

TCC SOCCER STANDARDS

FIFA rules govern play. Some leniency regarding “off sides” rules is allowed for younger age divisions (under 10), but other universal (FIFA) soccer rules govern play. Coaches are asked to familiarize themselves with these on the FIFA web site.

EQUAL PLAY TIME: When rotating players in due to more players being present than may play on the field at one time or due to differing numbers being available on opposing teams on game days, ALL coaches are expected to play all of their players equal time on the field during games as best as they are able in fairness to all. This should result in all players playing at least 3 quarters of each game.

PLAYER SUBSTITUTION: This does not regard rotating players on a team (please refer to equal playing time above for this matter). Rather, this refers to “borrowing players” to fill out short teams on game days. If a team shows without a complete roster of players sufficient to field a team matching one’s opponent, it is acceptable to identify another player enrolled in the TCC program to fill out your team. This should be done with a modicum of good sense without endeavoring to pull in “ringers”, but only to make numbers equivalent. Players **MUST** be enrolled in the TCC program in order to assure that all appropriate waivers have been signed by the player’s parents.

“FAIR RESTRAINT:” Otherwise known as “PULLING BACK”... if certain teams are unbalanced resulting in game scores skewing grossly unbalanced during any games throughout the season (when one team leads another by **THREE** or **MORE** goals), the team in the lead should show prudent judgment by pulling back their higher skill players to defensive positions and/or directing those high skill players to pass forward to lower skill players. We are building character and emphasizing fairness more than winning in this league and, if this does not align with a coach’s philosophy, that individual should decline volunteering for leadership in this league via coaching.

PLAYER ROTATION: Related to “Fair Restraint,” it is strongly encouraged that all coaches rotate players to allow each the opportunity to play both offensive and defensive positions. This applies more practically to our younger age divisions (Pre K through Div II/i.e. under 8 y.o.s), and has flexibility to allow for reasonable exceptions including those children who are not confident enough to play Forward and prefer to play Full Back, as well as for selecting those children with a proclivity to play Goalie over those uncomfortable in that position. Additionally, as the season progresses, your players may each gravitate toward favored positions in which they fit more naturally, and it is not unreasonable to play these players more consistently in those positions. **HOWEVER**, in instances where games are skewed toward gross score disparity, advanced players should still be **PULLED BACK** to allow for games that are not unnecessarily demoralizing to others.

SHIN GUARDS should be worn under socks (thinner socks beneath are also a good idea) **AT ALL TIMES** both during practices and during games. Shin guards are an important safety item and children not wearing shin guards should not be allowed on field by coaches during practices and must not be allowed by the league administrator on field during games.

HAIR BANDS for hair that hangs below a player's eye brows or that swings from the sides of the players' heads into the players' eyes must be bound back by some manner of appropriate head gear (generally, either a head band or a scrunchy). Visual obstructions pose safety hazards that may result in unnecessary collisions on the field at worst and, at the very least, impair a player's ability to see the ball and play the game at the best of their ability. Players not having longer hair bound back out of their eyes should not be allowed on field by coaches during practices and must not be allowed by the league administrator on field during games.

PLAYING OUT OF AGE DIVISIONS: Players of exceptional skill may be considered to "play up" in the next older age division with approval of coaches and the league administrator. However, players are not allowed to "play down" in the next younger age division as a matter of safety. This includes involving an older child to fill out a team of younger children. While we appreciate an older sibling's willingness and availability in a pinch on game day, safety interests must outweigh inappropriate age differences.

EXTRA JERSEYS: Coaches should carry extra team uniforms in their bags of balls throughout the game season in case players from opposing teams need to "loan players" to a "short team" on game day. Ideally, this allows the player on loan to wear the same colors as the team on which they are playing.

