

**GREATER CLEVELAND  
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (GCAA)**

**RECREATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE RULES**

## PURPOSE

The soccer program is intended to provide an organized program that is fun for the participants, and also provides opportunities to teach all players the skills, fundamentals, teamwork, strategy and sportsmanship of soccer. The main emphasis should always be a strong commitment to the enjoyment of the game and improvement of skills.

**Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) Soccer Rules are used for any rules not covered in this document** (Final interpretation of FIFA Rules for the GCAA Recreational Soccer program will be made by the GCAA Soccer Committee):

### Registration for Soccer:

1. The Greater Cleveland Athletic Association will announce and hold registrations for the soccer league.
2. The registrations will be held at a time prior to the season far enough in advance in order for the selection of coaches and the drafting of players to be held so that each team will have sufficient time to practice and prepare for the upcoming season.
3. Registration can be completed online through <http://www.gcaasoccer.com> or during the advertised walk-in soccer registration period. Players must complete online registration including submitting copies of birth certificates, any other required documents, and fees, and agree to online waiver statements within the sign-up period before participating in any practices or games.
4. All participants must be registered with NCYSA (North Carolina Youth Soccer Association). The GCAA Soccer Registrar normally handles this registration.

### Age Groups:

- 1) The GCAA Soccer Committee will use NCYSA guidelines to determine age and eligibility of the players in all leagues.
- 2) Verification of Birth will be obtained at time of registration to determine the player's eligibility. The soccer committee will maintain a copy of each player's birth certificate.
- 3) Players who are carded by NCYSA or USYSA for Classic or Challenge play are not eligible for play in the GCAA Rec Soccer league.
- 4) Age groups will be as follows: U04, U06, U08, U10, U12, and U14 (or older).
- 5) Age group assignments are based on the player's age as of August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season year. Each season runs from Fall to Spring, consistent with the school year.
  - a) Players are restricted to playing within their natural age group. No player is allowed to play in an age group below their own age. However, in the Spring season, players and/or parents may request that the player be allowed to play up to the next age group as long as the player meets the following requirements:
    - i) Player would naturally age up in the following season (essentially playing up 6-months).
    - ii) Player displays significant skill development for the current league and would benefit by playing up in the next league.
  - b) All players must be registered using the online registration system for their natural age group, and parents must immediately submit a written request via email to the Rec Soccer Chairman at [info@gcaasoccer.com](mailto:info@gcaasoccer.com) to be moved to the next age group. Priority is given to players that naturally fall into age groups. Player requests to play up are only granted provided there are available roster spots. Upon approval, the parents are responsible for paying any additional fees required for the new league (including but not limited to, increase in registration cost and uniform fee).
- 6) In U04, U06, and U08 leagues teams will be gender-balanced as best as possible in an effort to afford a coeducational experience for all players. U10 and U12 leagues

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are broken into coed and all girl teams. Girls may opt to play on a coed team or on an all girl team. If there are not a sufficient number of registrations to field an all girl team team, the registered girls will be automatically drafted to the coed teams. These coed teams at times may play against all boy teams, especially if they are part of a travel league. The U14 and up teams will typically be coed. At the conclusion of the registration period, the GCAA Soccer Committee will determine the number and classification of teams.

**Number of Players:**

1. North Carolina Youth Soccer Association (NCYSA) limits the maximum number of players on a Team Roster by age group. GCAA will adhere to the maximums allowed by NCYSA, although every effort will be made to reduce roster sizes to allow for greater playing time for each player. The goal is to allow at least 50% playing time for each player per game. The GCAA Soccer Committee's ability to recruit qualified volunteer coaches will, in part, factor into team roster sizes.
2. The maximum number of players per team can be found in this handbook in the rules sections for each league. The GCAA Soccer Committee will determine final roster sizes at the beginning of each season. Every effort will be made to see that each team has an equal number of players.
3. The number of players on the field at a time is also defined in this handbook in the rules sections for each league.

**Addendum to Number of Players on Playing Field**

1. If a team does not have a sufficient number of players to start a game the opposing team may opt to reduce the number of players on the field or may "loan" a player to the other team. Loaning players is encouraged to increase playing time for all players. In a season where scores are recorded and standings are kept, any team lacking their league's number of field players at the beginning of the game, will record the game as a forfeit. Player loans from the opposing team are encouraged in this case so that an exhibition game can be played for the enjoyment of the players and spectators in attendance.

**Coaches**

1. All prospective coaches, assistant coaches, and parent volunteers must register online through [www.gcaasoccer.com](http://www.gcaasoccer.com) or during the advertised walk-in soccer registration period and must complete the online NCYSA Risk Management application.
2. Each applicant must be approved by GCAA Soccer Committee.
3. Assistant Coaches are assigned to teams based on the team that their child is placed. Assistant Coaches can not be picked by a Coach in order to ensure a particular child is on his/her team.
4. All coaches become a member of the Greater Cleveland Athletic Association.
5. Each team will be allowed to have two adult coaches (1 head coach and 1 assistant coach) who have been approved by the GCAA Soccer Committee. A parent volunteer or team parent is recommended to assist team organization (snack duties, communicating game or practice changes or cancellations, etc.) Parent volunteers must also successfully complete the Risk Management process.

**Team Creation and Draft Rules:**

All teams will dissolve at the conclusion of each Spring season. Teams will be newly created on an annual basis every Fall season. The soccer season will run from Fall to Spring. Teams may either be randomly assigned by a member of the GCAA Soccer Committee (typically the Rec Chairperson or the League Director) or the individual team

coaches may draft teams. The GCAA Soccer Committee will determine at the beginning of each season which age groups will participate in a draft and which teams will use a random assignment.

Typically U04, U06, and U08 teams will be randomly assigned to teams. In the interest of attempting to create somewhat balanced teams, some considerations of age and gender are used when assigning the players. Each team should have a balanced number of girls and boys as well as younger and older kids within the league. Unless specifically requested by the parents, siblings within the same league are placed on the same team. Special requests of teammates and coaches will be attempted to be honored, but GCAA can not guarantee any specific team assignments for any player.

U10 and U12 players, depending on number of registrations, may participate in a draft (which involves players coming to a draft day and displaying their skills in a few drills) or may be randomly assigned. For U14 and up, the coaches typically select teams from a roster list (no player involvement required). For leagues that use the draft method for team creation, a supplementary draft will be held in the Spring. If teams retain enough of its players (approximately 50%) from the Fall and a head coach, assistant coach, or parent volunteer agree to keep the team, it will stay intact the following Spring season. Any team that can not meet these stipulations will be dissolved, and the players will be reentered into the Spring season's draft. The GCAA Soccer Committee will make a final determination of which teams may be kept together and which players must reenter the draft. In the interest of maintaining balanced teams, the GCAA Soccer Committee may also select players from an "over-talented" team to re-enter the draft in the Spring season. The GCAA Soccer Committee will determine the final number of players per team based on the number of players registered prior to the draft.

