



# REFEREE HANDBOOK

for

# LHSA RECREATION SOCCER

This handbook will aid you in becoming a successful referee for the Lawrence Hamnett Soccer Association. Regardless of your prior experience officiating, there is much to learn from the contents of this document.

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For a complete reading of the Laws of the Game, as published by US Soccer and FIFA, visit:

<http://www.ussoccer.com/Referees/Laws-of-the-Game.aspx>

For practical advice for new and experienced referees we recommend the following site:

<http://www.watchandwhistle.org/>

For those of you who have experience and want to officiate competitive soccer, you should check out the New Jersey chapter for USSF referees, which includes upcoming courses:

<http://www.njrefs.com>

Success hinges on respect and common sense for the players, parents, coaches, officials, yourself and the game. So be professional, show up early, be prepared, do what's expected, stay positive, but above all follow your heart, and have fun out there!

# Simplified Laws of the Game

## THE RULES OF SOCCER

The rules of soccer are organized into 17 Laws of the Game that are published annually in a small booklet of less than 50 pages. Their brevity suggests simplicity, but a thorough understanding only comes with years of experience and shared interpretation. This document is an even simpler presentation of the laws that everyone involved in the game should know to appreciate the game. It is important to note that some laws may be modified for youth games to encourage player development.

### LAW #1: THE FIELD OF PLAY

The soccer field, also known as the "pitch," must be rectangular with a length of 100 to 130 yards, and a width of 50 to 100 yards. The field must be longer than it is wide. With the proportions correct, junior fields can be significantly smaller depending on the age level and number of players. The longer boundary lines are called touch lines, and the shorter ones are called goal lines. A goal is centered on each goal line. The field is lined with goal areas, penalty areas, penalty spots, corner arcs, and a midline.

### LAW #2: THE BALL

The ball must be round with a circumference of 27"-28" and a weight of 14-16 oz for regulation adult play. This is a "Size 5" ball. For medium-sized children (ages 7-12), "Size 4" balls are often used. The circumference is 25"-26" and the weight is 12-14 oz. For very small children (ages 4-7) a "Size 3" ball is often used. The circumference is 23"-25" and the weight is 10-12 oz.

### LAW #3: THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS

In a regulation match, each side fields 11 players, one of whom must be designated as a goalkeeper, plus a limited number of eligible substitutes off the field. A limited number of substitutions are allowed, and a substituted player may take no further part in the match. Youth matches are often modified to allow fewer players on the field with unlimited substitutions where substituted players remain eligible to play. A complete roster of players and subs must be presented to the referee before the game starts (player passes are sometimes used instead). The referee must be notified and must indicate his permission to enter before a substitute can step onto the pitch. Players must leave the field before the substitute can enter. Any player sent off for misconduct (red carded) may not be replaced, and the team must play "short" for the remainder of the match.

### LAW #4: THE PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

The usual uniform of the soccer player is a jersey, shorts, socks, shin guards and shoes. Nothing potentially injurious

to another player may be worn. All jewelry is considered dangerous. No jewelry should be allowed, period, in any youth or amateur play. Cleats are normally rubber, plastic, aluminum or leather. The goalkeeper must wear a different color than the other members of the team. Shin guards must give a reasonable degree of protection and be entirely covered by socks.

### LAW #5: THE REFEREE

The referee is in charge of all game activity and is to make sure each team abides by the Laws of the Game. He is to stop, suspend, or terminate a match as appropriate. The referee may change his initial decision on any matter, so long as play has not restarted. His decisions are final. It is the referee's responsibility to keep the game clock, and enforce proper game conduct by players, substitutes and team officials. He can send off players or others who commit an act of misconduct. His authority extends from the time he arrives in the area to the time he leaves.

### LAW #6: THE ASSISTANT REFEREES

There are usually two Assistant Referees (ARs), one for each touch line. Their main responsibility is to assist the referee by indicating ball out of bounds, offside, corner kicks, and goal kicks; and to assist in enforcing the laws by indicating fouls the referee cannot see. ARs assist the referee by indicating their opinion, but the decision is still the referee's, if he saw the event or incident. ARs do not have whistles and cannot stop play. When no registered referees are available for this function, club linesmen may be used. The referee can only use club linesmen for out of bounds indications.

### LAW #7: THE DURATION OF THE MATCH

Game duration is determined by the competition authority. As a recommendation, U8 games have four 10 minute quarters. U10 games have 25 minute halves, U12 games 30 minute halves, U14 games 35 minute halves, U16 games 40 minute halves, and all higher level games 45 minute halves. The referee is to add time for time wasting, injuries, substitutions, and any other cause.

### LAW #8: THE START AND RESTART OF PLAY

A kickoff starts play at the beginning of a game, halftime and after a goal has been scored. A player kicks the ball in any direction from the center of the field. Opposing players must remain outside the center circle until the ball has been kicked. The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player. A second touch violation is penalized with an indirect free kick where the infraction occurred. If play is restarted with a dropped ball, at least two players must touch the ball before a goal can be scored.

## LAW #9: THE BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

After the whole ball completely crosses the touch line or goal line, either on the ground or in the air, it is out of play. Any ball striking a referee, goal post, or corner post and remaining on the field is in play. The line itself is in bounds, and the ball is out of play (or a goal is scored) only when the entire ball is completely past the outer edge of the line. If any part of the ball is still touching any part of the line (extended from the ground up into the sky), it is still in play.

## LAW #10: THE METHOD OF SCORING

A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line, between the goal posts and under the cross bar, provided that no infringement of the Laws of the Game has been committed by the team scoring the goal (e.g. offside infraction). The winner of the game is determined by the most goals scored.

## LAW #11: OFFSIDE

A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last opponent (including the keeper, if he is one of the two defenders closest to the goal line). A player is not offside when in his own half of the field of play. It is not an offense to be in an offside position. The referee is to call an offside infraction only if, in his judgment, the player in an offside position, when the ball is played or touched by a teammate, interferes with play, interferes with another player, or gains an advantage by being in that position. There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from a goal kick, a throw-in or a corner kick. When offside is called, the defending team is awarded an indirect free kick from where the infringement occurred.

## LAW #12: FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

Fouls can only be committed while the ball is in play. There are two categories of foul, direct free kick fouls and indirect free kick fouls. Except for handling, direct free kick fouls can only be committed against an opponent. Fouls are dealt with by awarding a free kick to the opposing team. Misconduct can be an included part of some fouls, or can be unrelated to a foul. Misconduct is dealt with separately by issuing a caution (yellow card) or sending the player off (red card).

A. For direct free kick fouls, the referee awards a direct free kick to the other team from where the infraction occurred:

1. Kicking opponent
2. Tripping opponent
3. Jumping at opponent
4. Charging opponent
5. Striking opponent
6. Pushing opponent

7. Making contact with the opponent before the ball when tackling or challenging.
8. Holding opponent or impeding with contact
9. Spitting at an opponent
10. Deliberately handling ball (touching ball with hands or arms from below shoulder to fingertips)

The first seven are to be called only if the referee considers that they were done carelessly, recklessly, or with excessive force. If reckless or excessive, then misconduct has occurred. A penalty kick is awarded if any of these 10 penal fouls are committed in the offending team's own penalty area, irrespective of the position of the ball.

B. An indirect free kick shall be awarded when a player commits these technical fouls. The first three can only be committed against an opponent.

