

# **Middle School Soccer Rules and Expectations**

## **Players and equipment**

11 players per team on the field. (10 field players and 1 goalkeeper)

No limit to how many players you can carry on each team.

Size 5 Soccer Ball will be used.

Legal soccer shoes-No metal spikes. No cleat at the toe of shoe, tennis shoes OK.

Shin Guards are mandatory- Players cannot play or practice without shin guards.

Socks must COVER the shin guards. No exposed shin guards allowed.

## **Unsafe Objects NOT to be allowed**

Jewelry on fingers, ears or hair. No hair beads.

Necklaces not allowed.

Pierced earrings not allowed.

Any other item determined to be dangerous by the referee.

## **Game Day Expectations**

Soccer fields should be clearly marked with paint visible for players and referees.

Goals with Nets are required. Goals must be fastened with spikes or sandbags.

Corner flags should be used.

All players should be in a similar uniform. Jerseys with numbers should be used if possible.

Have fields set up prior to opponents' arrival.

## **Game Length**

Games will be two 25-minute halves                      5-minute halftime break.

**If games are tied after regulation, please go straight to penalty kicks to decide the match.**

## **Starts and Restarts**

The restarts include throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks. A kickoff is done at the beginning of each half and after a goal is scored. The player who takes the kickoff may not touch the ball again until another player on the field touches it. The

kickoff may go either forward or backwards. Teams will switch the direction they are attacking to begin the second half.

### Throw-in

A throw-in is awarded to the team that DID NOT last touch the ball before completely crossing the touch lines (side lines). The entire ball must cross the line to be considered out of bounds. A ball on the line is considered still in play. A throw-in is when a player throws the ball back onto the field using both hands, taking the ball directly back over the head. Both feet must maintain contact with the ground when the ball is released. The player throwing the ball in may not touch the ball once they throw it in until another player on the field has touched it.

### Goal Kick

A goal kick shall be awarded if the offensive team last touches the ball before crossing the end line. The defensive team is awarded the goal kick. Any player on the defensive team can take the goal kick. The goal kick NO longer needs to clear the 18-yard box. The opponents must be outside the 18-yard box until the ball is put in play.

### Corner Kick

If the defensive team last touches the ball before crossing the end line a corner kick shall be awarded. The corner kick will be taken from the designated corner kick flag on the side which the ball went out of bounds. There is an arc in each corner and the ball must be kicked from the ground inside the arc. The player taking the corner kick may not touch the ball again until another player on the field has touched it.

### Substitutions

Teams will have free substitutions on their own throw-ins, goal kicks and after a goal is scored. NO substitutions are allowed on corner kicks or indirect/direct free kicks. If the opposing team is taking a throw-in and they are not substituting, then a team may not substitute. If the opposing team is making a throw-in and wants to substitute, then both teams can substitute.

## **Free Kicks**

Direct Free Kick (DFK) - A free kick that can score a goal directly from the kick without the ball having to touch another player on the field.

Indirect Free Kick (IFK) – A free kick that must touch another player on the field before entering the net for a score to occur. If a player kicks the ball directly into the opposing net on an IFK without another player touching the ball, then a goal kick is awarded to the opposing team.

Penalty Kick (PK) – A free kick that is taken from the penalty spot (which only the goalkeeper is allowed to defend), awarded to the attacking team after a foul a foul within the penalty area by an opponent.

## **Hand Ball**

A handball occurs when, in the referee's judgement, a player (other than the goalkeeper) intentionally plays the ball with any part of their hand or arm. A DFK is awarded when a hand ball is committed. Incidental contact with hand or arm should not be called.

## **Injuries**

Play should be stopped immediately when an injury occurs. Let the coaches treat their players. To restart after an injury, the referee will use a drop ball at the point of where the ball was when play was stopped. One player from each team will face each other and the referee will drop the ball between them. The ball is in play once it hits the ground.

## **Offside**

An offside call will be made if an attacking player is in an offside position when the ball is played to them by a teammate. For an offside position to occur all three conditions must occur.

1. The offensive player must be in the offensive half of the field AND
2. The offensive player must be closer to the opponent's goal line than the ball AND
3. The offensive player must be closer to the opponent's goal line than the last defender. (other than the goalkeeper)

For an offside penalty to be called, all the above must be true and the player in the offside position must **GAIN AN ADVANTAGE** by being in the offside position **when the ball is played** to them by a teammate.

### **WEATHER**

Soccer may be played in the rain. If there is lightning, then players must leave the field and the game will be postponed.

### **Final Thoughts**

Please put sportsmanship a priority. The referee's call is final. They will have authority over the game. Please be sure that all coaches, players and parents are providing encouragement throughout this process.