#### **Evaluation and Draft**

1. Players in a league that holds a draft are invited to attend the draft. If a player fails to show for the draft, then that child will be randomly assigned (via a random drawing from a hat) to a team.
2. The Rec Soccer Chairperson or League Director shall make the announcement of the draft date for the leagues holding a standard draft. All players within the appropriate "League Age" will be eligible to be evaluated.
3. Evaluations will be held on a designated date and it is strongly encouraged that every player to be drafted attends this evaluation session.
4. Before the draft begins, the League Director will give a list of players to be evaluated to each Head Coach. After the evaluation period is over and each player has been given a chance to display his/her merits, the League Director will meet with the coaches to distribute the players to the different teams. The League Director will be responsible for identifying draft order, rosters, and the number of players required by each team to make the number as close as possible to being equal.
5. Draft order will be determined by the random draw by the head coaches within a league. The draft will proceed in numerical order until the last team has made their first pick. That team will then make it's 2<sup>nd</sup> pick and proceed in reverse order back to the team who made the first pick. Picks will proceed up and down the drawn draft order until all teams have equal number of players from those players who attended the draft.
6. Coaches' Child Rule - If while a parent is the Head Coach, their child becomes a candidate, the coach must select his/her child in the

“first” round. If the coach has more than 1 child in the same league those children will count as additional draft picks and be drafted in succession (i.e., 2, 3, etc.).

7. Sibling Rule – Siblings will be placed on the same team and must be drafted in subsequent rounds. Siblings are defined as maternal or step brothers and/or sisters.
8. After the last complete round of drafting, all players attending the draft but not yet selected, and those players not attending the draft, but have properly registered, will be placed in a hat and selected by each team according to the draft order previously determined.
9. After all the players have been selected to a team, each player will then become the property of the team that selects them for a period of up to one year. If a player elects to “sit out” a season, he/she is then to be placed in the draft pool when he/she returns. Players may not be traded.

#### **Special Clarifications, Head Coach**

If the parent of a child on an existing team wishes to become a coach and is approved by the GCAA Soccer Committee, they may take their child from the existing team to join their newly formed team.

#### **Special Clarifications, Assistant Coach**

During the team formation process, a coach will only be guaranteed their child. The assistant coach for a team will be chosen from approved volunteer parents of the players selected to the team in the draft. In the event where no approved volunteer parent is available, there will either be no assistant coach or an approved volunteer (whose child is not assigned to another team within the same league) can be recruited for that season.

#### **Special Clarifications, Spring Draft and Expansion Teams**

In Spring seasons where new teams are created (expansion), all existing teams rosters will remain intact (provided they are approved by GCAA Soccer Committee according to the guidelines set forth in Team Creation and Draft Rules). New teams will be given two first round draft choices. These draft choices are subject to the coaches’ child rule and sibling rule. Existing teams will be given one first round draft choice. After the first round, subsequent rounds proceed with new teams drafting until their roster size meets that of one or more of the existing teams. The subsequent rounds will alternate between all teams of equal roster size. If at any point in these rounds an existing team has the same number of players as an expansion team, that existing team is eligible to participate in the next round.

#### **Special Clarifications, Decrease in Roster Size**

In the event a team is faced with a number of player resignations or injuries to the extent that there are insufficient players to field a team for every remaining game of the season, the GCAA Soccer Committee will determine how players within the league may be re-distributed to other team(s).

#### **Draft Issues**

The GCAA Soccer Committee will handle any situation that is not

covered in the rules as stated above. Also, the GCAA Soccer Committee will make all final decisions to resolve any discrepancies or conflicts regarding the draft process.

**Practice and Game Guidelines: duration, frequency, location, etc.**

1. Practices will be held ideally two times per week prior to the first game, then one hour weekly as field conditions and locations permit, subject to review by the GCAA Soccer Committee.
2. Practice equipment will not be issued; game balls will be provided when available.
3. Ideally teams will play eight games per season, subject to review or modification by the GCAA Soccer Committee.
4. Postponement or cancellation of games is determined by GCAA Inclement Weather Policy stated in this handbook and is subject to review or modification by the GCAA Soccer Committee.

**Rainouts and Other Cancellations**

Rainouts will be announced on the GCAA Soccer website ([www.gcaasoccer.com](http://www.gcaasoccer.com)) up to an hour before game times. If no rainout is announced, then a designee at the field (typically the Field Coordinator, Rec Soccer Chairperson, the League Director, Referee Assignor, or the Referee for the game) may make the call to cancel a game. A game is not automatically cancelled in the event of rain. Some games will be played in the rain. The presence of thunder and/or lightening is an automatic reason for a game to be called or cancelled. If a game reaches the halfway point or beyond it is considered an "official" game, and the score at that time will be listed as the final score. Make-up games for rainouts will be played if possible. Final decision on make-up games will be made by GCAA Soccer Committee. Rainout details and decisions will be posted on the GCAA Soccer website.

GCAA reserves the right to cancel any game or practice. Likewise, coaches and parents have ultimate responsibility for the safety of their own children and may choose to withhold them from participation in any game or practice where they feel the conditions are unsafe. Coaches are encouraged to request game cancellations by the referee if they feel conditions are unsafe. If anyone sees lightning or hears thunder, the game is automatically stopped, and all players, volunteers, and spectators should clear the field and spectator areas immediately.

**Field of Play**

1. Due to GCAA field limitations, field size may increase or decrease during a given season. All attempts will be made to provide as close to regulation fields appropriate for each given age group as defined by NCYSA.
2. Field markings, flags, goals, etc. will be placed by the GCAA Soccer Committee and have appropriate dimensions as determined by the GCAA Soccer Committee and NCYSA guidelines.

**Referees Duties**

1. Inspect field, goals, and balls prior to any game. Any issue or safety concern must be remedied before the game can start. If it can not be corrected, then the game must be postponed or cancelled. Details must be reported to GCAA authorities.
2. Inspect players prior to game for proper wear of protective equipment.
3. Officiate the game, keep the clock and score during the game, and abide by the normal duties outlined in the rules and the official rulebook.
4. If a safety concern arises during the game, the game must be stopped until the issue is remedied. If it can not be corrected, then the game must be postponed or cancelled. Details must be reported to GCAA authorities.
5. The referee must enter the team, date, time of game, goals scored by player, and

referee names on the score card. The score card must be submitted to the GCAA Rec Soccer Chairperson or the Referee Assignor. This score card is solely used to keep track of games played and is used as a payroll document for the referees. This score card is not used for league scorekeeping purposes or to determine league standings. Any forfeit must also be turned in to GCAA by the referee. If a team forfeits, that game will not be rescheduled.

#### **Yellow and Red Cards**

1. Soccer rules provide for the use of yellow and red cards to warn or eject players and/or coaches for actions on the field of play. Yellow cards will be used for rough play and excessive trash talking.
2. Two yellow cards in a game will be an automatic ejection.
3. A red card will be issued for offensive language and violation of rules that endanger another player. If a player is ejected, that player will not be replaced. All calls are made by the referee. The referee's decision will be final. If a player is ejected, that player is automatically suspended for the next game. Each incident will be handled on a case-by-case basis for review by the league to determine the severity of the incident and any further suspensions. Two red cards or ejections in a single season by any player will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season, and prior to registering for the following season, that player must be cleared to play by GCAA Soccer Committee.
4. Suspensions: If a coach or assistant receives a red card, a minimum of a 1 game suspension from GCAA coaching responsibilities and facilities will be implemented in addition to the game involved. Each incident will be handled on a case-by-case basis for review by the league to determine the severity of the incident and any further suspensions. If the incident involves any physical contact with another person, an automatic suspension for the remainder of the season will be implemented. If actions by a coach or assistant occurs prior to or following a game while involved in coaching activities, and these actions are deemed to be in violation of the GCAA Coaches Responsibilities and Code of Ethics, the league will review the incident and has the authority to implement a suspension. All suspensions may be appealed as described in the GCAA Coaches Responsibilities and Code of Ethics.

