



# **SYSA**

## **Rules of Competition**

**Updated and Adopted**

**May 2024**

## COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SYSA RULES AND REGULATIONS

**Resources:** In addition to these Rules, coaches should familiarize themselves with:

- The International Football Association Board Laws of the Game (IFAB Laws) ([www.theifab.com](http://www.theifab.com))
- The Washington Youth Soccer (WYS) Rules of Competition ([www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org](http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org)).

**Scope & Applicability:** The following rules apply to competitions sanctioned by SYSA, including its Fall League, the City Tournament, and its Spring League (together, “SYSA Competitions”).

### Definitions

**Member Clubs or Club:** Member Clubs, Club, and clubs are used interchangeably to reflect the membership of the Seattle Youth Soccer Association as defined in the SYSA By-Laws.

**Premier Player/Premier League:** A premier player is a select player who participates on a team that plays in the Elite Clubs National League (“ECNL”); Regional Club League (“RCL”); U.S. Club Soccer’s Super League; the Elite Academy League; and the Girls Academy League. At SYSA’s discretion, players on teams outside these leagues may be considered “Premier” based on the nature of the program, as described by the team and league in question. Considerations include where the team is in the club’s team hierarchy, whether the program includes year-round training, and other factors as determined by SYSA.

**Seasonal Year:** In recreational play, a seasonal year begins with the SYSA Fall Recreational Season for U10 and above (“fall league” or “fall soccer”), includes the City Tournament, and ends with the SYSA Spring Recreational Season (“spring league” or “spring soccer”) for U6 and above.

**Select Player/Select League:** A Select Player is a player participating on any team that uses tryouts as a basis for selection. This does not include school-based teams or leagues.

**SYSA Competition:** Includes fall league play at U10 and above, the SYSA City Tournament, spring league play for U6 and above, and any other SYSA-sanctioned and organized competition as may be created.

## 1. Game Rules

- 1.1 All SYSA league and tournament (collectively “SYSA Competitions”) play shall be governed by the IFAB Laws in effect on the first day of the month of July most recently preceding the start of the season.
- 1.2 The Washington Youth Soccer Rules of Competition are incorporated herein by reference. These SYSA Rules of Competition shall govern SYSA Competitions in cases of conflict.

**Note:** See the Appendix for tables summarizing common rules of play for SYSA Fall League, the City Tournament, and Spring League, as well as recommended rules for U9 and under divisions.

- 1.3 The use of offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or other actions concerning a player’s race, gender, sex, ethnic, or religious background are in all instances cause for a sending-off under IFAB Law.
- 1.4 Post-game formalities between teams (e.g. handshake lines) are encouraged and expected. Coaches should emphasize pre-game and post-game courtesy. A player may be disciplined for inappropriate conduct at any time.
- 1.5 If it has been determined that a game is abandoned by the referee due to actions of the coach, players, spectators, or any combination thereof, **NO REPLAY WILL BE GRANTED.**
  - 1.5.1 In case of abandonment, the referee shall determine which team was responsible for the abandonment or if both teams are equally responsible. The referee’s assignment of responsibility may be appealed to the Disciplinary Committee within 48 hours of the game. If the referee fails to make such a determination, the Disciplinary Committee shall make the determination.
  - 1.5.2 The final score for an abandoned game is determined as follows:
    - (a) If the team responsible for the abandonment is trailing when the game is abandoned, the score at that time shall be recorded as the final score.
    - (b) If the team responsible for the abandonment is leading when the game is abandoned, or if the game is tied, the game shall be considered forfeited and a score of 1-0 recorded in favor of the team not responsible for the abandonment.

## SYSA Rules of Competition

- (c) If both teams are deemed responsible for the abandonment, a loss of 0-1 shall be recorded for both teams.
- 1.5.3 Any team found responsible in whole or in part for the abandonment of SYSA-sanctioned tournament game shall be eliminated from the tournament.
- 1.5.4 The competition authorities shall ensure that any coach or player whose actions caused the abandonment of a game is referred to the Disciplinary Committee.
- 1.5.5 The standard sanction for a person causing the abandonment of a match shall be suspension from any SYSA competition for three games.
- 1.6 It is the goal to have referees assigned for all games for ages U10 and above, but it is not guaranteed. In case a referee is not available for any scheduled game, the teams' coaches shall work together prior to scheduled time of kick-off and be prepared to each provide a referee for one half each. Any person refereeing must be registered with either SYSA as a parent volunteer or current player, or with the Washington State Referee Committee or another referee sanctioning body accredited by US Soccer.

