



LEAGUE HANDBOOK

Revised March 2019

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FOUNDATIONS OF BWSA

The Big Walnut Soccer Association was established in 1989 and is classified as a not-for-profit corporation. BWSA is a volunteer organization whose purpose is to provide an amateur soccer program, dedicated to the enjoyment and education of soccer, by:

- Providing instruction and training of youth and other interested persons in the rules, techniques, and skills of the sport of soccer;
- Improving and developing the skills and capabilities of youth and other interested persons in playing or otherwise participating in soccer competition;
- Sponsoring and conducting amateur soccer competition, organizing soccer teams and related groups of personnel, and otherwise conducting programs in which youth and other interested persons may compete among each other or otherwise participate on an amateur basis in the sport of soccer; and
- Participating, as the Executive Board may authorize, in any other activity promoting soccer competition within the provisions of Chapter 1072 of the Ohio Revised Code and Section 501 8 (3) of the IRC.

All members of the Big Walnut Soccer Association, including players, coaches, officials, parents, officers, and directors will be expected to comply with the meaning, spirit, and philosophy of BWSA, as well as all league rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook and in the BWSA constitution. The Executive Board has the exclusive right to authorize or terminate at will, with or without cause, an individual's participation with the Association.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

BWSA currently has three leagues within the program:

1.) RECREATIONAL LEAGUE

- The rec league is open to all pre-school and school-age children between the grades of Kindergarten through the 5th grade. Pre-school children must turn 4 years of age by May 1st of the Spring Season or must turn 4 by October 1st for the Fall season. BWSA will make every attempt to establish divisions in which a minimal difference exists between the ages of the players within the league. However, BWSA reserves the right to combine age divisions when necessary. In addition, we will make every attempt to form both girl's and boy's leagues when numbers permit. When sufficient numbers do not exist, all teams will be co-ed. All Pre-K teams will be co-ed.

2.) MIDDLE SCHOOL LEAGUE

- The BWSA Middle School League is a traveling recreational program consisting of teams which play against other MSL teams in our neighboring communities. The teams are formed within BWSA and then enrolled in the

Middle School Soccer Association (MSSA). It is the MSSA League that schedules games for the season, sets the rules and guidelines for all teams in the program, and coordinates the end of season tournament. The MSSA follows the Ohio High School rules of soccer competition.

3.) FREEDOM-HEROES SELECT LEAGUE

- The Freedom Heroes is our volunteer parent coached travel program. The available divisions in this program are variable and dependent upon coaches who choose to serve in the capacity required for a one-year commitment beginning in June of each year. Teams participate in the Mid-Ohio Select Soccer League (MOSSL)
- The Freedom Soccer Club is our professionally coached affiliate travel program. Teams participate in the Mid-Ohio Select Soccer League (MOSSL), Buckeye Premier League (BPL), Ohio South State League (OSSL), and in the Midwest Regional League (MRL). Freedom has opportunities for ages 8-18.
- Select team try-outs are held at the end of each Spring season. Players who are offered and accept positions on these teams are making a commitment to remain with that team for the upcoming Fall and Spring seasons.

THE FIELDS AT HYLEN SOUDERS

All BWSA teams play at Hylen Souders Elementary School, which is located at 4121 Miller Paul Road in Galena. Our soccer fields are located at the corner of Miller Paul Rd. and Center Village Rd. A diagram with the field layout is available on the BWSA website as well as the shed doors.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW:

- Although the fields are owned by the Big Walnut Local School District, BWSA is responsible for their upkeep. Please keep the fields clear of trash and foreign objects, and report any field issues to the Board President.
- Do not kick or throw balls at or on top of the school building or the storage shed. If a soccer ball should accidentally be kicked onto the roof of the school building, DO NOT attempt to retrieve it. Wait until the next school day and contact the school office.
- DO NOT let children hang on the goals. Any misuse of goals can result in serious injury as well as dismissal from the league.
- For your convenience, there are two port-a-johns located behind the front storage shed.
- Utilize the gravel parking lot by the soccer fields and the PAVED parking area in front of the school first. DO NOT park along either side of Center Village Rd. or Miller Paul Rd and DO NOT park on the grass around the school.
- **NO PETS OF ANY KIND ARE PERMITTED AT THE FIELDS!** (Service animals are permitted.)
- Occasionally, events at the elementary school will supersede league games and practices.