#### **Spectators**

1. Parents and other spectators are expected to adhere to the agreed upon Parent Code of Conduct.
2. No parents or spectators are allowed behind the goal line.
3. Parents and spectators must remain behind the parent line on the side opposite the players and coach.
4. Parents and spectators are not allowed on the field. In the event of an injury, parents or guardians should await instructions from the referee or coach before coming on the field.
5. Coaches should make it clear to parents and spectator beginning at the first practice what GCAA's expectations are (Parent Code of Conduct).
6. Coaches are ultimately responsible for the actions of their spectators. Coaches should make all attempts to control any unacceptable behavior by their team's spectators. However, if a spectator interferes with a match or the officials, the referee has the authority to stop the contest and to inform the spectator that his behavior is unacceptable. If the spectator fails to sufficiently modify his behavior, the referee may eject the spectator from the area. If the spectator refuses removal and the interference is significant, the referee shall terminate the match and report the incident following the incident reporting procedure.

### **Violations**

Any violation of league rules by player, coach, or spectator may result in suspension or dismissal by GCAA.

### **Protest/Grievances**

1. Protests and grievances are designed to help better the Greater Cleveland Athletic Association and are not intended to have games or outcomes of games overturned or replayed.
2. Any protest/grievance of a game, participants, spectator, coaches, and/or referees must be made within one hour following the incident, unless the protest is made to the referee before the game is over. The referee will make a note of the protest on the score card.
3. No protest may be filed on the basis of a referee's judgment call.
4. Protest may be made only by an acting head coach. Verbal protest (as in Bullet Item 2 above) must be followed up a letter presented to a member of the protest committee no later than 24 hours from the end of the game, and include a \$25 fee.
5. A protest committee will be designated at the beginning of each year. The committee will be made up of the officers of the board and the directors of each league. In the event the protest involves any member (or members) of the committee, said members will not be involved in the process, other than to be questioned by the committee. The protest committee will convene in a meeting if the protest is valid and requires discussion beyond the letter provided by the acting head coach.
6. Any coaches involved in the protest must be available to be questioned by the committee.

### **Post-Season Play:**

Typically GCAA does not host tournament or festival games for any league in the Fall season. Provided sufficient funds are available and there is sufficient interest by the coaches, players, and parents, a festival weekend for U08 and up leagues may be scheduled at the conclusion of the Spring season. Participation in the GCAA Spring Festival is completely optional by team and typically is offered at an additional cost (a separate charge from the registration fee at the beginning of the season.) for the team. Also, interested teams may participate in the State Rec Tournament. Any team wishing to participate must notify the League Director in sufficient time (normally 45 days prior to the tournament) to obtain all necessary documents for participation. All expenses incurred in tournament or festival participation will be the sole responsibility of the team.

### **Awards**

Participation/Sponsor t-shirts will be given to all players and coaches near the conclusion of the season. We do not distribute trophies. Although we discourage it, individual teams may choose to purchase and distribute their own trophies.

## **Game Rules By League**

## **GCAA Rec Soccer League**

### **3 v 3: Under 4 (U04)**

The U04 players' needs are different from older players. The focus is on fun and participation. "Games" at this level of play are not to be viewed as competitive but more as opportunities to play in a group setting. Most children at this age do not play with other children, they play independently at the same time and we incorrectly call it "playing together". The concepts of playing cooperatively and sharing are still foreign or developing. In order to meet these players' needs we do not have traditional games with one ball. We add more balls to the playing field to allow all of the players to have as many touches on the ball as possible. We begin with every player having a ball on the field during the "games". As the season progresses, we reduce the number of balls to encourage some 1 v. 1 play. In the last 1 or 2 games of the season, if the coaches feel that the children have developed some understanding of the game, they may decide to reduce the number of balls in play to 1 or 2. We do not recommend this unless there is significant advancement of the players through the season. Games using one ball are truly introduced at the U06 age level.

The primary idea here is that we slowly introduce the children to the game setting, which is so different from the way practices are run. During practices, generally every child has a ball, and they have the concept of "my toy" and don't want anyone else to take it from them. Then, under the conventional method, we throw them into a game situation with just one "toy" for 6 children to share along with having the distraction or pressure of having the parents on the sidelines cheering which they're also not used to from practice. This process is a gentler introduction and may reduce the number of kids that run off the field or refuse to go onto the field at the beginning of a soccer game.

#### **Law 1 - The Field:**

**A. Dimensions:** No more than 30 yards long, no less than 20 yards long; No more than 20 yards wide, no less than 15 yards wide. **US Youth Soccer Optimal recommendation: 25 yards length by 20 yards width.**

**B. Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide to mark: a halfway line across the width of the field, a center circle with a three (3) yard radius. No goal area since no goal tending is allowed.

**C. Goals:** Small goals (roughly 4 x 6 feet).

#### **Law 2 - The Ball:** Size three (3).

We begin the season playing games with each player having a ball. Six (6) balls if there are six (6) players on the field.

As the season progresses we reduce the number of balls to encourage some 1 v 1 play. Our goal over the season is to slowly reduce the number of balls in play (6 to 4 to 3 to 2). It may be best to use no less than three (3) balls during a game or one (1) ball for every two (2) players. If the coaches would like to introduce the idea of one (1) ball on the field, then ideally, that should not happen before one of the last one (1) or two (2) games of the season and should be dependent on the overall development of the players.

Games using only one (1) ball per field are primarily introduced at the U06 age level.

#### **Law 3 - Number of Players:**

**A.** Maximum number of players per team on field at a time is three (3). **No goalkeeper.**

**B.** Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed eight (8).

**C.** Teams may be coed.

**D.** Substitutions: Coaches are the referees in the game and may make unlimited substitutions at any stoppage of play. Try to make all substitutions quick so that you can keep play moving as

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much as possible.

**E. Playing Time:** Each player should play an equal amount of total playing time in each game that they attend.

**F. Coaches** are directed to increase playing time of less skilled players, in games that are “well-in-hand”, by sitting more skilled players. A game “well-in-hand” is defined as a game where the winning team is up by four (4) goals or more.

**Law 4 – Player’s Equipment:** Conform to FIFA laws with the following exceptions:

**A.** Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

**B.** Shin guards are REQUIRED at all times for every player in practice AND games. Socks must FULLY COVER shin guards (shin guards are to be worn under socks).

**C.** No jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.) may be worn during games and practices. No metal hair clips are allowed; rubber band style or cloth “scrunchies” are acceptable.

**D.** Children wearing glasses must use a secured strap for their glasses.

**E.** Footwear may include tennis shoes or soft-creat soccer shoes. Soccer cleats are recommended, but not required. No metal cleats. No baseball cleats or similar cleats with toe cleats; simple “tennis shoes” are a better choice over this style of cleat for everyone’s safety.

