

South Okanagan-Similkameen
Youth Soccer Association

YOUTH LEAGUE POLICY

Rules & Guidelines 2001

Revised 2003

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WELCOME

Dear Coaches and Managers, the South Okanagan-Similkameen Youth Soccer Association (SOYSA) and its League Operating Committee (**LOC**) welcomes you and your team to the SOYSA Youth (House) League. The purpose of the League Policy is to outline the structure of the LOC and leagues. Information is provided about scheduling, game sheets, what to do in the event of inclement weather, a quick rundown of the rules, and discipline matters. It also provides a summary of the District Select Program (which has its own policies). Any comments on improving the guide are welcome.

GENERAL INFORMATION

SOYSA operates under the Constitution of the B.C. Soccer Association, and applies each year to the BCSA for permission to operate its leagues. In cooperation with representatives of the various areas, formerly Clubs, the general task of the LOC is to coordinate and govern boys and girls' youth soccer in Youth House league play within the SOYSA District. Each area should be represented by two voting Directors on SOYSA Executive Board, which is responsible for the general operation and promotion of youth soccer within its geographic boundaries. The LOC through the Administrator and Area Coordinators is responsible for making arrangements for the league and scheduling games. Each area should be also represented on the LOC by at least two members but additional officers may be appointed (e.g., Administrator, statistician, Head Referee or Division coordinators) as required.

LEAGUE COORDINATORS

At the beginning of each season, each area should appoint two League Coordinators, one for girls and one for boys, who will represent their area on the LOC. The LOC should have representation from each area and a minimum of four (4) people to operate. The role of the LOC is to organize the SOYSA Youth League each season, decide on division groupings, and to provide this information to the SOYSA Executive for its final approval. Coordinators are responsible for informing their area teams and coaches about the League structure, handing out schedules, and updating League Rules & Guidelines, and ensuring that all coaches are made aware of the Annual Preseason Coaches Meeting.

In all cases, the League Coordinators on the LOC work with the SOYSA Administrator and they are the final link between individual teams and the league. In no instance should teams feel that information from other sources is "official". The "final say" belongs to the LOC once the league structure is sanctioned each year by the SOYSA Executive.

ACCESS TO LEAGUES

The SOYSA League is intended for the enjoyment of recreational youth teams. Application for entry of new areas (towns) falling within the SOYSA boundaries, as described by BCSA, into the SOYSA Youth League must be received in writing by the SOYSA Executive no later than January 31 of any playing season.

LEAGUES

As a district, SOYSA offers two levels of play to its players, **District Select Teams** (Gold) and **Youth House Teams** (Silver). District teams compete in the most competitive level of play available within the Thompson-Okanagan Youth Soccer League (TOYSL) and are usually picked on a tryout basis.

DISTRICT SELECT TEAMS

For more complete information please refer to the District Select Team Policy.

Representatives from towns or areas operating teams in the SOYSA league undertake to annually affirm their individual area's commitment to the District Team program. *In general, no area representative shall knowingly encourage any players' non-participation on a District Team for reason of gaining advantage in the SOYSA Youth League.* If sufficient numbers of players are available, 15 being a minimum, District Teams will be formed and entered in the Southern Interior Zone, **Thompson-Okanagan Youth Soccer League (TOYSL)**. If by chance no such league is operating, then players chosen for District Teams must return to their respective area youth teams and play within the SOYSA League. This should occur by March 1 to allow for any restructuring of the league that may need to occur. District Teams are formed using a tryout system. The SOYSA District Team Director and the SOYSA Executive in discussion with the coaches, parents and players will determine at which level, "A" or "B" our District teams will compete depending on their demonstrated abilities.

Note 1: In age divisions where District Teams **may not** have been formed at the beginning of the season to play in the TOYSL, the SOYSA Executive reserves the right to form a "Dispensated District Team" for entry into Provincial Playdowns within the Southern Interior Zone. Players from all areas will have an opportunity to try out for these Dispensated District Teams in their age group. Formation of a Dispensated team means players on these select teams will play on two teams, youth and Dispensated select for purposes of Provincial Cup Playdowns only. In divisions where a District Select Team is operating, formation of a Dispensated team will only be considered when the decision was made to enter this first district team in the "A" Provincial Cup. Under no circumstance will a Dispensated team be formed to compete with an already existing District Team.