- Equipment Sheds
 - The combinations for both sheds are the same.
 - The sheds are used to store field equipment (flags, nets, etc.) for all fields.
 - The front shed also contains team mailboxes, a first aid kit, the lost-and-found, extra toilet paper, and a drop box for game cards.
 - Coaches and referees are the only people allowed in the sheds! Please keep kids out of the sheds!
 - If we need to replace any field equipment or an item from the first aid kit, please contact the Board President.
 - Do not leave the sheds unlocked any time that it would be left unattended. If you are the last person leaving the field, please make sure they are locked!

SPONSORS

BWSA gratefully accepts both Team Sponsors and League Sponsors. Team Sponsors are those sponsors who wish to help provide team jerseys for players and coaches. The sponsor's family name or business name will be printed on the back of each player's jersey on the team they are sponsoring. A League Sponsor is a sponsor who makes a general donation to the League. League Sponsor funds will be used to purchase equipment or provide scholarships for those who would otherwise not be able to play. If you are interested in being a team or league sponsor, please contact the Sponsorship Coordinator.

VOLUNTEERS

BWSA is a not for profit organization, therefore, the need for volunteers in all areas is of high importance. The recreational and Middle School leagues are composed of all volunteer coaches and new/additional coaches are needed each season. Additionally, coaches wishing to further their coaching experience can enroll in one of the coaches licensing clinics which will be paid by BWSA, budget permitting. Additional volunteers are needed for Board positions, including *Officers and Coordinators, Committees, Team Parent Representative, and Referees/Timekeepers.*

APPLICATION PROCESS AND FEES (For Rec and MSL)

BWSA has two soccer seasons each year: The Fall Season runs from August through October with the application deadline in early July, and the Spring Season runs from March through May with the application deadline in early February. Participants must both register and pay the appropriate fee for each season, separately. To register, a parent or guardian must submit an application, a medical release, a photo release, a Lindsey's Law form, and registration fee for each player. All forms and fees must be received by the appropriate deadline unless prior arrangements have been made. Applications received after the deadline will be assessed a

late fee, and the player may be placed on a waiting list. Late applications slow down the administrative process of preparing for the season.

The goal is to have all team information to the coaches one month prior to the start of the season. BWSA reserves the right to restrict entry, even if applications are received by the deadline if the number of applicants exceeds that which can be competently and efficiently managed.

The registration fee for the recreational league covers the cost of awards, equipment, field maintenance, referees, advertising, application processing and players/coaches jerseys. The MSL registration fee covers the aforementioned costs as well as MSSA league and tournament fees.

No player may participate in any BWSA practice, scrimmage, or game without first turning in to the BWSA office an application and medical release form signed by a parent or legal guardian, and including the prescribed entry fee.

PLAYER EQUIPMENT

BWSA REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

- Shin guards - NO CHILD MAY PARTICIPATE IN A PRACTICE OR A GAME WITHOUT PROPER SHIN GUARDS!
- A BWSA jersey
 - BWSA purchases a new jersey for each player at the start of the Fall Season. If a player received a new jersey in the Fall and either loses or out-grows their jersey by the Spring, it will be the player's responsibility to purchase a new jersey at the time of the Spring registration.
 - If a player signs up for the Spring Season and did not play for BWSA during the previous Fall Season, they will receive a jersey from the league at NO additional charge.
 - It is the responsibility of every coach to return any jersey not distributed to an active player to the league immediately.
- The proper soccer type shoe - shoes may be cleated soccer or turf shoe. Cleats cannot be metal. Tennis shoes, while not recommended are permitted ONLY in the recreational league.
- The goalkeeper must wear an overlay of a different color of both teams.
- If a player wears eyeglasses, the lenses should be shatterproof or plastic. If they are not, the player should wear an eyeglass protective mask.

ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT

Examples:

- Projecting metal or hard material, even if it is covered by soft material.

- Any elbow, knee, thigh, or hip pads containing unyielding material, even if covered by soft material.
- Helmets, hats, caps, or visors (goalkeepers may wear a cap or visor).
- Metal or metal tipped cleats
- No jewelry shall be worn on the field. (Watches, earrings, etc.)

* Any player having a cast must have a Doctors release before being allowed to play. Casts must be completely covered with foam padding, no exposed areas are permitted. Have the cast inspected by the referee prior to the game. Safety is our overall concern.