**Law 5 - Referee:**

**A.** Coaches serve as referees for this league.

**B.** All rule infractions should be briefly explained to the offending player. Do-overs are allowed and encouraged in order to teach the children proper techniques.

**C.** In the event of a player injury, the coach will immediately stop play. When play stops, the injured player must leave the field. Parents should only come on the field if directed by the referee (coach). The player may return to the game at the next legal substitution. If the opposing team is in control of the ball at the time the whistle is blown for injury, they will be awarded an indirect kick. Otherwise, a drop ball is played.

**D.** To reduce the possibility of injury – no slide tackles are allowed. Violation of this of the rule will result in an indirect kick.

**Law 6 - Linesman:** None needed. Parents are encouraged to simply direct wayward players back onto the field. At this level of play the lines are meaningless to the players, and play that goes outside the lines does not have to be stopped. Parents may just direct the players and/or the ball in the right direction and allow play to continue. For any play that gets too far “out of bounds” a simple Kick-In can be awarded to get play back going as soon as possible. (See Law 15).

**Law 7 - Duration of the game:**

**A.** Four (4) equal five (5) minute quarters.

**B.** Two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four.

**C.** Halftime break of five (5) minutes.

**D.** Since no final scores or standings are maintained, the game ends when the allotted time is complete. There will be no overtime.

**Law 8 - Start of Play:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

**A.** Opponent must be three (3) yards from center mark while kick-off is in progress.

**Law 9 - Ball In and Out of Play:** Play continues outside the lines. Parents are encouraged to direct players in the right direction. (See Law 6.)

**Law 10 - Method of Scoring:** Conform to FIFA (ball must completely go into the goal over the goal line). Ideally, after a player scores, the scoring player should be substituted with the next

player "in line" on the bench. This would create a continuous rotation of players from the bench. So no one child should be expected to sit for an entire quarter of play.

**Law 11 - Offside:** There shall be no offside called during these games.

**Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

**A.** No cautions or ejections issued, all fouls shall result in a direct free kick. The referee must explain ALL infringements to the offending player.

**B.** If a child is being too rambunctious then the coach shall make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

**Law 13 - Free Kicks:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

**A.** All kicks are INDIRECT.

**B.** If penalty occurs within three (3) yards of the goal, simply place the ball six (6) yards back from the goal line. This allows enough space for defensive players to position themselves between the ball and the goal.

**C.** Opponents must be at least three (3) yards away before kick is allowed.

**Law 14 - Penalty Kicks:** No penalty kicks are to be taken during these games. There are no goal keepers. All penalties result in a Free Kick (see Law 13).

**Law 15 – Kick-In (or Throw-In).** Some children may not be able to execute a proper throw-in and using hands may confuse some. Kick-Ins are recommended at this age. Throw-Ins are allowed, but if done, should conform to FIFA (ball thrown from behind head with both hands while keeping both feet touching the ground at the time of release of the ball). Opponents remain 3 yards from the ball until it is in play. A second and third throw must be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee or game official shall explain the proper method before allowing the player to throw-in again. It is best to just get the ball back into play as soon as possible, so a Kick-In is preferred. Players may throw or kick the ball in to themselves, however we encourage a pass to a "friend" or teammate in this situation if possible.

**Law 16 - Goal Kick:** No goal kicks. Use a Kick-In from where the ball exited play. (See Law 15.)

**Law 17 - Corner Kick:** No goal kicks. Use a Kick-In from where the ball exited play. (See Law 15.)

#### **OTHER YOUTH SOCCER RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULES**

- Opposing coaches, players, and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters. During games coaches should provide very few instructions; the kids should be allowed to simply enjoy and experience the game. Parents should not provide any instructions to the child during the game; this only mentally takes them out of the game and confuses them.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed on the GCAA campus.
- No pets (including dogs of any size) are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No weapons are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No slide tackles allowed in this age group.
- Coaches of U04 teams should attend the NCYSA Youth Module 1 coaching course.

## **GCAA Rec Soccer League**

### **3 v 3: Under 6 (U06)**

**Law 1 - The Field:**

- A. Dimensions:** No more than 30 yards long, no less than 20 yards long; No more than 25 yards wide, no less than 15 yards wide.
- B. Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide to mark: a halfway line across the width of the field; a center circle with a three (4) yard radius, four (4) corner arcs each with a one (1) yard radius, No goal area since no goal tending is allowed.
- C. Goals:** Small goals (roughly 4 x 6 feet).

**Law 2 - The Ball:** Size three (3).

**Law 3 - Number of Players:**

- A.** Maximum number of players per team on the field at a time is three (3). No goalkeeper.
- B.** Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed eight (8).
- C.** Teams may be coed.
- D.** Substitutions: Coaches are the referees in the game and may make unlimited substitutions at any stoppage of play. Try to make all substitutions quick so that you can keep play moving as much as possible.
- E.** Playing Time: Each player must play a minimum of 50% of total playing time in each game.
- F.** Coaches are directed to increase playing time of less skilled players, in games that are "well-in-hand", by sitting more skilled players. A game "well-in-hand" is defined as a game where the winning team is up by four (4) goals or more.

**Law 4 - Players Equipment:** Conform to FIFA laws with the following exceptions:

- A.** Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.
- B.** Shin guards are REQUIRED at all times for every player in practice AND games. Socks must FULLY COVER shin guards (shin guards are to be worn under socks).
- C.** No jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.) may be worn during games and practices. No metal hair clips are allowed; rubber band style or cloth "scrunchies" are acceptable.
- D.** Children wearing glasses must use a secured strap for their glasses.
- E.** Footwear may include tennis shoes or soft-cleat soccer shoes. Soccer cleats are recommended, but not required. No metal cleats. No baseball cleats or similar cleats with toe cleats; simple "tennis shoes" are a better choice over this style of cleat for everyone's safety.

**Law 5 - Referee:**

- A.** Coaches serve as refs for this league.
- B.** All rule infractions should be briefly explained to the offending player. Do-overs are allowed and encouraged in order to teach the children proper techniques.
- C.** In the event of a player injury, the coach will immediately stop play. When play stops, the injured player must leave the field. Parents should only come on the field if directed by the referee (coach). The player may return to the game at the next legal substitution. If the opposing team is in control of the ball at the time the whistle is blown for injury, they will be awarded an indirect kick. Otherwise, a drop ball is played.
- D.** To reduce the possibility of injury – no slide tackles are allowed. Violation of this of the rule will result in an indirect kick.

**Law 6 - Linesman:** None needed.

**Law 7 - Duration of the game:**

- A.** Four (4) equal eight (8) minute quarters.
- B.** Two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break

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between quarters three and four.

C. Halftime break of five (5) minutes.

D. Since no final scores or standings are maintained, the game ends when the allotted time is complete. There will be no overtime.

**Law 8 - Start of Play:** Generally, kick-offs start and restart play after quarter breaks and after goals are scored. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. The kicker must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player. Goals from kick-offs are allowed but not encouraged under the player development philosophy. Conform to FIFA, with following exceptions:

A. Opponent must be three (3) yards from center mark while kick-off is in progress

**Law 9 - Ball In and Out of Play:** Conform to FIFA. Simply, the ball must completely cross touchline or goal line to be out of play.

