



## ANNANDALE BOYS' & GIRLS' CLUB SOCCER RULES

The Annandale Boys' & Girls' Club Recreational Soccer Rules are printed to provide each Commissioner and Coach a set of standards that will be applicable to all participants in the soccer program. Once issued at the beginning of the season the rules will not be altered by the ABGC or any participant during that season. These rules apply to the Recreational League Elementary and Middle School grade levels. Amendments to the rules may be presented and will be incorporated after concurrence from each Soccer Commissioner and then only before the start of a new season.

*Except as otherwise provided, the FIFA "Laws of the Game" shall apply.* Law 1 (Field of Play), Law 2 (Ball), Law 3 (Number of Players), Law 4 (Player's Equipment), Law 6 (Assistant Referees), and Law 7 (Duration of the Game) have been altered for the Recreational League program. Law 5 and Laws 8 through 17 will be adhered to as written.

*Except for Mitey-Mites and Kindergarten, the "offside rule" will be called. In the First Grade League, it should be called in totally obvious situations, and not called if offsides by a step or less.*

1. All players participate fully in the action of the game. **Each player is required to play, at a minimum, two full quarters.** In divisions where halves are played with free substitution, it is the coach's responsibility to ensure that an amount of time equal to one half of the game is given to each player. Playing time above the minimum given to any player is the coach's decision only. ABGC encourages the coaches not to play any of the players four quarters until all the players have played three quarters.

**A player who is late** must still play two quarters if he arrives before the second quarter starts. If he or she arrives in the second or third quarter, he must only play one quarter. It is up to the coach whether or not to play a player who arrives in the fourth quarter.

*Coaches who do not comply with the participation rule will be exposed to possible forfeit of games in question.*

2. A player may lose his right to the minimum playing time if he:

- A. Consistently misses practice without a valid reason.
- B. Consistently disrupts practice sessions.

C. Is extremely abusive to teammates, or to members of another team during the game, and the coach feels that disciplinary action is necessary.

3. When a player is to be disciplined, the opposing coach and the referee must be informed prior to the start of the game. It is advisable that the parents of the player be informed of the necessity for disciplinary action.

4. *All coaches are responsible for checking their players' grade level.* Players in higher grades may play on a lower grade team only with an approved age-related waiver. However, if a coach is willing, a player may play with a higher grade team providing the permission of the Soccer Commissioner is given. In older age groupings, the coach is also responsible for checking the players' ages.

### 5. TEAM COMPOSITION

| GRADE                            | TEAM SIZE       | # ON THE FIELD | TIME                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Mitey Mites                      | 7 - 8 Maximum   | 4 (no goalie)  | 4 - 8 Minute Quarters  |
| Kindergarten                     | 7 - 8 Maximum   | 4 (no goalie)  | 4 - 9 Minute Quarters  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade            | 8 - 10 Maximum  | 5              | 4 - 10 Minute Quarters |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade            | 10 - 12 Maximum | 6              | 4 - 11 Minute Quarters |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade            | 11 - 14 Maximum | 7              | 4 - 12 Minute Quarters |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade            | 12 - 16 Maximum | 8              | 4 - 12 Minute Quarters |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade (Under 11) | 12 - 16 Maximum | 8              | 2 - 30 Min Halves      |

|                                  |                 |    |                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----|-------------------|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade (Under 12) | 12 - 16 Maximum | 8  | 2 - 30 Min Halves |
| 7 - 8 Girls (Under 14)           | 15 - 18 Maximum | 11 | 35 Minute Halves  |
| 7 - 8 Boys (Under 14)            | 15- 18 Maximum  | 11 | 35 Minute Halves  |
| Under - 16 Boys                  | 15- 18 Maximum  | 11 | 40 Minute Halves  |
| Under - 16 Girls                 | 15- 18 Maximum  | 11 | 40 Minute Halves  |
| Under - 19 Boys                  | 15 - 18 Maximum | 11 | 40 Minute Halves  |
| Under - 19 Girls                 | 15 - 18 Maximum | 11 | 40 Minute Halves  |

A team may be assigned more players than the maximum listed with the consent of the coach and the League Commissioner. This will be the exception rather than the rule.