## 2. Uniforms

- 2.1 Notwithstanding these rules, the determination of whether a player is properly attired shall be at the sole discretion of the referee in accordance with the Laws of the Game and the spirit of recreational soccer.
- 2.2 All players of the same team on the field, other than Goalkeepers, must be attired in numbered jerseys.
  - 2.2.1 All players on the same team must wear different numbers.
    - (a) Numbers must be in block type, no less than six inches in height.
    - (b) Number color must contrast with jerseys.
    - (c) Numbers must be securely attached to jerseys and must not create a hazard.
  - 2.2.2 Jerseys shall include the SYSA logo measuring 2.5 to 3 inches in height. The logo should be placed in one of the following locations in descending order of preference:
    - (a) The upper left jersey sleeve, centered on a short sleeve, or centered on the upper half of a long sleeve.
    - (b) The right jersey sleeve as in (a).
    - (c) On either side of the chest, if there is no club logo on the chest.
    - (d) On the back of the jersey between the neckline and numbers.
  - 2.2.3 All jerseys for a given team must match to the satisfaction of the referee.
  - 2.2.4 In the event of a color clash, and at the discretion of the referee, the designated home team will change jerseys. Nothing herein should be construed as preventing the use of practice vests to effect a color change.
  - 2.2.5 Notwithstanding these rules, the referee shall have the sole discretion to determine the suitability of any jersey for use in a match, according to the Laws and in the spirit of recreational soccer.
- 2.3 Shin guards are mandatory and must be covered by socks.
- 2.4 Shoes are mandatory for all players.
- 2.5 Shorts or pants are mandatory for all players.

- 2.6 When playing in inclement weather, players shall be allowed to wear sweatpants or tights, soft hats, or gloves.
- 2.7 In alignment with the IFAB Laws for players equipment: match day officials may prohibit the use of any footwear or shin guards that they consider to be dangerous. Therefore, some non-soccer footwear including shoes with metal or metal-tipped studs, shoes with other spiked materials (including aluminum and plastic) showing, or any cleat with a toe stud is prohibited in SYSA-sanctioned play. (Most baseball, football and lacrosse shoes are not suitable.) Should a detachable cleat be worn down to the extent metal is exposed, the referee shall not allow that player to begin or continue with play until the cleat is repaired or the shoe replaced.
- 2.8 Under no circumstances may jewelry of any sort be worn in SYSA Competitions. Jewelry includes, but is not limited to: watches, rings, bracelets[c], chains, necklaces, earrings (including posts), hair barrettes, and other similar objects.
- 2.9 At the referee's discretion, players may wear non-dangerous protective or medical equipment, such as headgear, facemasks, casts, braces, knee and arm protectors, medical alert bracelets or necklaces, made of or covered by soft, lightweight padded material.
- 2.10 At the referee's discretion, religious items (e.g., headwear such as turban, yarmulkes, or hijab) mandated by a person's faith may be worn, but only if they do not pose a danger to the player wearing it or to the other players.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is strongly suggested that players and their coaches proactively communicate with SYSA concerning any religious items that are not soft prior to play to align on whether the item should be permitted and what safety precautions must be taken.

### 3. Team/Player Participation

3.1 Maximum roster sizes for each team participating in SYSA leagues shall be:<sup>2</sup>

3.1.1 For age group U10,12 players.

3.1.2 For age groups U11 & U12, 14 players.

3.1.3 For age groups U13 & U14, 18 players.

3.1.4 For age groups U15 through U19, up to 22 players may be registered, however, no more than 18 players shall be listed on the game sheet for, and participate in, a single match.

3.1.5 Exceptions to this rule may be granted under the procedures specified in the SYSA Administrative Regulations.

3.2 Except as specifically allowed under the SYSA Administrative Regulations, players shall not be allowed to register for, or participate on, more than one SYSA registered team during the same season.

**Note:** Exceptions to roster rules may not be honored by leagues or tournaments organized by WYS, such as League Washington and the State Recreational Cup.

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<sup>2</sup> For spring league play, SYSA recommends reduced roster sizes to account for small-sided games at U11 and older. See Appendix for recommended roster sizes.