**Law 10 - Method of Scoring:** Conform to FIFA. Generally, ball must completely cross goal line between goal posts.

**Law 11 - Offside:** There shall be no offside called during these games. Players are allowed to move freely around the field.

**Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. No cautions or ejections issued, all fouls shall result in a direct free kick. The referee must explain ALL infringements to the offending player.

B. If a child is being too rambunctious then the coach shall make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

**Law 13 - Free Kicks:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. All kicks are INDIRECT.

B. If penalty occurs within three (3) yards of the goal, simply place the ball six (6) yards back from the goal line. This allows enough space for defensive players to position themselves between the ball and the goal.

C. Opponents must be at least three (3) yards away before kick is allowed.

**Law 14 - Penalty Kicks:** No penalty kicks are to be taken during these games. There are no goal keepers. All penalties result in a Free Kick (see Law 13).

**Law 15 – Kick-In (or Throw-In).** Some children may not be able to execute a proper throw-in and using hands may confuse some. Kick-Ins are allowed at this age. Throw-Ins must conform to FIFA (ball thrown from behind head with both hands while keeping both feet touching the ground at the time of release of the ball). Opponents remain 3 yards from the ball until it is in play. A second and third throw must be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee (coach) shall explain the proper method before allowing the player to throw-in again. Players must throw or kick the ball in to another player. This is a very simple introduction to a pass (if doing a kick-in) or sharing the ball with your “friends” (teammates) if doing a throw-in. They cannot throw or kick the ball to themselves. Another player must first touch the ball before they can touch the ball again.

**Law 16 - Goal Kick:** Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

A. Opponents must retreat behind the Halfway Line until after the ball is kicked.

**Law 17 - Corner Kick:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. Opponents must be at least three (3) yards away from the ball.

**OTHER YOUTH SOCCER RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULES**

- Opposing coaches, players, and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters. During games coaches should provide very few instructions; the kids should be allowed to simply enjoy and experience the game. Parents should not provide any instructions to the child during the game; this only mentally takes them out of the game and confuses them.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed on the GCAA campus.
- No pets (including dogs of any size) are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No weapons are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No slide tackles allowed in this age group.
- Coaches of U06 teams should attend the NCYSA Youth Module 1 coaching course.

## **GCAA Rec Soccer League**

### **4 v 4: Under 8 (U08)**

**Law 1 - The Field:**

**A. Dimensions:** No more than 35 yards long, no less than 25 yards long; No more than 30 yards wide, no less than 20 yards wide.

**B. Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide to mark: a halfway line across the width of the field; a center circle with a four (4) yard radius, four (4) corner arcs each with a one (1) yard radius, Goal Area: Three (3) yards from each goal post and three (3) yards into the field of play joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line.

**C. Goals:** No larger than 6 x 12 feet.

**Law 2 - The Ball:** Size three (3).

**Law 3 - Number of Players:**

**A.** Maximum number of players per team on the field at a time is four (4). No goalkeeper.

**B.** Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed ten (10).

**C.** Teams may be coed.

**D.** Substitutions: Coaches are the referees in the game and may make unlimited substitutions at any stoppage of play. However, we do encourage coaches to allow kids to play at least half of a quarter before being substituted if possible. Try to make all substitutions quick so that you can keep play moving as much as possible.

**E.** Playing Time: Each player must play a minimum of 50% of total playing time in each game.

**F.** Coaches are directed to increase playing time of less skilled players, in games that are "well-in-hand", by sitting more skilled players. A game "well-in-hand" is defined as a game where the winning team is up by four (4) goals or more.

**Law 4 - Players Equipment:** Conform to FIFA laws with the following exceptions:

**A.** Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

**B.** Shin guards are REQUIRED at all times for every player in practice AND games. Socks must FULLY COVER shin guards (shin guards are to be worn under socks).

**C.** No jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.) may be worn during games and practices. No metal hair clips are allowed; rubber band style or cloth "scrunchies" are acceptable.

**D.** Children wearing glasses must use a secured strap for their glasses.

**E.** Footwear may include tennis shoes or soft-cleat soccer shoes. Soccer cleats are recommended, but not required. No metal cleats. No baseball cleats or similar cleats with toe cleats; simple "tennis shoes" are a better choice over this style of cleat for everyone's safety.

**Law 5 - Referee:**

**A.** Coaches serve as refs for this league.

**B.** All rule infractions should be briefly explained to the offending player.

**C.** In the event of a player injury, the coach will immediately stop play. When play stops, the injured player must leave the field. Parents should only come on the field if directed by the referee (coach). The player may return to the game at the next legal substitution. If the opposing team is in control of the ball at the time the whistle is blown for injury, they will be awarded an indirect kick. Otherwise, a drop ball is played.

**D.** To reduce the possibility of injury – no slide tackles are allowed. Violation of this of the rule will result in an indirect kick.

**Law 6 - Linesman:** None needed.

**Law 7 - Duration of the game:**

**A.** Four (4) equal twelve (12) minute quarters.

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- B. Two (2) minute break between quarters one and two and another two (2) minute break between quarters three and four.
- C. Halftime break of five (5) minutes.
- D. Since no final scores or standings are maintained, the game ends when the allotted time is complete. There will be no overtime.

**Law 8 - Start of Play:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. Opponent must be five (5) yards from center mark while kick-off is in progress. Generally, kick-offs start and restart play after quarter breaks and after goals are scored. Goals from kick-offs are allowed but not encouraged under the player development philosophy.

**Law 9 - Ball In and Out of Play:** Conform to FIFA. Simply, the ball must completely cross touchline or goal line to be out of play.

**Law 10 - Method of Scoring:** Simply, ball must completely cross goal line between goal posts. Conform to FIFA with following exception:

A. Shot on goal must originate from offensive side of field unless another player touches the ball before entering the goal.

**Law 11 - Offside:** There shall be no offside called during these games. Players are allowed to move freely around the field.

**Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. No cautions or ejections issued, all fouls shall result in an INDIRECT free kick. The referee (coach) must explain ALL infringements to the offending player.

B. If a child is being too rambunctious then the coach shall make a substitution of that player to give the child a chance to calm down before returning to play.

**Law 13 - Free Kicks:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. All kicks are INDIRECT.

B. No kicks shall be taken by the attacking team within the defending team's goal area. If penalty occurs within the goal area, simply place the ball five (5) yards outside the goal area. This allows enough space for defensive players to position themselves between the ball and the goal.

C. Opponents must be at least five (5) yards away before kick is allowed.

**Law 14 - Penalty Kicks:** No penalty kicks are to be taken during these games. There are no goal keepers. All penalties result in a Free Kick (see Law 13).

**Law 15 - Throw-In:** Conform to FIFA (ball thrown from behind head with both hands while keeping both feet touching the ground at the time of release of the ball) with following exceptions:

A. A second throw-in must be allowed if the player commits a foul on the initial attempt. The referee or game official (coach) shall explain the proper method before allowing the player to throw-in again. A second foul results in loss of possession and the other team takes a throw-in.