RECREATION LEAGUE-SPECIFIC TEAM GUIDELINES

RECREATIONAL PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The BWSA Recreational Program is dedicated to the enjoyment and education of soccer. Our first priority will be to see that the teams have FUN! Secondly, it is our goal to help children understand and play the game of soccer. Everyone loves to have a winning season, but "adult" egos should be set aside and emphasis should be placed on the children's welfare, not team standing. Even though the commitment of a family's time may be significant, being a part of youth sports is well worth it. Players and parents often develop long-lasting friendships with teammates and their families. The players learn many things that they can apply throughout their lifetimes, such as the value of hard work, perseverance, and teamwork. Playing soccer - or any sport - also encourages closer relationships between parent and child because the parent must be involved in the child's day to day activities.

Assignment of Players

Teams are formed by random placement and experience level. The BWSA Board will make every attempt to balance the teams in an equal and fair manner by utilizing a player rating system when possible.

BWSA teams will be formed each Fall season and will remain together for the following Spring season, unless:

- The application arrives after the deadline and the roster has been filled.
- The player indicates via their current application that they wish to be placed on a different team.
- The team folds (in this event we will keep all players who have signed up from that team together to form a new team, adding new players and/or coaches.)
- New teams will be formed in the Spring to accommodate additional applicants, when necessary.

Coaches will receive a roster with their assigned players. No coach will allow any child to play on their team during a game that was not officially assigned to them by the league. Violations are subject to disciplinary action by the board.

Recruiting

It will be considered a recruiting violation, if a coach, assistant coach, or parent either directly or indirectly, actively solicits a player to transfer to his/her team from any other BWSA team once a player has been assigned to a team or in between the Fall and Spring seasons. Violations will be called before the Investigative Committee.

Switching Teams

No team transfers may take place while a season is in progress – they will only be considered between Fall and Spring. Transfers will only be granted if there is an opening on a team. No player will be added to a team that currently has the maximum number of players as set by the board, nor will any incoming new players or transfers be allowed to force an existing player out of their position on a team.

If a player wishes to drop their Fall team, the player will be assigned by the Board to another team for Spring. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE FOR ANY SPECIFIC TEAM. The player will be responsible for purchasing a new team jersey.

Special Requests

BWSA follows strict guidelines when granting special requests. Even though a parent or coach may make a request for placement on a particular team, the Board has the sole discretion as to the placement of the player onto a team.

- Each coach/assistant coach will have their own child on their team providing that the child is assigned to the age division in which the parent is coaching.
- Siblings will be placed on the same team, providing that they are assigned to the same age division.
- The Board may allow a request for players to be placed on the same team to accommodate carpooling provided:
 - This does not include the placement of a majority of players within one team.
 - You may not request a specific coach.
 - The players making the request must be in the same age division.
 - The requests must be made within the guidelines of other team formations.
 - Must still have the balance of girls to boys, the balance of ages, and balance of rated players.

- The Board will honor a request to NOT place your child with a specific coach, however, you may not choose a particular coach.
- No player will be allowed to play up/out of their age division.

Team Standings and Awards

As a non-competitive program, the recreational league does not keep/record scores or division standings. At the conclusion of each season, all team members will receive a participation award.

MIDDLE SCHOOL LEAGUE-SPECIFIC TEAM GUIDELINES

Player Eligibility and Team Formation

The MSL is open to any child in the 6th, 7th, or 8th grades, provided that they are not an active "select" player during the MSL season. The number of teams BWSA can form will depend entirely on the favorable response of adults volunteering to be coaches.

When possible, BWSA will form all-girls and all-boys teams according to the grade they are in. If there are not sufficient numbers to do this, teams may be co-ed and grades will be mixed. It is intended that once a team is formed, they will stay together for the remainder of the time they are in the MSL. This will allow the players the opportunity to work together as much as possible before entering a high school program if they so choose.

BWSA reserves the right to limit the number of players placed on a team and restrict entry, even if applications are received by the deadline if the number of applicants exceeds that which can be competently and efficiently managed.

Recruiting

It will be considered a recruiting violation, if a coach, assistant coach, or parent either directly or indirectly, actively solicits a player to transfer to his/her team from any other team in the BWSA Middle School League. Violations will be called before the Investigative Committee.

Switching Teams

As in the Rec. League, the MSL teams are formed in the Fall and remain together through the following Spring season. A player wishing to be dropped from their Fall team will be assigned by the Board to another team in the Spring. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE FOR ANY SPECIFIC TEAM, and the player will be responsible for purchasing a new team jersey. No team transfer may take place while a season is in progress.

Transfers will only be granted if there is an opening on a team. No player will be added to a team that currently has the maximum number of players as set by the board. Incoming new players or transfers cannot force an existing player out of their position on a team. Any coach who attempts the aforementioned will be in direct violation of the Code of Conduct and charges will be filed with the Investigative Committee.