1. Dangerous play adversely affecting opponent's play
2. Preventing opposing goalkeeper from releasing ball
3. Impeding an opponent without contact
4. A goalkeeper taking more than 6 seconds to release the ball while controlling it with his hands
5. A goalkeeper handling a ball that has been intentionally kicked by a teammate's foot, or thrown in by a teammate, or that he touches again with his hands after having released it from his possession and before it has touched another player
6. Any offense not mentioned above for which play is stopped for misconduct (yellow or red card)

C. Cautionable Offenses: A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following offenses:

1. Is guilty of unsporting behavior
2. Shows dissent by word or action
3. Persistently infringes the Laws of the Game
4. Delays the restart of play
5. Fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick, or throw-in.
6. Enters, re-enters, or deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee's permission.

D. Sending-Off Offenses: A player is sent off and shown the red card if he commits any of the following offenses:

1. Is guilty of serious foul play
2. Is guilty of violent conduct
3. Spits at an opponent or any other person
4. Denies an opponent a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (does not apply to goalkeeper in his own penalty area)

5. Denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or penalty kick\*
6. Uses offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures
7. Receives a second caution (card) in the same match

The referee is to refrain from calling fouls that are trifling or doubtful, or when stopping play for the foul would give an advantage to the offending team or take one away from the fouled team. \*In some cases, when a penalty kick is awarded for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity, the player may simply be cautioned.

### **LAW #13: FREE KICKS**

The types of free kick awarded by the referee are the:

- Direct Free Kick - a goal can be scored by kicking the ball directly into the goal
- Indirect Free Kick - the ball must touch another player before a goal can be scored; if the ball goes into the goal without being touched by another player, it is just out-of-bounds, and the restart is a goal kick or corner kick

In either case, the kicker is free to simply pass the ball to a teammate. The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player. When a free kick is taken, the opposing team must stay at least 10 yards away from the ball until it is kicked (or be on their own goal line between the goalposts). A team cannot score against itself directly (i.e. without another player besides the original kicker touching the ball) on any free kick. Any free kick taken from inside the kicker's own penalty area cannot be touched by any other player until it has passed outside the penalty area into the playing field, or else it must be re-kicked. No opposing player can enter the penalty area until the ball has passed out of it.

### **LAW #14: THE PENALTY KICK**

A penalty kick is awarded whenever a direct-kick foul takes place in the offending team's penalty area. It is a direct kick taken 12 yards from the goal line. All players except the goalkeeper and kicker must remain outside of the penalty area, behind the penalty mark, at least 10 yards from the ball until it is kicked. The goalkeeper must stay on the goal line and may not move forward off of it (sideways movement is ok) until the ball is kicked. The kicker must kick the ball forward and may not touch the ball again until it has been touched by another player.

### **LAW #15: THE THROW-IN**

When the ball completely crosses the touch line, a throw-in is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball, from the point where the ball crossed the line. The ball must be thrown by both hands from behind and over the head. At the moment the thrower releases the ball:

- A. The thrower must be facing the playing field.
- B. Both feet must be outside or on the touch line. Any part of the foot touching the line makes it legal.
- C. Both feet must be touching the ground.
- D. Opponents must be at least two yards away

On incorrect throws, a throw-in is awarded to the opposite team. The thrower may not touch the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player. If the thrown ball does not enter the field, that is, the ball never breaks the plane of the outside edge of the line before hitting the ground, then the thrower must throw again from the same spot. If the referee believes this is intended to waste time, he may caution the player and must add on time.

### **LAW #16: THE GOAL KICK**

A goal kick is awarded when the ball crosses the goal line but a goal is not scored, and it was last touched by an attacking player. The ball may be kicked from anywhere in the goal area. The ball must travel outside the penalty area into the field of play before it is in play. If it is touched before it leaves the penalty area, the kick is retaken. The attacking team must stay out of the penalty area until the ball is in play. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player.

### **LAW #17: THE CORNER KICK**

A corner kick is awarded when the ball crosses the goal line, but a goal is not scored, and it was last touched by a defensive player. One member of the attacking team takes the kick from the quarter circle at the nearest corner flag post. The opposing team must remain at least 10 yards from the arc as the ball is kicked. A goal may be scored directly from this kick. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has been touched by another player.

### **MORE ON REFEREES**

There are many other details a referee must know and apply in making decisions on the field. Knowing this simplified version of the "Laws of The Game" is just a starting point on the path to fully understanding the Laws of the Game. A good referee knows exactly when and how to whistle and also where and how to restart play. A great referee arrives at the field fully prepared and sets the tone for proper conduct by all participants.

# UNDERSTANDING OFFSIDE IN SOCCER

The offside infraction is one of the most widely misunderstood rules in soccer.

The purpose of the offside rule is to prevent a team from stationing a player in front of the opposing goal and passing to him or her for an easy score. To determine if the player was guilty of an offside infraction, ask three questions:

1. **Where was the player?**

The player was in an offside position if located:

- ✓ In the attacking half of the field (opponent's half), AND
  - ✓ Closer to the opponent's goal line than the ball, AND
  - ✓ Closer to the opponent's goal line than the second-to-last defender.
- Standing even with the second to last defender or the ball is not offside. In a typical infraction only the goalkeeper is between the player and the goal.

2. **When was there player in that position?**

The moment of judgment is the precise instant a teammate plays the ball. Where the player was at that instant remains relevant until someone else controls the ball.

3. **Did the player get involved in the play?**

If a player in an offside position at the instant a teammate plays the ball subsequently becomes actively involved in the play, then an offside infraction has occurred. It is not an infraction to simply be in an offside position. If the player is passive or avoids getting involved, then there is no impact on the game and no infraction. Play continues. "No harm, no foul."

What does "actively involved" mean?

- It means touching the ball or being the only player to run toward the ball in order to play it. Just being near the ball or on its projected path is not enough. Participation must be both active and in close proximity to the ball.
- It means interfering with an opponent who is trying to play the ball, which includes obstructing a player's line of vision or challenging a player for the ball.
- It means helping your team gain an advantage by being in that position, specifically for playing the ball after a shot rebounds off a goal frame or is saved by a defender.

Making the call is a matter of fact, judgment, and opinion.

- Was the player in an offside position? This is a matter of fact.
- Was the player in an offside position just before or after a teammate played the ball? This is a judgment call that often requires being in exactly the right position to see.
- Was the player actively involved in the play? This is a matter of opinion.

Keep in mind:

- Offside position is determined by where a player is at the instant a teammate plays the ball, not where the player becomes actively involved in the play. For example, if you're in an offside position and a teammate kicks the ball in your direction, you can't avoid an offside infraction by running to an onside position before touching the ball.
- There is no offside infraction if you receive the ball directly from a throw-in, corner kick, or goal kick. Directly means that no teammate touched the ball.
- There is no offside infraction if an opponent last plays the ball deliberately. However, a pass from a teammate that deflects off an opponent is not considered deliberate play, and so the attacker in the offside position can still be guilty of an infraction.
- There are also gray areas where referees will disagree among themselves. So it goes.