**Law 16 - Goal Kick:** Conform to FIFA with the following exceptions:

A. The Goal Kick may be taken anywhere within the goal box.

B. Opponents must retreat behind the Halfway Line until after the ball is kicked.

**Law 17 - Corner Kick:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. Opponents must be at least five (5) yards away from the ball.

**OTHER YOUTH SOCCER RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULES**

- Opposing coaches, players, and parents should shake hands after each match.

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- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters. During games coaches should provide very few instructions; the kids should be allowed to simply enjoy and experience the game. Parents should not provide any instructions to the child during the game; this only mentally takes them out of the game and confuses them.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed on the GCAA campus.
- No pets (including dogs of any size) are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No weapons are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No slide tackles allowed in this age group.
- Coaches of U08 teams should attend the NCYSA Youth Module 1 coaching course.

## **GCAA Rec Soccer League**

### **6 v 6: Under 10 (U10)**

#### **Law 1 - The Field:**

**A. Dimensions:** No more than 60 yards long, no less than 45 yards long; No more than 45 yards wide, no less than 35 yards wide. **US Youth Soccer Optimal recommendation: 50 yards length by 40 yards width.**

**B. Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide to mark: a halfway line across the width of the field; a center circle with a eight (8) yard radius, four (4) corner arcs each with a three (3) foot radius, Goal Area: Six (6) yards from each goal post and six (6) yards into the field of play joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. Penalty area: Ten (10) yards from each goal post and ten (10) yards into the field of play joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The Penalty Spot is eightw (8) yards away from the goal line.

**C. Goals:** Six (6) feet high and eighteen (18) feet wide.

**Law 2 - The Ball:** Size four (4).

#### **Law 3 - Number of Players:**

**A.** Maximum number of players per team on the field at a time is six (6) including goal keeper.

**B.** Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed twelve (12).

**C.** Teams may be coed.

**D. Substitutions:** Made at the Halfway line, at half time, with the permission of the Referee after a goal or before a goal kick, prior to a throw-in, where your team has possession, after an injury where the referee stops play, and when the other team substitutes. The player must come off the field before the new player goes on. Substitutions are unlimited.

**E. Playing Time:** Each player must play a minimum of 50% of total playing time in each game.

**F. Coaches** are directed to increase playing time of less skilled players, in games that are "well-in-hand", by sitting more skilled players. A game "well-in-hand" is defined as a game where the winning team is up by four (4) goals or more.

**G.** Players positioned as goalies must play at least ten additional minutes in a non-goalie position (this will be enforced by the Honor System). The goalkeeper can only be substituted in a dead ball situation. You may not substitute before direct or indirect kicks.

#### **Law 4 - Players Equipment:** Conform to FIFA laws with the following exceptions:

**A.** Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

**B.** Shin guards are REQUIRED at all times for every player in practice AND games. Socks must FULLY COVER shin guards (shin guards are to be worn under socks).

**C.** No jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.) may be worn during games and practices. No metal hair clips are allowed; rubber band style or cloth "scrunchies" are acceptable.

**D.** Children wearing glasses must use a secured strap for their glasses.

**E.** Footwear may include tennis shoes or soft-cleat soccer shoes. Soccer cleats are recommended, but not required. No metal cleats. Baseball cleats or similar cleats with toe cleats are not recommended; simple "tennis shoes" are a better choice over this style of cleat for everyone's safety.

#### **Law 5 - Referee:**

**A.** Registered or Associate Referee.

**B.** All rule infractions should be briefly explained to the offending player.

**C.** The referee must adhere to the following procedure when dealing with injured players:

- play is allowed to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is, in the opinion of the referee, only slightly injured
- play is stopped if, in the opinion of the referee, a player is seriously injured

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- after questioning the injured player, the referee may authorize the coach to enter the field of play to assess the injury and arrange the player's safe and swift removal from the field of play
- parents should only come on the field if directed by the referee or coach
- the referee must ensure an injured player is safely removed from the field of play
- any player bleeding from a wound must leave the field of play. He may not return until the referee is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped
- When the referee stops play, the injured player must leave the field. The player may return to the game at the next legal substitution. If the opposing team is in control of the ball at the time the whistle is blown for injury, they will be awarded an indirect kick. Otherwise, a drop ball is played.

**D.** In the event the goalkeeper is injured during the last two minutes of play, the new goalkeeper must come from the bench. In the event there are no eligible players to substitute for the goalkeeper, only then may a player be moved into the keeper position.

**E.** To reduce the possibility of injury – no slide tackles are allowed. Violation of this of the rule will result in a direct kick. If the foul occurs inside the goalie box a penalty shot will be awarded.

**Law 6 - Linesman:** None needed.

**Law 7 - Duration of the game:**

- A.** Two (2) equal twenty-five (25) minute halves.
- B.** Halftime break of five (5) minutes.
- C.** Since no final scores or standings are maintained, the game ends when the allotted time is complete. There will be no overtime.

**Law 8 - Start of Play:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

**A.** Opponent must be eight (8) yards from center mark while kick-off is in progress. Generally, kick-offs start and restart play after halftime and after goals are scored. Goals from kick-offs are allowed but not encouraged under the player development philosophy.

**Law 9 - Ball In and Out of Play:** Conform to FIFA. Simply, the ball must completely cross touchline or goal line to be out of play.

**Law 10 - Method of Scoring:** Conform to FIFA. Simply, ball must completely cross goal line between goal posts.

**Law 11 - Offside:** There shall be no offside called during these games. Players are allowed to move freely around the field.

**Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct:** Conform to FIFA with following clarifications:

**A.** An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.

**B.** Coaches are not allowed to go past the mid-line. Consistent violation will mean ejection by referee.

**C.** While the goalkeeper has taken possession of the ball within his own penalty area, attacking players are required to move to the side of the goalkeeper as the ball is returned (possession by the goalkeeper includes holding, bouncing, throwing the ball into the air and catching it again, or releasing it into play). The goalkeeper has a maximum of (10) seconds to get rid of the ball. Violation of this rule will result with an indirect free kick at the edge of the goal box for the opposing team.

**Law 13 - Free Kicks:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

- A.** Opponents must be at least eight (8) yards away before kick is allowed.

**Law 14 - Penalty Kicks:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

- A. The Penalty Spot is ten (10) yards away from the goal line.
- B. Opponents must be eight (8) yards away before kick is allowed.

**Law 15 - Throw-In:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 16 - Goal Kick:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 17 - Corner Kick:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

- A. Opponents must be at least eight (8) yards away from the ball.

**OTHER YOUTH SOCCER RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULES**

- Opposing coaches, players, and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters. During games coaches should provide very few instructions; the kids should be allowed to simply enjoy and experience the game. Parents should not provide any instructions to the child during the game; this only mentally takes them out of the game and confuses them.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed on the GCAA campus.
- No pets (including dogs of any size) are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No weapons are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No slide tackles allowed in this age group.
- Coaches of U10 teams should attend the NCYSA Youth Module 2 coaching course and are encouraged to take the NCYSA "E" License course.