#### 4. Coaching and Sideline Conduct

- 4.1 Each team shall have a technical area at every game.
  - 4.1.1 The entire technical area shall be no closer to the touchline than 2 yards.
  - 4.1.2 The technical area shall extend from a point along the touchline no closer than 18 yards to the corner of the field to a point on the same half of the field no closer than 2 yards to the halfway line.
- 4.2 Only those coaches, players, and team officials who are registered with SYSA for the current season may be present in the technical area.,
- 4.3 Each coach, team official, and substitute is to remain within the technical area during the game, unless permitted to enter the field by the referee.
  - 4.3.1 Each coach should instruct only their own players from within their own technical area ensuring that the tone is constructive and informative.
  - 4.3.2 Coaches may not employ mechanical or electronic devices to communicate with players.
  - 4.3.3 No person outside the technical area shall give instructions or directions to any player during a game.
  - 4.3.4 Nothing herein should be construed as preventing substitutes or team officials from leaving the technical area for reasons unrelated to the game, nor temporarily for reasons related to the game (e.g., to retrieve a stray ball, or check on the health of a player) as long as that person does not enter the field of play without the permission of the referee.
- 4.4 Spectators shall watch from the opposite sideline than that accommodating the technical areas, to the extent field conditions permit as solely determined by the match officials.
- 4.5 No coach, substitute, or player is to make derogatory remarks or gestures to the referees, other players, substitutes or spectators.
- 4.6 No coach, substitute, or player is to use profanity.
- 4.7 No coach, substitute, or player is to incite, in any manner, disruptive behavior of any kind.



- 4.8 Each coach, team official, and team shall be held accountable for the conduct of the spectators from their respective teams.
- 4.8.1 A referee may direct a coach to instruct any associated spectator to leave the vicinity of the field and not return if the spectator is causing a disruption. If the associated team cannot be identified, the coach of the team designated as the home team shall be held responsible.
- 4.8.2 The referee may caution a coach for Unsporting Behavior if a spectator associated with the coach's team disrupts a game.
- 4.8.3 The referee may issue a second caution for Unsporting Behavior to the coach and a sending-off for a Second Caution if the disruption persists.
- 4.8.4 If a coach is sent off, another RMA-approved assistant coach or manager on the team's roster may assume the role of coach. If no RMA-approved person is present, the game will be considered a forfeit.
- 4.8.5 The referee may suspend play to direct a coach to remove a disruptive spectator associated with their team from the vicinity of the field.
- 4.8.6 The referee may send the players to their respective technical areas and direct them to stay there if a disruptive spectator refuses to leave the vicinity of the field.
- 4.8.7 The referee may abandon a game if, in their judgment, the game cannot proceed safely and peacefully in a timely manner due to disruption by a spectator.
- 4.8.8 If a spectator's behavior associated with a team causes an abandonment by their behavior, including if the abandonment is because the team in question has no remaining eligible team officials due to one or more being sent off, that team will be held as the team responsible for the abandonment according to Rule 1.5.
- 4.8.9 Any team official, player, or substitute that has been sent off by a referee shall be thereafter considered a spectator. Such a person will be excluded from the team's technical area and if further action is warranted it may be applied by the referee according to these rules.
- 4.9 A coach may be cautioned or sent off (red carded) by the referee if in violation of any of the Rules of Competition.

## SYSA Rules of Competition

- 4.10 It is the responsibility of each coach to take all precautions necessary before, during or after the game to protect both the safety of persons and the property on which games take place.
- 4.11 It is the responsibility of the home coach to provide a properly inflated, legal game ball.
- 4.12 It is the responsibility of each coach to:
  - 4.12.1 Submit to the referee, prior to the start of the game, a copy of an SYSA approved Game Sheet/Player Roster generated by SYSA's registration system, and in accordance with the SYSA's current game day routines. Each copy shall include the name of the team's Club, the team, and all team officials who will be present at the match. Each player must be identified by first name and last name, and jersey number whether generated by the registration software or handwritten. Each player must report to the referee to confirm this information prior to the game or when the player first enters the game, and upon any change of jersey. Players not listed on the game sheet and not properly identified are not eligible to play in the game. For those age groups where the number of players allowed on the roster is greater than the number of players allowed to participate in a match and where no exception has been granted, the coach must clearly identify the players who will not be participating on the Game Sheet/Player Roster. They can do so by crossing out their names, writing "not playing" beside them, or using similarly clear written indications.
  - 4.12.2 Within 48 hours after the game, report the game score and any other information in the manner and format specified by SYSA.
- 4.13 Any team or club official determined to have used an ineligible player will be subject to sanction by the Disciplinary Committee unless a sanction has been applied by another WYS authority and is applicable to SYSA participation. The sanction shall not exceed suspension from all WYS activities for the balance of the current and entirety of the following seasonal year.

