



**2025 HANDBOOK
For
REFEREES, COACHES and PARENTS**

Eastside Youth Soccer Association
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Mercer Island, WA 98040

www.eysa.org

EYSA Local Member Clubs

Bellevue United FC
Eastside FC
Issaquah FC
Lake Hills Soccer Club
Mercer Island FC

www.bellevueunitedfc.org
www.eastsidefc.org
www.issaquahfc.org
www.lakehillssoccer.org
www.mercerislandfc.org

Contents

Purpose of this Handbook	3
The Laws of the Game	4
Common Situations and Important Laws.....	5
Law IV –The Players’ Equipment.....	5
Uniforms – in case of conflicting colors	5
The home team shall wear light colored jerseys and the away team shall wear dark. For teams with one jersey, the coach shall coordinate with the opposing coach before the game. In the event of a conflict at the game, the home team shall change or wear pinnies. .	5
No Jewelry, Casts, or Splints Allowed (EYSA and WYS).....	5
Law III – The Players - Substitution Rules	5
Law XI - Offside	6
Law XII - Fouls and Misconduct (Direct and Indirect kicks)	6
Law I - Full Size Field Dimensions (U13 and older)	7
Summary of Disciplinary Sanctions for Misconduct	8
“Standard” FIFA	8
Referee Evaluations	8
Referee and Coach Protocols	9
Restarts After Stoppage of Play on the Field	9
For Handling of Injuries	9
Sportsmanship and Customs of Soccer.....	9
Being a Good Host at the Field.....	10
Referee Protocols for Unruly Coach or Spectator Problems.....	10
Protocols for Handling Referee Abuse.....	10
Protocols for Supervising Referees	10
Modifications not directly aligned to Laws of the Game.....	11
No Heading for Players on U11 or Younger Age Teams (USSF)	11
No Punting or Drop-kicking for players on U12 or Younger Age Teams.....	11
No enforcement of the 8-second rule for ball in Keeper’s hands	11
Build Out Lines (WYS Rule, aka EYSA No Poaching Rule)	11
EYSA Mercy Rule Policy (U8-U12 EYSA League).....	12
Administering the Mercy Rule	12
Game-Day Requirements will vary by age and level of competition	13
Modifications for the Small-Sided Game U08 and U09	14
Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U08).....	17
Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U09).....	18
Modifications for Small-Sided Play U10	19
Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U10).....	22
Modifications for Small-Sided Play U11 and U12.....	23
Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U11 and U12)	26
Guidance and Procedural Advice to Referees	27
What to do when things are not right with fields or teams?.....	28
Modifications to USSF Rules- Laws II, III and VII, by age (EYSA Rec)	29
EYSA Club Contacts	29

Purpose of this Handbook

More than 5,000 players play soccer through EYSA. At all ages and levels of play, EYSA promotes play that should be SAFE, FUN and FAIR.

EYSA prepares this handbook to help referees, coaches and parents understand the philosophy of soccer at each level of play sponsored by EYSA and to know the rules of play for each level. EYSA also offers many coaching resources on its web site (www.eysa.org) and through clinics and training sponsored by the soccer clubs that make up EYSA.

If anyone has questions, wants to volunteer, or has concerns, he or she should call their club Board members or EYSA representatives. The specific contacts are listed in the Administrative section of this handbook.

Organization of Youth Soccer – from FIFA to Each Team

Soccer sponsorship starts with FIFA, the acronym for Federation Internationale de Football Association, the game's governing body worldwide. FIFA maintains The Laws of the Game annually.

The US Soccer Federation (USSF), governs soccer in this country. US Youth Soccer (USYS) is one of three (3) nationwide Youth organizations under USSF. Within USYS, each state has an association, and most states also have youth soccer associations. Under USYS, Washington Youth Soccer (www.WashingtonYouthSoccer.org) governs youth soccer for its members in the state.

WYS runs some competition directly, though many leagues are run by members throughout the state. WYS members are geographically defined Associations around the state like EYSA. WYS governs, recognizes and supports Associations with some key centralized services including Risk Management & Insurance, Coach training programs, organizing State Cup tournaments, registering players with USYS/USSF and helping organize league structures. Associations like EYSA and their member clubs perform a large part of the organizational work that makes soccer possible for so many youths largely through volunteers

WYS and EYSA may and do modify the FIFA international rules for recreational and 'modified youth soccer (generally All ages U19). **These rule modifications serve two purposes: to provide specific instruction where FIFA rules are general, and to implement rules intended to make youth soccer Safe, Fun and Fair. This Handbook includes detailed description of those modifications used in the EYSA U8-U12 Recreational League.**

The five clubs that comprise EYSA are Issaquah FC, Bellevue United FC (which now includes the former Newport Youth Soccer Club), Issaquah FC, Lake Hills Soccer Club, Mercer Island FC, and Eastside FC. The referee assignors for the clubs in EYSA work together so that updates or changes to the Laws of the Game are implemented for the U8-U12 Recreational League.

Referees for EYSA U8-12 Rec teams are provided through EYSAReferees.org.

EKCSRA.org and other organizations provide referees for EYSA, League Washington, NPSL and RCL leagues and tournaments, which are subject to their specific rule modifications. All scheduled referees are USSF certified referees.

The Laws of the Game

The Laws of the Game come from FIFA, and are endorsed for the USA by the US Soccer Federation. WYS governs modifications for state youth programs. Each Association further modifies the Laws if local situations make modifications advisable. Referees and coaches are encouraged to learn the Laws of the Game.

This page provides a summary list of the Laws but does not restate the entirety of the Laws.

Law I THE FIELD OF PLAY

Law II THE BALL

Law III THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- Details of these laws vary by age group. See by age and summary of [Modifications to USSF](#) in this Handbook.

Law IV THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

- Youth Recreational soccer has specific modifications discussed in detail in a [following section](#). Equipment must not be dangerous to a player or to others. Uniform, socks, shin guards, and safe footwear are required. NO jewelry is allowed during practices or games in WYS/EYSA.

Law V THE REFEREE

- Defines authority and role of the referee. The “advantage” rule is in this Law.

Law VI THE ASSISTANT REFEREES

Law VII THE DURATION OF THE MATCH

- Often modified by age group, always at least two equal halves.

Law VIII THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

- Details of these laws vary by age group. See Modifications in this Handbook.

Law IX THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

Law X THE METHOD OF SCORING

- These laws do not change with age groups.

Law XI OFFSIDE

- Within WYS, this Law is waived for U09 and younger age groups.

Law XII FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- This Law does not change with age groups. See advice about [Fouls and Misconduct](#).

Law XIII FREE KICKS

- Within WYS, no direct free kicks are awarded below U11 in recreational soccer. All kicks are indirect.

Law XIV THE PENALTY KICK

- Within WYS, no penalty kicks are awarded below U11 in recreational soccer. All kicks are indirect.
- Follow FIFA rules for the restart if players enter the penalty area before the kick is taken.

Law XV THE THROW-IN

- Within EYSA, an improper throw-in may be re-taken for U10 and younger ages recreational games.

Law XVI THE GOAL KICK

- See [Build Out Line \(aka EYSA No Poaching Rule\)](#)

Law XVII THE CORNER KICK

- This law does not change with age groups.

Common Situations and Important Laws

Referees should know the Laws of the Game. Youth referees should also know the Small-Sided Game rule changes that come from WYS and EYSA. The next pages of the Handbook summarize key rules governing common situations, including substitution rules, Law 11 (Offside), Law 12 (Fouls and Misconduct) and the strict ban on jewelry. Referees are encouraged to review these rules prior to each game.

Law IV – The Players' Equipment

Uniforms – in case of conflicting colors

The home team shall wear light colored jerseys and the away team shall wear dark. For teams with one jersey, the coach shall coordinate with the opposing coach before the game. In the event of a conflict at the game, the home team shall change or wear pinnies.

No Jewelry, Casts, or Splints Allowed (EYSA and WYS)

WYS and EYSA interpret **Law IV** strictly. **“A player must not use equipment or wear anything which is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry).”**

Jewelry

A player may not tape or band-aid over jewelry. The jewelry must be removed. Rings, metal or hard plastic hair clips, exposed facial piercing jewelry, wristwatches, plastic bracelets, woven bracelets, necklaces and medallions are **NOT** allowed and must be left on the sidelines. Earrings cannot be worn during games or practices. The posts in freshly pierced ears can be removed for the practice or a game.

Medic-Alert bracelets should be given to a sidelines spectator or the coach. That person must accept responsibility for delivering the bracelet to any aid-car or medical personnel in case of an emergency involving the player at the field.

