct free kick, the ball may be kicked directly into the goal for a score by the player taking the kick.** The direct free kick is taken at the spot where the foul occurred unless it is within the penalty box. Then a penalty kick is awarded.

QUICKLY TAKING A FREE KICK: **Quick free kick** is defined as A free kick taken (with the referee's permission) very quickly after play was stopped.

A free kick can be taken quickly when (1) the referee permits it **and** (2) the ball is stationary, **and** (3) the kick is taken from the correct position, **and** (4) no player is injured, **and** (5) the referee has not distracted the offending team.

A team may choose to take a quick free kick to surprise the defense or take advantage of their poor positioning. However, the kicking team gives up the right to retake the kick if an opponent within 10 yards intercepts the ball. **The referee has full discretion on whether to allow a quick free kick.**

DIRECT KICKS AND THE "WALL": Until the ball is in play, all opponents must remain at least ten (10) yards from the ball, unless they are on their own goal line between the goalposts, OR outside the penalty area for free kicks inside the opponents' penalty area.

Where three or more defending team players form a 'wall,' all attacking team players must remain at least 1 yd from the 'wall' until the ball is in play. The attacking team members may not join in the wall or attempt to distract the goalkeeper.

INDIRECT FREE KICK

A goal can be scored **only if the ball is touched by one or more players from either team, after it is kicked into play** and before it enters the goal.

FREE KICK REQUIREMENTS

There are a few rules that are followed on a free kick, they are:

- i. The Referee will signal an indirect free kick by putting one arm straight up into the air.
- ii. The ball must be stationary when it is kicked.

- iii. The kicker may kick the ball if the opponents are closer than **ten (10)** yards if he wishes (see QUICK FREE KICK).
- iv. The kicker may ask the Referee to move the opponents back **ten (10)** yards from the ball. The kicker **must then wait** until the Referee blows his whistle before taking the free kick.
- v. If a free kick is taken within **ten (10)** yards of the opponent's goal, opposing players may stand on their own goal line between the goal posts.
- vi. A free kick **by the defending team within its own goal area** may be taken from any point within the half of the goal area in which the free kick was awarded.
- vii. An **indirect free kick** by the attacking team within the defending teams goal area is taken on the six (6) yard line at the point nearest to where the foul was committed. (The six-yard line is the line that outlines the goal area).
- viii. The player taking the free kick must not play the ball again until it has been kicked/touched by another player, from either team.

LAW 14 - Penalty Kick

A penalty kick is awarded if a player commits a direct free kick offense inside their penalty area, or off the field as part of play as laid out in Laws 12 and 13. A goal maybe scored directly from a penalty kick.

- i. The ball must be stationary, with part of the ball touching or overhanging the penalty mark., and the goalposts, crossbar, and the goal net must not be moving.
- ii. The player taking the penalty kick must be clearly identified.
- iii. All players except the goalkeeper must remain outside the penalty area and penalty arc until the kick is taken.
- iv. The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, until the ball is kicked. The goalkeeper must not behave in a way that unfairly distracts the kicker, ex: delay the taking of the kick or touch the goalposts, crossbar or goal net.

The **players other than the kicker and goalkeeper** must be:

at least 9.15 m (10 yds) from the penalty mark
behind the penalty mark
inside the field of play
outside the penalty area

After the players have taken positions in accordance with this Law, the referee signals for the penalty kick to be taken.

The player taking the penalty kick must kick the ball forward; backheeling (kicking with the heel) is permitted provided the ball moves forward.

When the ball is kicked, the defending goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot touching, in line with, or behind, the goal line.

The ball is in play when it clearly moves.

The kicker may not play the ball again until it has touched another player (the goalpost and crossbar do NOT count).

The penalty kick is completed when the ball stops moving, goes out of play or the referee stops play for an offense.

ENCROACHMENT: is when a player enters the penalty area or penalty arc before the ball is kicked.