COACHING FOR THE BWSA

The BWSA Executive Board shall have the final approval over the qualifications, acceptance and assignment of all coaches and assistant coaches. Any additions or changes to the coaching staff must meet with board approval. The BWSA Board has the exclusive right to authorize or terminate at will, with or without cause, an individual's participation with the Association.

COACHING CRITERIA

- The head coach of a team must be at least 18 years of age. There is a maximum of 3 coaches per team.
- All coaches must be approved through Ohio South Youth Soccer Association's Risk Management.
- All coaches are to obtain a Concussion Awareness Certificate and be familiar with Lindsay's Law.
- All coaches must agree to abide by the rules, regulations, Code of Conduct, and the constitution adopted by the BWSA Executive Board.
- All coaches must show good sportsmanship during all BWSA games whether as a coach, official, or spectator.
- All coaches must consider the interest and welfare of each player. You must agree to follow the guidelines discussed in the sections concerning Letting Up/Mercy Rule, Equal Play, and Rotating Positions whenever possible and to the best of your ability.
- All coaches and Assistant Coaches are to be familiar with and follow the rules and procedures contained herein, as well as the general laws of soccer.

COACHES BEHAVIOR

- PATIENCE!!! NEVER argue with a referee, especially a youth ref. A head coach or an official assistant coach may discuss with the official(s) a rule interpretation at either the halftime interval or after the game has concluded. This discussion must be done with dignity, sincerity and in a proper and calm demeanor. Remember, a referee is not required to discuss his/her call with any other individual. If the referee cannot explain his call to your satisfaction, take your question/complaint to the Referee Coordinator.

- We expect our coaches to demonstrate responsible behavior at all times during practices and games. Teach children by example, to show respect to our fellow players, coaches, and referees. Please keep winning in perspective. The goal is to help children have fun so that they will want to return for the next season.
- The use of tobacco products and/or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited for both the players and coaches during practices or games associated with BWSA.

Coaches' Responsibilities

- All coaches and assistant coaches are to attend the mandatory coaches meeting held prior to each season.
- Coaches should contact all players as soon as possible after the meeting. It is recommended to have a team meeting prior to (or along with) the first practice to meet each of the players and their parents. Information given at that time should include:
 - Parking areas at Souders.
 - Mandatory and illegal equipment.
 - Practice, game, and snack schedule.
 - Coaches expectations, Code of Conduct, spectator areas during a game.
 - NO PETS AT THE FIELDS!
- Inform the League Administrator ASAP if a player quits or additional players are needed.
- Keep parents informed of any schedule changes or league announcements.
- Assist in the preparation of the playing fields. Coaches for the earliest scheduled games should put up the nets and corner flags while coaches from the last scheduled game will take them down and return them to the shed.
- Every coach is responsible for seeing that any trash left behind on the fields is picked up and thrown away after every practice and every game! Any personal belongings forgotten at the field should be placed in the lost and found.
- Turn in player ratings and pick up team pictures and awards from the League President on the date established at the coaches meeting.

PRACTICE AND GAME POLICIES

Practices

- Practices may begin after the coaches meeting.
- Practice fields are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Two teams may practice on one field at once.
- Games, scheduled or make-up, and BWSA approved clinics take precedence over a practice, even if you have reserved the field.

Field Equipment

- It is the responsibility of both coaches to pick up/set up the nets, corner flags, etc. if they are the first game of the day. Conversely, it is the responsibility of both coaches to take down all field equipment and return it to the sheds if they are the last game/practice of the day.

Coaching Areas on the Field

- The coaches and the players of each team will be positioned on one side of the field and are limited to the area between the half-line and the 18-yard line (penalty box). All spectators are to remain on the opposite side of the field at least 5 ft. behind the touchline.
- No one is allowed by the goal areas during a game.
- No coach is to enter the field of play during the game without the referee's permission.
 - The only exception to this rule is in the Pre-K and Kindergarten divisions. One coach from each team will be allowed on the field to direct their players. However, the coach is not allowed between the penalty box and the goal line on either side of the field.

Game Times

- Every effort is made to schedule games on Saturdays, but some games may need to be scheduled/rescheduled for Sunday afternoons or weekday evenings.
- Recreational game start times:
 - Saturday: 9:00am, 10:30am, 12 Noon, and 1:30pm
 - Sunday: 1:00pm, 2:30pm
 - Weekday nights: 6:00pm
- Fields must stay on schedule at all times.