Casts or Splints

No player shall be allowed to participate in a hard cast or splint in Recreational games - **no exceptions**. Any splint with a stiff strut of metal or other stiff material is not allowed on the field. In Select and Premier games referees have discretion for and may allow hard case or splints if they judge it is protected enough not to pose a danger to other players.

Simple cloth wraps (e.g. Ace Bandages with tape over the metal clips) are acceptable.

Mouth guards are highly recommended. Soft, protective head-bands are permitted. They are not required by EYSA, WYS, US Soccer or FIFA at this time. Hard-billed hats like baseball caps are not allowed. Players may wear beanies. Keepers may wear a hat or cap with a short, soft bill.

Disputes or objections can be appealed to the home soccer club or to EYSA. However, on game day, the rules apply in the absence of a league approved and documented special arrangement

Law III – The Players - Substitution Rules

1. Either team may substitute at any stoppage of play; with the consent of the referee; *At all ages, the referee must approve any and all substitutions.*
2. An unlimited number of players may substitute, given the consent of the referee.
3. Substitution is not required after a player is cautioned with a yellow card. The referee should make eye contact with the player's coach and allow ample time for the coach to ask for a substitution of the player.
4. A red-carded player may not be substituted.
5. Coaches should be sure to tell referees about keeper substitutions.
6. The referee has the authority to limit substitutions in whatever way he or she thinks is helpful to game management.

Law XI - Offside

The following elements must be present for a player to be offside:

1. The player must be in the attacking half of the field.
2. The player must be closer to the opponent's goal line than the ball.
3. Fewer than two opponents must be between the player and the opponent's goal line.
4. All the above conditions must exist at the time the ball is last touched by a teammate.
5. The player must be involved in active play by: 1) interfering with play or with an opponent, or 2) gaining an advantage by being in that position.
6. The player does not receive the ball directly from goal kick, corner kick, or throw-in.

In summary, to be offside a player not only must be in an offside position (elements 1 through 3) but also must gain an advantage by being in that position. Therefore, a player in an offside position may not be whistled for an offside infraction. Referees interpret Law 11 by whistling the offside infraction only if the player receives the ball by pass or deflection. If a player runs into an offside position to take advantage of that position but does not receive the ball, referees do not whistle a foul.

Offside infractions apply when the ball is passed by an attacking teammate. Deflections by a defender do not nullify an offside infraction. If a defender gains control of the ball, then passes the ball to an offside attacker by mistake, there is no offside. If a player is declared offside, the referee awards an indirect free kick at the spot where the offside player became involved in the play. If the offense occurs in the goal area, the defenders' free kick shall be taken from any place in the goal area.

Law XII - Fouls and Misconduct (Direct and Indirect kicks)**Direct Free Kick**

Fouls calling for a direct free kick are known as penal fouls. A player has committed a penal foul if the player carelessly, recklessly, or with excessive force:

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. Hits or attempts to hit an opponent;
6. Pushes an opponent.

A player has committed a penal foul (whether or not acting carelessly, recklessly or with excessive force) if the player:

1. when tackling makes contact with an opponent before making contact with the ball;
2. holds an opponent;
3. spits at an opponent;
4. deliberately handles the ball. Note:
accidental contact between ball and hand
or arm is not a foul.

A penalty kick is awarded if the penal foul is committed in the player's penalty area. NOTE: In the Small-Sided Recreational Game (U08-U10), all free kicks are indirect; there are no penalty kicks.

Indirect Free Kick

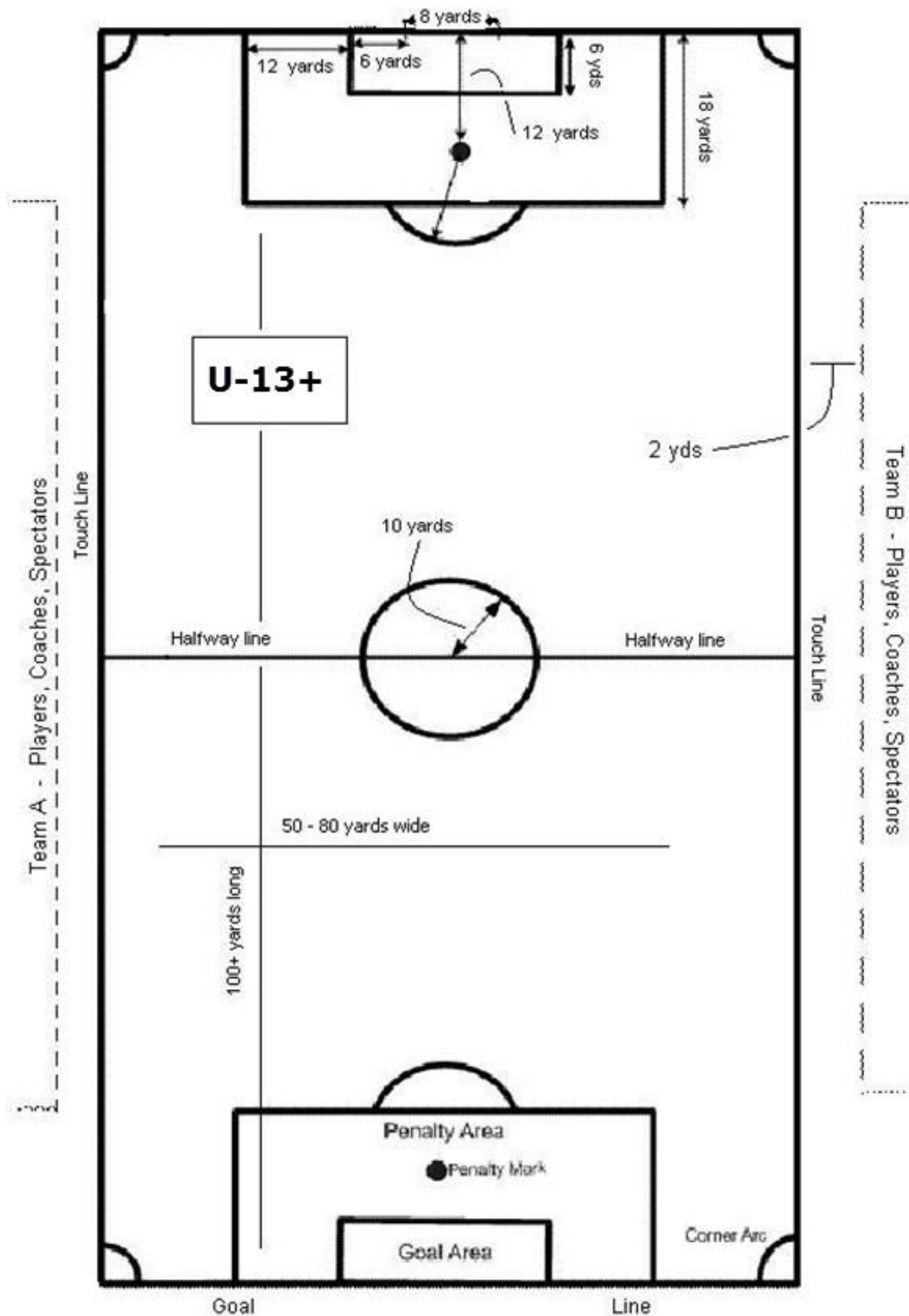
The following, known as technical offenses, result in an indirect free kick:

1. Dangerous play;
2. Impeding the progress of an opponent (often called "obstruction" in the past);
3. Preventing a goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hand;
4. Committing any other offense not previously mentioned in Law XII for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player.

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

1. Touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not been touched any other player;
2. Touches the ball with his hands after 1) it has been deliberately kicked to him by a teammate (except at U09 and below) or 2) he has received it directly from a teammate's throw-in

Law I - Full Size Field Dimensions (U13 and older)



Modified field sizes are included with each of the Age-related modifications below

Summary of Disciplinary Sanctions for Misconduct

“Standard” FIFA

Players guilty of the following offenses shall be cautioned (Yellow Card):

- Unsporting Behavior
- Dissent
- Persistent Infringement
- Delaying Restart of Play
- Failing to Respect the Required Distance
- Entering/Re-entering Field without Permission
- Leaving the Field without Permission

Players guilty of the following offenses shall be sent off (Red Card):

- Serious Foul Play
- Violent Conduct
- Spitting at another Person
- Denying a Goal by Handling the Ball
- Denying a Goal by Other Unlawful Means
- Offensive, Insulting or Abusive Language
- Second Caution

Referees should not allow foul language or any physical or verbal abuse by or toward players, coaches, spectators, or the referee. Immediate enforcement of the laws of the game is warranted.