# **ADVICE TO REFEREES for 5v5 GAMES**

## **5 Areas of Emphasis for Officiating 7/8 Year Olds**

### **1. Signaling Technique (for all age groups)**

stop moving, stand still and signal with one outstretched arm

hold your arm straight out for approximately 5 seconds

if signaling a kick-in or free kick, then point parallel to touchline in direction of intended kick

otherwise point toward the spot where the ball should be placed (goal area, corner arc, center spot)

during first month only, assist 7/8 year olds with retrieving and placing ball when necessary

a loud voice is as important as a loud whistle - make sure grandma can hear you

*"kick-in blue" "free kick yellow" "corner kick red" etc.*

### **2. Goal Kicks**

opponents must stand in their own half of field until ball is kicked, but they may intercept

*"goal kick blue, yellow backup behind midline"*

if goal kick is taken before other team has backed up, that's OK so long as they DO NOT intercept

if violation, then redo goal kick

### **3. Goalie Distribution**

goalkeeper may not punt or drop-kick the ball

after a goalkeeper takes possession with hands, the other team may not intercept the distribution

*"goalie has it, she gets a free pass to a teammate"*

if violation, then redo distribution by giving the goalkeeper the ball

### **4. Free Kicks and Throw-ins**

Kick-ins are used instead of throw-ins

all restarts are indirect (kick-ins, free kicks, corner kicks, goal kicks, kickoffs)

opponents must stand at least 4 yards away whenever a kick is taken

there are NO direct kicks or penalty kicks

whistle for fouls, then award indirect kick where the foul took place

for fouls committed by defenders in their goal area, the kick will be taken from nearest edge of goal area

proper arm signal for a foul is to point in the direction that the fouled team is headed

you may also need to point at the spot where you want the kick to be taken

*"pushing by red, free kick for yellow right here"*

DO NOT enforce offside infractions

DO ALLOW goalkeepers to handle a ball kicked (or thrown-in) to them by a teammate

NO SLIDE tackling, except by keeper - award indirect kick for dangerous play

a player may slide (e.g. to keep ball from crossing goal line) so long as it's not a slide tackle

NO DELIBERATE head balls - award indirect kick for dangerous play

accidental contact of ball to head is ok - but a decision to play ball with head is not ok

Note that the goal area and penalty area are combined as one box

### **5. Players, Substitutions, and Game Management**

5 v 5 including keepers (fewer players is acceptable, more is not)

size 3 ball, two 16-minute games after a 25 minute warm-up period

allow on-the-fly substitutions at any time (except goalkeeper changes)

stop immediately when you realize a player may be injured and signal the coach to come onto the field

it's OK to encourage kids with positive reinforcement. It's OK to coach them a little.

*"awesome shot" "excellent pass" "nice pull-back" "remember to dribble away from pressure"*

## **ADVICE TO REFEREES for 6v6 and 7v7 games**

### **10 Keys Points for Making the Transition to 9/10/11 year olds**

A few procedures remain the same in the 6v6 and 7v7 game, such as signaling technique, goal kicks and goalkeeper distribution, but there are many new issues that require preparation and review. These new rules largely apply to the 9v9 game as well.

- \* throw-ins instead of kick-ins
- \* be ready to call offside infractions
- \* managing player substitutions
- \* goal kicks
- \* goalkeeper distributions
- \* keeper may not handle teammate's kick or throw
- \* awarding free kicks and penalty kicks
- \* opponent distance on free kicks (4-8-10)
- \* verbal assistance and injury management
- \* bigger field / longer games / more players

#### **(1) throw-ins instead of kick-ins**

No more kick-ins from the touchline. Watch for three things on a throw-in: (a) two hands on ball, (b) two feet touching the ground on or behind touchline, and (c) ball delivered from behind and over head while facing the field. Don't worry about body twist, ball spin, arm speed, direction of throw, or point of release. It's more important to get the ball back into play than to worry about a questionable throw. If a player does throw illegally (e.g. raised foot or thrown from chest-level), then blow the whistle and grant the player a second try. If thrown poorly again, coach them to do it correctly and try again.

The throw should be taken approximately within a yard from where it crossed the touchline. Opponents must stand at least 2 yards away from thrower. You cannot score directly from a throw-in because it must touch another player first (similar to an indirect kick). If the ball is thrown but hits the ground before crossing the touchline into the field of play, then the throw must be retaken by same team.

#### **(2) be ready to call offside infractions**

An offside infraction requires a player being in an offside position AND getting involved in play. **It's critical that you review and understand the page in the LHS A Referee Handbook dedicated to offside infractions.** For recreation soccer, the infraction should be flagrant, not mere inches. For 9/10/11 year olds, we are even more lenient, as we are mainly concerned with stopping obvious poachers.

#### **(3) managing player substitutions – no more “on the fly” substitutions**

An unlimited number of players may substitute **after play is stopped** for a throw-in, goal kick, injury or misconduct, as well as after a goal and between periods. No subs on corner kicks, fouls or offside infractions, unless there is an injury or misconduct. Either team may sub no matter which team is conducting the restart. Listen and look for a possible sub request every time the ball goes out of play. Whenever a sub is requested, double WHISTLE to alert players, then wave the players onto the field while shouting "SUBS." Once substituted players are off the field, always WHISTLE to restart play.

#### **(4) goal kicks are basically the same as 5v5**

As in 5v5 games, opponents must retreat behind midline until a goal kick is taken, but they may intercept after the kick so long as the ball has cleared the penalty area. Goal kicks may be taken from anywhere inside the goal area, which is the smaller rectangle marked inside the larger penalty area.

## **(5) goalkeeper distributions same as 5v5**

Goalkeepers who have picked-up the ball are granted an initial free pass on distributions (no interception allowed). Goalkeepers may not drop-kick or punt the ball. If there is an incorrect distribution, play will be stopped and the ball given back to the goalkeeper for proper distribution.

## **(6) goalkeeper MAY NOT handle a teammate's kick or throw**

If a player kicks or throws the ball to his own keeper, the keeper may play it, but he **MUST NOT** pick up the ball or use his hands/arms unless the other team touches the ball first. If he does, then the other team gets an **INDIRECT** free kick at the spot the keeper handled the ball. Remember, a goalkeeper inside his penalty area may **NEVER** be penalized with a penalty kick for handling the ball. If a teammate chests, heads or thighs the ball to his keeper without using his foot, then the keeper **MAY** pick it up.

## **(7) awarding free kicks and penalty kicks**

**All free kicks are still indirect**, as in 5v5 game, **EXCEPT**, physical fouls committed by the defending team inside their own penalty area; such fouls will result in a **PENALTY kick**. You must know the difference between physical contact fouls (kicking, pushing, holding, tripping, charging, tackling, deliberate handling, striking, spitting and jumping) that would normally result in **DIRECT** kicks, and technical infractions (offside, dangerous play, impeding, second touch, goalkeeper handling) that result in **INDIRECT** kicks. As in 5v5, **DELIBERATE** head balls are still considered a dangerous play in 6v6 and 7v7 games. Review **LAW 12** in referee handbook, but realize that for all 6v6 and 7v7 games, physical fouls will result in **INDIRECT** kicks unless the defender commits the physical foul inside his or her penalty area, in which case the free kick becomes a **PENALTY** kick. Review **LAW 14** on how to setup the penalty kick.

## **(8) opponent distance on free kicks (4-8-10)**

The distance that the opposing team must retreat on free kicks, kickoffs, and corner kicks varies with the size of the field and age of the players. Enforce 4 yards for the 7/8 age group (5v5), 8 yards for the 9/10/11 age group (6v6, 7v7), and 10 yards for the 11/12/13 age group (8v8, 9v9). Opponents must retreat in every direction (360°) from where the ball is placed.

## **(9) player assistance and injuries**

There's no need to assist players with retrieving or placing ball on restarts. If there's any confusion, just tell them what to do. However, it is still good practice to explain your calls and even recognize players for performing well. It is also recommended to stop play immediately after an apparent injury and beckon the coach onto the field. The only reasons to delay might be an immediate scoring opportunity in close proximity to the goal, or clear evidence that the player can continue unassisted. There's no need to stop play because a player's shoe fell off, though you should delay a restart until the situation is fixed.

## **(10) bigger field, longer games, more players**

Games are scheduled as 6v6 or 7v7 including the goalkeeper (fewer is acceptable, not more). There is no warm-up period. Games start at scheduled time using a size-4 ball. There are two 25 minute halves with 5 minutes given between periods. Penalty spot should be 10 yards from goal line for 9/10 age group.

