

## **PART 5 LEAGUE PLAYING RULES**

The basic rules of play for the Greater Cincinnati Soccer League, Inc. (GCSL) are covered under FIFA, USSF, US Youth Soccer and OSYSA rules of play. The following cover the specifics of play for GCSL.

### **SECTION I - LEAGUE OPERATIONAL RULES**

#### **A. League Structure**

1. Each spring and fall league will operate both boys and girls divisions. Boys cannot be rostered on girls teams and girls cannot be rostered on boys teams.
2. If a sufficient number of teams enter, the league shall operate different playing levels of competition divisions within each age group. They shall be First Division, Second Division, Third Division, etc. GCSL will operate as many divisions as necessary to support the number of teams entered by the members.
3. Leagues will operate in single year age groups. In the event insufficient teams are available to form a single year league, teams may be grouped in two-year brackets (which will follow US Youth Soccer practice of under 14, under 16, etc. if at all possible).
4. No less than six (6) teams will be placed in the First Division in U-11 and older age groups; eight teams in First Division of younger age groups. For other divisions of each age group, the objective is to have eight(8) teams. However, depending upon the number of teams, the lesser competitive divisions can have fewer than eight teams, but no division shall have less than four (4) teams. The Boys or Girls Director may accept a team(s) after the entry deadline if necessary to complete the number of teams for any level or to replace a team that has withdrawn.
5. The number of games each team will play during the season will depend upon the number of teams in its competitive bracket.
6. Each team will be placed in a division within their proper age (unless approved for playing up) based on their ability, their league results from their previous season and information provided by their member. Before a new team is placed in a division, each existing team will be assigned to a competitive division based on its ability. Each new team will be placed based on its ability (based on documentation provided to the Boys/Girls Director(s) and reviewed by the Operations Committee). However, no team will be moved down to make room in that bracket. Instead, that division will be expanded. The following season, any such expanded division will return to 6 or 8 teams, as is appropriate
7. At the conclusion of each playing season, the last place First Division team will be relegated to Second Division and the first place Second Division team promoted to First. The Operations Committee may consider the competitiveness of the First Division teams not finishing last and Second Division teams not finishing first to determine if any of these teams should be relegated and promoted. In all other divisions, teams that finish in first and second place will be moved to the next higher competitive division the following season and the last two placed teams to the next lower competitive division. In the event more than two teams tie for either first or second place, the tie-breaker system, see III.B., shall be used to determine the first and/or second place team. In any division where there are more than eight teams, those that finish in seventh place or lower will be moved to the next lower competitive division. For example, in a nine team Second Division, three teams will move to Third Division which will have the affect of moving three teams

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from each of the next eight team lesser competitive divisions.

8. A team may request it be permitted to play in an older age group. The decision will be based upon the team's ability as outlined above, and is subject to the approval of the Operations Committee. Any such request must be accompanied by letter from the team's club President and Director of Coaching in support of thereof. A team that is moved up will be treated as a new team in regard to placement in a bracket in the older age group.

9. Once a team elects the play up option and is placed in the older age group, future placement (if the team elects to remain in higher age group) will be based on the appropriate rules and the results the team achieves in higher age group.

10. Clubs will be advised by email of team assignments within each age group and playing level six (6) weeks prior to the start of the season. Clubs may appeal any placement that does not conform to the rules contained herein. Appeals must be filed in writing/e-mail with the Boys/Girls Director within the time determined by the Operations Committee.

11. At least three weeks prior to the start of each season, the Operations Committee will notify each club of the decision of the Boys and Girls Directors with respect to appeals that were filed, if any. Each club will have the right to appeal the decision of the Boys and Girls Director to the Operations Committee by notifying the Executive Director by an e-mail explaining the basis for the appeal. A Club may elect to be involved in any appeal from another and challenge this appeal as it relates to any team from their club who would be impacted by that decision. Temporary (single season, non precedent setting) changes to the bracketing rules may be made with a simple majority approval of the Operations Committee. Decisions made by the Operations Committee for the upcoming season are final; there can be no further appeal within the organization. Teams may not trade their position within a division. If a team demonstrates that its ability has changed and wants to be placed based on its ability, it may not trade its position. If a team wishes to be moved based on its change in ability to a higher or lower division (or changes in age groups), the Operations Committee may approve the move of teams in order to accomplish such request.