Modifications for Discipline/ Using Cards in U8-U12 Recreational play

Misconduct that requires a yellow or red card is very rare in Small-Sided Games. Referees are advised to moderate their interpretation of offenses that might require cards for Small-Sided games.

Most cautions or “yellow-card” offenses should be whistled just as fouls. Then give the young player a one-to-one explanation of the problem and restart play.

Yellow cards should be given for incidents of Unsporting Behavior. Referees also may interpret most send-off “red-card” situations as Unsporting Behavior. Whistle the foul to stop play, explain the situation to the player, show the player a yellow card, and ask the coach to make a substitution. Be sure the coach knows the cause of the foul so he or she can continue explanation or correction of behavior on the sidelines.

Do show a red card and send a player off without substitution for serious incidents of misconduct — clearly violent conduct or grossly offensive language.

Referee Evaluations

Coaches are encouraged to submit feedback, particularly for U8-U12 games. Anyone can leave feedback on a referee's performance for any game in the last 15 days. When leaving feedback please make it constructive and please consider the age of the referee.

For U08-U12 recreational games played in Bellevue, Issaquah, Lake Hills, or Mercer Island in the fall you can leave feedback at this website: www.eyesareferees.org/evaluation

For Select and U13+ recreational games played on the Eastside, you can leave feedback here: <http://www.ekcsra.org/evaluation>

For Premier games played on the Eastside, contact EFC at info@EastsideFC.org:

Referee and Coach Protocols

Restarts After Stoppage of Play on the Field

If play is stopped for injury or other interruption, the game is restarted by a dropped ball to the team in possession of the ball when the whistle was blown. If neither team had possession, restart is by an uncontested dropped ball.

For Handling of Injuries

Referees, coaches and players should ensure that injuries are treated quickly. The referee should stop the game as quickly as possible whenever a serious injury is suspected, such as a blow to the head, a possible broken bone or any form of bleeding. If an injury appears minor, the referee may wait until the next stoppage of play to address it.

If an injury occurs, players and coaches of both teams should alert the referee. The referee stops play and allows coaches or other persons to attend to the player. A referee should never attempt to treat an injury. He or she should inspect the player for bleeding and major injury. A bleeding or clearly injured player must leave the field before play restarts.

An injured player's coaches and team representatives should not come onto the playing field until the referee directs them to do so. However, certain exceptionally serious injuries -- such as a blow to the head -- may demand that coaches and others attend to the injury even before the referee has stopped the game. Meanwhile, the injured player's teammates and opponents on the field, using the "back off and take a knee" custom, should give plenty of space to the injured player and to the few people needed to attend to him or her.

If the referee stops play for an injury, the injured player must leave the playing field and may be substituted. The player may return only at the next stoppage of play.

When an injury stops play, the referee must keep track of how much injury time he or she might add. The referee also must determine the correct way to restart the game; i.e., by dropped ball or, as permitted by WYS rules, by indirect free kick by the team in possession of the ball at the time play was stopped.

Concussions

There is a growing concern about concussions. In response, USSF (United States Soccer Federation) has mandated two major rule changes beginning Sept 1, 2016.

Suspected Concussions

If a referee suspects a head injury, they will stop the game and allow sideline help to attend to the player. If the player is removed from play a substitution may be made. If the referee believes there may be a concussion, the player may not return to the game until approved by a qualified medical person. Arguments with the referee about not allowing the player to return to the game by the coach or parents will result in the referee ending the match.

Sportsmanship and Customs of Soccer

Some informal customs have developed in the world of soccer. These are courtesies and not rules that can be enforced. However, they show a spirit of fair play and courtesy.

1. When a player is injured, he or she stays down, at least on one knee, to indicate that the injury is severe enough that play should stop, and they should leave the field.
2. If other players recognize the injury and the referee has not stopped the game, the players may

stop play by kicking the ball out of bounds. When the injured player has left the field, the team that is awarded the throw-in is expected to throw the ball back to a player on the team that kicked the ball out. All this should be done in relatively neutral parts of the playing field.

3. Players do not expect opponents or referees to stop clear goal-scoring opportunities unless the injury appears very serious and likely to require immediate attention.

Being a Good Host at the Field

1. EYSA policy is that teams are on opposite sides of the field. This means players, coaches, and spectators. Spectators who choose to be on their opponent's side of the field should remain quiet.
2. EYSA encourages the HOME team to give the visitors the nicer sideline. Typically, this is the sideline nearer the parking lot or not facing into the sun — but let the visitors choose.

Referee Protocols for Unruly Coach or Spectator Problems

Coaches and spectators should treat referees with respect. For more information, see “Advice for Coaches” and “Advice for Parents” on the EYSA website (links are on the home page of www.eysa.org). A coach or spectator is disrespectful and unruly if he or she is persistently and loudly complaining, dissenting, or swearing about the referee's work on the field.

In general, referees do not show cards to unruly coaches or spectators. Referees are trained to give a private warning to a coach who is unruly. If the coach's or spectator's behavior persists after the private warning, a public warning is given. The coach is advised that the behavior must stop or the persons involved will be asked to leave the field and area of play. If the public warning is ignored, then the referee asks the coach to leave, or asks the coach to have the offending spectators leave. At this time, the referee advises the coach that game abandonment is likely if the offending persons do not leave.

If a game must be abandoned, the referee advises the opposing team of the situation and abandons the game. Referees should leave the field at this time. They should be sure to take prudent steps to leave safely. Youth referees should leave with an adult or go to a public area nearby.

Any misconduct that required a warning from the referee must be reported to the club's referee assignor, and may be reported to EYSA using the EYSA Misconduct Report on EYSAReferees.org under “Referee”. Any situation that leads to the sending away of a coach or spectator, or leads to abandonment, must be reported on an EYSA Misconduct Report.

Protocols for Handling Referee Abuse

Formally, “abuse” of the referee is any physical gesture or verbal statement that includes a threat of harm. If such behavior occurs, the referee is to abandon the game immediately and take prudent steps to be able to leave safely. The incident is reported to club, EYSA, and WYS. Investigation, hearings, and subsequent disciplinary actions are the responsibility of WYS. Their committees may ask for help from EYSA and the involved clubs. Abuse is a serious offense. If a coach or parent thinks that abuse has occurred, they should report the events to their club referee assignor, even if the referee does not plan on reporting an incident.

Protocols for Supervising Referees

EYSA encourages member clubs to have adult referees watch games being run by youth referees, especially for younger referees. The supervising referee should be in uniform. Occasionally, the adult may have to assist the youth with a difficult situation. Also, a visit and words of encouragement at a quarter break or at half time are very helpful for youth referees. However, before walking onto a game field to talk to the youth, the adult referee needs to be in uniform and should clearly ask permission to step onto the field. Good role modeling of expected behavior helps.

Modifications not directly aligned to Laws of the Game

Modifications may vary depending on players age and level of competition. See also the following sections with detail for each U8-U12 age group

No Heading for Players on U11 or Younger Age Teams (USSF)

USSF has mandated there be no heading of the ball by players on U11 or younger teams,. This means **no heading during the game, during warmup and during practice**. As a coach, if you violate this ruling you are risking legal action. During a game, if a player intentionally heads the ball, a violation will be called, and an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded at the spot of the violation. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.

No Punting or Drop-kicking for players on U12 or Younger Age Teams

Under modifications for Law XVIII, there is **no punting or drop-kicking by the goalkeeper on U12 or younger teams**. In case of a violation the referee will stop play, inform the goalkeeper of the rule, and play will restart with a drop ball to the offending goalkeeper, Build-out line rules apply to restart.

No enforcement of the 8-second rule for ball in Keeper's hands

Build Out Lines (WYS Rule, aka EYSA No Poaching Rule)

In the spirit of developing players to the greatest of possible efficiency, EYSA (and now WYS) has adopted a rule requiring the opposing team to retreat to a "Build out line" when a goalkeeper has the ball in their control or when a team is taking a goal kick or free kick within their penalty area. The rule is designed promote player development in playing the ball out of the back via more meaningful player touches in matches. It is also intended to reduce goals from errors teams make executing goal kicks.

The rules regarding Build Out Lines in this document apply only to Recreational EYSA U08-U12 games. Please consult NPSL or RCL (or relevant league) rules for Select and Premier matches, respectively.

U08-U09

The Build Out Line will be the center line for U08-U09 games.

Goal Kicks and Goalie Possession

On Goal Kicks and when the goalie has possession of the ball for U08-U09, opposing players (defenders) must remain behind the Build Out Line until the goalie has put the ball in play AND the receiving player has touched the ball. (At U08, "the goalie" is player taking the Goal Kick.)