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When you get assigned to your first 6v6 or 9v9 game, don't worry. It's a learning experience. A good ref learns how to improve the officiating with every game. The real key is a desire to learn and improve. Good luck and have fun!

## **ADVICE TO REFEREES for 8v8 and 9v9 games**

### **5 Keys Points for Making the Transition to players age 12 & over**

Most of the rules for 6v6 are applied the same way at the 12 & older age groups. **You must have a firm understanding of the 6v6 rules in order to officiate an 8v8 or 9v9 match, so review them first.** Below are just the key differences. The 8v8 and 9v9 games conform to standard USYSA rules.

#### **(1) throw-ins**

If a player throws illegally (e.g. raised foot or ball thrown basketball style), then blow the whistle and award a throw-in to opponents at the same spot. There is no second-try as in the 6v6 game.

#### **(2) offside infractions**

Whereas game flow is more important than a trivial offside infraction in 6v6 games, offside infractions must be called more tightly in 8v8 and 9v9 games as defenders are starting to learn the power of the offside trap. An offside infraction requires a player being in an offside position AND getting involved in play. **It's critical that you review and understand the page in the LHS Referee Handbook dedicated to offside infractions.** For recreation soccer, the infraction should be flagrant, not mere inches.

#### **(3) goal kicks and goalkeeper distributions**

The other team is no longer required to backup beyond midline on goal kicks, nor do they have to allow a free pass on goalkeeper distributions. Goalkeepers MAY drop-kick or punt the ball on distributions. Opponents may intercept the ball on goal kicks and goalie distributions. However, a goal kick **MUST BE RETAKEN** if any player touches the ball after it is kicked but **BEFORE** it has left the penalty area. Note that goal kicks may be taken from anywhere inside the goal area.

#### **(4) award direct, indirect, and penalty kicks**

You must know the difference between physical contact fouls (kicking, pushing, holding, tripping, charging, tackling, deliberate handling, striking, spitting and jumping) that result in **DIRECT kicks**, and technical infractions (offside, dangerous play, impeding, second touch, goalkeeper handling) that result in **INDIRECT kicks**. Deliberate head balls are allowed in this age group, but slide tackling, except by keeper, is still considered dangerous play; however, a player may slide (e.g. to keep ball from crossing goal line) so long as it's not a slide tackle to dispossess the opponent. Review LAW 12 in referee handbook. When a defender commits a physical foul inside his penalty area, the direct kick becomes a **PENALTY kick**. Review LAW 14 on how to setup the penalty kick. Opponents must retreat 10 yards in every direction (360°) from where the ball is placed.

You will find that the hardest part of officiating older and faster players is foul recognition and selection. There are some fouls that are trivial and should not be whistled, while others are careless or even reckless and must be whistled. The frequency and types of fouls vary with the age of the players. Good foul recognition and proper selection for whistling only comes with experience.

#### **(5) bigger field, longer games, more players**

Games are 8v8 or 9v9 including the goalkeeper (fewer is acceptable, more is not). There is no warm-up period. Games start at scheduled time using a size 4 ball. There are two 30-minute periods with 5 minutes given between periods. Penalty spot should be 12 yards from goal line for this age group.

## KEY POINTS OF FOCUS

As referees for the Lawrence Hamnett Soccer Association, here are some key areas we all need to focus on regardless of the age of the players or our own experience.

### (1) BEFORE THE GAME KICKS OFF

If you show up ahead of time, in all black (shirt, shorts, socks and shoes), with your whistle, watch, cards, coin and water, and then introduce yourself to the coaches, then you will have done a great job in establishing your credibility as a referee before the game even starts.

### (2) NO SLIDE TACKLING (any age) & NO DELIBERATE HEAD BALLS (u11)

The first two weekends, remind the coaches and players that SLIDE tackling is NOT ALLOWED in our league. Any infractions will result in awarding an indirect kick for dangerous play to the opposing team. Additionally, after the first two weekends, sliding into an opponent to get the ball may result in a yellow card for misconduct. For 5v5 and 6v6 games (u11 players) you should remind coaches and players that a DELIBERATE head ball will be ruled as a dangerous play.

### (3) KEEP UP WITH PLAY, COVER THE ENTIRE FIELD

If you find yourself on the far touchline when the ball is on the opposite side, or standing at the halfway line when the ball is near the goal line, then you are out of position. You must keep up with play, cover the entire field, and be 100% attentive.

You should generally be behind the player with the ball and within 10 to 20 yards of active play. When the ball is in or near the penalty area, you should be there too. When a goal kick is taken, you should be standing near where you think it will land. Your view of the game is the only one that counts, and if it is farther away than the view of the coaches and spectators, then you are doing a disservice to the players. Be sure to move up, down, and ACROSS the field and have a clear view of play at all times.

### (4) BALL OUT OF PLAY DECISIONS

Be confident when making a restart decision. Even if you aren't sure which player last touched the ball before it went out of play, use your best judgment. Observe the direction the ball was last traveling, as well as the body language and subsequent actions of the players involved. Give a clear arm signal and perhaps a verbal confirmation such as "throw-in blue" or "corner kick red".

There is no need to blow the whistle every time the ball goes out of play for a throw-in, kick-in, corner kick, or goal kick. Definitely blow the whistle if the players are unsure whether the ball is indeed out. For corner kicks and goal kicks, point to where the kick should be taken. For throw-ins and kick-ins, simply use your arm to indicate the direction of the throw-in. If necessary, point to the spot along the touchline where the throw-in should take place.

### (5) MAKE THE CALL ON FOULS – USE YOUR WHISTLE AS YOUR VOICE

Don't hesitate to blow the whistle loudly when your instincts tell you there's been a foul. Make the call. And be sure that grandma can hear it at the other end of the field. Strive to improve your foul recognition and look for opportunities to educate the players about the rules you are enforcing. Don't be shy with the whistle. The whistle is your voice and its tone should signal to the players just what you want to say.

## (6) MAKE THE RESTART CRYSTAL CLEAR AFTER A FOUL

After whistling for a foul, be sure to stop and stand still, and then point for several seconds in the direction the ball should be kicked. If you are not close to where the foul occurred, then run to the spot before signaling with your arm. Your extended arm and your verbal explanation, if needed, should make it clear which team is taking the kick. Point with your other hand to the spot where you want the kick to take place.

Be confident, not hesitant or unsure. Leave no doubt as to what needs to happen next. Take the time to educate younger players if necessary. Guide them through what has happened and what needs to happen next (e.g. "pushing by red, direct free kick right here for blue"). On INDIRECT free kicks, after indicating the restart, you must hold your arm straight up, and leave it up until the ball is kicked AND subsequently touched by another player.

## (7) DEALING WITH COACHES & PARENTS – ASK, TELL, DISMISS

Some coaches and parents can be intimidating, but please try to smile as you as make sure they follow the rules too. Most coaches and parents will be supportive, but if not, be firm, fair, and calm. Coaches may only come onto the field if you have signaled an injury. They should not be coming onto the field to position players or place the ball. They must stay behind the touchline, between the 18 yard line and the midline. Parents should only be on the field if there is a severe injury. If a parent is interfering with the game in any way, then stop the game and alert both coaches that the game will not continue until they (the coaches) have fixed the situation.

If coaches are trying to make the calls or persistently questioning your calls during play, politely **ASK** them to refrain from officiating and to focus on coaching. If they persist, then **TELL** them to stop interfering or you will be forced to take action. If they persist further, then you should stop the game, **DISMISS** the coach, and tell the other coach that the game cannot continue until the offending coach has moved at least 100 yards away from the playing field. If you ever have a problem with a coach, let your referee coordinator know!