### 5. Substitutions

- 5.1 Unlimited substitutions are permitted in SYSA-sanctioned leagues and tournament games.
- 5.2 Substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee at any stoppage of play.
- 5.3 A player whose suspected injury causes a stoppage in play and who receives treatment must leave the field of play. A substitution may be made immediately at the discretion of the referee.
- 5.4 Incoming players may not enter the field of play until outgoing players are off the field, except as directed by the referee, at the referee's sole discretion.
- 5.5 Substitutes should wait to enter at the halfway line and should notify the assistant referee on that side of the field of their desire to enter the game.
- 5.6 In the spirit of recreational soccer, Teams are permitted to increase the numbers of players on the field in certain circumstances:
  - 5.6.1 A team may add a player to the field any time it is trailing by a multiple of three goals, until such time that its deficit is reduced to less than the next lower multiple of three goals.

*Note:* To illustrate, a team that has fallen behind by three goals may add an additional field player; if the deficit is subsequently reduced to two goals, the additional player must be removed.

If on the other hand, the team falls further behind and then is six goals in arrears, it may add a second additional player, but is then only allowed a single additional player if the deficit is reduced to five goals.

- 5.6.2 Notwithstanding these rules, coaches may, with the consent of the referee, agree to other accommodations to mitigate lopsided games, including reducing player numbers on the leading side, modifying field sizes, sharing or exchanging players. or other changes that fulfill the objectives of recreational soccer.

*Note:* Modifications of any sort under this Rule may, but need not, result in the automatic forfeit of a game by the side that benefits. A forfeit of this type, as with any modification of the rules under this Rule, shall only be implemented with the consent of the coaches of both teams and the referee. Absent such a consensus, no modifications shall be permitted. Any game forfeited in accordance with this rule shall be reported as a 0-1 loss for the forfeiting team.

- 5.6.3 Regardless of other circumstances, in no case shall any player represent either team in a game unless that player is on the roster of one of the teams scheduled to play in that game.

## 6. Suspensions, Appeals, and Protests

6.1 **Game Misconduct:** The Disciplinary Committee may issue orders of discipline, as it, in its discretion, deems appropriate. Discipline imposed may include warnings, suspension, or permanent expulsion from the activities of the corporation.

6.1.1 **Sending Off (Red Card).** Any person sent off (red-carded) by a referee before, during, or following a match shall leave the field of play to the satisfaction of the referee and be subject to an automatic suspension from the next league or tournament game, except in the following circumstances:

- (a) A sending-off for Violent Conduct shall incur a two-game suspension.
- (b) A sending-off for Spitting at another person shall incur a six-game suspension.
- (c) A sending-off for Offensive, Insulting, or Abusive Language directed at another person other than a match official shall incur a two-game suspension.
- (d) A sending-off for Offensive, Insulting, or Abusive Language directed at a match official shall incur a three-game suspension.
- (e) If a coach is sent off for the behavior of a spectator associated with their team, an automatic suspension of one game shall be assessed. However, at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee, the suspension shall be waived if the spectator involved commits in writing to serving the suspension and not attending the team's next game; to not attending two additional games if the disruption involved abuse of the referee; and in either case to refraining from similar disruptions to any future games they might attend after their return.

Any sending-off may be subject to additional action by the Disciplinary Committee, including further sanctions up to and including expulsion.

6.1.2 **Yellow Card Accumulation.** Any person who is cautioned (yellow carded) three times in any season shall be suspended for the next league or tournament game. Any additional yellow card received in that season will each result in an additional game suspension.

6.1.3 **Points System.** The Disciplinary Committee may, in its discretion, use a point system assigning three points for a red card, and one point for

a yellow card as an advisory system in establishing disciplinary action for players and/or teams. Players accumulating more than six points during a season can be subject to special sanctions including special reporting requirements, and/or expulsion.

- 6.2 **Appeals of Send-Offs.** Any suspension for a sending-off may be appealed to the Disciplinary Committee.
- 6.2.1 Any such appeal must be filed within 48 hours after the conclusion of the game in which the sending-off occurred.
- 6.2.2 To be considered, the appeal must be brought forward to the Member Club representative, the Disciplinary Committee Chair, the SYSA President, or the SYSA Executive Director.
- 6.2.3 The submission of an appeal does not delay or interrupt the service of an automatic suspension unless and until upheld by the Disciplinary Committee.
- 6.2.4 Only an explicit action by the Disciplinary Committee, as reported to SYSA and the responsible Member Club, can alter the application of an automatic suspension.
- 6.3 **Protests of Game Results.** Protests of game results based on a perceived misapplication by the referee of the laws of the game must be given verbally by the protesting coach to both the referee and the opposing coach after the game, and before leaving the field.
- 6.3.1 A written protest must be submitted to the Disciplinary Chair, SYSA President and/or Executive Director, or the Member Club's disciplinary committee member, within forty-eight (48) hours of the incident. The protest must be signed by the coach, and specify the date of the game, game number (if known), the field location, the names of the teams involved with their gender, age group and club, name of the referee (if known), and a description of the protested incident. The protest must be endorsed by the club disciplinary representative or the club president, or SYSA Executive Director.
- 6.3.2 Protests made under this provision shall be accompanied by a \$250 filing fee (check to be made out to "SYSA"). The fee shall be returned if the protest is successful.