6. Game dates and times may only be changed with the approval of the League Commissioner.

7. *Games may only be cancelled by the League Commissioner.* Games may have to be played under poor weather conditions so tell the players to show up unless you notify them of a cancellation. If you have not been notified of a cancellation, you are required to show up for the scheduled game. The referee is then the only person authorized to cancel the match. Keep in mind that the ABGC spends a lot of time and money to help keep the fields in decent shape for the children to play on. We will generally cancel for bad weather.

*Each League Commissioner will set a time when coaches will be notified of cancellations.*

8. If a game is called by a referee for darkness or weather the following rules apply:

- A. If the game is called during the first or second quarter the game will be replayed in its entirety.
- B. If the game is called during halftime or later, the game will be counted as a complete game.

C. If the teams are playing halves and the game is called during the first half, the game will be replayed in its entirety.

If the game is called during the second half or at halftime, the game will be completed from the second half kickoff with the score each team had at halftime.

9. *A team in Mitey Mites through Grade 4 must field no less than two players under regulation (rule 5) or the game is a forfeit.* If a team plays under regulation the opposing team should play the regulation amount of players unless it too is short of players. If both teams have an insufficient number of players the game is a forfeit for both teams. Coaches may not mutually agree to reschedule a game if one team can be fielded. For the game to be won on forfeit, the winning team must set up on the field to insure the referee that a sufficient number of players are available to play.

10. *The ball sizes to be used by the ABGC League:*

| GRADE                      | SIZE |
|----------------------------|------|
| Mitey Mites/Kindergarten/1 | 3    |
| 2-4                        | 4    |
| 5-6 (Under - 12)           | 4    |
| 7-8 (Under - 14)           | 5    |
| Under - 16                 | 5    |
| Under - 19                 | 5    |
| Adults                     | 5    |

11. Games must start on schedule. *Games not started within a ten minute grace period are subject to forfeit.* When situations occur that a referee is late the ten minute grace period will begin when the referee enters the field of play and attempts to start the game. Subsequent games played after a delay in the starting time will have the grace period begin with the final whistle of the preceding game.

12. *The referee will control the official time.* The clock will stop for injuries and when the referee feels that time is being wasted by either team. At the coin toss, the winner of the toss picks the side of the field that they want to attack, and the other team kicks off.

13. *Substitutions shall be allowed only at the end of each quarter, halftime and for injuries.* For those teams playing two halves with unlimited substitutions, substitutions may be made with the consent of the referee:

- A. Prior to a throw-in in your favor. The opposing team may substitute as well if the team in possession is making a substitution.

- B. Prior to a goal kick by either team.
  - C. After a goal by either team.
  - D. After an injury, by either team, when the referee stops play.
  - E. At halftime.
  - F. After a caution has been issued at the request of the player's coach, for the cautioned player.
14. Any change in goalies must be brought to the attention of the referee. A changing of shirts does not indicate advising the referee and an indirect kick is called. The goalie must wear a different color shirt than either team is wearing.
15. *The halftime break shall be a minimum of five minutes.* The quarter break will be of sufficient time to substitute, no more than two minutes. Teams will change goals at halftime only. Each quarter will begin with a kickoff.
16. The goalkeeper has possession when one or both hands or arms is holding the ball. Holding the ball and pinning it to the ground with any part of the hand is considered possession.
17. Charging or blocking the goalie will result in a warning or, if deliberate and severe, ejection. A Direct Kick is awarded to the defensive team at the point of the foul. If ejected, the player may not return to the field for the rest of the game and his or her team plays one short for the remainder of the game.
18. When a player is ejected, the team will play the remainder of the game with one less player. *The ejected player will be suspended from the league for a minimum of one game, depending on the reasons for the ejection.*
19. **During the game no person is permitted behind the goal or goal lines.** Notify the referee and he or she will stop play and take necessary action.
20. *Teams should occupy opposing sides of the field.* The Home Team will have its choice of which side of the field it prefers.

