

Spring Soccer Rule Guide 2011

Understanding the Referees

Referees attend an 18-hour course that meets for six days over three weeks. At the end of the course they take a 100-question test and if they pass they are a grade 8 referee. They get no field or practical experience. The only way for the referee to gain experience is by doing games and making many mistakes. In the best of all worlds all games would have the best referees on them. The reality is that young referees are often put in over their head.

A MLS referee is considered top notch if they get 85% of the calls right. Count yourself lucky if your referee gets 50% of the calls right. Our referees are no where near MLS quality.

What can you do to make it better? Take a referee course. It will make you a better coach, player and spectator.

A Brief Rule Guide for Coaches

Coaches must remain in the coach's area between the fields on their side of the field in **all** age groups. The coach's area extends from midfield to 10 yards down the field towards the goal line and 1 to 2 yards from the sideline. No Coach or Parent is permitted to speak to the referees regarding calls that will interrupt the flow of the game. At a break or at the end of the game you may ask a question and you are to accept the answer without question. Any problems or issues with referees should be addressed with Doug Hartwell, Steve Wythe or Sheila Groff who are administrating Spring Soccer.

During play **no one** is permitted behind the goals in any age groups. The Referees and Field Marshals have been told to strictly enforce these rules. It is a felony to assault a game official in the State of Florida. Keep your cool.

Socks must cover shin guards (the rule actually states that shin guards must be underneath socks). Shirts must be tucked in.

BELOW ARE FYSA (Florida Youth Soccer Association) RULES and MUST be followed – NO EXCEPTIONS

1. NO jewelry (*includes earrings, even if the ears were pierced the night before, covering earrings with tape is NOT permitted*)
2. NO HARD BEADS in hair or braided into hair.
3. NO casts
4. NO hats (exception: goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed hat to block sun)
5. NO orthopedic devices unless the player has a signed DR's note and a waiver from parent releasing FYSA from liability
6. NO bandanas (one piece sweatband is acceptable)
7. NO sharp cleats
8. NO Armstrong bands or any other rubber bracelets.

Referees decisions regarding the above list are final and may not be challenged.

- No more than three coaches may be on the team sideline.
- ALL parents and spectators must be on the opposite side of the field.
- **COIN TOSS** – winner of toss chooses goal to defend, losers of the toss get the ball first.
- **Min # of players required to start game:** 3 players. We want to play games when scheduled. If needed loan extra player to opposing team to let the kids play. That is why we are there to let kids enjoy playing the game.
- **No goalies for any age group**
- **U12 4 vs 4** - playing 12 minute quarters, 2 minute quarter breaks w/5 minute halftime
- **U10 4 vs 4** - playing 12 minute quarters, 2 minute quarter breaks w/5 minute halftime
- **U8 4 vs 4** - playing 10 minute quarters, 2 minute quarter breaks w/5 minute halftime
- **U6 4 vs 4** - playing 8 minute quarters, 2 minute quarter breaks w/5 minute halftime

***** NO SLIDE TACKLING PERMITTED – RESULTS in a indirect kick for all age groups**

ADVANTAGE RULE – referee delays foul call if the team that is being fouled would benefit more from a no call. For example if a player is fouled but fights through and scores a goal then the ref makes no call.

SUBSTITUTIONS (all subject to ref approval) - Prior to:

Throw-in in your favor	Between periods
Goal kick by either team	Following stoppage for a caution w/ ref approval
After goal by either team	NO substitution for an EJECTED player
After injury where ref has stopped play	

BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY – Lines are part of the playing field. The ball must **completely cross** the line to be out of play or for a goal to be scored.

KICKOFF – for all age groups – **Indirect**. The ball may enter the goal after a 2nd player touches the ball.

Referee on the field, goal posts, flags are all part of the field of play. Ball hitting them is still live.

COACH – may give TACTICAL instructions only. Please do not direct every move or berate players. *Coaches must remain in coach or team box area.*

Intentional Handling (mistakenly called “Handball”) – In referees judgment it must be **intentional**. Even if it results in an advantage if it is not an intentional handball in the referees opinion then it is not a foul.

DANGEROUS PLAY – kicking the ball while on the ground or a high kick are not by themselves a foul. If another player places himself or another in jeopardy then it is a dangerous play.

U6 and U8 only – all fouls result in a DIRECT kick. NO PENALTY KICKS. Players must stand back 5 yards during the kick. A DIRECT kick may not be closer than 8 yards to the goal. A wall may be set but the referee does not delay the kick to allow for this unless it is an issue of safety. For example, a player is 3 yards away in front of the ball, not paying attention and about to get blasted with the ball.

U10 & U12 age groups:

1. does have direct kick fouls, they will all be indirect
2. has to score from their offensive half, a goal cannot be scored from a teams defensive half. If a goal is scored from the defensive half a goal kick will restart the game and no goal will be scored.
3. the ball may not be touched within the “**goal box**”
 - 1) if an offensive player touches the ball in the goal box it will result in a goal kick for the defensive team. A goal will not be given to the offensive team if it goes into the goal.
 - 2) if an defensive player touches the ball in the goal box it will result in a goal for the offensive team.

The following kicks are DIRECT for U6/U8 age groups – Goal Kicks, Corner Kicks.
Corner Kicks are the only DIRECT Kicks for U10/U12 age groups

THROW IN – the ball may spin in the air. One or both feet may be on the touchline but not across it. The main purpose is to get the ball back in play. Keep in mind and don’t look for every little infraction to be called.

NO OFFSIDE for spring soccer.

SSS follows FIFA rules with US youth soccer modifications.

Please remember this was written as a guide. All decisions are the referees to make based on the rules.

Thank you,
Steve Wythe