REGISTRATION

Each and every season all players, on all teams, from all areas must be registered with the BCSA using player/team registration forms or equivalent. These forms can be obtained from the SOYSA Administrator. Players playing on a District Team entered in the TOYSL shall also be registered under the SOYSA name. At no time will a player currently registered on a District Select be allowed to play within the SOYSA League. Any area representative, coach, or team found to be using these players will be disciplined by the SOYSA executive. Youth players may be invited to play on a District Select Team from time to time, however a Player Transfer Form must be completed.

AGE CATEGORIES

Whenever possible players will be grouped as per BCSA age categories using calendar years as a cut-off. However, in order to form leagues of sufficient size, four teams being the minimum, the LOC may agree to group players across age categories. Teams formed from mixed-aged players will have to play in divisions according to their oldest players grouping. At no time will overage age players be allowed to play down an age group without first notifying the league committee for a ruling. Any team found to be playing overage players, without previous agreement among the LOC members will forfeit any games in which those players participated and that teams further play in the league will be decided by the LOC.

PLAYERS MUST PROVE AGE

All registered players must submit proof of age and photocopies of this information must be on file with the Administrator. **Proof of Age must be by: birth certificate, passport, landing document, baptismal certificate, or by signed affidavit.** In the event that any players' age comes into question the LOC will refer to the Administrator's records at the time of questioning. **Note:** Medical cards are not an acceptable proof of age.

HOW MANY PLAYERS ON A TEAM?

There must be a **minimum of 11** players registered with the District Registrar by **March 1st** - if not, the team does not exist for scheduling purposes. There is a **maximum of 18** players who can register with a team. If a team exceeds that limit, one player must be removed from the team (by a letter to the District Registrar copied to the LOC. After March 10 a player who has not been registered with another team during the current season may be registered using an individual registration form obtained from the SOYSA Administrator. The Administrator must have a copy of this form at least 48 hours before the player is eligible to play. Each team coach should confirm the team roster by email or fax before the first league game.

AREA BOUNDARIES AND PLAYER REGISTRATION

All local town and area representatives agree that soccer programs exist to serve the needs of mini and youth players resident within their boundaries, as defined and described in the SOYSA Constitution. Players who both live and go to school within an area's boundaries must play for a team in that area. Players who live or go to school within more than one area's boundaries are eligible to play for the involved town or area of their choice. No player can register on more than one team at a time. Any exception to these boundary regulations will be examined by the LOC on an individual case-by-case basis where necessary.

PLAYER IDENTIFICATION

At the present time SOYSA does not make use of the BCSA player identification cards to ensure that teams are not using ineligible players, but SOYSA reserves the right to invoke said usage if areas, teams or coaches are found to be taking advantage of this situation.

LEAGUE & WINDUP (SOYSA Cup) SCHEDULES

These documents are the product of much effort from a committee of schedulers from each area working with the Administrator and covers all regular league play and SOYSA Cup Tournament. **Teams are requested to PLEASE not make private "arrangements" with another team to change the time, venue or date of any scheduled game as it might interfere with another team's game or practice!!**

Be Considerate!!!

Too often individual coaches, managers and players do not understand how their actions affect others. When a game is scheduled, a series of events occurs which cause much work to be completed.

- 1. Officials are assigned to the game.**
- 2. The home team may line the field or put up nets.**
- 3. The visiting team contacts its' players and parents as to the time and place of the game.**
- 4. District, Area or League officials may be assigned to monitor play or to evaluate officials.**

Postponed Games

COACHES PLEASE DO NOT RESCHEDULE YOUR OWN GAMES

Teams must communicate with their SOYSA Youth League Coordinator or Rep to let them know that a game has been postponed. The area's League Coordinator will arrange for a make-up game through the Administrator. Two possible dates will be given and the game has to be played on one of them. **ALL REPLAYS WILL TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAY NIGHTS ONLY!** The games are to be made up as soon as possible after the postponement. If no makeup is played then a 0-0

tie will be awarded. Postponements must not be made by personal arrangement of the coaching staff. If this occurs a 0-0 no point tie may be awarded. Postponements can only be officially arranged through the SOYSA LOC using your area coordinator. If a week is a complete washout go to the next week in the schedule. Coaches should remember that not being able to field your strongest team or a full roster is **NOT** grounds for cancelling a game. As long as a team has 7 players, one of which is the goalie, they are obligated to play the game.

YOUR AREA LEAGUE COORDINATORS WILL RESCHEDULE THE GAME WITH THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Note: Games, which are abandoned or cancelled by the referee are a special case and will be rescheduled by the LOC.