- If an opposing player crosses the Build Out Line before the receiving player touches the ball the play will be reset.
- If the ball goes out of bounds, the defending players will be awarded a throw-in where the ball went out of bounds.
- If the ball goes past the Build Out Line after the goalie passes it, the ball is live and may be played by anyone. The offensive team has lost their privilege to touch the ball first.

U10-U12

The Build Out Line will be halfway between the midfield line and the penalty area for U10-U12 games.

Note that the offside law will be enforced from the halfway line for U10-U12

Goal Kicks

The opposing players must be behind the Build Out Line. The opposition can enter the build area as soon as the ball is kicked. Should an opposing player enter the area early the kick will be retaken.

Goalie Possession (ball controlled with their hands):

Opposing players must attempt to get behind the Build Out Line. The opposition can enter the build out area as soon as the goalkeeper puts the ball into play. Should an opposing player enter the area early, the restart will be retaken. If the GK puts the ball in play quickly (throw, roll or set the ball at their feet) the opposition can now defend immediately, even if they are inside the "build out line" area.

EYSA Mercy Rule Policy (U8-U12 EYSA League)

The mission statement of Eastside Youth Soccer Association includes the goals of teaching the game soccer and promoting sportsmanship.

Under the heading of sportsmanship, one of the main things that we as coaches need to avoid is running up the score against opponents who are not as strong. The general ***rule of thumb is that if your team is ahead by five or more goals, the coach should take measures to keep further scoring to a minimum.***

For U08 – U12 Recreational Games

If the score differential reaches 5 goals, then the coach of the team with fewer goals must add one field player. If the goal differential returns to 4 goals, then the coach must remove one player, thus returning to the original number of players.

If the team who is losing does not have a sufficient number of players to be able to add a player, the winning team must remove a player.

If the score differential reaches 10 goals, then the coach of the team with more goals must remove one player from the field. If the goal differential returns to 9 goals, then the removed player must be replaced on the field with any player.

Administering the Mercy Rule

It is the responsibility of the coach to adhere to this EYSA policy. Our referees may remind the coach, but it is **NOT** their responsibility to bring this to the coaches' attention or force the coaches to take the necessary steps. Please take the lead and do not put our referees in an awkward situation.

If the final goal discrepancy is 11 or more goals, the winning coach must write an e-mail to his/her club's BOD explaining the steps that he/she took to attempt to avoid such a large disparity in the final score. If the club feels that the necessary steps were not taken, the coach will be requested to appear at their next club board of directors meeting for an explanation and possible sanctions.

Ideas to Avoid Running Up the Score

The following provides a list of potential "necessary steps" that coaches can take to keep the score differential reasonable, while still providing their team with the opportunity to learn different aspects of the game and provide a fun environment for all. These are guidelines and tips only – these are not a component of the Mercy Rule policy.

- Place your stronger players in goals or defense and do not let them cross the halfway line

- Sub out the stronger players / prime goal scorers
- Play one player short (play short in midfield or forward)
- Play 3-touch soccer – Don't allow your players to take more than 3 touches once they are in the opponent's half of the field.
- Instruct your team to
 - Pass a minimum of 5 times on each possession prior to shooting.
 - Take all shots from outside the penalty area
 - Ask players to work on taking shots with their weaker leg

All of these things can be done subtly so that the other team can feel good about their increased competitiveness. Please do not ask your players to play “keep away” – this can be viewed as rubbing it in.

Other Ethical Coaching Practices

- Encourage your players to quietly celebrate goals as opposed to high-fives, etc.
- Remind sideline supporters to cheer/celebrate quietly and be supportive of both teams.
- Play a low-key role from the sidelines – avoid the temptation to keep coaching vocally from the sidelines.

Game-Day Requirements will vary by age and level of competition

Age Bracket	Roster Sheet	Score Reports	Misconduct Form to use
Recreational (U8 - U12)	No Roster Required	Coaches (to EYSA)	EYSA
Recreational (U13 - U19)	Affinity photo game roster per League Washington(LW)	Coaches (to LW – in Affinity system)	League Washington

Modifications for the Small-Sided Game U08 and U09

The following WYS and EYSA modifications to the Laws of the Game apply to U08 and U09 games. If a section of the Law has no modifications, then general EYSA, WYS, or FIFA rules for competition apply.

Law I THE FIELD

1. Recommended field size:
 - a. U08 is 30 yards long and 20 yards wide.
 - b. U09 is 40 yards long and 25 yards wide.
2. Fields may be lined or marked with cones.
3. No center circle is needed. If one is marked, it should be six (6) yards in radius.
4. Corner arcs and corner flags are not needed.
5. The goal size is a maximum of six (6) feet high and eight (8) feet wide. The minimum size is four (4) feet high by six (6) feet wide. Goals may be defined by corner flags or cones (See Method of Scoring).
6. Goal area: two (2) yards into the field of play, across the width of the field.
7. Penalty area: six (6) yards into the field of play, across the width of the field.
8. A penalty mark is not needed. (see Penalty Kicks, on the next page).
9. Players, coaches and spectators shall remain between the penalty areas and at least two yards back from the touch line. Coaches and spectators may not enter the field of play during the match without the referee's permission.
10. Teams will be on opposite sidelines.

Law II THE BALL

1. U08, use a #3 ball.
2. U09, use a #4 ball.

Law III NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. Each U08 Small-Sided team shall have a maximum of 4 players on the field. There will be no goalkeeper. Roster size is limited to a maximum of 8 players.
2. Each U09 Small-Sided team shall have a maximum of 5 players on the field, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. Roster size is limited to a maximum of 9 players.
3. PLAYING TIME: Each player shall play at least half of every game, with exceptions for inappropriate behavior or persistent failure to attend team practices. No player may be goalkeeper for more than half of any game. These rules will be enforced by the coaches, not by referees at games.
4. GENDER: A team shall consist of either boys or girls.

LAW IV PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

All players must wear a club-approved uniform:

1. Jersey or shirt.
2. Shorts (trousers or tights permitted if shorts are worn over them)
3. Shin guards covered entirely by socks, and protecting more than half of the lower leg
4. Approved soccer shoes (may be tennis or sport shoes, should not have front-of-toe cleats or sharp spikes)
5. Undergarments (such as leggings, long-sleeve shirts) that show should match the uniform

Law V REFEREES

Trained referees should be used for U9 games, and may be available for U8 games. Coach or parent referees are acceptable; they must act as a neutral referee and not as an on-field coach for their team. If a referee is not available, each team provides a referee for half of the game.

1. The referee's decisions shall be final.
2. Referees shall explain infractions to the offending player.

Law VII DURATION OF GAME

1. The game shall be divided into equal quarters of twelve (12) minutes each, with a two-minute break between quarters and a 5-minute half-time break.
2. Possession at kick-off changes every quarter. Teams change ends only at half time.

Law VIII START OF PLAY

1. Opponents shall be at least 6 yards away from the team with kick-off. The referee will step off 6 paces to show the players the distance.
2. The ball must be kicked and move at kick-off. The ball may be kicked in any direction.
3. The kicker cannot play the ball again until it is touched by another player of either team.
4. At kick-off, the kicker cannot score directly. The ball must touch another player first.

Law X METHOD OF SCORING

1. The whole ball must cross the goal line between the posts and under the cross bar.
2. When using corner-flag posts or similar high side-posts to mark a goal, (1) the flight of the ball must be wholly under a line between the tops of the posts for a goal to count, and (2) the flight of the ball must be wholly within the post. The referee may award a goal if a ball brushes the post in flight, causing minimal bending of the post.
3. If a goal is marked by cones, then a goal is counted if the flight of the ball is wholly under a height pre-determined by the referee before the game starts. EYSA recommends a neutral standard, such above the up-stretched fingertips of the goalie.
4. All judgments by a referee about a counting a goal are final. Referees should tell coaches how they will call goals before the game starts.

Law XI OFFSIDE

1. The offside rule does not apply. However, the intent of the rule will be followed.
2. A referee can call an offside foul if a player is repeatedly positioned in an offside position close to the opponent's goal (e.g. inside the penalty area), irrespective of the location of the ball on the field.
3. The restart is an indirect free kick, after the referee gives an explanation for the foul.

Law XII FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

1. All fouls shall result in an indirect free kick.
2. The referee shall explain all infractions to the offending player.
3. Slide tackling is not allowed for ages U10 and below.
4. See ["The Small-Sided Game and Referees Using Cards"](#).

Law XIII FREE KICKS

1. All free kicks shall be indirect.
2. Opposing players should be six (6) yards from the ball until the ball is kicked.
3. A goal cannot be scored from an indirect free kick until the ball has been played or touched by a second player of either team.