- 6.3.3 Protests involving matters within a referee's discretion (i.e., matters that the IFAB Laws or these Rules leave to the judgment or discretion of the referee) will not be heard or reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee.
- 6.4 **Protests Related to Ineligible Players:** Except for protests that arise during the City Tournament (see Rule 10, City Tournament), protests concerning alleged violations of the limits on select or premier player participation on teams or on the use of overage players must be submitted to the Disciplinary Chair, SYSA President and/or Executive Director, or the Member Club's disciplinary committee member as soon as the violation could reasonably be discovered. The protest must be signed by the coach, and specify the date of the game, game # (if known), the field location, the names of the teams involved with their gender, age group and club, name of the referee (if known), the name(s) of the players at issue, a copy of the game day roster (if available), and a short statement describing the basis for the allegation. The protest must be endorsed by the Member Club's disciplinary representative or the club president, or SYSA Executive Director.

## 7. Scheduling

- 7.1 Except in cases of unsafe weather or field conditions or other situations as determined by SYSA, games will not be rescheduled.
- 7.2 When SYSA determines a game will be rescheduled, it will determine the date. Failure to participate will result in a recorded loss for the non-participating team. If neither team is able to participate in a rescheduled game, no result will be recorded and the game will not be rescheduled a second time.
- 7.3 When games are canceled and will not be rescheduled, adjustments to the league standings will be made at the sole discretion of SYSA. No registration fee refunds will be made.



## 8. Score Reporting and Disqualification (Fall League and City Tournament)

- 8.1 A team official from each team shall record the score of each game. Based on such reporting, three points shall be awarded to the winning team of a match, one point to each team in a tied match, and zero points to a team losing a match. In a forfeit the result shall be a 1-0 win for the non-forfeiting team. SYSA shall designate schedulers to monitor and correct standings as needed.
- 8.2 Teams that cause games not to be played by their failure to appear may be disqualified from the current SYSA seasonal competition, the SYSA City Tournament, and other SYSA-sanctioned competitions at the discretion of the SYSA.
- 8.3 Standings for each age and gender division U11 and older shall be made available each week by SYSA.
  - 8.3.1 Such standings will be used in promoting and relegating teams between divisions in the next year.
  - 8.3.2 Final standings will be determined at the discretion of the SYSA. Where teams have played different numbers of games, schedulers may, but are not required to, consider points per game in determining the final standings.

## 9. Special Rules for U12 and Younger Competition

- 9.1 SYSA requires that US Youth Soccer and WYS small-sided rules be applied to all competitions involving U10 to U12 games.
- 9.2 SYSA recommends that US Youth Soccer and WYS small-sided rules be applied to all competitions involving players younger than U10. See the Appendix for recommended rules for fall league play; and required rules for SYSA spring league.

## 10. SYSA City Tournament

- 10.1 After the conclusion of each regular season, SYSA will sponsor a tournament in each age division U11 or higher for both boys and girls (the “City Tournament”). Any team, of any ability level, may compete in the City Tournament so long as it competed in the regular SYSA fall league, was not disqualified from competition, and remains in good standing.
- 10.2 The SYSA VP of Competition shall serve as the City Tournament Director.
- 10.3 All Rules and By-Laws of SYSA Competitions shall be enforced unless specifically modified by Rule. Roster exceptions granted by SYSA under Rule 3 shall carry over to the City Tournament.
- 10.4 There must be a minimum of three teams entered for competition at any age level.
- 10.5 Teams must enter the age group that they competed in during that seasonal year’s league play. In the special case of teams that play in a combined age group during league play, teams may play at their age of registration during the City Tournament, provided ALL players on the City Tournament roster meet the age requirements.
- 10.6 All City Tournament competition shall be double elimination except for the final game in each bracket. Bracket positions for each team shall be determined by random draw. The drawing shall be conducted by the SYSA, under the supervision of the VP of Competition.
- 10.7 Boys’ and girls’ divisions shall be concurrent and shall begin the week after Thanksgiving and be scheduled to be completed before Christmas subject to rescheduling compelled by inclement weather.
- 10.8 **Penalty Kicks.** If a City Tournament game is tied at the end of regulation play, kicks from the penalty spot will be used to determine a winner.
- 10.9 **Adds/Drops.**
  - 10.9.1 No players may be added to or dropped from team rosters for purposes of the City Tournament after a date set by SYSA.
  - 10.9.2 Except as provided for Select Players in the Administrative Regulations, players must be registered with SYSA by October 31 of the current seasonal year to participate in the City Tournament.