## **GCAA Rec Soccer League**

### **8 v 8: Under 12 (U12)**

#### **Law 1 - The Field:**

**A. Dimensions:** No more than 80 yards long, no less than 70 yards long; No more than 55 yards wide, no less than 45 yards wide. **US Youth Soccer Optimal recommendation: 75 yards length by 50 yards width.**

**B. Markings:** Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide to mark: a halfway line across the width of the field; a center circle with a eight (8) yard radius, four (4) corner arcs each with a three (3) foot radius, Goal Area: Six (6) yards from each goal post and six (6) yards into the field of play joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. Penalty area: Fourteen (14) yards from each goal post and fourteen (14) yards into the field of play joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The Penalty Spot is ten (10) yards away from the goal line.

**C. Goals:** Six (6) feet high and eighteen (18) feet wide or larger.

#### **Law 2 - The Ball:** Size four (4).

#### **Law 3 - Number of Players:**

**A.** Maximum number of players per team on the field at a time is eight (8) including goal keeper.

**B.** Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed fourteen (14).

**C.** Teams may be coed.

**D. Substitutions:** Made at the Halfway line, at half time, with the permission of the Referee after a goal or before a goal kick, prior to a throw-in, where your team has possession, after an injury where the referee stops play, and when the other team substitutes. The player must come off the field before the new player goes on. Substitutions are unlimited.

**E. Playing Time:** Each player must play a minimum of 50% of total playing time in each game.

**F. Coaches** are directed to increase playing time of less skilled players, in games that are "well-in-hand", by sitting more skilled players. A game "well-in-hand" is defined as a game where the winning team is up by four (4) goals or more.

**G.** Players positioned as goalies must play at least ten additional minutes in a non-goalie position (this will be enforced by the Honor System). The goalkeeper can only be substituted in a dead ball situation. You may not substitute before direct or indirect kicks.

#### **Law 4 - Players Equipment:** Conform to FIFA laws with the following exceptions:

**A.** Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.

**B.** Shin guards are REQUIRED at all times for every player in practice AND games. Socks must FULLY COVER shin guards (shin guards are to be worn under socks).

**C.** No jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.) may be worn during games and practices. No metal hair clips are allowed; rubber band style or cloth "scrunchies" are acceptable.

**D.** Children wearing glasses must use a secured strap for their glasses.

**E.** Footwear may include tennis shoes or soft-cleat soccer shoes. Soccer cleats are recommended, but not required. No metal cleats. Baseball cleats or similar cleats with toe cleats are not recommended; simple "tennis shoes" are a better choice over this style of cleat for everyone's safety.

#### **Law 5 - Referee:**

**A.** Registered or Associate referee.

**B.** All rule infractions should be briefly explained to the offending player.

**C.** The referee must adhere to the following procedure when dealing with injured players:

- play is allowed to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is, in the opinion of the referee, only slightly injured

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- play is stopped if, in the opinion of the referee, a player is seriously injured
- after questioning the injured player, the referee may authorize the coach to enter the field of play to assess the injury and arrange the player's safe and swift removal from the field of play
- parents should only come on the field if directed by the referee or coach
- the referee must ensure an injured player is safely removed from the field of play
- any player bleeding from a wound must leave the field of play. He may not return until the referee is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped
- When the referee stops play, the injured player must leave the field. The player may return to the game at the next legal substitution. If the opposing team is in control of the ball at the time the whistle is blown for injury, they will be awarded an indirect kick. Otherwise, a drop ball is played.

**D.** In the event the goalkeeper is injured during the last two minutes of play, the new goalkeeper must come from the bench. In the event there are no eligible players to substitute for the goalkeeper, only then may a player be moved into the keeper position.

**Law 6 - Linesman:** Two (2) Registered or Associate Referees. If necessary, a Parent/Coach may be used.

**Law 7 - Duration of the game:**

- A.** Two (2) equal thirty (30) minute halves.
- B.** Halftime break of five (5) minutes.
- C.** Since no final scores or standings are maintained, the game ends when the allotted time is complete. There will be no overtime.

**Law 8 - Start of Play:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

- A.** Opponent must be eight (8) yards from center mark while kick-off is in progress. Generally, kick-offs start and restart play after halftime and after goals are scored. Goals from kick-offs are allowed but not encouraged under the player development philosophy.

**Law 9 - Ball In and Out of Play:** Conform to FIFA. Simply, the ball must completely cross touchline or goal line to be out of play.

**Law 10 - Method of Scoring:** Conform to FIFA. Simply, ball must completely cross goal line between goal posts.

**Law 11 - Offside:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct:** Conform to FIFA with following clarifications:

- A.** An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the center spot on the halfway line if a goalkeeper punts or drop-kicks the ball in the air from his/her penalty area into the opponents penalty area.
- B.** Coaches are not allowed to go past the mid-line. Consistent violation will mean ejection by referee.
- C.** While the goalkeeper has taken possession of the ball within his own penalty area, attacking players are required to move to the side of the goalkeeper as the ball is returned (possession by the goalkeeper includes holding, bouncing, throwing the ball into the air and catching it again, or releasing it into play). The goalkeeper has a maximum of (10) seconds to get rid of the ball. Violation of this rule will result with an indirect free kick at the edge of the goal box for the opposing team.

**Law 13 - Free Kicks:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

- A.** Opponents must be at least eight (8) yards away before kick is allowed.

**Law 14 - Penalty Kicks:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

- A.** The Penalty Spot is ten (10) yards away from the goal line.

B. Opponents must be eight (8) yards away before kick is allowed.

**Law 15 - Throw-In:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 16 - Goal Kick:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 17 - Corner Kick:** Conform to FIFA with following exceptions:

A. Opponents must be at least eight (8) yards away from the ball.

**OTHER YOUTH SOCCER RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULES**

- Opposing coaches, players, and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters. During games coaches should provide very few instructions; the kids should be allowed to simply enjoy and experience the game. Parents should not provide any instructions to the child during the game; this only mentally takes them out of the game and confuses them.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed on the GCAA campus.
- No pets (including dogs of any size) are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No weapons are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- Coaches of U12 teams should attend the NCYSA Youth Module 2 coaching course and are encouraged to take the NCYSA "E" License course.

## **GCAA Rec Soccer League**

### **11 v 11: Under 13 and Up (U13+)**

**Law 1 - The Field:**

- A. Dimensions:** Conform to FIFA.
- B. Markings:** Conform to FIFA.
- C. Goals:** Seven (7) feet high and twenty-one (21) feet wide or eight (8) feet high and twenty-four (24) feet wide.

**Law 2 - The Ball:** Size five (5).

**Law 3 - Number of Players:**

- A.** Maximum number of players per team on the field at a time is eleven (11) including goal keeper.
- B.** Maximum number of players on the roster should not exceed eighteen (18).
- C.** Teams may be coed.
- D.** Substitutions: Made at the Halfway line, at half time, with the permission of the Referee after a goal or before a goal kick, prior to a throw-in, where your team has possession, after an injury where the referee stops play, and when the other team substitutes. The player must come off the field before the new player goes on. Substitutions are unlimited.
- E.** Playing Time: Each player must play a minimum of 50% of total playing time in each game.
- F.** Coaches are directed to increase playing time of less skilled players, in games that are “well-in-hand”, by sitting more skilled players. A game “well-in-hand” is defined as a game where the winning team is up by four (4) goals or more.