Bad weather directions

Soccer is easily and safely played in the rain. **Games will generally not be cancelled because of rain unless civic authorities have closed access to fields.** However, safety of the players is our number one priority, so use common sense where playing conditions are questionable (e.g., lightning, extremely wet (pooling water), badly pot-holed, hazardous debris etc.). Please remember that the referee is responsible for making the final decision on the playability of the field, but as a coach or manager, you can suggest to the referee and your players that they should play to protect themselves if conditions are what you consider marginal. If weather becomes poor, games may be moved or cancelled. To insure a minimum of confusion the league coordinator will phone individual teams affected. Please note that field decisions cannot be uniform throughout our Townships. The various civic authorities may close grass fields in one municipality while others are left open.

Field Closure Rules

If the home team cannot provide a field then the game will be rescheduled on the opposing team's home field. Field changes must be organized in a timely manner and your area LOC Representative must be notified.

GAME SHEETS

Home Teams' Responsibility

It is the home team's responsibility to supply a completed game sheet to the opposing team before the start of each game. Game sheets will be used to track league standings, red and yellow card offences, forfeited games, payment of referees, and missing referees. Game sheets are to be completed and signed by both coaches after each scheduled league and playdown game. Game sheets will include the names of each teams coach, manager, players, and player jersey numbers. Coaches will obtain their game sheets in their coaches' package at the annual coaches meeting. If you cannot make this meeting please make arrangements with you local area coordinator to pick

up your package. When both teams have completed the game sheet, it must be given to the referee before the start of the game. After the game the referee will fill in the score, sign the sheet and give each coach a signed copy of the game sheet so they can keep an unofficial set of standings and track their players' cards. The home team Coach/manager must phone or email the final score to the Administrator within 24 hours and must advise of any yellow or red cards that were issued.

Referees' Responsibility

After each game it is the responsibility of the referee to:

1. Complete the game sheet by recording the final score
2. Record on the game sheet any red or yellow cards that were handed out
3. Sign the game sheet and have referees' assistants sign it if they were present
4. Give each coach a copy of the game sheet
5. Mail or fax the top copy to the League Statistician
6. If red cards are issued the referee must complete a misconduct form describing the events leading to this issuance. The referee must forward this report to the League Statistician.

Note: *Signed game sheets will be used to pay referees and their assistants.* The Administrator must receive all game scores no later than one week after each game and receipt of game sheets is necessary for referees to be paid. Referees should also report any game, which was cancelled or forfeited to the Administrator. Referees that show up for forfeited or cancelled game will still be paid!

REFEREE APPOINTMENT

Referees are supplied by the area Referee Coordinator. **Linesmen will be supplied where possible.**

GENERAL RULES

The SOYSA League plays under the guidelines established by the BCSA, which are available through the District Chairman. Any item in this SOYSA guide is subject to the operating rules of that umbrella body.

Size of Game Ball

Under 10 - 13 #4 ball	Under 14 - 18 #5 ball
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Duration of Games

U-18 - 2 equal halves of 45 min.	U-14 - 2 equal halves of 40 min.
U-17 - 2 equal halves of 45 min.	U-13 - 2 equal halves of 35 min.
U-16 - 2 equal halves of 45 min.	U-12 - 2 equal halves of 30 min.
U-15 - 2 equal halves of 40 min.	U-11 - 2 equal halves of 30 min.
	U-10 - 2 equal halves of 25 min.

*Area coordinators are reminded to inform their referees and coaches, especially older referees coaches who may not be familiar with Youth Specific Soccer Rules, that ball sizes and game times vary with age as above. **Note:** Any special arrangements to increase the length of a game **MUST** be made and agreed to by both coaches and the referee **BEFORE** the game. No time changes can be made for windup games, as schedules are very tight. No youth game shall be longer than 1.5 hrs total.*

Number of Players

A total of **seven (7)** registered players are required to begin a game. Less than seven (7) players is a default. **Under no conditions are teams to use unregistered or District Select players.**

Team Colours

Area equipment managers will make every effort to ensure team colours do not conflict by informing the District Equipment LOC by March what colours each team will use. In the event of a colour clash (both teams have same coloured jerseys) the home team must change or use pinnies to avoid confusion. Teams should check their schedules or confirm colours when confirming the game. All Jerseys or tee shirts shall be numbered appropriately. All players must have a unique number for the entire season!

Game Times

Games are to start promptly at the scheduled time subject only to the discretion of the referee. Should one team not be at the field by the scheduled time, the referee will wait a **15 minute grace** period. If the team does not show by that time, the game will be called, and the referee will put in a report to the District and a decision will be made by the League Committee as to the outcome.

LEAGUE PLAY RULES

Schedule Changes

Home teams must phone the visiting team no later than 48 hours before the game if there are any changes in time or location.