- i. If a **defender encroaches**, then a scoring shot counts, and a non-scoring shot is retaken.
- ii. If an **attacker encroaches**, a scoring shot is disallowed, and the kick is retaken. If the shot was non-scoring then the defending team gets an indirect free kick or a goal kick depending on where the ball is when the Referee blows his whistle.
- iii. If **both teams encroach**, the penalty kick is retaken whether it was a scoring shot or not.

3. Summary table

	Outcome of the penalty kick	
	Goal	No goal
Encroachment by attacking player	<u>Impact: penalty is retaken</u> <u>No impact: goal</u>	<u>Impact: indirect free kick</u> <u>No impact: no retake</u>
Encroachment by defending player	<u>Impact: goal</u> <u>No impact: goal</u>	<u>Impact: penalty is retaken</u> <u>No impact: no retake</u>
Encroachment by defending and attacking player	<u>Impact: penalty is retaken</u> <u>No impact: goal</u>	<u>Impact: penalty is retaken</u> <u>No impact: no retake</u>
Offence by goalkeeper	Goal	Not saved: penalty is not retaken (unless kicker is clearly impacted) Saved: penalty is retaken and warning for goalkeeper; caution for any further offence(s)
Goalkeeper and kicker offend at the same time	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Ball kicked backwards	Indirect free kick	Indirect free kick
'Illegal' feinting	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for kicker
Wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker	Indirect free kick and caution for wrong kicker

LAW 15 - Throw-in

A throw-in is taken to restart a Match after the ball goes out of play over the touchline. A throw-in is taken by a player from the team, which did not touch the ball last.

The player throwing the ball in must have both feet on the ground and both hands on the ball over his head, facing the field.

Both feet must remain on or behind the touchline. The thrower must throw the ball with equal strength from both hands from the back of the head and over the top of the head.

The thrower must not play the ball again until another player from either team has touched the ball.

A player cannot score a goal directly from a throw-in.

A player in the offside position receiving the ball directly from a throw-in **is not offside**.

LAW 16- Goal Kick

A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the attacking team, and a goal is not scored.

A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents.

The ball must be stationary and is kicked from ANY POINT WITHIN THE GOAL AREA by a player from the defending team.

The ball is in play when it clearly moves.

The opposing team must **remain outside of the penalty area until the ball completely leaves the goal area (Youth Soccer)**. (NOTE: FA - Opponents must remain outside the penalty area until the ball is kicked).

The goal kick is played again if the ball does not leave the penalty area, if the ball crosses the goal line before leaving the penalty area or if the ball is played again by a player from either team before it leaves the penalty area.

The kicker may not play the ball again until another player from either team touches the ball. **A player in the offside position receiving the ball directly from a goal kick is not offside.**

LAW 17- Corner Kick

A corner kick is awarded when the **whole of the ball** passes over the goal line, on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the defending team, and a goal is not scored.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team; if the ball directly enters the kicker's goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opponents.

The corner kick is taken from **within the corner arc** on the side of the field where the ball went out of play.

The ball must be stationary.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves. It does NOT need to leave the corner area.

The Corner post shall not be moved.

The corner kick may be taken by any player on the attacking team and the kicker is **allowed to score a goal by kicking the ball directly into the goal.**

The opponents must be 10 yards back from the ball on a corner kick.

The kicker is not allowed to play the ball again until a player from either team touches the ball.

A player in the offside position receiving the ball directly from a corner kick is not offside.

VII. US YOUTH SOCCER: UNDER 12 PLAYING RECOMMENDATIONS

FIFA Laws of the Game - <https://www.ussoccer.com/referees/laws-of-the-game>

Law 1 – The Field of Play

Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. *Field sizes are modified herein by Grace to fit available space.*

Length: minimum 70 yards maximum 80 yards

Width: minimum 45 yards maximum 55 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of **eight (8) yards** is marked around it.

The Goal area: Conform to FIFA.

The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, fourteen (14) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of fourteen (14) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a **penalty mark** is made ten (10) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistance to them.

The Penalty Arc: An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area.

Flag posts: Conform to FIFA.

The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA.

