



Yavapai Soccer League

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COACH HANDBOOK

This handbook is provided by Yavapai Soccer League, Inc. (YSL) to help all involved in our League to have a positive and enjoyable soccer experience. By setting forth procedures, operations, attitudes and courtesies to be observed, we promote good sportsmanship among our players, coaches and spectators.

Coaches are expected to read the YSL Handbook before the season starts, and refer to it throughout the season as situations arise. Please also share the Handbook and its contents with your team parents. Coaches and parents are partners with the League in teaching and modeling good sportsmanship. When coaches and parents understand the rules and etiquettes of soccer, our children benefit. Let's work together to make our players' soccer experience one that is positive and fun.



About Yavapai Soccer League . . .

Yavapai Soccer League, Inc. is a non-profit educational organization run by local volunteers. We serve youth ages 3 to 18, from Prescott Valley to Prescott to Chino Valley to Dewey to Cordes Junction. Our growing League offers a variety of programs for players and parents to learn and enjoy the game of soccer:

Recreation League fields boys and girls teams in ages pee-pee through U19 for play in the Fall and opportunities for tournament play after the Recreation Season.

Select Teams offer an advanced level of play and travel in leagues and tournaments throughout the year.

The Referee Certification and Youth Referee Program offers certification and paid game refereeing during the Recreation season, and focuses on continuing education and retention.

The Yavapai Cup is hosted by Yavapai Soccer League and attracts teams from Arizona and neighboring states, as well as local Recreation and Select teams.



Yavapai Soccer League is proud to be affiliated with the Arizona Youth Soccer Association (AYSA), US Youth Soccer, and the United States Soccer Federation (USSF). US Youth Soccer offers increasingly competitive soccer opportunities through participation in the youth National Championship and Olympic Development Program. Yavapai Soccer League's rules and regulations come from these associations as they are applied nationwide to all involved with USSF soccer programs and leagues.



Philosophies

Yavapai Soccer League strives to teach children the game and spirit of soccer, while stressing skill building, sportsmanship and safety. Coaches and parents are a team in this effort, and parental support of the children, coach and League are key to making your child's soccer experience a positive one.

To understand the contents of this Handbook, you should always be aware of our motto:



“Kids Come First”

YSL asks you to support this theme by recognizing the value of developing youngsters in:

- * learning the game
- * building skills
- * building character
- * acquiring team spirit
- * gaining personal confidence and pride
- * setting objectives and striving toward them

Although our teams play in a Recreation league where all children play regardless of ability, each game is still inherently competitive. Competition is natural. Competition builds team spirit and provides goals to work towards. And as in any competition, there is a “winner” and a “loser” based on the score of the game. YSL encourages coaches to keep this part of the game in perspective. If “winning the game” is **not** the focus of your coaching effort, your kids will be winners no matter what the score.

The winning of games should not be viewed as a measure of success for your players or yourself.

The winning of games should not be more important than building skills, team spirit or individual character.

Focus instead on praising each child for giving their best effort. Remember that a team reflects the attitude and amount of effort put forth by its coach – win or lose, your players are taking steps toward learning and loving the game of soccer. Praise, encourage and promote fun.



Players Code



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

Our soccer league is for the kids – strive to put them first in all you do. Help them to learn the game and the value of good sportsmanship while having fun.

The Game for All Kids !



Things Coaches Need To Know!

Game Scores – No game scores will be kept in PeeWee through U8.

Ties – All ties will stand in all regular season games in all age groups.

Forfeiture – If a team does not have the required number of players on the field at game time, the game may be played with one team short of players (must have the minimum number of players allowed for that age group or it is a forfeit). Or, at the discretion of the referee and both coaches, the game may be played with both teams playing short but with an equal number of players on the field.

Substitutions – All substitutions must first be recognized by the center referee. Substitutions must be made from the coaches box at midfield, with the outgoing player leaving the field before the substitute enters. Substitutions may be made only by a team who has possession of the ball after it goes out of bounds over the sidelines (your throw-in). Either team may substitute on a goal kick, but no substitutions are allowed on a corner kick. The referee has the discretion to disallow substitutions in the last two minutes of the game, and to limit substitutions if they become frequent enough to disrupt the flow of the game.

Fouls – Please remember that many infractions are called at the referee's discretion, taking into account whether or not an advantage was gained through the foul and whether or not the player "played the ball." Advantage can be a hard concept to grasp, but it is very important to understanding calls that may – or may not – be made by the referee.

Practices – Please ask your team parents for the courtesy of their prompt arrival to and pickup from practices and games. For the safety of your players, coaches should wait after practice until all players have been picked up.