## (8) MISCELLANEOUS GAME & TIME MANAGEMENT ISSUES

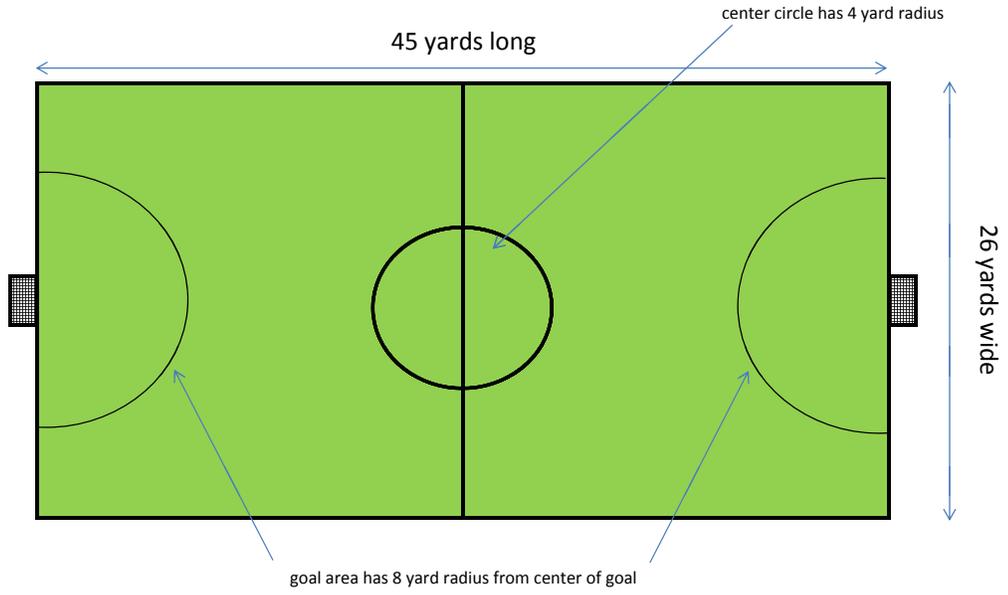
If you realize you made an incorrect call **before** the game has been restarted, then don't be shy about correcting it. Misconduct in our recreation league is rare. If you are unsure about whether to give a yellow card, try a brief warning first so the player knows what is expected. Always know the names of the teams and score of the game. Know how much time has been played, and how much time remains, because you will be asked by the coaches.

## (9) WEATHER – EXCESSIVE HEAT – LIGHTNING & THUNDER

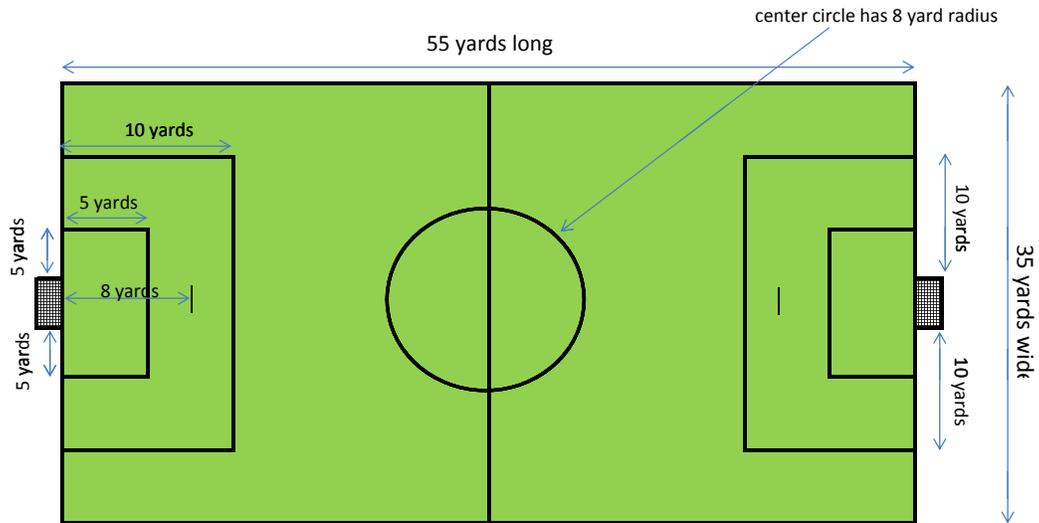
On **HOT & HUMID DAYS**, it is strongly recommended to take water breaks approximately halfway through each period. Simply stop the game (and the clock) when the ball goes out of play, and restart, as you would have, after taking a 2-minute water break.

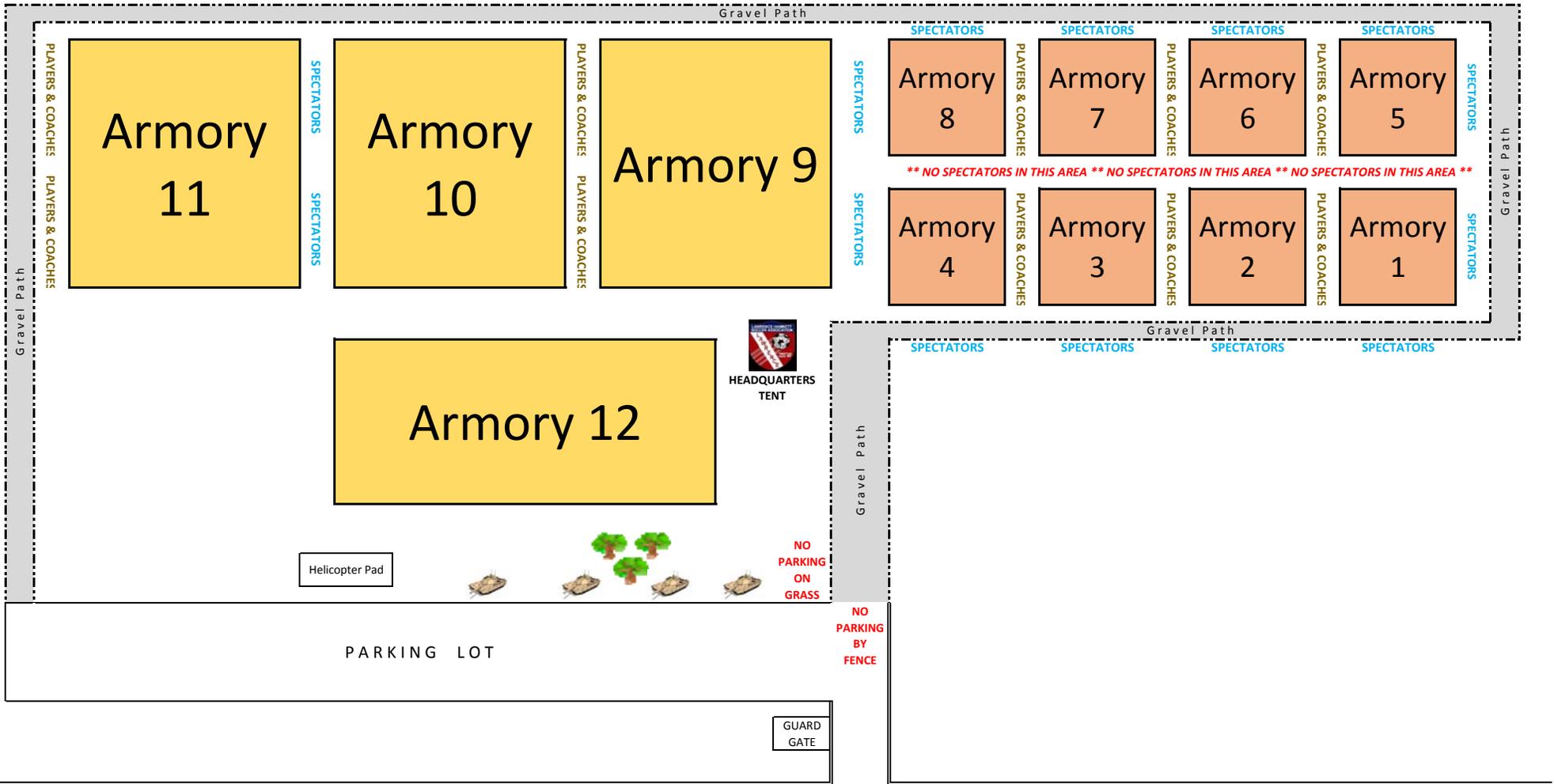
If you see lightning or hear thunder **DURING** a game, then blow your whistle, and stop the game. Unless Lawrence Hamnett indicates otherwise, the game will end immediately and NOT continue. Players, coaches, and fans should return to their cars. Subsequent games may or may not be canceled depending on the forecast. If you see lightning or hear thunder **BEFORE** a game, then wait 30 minutes, away from the field, before starting the game. If the start is delayed 30 minutes beyond the originally scheduled **kickoff time**, then the game will be canceled unless otherwise indicated by Lawrence Hamnett.