- 10.10 **Eligibility Violations.** Any alleged violations of rules regarding player eligibility during the City Tournament need not be formally protested. Only a notice via email to the City Tournament director within 24 hours of the conclusion of the game in question is required. The City Tournament Director at their sole discretion shall determine if a violation exists; if so, the game shall be forfeited, and the team concerned shall be disqualified from any further play in the City Tournament. The City Tournament Director may, at their discretion, refer any violations to the Disciplinary Committee for additional action.
- 10.11 **Forfeits.** Any team forfeiting a game without valid reason, as solely determined by the City Tournament Director, will be dropped from the City Tournament. A forfeit due to a conflict with a WYS Cup match will be considered a valid reason and the forfeited game treated as a tournament loss.
- 10.12 **Championship and Awards.**
- 10.12.1 The winners of the City Tournament will be the City Champions for boys and girls in each age division. SYSA will provide individual awards for the players on the teams participating in each final, and a perpetual trophy to the championship-winning team.
- 10.12.2 The team receiving the perpetual trophy shall have the responsibility of engraving and will be responsible for the cost and execution of the same. The coach of the championship-winning team will be responsible for the maintenance and return of the trophy by November 1 of the following year to SYSA as directed by staff.

## 11. Amendment of Rules

- 11.1 Absent exceptional circumstances, any changes to these Rules must be adopted by or before May 1 to be effective for the following season.
- 11.2 Recommendations for amendments to these Rules may only be proposed by members of the SYSA Board of Commissioners; the SYSA Rules Committee; or SYSA Staff.
- 11.3 The Rules Committee shall consider the recommendation and may consult with the Disciplinary Committee, the SYSA Board of Commissioners, SYSA staff, or others, as necessary. If approved by the Rules Committee, the Rules Committee shall then propose text to incorporate the recommended amendment, together with a justification therefore, to the SYSA Board of Commissioners for its consideration.

**U5-9 Developmental Recommendations**

|  | U-5                | U-6                | U-7                | U-8                | U-9                |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Field Size* (yards)</b>             | 20-35 L<br>15-25 W | 25-35 L<br>15-25 W | 25-35 L<br>15-25 W | 35-45 L<br>25-35 W | 55-65 L<br>35-45 W |
| <b>Maximum Goal Size* (feet)</b>       | 4 x 6              | 4 x 6              | 4 x 6              | 6 x 8              | 6 x 18             |
| <b>Build-Out Line*</b>                 | Midfield           | Midfield           | Midfield           | Quarter            | Quarter            |
| <b>Ball Size</b>                       | 3                  | 3                  | 3                  | 3                  | 4                  |
| <b>Players on field</b>                | 3 v 3              | 4 v 4              | 4 v 4              | 5 v 5              | 7 v 7              |
| <b>Roster Size (max)</b>               | 6                  | 8                  | 8                  | 9                  | 12                 |
| <b>Min. Players to Play</b>            | 2                  | 3                  | 3                  | 4                  | 5                  |
| <b>Goalkeeper*</b>                     | N                  | N                  | N                  | Y                  | Y                  |
| <b>GK Punt</b>                         | N/A                | N/A                | N/A                | N                  | N                  |
| <b>Game Time (# periods x minutes)</b> | 2 x 16             | 2 x 18             | 2 x 20             | 2 x 20             | 2 x 25             |
| <b>Score Directly from a Kick-off</b>  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  |
| <b>Offsides Called</b>                 | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | Y                  |
| <b>Heading</b>                         | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  |
| <b>Sendoffs &amp; Cautions</b>         | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  |
| <b>Slide Tackling</b>                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  |
| <b>Direct Kicks</b>                    | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | Y                  |
| <b>Penalty Kicks</b>                   | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | Y                  |
| <b>Retry Throw-ins</b>                 | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  |
| <b>Score Directly from Goal Kick</b>   | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  |
| <b>Retry Corner Kicks</b>              | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | N                  |
| <b>Referees Provided</b>               | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  |
| <b>3-Goal Policy</b>                   | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  |
| <b>Scores Recorded &amp; Standings</b> | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                  |