Inclement Weather – In case of inclement weather for practices: a coach may cancel practice, but must make every effort to notify each player as soon as possible. In case of inclement weather for games: **only the league or referee may postpone or cancel a game**, and only upon inspection of the field conditions at game time. **Teams must report to the field** for their scheduled game time, unless prior notification has been given. For **lightning**

safety it is recommended that someone monitor the weather at the field location and once that monitor observes 30 seconds between seeing the lightning flash and hearing its thunder, all individuals should leave the practice or game facility and seek appropriate shelter. Lightning can jump up to 10 miles out from the associated storm putting you and your team at risk.

Referees

All of Yavapai Soccer League's referees are certified and serve our League as volunteers. We have a large youth referee corps, all fully certified, who carry the same authority as adult referees. The goal of our referees is to be part of teaching our children the game, rules and etiquettes of soccer. A referee's call often involves an explanation to players, who learn from the event and play on. The intent, especially in the younger age groups, is not to punish but to teach. Please encourage your parents and players to look on the referee not as an enemy, but as a partner in developing our children's understanding of the game. They deserve the respect of coaches, players, parents and spectators at all times. Without their service, our League could not exist. Please refer to YSL Rules for more information on treatment of referees and discipline.





Age Division Guidelines

Age Division	Ball Size	Players Per Side	Max Players Per Team	Keeper	Referees	Game Length
Pee Wee	3	3	6	No	No	30 minute game 2 - 15 min. periods, 5 min. half
U6	3	3	7	No	No	40 minute game 2 - 20 min. periods, 5 min. half
U8	3	7	12	Yes	Center	44 minute game 2 - 22 min. periods, 5 min. half
U10	4	8	13	Yes	Center (minimum)	50 minute game 2 -25 min. periods, 5 min. half
U12	4	11	16	Yes	Center + 2 ARs	60 minute game 2 - 30 min. periods, 5 min. half
U13 – U15	5	11	16	Yes	Center + 2 ARs	70 minute game 2 -35 min. periods, 5 min. half
U16 – U18	5	11	16	Yes	Center + 2 ARs	80 minute game 2 -40 min. periods, 5 min. half



* Note 1: To determine age division, check age chart on www.yavapaisoccer.com

** Note 2: Minimum of 7 players to play a game in U9 or above. None for U8 or below

Take the Lead: *Tips for Coaches*

As the coach of a youth soccer team, your role as a leader and teacher is important. Young players look up to you and are influenced by how you handle every situation. That's why it's so important that you follow these suggestions:

- **GUIDE** your players toward improvement through education, practice and encouragement.
- **PLAY** *all* team members in *all* games.
- **TEACH** good sportsmanship among teammates and opponents alike.
- **BE AWARE** of each team member's needs and address them accordingly.
- **COMMUNICATE** your goals, concerns and aspirations for the team to the team's parents.
- **ENCOURAGE** your team to set personal goals – and have a ball achieving them!
- **KEEP YOUR COOL** when dealing with a bad call or opposing opinion.
- **REMEMBER** why you choose to coach youth soccer and always keep those reasons alive.



Conduct – Coaches, Players, Spectators

The following rules will be strictly enforced by the referees in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of Yavapai Soccer...

Coaches and players of both teams (U9 and above) shall **occupy one side of the field.** Parents and spectators shall occupy the opposite side of the field.



Coaching is permitted only within a 10-yard strip along the sideline at midfield (called the technical area), which will be clearly marked (U8 and above).

Substitutions must be made from the half line, taking players off before sending players on. Coaches and/or spectators may not move up and down the sideline with the play, or may not stand at or around the goal box or goal line area.

Coaches, players and spectators (in U9 and above) must remain **a minimum of two yards behind the sideline** at all times to permit the assistant referee access to move with the play.

Good sportsmanship is a major objective both on and off the field. YSL may consider disciplinary action against coaches and teams which have parent, coach or fan behavior problems. Enforcement of the “Good Sportsmanship” rule will be strict, as the League believes that our youth deserve the best sporting environment possible.

YSL encourages players to shake or touch hands with their opponents and the referees after the game. It is good form for coaches to shake hands with each other and the referees. Any foul language or abusive behavior by players, coaches or parents during this post-game period will be considered a cardable offense.

Coaches are not allowed to assign or trade players amongst themselves. All player assignments are made only by the Director of Recreation. Such action may result in suspension of the coaches.



Please do not accept registrations and/or money at the field. Ask parents to contact the Registrar or Director of Recreation.

Give all players a fair and equal opportunity to play the game, regardless of ability. Also give all players a fair and equal opportunity to play different field positions. Consistent lack of attendance at practices, without prior coach approval may affect playing time.



Limit the amount of coaching during games. Give positive encouragement and suggestions, not detailed instructions. Never yell at a player, referee or another coach.

Only properly registered and assigned players may play on or with a team. Each player must be a paid, fully registered member of Yavapai Soccer League to practice with a team, receive a uniform, and play in League games. Illegal players may result in liability to the coaches and the League, and suspension of the player and coach. Please work with YSL to assure players are legitimately those listed on team rosters.