Law XIV PENALTY KICKS

1. No penalty kicks shall be awarded.
2. A foul committed by a defender inside his or her own penalty area shall result in an indirect free kick from that part of the penalty area line which runs parallel to the goal line, at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.
3. If the penalty area lines are not marked at six yards from the goal line, the referee will measure off six yards and determine the placing of the ball for the indirect kick.

Law XV THROW IN

1. Conform to FIFA Laws of the game.

2. Two re-throw tries shall be allowed. Referees should give brief corrective instruction. The same player, rather than a teammate, attempts the re-throw. The game is allowed to continue even if the second re-throw is not done correctly.

Law XVI – THE GOAL KICK

1. The Build Out Lines (aka No Poaching Rule) will apply to Goal Kicks. All Defenders must remain behind the Build Out Line until the ball is kicked and touched by the Offensive team.
2. May be taken from any point inside the goal area.

Law XVII - CORNER KICKS

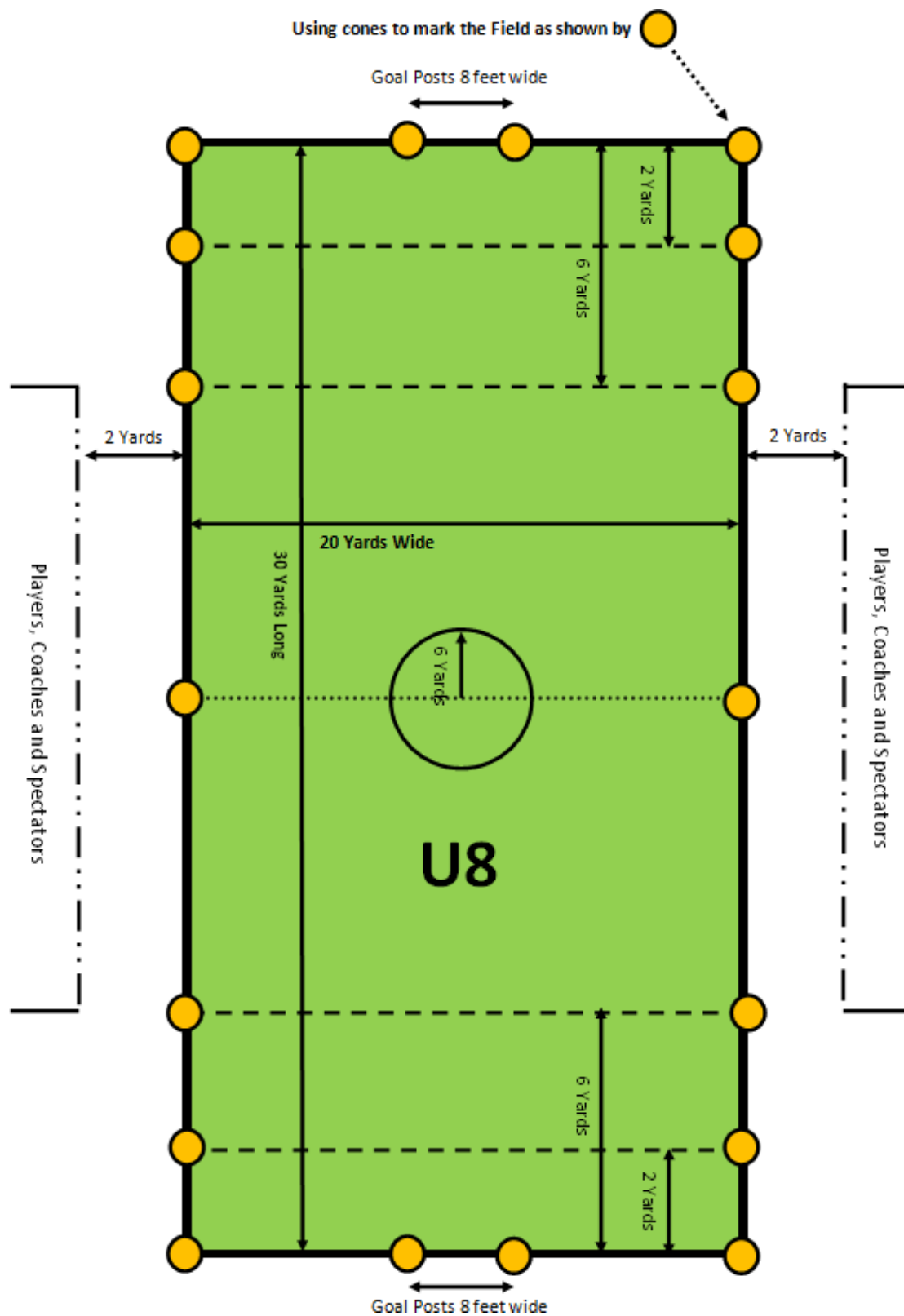
1. Opposing players should be ten (10) yards away from the kicker.

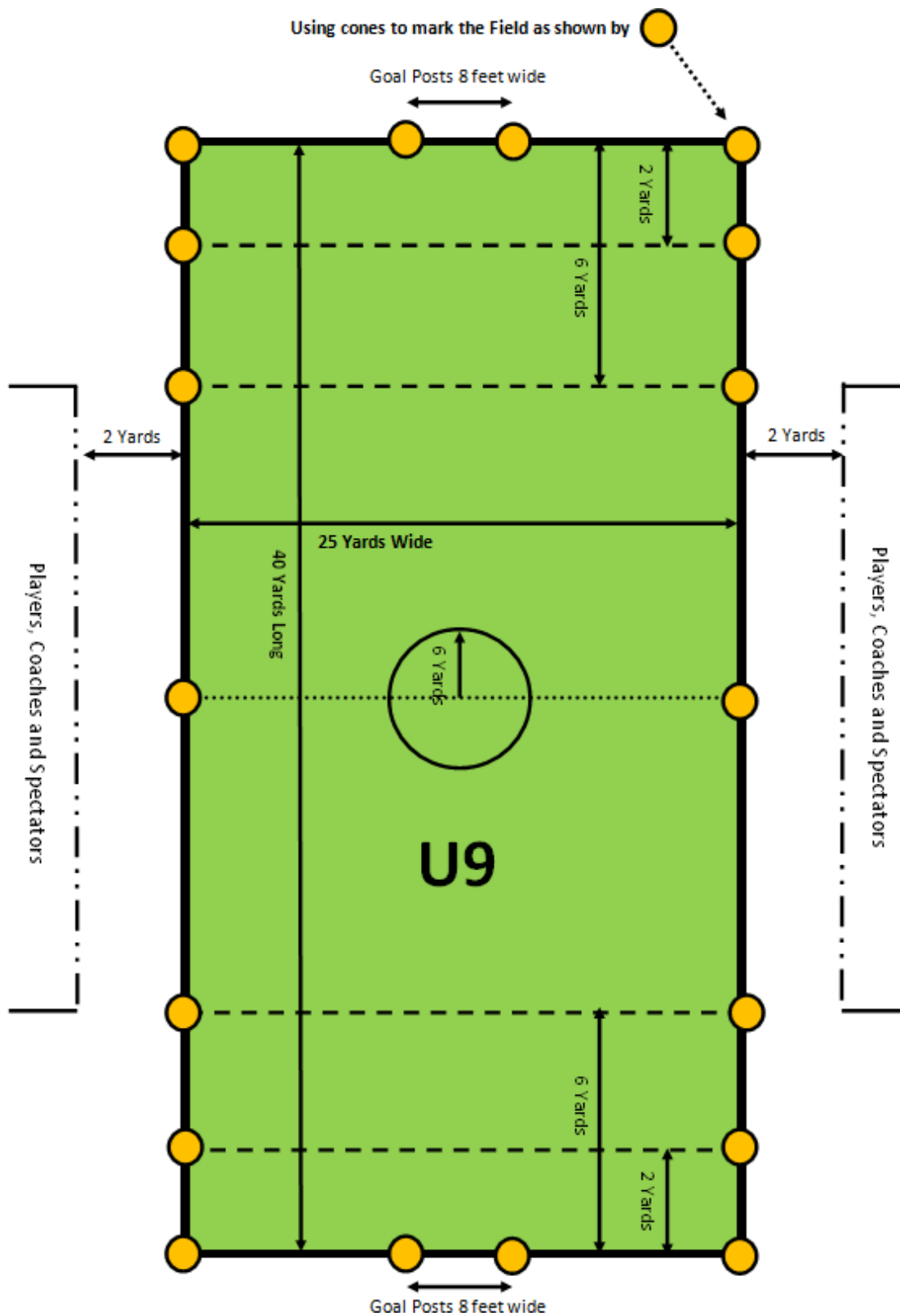
Law XVIII GOALKEEPER (for U09 only – no goalkeeper in U08)

1. No opponent shall touch a goalkeeper possessing the ball. The ball is considered in the goalkeeper's possession whenever the goalkeeper is touching the ball inside the penalty area with any part of the body.
2. The goalkeeper may handle a ball passed deliberately back to him, as long as he is inside the penalty area.
3. Goalkeepers may NOT punt or drop kick the ball after a save. The goalkeeper must throw the ball out to a teammate on the field or pass the ball with a kick from the ground.
4. Referees will STRONGLY enforce protection of the goalkeeper from being kicked when holding the ball. Players and coaches will be reminded of this rule before games, and referees are instructed to blow their whistle quickly and loudly as soon as they see a player starting to kick a goalkeeper.