Equal Play

- The BWSA recreational league is designed as a developmental experience. ALL youth players should have the opportunity to play at least 50% of the game, regardless of their skill level. No player should have to stand and watch a practice or game.

Rotating Positions

- ALL players are entitled to play all positions. This especially pertains to the younger age groups. Limiting a child to one position diminishes the opportunity to learn and improve other skills. A player may not show much skill in a certain position at the beginning of the season but may be great at it by the end of the season.

Letting Up/Mercy Rule

- All coaches **MUST BE WILLING TO “LET UP”**. If a team goes ahead by 5 or more goals, the coach must either play with one less player or allow the other team to add an additional player until such time that the goal differential is 3 or less. The winning team is also encouraged to pull their best players from their best positions and let up on offensive tactics. It's great to win, but there is no useful purpose in devastating your opponent. Let your opponents leave the field with a little dignity.
- Failure to abide by the Mercy Rule and/or purposely running up the score will not be tolerated and could result in the loss of coaching privileges.
- The Mercy Law only applies to the Recreational League in the Kindergarten – 5th/6th Grade Divisions.

Dangerous Play

- Slide tackling is **NOT** permitted in the Recreational League.

Injury

- In the event of a serious injury, the referee and one coach should stay on the field with the player while another coach should call for medical assistance if needed. Any injury occurring during a practice or a game should be reported to the Board President immediately.

Weather Policy

- BWSA follows the OSYSA Guidelines for Lightning and Hazardous Weather Conditions (see page 19.) Therefore these policies are to be strictly enforced, no exceptions!

- **If thunder is heard or lightning is seen, games and practices are to be suspended immediately and the fields cleared. Everyone needs to go to a safe shelter. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL IT RAINS.**
 - Avoid standing in an open area, near soccer goals, under a tent, near trees or in water. The safest place during a thunderstorm with or without visible lightning is in a car, but not a convertible.
- No one is to retake the fields for a **minimum of 30 minutes after the last lightning is seen or thunder is heard, or any dangerously high winds have passed.**

Field Closures, Game Cancellations, and Rescheduling

- In the event of poor weather conditions or if the fields cannot be played on safely, the Board President and Referee Coordinator may make the decision to close the soccer fields. If the fields are closed, all practices and games are automatically canceled for the day. Field status updates can be checked on the BWSA website.
- No coach has the right to cancel a game without prior approval from the Referee Coordinator. Should any coach decide to cancel a game without approval, the game will be considered a forfeit and will not be re-scheduled.
- To reschedule any game, coaches from both teams must agree on a day and time BEFORE contacting the Referee Coordinator.

DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

General Notes

- Coaches need to let the referees know if there are any medical concerns among their players prior to the start of the game.
- If the number of players on the field needs to be adjusted, coaches need to come to an agreement and let the referee know.
- Before, during, and after a game, the referee has control of the field and is expected to enforce both the Laws of the Game and the regulations of BWSA. The referee's decisions are final and are not to be openly or directly challenged.

Pre-K

- Officials Team: One timekeeper
 - The official will keep time, check players in at the beginning of game and whistle restart after a goal scored.
- Field Size 20X30
 - Fields #10, 11, 12, and 13
- Ball Size: 3
- 4 v 4, no goalkeeper
 - Players are NOT allowed to remain in front of the goal or in any kind of defensive position.
- 4 – 8-minute quarters
 - Substitutes at approx. 4-minute mark.
 - Short breaks between each quarter and at the half.
 - Do not swap goals at the half.
- One coach from each team may stand in their half of the field to help with mechanics, etc.
- No throw-ins – coaches are to restart play, aka “master of the ball”.
- No heading!
- If there isn't an assistant coach, try to get a parent to assist with sideline control.
- Mercy Rule doesn't apply in this division. Coaches are encouraged to help players find creative ways to score once a game becomes lopsided.

Kindergarten

- Officials Team: One timekeeper
 - The official will keep time, check players in at the beginning of game and whistle restart after a goal scored.
- Field Size 20X40
 - Fields #8 and 9

- Ball Size: 3
- 5 v 5, no goalkeeper
 - Players are NOT allowed to remain in front of the goal or in any kind of defensive position.
- 4 – 10-minute quarters
 - Substitutes at approx. 5-minute mark.
 - Short breaks between each quarter and at the half.
 - Do not swap goals at the half.
- One coach from each team may stand in their half of the field to help with mechanics, etc.
- Players may throw or kick the ball in to restart play.
- No heading!
- If there isn't an assistant coach, try to get a parent to assist with sideline control.
- Follow the Mercy Rule