# SYSA Rules of Competition

## Official U10-19 Citywide Rules of Play for Fall League and City Tournament

|                                       | U-10               | U-11               | U-12               | U13-14               | U15-16               | U17-19            |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Field Size* (yards)</b>            | 55-65 L<br>35-45 W | 70-80 L<br>45-55 W | 70-80 L<br>45-55 W | 100-115 L<br>70-80 W | 100-115 L<br>70-80 W | 100-115 L 70-80 W |
| <b>Maximum Goal Size* (feet)</b>      | 6 x 18             | 6 x 18             | 6 x 18             | 8 x 24               | 8 x 24               | 8 x 24            |
| <b>Build-Out Line*</b>                | Quarter            | Quarter            | Quarter            | N                    | N                    | N                 |
| <b>Ball Size</b>                      | 4                  | 4                  | 4                  | 5                    | 5                    | 5                 |
| <b>Players on field</b>               | <b>7 v 7</b>       | <b>9 v 9</b>       | <b>9 v 9</b>       | <b>11 v 11</b>       | <b>11 v 11</b>       | <b>11 v 11</b>    |
| <b>Max. Roster Size</b>               | 12                 | 14                 | 14                 | 18                   | 22                   | 22                |
| <b>Min. Players to Play</b>           | 5                  | 6                  | 6                  | 7                    | 7                    | 7                 |
| <b>GK Punt</b>                        | N                  | N                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Fall Game Time (minutes)</b>       | 2 x 25             | 2 x 30             | 2 x 30             | 2x35                 | 2x40                 | 2x45              |
| <b>Spring Game Time</b>               | 2 x 25             | 2 x 25             | 2 x 25             | 2 x 25               | 2 x 25               | 2 x 25            |
| <b>Score Directly from a Kick-off</b> | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Offsides Called</b>                | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Heading</b>                        | N                  | N                  | N                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Sendoffs &amp; Cautions</b>        | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Slide Tackling</b>                 | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Direct Kicks</b>                   | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Penalty Kicks</b>                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Retry Throw-ins</b>                | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                    | N                    | N                 |
| <b>Score Directly from Goal Kick</b>  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>Re-try Corners</b>                 | N                  | N                  | N                  | N                    | N                    | N                 |
| <b>Referees Provided</b>              | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |
| <b>3-Goal Policy</b>                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                  | Y                    | Y                    | Y                 |

# SYSA Rules of Competition

## Official Rules of Play for Spring League

|                                | U6     | U7     | U8       | U9                  | U10                 | U11               | U12+              |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|----------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| No. of Players on the Field    | 4      | 4      | 5        | 7                   | 7                   | 8                 | 8                 |
| Max No. of Players on Roster   | 9      | 9      | 10       | 12                  | 12                  | 16                | 16                |
| Min No. of Players for Game    | 3      | 3      | 3        | 5                   | 5                   | 6                 | 6                 |
| Game Time Periods (Minutes)    | 2 x 25 | 2 x 25 | 2 x 25   | 2 x 25              | 2 x 25              | 2 x 25            | 2 x 25            |
| Time Between Periods (Min.)    | 5      | 5      | 5        | 5                   | 5                   | 5                 | 5                 |
| Ball Size                      | 3      | 3      | 3        | 4                   | 4                   | 4                 | 5 (U12: 4)        |
| Field Width (yds)*             | 15-25  | 15-25  | 15-25    | 35-45               | 35-45               | 45-55             | 45-55             |
| Field Length (yds)*            | 25-35  | 25-35  | 30-40    | 55-65               | 55-65               | 70-80             | 70-80             |
| Build Out Line                 | N/A    | N/A    | Midfield | Quarter             | Quarter             | Quarter           | N/A               |
| Goalkeeper Punts & Goal Kicks  | N/A    | N/A    | No       | No                  | No                  | No                | Yes               |
| Goal Area (yds)                | none   | none   | none     | 5x16                | 5x16                | 6x18              | 6x18              |
| Penalty Area (yds)             | none   | none   | none     | 10x30               | 10x30               | 14x40             | 18x40             |
| Goal Size (feet)*              | 4 x 6  | 4 x 6  | 4 x 6    | 6x12 to<br>6.5x18.5 | 6x12 to<br>6.5x18.5 | 6.5x18 to<br>7x21 | 6.5x18 to<br>8x24 |
| Slide Tackling                 | No     | No     | No       | No                  | No                  | Yes               | Yes               |
| Heading                        | No     | No     | No       | No                  | No                  | No                | U13+ only         |
| Goalkeeper                     | No     | No     | Yes      | Yes                 | Yes                 | Yes               | Yes               |
| Offside Rule*                  | No     | No     | No       | No                  | Yes                 | Yes               | Yes               |
| Penalty Kick Distance (yds)    | No     | No     | No       | 7                   | 7                   | 8                 | 8                 |
| Direct Free Kicks              | No     | No     | No       | Yes                 | Yes                 | Yes               | Yes               |
| Free Kick Defender Dist. (yds) | 3      | 3      | 3        | 5                   | 5                   | 7                 | 7                 |
| Retake on Throw-In or Kick-Off | Yes    | Yes    | Yes      | Yes                 | No                  | No                | No                |
| Throw-In Defender Dist. (yds)  | 2      | 2      | 2        | 2                   | 2                   | 2                 | 2                 |
| Goal Scored from Goal Kick     | No     | No     | No       | No                  | Yes                 | Yes               | Yes               |