## REFEREE AUTHORITY

1. Soccer is controlled by a referee who is responsible for interpreting and applying the rules. He may be assisted by two assistant referees. This is usually not the case with the youngest leagues. The referee will ask that someone from each team assist him or her in calling balls over the touchline for throw-ins.
2. *The referee has jurisdiction from the time he or she enters the field until the game is over and both teams have left the field.* The referee's decisions are final. The referee keeps the official time. The games for Mitey Mites and Kindergarten are refereed by the coaches.
3. In the event a referee should fail to show up, the coaches may mutually agree upon one "volunteer official" from available spectators. His or her decisions will be binding upon both teams. The coaches should call the Referee Coordinator with the name and phone number of the "volunteer official". The ABGC will then offer to pay the referee for his or her services.
4. If the referee does not show, coaches are not required to play and a game will be rescheduled by the League Commissioner. No forfeits can be invoked in the event a league assigned referee does not show up.
5. When the referee decides to apply the "advantage clause" he allows play to continue without penalizing an infraction. This is done when stopping the game would give an advantage to the offending team. The Advantage Rule applies to all violations punishable by indirect or direct free kicks. The Advantage Rule is indicated by the referee's verbal "play on".
6. The referee is required to whistle:
  - A. To start play at the beginning of each period.
  - B. To end play at the end of each period.
  - C. For kickoffs following goals.
  - D. Before a penalty kick may be taken.
  - E. To stop play for free kicks (providing there is no advantage clause on the play).
  - F. To restart play after an injury.
  - G. To restart play after a substitution.
7. *Do not argue with the referee.* In cases of foul language or dissent, the referee is empowered to eject a player or coach. For any ejection, the player or coach is suspended for a minimum of one game. In extreme cases, the referee may cancel the game.

Failure to leave the field after an ejection will result in a forfeit of the game. Any player, coach, or spectator hitting or pushing an official will be suspended from the ABGC League for the remainder of the season, at a minimum.

8. *The referee is in charge of the field, the players on the field, and may deny anyone access to the field during play.* The coaches will not enter the field to set his or her team up for a free kick, penalty kick, drop ball or kickoff after a goal. Coaches may enter the field to set up players before the beginning of a period.

9. *If there is an injury*, call it to the referee's attention. *Do not run out on the field.* The referee will stop the game as soon as possible. In case of an apparent serious injury, play will be stopped immediately.

PLEASE BE CAREFUL IN ATTENDING TO INJURIES ON THE FIELD. FOR MOST SOCCER INJURIES, "RICE" IS THE PROPER TREATMENT. REST THE INJURY, ICE THE INJURED PART OF THE BODY, COMPRESS THE INJURY WITH AN ACE BANDAGE OR OTHER WRAP, AND ELEVATE THE INJURED PART ABOVE THE HEART. FOR HEAD INJURIES, DO NOT MOVE THE PLAYER. WHEN IN DOUBT, ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION AND CALL 911 FOR AN AMBULANCE. PLAY WILL NOT START SO TAKE YOUR TIME IN MOVING THE INJURED PLAYER.

## GENERAL RULES

1. If a coach feels there is an error in a technical call by the referee, or an impropriety by the opposing team, he or she may file a protest with the League Commissioner. It must be made known to the referee at the end of the half of play in which the incident occurred. The coach protesting must also notify the opposing coach with the referee present. The *protest must be submitted in writing within 24 hours.* It must be sent to the League Commissioner in care of the ABGC. The League Commissioner will then decide if the protest is technical. If so, the League Commissioner:

- A. May consult with the referee.
- B. May consult with the opposing coach.
- C. May consult with spectators from both teams.
- D. May search the ABGC rules and the FIFA Laws of the game.
- E. May submit the findings to the Soccer Coordinator to submit to three impartial parties for a vote.
- F. Will notify the protesting coach and opposing coach verbally within two weeks and follow with written confirmation.

2. If the League Commissioner decides a protest is not technical in nature, a written response will be provided to the coaches of both teams involved advising them of the reasons. The protest will then go no further in the channels.

