

## POLICY FOR U12

### FIELD SIZE:

- 105-120 yards long by 50-55 yards wide – standard football field measurements.
- Center line with 10-yard radius circle.
- GOAL AREA - rectangle, 20 yards wide and 6 yards into field of play joined by a line parallel with the goal line.
- PENALTY AREA - rectangle, 44 yards wide and 18 yards into field of play joined by a line parallel with the goal line.

### GOAL SIZE:

- 24 feet wide; 8 feet tall

### BALL:

- Size 4 approved by referee.

### PLAYERS:

- Maximum number of players on the field is 9 per side, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. Goalkeeper will wear a different color jersey.
- Minimum number of players to start a game is 6.
- If a team is short players they may borrow players from the opposing team, another team in the same league, or a team from the next younger league until they achieve the maximum number of field players and up to two (2) substitutes. Unregistered players may never be used in games due to liability issues and lack of insurance. Players younger than the next younger league may not be used due to safety concerns. Once the team reaches the maximum number of rostered field players plus two (2) in attendance (11 in this case) all “guest” players must cease playing. If a rostered player becomes injured then a guest player may be substituted until such time as the injured player can return to the game.

### UNIFORM:

- EYO soccer jerseys and socks will be provided. Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn at all times during practice and game play.
- Player's socks shall be pulled up as to cover the shin guards in their entirety.
- Soccer cleats are recommended but not required. If cleats are worn, they have to have rubber spikes. Steel or hard plastic cleats are prohibited (*inspected by referee prior to the game*).
- No hats, watches, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, rings or other jewelry may be worn during games or practices. Earrings may NOT be taped over.
- ***Note: no player shall be allowed to practice or play without shin guards.***

### REFEREES:

- The Referee Coordinator shall make assignments of referees for play. The referee pool shall consist of USSF Certified EYO Referees. If a referee is unavailable, both teams will select suitable volunteer(s).
- At this level the game is officiated by two Center Referees. They will usually have three (3), or more, seasons of experience. In some cases a more experienced referee will be paired with a less experienced referee for training purposes.
- Referees should briefly explain infractions to the offending player(s) or coaches if asked.
- Referees shall make every attempt to ensure the safety of the players. See additional information under GOALIE.

### DURATION OF GAMES:

- Two halves of 30 minutes with a 5-minute half time.

### START OF PLAY:

- A coin toss will be used to start the game. Winner of the toss may choose to kick-off or choose which goal

to attack. If choosing team takes the kick-off then the other team decides which goal it will attack otherwise the other team kicks-off to start the game. The team that did not kick-off to start the game will kick-off to start the second half.

#### SCORING:

- Whole ball must cross goal line between goal posts and under bar.
- If the goalkeeper throws the ball directly into the opponents' goal, a goal kick is awarded.
- See additional information under SPORTSMANSHIP.

#### SUBSTITUTIONS:

- Prior to a throw-in by either team, only **IF** the team who has possession substitutes.
- Prior to a goal kick (by either team.)
- After a goal (by either team)
- For an injured player when referee stops play. Opponent may substitute one for one.
- **All substitutes must be ready to enter the field, standing at the mid-field line, prior to requesting a substitution from the referee.**
- **Substitutes may not enter the field until the referee acknowledges the substitution request.**

#### INJURIES:

- Injured players will be quickly assessed by the referee as play continues.
- If the injury warrants the referee may stop play to assess the player.
- The referee may call a team official onto the field to assist with the player.
- If a team official enters the field then the player must be substituted out.
- If deemed fit to play then the player may re-enter the game through a substitution if desired.
- If, at the taking of a Penalty Kick, the player taking the penalty kick is injured then the team official may enter the field to render assistance to the player. The player will NOT be required to leave the field under these specific circumstances.

#### OFFSIDE:

- Called for offside violations per FIFA Laws\*.