Goals: Conform to FIFA with the exception that the maximum distance between the posts is eighteen (21) feet and the maximum distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (7) feet.

Law 2 – The Ball

- i. “U11” (D3 & D2) Size four (4).
- ii. “U6” (D4) Size three (3)
- iii. “U14” (D1) Conform to FIFA; Size five (5)

Law 3 – The Number of Players

A Match (youth soccer) is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than nine players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A Match may not start if either team consists of fewer than eight players. Grace modified herein – see chart.

Law 4 – The Players Equipment

Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

Law 5 – The Referee

Grace Modified: whenever possible use U.S.S.F. registered referees.

Law 6 – The Assistant Referee

Use U.S.S.F. registered referees or club linesmen/women.

Law 7 – Duration of the Match

Conform to FIFA with the exception of the Match being divided into two (2) halves of thirty (30) minutes each. There shall be a half-time interval of five (5) minutes.

Grace modified herein; 6 min.

Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play:

Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) yards from the ball until it is in play.

Law 9 – The Ball In and Out of Play:

Conform to FIFA.

Law 10 – The Method of Scoring:

Conform to FIFA.

Law 11 – Offside:

Conform to FIFA.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct:

Conform to FIFA with the exception that an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the infraction if a player intentionally makes contact with the ball using his or her head. “Heading the Ball”

Law 13 – Free Kicks:

Conform to FIFA with the exception that opponents are at least ten (10) yards from the ball.

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick:

Conform to FIFA with the exception that the penalty mark is at **ten (10) yards**. ~~and that players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight (8) yards from the penalty mark.~~

Law 15 – The Throw-In:

Conform to FIFA.

Law 16 – The Goal Kick:

Conform to FIFA.

Law 17 – The Corner Kick:

Conform to FIFA. ~~with the exception that opponents remain at least eight (8) yards away from the ball until it is in play.~~

IX. US YOUTH SOCCER ADDENDUM - MODIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GAME FOR U12

Law 1 - FIELD OF PLAY

Dimensions:

- i. The Field of Play dimensions are smaller to accommodate the eight-versus-eight game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of ten- and eleven-year-old children.
- ii. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Field Markings:

- iii. per FIFA with the exception of the center circle, penalty area, penalty mark and penalty arc.

Goals:

- iv. the goal, 7 x 21 feet.
- v. Modified by Grace (D1& D2: 27' x 8' / D3: 12' x 6.5')

Law 2 - The Ball

- i. must be a size four. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, headed, dribbled, caught, thrown, and passed.
- ii. Grace modified the above.

Law 3 - The Number of Players

- i. Deleted
- ii. Deleted

Law 6 - The Assistant Referees

- i. per FIFA. Use registered referees or club linesmen/women.
- ii. Grace modified the above.

Law 7 - The Duration of the Match

- i. per FIFA with the exception of the halves being 30 minutes each.
- ii. Grace modified the above.

Law 8 - The Start and Restart of Play

- i. per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle (*added: or ten (10) yards, whichever is more*).

Law 10 - Goal Scored

- i. shall conform to FIFA and the sections concerning Winning Team and Competition Rules shall conform to US Youth Soccer guidelines.

Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct

- i. Heading banned in games at ages U13 and younger, pursuant to US Youth Soccer Guideline

Law 13 - Free Kicks

- i. Conform to FIFA ~~The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.~~

Law 14 - The Penalty Kick

- i. Conform to FIFA ~~with the exception that the penalty mark is ten (10) yards from the center of the goal line and that players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight yards from the penalty mark.~~
- ii. The distance of ten (10) yards conforms to the radius of the center circle. The distance of ten yards from the center of the goalmouth for the penalty mark fits within the reduced dimensions of the penalty area and is a reasonable distance for the kick.