No Referee for a Game?

If the referee has not shown 30 minutes after the designated starting time and both teams agree to play the game, the home team will referee the first half and the visiting team will referee the second half, unless it is agreed that one person will referee the whole game. If coaches agree to play the game they should complete the game sheet and sign it **before the game**. After the game fill in the score which will stand as if the referee was present. In this situation **both** teams must report the game score to the Administrator. The completed game sheet will be used to track missing referees.

Note to Coaches: If the teams do not agree to play the game, the game will be rescheduled at the discretion of the LOC.

Team Lists

Team lists are required for both teams in all games. All area coordinators will be provided with these lists through the Administrator.

Note to Referees: Teams may challenge the eligibility of players at half-time or at a throw-in or corner kick for their own team, the referee will witness and record this challenge by noting the players name and number involved on the game sheet. After the game the challenged team must provide proof that the player is on the official list being held by the Administrator. Using unregistered players is grounds for forfeiting a game and suspension of team officials.

Injuries

Team officials are not to enter the field until the referee motions you on. When permission has been given only one team official will enter the pitch.

Coaching from the Sideline

Coaching is not allowed on the goal end of the field. Players should not warm up in this area and playing gear should not be left in the area of the goal posts if a game is in progress. If there is more than one coach per team, all coaches must be on the same side of the field.

Substitutions

Unlimited substitutions are permitted in all SOYSA Exhibition, League, Cup and Tournament games. Substitutes must wear clothing on the sidelines so as not to be mistaken for a player on

the field. Substitutions may only be made at a stoppage in play and at the referee's discretion. The player should have his uniform on and be standing at the centre line of the pitch ready to play as soon as his coach has received permission from the referee for the substitution. If linesmen are present inform them you wish to substitute.

Field Markings

Home teams must ensure their fields are properly lined or marked out to the satisfaction of the referee. School or civic authorities should be informed of problems with fields. Most areas do not line their own fields but if they are please be careful to use sports field whitening or some other non-toxic material for this purpose. Lime is not to be used.

Corner Flags & Nets

Use of corner flags and especially nets can reduce many potential problems, especially disallowed goals. The home team should try to provide nets whenever possible. The home team should also try to provide corner flags standing a minimum of five (5) feet above the ground for all divisions. Bicycle flag-type corner flags are **not permitted**, as there have been cases of severe eye injuries to players.

Fan Behaviour

Team officials are responsible for the behaviour of their own fans. If requested by the referee to control the behaviour on the sideline, a team official could be reported for failing to give his best efforts toward complying with this request.

A Gentle Reminder

The referee is in charge of the game. This authority is total and should not be challenged. If coaches or managers wish to question a decision, it should be done quietly and politely at the end of a game or half time. Nothing is gained, and much is lost, when this routine is not used. Referees must not indicate what penalty they think may be levied by the LOC. Coaches should remember referees are **NOT** obligated to explain their calls to team captains or anyone else as they do in other sports.

A Not So Gentle Reminder

Discipline Committees take a very dim view of individuals who feel they have the right to physically threaten or harass game officials. If anyone strikes or threatens to strike an official the penalties are severe.

What Should I Do If...?

If a referee asks you to control your sidelines you are expected to do so - immediately. If you are "red carded" leave the playing field immediately. The best practice is to go to a car and keep the windows rolled up!! Red-carded players are also asked to leave the field immediately and should

be sent to a car or directly home and are not to take part in the post-game handshake. Remember red cards can be issued off the field and after the game up until both teams leave the field and parking lot.

LEAGUE STANDINGS

1. Three (3) points will awarded for each win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss.
 2. The team with most points at the end of league play will be declared the League Champion. The onus is on each team to make up missed games before the end of league play. Remember this goes through the Administrator. Only those games having an official signed game sheet will be used in recording standings.
 3. In a tie situation, only games between teams count. (i.e. head-to-head wins & losses).
 4. If still tied the team with the most wins will be given the higher standing.
 5. If still tied goals for minus goals against will be used to calculate a goal difference, the team with the highest goal difference (i.e. scoring more goals than conceding) will be given the higher standing.
 6. Still tied? The LOC will flip a coin.
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DISCIPLINE

All players, coaches, managers and teams taking part in the SOYSA League are subject to the control of the LOC, and SOYSA. Each season the SOYSA Discipline Director will form a League Discipline Committee (LDC), as needed, of three qualified members ideally consisting of members coming from the other areas of SOYSA.