**\* Notes:**

All Spring games are 50 minutes (2x25), with 5 minute halftimes, and **MUST** end 5 minutes before the hour.

Goal and Field sizes are USSF recommended dimensions. Adjustments to fit physical constraints or permanent markings are acceptable.

The offside rule will not be enforced for U6-U9. However, players “cherry picking” or standing in front of the opponent goal will be called offside.

No player at U12 or under should head the ball. This is a USSF and US Youth Soccer restriction to reduce concussion risk.

For the purposes of the Build Out Line, the ball is in play once it leaves the goalkeeper’s possession.



### Further Breakdown of Important Rules

*Game Management – Officiating:* SYSA contracts with the Seattle Soccer Referees Association to provide referees. Due to referee shortages, we sometimes have to rely on the coaches of the participating teams to referee the games. Absent an agreement between the coaches to the contrary, SYSA expects that each coach referee one-half of the game. If a parent or sibling with referee certification, experience and proper background checks completed volunteers to referee, and each coach agrees to that solution, then that is also an acceptable way to have the game refereed. Keep in mind that these games are meant to be recreational and fun. Decisions of substitute referees are final and they shall retain all of the discretion afforded officially assigned referees. In U10 and above games, results of games refereed by substitute referees shall stand.

*The Build-Out Line:* The U8 through U12 age groups will use the Build Out Line (BOL) rules. The BOL is used to promote playing the ball out of the back without immediate pressure to help players learn how to “build out” the attack. When the goalkeeper possesses the ball, either from the run of play or from the ball going out the back line (when last touched by the attacking team), the opposing team should move behind the BOL. The goalkeeper is not required to pass or throw/roll the ball to a teammate until the members of the opposing team are behind the BOL. After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the BOL and play resumes as normal. At U8 through U12 goalkeepers are not allowed to punt the ball. They can either throw, roll, or place the ball on the ground and pass it to a teammate. To help address lopsided games, coaches may consider adjusting the position of the BOL, directing their team to hold at the BOL until one or more touches are made, or waiting for the opposing team to cross the BOL. When there are insufficient markings on the field, the BOL should be indicated by double cones, large cones, pinnies, or otherwise unique items.

*Goalkeepers:* Under IFAB,

“a goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball with the hand(s) when 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; holding the ball in the outstretched open hand; 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).”

In other words, **a single finger on the ball while it is on the ground constitutes control**. Especially at the U9 and younger ages, where goalkeeping is being introduced, goalkeepers can be especially vulnerable when on the ground. It is therefore recommended that play be stopped and an indirect kick be awarded if a player makes

## SYSA Rules of Competition

any physical contact with the opposing goalkeeper whatsoever while they are on the ground.

*Rescheduling or Missing Games:* Games cannot be rescheduled. Teams should do all they can to ensure that their team will be available to play their games. When a team knows they will not be able to attend a game, they **MUST CONTACT** the opposing coach, and the SYSA Scheduler. Contact the SYSA Scheduler well ahead of any game the coach knows will be missed. Contact information for each team can be found by clicking that team's name in the team list for the season. In Spring league, players can often be shared between teams if one team needs more players. This is not the case during the fall league. Contacting the opposing coach before the game can often help in working out a plan to share players so that the game can be played. In addition, players can also be borrowed from another Spring team if they are appropriately registered in SYSA for the Spring league.

*Lopsided Games:* SYSA makes every effort to have balanced leagues, with competition that is comparable. If a game becomes unbalanced and the score lopsided, we strongly encourage both coaches to work out a solution to make the game enjoyable and fun for the players.