Law 17- The Corner Kick:

- i. Conform to FIFA. ~~The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.~~

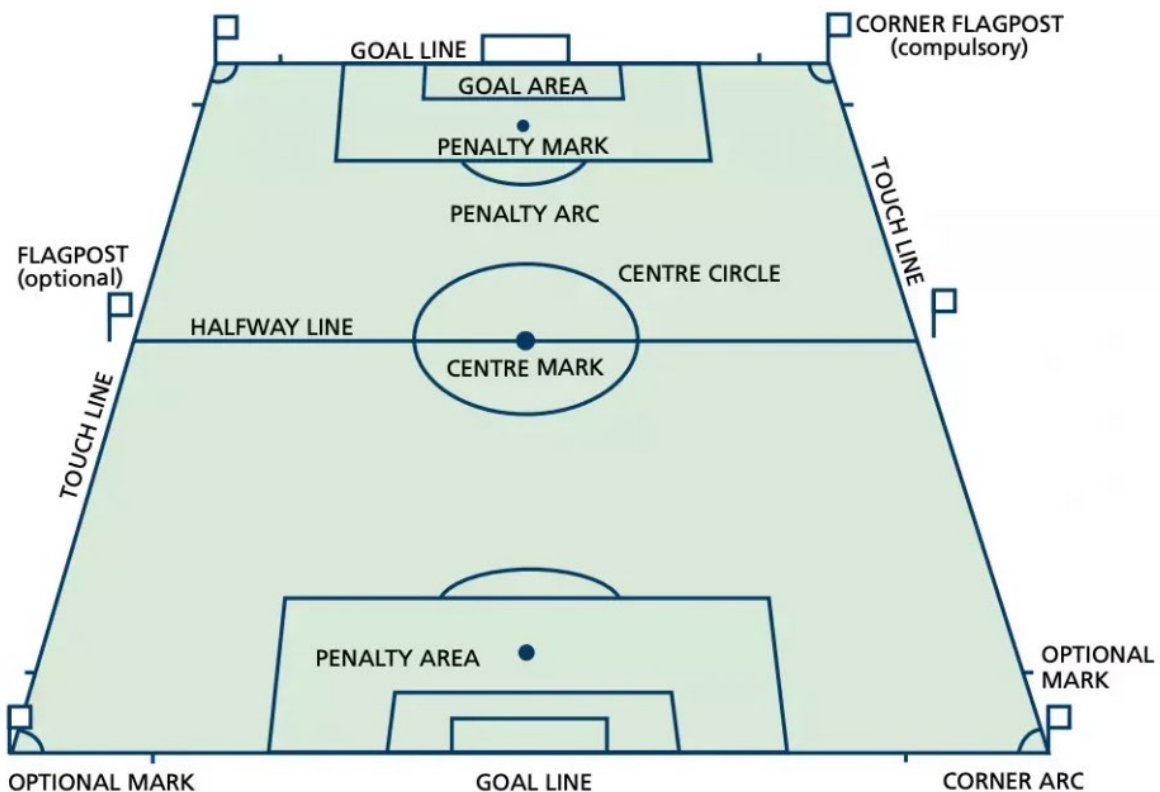
X. LEAGUE RULES, MODIFICATIONS & ADDITIONAL GENERAL INFORMATION

a. FIELD OF PLAY - Sizing

- i. The dimensions and markings of the field of play and goals shall be at the discretion of GYS. All field sizes are based on the division and available space.
- ii. All fields will be clearly marked prior to Opening Day. Adjustments may also be made to goal size, goal box, and penalty box as appropriate.

b. FIELD OF PLAY - Terminology

- i. Sections, Line and Areas on the field are described as follows:



c. COACHES BOX (“Technical Area”)

- i. A Coaches technical area (Coach’s Box) on each side of the halfway line shall be marked by two lines off the field of play and perpendicular to the touch line. The area shall be at least as long as the diameter of the center circle.
- ii. Currently, in GYS, the Coach’s Box end line extends perpendicularly out from the

touch line starting at the imaginary 90-degree intersection of the top of the penalty box's extension and the touch line; one on each side of the field. The depth of the box should be approximately four (4) feet.