All coaches must submit a volunteer application for background check. For the safety of the youths participating in YSL Soccer, a background check form submission and approval is required for all head coaches. The application must be submitted before coaching any games.



Team Organization

Team Parent. Each coach may recruit a team parent to help with team organization and a snack schedule (if desired – YSL suggests fruit and water at halftime, and perhaps juice and a healthy snack after the game). Teams are responsible for their own trash pickup, and to make sure all team members' balls, equipment, jackets, water bottles, etc. are picked up from the field after each practice and game.



Team Banners, The making of a team banner is optional. Often parents make the banner, or members pitch in to have one professionally made. They are great for team pictures, and displaying team spirit at games.

Opening Ceremony, Teams are encouraged to attend, in uniform the Opening Ceremonies for Yavapai Soccer League, generally set for the first Saturday game at 1:00 p.m. YSL also participates in Yavapai Soccer Night with the College Roughriders game at the Mountain Valley Park Amphitheater in Prescott Valley. YSL players in uniform get in free! Sit as a team, cheer on the Roughriders, and march in the halftime parade! Please watch the website for date and details.

Pictures, Watch the website for more information on the date, time & place for pictures.

Equipment / Safety

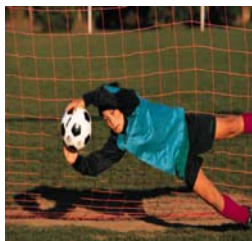
The following FIFA / YSL rules apply to all players and will be enforced by the League and its referees:

Shin guards are required by FIFA / YSL for each player at all practices and games. This rule will be enforced by the League and its referees. Soccer cleats are strongly recommended, but not required. If a baseball shoe is worn, the toe cleat must be removed before the child will be allowed to play.

Uniforms are provided by YSL, and no exceptions will be allowed. Shorts or sweats of matching color only may be worn *under* uniforms. No player may cover the uniform with another shirt, sweatshirt, jacket, etc., and no team or player may affix patches or other insignia to their uniform. Shirts must be tucked into the shorts and socks must be pulled up over the shin guards.

Players should bring their own **water** to all practices and games. A soccer ball of the appropriate size is strongly recommended for each player to bring to practice.

Wearing of **jewelry** of any kind will not be allowed during practices or games.



Goalkeepers must wear a color to distinguish themselves from the field players. A goalie jersey may be provided by YSL for some teams. Goalies may wear long pants, gloves, pads, rubber helmet or soft-billed cap. *Baseball caps are not permitted.*

Players may wear gloves or knee pads with the permission of the referee. Bandannas, sweat bands, hair ties, etc. may be worn when properly secured and do not pose a distraction to others or give an advantage to the wearer.



Guidelines for “Playing Up” & Coach / Player Requests

1. “Playing Up”

- ☹️ Yavapai Soccer League strongly discourages youth players from "playing up" in an older age group.
- ☹️ Playing up is discouraged because: it is not in the best interest of the vast majority of recreational players, causes administrative headaches, is discouraged by the State AYSA league, has potential for causing player injury, and is a potential liability risk for YSL and its volunteers. If a player is determined to play up - then YSL encourages them to try-out for a Select team.
- ☹️ Playing up must be approved by the Director of Recreation and the rationale must be documented and presented to the YSL Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may over-rule any play-up decision.

2. Coach and Team Requests by Parents and Players

- ☹️ Coach requests by players & parents in the Recreational League are only allowed in the Pee-Wee and U6 age groups. YSL will attempt to fulfill coach requests in these younger age groups when possible – however there should be no expectation that a coach request will be met. These requests must be communicated in writing to the Director of Recreation.
- ☹️ YSL will NOT accept coach requests by parents or players in U8 and older age groups for any reason including transportation needs. This rule is because of the extreme difficulty in fulfilling coach requests and the subsequent disappointment.

3. Player Requests by Coaches

- ☹️ YSL strives to balance the competitiveness of teams as much as possible in the Recreational League while providing some team continuity.
- ☹️ To provide some team continuity, returning head coaches in the U8 and higher age groups may request a few players from their previous teams. These players must have previously played on a head coaches' team. A U8 team may have up to 3 coach requests, U10 - up to 4, U12 and higher - up to 5.
- ☹️ The son or daughter of each team's coach and assistant coach will be an assigned player to that team and thus be a part of that team's total player requests.
- ☹️ Coach requests must be submitted in writing to the Director of Recreation by the final regular registration deadline. The Director of Recreation may accept coach requests before or after this deadline at the Director's discretion.
- ☹️ Coaches that wish to retain more players for team continuity are encouraged to discuss transitioning the team to the Select League with the Director of Select.