Law XIX SPORTSMANSHIP

1. Coaches and players shake hands with opponents and thank the referee after each game.
2. Coaches, managers, team officials and parents should not criticize game officials and should encourage the same attitude among all players and spectators.
3. Publicizing game results is forbidden.
4. Referees shall instruct opposing teams to stand on opposite sides of the field (This is EYSA policy—other associations may promote different sidelines arrangements).

Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U08)

Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U09)

Modifications for Small-Sided Play U10

This section of the Handbook reviews the Laws of the Game with WYS modifications for Small-Sided Play for the Under-10 age group. Local EYSA rules also are listed.

Law I THE FIELD

1. A halfway line and a center circle with a 10-yard radius shall be marked.
2. Corner arcs are helpful but are not required.
3. Penalty mark and the penalty arc are not required.
4. Goal size: 6'x12' (Recommended), 6'x12' (Minimum), 6'x18' (Maximum)
5. Goal area is six yards wide from each goal post and six yards into the field of play.
6. Penalty area: Six yards wider to each side and 8 yards deeper than the goal area.
7. EYSA recommends using the field size of 60 yards long and 40 yards wide.
WYS: Maximum 65 yards long and 45 yards wide. Minimum 55 yards long by 35 yards wide.
8. Players, coaches and spectators shall remain between the penalty areas and at least two yards from the touch line. Coaches and spectators may not enter the field of play during the match without the referee's permission.
9. Teams will be on opposite sidelines.

Law II THE BALL

A size #4 ball.

Law III NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. Field Players and Roster Size
No more than 7 players on the field, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. Roster size shall be limited to 12 players.
2. PLAYING TIME: For Recreational players, each player plays at least half of every game, with exceptions for behavior or persistent failure to attend team practices. Playing time will be enforced by the coaches, not by referees at games.
3. GENDER: A team shall consist of either boys or girls.

Law IV PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

All players must wear a club-approved uniform:

1. Jersey or shirt.
2. Shorts (trousers or tights permitted if shorts are worn over them)
3. Shin guards covered entirely by socks, and protecting more than half of the lower leg
4. Approved soccer shoes (may be tennis or sport shoes, should not have front-of-toe cleats or sharp spikes)
5. Undergarments (such as leggings, long-sleeve shirts) that show should match the uniform.

Law V REFEREES

1. Trained referees should be used. Referees should be two years older than the age designation of the teams (A referee for U10 is at least 12 years old). Referees should avoid games played or coached by a sibling or a parent.
2. The referee's decisions shall be final.
3. Referees shall explain infractions to the offending player.

Law VII DURATION OF GAME

Two – 25-minute halves. Teams change ends and attack the opposite goal at half time.

Law VIII THE START OF PLAY

1. Opponents must remain outside the center circle until the ball is in play.
2. The ball must be kicked and move at kick-off. The ball may be kicked in any direction.

3. The ball may not be touched by the first player until another has touched the ball.

Law XIX BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

The ball is out of play only when 1) it has wholly crossed the goal or touch lines or 2) play has been stopped by the referee.

Law X METHOD OF SCORING

The whole of the ball must cross the goal line between the goal post and under the cross bar, unless the scoring team has committed an infringement.

Law XI OFFSIDE

U10 shall conform to FIFA offside rules. If the referee calls an offside offense, he or she shall give a brief explanation to the players involved. The game is restarted with an indirect free kick where the offside player became involved in the play.

Law XII FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

1. All fouls shall result in an indirect free kick.
2. The referee shall explain all infractions to the offending player.
3. Slide tackling is not allowed for ages U10 and below.

Law XIII FREE KICKS

1. All fouls result in an indirect free kick.
2. Opposing players shall remain at least ten (10) yards from the ball.
3. A goal may not be scored from an indirect free kick until the ball has been played or touched by a second player of either team.

Law XIV PENALTY KICKS

No penalty kicks shall be awarded. A foul committed by a defender inside his or her own goal area shall result in an indirect free kick from six yards into the field from the goal line, at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. The referee should place the ball.

Law XV THROW IN

One re-throw try shall be allowed. Referees should give brief corrective instruction. The same player, rather than a teammate, attempts the re-throw. The defending team takes possession of the ball if the re-throw is not done correctly.

Law XVI GOAL KICK

1. The Build Out Lines (aka No Poaching Rule) will apply to Goal Kicks. All Defenders must remain behind the Build Out Line until the ball is kicked into play by the Offensive team.
2. May be taken from any point inside the goal area.

Law XVII CORNER KICK

1. Opposing players should be ten (10) yards away from the kicker.
2. The ball shall be placed within a three (3) foot arc from the corner flag, cone or field markings and shall be kicked into play from that position by an attacking player.

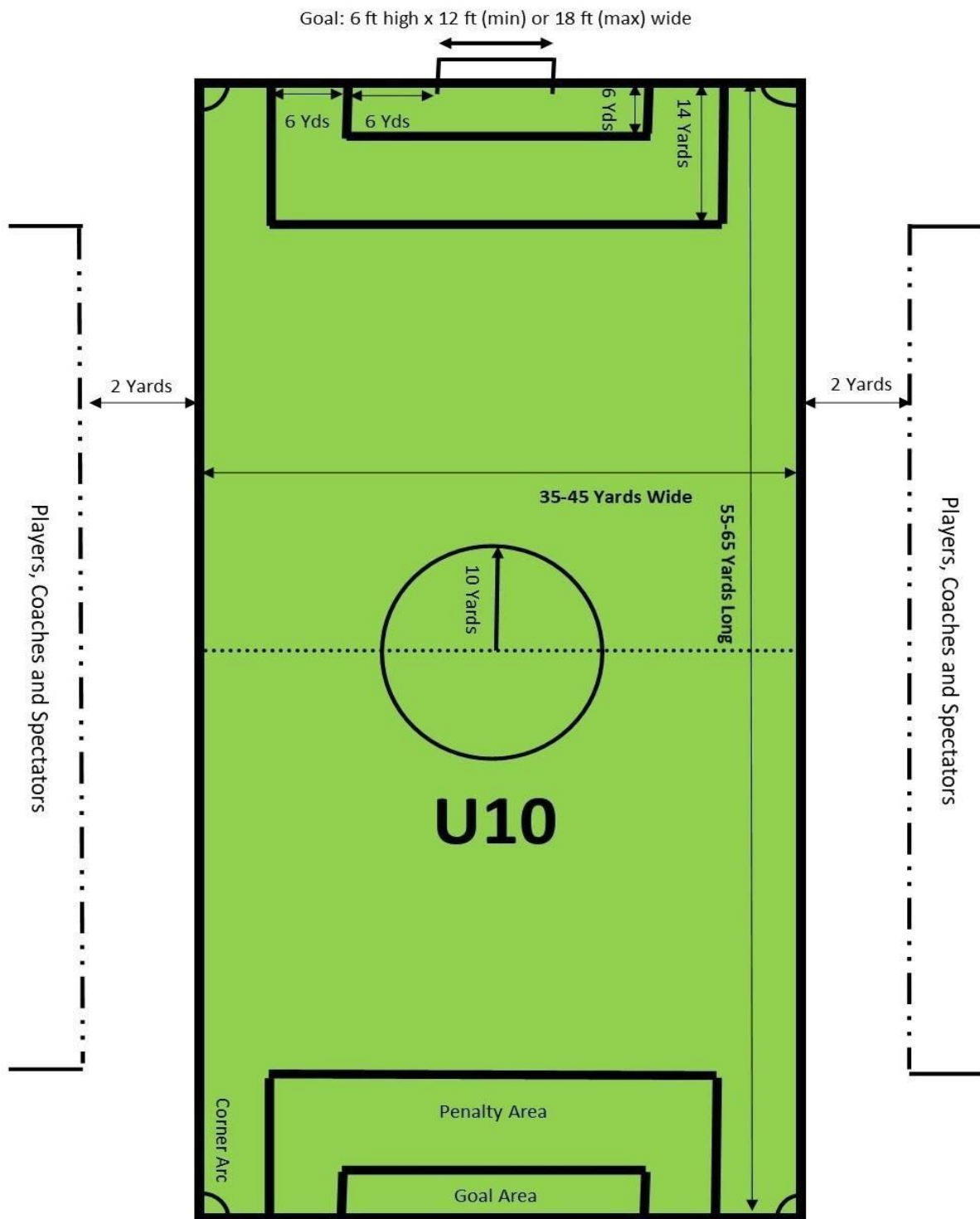
Law XVIII GOALKEEPER

1. No opponent shall touch a goalkeeper possessing the ball. The ball is considered in the goalkeeper's possession whenever the goalkeeper is touching the ball inside the penalty area with any part of the hand or arm.
2. Referees will STRONGLY enforce protection of the goalkeeper from being kicked when holding the ball. Players and coaches will be reminded of this rule before games, and referees are instructed to blow their whistle quickly and loudly as soon as they see a player starting to kick a goalkeeper.
3. Goalkeepers may NOT punt or drop kick the ball after a save. The goalkeeper must throw the ball out to a teammate on the field or pass the ball with a kick from the ground..