**Law 4 - Players Equipment:** Conform to FIFA laws with the following exceptions:

- A.** Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams.
- B.** Shin guards are REQUIRED at all times for every player in practice AND games. Socks must FULLY COVER shin guards (shin guards are to be worn under socks).
- C.** No jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.) may be worn during games and practices. No metal hair clips are allowed; rubber band style or cloth “scrunchies” are acceptable.
- D.** Children wearing glasses must use a secured strap for their glasses.
- E.** Footwear may include tennis shoes or soft-cleat soccer shoes. Soccer cleats are recommended, but not required. No metal cleats. Baseball cleats or similar cleats with toe cleats are not recommended; simple “tennis shoes” are a better choice over this style of cleat for everyone’s safety.

**Law 5 - Referee:** Conform to FIFA laws with the following clarifications:

- A.** Registered or Associate referee.
- B.** All rule infractions should be briefly explained to the offending player.

**Law 6 - Linesman:** Two (2) Registered or Associate Referees. If necessary, a Parent/Coach may be used.

**Law 7 - Duration of the game:**

- A.** U13, U14 - Two (2) equal thirty-five (35) minute halves with a Halftime break of up to fifteen (15) minutes.
- B.** U15, U16 - Two (2) equal forty (40) minute halves with a Halftime break of up to fifteen (15) minutes.
- C.** U17+ - Two (2) equal forty-five (45) minute halves with a Halftime break of up to fifteen (15) minutes.
- D.** Since no final scores or standings are maintained, the game ends when the allotted time is complete. There will be no overtime.

**Law 8 - Start of Play:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 9 - Ball In and Out of Play:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 10 - Method of Scoring:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 11 - Offside:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 13 - Free Kicks:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 14 - Penalty Kicks:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 15 - Throw-In:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 16 - Goal Kick:** Conform to FIFA.

**Law 17 - Corner Kick:** Conform to FIFA.

**OTHER YOUTH SOCCER RECOMMENDATIONS AND RULES**

- Opposing coaches, players, and parents should shake hands after each match.
- Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters. During games coaches should provide very few instructions; the kids should be allowed to simply enjoy and experience the game. Parents should not provide any instructions to the child during the game; this only mentally takes them out of the game and confuses them.
- Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed on the GCAA campus.
- No pets (including dogs of any size) are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- No weapons are allowed on the GCAA campus at any time.
- Coaches of U14 and up teams should attend the NCYSA Youth Module 2 coaching course and are encouraged to take the NCYSA "E" License course. Also the NCYSA "D" License course may be helpful.

### **Overview of Some Game Rules**

**This is intended as a guide and supplement, but does not replace or overrule the rulebook used.**

#### **Start of Game**

1. Choice of ends of field and kick-off shall be determined by a coin flip. The winner of the flip shall have choice of either end or the kick-off. The loser of the coin toss will have the other choice (i.e., Red Team wins toss and chooses to kick-off, the Green Team has choice of goal to defend).
2. Play shall be started by a kick-off at the center of the field after the referee's signal.
3. At halftime, ends will change and the kickoff will be by a player of the opposite team that started the game.

#### **Kick-Off**

1. Opposing players must be outside the center field circle.
2. The ball must move forward.
3. The kicker cannot play the ball a second time before another player has played it.

#### **Ball In and Out of Play**

1. Lines are regarded as part of the field. The entire ball must be completely beyond the line to be out.
2. If the ball rebounds off the referee when in the field of play, goal post/bar or corner flag, the ball continues to be in play.

#### **Handling the ball**

Not all instances in which the ball makes contact with a player's hand or arm is it considered a foul. Handling the ball involves a deliberate act of a player making contact with the ball with his hand or arm. The referee must take the following into consideration:

- the movement of the hand towards the ball (not the ball towards the hand)
- the distance between the opponent and the ball (unexpected ball)
- the position of the hand does not necessarily mean that there is an infringement
- touching the ball with an object held in the hand (clothing, shinguard etc.) counts as an infringement
- hitting the ball with a thrown object (boot, shinguard, etc.) counts as an infringement

Normally the contact must result in a change in play or provide an advantage to the offending team. A handling the ball foul are at the discretion of the officials.

#### **Offside**

##### **Simple Interpretation of Offside**

A player is in an Offside position if he is nearer to his opponent's goal line, unless

- (1) The player is in his own half of the field of play, or
- (2) There are at least two of his opponents (including the goalie) nearer their own goal line than he is.
- (3) The player is not in the immediate vicinity of the play (referee's discretion).

There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from a goal kick, a throw-in, or a corner kick.

### **Fouls and Misconduct**

For age groups in Recreation Soccer, a foul is any play that could result in an injury or for intentionally handling the ball.

### **Direct Free Kick**

The decision on whether or not to call any foul rests with the referee. The referee in rendering his decision will judge the player's intent. A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
2. Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent
7. Tackles an opponent
8. Holds an opponent
9. Spits at an opponent
10. Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper in his own penalty area)

A direct free kick is taken from the place where the offense occurred.

If the offense is committed by a player inside his own penalty area, irrespective of the position of the ball, provided it is in play, then a penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team.

### **Seven Indirect offenses**

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following four offenses:

1. controls the ball with his hands for more than the allotted time before releasing it from his possession (delay of game)
2. touches the ball again with his hands after he has released it from his possession and before it has touched another player
3. touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate
4. touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:

1. plays in a dangerous manner
2. impedes the progress of an opponent
3. prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
4. commits any other offense, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player

The indirect free kick is taken from the place where the offense occurred.

**Penalty-kick**

1. All players, except the goalkeeper and the penalty kicker, must be outside the penalty area and at least ten yards from the penalty mark. The goalkeeper must stand on his own goal line without moving his feet until the ball has been kicked.
2. The kicker must make a smooth and uninterrupted approach to the ball.

**Throw-In**

1. At the time the ball leaves the hands, both feet must remain on the ground.
2. Both feet must be on the touch line or outside the field.
3. The ball must be brought back over and behind the head.
4. A re-throw will be taken if the ball does not enter the field of play.
5. There is no offside on a throw-in.
6. The throw-in must be taken within 1 yard of where the ball left the field.
7. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in unless touched by another player.
8. After throwing the ball into play, the thrower cannot touch the ball again until it touches another player.
9. An opponent may not jump in front of a person trying to throw a ball into play.

**Goal-Kick**

1. When a goal kick is taken, the ball may be placed anywhere within the goalie area. The intent of this rule is to place the ball back into play as quickly as possible.
2. When the ball is kicked it must travel beyond the penalty area before being played again. If it fails to clear the penalty box area, a re-kick will be taken.
3. In the U06 age group, all players of the opposing team must be beyond the mid-field prior to taking the kick.

**Corner-Kick**

1. A corner-kick will be awarded when the ball exits the field over the goal line and was last touched by a defender and a goal was not scored.
2. There is no offside on corner-kicks.
3. A goal may be scored directly without touching another player.
4. The ball must be placed entirely inside the corner arc.
5. All other players must be the required distance back from the ball (see individual league rules).

**Free Kicks**

1. If a direct kick is kicked directly into the opponents' goal, a goal is awarded.
2. If a direct kick is kicked directly into the team's own goal, a corner kick is awarded to the opposing team.
3. Another player must touch an indirect kick before it enters to goal – for the goal to be awarded.