**5v5 Games**  
**45 x 26 fields (using 4.5 x 9 ft goals)**



**6v6 Games**  
**55 x 35 fields (using 6.5 x 12 ft goals)**





EGGERTS CROSSING ROAD

WEST PINE APARTMENTS

ADDITIONAL PARKING  
AVAILABLE BEHIND  
SCHOOL

LAWRENCE  
INTERMEDIATE  
SCHOOL

PLAYERS & COACHES

LIS 1

SPECTATORS SPECTATORS

LIS 2

PLAYERS & COACHES

LIS 3

SPECTATORS SPECTATORS

HILL  
HILL  
HILL  
HILL

SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS

LIS 7a

SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS

LIS 7b

SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS

LIS 7c

SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS  
SPECTATORS

LIS 7d

JUNGLE GYM

HEADQUARTERS  
TENT



Zimmer Field

PLAYERS & COACHES

LIS 4

SPECTATORS SPECTATORS

LIS 5

PLAYERS & COACHES

LIS 6

SPECTATORS SPECTATORS

BASKETBALL COURTS  
NO PARKING ON GRASS

SAND

LIS  
PARKING LOT

ZIMMER  
FIELD  
PARKING LOT

EGGERTS CROSSING ROAD

**LAWRENCE HAMNETT SOCCER ASSOCIATION  
POLICIES & PROCEDURES  
RECREATIONAL LEAGUE**

1. Everyone associated with Lawrence Hamnett Soccer Association is bound to the LHS A Model Code of Conduct, including but not limited to the players, coaches, referees, spectators, and parents. Everyone is encouraged to support the players, referees and the coaches in their efforts.

2. League games are played and officiated according to the Laws of the Game published by FIFA and as recommended by United States Youth Soccer, with the following modifications:

Area of Law	Age 5/6	Age 7/8	Age 9/10	Age 11/13	
<b>Field of Play</b>	Bazooka Goals (3.5'W x 2'H) 18 x 30	Youth Goals (9'W x 4.5'H) 26 x 44	Youth Goals (12'W x 6.5'H) 35 x 55	Junior Goals (21'W x 7'H) ~ 45 x 75	
	Most divisions will play small-sided soccer on appropriately sized and marked fields. Field and goal size may vary from dimensions above. The goal of small-sided soccer is to develop soccer skills by increasing the frequency that players make contact with the ball.				
<b>Soccer Ball</b>	Size 3	Size 3	Size 4	Size 4	
<b>Players</b>	3 v 3 no keepers	5 v 5	6 v 6	9 v 9	
<b>Goalkeepers</b>	None	Yes, no punting	Yes, no punting	Yes	
<b>Substitutions</b>	Players may be substituted "on the fly," without ref recognition.		Both teams may sub any number of players when play is stopped ONLY for throw-ins, goals, goal kicks, injuries, and misconduct. Substitutes may not enter the field until recognized by the referee. Each player is entitled to play a minimum of half the game.		
<b>Player Equipment</b>	All players <u>must</u> wear shin guards under socks. Soccer cleats are recommended but not required; no metal spikes, no baseball cleats with a "toe" cleat. No watches, barrettes, or jewelry of any kind, including necklaces, hard or soft bracelets, earrings & posts. Tape over earrings is not permitted. Hard casts must be sufficiently padded and approved by referee. Hair may be tied up with soft bands. Players may wear extra clothing to stay warm so long as it is safe and referee can identify opposing teams.				
<b>Duration of Match</b>	(3) 10-minute periods	15-minute halves	25-minute halves	30-minute halves	
	Games will be divided into equal periods. There will be approximately 5 minutes between halves and 2 minutes between other periods. Periods will restart with a kickoff; teams alternate kickoffs, starting with the team that lost the coin toss. Teams will change ends of field at half-time only.				
<b>Ball in and out of play</b>	Coach Directed	Kick-In (always indirect)	Throw-in (second try given all season)	Throw-in	
<b>Goal Kicks &amp; Saves</b>	N/A	Defending team must not cross the midfield line until goal kick is taken. After saves, keeper may not drop-kick or punt, and distribution may not be intercepted.		No restrictions.	
<b>Offside &amp; "Pass Back"</b>	Not Enforced		Enforced		
	In the younger divisions, referees will not enforce offside infractions and will allow goalkeepers to handle a ball kicked or thrown-in to them by a teammate.				
<b>Fouls &amp; Misconduct</b>	N/A	All fouls result in indirect kicks, except that there WILL be penalty kicks awarded in the 9/10 division. No DELIBERATE heading allowed for 10 & under players.		Both direct-kick fouls and penalty kicks will be called. Trivial incidents or handling that is not deliberate will not be whistled anywhere on the field.	
	No SLIDE tackling at any age. Sliding is OK, but slide tackles will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team for playing in a dangerous manner and may result in a yellow card for misconduct.				
<b>Standings</b>	No		Yes		

### 3. Balanced team play is required as follows:

- Sessions scheduled for the Age 7/8 and Age 5/6 divisions will begin with a practice for the first 25 minutes and then teams will organize to compete in two (Age 7/8) or three (Age 5/6) simultaneous small-sided mini-games against an opposing team that has likewise split. Games must start no later than 25 minutes into session. After each mini game, the away teams will switch fields, ensuring that all players compete against each other during the session.
- For the Age 5/6 division, each team will split into 3 groups when the small-sided games are ready to begin. If both teams have 8 or fewer players present then you will split into 2 groups playing 3v3 with a substitute. In the event that fewer than 3 players are present for a given team after splitting, the team with a greater number of players will lend the other team as many players as necessary to balance the teams.
- For the Age 7/8 division, each team will split in half when the small-sided games are ready to begin. If both teams only have 8 or 9 players then you will still split into two groups but play 4v4 instead of 5v5, if necessary. In the event that fewer than 5 players are present for a given team after splitting, the team with a greater number of players will lend the other team as many players as necessary to balance the teams.
- For Age 9/10 division, games will begin at the scheduled time and there is no warm-up time allocated. Teams wishing to warm-up can plan to arrive early and do so prior to the start of their game. A team will forfeit the game after a 10 minute grace period if they have fewer than 6 players on the field. In the case of a forfeit, teams will play a scrimmage after balancing the squads. A team may not compete with more than a one player advantage.
- For Age 11/13 division, games will begin at the scheduled time and there is no warm-up time allocated. Teams wishing to warm-up can plan to arrive early and do so prior to the start of their game. A team will forfeit the game after a 10 minute grace period if they have fewer than 7 players on the field. In the case of a forfeit, teams will play a scrimmage after balancing the squads. A team may not compete with more than a one player advantage.