3. *Through 4<sup>th</sup> grade there will be one one-hour practice per week.* A scrimmage is a practice. Older teams may practice twice per week.

4. There are many teams, many leagues, and only a few fields. At any practice you are entitled to one-third of a field. *You will receive a field from ABGC at the coaches' meeting or by e-mail before the coaches' meeting.* Please check that any other team on the field at the same time is from the ABGC. We have permits for the fields at certain times. Always carry the ABGC practice field form. Make sure only our club is using them at these times. To help protect our players' bodies, as well as the mower blades and tires, please have the players on your team walk their practice and game field at least once a season to remove rocks, sticks, tape, and string. The Park Authority, School Grounds Division, and ABGC have limited budgets. If we all work together, all the fields will be improved and maintained. If a field is in really bad shape, making it unsafe for the physical education classes as well as after school use, call the Principal of the school. Ask her or him to write up a work order to redo the field, goalmouth, or whatever. The Grounds Division will schedule work on the field at different times of the year so we can rotate the fields. You should also notify your Commissioner. Please do your warmups in grassy areas on the side of the field or outside the field. Most fields now have portable goals, which has taken us over 5 years to implement. Goals should be locked up after practices or games. If your practice field has portable goals, please move them away from the middle of the goalmouth and train sideways. Do not practice on the field on rainy days, and do not use the goalmouth area if at all possible, especially when the field is wet. Cancel your practice if there is bad weather, go off to the side or on the blacktop. Ruining a field in bad weather may result in the ABGC losing the field for future seasons. If you are not sure if a field is playable, call the County Inclement Weather line at 703-324-5264. The County decides individual park or school closings or entire county facility closings. The ABGC Inclement weather line is 703-642-9581, and will be used primarily on weekends. If you see other clubs using any field, whether we have the permit or not, on rainy days, please call the police, the ABGC, School Security at 703-764-2453, and the Fairfax County Department of Recreation at 703-324-5533 to report it. This will help keep the fields in better shape, and result in ABGC receiving more fields in the future. Also, if you see a field close to the majority of your team, and it is not being used, call and we will request the permit be given to us because the other club doesn't use it enough.

5. The Soccer Coordinator should be given your practice schedule. Information on a field can then be centrally held at the ABGC office and other coaches can easily find practice space for rained out practices or scrimmage partners. The Commissioner will provide a roster for each team to the ABGC office by the first game. **The County must have this exactly to assign the fields each season. A player must be on the roster in order to play.**

6. *Minor coaching from the sideline is permitted.* Coaches must refrain from shouting at players on the opposing team and should also try not to shout at their own players. Under no circumstances will mechanical or electrical voice amplifiers be allowed during games.

7. The score of a forfeited game is 1 - 0.

8. *The coach of the winning team is to call his or her League Commissioner with the score.* The League Commissioner will keep the standings. 3 points are awarded for a win, 1 point for a tie, and no points for a loss. There is no overtime.

9. Trophies are awarded to the League Champion in the Third and Fourth grade Leagues. In the older Suburban Friendship League Divisions, trophies will be awarded by the SFL. Second place trophies are awarded for ABGC Grades 3 & 4 if they have at least 8 teams in their division. If there is a tie for first, 2 sets of trophies will be distributed. Everyone receives a certificate of participation and Mitey Mites and Kindergarteners receive a patch and a T-shirt.

10. Returning players have priority. They are guaranteed spots on their previous team until that team is filled. Coaches should make sure to contact their players from the previous season and remind them to sign up early.