1st & 2nd Grade

- Officials Team: 1 unlicensed referee
 - The referee will keep time, check players in at the beginning of the game, look for and enforce proper FIFA restarts for fouls, corners and goal kicks.
- Field Size 25X40
 - Fields #4 and 5
- Ball size: 3
- 6 V 6, includes a goalkeeper.
 - Minimum 4 players needed to start the game.
- 4 – 12 minute quarters
 - Substitutes at approx. 6 minute mark.
 - Short break at halftime
 - Do NOT swap goals
- Goal kicks can be taken anywhere inside to goal area.
 - Opposing players need to move away from the goal box to allow room for the keeper to restart play.
- Throw-ins – two tries then other team takes possession
- Protect the keeper/benefit of doubt to the keeper.
 - The keeper cannot punt/dropkick.
- No slide tackling or reckless behavior.
- No heading!
- Coaches are not permitted on the field.
- Follow the Mercy Rule.

3rd & 4th Grade (U8)

- Officials Team: 1 licensed referee or 2 unlicensed referees
 - The referee will keep time, check players in at the beginning of the game, look for and enforce proper FIFA restarts for fouls, corners and goal kicks.
- Field Size 35X50
 - Fields #14, 15, and 16
- Ball size: 4
- 6 V 6, includes a goalkeeper.
 - Minimum 4 players needed to start the game.
- 2 – 24 minute halves
 - Free substitutions on goal kicks, after goals, and possession throw-ins.
 - Short break at halftime
 - SWAP goals
- Goal kicks can be taken anywhere inside to goal area.
- Throw-ins – two tries then other team takes possession
- Protect the keeper/benefit of doubt to the keeper.
 - The keeper cannot punt/dropkick.
- No slide tackling or reckless behavior.
- No heading!
- Coaches are not permitted on the field.
- Discourage offside/"cherry picking"
- Follow the Mercy Rule.

5th & 6th Grade (U12)

- Officials Team: 1 licensed referee and 1 unlicensed referee
 - The referees will keep time, check players in at the beginning of the game, look for and enforce proper FIFA restarts for fouls, corners and goal kicks.
- Field Size 48X75
 - Field #17
- Ball size: 4
- 9 V 9, includes a goalkeeper
- 2 – 30 minute halves
 - Free substitutions on goal kicks, after goals, and possession throw-ins.
 - Short break at halftime
 - SWAP goals
- Goal kicks can be taken anywhere inside to goal area.
- Protect the keeper/benefit of doubt to the keeper.
 - The keeper is allowed to punt and receive pass-backs.
- No slide tackling or reckless behavior.
- Heading is allowed

- Offside is enforced
- Coaches are not permitted on the field.
- Follow the Mercy Rule.

MSSA

- Officials Team: 2 licensed referees
 - Laws of the Game are fully enforced
- Fields #1 and 2
 - Field Size 50x110
- Ball Size: 5
- 11 v 11
- 2 – 35-minute halves
 - 5-minute halftime
- Slide tackling is allowed

OHIO SOUTH GUIDELINES FOR LIGHTNING AND HAZARDOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS

Revised 1/3/2015

The protection of Ohio South members and participants is of paramount importance. Every member should recognize the danger presented by lightning, tornados and other hazardous weather. The following items represent generally accepted principles regarding the dangers involved with lightning and tornados.

LIGHTNING

- All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous.
- Lightning often strikes as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.
- You are in danger from lightning if you can hear thunder.
- You are in danger if you can see lightning.
- Lightning injuries can lead to permanent disabilities or death.
- Look for dark cloud bases and increasing wind. Lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles and strike when skies are blue.
- Soccer fields are a dangerous place to be during a lightning storm. When lightning is seen or thunder is heard, or when dark threatening clouds are observed, quickly suspend the game and/or practice and move to a safe location.
- Avoid standing in an open area, near soccer goals, under a tent, near trees or in water. The safest place during a thunderstorm with or without visible lightning is in a car, but not a convertible.

TORNADOS

- Watch for rapidly darkening skies.
- The sound of an approaching tornado is often described as that of an approaching train.
- The funnel of a tornado does not have to touch down to cause extensive damage and injuries.
- Tornados can produce winds of 300 miles per hour or more. Most people who are hurt during a tornado are hurt when they are struck by flying debris.
- Seek safety in a solid structure, preferably in a basement or in an interior room. If no building is available, lay down in a ditch.

GAME SUSPENSION REQUIREMENTS

In any of the circumstances outlined below occurs, the referee should immediately suspend the game.