4. If the goalkeeper takes longer than six (6) seconds to put the ball back into play, the referee shall instruct the goalkeeper about the time limit.
5. The prohibition against a goalkeeper's handling a ball passed directly to him or her by a teammate shall apply to U10 Small-Sided soccer.

Law XIX SPORTSMANSHIP

1. Coaches and players shake hands with opponents and thank the referee after each game.
2. Coaches, managers, team officials and parents should not criticize game officials and should encourage the same attitude among all players and spectators.
3. Publicizing game results is forbidden.
4. Game scores are reported to the EYSA score keeper but shall not be publicized. Score also is kept by the referee. Reporting of scores is the responsibility of the coaches. In case of doubt, the referee's final recorded score is considered as the truth. Referees are instructed to keep their game notes until two months after the end of the season.
5. Referees shall instruct opposing teams to stand on opposite sides of the field (This is EYSA policy—other associations may promote different sidelines arrangements).

Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U10)

Modifications for Small-Sided Play U11 and U12

This section of the Handbook reviews the Laws of the Game with WYS modifications for Small-Sided Play for the Under-11 and Under-12 age groups. Local EYSA rules also are listed.

Law I THE FIELD

1. A halfway line and a center circle with a 10-yard radius shall be marked.
2. Corner arcs are helpful but are not required.
3. Penalty mark and the penalty arc are required.
4. Goal size: 7'x21' (Recommended), 6'x18' (Minimum), 7'x21' (Maximum)
5. Goal area is six yards wide from each goal post and six yards into the field of play.
6. Penalty area: Six yards wider to each side and 12 yards deeper than the goal area.
7. EYSA recommends using the maximum field size of 80 yards long and 50 yards wide.
WYS: Maximum 80 yards long and 55 yards wide. Minimum 70 yards long by 45 yards wide.
8. Players, coaches and spectators shall remain between the penalty areas and at least two yards from the touch line. Coaches and spectators may not enter the field of play during the match without the referee's permission.
9. Teams will be on opposite sidelines.

Law II THE BALL

A size #4 ball.

Law III NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. Field Players and Roster Size
 - No more than 9 players on the field, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper. Roster size shall be limited to 14 players.
2. PLAYING TIME: For Recreational players, each player plays at least half of every game, with exceptions for behavior or persistent failure to attend team practices. Playing time will be enforced by the coaches, not by referees at games.
3. GENDER: A team shall consist of either boys or girls.

Law IV PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

All players must wear a club-approved uniform:

1. Jersey or shirt.
2. Shorts (trousers or tights permitted if shorts are worn over them)
3. Shin guards covered entirely by socks, and protecting more than half of the lower leg
4. Approved soccer shoes (may be tennis or sport shoes, should not have front-of-toe cleats or sharp spikes)
5. Undergarments (such as leggings, long-sleeve shirts) that show should match the uniform.

Law V REFEREES

1. Trained referees should be used. Referees should be two years older than the age designation of the teams (A referee for U11 is at least 13 years old and for U12 is at least 14 years old).
Referees should avoid games played or coached by a sibling or a parent.
2. The referee's decisions shall be final.
3. Referees shall explain infractions to the offending player.

Law VII DURATION OF GAME

Two – 30-minute halves. Teams change ends and attack the opposite goal at half time.

Law VIII THE START OF PLAY

1. Opponents must remain outside the center circle until the ball is in play.
2. The ball must be kicked and move at kick-off. The ball may be kicked in any direction.

3. The ball may not be touched by the first player until another has touched the ball.

Law XIX BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

The ball is out of play only when 1) it has wholly crossed the goal or touch lines or 2) play has been stopped by the referee.

Law X METHOD OF SCORING

The whole of the ball must cross the goal line between the goal post and under the cross bar, unless the scoring team has committed an infringement.

Law XI OFFSIDE

Play shall conform to FIFA offside rules. If the referee calls an offside offense, he or she shall give a brief explanation to the players involved. The game is restarted with an indirect free kick where the offside player became involved in the play.

Law XII FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Free kicks are either direct or indirect, according to FIFA Laws.

Law XIII FREE KICKS

1. Free kicks are either direct or indirect, according to FIFA Laws.
2. Opposing players shall remain at least ten (10) yards from the ball.
3. A goal may not be scored from an indirect free kick until the ball has been played or touched by a second player of either team.

Law XIV PENALTY KICKS

Play shall conform to FIFA penalty kick rules.

Law XV THROW IN

Play shall conform to FIFA throw-in rules.

Law XVI GOAL KICK

1. The Build Out Lines (aka No Poaching Rule) will apply to Goal Kicks. All Defenders must remain behind the Build Out Line until the ball is put into play by the goalie.
2. May be taken from any point inside the goal area. Opponents must remain outside the penalty area. Defending players may be inside the penalty area.
3. The ball is in play when it has been kicked and moves.

Law XVII CORNER KICK

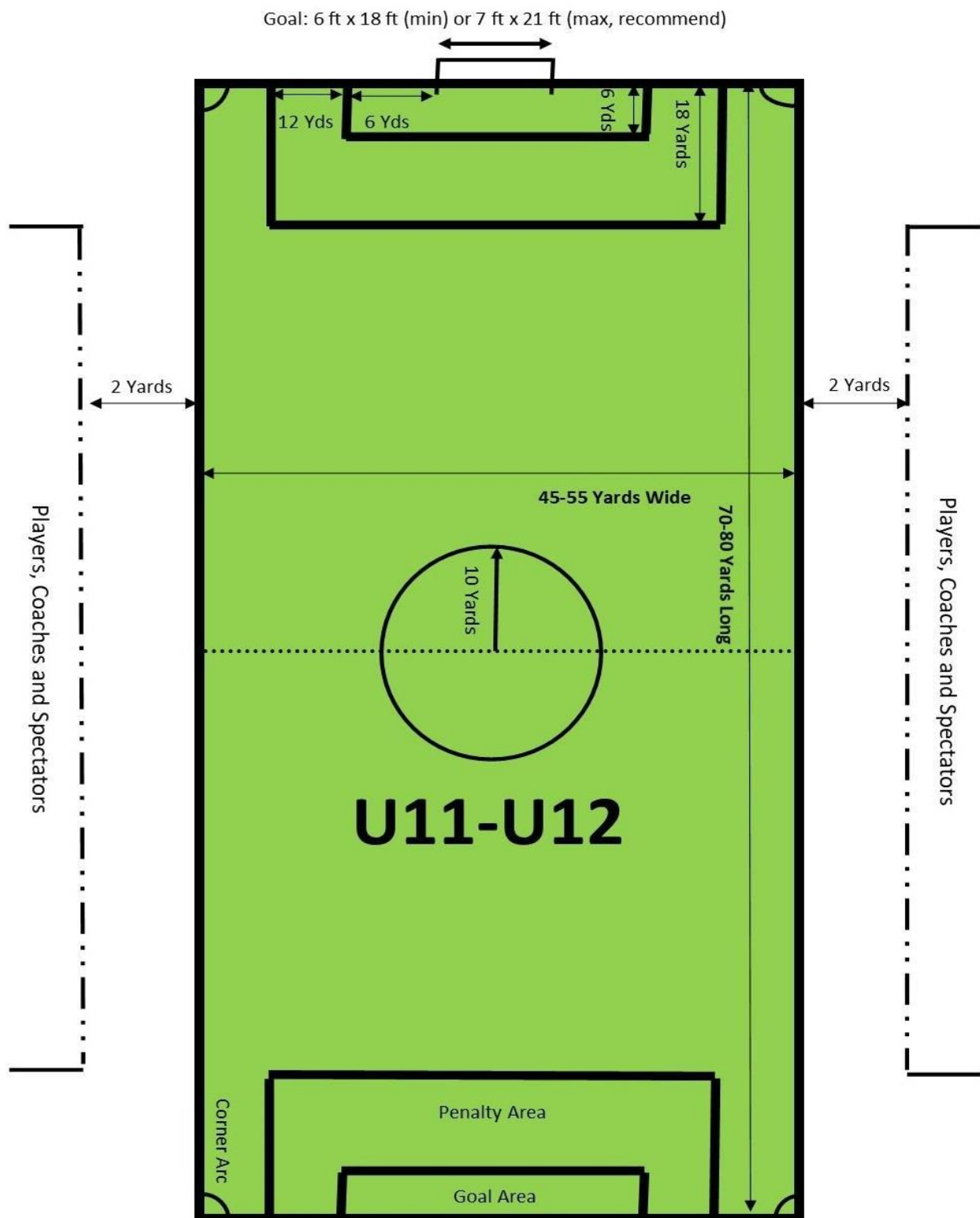
1. Opposing players should be ten (10) yards away from the kicker.
2. The ball shall be placed within a three (3) foot arc from the corner flag, cone or field markings and shall be kicked into play from that position by an attacking player.