### 4. Coaches

- Coaches are encouraged to play the children in all positions and for at least half the game in order to fully develop each player's soccer skills.
- When leading another team by a large margin, the leading coach is responsible for managing the team so as not to "run-up" the score. A 6-goal differential is the **maximum allowed** in a division with standings. Games that end with a goal differential exceeding the maximum, for any reason, will be recorded in the standings as a 1-1 tie.
- During the game, coaches must remain behind the touchline and on their assigned side of the midline, and may not enter the field unless beckoned by the referee. In the 6 & under division coaches are allowed on the field to facilitate play as required. After each game, coaches will line up the teams along the touchline to shake hands.
- Coaches must always have first aid kits and ice at the field during play.
- If a referee identifies misconduct by players or spectators, coaches must assist the referee in properly handling the situation. Cautioned players should be substituted immediately. Ejected players must take no further part in the game, but may, at the coach's discretion, remain on the sideline. Coaches must inform ejected spectators that they are required to leave the field and its immediate surroundings.

### 5. Parents and Spectators

- Spectators are to watch from **designated areas only**. At LIS this is 5 yards behind the goal line that is nearest the parking lot. At the Armory this will always be the opposite side of the field from the coaches and players and at least a yard outside the touchline or 10 yards outside the goal line, and never directly behind a goal.

- Parents will be asked to help with team tasks such as the writing of a brief highlight each weekend, team communications, etc.
- Parents and spectators who violate the LHSA model code of conduct will be asked to leave the field and its immediate surroundings for the duration of the match. The game will be suspended until they depart. They may wait in the parking lot. If they return to the field or refuse to leave, the game will be abandoned and the police notified.

## 6. Referees

- LHSA referees are primarily adolescents who are learning the art and science of refereeing, just as the players are learning to master their soccer skills and tactics. Everyone is expected to encourage the referees just as we encourage the players.
- LHSA assigns a referee coach to monitor and improve the quality of the refereeing with pre-season training and in-season assessments for all referees. Any advice regarding referee behavior should be discussed with the referee coach and not the referee directly.
- Referees should wear dark shirts, shorts, socks, and footwear (preferably all black), and must be equipped with a whistle, watch, coin, pen and paper, and misconduct cards. LHSA typically provides new referees with a black T-shirt, whistle and card pack.
- Referees have the authority to disqualify players, coaches and/or spectators for infractions such as verbal abuse and dissent.
- There will be no referees assigned to the 6 & under division matches; rather the coaches will monitor play. The older division matches will typically be assigned one center referee.

## 7. Injuries

- Referees are trained to immediately stop play when they recognize a player is injured, regardless of whether there was a foul. The injury will supersede the advantage rule or any continuation of play in 8 & under divisions. An injury stoppage will only be delayed in older age groups if there is an immediate scoring opportunity in close proximity to the goal, or clear evidence that the player intends to continue unassisted.
- The coach should not enter the field until beckoned by the referee. After assessing the possible injury, the coach may choose to remove the player. Spectators should avoid entering the field of play unless requested by the referee or coach.

## 8. Awards

- Teams in the 9 year-old and over divisions will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place trophies if the division has 5 or fewer teams. 3<sup>rd</sup> place trophies will be awarded to divisions having at least 6 teams.
- Participation awards will be given to all other teams.
- Points will be awarded as follows: Win=4pts, Draw=2pts, Loss=1pt, Forfeit=0pts. First tiebreaker will be head-to-head competition. Second tiebreaker will be fewest goals allowed. Final tiebreaker will be resolved with kicks from the penalty mark.

## 9. Smoking is prohibited at all Lawrence Hamnett practices, games and events.

*\*updated March 11, 2016*

## Common Referee Scenarios

### Are you ready to make the call?

- (1) As a referee, what do you do if you didn't see who kicked the ball over the touchline or goal line?
  - a. Most refs will tell you that they simply make a best guess, often relying on the body language and subsequent actions of the players involved, or the direction the ball was last traveling. If it is unclear, the ref will usually favor the defenders – so goal kick, or throw-in for the defense. Even when you think you saw it, you can get it wrong. That's OK. A confident, good guess keeps the game flowing and is recommended. You must make a decision so the game can be restarted.
  - b. If you didn't see it, and the players are looking to you to make a call, you might be tempted to restart with a drop-ball near where the ball went out-of-play. While it may seem fair to do it this way, it is not the correct restart, except under high school rules, which differ from FIFA rules.
  
- (2) What do you do if you see a player kick the ball to his own goalkeeper who then picks it up with his hands in his own penalty area?
  - a. For Lawrence Hamnett Recreation Soccer, if you are officiating players age 8 or younger (5v5) then do nothing. We allow the keepers in these younger games to receive kicks and throw-ins directly from their teammates.
  - b. For players age 9 & over (6v6, 9v9), award an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the place where the keeper picked-up the ball, unless he is in his own goal area, in which case you place the ball on the 6-yard line nearest to where the ball was touched. Remember that the defenders must be 8 to 10 yards away (depending on age), but they are allowed to stand on the portion of the goal line between the goal posts, even though that's only 6 yards away.
  - c. REMEMBER, if the player used his head, chest, thigh, or knee rather than his foot to pass the ball, then there is no infraction of the rules. The infraction only applies when the teammate kicks the ball with his foot.
  
- (3) What, if anything, do you do if a goalkeeper who is outside the penalty area receives a throw-in from his teammate, then dribbles into the penalty area, and picks up the ball with his hands?
  - a. Same as #2 above – Do nothing for ages 8 & under (5v5), but for players age 9 & over (6v6, 9v9), restart with an INDIRECT free kick for the opposing team. The keeper may not directly receive a throw-in or kick from a teammate and then subsequently pick-up the ball in his penalty area, even if he dribbled it in himself from outside the penalty area. The other team must touch the ball before he can pick it up.

- (4) What, if anything, do you do if a player quickly takes a free kick and an opposing player who was 3 yards away moves forward to intercept the kick and passes it to a teammate?
- If the opponent moved forward BEFORE (or just as) the kick was taken, then retake the free kick. You should verbally warn the player who intercepted the kick not to encroach, but you have the option to caution her for "failing to respect the required distance on a free kick." Players may not encroach (move forward), even if the person taking the kick rushes the kick.
  - If the opponent responded AFTER the kick was taken, then let play continue. The team rushing the kick has to expect that opponents will respond once the ball is put in play.
- (5) If you feel you made a bad decision earlier in the game, or perhaps failed to call a foul when you should have, how do you make it up to the other team later in the game?
- You make it up by being more alert and making the best possible calls you can. Making another incorrect call to try and fix a previous incorrect call simply conveys to the players that you are a ref that makes bad calls. Worse, players may decide that they will fix the situation by fouling other players, since the ref can't make the right calls.
- (6) If you realize you made a mistake after blowing the whistle and announcing a decision, but before the game has restarted, what must you do?
- Since play hasn't restarted, you can and should make the correction. Players recognize that refs make mistakes, and appreciate it when you can correct yourself. For instance, I have seen refs call offside, only to realize an instant later that they were wrong. Instead of restarting with a free kick, they restarted with a dropped-ball. Likewise, if you signal the incorrect direction for a throw-in, it's OK to correct yourself before the throw-in is taken.
- (7) What must you do if you realize the player who just scored a goal was offside, but you failed to blow the whistle when he received the pass?
- If you are confident the player was guilty of an offside infraction, then you must make the offside call, even if it's late, and disallow the goal. Naturally the call should be made as soon as possible, but it is unacceptable to allow a goal to stand once you realize an attacking player interfered with play while in an offside position. However, once play restarts with a kick-off, it's too late to go back and change your decision. Of course, offside infractions are not enforced for ages 8 & under (5v5).
- (8) Must you call a foul each and every time a player gets kicked, bumped, pushed or held?
- The simple answer is no. While it is good to call all infringements early on in a game to show you are "on the ball," there is always the expectation that players will bump and collide and be guilty of "trifling" or "incidental" fouls that don't have an unfair impact on a player's possession or the flow of the game, and aren't

risking the safety of the players. Strike a balance between keeping the game going and having players getting annoyed because you aren't calling enough fouls.