- If thunder is heard, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter.
- If lightning is seen, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter.
- If a thunderstorm is heard or seen coming or your hair stands on end, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter. Do not wait until it rains.
- If an audible tornado warning is heard, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter.

If the game official does not immediately suspend the game when any one of the points above have occurred, the head coach from each team can agree that one of the four criteria listed above has occurred they are to withdraw their teams from the field. If this action is taken, then both coaches must submit a written report to their league outlining the circumstances, the facts concerning the weather conditions at that time, the fact that the two coaches were in agreement and the name of the officials at the game.

If an official and one of the coaches do not reach the conclusion to suspend the game and any one of the four points listed above are believed to have occurred, the coach that supported the suspension of the game is to send a written report to their league outlining the facts and the names of the officials.

No one should retake the field or re-start the game until all of the lightning and thunder or other hazardous weather has left the area. Specifically, no one should retake the field for a minimum of 30 minutes after the last lightning is seen or thunder is heard, or the dangerously high winds have passed.

Each league should establish their own procedures for replaying of any games suspended due to lightning or tornados.

BWSA CODE OF CONDUCT

A MESSAGE FROM THE BWSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Board of Directors of the Big Walnut Soccer Association encourages communication among all players, coaches, officials, parents, and volunteers. BWSA is dedicated to providing a quality program for the enjoyment and education of soccer. Our first priority is to see that our participants have fun. Secondly, it is our goal to help our children understand and play the game of soccer in a safe and enjoyable atmosphere.

Before, during, and after a game, the referee has control of the field and is expected to enforce both the laws of soccer and the regulations of BWSA. The referee's decisions are final and are not to be openly or directly challenged. If you have a problem, question, or complaint concerning a law interpretation or a league regulation, please see the Referee Coordinator.

Good sportsmanship is expected of everyone. Hostile conduct is inappropriate behavior; it will not be tolerated and will result in your expulsion from the field for the remainder of that game and/or your team's next scheduled game.

In keeping with BWSA philosophy, the Board of Directors endorses the attached code of conduct for all spectators and participants. Adoption of this code of conduct by all league members and guests will prevent any misunderstandings and help keep situations in the proper perspective.

A PARENT'S CODE OF CONDUCT

- Children have more need of example than criticism.
- Attempt to relieve the pressure of competition, not increase it. A child is easily affected by outside influences.
- Be kind to your child's coach and to the officials. The coach is a volunteer, giving of personal time to provide a recreational activity for your child.
- The opponents are necessary friends. Without them, your child could not participate.
- Applaud good plays by your team and by members of the opposing team.
- Do not openly question an official's judgment and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity, and sportsmanship.
- Accept the results of each game. Encourage your children to be gracious in victory, and to turn defeat into victory by working toward improvement.

BWSA CODE OF CONDUCT

It is one of the principals of the Big Walnut Soccer Association that the highest standards of ethics and sportsmanship be maintained by all participants, including spectators, at all times. The ethics and sportsmanship of the players, coaches, officials, parents, and others associated with the game must be exemplary and beyond reproach. Everyone participating and watching must conduct themselves so as to be a credit to the Sport and the Association.

The following CODE OF CONDUCT for soccer prescribes the duties and basic responsibilities of those playing, administering, and watching the game:

- All coaches, officials, players, spectators, Officers, and Directors of the Association must comply with the meaning and spirit of the Constitution, rules, regulations, and policies as adopted by the Executive Board of BWSA.
- All coaches, players, and spectators must show respect for all decisions of the officials and efforts of all participants. They must conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times so as to dignify the game of soccer. Unsportsmanlike conduct, including "Booing"/berating, is not permitted at any time. A referee will issue a warning (yellow card) to any individual(s) showing disrespect. Ejection (red card) will follow for repeat offenders.