The LDC may investigate all of the following:

- 1. Abandoned games**
- 2. Teams with excessive cards**
- 3. Teams with excessive no-shows or forfeitures**
- 4. Teams requesting excessive scheduling changes**
- 5. Misconduct of teams/officials**

The LDC may make recommendations to the Protests and Appeals Committee (PAC) and to the LOC on such protests as it sees fit. There is an automatic one game suspension for a team brawl, which includes all players and officials. First, a reminder that as soon as your Club receives the red card, you must phone the Administrator to inform them of the name of the player, his team and division. The Administrator will then verify this against the game report that comes in from

the referee but it is your responsibility to get the information in immediately because your next game may occur before the Administrator gets the game report.

Informing Other Teams

When a Discipline matter, like a suspension of a player or team official has been ruled on by the LDC, this will be communicated to the SOYSA LOC, and the suspended player or team official in a timely fashion. The teams playing League games against the suspended player or coach should be informed of the suspension.

The Automatic One Game

All **red cards** carry an automatic one game suspension. This one game is served automatically by sitting out the very next scheduled League, Cup or Tournament game (which ever comes first) after the game in which the red card was received. There are no exceptions or appeals to this procedure. Exhibition Games cannot be arranged to circumvent this rule but make up of rescheduled league games would count. **Yellow cards** have the same automatic provision. Anyone with a total of **three yellow cards** in one season must sit out the game immediately after the game in which the third yellow card was issued.

Note: Games cancelled do not count as a game suspension completed.

Violent Conduct

Referees must be encouraged to fill-out reports accurately, with the time of the incident noted which often times indicates who the instigator was. If the incident occurred simultaneously reports should reflect that information (e.g.: dangerous trip, followed by retaliation - F/A language from opposing player).

Discipline Hearings

Any player or team official receiving **two red cards** in a season is required to attend a discipline hearing. Failure to attend when called to a hearing may result in an indefinite suspension. An LDC member will call the player, coach and area coordinator as soon as the referee's report has been received to let them know the date they are to attend the discipline hearing. The LDC will decide what additional penalty will be imposed on the person who was given the red card by the referee. **The LDC can suspend players or team officials within guidelines established by the Canadian Soccer Association, and B.C. Soccer Association from one additional game up to a lifetime!**

Appeals of Discipline

To appeal a decision made by the LDC, please submit an appeal in writing to the Chairperson of SOYSA within 4 days of the notification of the original decision.

Serving Your Discipline

Suspended team officials must arrange for someone to fill their position, and inform their league coordinator of that person's name and phone number. The suspended team official may go to the field, but he must stay well back from the sideline. He must not coach verbally or by hand signals. The players must be told not to approach him, before, during or after the game. In most cases the best solution is for the suspended person to stay away from games. An infraction of the above can lead to further suspensions (up to six games).

Reporting Fouls and Misconduct

Whenever a red card is issued the referee in question must file a Misconduct Report. These reports must be filed promptly with an accurate, full description of the offence at the time along with the game sheet to be sent to the League Statistician. Refs should keep their opinions to themselves with regards to discipline likely to be levied. These reports are photocopied and sent to all people involved, therefore, "throw the book at them!" does not read well.... Refs should not ignore the reporting of yellows - coaches will keep track and it's a little embarrassing when a coach phones the LOC or LDC expecting his player to be on his third yellow when, in fact, no yellows have been submitted!

Submitting a Protest

A team may protest any scheduled game, League or Cup. All protests must be submitted in writing within 48 hours of the date of the match to which they relate (contact the Administrator by phone to alert them that a protest is coming). Submit the written protest to the Administrator by Fax, mail or email.

FAX: (250) 494-8853

Email: administrator@soysa.net

Mail: Administrator

South Okanagan (Similkameen) Youth Soccer Association

P.O. Box 24072

Penticton, B.C. V2A 8L9

The "Grounds" for Protest

A protest will only be considered on the grounds of interpretation of the F.I.F.A. Laws of the Game, on the eligibility of players, or on breaches of Competition Rules and Regulations. Any protests relating to the ground, goal posts, or any other appurtenances (that's a big word for other things that are used to play soccer - nets, soccer balls, corner flags, etc.) shall not be considered unless notice has been given to the referee before the game starts. If the problem cannot be solved without delaying the game a protest must still be made in writing, and be properly submitted, to be considered. No protests will be considered if, in the opinion of the referee, the objection lodged did not seriously affect the outcome of the game.

If a Protest is Considered

After forwarding a copy of the protest to the other team involved (within 48 hours of receiving the protest) the LOC will ask the other team's officials for a written report. The referee will also supply a written report to the committee. The Protest Committee's decision will be conveyed in writing to both teams.