- iii. A Coach's Box shall be placed, one on each side of the field; one for each team.
- iv. The Coach's Box is off limits to any Parent or Spectator.
- v. Coaches shall remain on their side of the field (Home vs. Away)

d. SEATING & SPECTATING AREAS

- i. Parents & Spectators should keep a distance of at least 5 FEET from the Touch Line. Additionally, no parents, Coach, or spectators are allowed to sit or stand in the following areas:
 - i. The area behind the goal line (end of the field).
 - ii. The area starts at the imaginary 90-degree intersection of the top of the penalty box's extension and the touch line and continuing to the corner of the field closest to the top of the penalty box's extension.
- ii. Parents should be sitting behind the Coach's box, not blocking any access or visibility of the Coach or AR to the full field.
- iii. Any overflow, beyond the Coach's box line; should remain 10 YARDS back from the touch line.

e. COACHING vs. SPECTATING

- i. Coaches Coach - while Spectators and Parents watch and cheer.
- ii. **At NO POINT shall a Parent or Spectator talk to the Coach, Referee, or offer ANY Coaching or direction to a player on the field.**
- iii. This Match time belongs to the players and the Coaches, they have worked hard at practices on drills, plans, and strategies for this day. Let them do their "job;" and you do yours.
- iv. **Cheering with Directions:** Cheering on your player by giving motivational directions, guidance or "helpful hints" IS COACHING and is not permitted.
- v. **IF you want to Coach; please see the League Director or your player's Coach for directions on how to become a Coach.**

f. AGGRESSIVE PLAY

Soccer is considered a "Non-Contact" sport, while at the same time it includes actions such as legal charging, running side by side, attacking the ball and the kicking of the ball directly in the direction of either blocking players or the goalkeeper. It contains terms like "Attacking Player," "Attacking Team", "Attacking Half", "Charging", "Charging Team, and "Defensive player"; and that's in just the first four letters of the soccer dictionary.

Aggressive play in soccer should be looked upon as playing with assertiveness and effort, while still maintaining control and playing clean. It is very different from being violent, "winning at all costs", or "doing whatever it takes". Here are some tips

for teaching and playing aggressively in soccer:

- i. **Be confident:** Believe you will win the ball when you tackle.
- ii. **Do not be afraid:** Be fearless on the field.
- iii. Practice pressurizing: Make it difficult for the opposing team to have the ball.
- iv. **Tackle from the side or front:** Tackling from behind is risky, a violation of the rules, and can lead to injuries.
- v. **Focus on your role:** Play your role with full effort and determination.
- vi. **Set goals:** Set process goals to make it easier to take chances.
- vii. **Do not fear mistakes:** Mistakes are a necessary part of improving.
- viii. **Hustling & determined play** is especially important in both offense and defense. If your team does not hustle and play with determination, you will almost always lose to a team that is significantly more determined.

When GYS refers to **aggressive play**, we mean hustling, not being afraid of making minor contact and "winning" the attack for the free ball ("50/50 balls"). The most "aggressive" team will usually "win" most of the 50/50 balls, will NOT commit an offense in doing so, and will usually win the game.

It is critical that your defenders are Brave and not afraid of contact - Bravery is an effective motivational word because all kids want to be Brave (but not necessarily wanting to make negative contact with other players).

Unacceptable Aggressive Play:

- i. Elbows shall not extend beyond 30 degrees from the armpit and shall not intentionally be used to contact another player.
- ii. Pushing, shoving, or slapping another player is **forbidden**.
- iii. **Retaliation** or "revenge" against another player for an **actual or perceived** foul made against the retaliating player is forbidden and shall be treated severely, with the **combination** of the following: RC, YC, Verbal caution, a direct kick or a penalty kick.
- iv. Verbal threats, bullying, or physical taunting are forbidden.

Unsportsmanlike conduct is forbidden.