- Coaches, spectators, players, and parents are NOT to harass the officials or challenge their decisions before, during, or after the match. A red card may be issued for the first offense if, in the official's judgment, it is warranted. Ejected individuals must leave the playing area immediately.
- A head coach or an official assistant coach may discuss with the official(s) a rule interpretation at either the half-time interval or after the game has concluded. This discussion must be done with dignity, sincerity and in a proper and calm demeanor. A referee is not required to discuss his/her call with any other individual. If another individual(s) has a question(s) concerning an official's call or a rule interpretation, the individual(s) may discuss the matter with a coach, who may, in turn, discuss the official's call with the referee.
- Abuse, intimidation or any other undignified discussion with, or about, an official is not permitted at any time under any circumstances. If such a situation occurs, the referee will issue a warning (yellow card) to the individual(s) in violation. A repeat offense by the same individual(s) will lead to an ejection (red card) from the premises of the offending individual(s).
- Coaches should motivate their players to control themselves at all times, thereby preventing any unsportsmanlike act(s) against opponents, players, officials or spectators.
- Coaches and officials will not tolerate actions by any player which are deemed to be physically dangerous to another player. Coaches and spectators must not incite players to initiate any retaliatory action regardless of the provocation or to imply to the player's dissatisfaction with the officials (verbal or by gesture).
- Coaches, parents, officials, and spectators will not use their position to upset or intimidate neither their own team players nor an opposing team's players. Profanity should not be used by any of the aforementioned individuals.
- Coaches may be held responsible for the actions of their team parents, assistant coaches, players, and spectators.
- Coaches will focus on and instill in their players, the habit of properly respecting opponents, officials and spectators. Players, coaches, officials, and spectators are not to direct any unbecoming or unsportsmanlike language or personal remarks to any other players, coaches, officials or spectators.
- Coaches, players, and officials must cooperate in an effort to avoid unnecessary delays in the game.
- The decision of the referee is final with regard to all matters directly associated with the play of a game. Regardless of the nature of an issue of disagreement, it is not possible or permitted to appeal or protest the outcome, or any part of, a game.
- Defacing, destroying, vandalism or theft of any property belonging to Hylen Souders Elementary or the Association is not permitted and, at the sole discretion of the Executive Board, the Association may pursue legal action against the responsible individual(s).
- Under no circumstances, will the use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tobacco-related products or illegal drugs by coaches, players or officials be permitted during any BWSA practices, scrimmages, or games.

BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Any violation of the Code of Conduct will be deemed unsportsmanlike conduct.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the Code of Conduct is maintained at all times and that breaches of said Code are reported to the Investigative Committee (via the BWSA Executive Board) in writing within 24 hours of the incident, or as soon thereafter as is practicable. Such action can be initiated by a player, coach, parent, official, BWSA staff, officer, or director, or adult spectator and is independent of any warning or ejection by the referee. All reported incidents will be reviewed by the Investigative Committee, and if deemed necessary, they will conduct an investigative hearing as set forth in the BWSA constitution.

PARENTS GUIDE TO US YOUTH SOCCER

(From US Youth Soccer Education Program)

Why Do Players Play?

- To have fun.
- To be with their friends.
- To make new friends.
- To improve and learn.
- To feel good.
- To wear the stuff.

PLAYERS CODE:

- Play the game for the game's sake.
- Be generous when you win.
- Be graceful when you lose.
- Be fair always no matter what the cost.
- Obey the laws of the game.
- Work for the good of your team.
- Accept the decisions of the officials with good grace.
- Believe in the honesty of your opponents.
- Conduct yourself with honor and dignity.

PLAYERS RIGHTS:

- The right to decide when to participate in soccer.
- The right to play in every game. At younger ages, every child should have an opportunity to play at least 50% of every game. No child should have to stand and watch at practice.
- The right to be taught the fundamentals of soccer.
- The right to participate in a safe and healthy environment.
- The right to play as a child and enjoy participating in the sport.

Four Emotional Needs of Players (Douglas Abrams; Villanova Sports Journal, 2002) -

Children have four basic emotional needs in organized sports.

- To play without unhealthy pressure to win imposed by parents and coaches.
- To be treated like children, not miniature professionals.
- Adult role models whose sportsmanlike behavior helps make participation fun.
- To play without adult-imposed pressure for financial gain inspired by professional or big-time collegiate sports.

Signs That You Are Taking Soccer Too Seriously:

- You are nervous before your child's game.
- You have a difficult time recovering from a game your child has lost.
- You make mental notes during a game so that you can give your child advice during the drive home.
- You become verbally critical of an official.

Top Reasons Players Quit:

- Criticism and yelling
- No playing time
- Overemphasis on winning

- Poor communication
- Fear of making mistakes
- Boredom

Guidelines for Soccer Parents:

- Have reasonable expectations. In competition, someone always loses. If you win, do it gracefully, not boastfully. If you lose, do not allow your child to become negative.
- Cheer!!! The overall purpose is to enjoy the game and the opportunity to be with your child on the field of play.
- Relax and let them play. Too much competition, too soon, can slow down a child's progress in skill development.
- Yelling Directions = Distraction.
- Communicate with the coaches. Your child's coach will need all the support and help you can offer. Please, make yourself available and volunteer all the time you can spare.