#### HANDLING:

- Called when a player is obviously and intentionally playing the ball and not defending him/herself. The rule for handling includes using any part of the body from the tips of the fingers to the shoulder. The proper way to interpret this is that a player cannot "handle" the ball.
- Called if a player gains possession/control of the ball after it has touched their hand/arm and then scores in the opponents' goal, creates a goal-scoring opportunity for their team, scores in the opponents' goal directly from their hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper.
- It is usually an offence if a player touches the ball with their hand/arm when the hand/arm has made their body unnaturally bigger such as when the arms are away from the body or the hand/arm is above/beyond their shoulder level (unless the player deliberately plays the ball which then touches their hand/arm). The above offences apply even if the ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from the head or body (including the foot) of another player who is close.
- Except for the above offences, it is not usually an offence if the ball touches a player's hand/arm directly from the player's own head or body (including the foot), directly from the head or body (including the foot) of another player who is close by as long as the hand/arm is close to the body and does not make the body unnaturally bigger.
- It is not an offence if a player touches the ball if they fall and the hand/arm is between the body and the ground to support the body, but not extended laterally or vertically away from the body.
- The referee must use his or her own judgment to some extent in determining whether or not a handball is accidental contact or a purposeful attempt to gain an advantage.

#### FOULS AND MISCONDUCT:

- Per FIFA Laws\*.
- A goal cannot be scored from an indirect kick until another player touches the ball.
- In addition, the referees are instructed not to tolerate foul or abusive language on the part of any player, coach or parent.
- While slide tackles are a valid part of the game of soccer the mastery of such moves is believed to be beyond the capabilities the recreational level U12 age group participant. For this reason all intentional slide tackles, regardless of the contact with the ball or opposing player, will be sanctioned as Dangerous Play and will result in an indirect free kick being awarded to the opposing team. Players who continually violate this rule will be cautioned for Persistent Infringement and will be shown the yellow card.
- In order to minimize the potential for head injuries, players in the U12 league are not allowed to head the ball under any circumstances. Coaches will ensure that players do not head the ball during practices. Players who intentionally head the ball during a game will be warned once and then be charged with Dangerous Play if it occurs again. If the player continues to head the ball after being warned then the referee MAY issue a Yellow Card for Persistent Infringement.
- As always, if a player is cautioned (shown the Yellow Card) twice then that player will be removed from the remainder of the game.

#### BALL OUT OF PLAY:

- The ball is out of play when the entire ball fully crosses the sideline or end line of the field either in the air or on the ground even if the ball subsequently returns to the field.
  - If the ball crosses the sideline then play will restart with a throw-in from the team opposite the player who sent the ball out.
  - If the ball crosses the end line then play will restart with a goal kick for the defending team if the attacking team sent the ball out. Otherwise play will restart with a corner kick for the attacking team.
- The ball is also out of play when it touches a match official, remains on the field of play, and:
  - a team starts a promising attack or
  - the ball goes directly into the goal or
  - the team in possession of the ball changes
  - In all these cases, play is restarted with a dropped ball
- The ball is in play at all other times when it touches a match official and when it rebounds off a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag post and remains on the field of play.

#### DROPPED BALL:

- If the ball was in the penalty area, or was last touched in the penalty area, when play was stopped then the ball will be dropped for the defending goalkeeper in their penalty area.
- In all other cases, the referee drops the ball for one player of the team that last touched the ball at the position where it last touched a player, an outside agent or a match official.
- All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4m (4.5 yds) from the ball until it is in play.
- The ball is in play when it touches the ground.

#### PENALTY KICKS:

- Penalty kicks are to be taken during these games if necessary.
- Appropriate player position in regards to penalty box applies.
- The defending goalkeeper must remain on the goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, without touching the goalposts, crossbar or goal net, until the ball has been kicked.
- The player taking the penalty kick must kick the ball forward; back heeling is permitted provided the ball moves forward.
- When the ball is kicked, the defending goalkeeper must have at least part of one foot touching, or in line with, the goal line.

#### THROW-IN:

- One attempt is allowed. Referee will stop play and explain the throwing error of the throw-in. Opposing team then awarded throw-in.
- All opponents must stand at least 2m (2 yds) from the point on the touchline where the throw-in is to be taken.

