

AREA 8A INTERPLAY GUIDELINES (6U – 19U)

Purpose and Scope

To establish a formal standardized system of rules for Regional teams participating in inter-regional play within Area A. Revisions shall be made to this document as needed and will be noted in Section 15.

1. TEAM DEFINITION

Teams shall be composed of registered AYSO players in the Region represented. Official AYSO age divisions shall apply. Mixed age divisions (e.g. 16U/19U) shall play in the oldest division represented.

Teams playing within a girl's division will be composed entirely of female players. Coed teams will play in the boy's division.

2. THE FIELD

Regions should provide an appropriately sized field for interplay games according to the following:

Age	Field Size	Goal Size
6U	25 yards x 15 yards	4' x 6'
8U	35 yards x 25 yards	4' x 6'
10U	60 yards x 40 yards	6' x 18'
12U	80 yards x 50 yards	7' x 21'
14U – 19U	100-120 yards x 50-75 yards	8' x 24'

a. Field Markings

Field and area markings as noted in the Laws of the Game or adjusted for small-sided games.

b. Technical Area

Unless otherwise marked by lines, the team (Technical Area) shall be ten (10) yards from either side of the halfway line and one (1) yard back from the touch line. Coaches shall remain in the Technical Area.

c. Spectator Area

All spectators are to remain on the side opposite the teams, between the penalty areas and a minimum of one (1) yard from the touchline. No spectator is allowed behind the goal line unless approved by the referee.

3. THE BALL

The standard size ball for each division shall be according to the table below:

Division	Size of Ball
6U-8U	SIZE 3
10U-12U	SIZE 4
14U-19U	SIZE 5

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The home team shall provide the match ball for each game. The Referee shall determine the suitability and safety of the match ball.

4. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

a. Maximum Number of Players

The standard maximum number of players on the field during games shall be according to the below table:

Age	Number of Players
6U	4v4
8U	4v4
10U	7v7
12U	9v9
14U - 19U	11v11

b. Minimum Number of Players

The minimum number of players in the 12U division and up shall be seven (7) for a legal match. For the 10U division the minimum number of players shall be five (5)

c. Reduce to Equate

When either team has less than the standard maximum number, reducing from one team to equate or sharing players is highly recommended and encouraged. If the full team decides to share players, for instance, whoever is sitting out could play with the other team for that quarter or half. Coaches should carry extra jerseys, pennies, or t-shirts of their team's colors to accommodate this process. All kids get more playing time this way and should not affect the full team coach's plan.

If the full team's players would prefer not to play with the other team, it is highly encouraged that the full team would then reduce to be equal with the other team, given that the reduction does not impact each player's guaranteed 50% playing time.

Both head coaches and the referee will determine the number of players by agreement before the coin toss.

d. Injury Caveat

If a player is injured, the coach has two options. They can replace the player with another and not put the injured player back in until the next normal substitution time, or they can play short until the injury has been dealt with and send the player back in at a proper stoppage in play with the referee's permission.

5. SUBSTITUTIONS

Matches shall be played using the AYSO system of substitution. The referee will call a break approximately midway through each half; allowing only enough time to complete the substitution process. Under no circumstances will free substitution be allowed in matches involving teams younger than 14U.

Free substitution will be allowed in the 16U and 19U divisions. Monitored free substitution will be followed in the 14U division beginning with the Spring 2024 (MY2023) soccer season. 14U monitored free substitution will require the addition of an independent monitor to track each player's time in and out of each match.

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6. DURATION OF THE GAME

The match shall consist of two (2) halves equally divided for substitution opportunities as noted in paragraph 5, Substitution, above. The length of each half for each division shall be governed according to the following table below:

Age	Length of Halves
6U	10 Minutes
8U	20 Minutes
10U	25 Minutes
12U	30 Minutes
14U	35 Minutes
16U/19U	40 Minutes

7. MATCH SCHEDULES

a. Communication

To avoid confusion and/or miscommunication, the Visiting Team Coach will contact the Home Team Coach to confirm the match time and location no later than the Wednesday prior to the scheduled match.

b. Cancellations

Cancellation of a match for any reason requires notification by the cancelling team's Regional Commissioner to the opposing team's Regional Commissioner, Referee Administrator, and the coach/team contact for the opposing team.

c. Schedule Changes

A change to the published schedule requires notification of the home team's Referee Administrator as soon as known.