## GAME NOTES

1. *The Field of Play includes the touchlines and the goal lines.* The ball is in play until it crosses completely over the lines and the referee blows his or her whistle. The dimensions of the field are smaller for the younger age groups. The field is much shorter and narrower for Mitey-Mites through Grade 4. MM and K play on fields approximately 30 yards x 20 yards. Grades 1-2 play on fields about 50 yards long x 30 yards wide. The goals are 4'x6' for the Mitey-Mites through Kindergarten, and Grades 1-2 play with a 6 1/2'x12' goal and use goalkeepers. Grades 3-4 play, generally, on 6 1/2'x18 1/2' goals. The penalty area is normally eighteen yards from the goal line by forty-four yards across. *In the Grade 1 through Grade 2 Leagues, the penalty area is only 12 yards out from the goal line by 28 yards. The penalty spot is only 9 yards for the Grade 1 and Grade 2 Leagues, 10 yards for the Grades 3-4 League, and U11 & U12 Girls with a 14 yard penalty area, and the regulation 12 yards for Grades 7 - 12. The Center Circle for the Grades 1 through 2 is only an 18 foot radius, and Grades 3-4(and U11 Girls) play on a 24 foot radius from the center spot.* All other leagues play with a regulation 10 yard radius (30 feet) for the center circle. The arc from the penalty spot is also 18 feet for Grades 1-2, and 24 feet for Grades 3-4 Leagues, and 30 feet for all other leagues.

2. When the ball leaves the field on either touchline, the team other than the last one to touch the ball has a throw-in. *The throw-in is taken where the ball went out and the player doing it must be on or behind the touchline. At the time of the release of the ball, both hands and the ball must be brought over the head in a straight line and both feet must be touching the ground. Continuous play is used in Mighty Mite and Kindergarten leagues.*

3. When a foul is whistled, the spot for the free kick is directed by the referee. *A Direct Kick may be scored directly from the kick. A Penalty kick is a direct kick by the attacking team inside the penalty area. The goalkeeper may move laterally along the goal line before the kick is taken. An Indirect Kick may not score until the ball is touched by another player. The defense must be at least 10 yards from the kick for both types.* If an indirect free kick is taken within 10 yards of the defending team's goal, the defending players may be on the goal line between the goal posts.

### A Direct Free Kick is awarded for the following offenses:

- A. A player kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
- B. A player trips an opponent.
- C. A player jumps at an opponent.
- D. Charging a player from behind unless being obstructed.
- E. A player Charges in a violent or dangerous manner.
- F. A player strikes or attempts to strike an opponent.
- G. A player holds an opponent.
- H. A player handles the ball intentionally. Hand ball includes the whole arm up to the shoulder blade.
- I. A player pushes an opponent.

**An Indirect Free Kick is awarded for the following offenses:**

A. A player plays in a dangerous manner. This includes a high kick, low header, and playing the ball between both feet while on the ground, and attempting to kick the ball while held by the goalkeeper.

B. A player charging fairly when the ball is not within playing distance.

C. A player intentionally obstructs an opponent.

D. A player charges the goalkeeper except when he has passed outside his goal area.

E. The goalkeeper attempts to hold up the game by wasting time with the ball in his hand more than 6 seconds.

F. The goalkeeper picks up the ball passed to him by a teammate's foot or from a throw-in.

4. *A player is declared offside if he or she is nearer the opponent's goal line than the ball at the moment the ball is passed forward towards him or her.* A player cannot be ruled offside if in his or her own half of the field, or when there are two opponents equal to or nearer to the goal line than he or she is, or in a case where the ball was last touched by an opponent or was played by him.

There are no offsides on a corner kick, goal kick, throw-in, or on a drop ball.

5. *A Goal Kick may be taken anywhere within the goal area, on either side of the goal, and a goal may be scored directly from a goal kick.*

6. A Kick-off is a direct kick, which may be scored from the kick-off. The kick-off must still travel forward, but must only be touched. The only other kick which must go forward is the penalty kick.

7. All direct and indirect kicks are in play once they have been touched.

8. The goalie may only pick up passes made back to him or her if done with the head or upper body. Passes made back to the goalie by foot or leg, and throw-ins, may not be picked up. The goalie must use his or her feet as other field players.

**NO TEAM IS TO WEAR ANY PART OF ITS UNIFORM ADVERTISING ANOTHER SPORTS ORGANIZATION.  
SCHOOL SHIRTS ARE ALLOWED TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOL AND NEIGHBORHOOD TEAMS AT THE MM  
THROUGH GRADE 4 LEAGUES.**