#### GOALKEEPER:

- Allowed six seconds to put ball in play. Keeper has the option to kick, punt or throw the ball.
- The goalkeeper is said to have possession of the ball if they are touching it with any part of their arm, hand, or fingers. Players who continue to attack the ball when in possession of the goalkeeper should be advised to stop by the referee. Repeated attacks should be cautioned as unsporting behavior. Players who charge recklessly at the goalkeeper causing a collision should be cautioned for unsporting behavior.
- The attacking player has equal right to play the ball if that attacker is under control and is not playing in a dangerous manner or using excessive force.
- An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, commits any of the following offences:
  - Controls the ball with the hands/arm for more than six seconds before releasing it
  - Touches the ball with the hands/arm after releasing it and before it has touched another player
  - Touches the ball with the hand/arm, unless the goalkeeper has clearly kicked or attempted to kick the ball to release it into play, after it has been deliberately kicked to the goalkeeper by a team-mate or the goalkeeper receives it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate
- Each child should be offered the opportunity to play goalkeeper at least once during the season.

#### GOAL KICK:

- May be taken from any point inside the goal area.
- The ball is in play when it has been kicked and completely leaves the penalty area.
- Players from either team may not play the ball until it has cleared the penalty area.
- If the ball does not exit the penalty area, or is touched by any player before leaving the penalty area, or goes over the defending team's goal line (even in the goal) without first exiting the penalty area, then the kick is retaken.
- All attacking players must be outside of the penalty area at the time of the kick.

#### SPORTSMANSHIP:

- Coaches are encouraged to shake hands before the game. Players will shake hands with the opponents after the game.
- When a team has scored four (4) goals more than the opposing team that team is required to remove a player from the field prior to the restart of play. Once the margin is reduced to less than four the player may be substituted back in at the next stoppage. If a team has scored five (5) goals more than the opposing team that team will remove an additional player from the field prior to the restart of play. Once the margin is reduced to less than five the player may be substituted back in at the next stoppage. This rule will be applied as the margin increases for up to a maximum of three (3) players removed. In other words if the winning margin is four goals then the game will be 9 v 8, five goals = 9 v 7, six goals = 9 v 6. Coaches are encouraged to employ other strategies to prevent a large goal differential such as moving key scorers back, requiring players to complete a certain number of passes prior to scoring, instructing players to shoot from outside of the 18 yard line, moving weaker players up front, etc.

#### PLAYING TIME:

- Each player should expect to play at least one-half of each game. However, a coach may refuse playing time for particular game to a player who has not attended or participated in practices during the two-week period preceding the game.

#### SPECTATORS/SIDELINES:

- All spectators, including parents and siblings of players, must stand or sit in designated areas. Where

spectator bleachers are provided it is recommended that they be used. If a fence surrounds the field then all spectators must be outside the fence. On fields where no fence is present they must be at least six feet (6') back from the sidelines. Spectators may not stand or sit along the sideline between the goal line and the line marking the top of the penalty area. Spectators may not stand or sit behind the goal lines.

- All players and coaches must stand away from the touchline to allow the referees a clear view of the entire field and unobstructed movement along the sidelines. A minimum distance of two feet from the touchline should be observed where possible.
- Players, coaches and spectators should not interfere with play by kicking or touching any balls that are coming near to, or crossing, the touchlines.
- No one is permitted to play behind the goals while a game is in progress.
- Photographers must get the permission of the referee prior to moving behind the goal for limited periods of time.
- Parents or guardians are not allowed to enter the field of play unless invited by the referee.

#### PUBLICITY:

- Normally, there will be no post game publicity, and any publicity that may be issued shall not contain the win-loss record of any team.

#### AWARDS:

- All players will receive participation awards at the conclusion of the last season. Standings will not be maintained.

*Coaches should inform their players and parents of these guidelines and encourage support for the referees and players. The game is for the players! We want them to learn, and most of all, **HAVE FUN!!!***

\*FIFA Laws can be found [www.fifa.com](http://www.fifa.com) at the bottom of the page by clicking on Laws of the Game.