8. COACHING

A maximum of two coaches will be allowed per team. All coaches must remain in the coach (team) area. Negative comments and complaints about refereeing shall not be allowed.

The AYSO philosophies of Positive Coaching and Good Sportsmanship should be followed at all times.

9. ROSTERS & REQUIRED PAPERWORK

Coaches shall have in their possession at all games the following documents:

- An official team roster, listing all players currently rostered to the team
- Player registration forms for every player on their roster
- Completed lineup card to be retained by the referee crew during the game

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10. OFFICIATING

It is **always** recommended that the diagonal system of control be used at all times with three referees.

- a. If a region is unable to meet these recommendations, they should attempt to contact the visiting region or Area Referee Administrator for assistance in fulfilling the recommendation.
- b. **Officials will wear proper attire**, including a jersey with patch, shorts, socks, and shoes.

11. MISCONDUCT & DISCIPLINE STANDARDS

a. **General**

Misconduct shall be issued at the discretion of the Center Referee for violations of Fair Play in accordance with the home Regional Referee Administrator. Misconducts shall be forwarded to the Area Referee Administrator.

A caution (yellow card) shall not/cannot warrant that the player cautioned be substituted for a “time out” period.

When a player is sent-off (red card) during a match, that team shall play short the rest of the game. The Center Referee shall file a report of the send-off with the Regional Referee Administrator and the Area Referee Administrator within 24 hours of the match.

b. **Sanctions & Suspension**

Players receiving three (3) yellow cards during a season - fall or spring - shall be suspended for one (1) future match. Players or coaches who receive a red card will serve a suspension of at least one future match, pending review by the Regional Commissioner, Area Director, and Area Referee Administrator. Date(s) of suspension shall be determined by AYSO Executive Members, not by the team coach, and shall be the next available opportunity in the team’s schedule after review and decision. Red cards received in the last game of the season will carry over to Area tournaments.

12. CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

a. **Removal from Play**

If the referee stops play for an apparent head injury, the injured player must be removed from play and cannot return to practice or play that day. The injured player shall be monitored for signs and/or symptoms of a concussion by the team coach. If concussion signs and/or symptoms are observed, the team coach shall notify the player’s parents or guardians.

b. **Return to Play**

Any player removed from play for a head injury who has displayed signs or symptoms of a concussion may not return to practices or matches until they are cleared by a health professional. To document the player’s release to play, the injured player must submit a completed **AYSO Participation (Return to Play) Release** form signed by the player’s parent or guardian as well as a completed **AYSO Concussion Release** form signed by the health care professional.

The above protocol will also be followed if the player suffers an apparent head injury during practice.

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13. WEATHER

If a region cancels a match due to poor weather conditions that could create unsafe playing conditions, the Regional Commissioner of the hosting region must contact the visiting Regional Commissioner and communicate the cancellation as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary travel.

14. PRACTICE TIME GUIDELINES

The frequency and duration of a division's weekly practice session(s) is as stated in the table below:

AGE	LENGTH OF PRACTICE
6U	1 X 60 MIN INCL GAME
8U	1 X 60 MIN PLUS GAME
10U	2 X 60 MIN PLUS GAME
12U	2 X 90 MIN PLUS GAME
14U – 19U	2 X 90 MIN PLUS GAME

15. REVISIONS

Date Revised	Section or Paragraph Revised
11-9-08	Initial release
7-15-09	Addition of number 12. Weather conditions
6-23-10	Additions to numbers 2,3,4, and 6 to include the 10U division. Addition to number 8 to include player registration forms. Addition of 11b. Referee Attire
9-19-14	Team definition. Girls 16/19U division.
11-1-14	Team definition. Girls 16/19U division struck. No male players
8-16-16	Addition of number 13, Concussion Protocol.
8-7-17	Updated to reflect new US Soccer Player Development Initiatives
3-15-19	Clarifications
2-16-2020	Practice time guideline
8-7-2023	Updated Substitution section to include 14U monitored free substitution as approved by the majority vote of Area 8A's executive members