GAME OFFICIATING: It remains our goal to allow for a constructive, recreational experience for all of our children that deemphasizes competition over developing skills and allowing fun to happen in a low intensity, low stress environment. To this end we look to coaches to officiate the games of our younger age divisions: Pre K through Division III (under 10 y.o.) and to be civil in working together (which in itself teaches more than simple soccer skills to children). Ideally, we also look for volunteer referees independent of parent/coaches to officiate games of older children (11 y.o & up). These referees may be a parent from one of the teams playing who can demonstrate objectivity and the parent/coaches of both teams playing should respect the official's calls during games with concerns registered to the league administrator off the game field. Even more ideally, if community members know of qualified adult volunteers who don't have children enrolled and who may officiate (like the wonderful High School soccer players who sometimes grace our fields), please refer these individuals to the league official!

The above standards are in place for the benefit of all players involved in our program and to the end of striving toward our overarching goals of supporting:

- FUN
- FAIR PLAY
- FUNDAMENTALS

LEAGUE SPECIFICS:

	Ball Size	Field & Goal	Game Duration	Coaches*	Officiating**
Pee Wee, 3-4 y.o.	3	Shorter half field & small goals	1 or 2, 6 minute 'halves	On field w/ players req'd	By coaches
Div. I, 5-6 y.o.	4	Half/cross field & small goals	4, 8 minute quarters	On field w/ players o.k.	By coaches
Div. II, 7-8 y.o.	4	Half/cross field & small goals	4, 10 minute quarters	On field w/ players o.k.	By coaches
Div. III, 9-10 y.o.	5	Full length field & large goals	4, 10 minute quarters	On sidelines	By volunteer parent
Div. IV, 11-12 y.o.	5	Full length field & large goals	4, 12 minute quarters	On sidelines	T.B.A.
Div. V, 13-14 y.o.	5	Full length field & large goals	2, 30 minute halves	On sidelines	T.B.A.

(* , ** , ***- please see following page for foot notes re: rationale for these standards.)

***Coaches** should actually be on field with their players in the **pre-k division** to help direct the flow of the game and aid learning. It may also be helpful if other selected parent volunteers (on the coach's lead) wish to support this flow on field. All other parents should spread out along both sidelines to keep both ball and players on the field of play, supporting better flow of the games (you'll see).

With **ages 5-8** it may also be helpful for the teams' coaches to walk the field with children (I practice this myself). This enables coaches to gently remind players to remain close to their positions and allows for other on the spot instructions in brief. As long as on field coaches remain calm, maintain awareness of children around them on the field, and make an effort to move about the field with caution, coaching opportunities during the game in those many "teachable moments" (coachable moments) can prove invaluable. However, if coaches in this age division are more comfortable remaining on the sidelines during games they are absolutely supported in this preference as well.

Players on Field at Game Time - Given the reduced size of our fields, our plan is to field 6 players (2 forwards, 2 halfbacks, and two fullbacks) & 1 goalie per team during games. This should allow for optimal 'touches' or ball handling experience per child and encourage players to play in their positions. With this in mind, if each team roster carries between 8 & 10 players, everyone should play most of their games with some substitution players on the sideline. It should also allow for one or two absences at games without 'shorting' a team.

****Officials** are generally unnecessary in younger age divisions where children are still learning the most basic fundamentals of the sport. In these divisions, coaches have proven to be sufficiently able to support the flow of the game while keeping momentum moving forward, thereby optimizing the fun factor. Somewhere along about ages 9 & up youth players become more highly competitive and physically stronger. Therefore, it is with the older age divisions that officials are commonly introduced

to the game. Officiating for ages 9 & older have customarily been done by volunteers who are either parents or youth volunteers (typically H.S. soccer players). If you are interested in volunteering to officiate or know teen agers with the interest and skill in volunteering, please refer them to the league administrator.

Parents are asked to abide the spirit of community and respect officials and the calls they make. Parent concerns regarding officials should be directed to the league administrator instead of confronting officials. Officials who are unable to demonstrate impartiality while officiating games may be thanked for their willingness to volunteer their time and asked by the league administrator to leave the field in the best interests of everyone involved.