Unsportsmanlike conduct is described as behavior that is considered unacceptable in sports and violates the rules of fair play and sportsmanship. It can include actions that are **disrespectful to** other players, Officials, Coaches, or even to **the spirit of the game**. Some examples of unsportsmanlike conduct are as follows: Fighting or physical altercations, verbal abuse or harassing comments, taunting an opponent or Official, excessive celebration after a significant play, **feigning an injury**, illegal holds, **being a bad loser**, and intolerant chants

g. THROW-INS

- i. Opposing players must be at least two yards from the ball until it has been thrown
- ii. Training in throw-in techniques may begin at age 7 and up.

h. GOALKEEPER PUNTS

- i. At this time, GYS does not have any rules against a Goalkeeper punting the ball. Players downfield of a goalkeeper's punt are not allowed to head the ball.

i. HOME vs. AWAY

- i. Generally, the **HOME** team occupies the side of the field closer to the school buildings, this is generally the **SOUTH** or **WEST** side of a particular field.

j. OFFICIALS SIGNALS

- i. Generally, these are the Signals used by Referees on the field.



XI. PLAY-OFFS, CHAMPIONSHIPS AND OVERTIME

a. OVERTIME

- i. If a **playoff Match** ends in a tie score at the end of regulation time, the Match will be extended for a 10-minute overtime consisting of two five-minute periods.
- ii. This overtime period is **NOT a “sudden-death, or a first-goal-wins” format**. The full 10-minute overtime will be played. The Referee may allow a three-minute break before the start of overtime, and two-minute breaks before a second OT period and again before the beginning of any penalty “shoot-out” kicks from the penalty mark.
- iii. All players (except those who have received an RC) are eligible to play in the overtime period, irrespective of the amount of playing time in regulation. No substitutions will be allowed during overtime play except in the case of injury. Substitutions may be made before the start of an overtime period.
- iv. If the Match is still tied at the end of overtime, the Match will then be decided by penalty “shoot-out” kicks.
- v. Players injured during regulation play, and removed (and have not subsequently returned) are allowed to play in the OT period; however, a Coach should look cautiously at this player’s request to play, as they were just previously unable to return to the Match prior to OT.
- vi. See **Substitutions** regarding Goalkeeper substitutions for shoot-outs.

XII. D4 – MICRO SOCCER RULES

a. MOST IMPORTANT

- i. The most important part of Micro Soccer is to make sure that the kids are having a fun time. While the rules of the Match are particularly important for uniformity on the field, it is just as important to keep the Match moving in an enjoyable manner. Probably the one thing that gets the kids the most excited on the field is when their parents are cheering them on from the sidelines, and not from their chairs on the opposite sides of the field. GYS wants to encourage the Coach to tell the parents that it is OK to be on the sidelines rooting for their kids.

b. MICRO ADJUSTMENTS TO THE RULES OF SOCCER

- i. Below are listed a few of the more important basic Soccer rules we would like to have taught and followed.
- ii. **The Apples, Bananas, and Oranges:**
 - i. Coaches should break up their team into three competing groups: they are the Apples (“A”), Bananas (“B”), and Oranges (“O”) respectively. Apples are the top 3-4 players on the field that day. The Bananas are your middle players and finally, the Oranges are your lower-level players. This separation is **BY SKILL – NOT BY AGE**.
 - ii. The idea is to have similar ability level players playing against each other. Coaches: **do not let your players know that a particular “choice of a fruit” means that one group is “better” than another - this is for your internal use only.**
 - iii. The best way to determine who is an A, B or O is to first pick your A’s and then the O’s. The players left over are your B’s. **Substitutions:** If by chance a player gets hurt or cannot finish a period, never sub an A for an O, only like kind ranked player can be substituted for like kind.
- iii. **Match Play:**
 - i. The Matches will be played with 3-4 players on the field at a time per side, 1 goalie and 2-3 forwards. Players will stay in their given position for an entire period and cannot be changed or substituted during the period except for injury.
 - ii. Each player will rotate through the three (3) positions and or sub during the course of the periods during the Match. Coaches should do their best to have each player experience each position at least once for an entire 7-minute period.
 - iii. The use of a spread sheet and a clipboard will be extremely helpful.
- iv. **Micro Fields & Match Play – How to:**
 - i. The MICRO (D4) Division has two fields (fields “A” and “B”). Field “A” is located nearest the street. Each weekly Match is played on BOTH fields’ “A” and “B” at the same time.