Law XVIII GOALKEEPER

1. No opponent shall touch a goalkeeper possessing the ball. The ball shall be considered in the goalkeeper's possession whenever the goalkeeper is touching the ball inside the penalty area with any part of the hand or arm.
2. Referees will STRONGLY enforce protection of the goalkeeper from being kicked when holding the ball. Players and coaches will be reminded of this rule before games, and referees are instructed to blow their whistle quickly and loudly as soon as they see a player starting to kick a goalkeeper.
3. If the goalkeeper takes longer than six (6) seconds to put the ball back into play, the referee shall instruct the goalkeeper about the time limit.
4. The prohibition against a goalkeeper's handling a ball passed directly to him or her by a teammate shall apply.
5. Goalkeepers may NOT punt or drop kick the ball after a save. The goalkeeper must throw the ball out to a teammate on the field or pass the ball with a kick from the ground.

Law XIX SPORTSMANSHIP

1. Coaches and players shake hands with opponents and thank the referee after each game.
2. Coaches, managers, team officials and parents should not criticize game officials and should encourage the same attitude among all players and spectators.
3. Publicizing game results is forbidden.
4. Game scores are reported to the EYSA score keeper but shall not be publicized. Score also is kept by the referee. Reporting of scores is the responsibility of the coaches. In case of doubt, the referee's final recorded score is considered as the truth. Referees are instructed to keep their game notes until two months after the end of the season.
5. Referees shall instruct opposing teams to stand on opposite sides of the field (This is EYSA policy—other associations may promote different sidelines arrangements).

Small-Sided Field Dimensions (U11 and U12)

Guidance and Procedural Advice to Referees

Attitude

Referees contribute to the philosophy that youth soccer is safe, fun and fair. Referees of EYSA youth games, especially for Small-Sided Games, should carry out their duties as if they were teachers and older friends of all players. Your first duty is to enforce the laws of the game, but you should not forget your role as a teacher of younger players.

Equipment

Wear the proper referee's uniform, including referee patch. Shirts should be FIFA/US-Soccer approved colors. All referees wear black shorts and either black or black-with-3 white-stripes socks. Avoid any team or club-logo wear.

The referee must bring the following to every game:

1. Stopwatch, worn on the wrist, to keep time
2. Whistle
3. Red and yellow cards
4. Paper & pencil to record game events
5. A coin to flip

Optional items a referee should bring to every game:

1. Water to drink
2. An extra whistle and an extra watch
3. A garbage bag or other way to keep your gear dry on rainy days

Before the Game

Before each match the referee must perform the following tasks:

1. Arrive 20 minutes before game time.
2. Inspect the field and goals and try to correct any problems. Be sure that goals are anchored down to avoid tip-overs. Contact the home team coach to anchor the goals if they are not anchored.
3. Introduce yourself to and shake hands with the coaches.
4. Write down the name of each team and its coach, their soccer club, the players' age group, the field where the game is played, and the date and time of the game.
5. For U13 and older recreational games, get team rosters from each coach. Select and premier games will have team rosters for all ages.
6. Remind coaches that everyone should stay two yards away from the touchline and between the tops of each penalty area, and that teams and their spectators, players and coaches stand on opposite sides of the field.
7. Instruct coaches on procedures for substitutions.
8. Inspect for safe equipment and shoes. Players must not wear any rings, watches, necklaces, etc. Players must wear shin guards and socks. Socks must completely cover the shin guard.

Five minutes before game time conduct coin flip with team captains. The visiting team calls the toss. The winner of the toss chooses which side to defend. The loser of the toss kicks off for the first half (or first quarter in U08 and U09 games).

During the Game

The responsibilities of the referee during the game include the following:

1. Keep score for all U08 and older games.
2. In U08 through U10 games, always explain to the players involved each call against him or her for fouls, misconduct, throw-in violations, or offside (U10 only). In U11 and older games use discretion in explaining calls to players. In all games, use discretion in explaining calls to coaches. Do explain briefly and courteously. Avoid lengthy discussion or argument.
3. In U08, U09 and U10 games, allow additional tries after improper throw-ins. For U08 and U09 games, after the last improper throw-in, let play continue. Do not turn the ball over to the other team.
4. Only one throw-in is allowed in U11 or older games. The ball is turned over to the other team if the referee whistles for an improper throw-in. First, teach field players the proper distance to stand back from thrower (2 yards or more). Issue a yellow card for harassment of thrower from a close-in distance, only on repeat offenders.
5. Manage the game giving the highest priority to the players' safety. Stop the game quickly if you think a player is injured. If coaches or parents are yelling at you about an injury, stop the game first, let the coach attend to the player, and restart the game appropriately. Also see [Handling of Injuries](#).

After the Game

The responsibilities of the referee after the game include the following:

1. Observe the shaking of hands between teams and coaches.
2. By the next day, report any cards issued to the Chairman of the EYSA judiciary committee. This is done on the EYSA Misconduct Report on EYSAReferees.org under "Referee". One report must be filled out for each card issued. Report any problems with coaches or spectators to your individual club's referee assignor.

What to do when things are not right with fields or teams?

When the field or the number of players are not right, the referee and coaches should try to make arrangements to have a fair game for the players who are there.

If field lines are missing or wrong, use cones or bags to mark corners. Step off yardage from corners up the touch line to mark a penalty area across the entire end of the field.

If teams are uneven, coaches may swap or loan players. Referees should stay and officiate for a 3 vs.3 game or even 2 vs.2 if both teams arrive with only a few players.

Helpful resources for referees:

www.WashingtonYouthSoccer.org

www.eysa.org

www.eyesareferees.org

www.ekcsra.org

www.ussoccer.com

The state youth soccer association EYSA web site, includes links to member clubs and helpful information regarding tournaments and clinics
EYSA referee web site used for scheduling
East King County Soccer Referee Association
Click on "More", then "Referee Program"

Modifications to USSF Rules- Laws II, III and VII, by age (EYSA Rec)

AGE GROUP	(Law VII) GAME DURATION	(Law II) BALL SIZE	(Law III) FIELD PLAYERS	GAME ROSTER SIZE
Under-19	Two 45 min halves	#5	11	Rules vary by league
Under-18	Two 45 min halves	#5	11	
Under-17	Two 45 min halves	#5	11	
Under-16	Two 40 min halves	#5	11	
Under-15	Two 40 min halves	#5	11	
Under-14	Two 35 min halves	#5	11	
Under-13	Two 35 min halves	#5	11	
Under-12 (small-sided)	Two 30 min halves	#4	9	14
Under-11 (small-sided)	Two 30 min halves	#4	9	14
Under-10 (small-sided)	Two 25 min halves	#4	7	12
Under-9 (small-sided)	Four 12 min quarters	#4	5	9
Under-8 (small-sided)	Four 12 min quarters	#3	4	8
Under-7 (small-sided)	Four 10 min quarters	#3	3	6
Under-6 (small-sided)	Four 8 min quarters	#3	3	6

Games at all age levels shall include a five-minute break at halftime.

U06 through U09 games have a two-minute break between Quarters 1 & 2 and Quarters 3 & 4.

There is an EYSA Referee Reference (card size) summary of rules by age in [Information: Documents \(eysareferees.org\)](https://eysareferees.org): including the information in the table above

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