Conduct Rules and Regulations

The following pages are conduct excerpts from the Yavapai Soccer League (YSL) Rules and Regulations, revised 2008, which govern our youth soccer programs. Please read and refer to these rules throughout the season, and contact the YSL Field Marshall fieldmarshall@YavapaiSoccer.com with any questions or concerns.

RULE 3 - CONDUCT

It is a privilege, not a right, to be a member of the YSL. Any member, player, coach, parent or anyone associated with the YSL, who, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, conducts themselves in a manner which would bring discredit to the YSL or which is not in the best interest of the YSL may receive disciplinary action or suspension from the YSL.

RULE 4 - ACCOUNTABILITY

- A. Each member, and team shall be held primarily accountable for the conduct of persons associated with the member or team, in any manner whatsoever.
- B. During any game sanctioned or scheduled by YSL, a referee may stop the game and eject any spectator from the grounds (field of play and areas surrounding the field and fields near the field upon which the game is being played), if in the opinion of the referee, the offender is guilty of violent conduct, serious foul play, or the use of foul or abusive language, or if the conduct is deemed to be interference by the offender as designated in FIFA Laws of the Game (link available on the Yavapai Soccer website).
- C. Coaches and other team officials shall be subject to all rules pertaining to misconduct contained herein, including cautions, ejections and standard suspensions. Any other individual who may be reasonably construed as being associated with a team, such as relatives and spectators, shall also be subject to the jurisdiction and authority of the League. Any coach or team official shall be held responsible for the actions of any individual(s) at any match that, in the opinion of the referee, is a supporter of that team.
- D. All red cards or ejections shall result in a minimum one game suspension. Referees' decisions are final and may not be overturned unless a technical error has been made by said referee.
- E. At no time shall drinking of alcoholic beverages be permitted at any game or practice sanctioned or scheduled by YSL.

RULE 5 - GRIEVANCES, PROTESTS & APPEALS

Any hearing of a protest, appeal, allegations of misconduct or grievance must be the result of a written cause of action including the signature of the party (ies) requesting the action. No hearing or other administrative action shall result from circumstances of charges that are only communicated verbally or by email. Proper documentation of all Protest, Appeal, and Disciplinary Hearing matters must be maintained. All actions taken must be in accordance with the procedures and time frames set forth in YSL Rules.

1. As a Level 1 Authority, YSL shall hear initial protests, appeals and allegations of misconduct arising from events within its jurisdiction. These matters shall be GAME RELATED COMPLAINTS only or complaints referred to them by AYSA.

**RULE 6 - CENSURE AND SUSPENSION**

- A. When any person assaults or abuses an official, jurisdiction shall vest immediately with the YSL Board of Directors.

An "official", for the sole purpose of this specific YSL regulation, shall be defined as the referee, official linesman, referee assignor(s), referee administrator, player, coach, team administrator, tournament director(s), tournament staff or any officer or member of the Board of Directors, AYSA or its member leagues and clubs. Misconduct towards officials may occur before, during and after the match, including travel to and from the match.

"Assault" shall be defined as an intentional act of physical violence upon an official and shall include, but not be limited to, hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting at, or on, grabbing or bodily running into an official, kicking or throwing any object that could inflict injury, damaging an official's uniform, equipment or personal property.

"Verbal Abuse shall be defined as a verbal statement which implies or threatens physical harm to an official or the official's property.

"Physical Abuse" shall be defined as, but not limited to, using foul or abusive language toward the official, threatening the official with remarks that carry implied or direct threat of physical harm, and spewing a beverage on an official or his property.

"Suspension" shall be defined as a complete cessation of any and all affiliated activities (directly and indirectly). All benefits of membership are removed. Suspension from an affiliated organization (club, league, US Club Soccer, US Youth Soccer, AYSA) is suspension from them all. When suspended, a member may not play for or practice with any team; may not coach or in any way assist in the instruction, training or management of a team or any of its players; may not hold any official position of responsibility within any affiliated organization.

- B. It shall be mandatory upon the Board of Directors of YSL to execute the provisions of this regulation within thirty (30) days of notification of the offense.
- C. Penalties shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
1. Assault against a referee or assistant referee or any other adult reasonably construed to be an official as stated above.
 - a. For a minor or slight touching of the referee or the referee's uniform or personal property, suspension at least three months from the time of the assault.
 - b. For other assaults, suspension at least six months from the time of the assault.
 - c. If there is serious injury, a five year minimum suspension or more is warranted.
 - d. Verbal Abuse - an automatic suspension of at least three scheduled matches.
 - e. Physical Abuse - an automatic suspension of at least three scheduled matches.
 - f. When the official involved is a youth of age to play in this Association, the minimum penalties shall be three times greater than a, b and c, above.

***THANK YOU PARENTS,
PLAYERS & VOLUNTEERS!***