v. **Players & Team Make-up:**

- i. A Coach will divide his players into the three groups as noted above in section XII.b.ii. The head Coach of each team will (prior to the Match's start) decide which groups (i.e. the "Apples" & the "Bananas") will play against each other and on which field. Only players from the same group will play against each other (ex: apples vs. apples).
- ii. So, by way of example, the Apples would play each other on field "A" and Bananas would play each other on field "B". Resting Team: The third, and remaining group (in this example the "Oranges") will sit out the first 7-minute period; and thus, would initially be referred to as the "resting team".

vi. **Organization:**

- i. **Officiating:** Each 7-minute period (there will be a total of six) will be overseen or officiated by the Coach themselves. Historically, the best way to accomplish this is to have the two head Coaches take the 7-minute Match on field "A", while the Assistant Coaches officiate the other 7-minute Match on field "B".
- ii. **Resting vs. Playing:** When a group is resting, they must stay with their Coach, Assit. Coach, or team parent and cannot roam around the field. When a period ends the rested group should be ready to take the field; and please make sure the rested players know which position they will be in before the start of that period
- iii. **The Resting Team:** It will be VERY HELPFUL if you have your team mom/parent coordinate, manage the resting group, and prepare them to play the next Match. The better the resting group is managed, the faster the Match will progress.
- iv. **Corralling the Resting Team:** Remember – the players in the resting group MAY NOT wander around while the other Matches are underway.
 - a) **Hint:** There is a space between the two fields that can be used to "hold" the kids waiting their turn. The field's white lines on both sides can help as an invisible fence line.
- v. **Game time:** MICRO Division will play a total of 6 Matches, each 7 minutes long – allowing for each group (as there are three) to each play FOUR 7 min Matches. GAMES MUST START ON TIME.

vii. **MATCH PLAY ON THE MICRO FIELDS:**

- i. **Use of Hands:** Goalies can use their hands anywhere inside the Goalie box. When a Goalie picks up the ball, he can either throw it or free kick it. The coach should encourage the kids to get rid of the ball quickly when they are the goalie.

- ii. **Time limit:** Each period will last 7 minutes. A total of 6 periods (based upon times, heat index, and Coach availability) will be played. A parent volunteer will be needed as a timekeeper. The breaks between periods should only take about 1 minute; try and keep the Matches moving with as little down time as possible. Both fields start at the same time.
- iii. **Scoring:** Keeping a score is not important. While scoring a goal is fun, we do not keep score at this level. Please do not emphasize the score only the goal at the time. This is instructional soccer, everyone wins!
- iv. **Kicking at the Goalie:** When a Goalie reaches down for the ball the offensive players cannot continue kicking at the ball. This only applies when the Goalie is reaching down for the ball, and NOT if he/she is also trying to kick a ball that is still in play.
- v. **Hands Ball:** If a player other than the Goalie touches the ball with their hands “intentionally”, play will be called dead, and the opposing team will take possession of the ball at the point of contact with the hands. This will be a free kick. (There are NO penalty kicks in the D4 MICRO league). Remind the offending payer not to use their hands.
- vi. **Tripping:** If a player trips, pushes, or holds another player on purpose or on accident, play will be stopped, and a free kick will be awarded to the tripped player. Take a brief moment to explain to the offending player that he/she cannot grab, trip, push or pull on another player.

XIII. DISCREPANCIES, SCORING, ELIGIBILITY ISSUES, DECISIONS, RULINGS AND CHANGES

- a.** Any discrepancies in a decision, the score, remaining or available time, a player's eligibility, a player's caution (YC), being sent off (red card), etc. may be appealed to the League Director, and any decision by the League Director shall be final.

- b.** It should be **CLEARLY** understood that it is **VERY UNLIKELY** that a decision made by a Referee will be overruled, or an existing rule will be changed or modified to accommodate the wishes of a parent, group of parents, or a single player that wishes the rules changed or modified.