- b. Learn to differentiate between “careless” fouls, which are accidental but unfair, and “reckless” fouls, which show poor judgment and a disregard for the safety of other players. Careless fouls require just a whistle, but reckless fouls require a whistle and a yellow card for misconduct. Fouls that use “excessive force” are ones that clearly endanger other players, and require both a whistle and a red card.
- (9) Explain a situation where the ball makes contact with a player's hand but you decide not to call a foul for handling the ball.
- a. An attacking player is within 18 yards of the goal and shoots the ball firmly toward the goal. The ball strikes a defender's arm while that defender is about 2 yards away from the kicker and standing with his arms down by his side. The deflected ball goes over the goal line, not between the goal posts. The attacking team yells "hand ball, penalty kick!" However, the ref should award a corner kick because the defender did not "deliberately" handle the ball, but he was the last person to touch it before it went out of play.
  - b. In order to award a foul, the offending player must have deliberately handled the ball, which means she must have purposely positioned herself to handle the ball. If that is not the case, there is no foul, even though the ball struck the hand or arm, even if the player gained an advantage from the contact. This is especially true if the player was instinctively trying to protect herself by covering her face or another sensitive area of the body.
- (10) An attacking player is standing in a position where she is ahead of the ball, no one is next to her, and only the opposing goalkeeper is ahead of her. This player receives the ball directly from her teammate. The ref decides she is not infringing the laws of the game. The player shoots and scores, and the ref allows the goal. Several people are yelling "offside" on the sideline. Is it possible the ref is correct or has he blown it?
- a. There are four possibilities where this is the RIGHT call. A player cannot be guilty of an offside infraction on a (1) throw-in, (2) goal kick, or (3) corner kick, regardless of where she is standing. A player could be standing right by the opposing goalkeeper when her team is taking a goal kick, and she may receive the kick without infringing the rules. Of course, if the goal kick goes to another teammate, who then passes it forward to the player standing in an offside position, then the ref should blow the whistle for an offside infraction.
  - b. The fourth possibility (4) is if the attacking player was standing in her own half of the field when her teammate kicked the ball. A player is NOT in an offside position if she is standing in the half of the field that her team is defending, even if she later receives the ball in the opponent's half of the field.

## REFEREE NOTES

1. **Success hinges on respect and common sense** for players, parents, coaches, officials, yourself and the game. So be professional, show up early, be prepared, do what's expected, stay positive, call that first foul early, but above all follow your heart. Don't be afraid to correct a mistake after you whistle but before you restart. Be willing to explain your call and teach the younger players. Remember, the players are there to kick the ball and hopefully score a goal. They really aren't worried that much about the score, the ref, or anything but getting time on the field to show off what they can do.
2. **Arrive early & prepared:** Proper uniform (all black) & attitude. Know the rules. Remember whistle, watch, coin, cards, and water. Bring pen and paper so you can report results.
3. **Check conditions:** Field, nets, anchored goals, weather. Get game ball from home team.
4. **Player Inspection & Introduction:** Set the tone for everyone, keep pre-game remarks brief as you visually check player equipment. Do not allow jewelry, watches, or hard casts without lots of padding. Look for shin guards. (see sample speech below)
5. **Coach Conference:** Again, set the tone (see sample speech below). Also, review duration of game, number of players and any special rules for the age group.
6. **Sideline assistants:** If available, let them call ball out of play only, not fouls, not offside
7. **Coin Toss:** No coin? Then use 1 finger or 2 behind your back.
8. **Quarters:** Signal for a water break at the midpoint of the halves if necessary (hot days).
9. **GOAL!** Simply point to center spot, and watch players near goal who may act up.
10. **Offside:** As simple as head, body, or feet (not arms) in advance of next-to-last defender and the ball **WHEN** the ball is played by a teammate **AND** player is in the attacking half of the field **AND** is interfering with play (such as receiving the pass), interfering with an opponent (such as blocking keepers view) or gaining advantage (receiving rebound off goal post). **However**, a player is never offside on a goal kick, corner kick, or throw-in. If the player doesn't interfere, don't call it. Be consistent on your calls.
11. **Fouls:** Be decisive with loud whistle. Make it clear which team has the kick both verbally and with outstretched arm (hold it up for awhile). Remember direct=physical, indirect=inappropriate. Establish respect by blowing whistle early in game; let them know you're watching. Use "play on" or "advantage" sparingly at recreation level.
12. **Deliberate Handling:** A player must deliberately move their arm into the path of the ball for a foul to occur. Did the hand play the ball or the ball play the hand? Generally, if a player is trying to receive, block, trap or otherwise control the ball and involves her hand or arm, it is a foul. If a player is simply in the way of a shot, nearby kick, or a strange bounce, it is not a foul, so long as their arm was tucked in to their body. A player protecting themselves from a hard close shot is not deliberately handling the ball.
13. **Cautions:** Try verbal warnings/instructions first. Bring player aside to put on notice.
14. **Ejections:** Violent vs. merely unsportsmanlike. Only when obvious to everyone. Very rare.
15. **Free kicks:** Remember your arm positions, PK procedures, and help younger players setup.
16. **Throw-in:** Remind players to be at least 2 yards away from thrower (4 yards if kicking-in).
17. **Whistle:** Use for fouls, restart after sub, or when unclear to players that ball is out of play.
18. **Dealing with coaches:** 3 Steps - Ask, tell, then dismiss if necessary.
19. **Dealing with parents:** Ask coach or field marshal to handle it.

### *Sample Introduction*

"Hi everyone. I will be your referee for today's game. Just a few things to remember. I am out there to keep the game safe, fun, and fair. I will be doing my best and I expect you to do the same. Please kick the ball not the player. If I whistle, it will most likely be because someone accidentally kicked or pushed another player. If your team commits such a foul, please move ten yards away from where it happened so the other team can restart play with a free kick. There will be no foul language, hitting, or other unsportsmanlike conduct on the field. Let's make sure everyone has the right equipment, and has removed all wristbands and other items that aren't needed for soccer. Good luck, and make your coaches proud. Captains, I'll be calling you into the center of the field momentarily for the coin toss."

### *Coaches Conference*

"My job is to keep the game safe, fun, and fair. We all know that I won't see every foul and that I will likely make a call you don't agree with. All I ask is that you save your comments for after the game." *[Then confirm duration of game, number of players and any special rules for the age group.]*

### *Final Thought*

The key to a safe, enjoyable game is to have a ref who is prepared and who can set the tone on the field. Be that ref. Do what it takes to get your head in the game. You will find that it is fun and rewarding and that most players, coaches, and parents will be quite thankful for your efforts.