12. Two First Divisions will be established each fall for U-9 aged teams. Each club will have the opportunity to have one team placed in one of the First Divisions. Specific bracket assignments will be made by random draw. If less than sixteen teams seek First Division placement, a random draw will be made from other teams interested in playing in a First Division. There will be no Second Division in the fall. The following spring, there will be only one First Division, and the top four teams from each fall First Division will be placed there. The fifth, sixth, and seventh placed teams from each fall First Division will move to Second Division in the spring, along with the first two placed teams from Third Division. The eighth placed fall First Division teams will be placed in Third Division in the spring.

13. US Youth Soccer standard age groups will be used to determine the range of ages for each age group.

14. Each team must play its home matches its club's fields. A club will not be permitted to add a field location that is not within the generally acknowledged geographic area in which the club is based, serves, or already has a field, just to accommodate a team. As an example, a team from Monroe, OH could play through a Kentucky club, but could not have its home matches in Monroe; they would have to be played at the club's "usual" fields. If in doubt, a club should, first, seek input from the Operations Committee concerning the addition of a new field location.

## **B. Team Rules**

1. A team may play in its own age division or, as provided for herein, in an older division provided there is no conflict with US Soccer and Ohio South Youth Soccer Association rules. Playing in an older age group requires the approval of the Operations Committee. A team wishing to play in an older age group, or moving from an older age group back to its true age group, must make such request by e-mail addressed to the Boys or Girls Director, as is appropriate, no later than the date by which preliminary team registration is to be input into the system.

2. A team will be placed in an age division based upon the age of its oldest player. A team playing in the U-11 or younger age group, must have at least half its rostered players with birth dates that are within the range of birth dates. However, if a team, on appeal, is approved to play in an older age group, at least half its roster must include players whose birth dates fall within the range of its true age group.

3. Roster sizes as well as referee fees, half lengths etc are in the table below:

Age	Players	Halves	Ball	Roster Min	Roster Max	Ref	AR	Team
U9/U10	7v7	25min	4	9	14	32	22	38
U11/U12	9v9	30min	4	11	16	40	30	50
U13/U14	11v11	35min	5	13	18	46	36	59
U15/U16	11v11	40min	5	13	22	52	42	68
U17-up	11v11	45min	5	13	22	58	48	77

4. U-16 and older aged teams may roster twenty two (22) players, but no more than eighteen may dress for and play in any game.

5. The roster of a U-13, U-14 or U-15 team is limited to a maximum of 18 players.

6. Players that are not officially rostered cannot participate in Ohio South Youth Soccer Association State Cup/ USYSA competition.

7. From October 1 to the end of a league's fall season, Ohio South Youth Soccer Association does not permit a player to transfer from a team that participated in its fall league. In the spring season, the limitation begins after May 15.

8. There is no limitation on the number of previously rostered players a team may have on its roster at any one time.

**1. HOWEVER: OSYSA LIMITS THE NUMBER, AT ANY ONE TIME, TO FIVE, SO ANY TEAM INTENDING TO PARTICIPATE IN STATE CUP SHOULD NOT, AT ANY ONE TIME, HAVE MORE THAN FIVE.**

2. The GCSL rule benefits those teams that do not participate in State Cup, but a team that, also, participates in a league other than GCSL, or in tournaments needs determine whether carrying more than five previously rostered players will affect its participation in either of those events.

9. A U-09 aged player may not be rostered, or guest, on a U-12 or older team.

10. There is no limitation for a U-12 and younger aged team on the number of rostered players not within the range of birth dates for that specific aged team, except as noted above.

11. U-13 and older teams may have on its roster, in total, no more than four U-10 and/or U-11 aged players.

12. No U-07 or younger aged player may be rostered in GCSL.

### **C. Club/Team Ranking Positions**

GCSL is founded on the principles of open, honest communication among the Clubs and decisions made in the best interests of competitive play. League results of the previous season, and other pertinent information will be used by the Operations Committee to assign teams to a competitive division. Each club may appeal the placement of any of its teams in a specific competitive division. If the appeal documentation is accepted, none of the teams originally placed in the division will be moved, but the division will operate with one additional team for that season. After each season, teams will move to a more or less competitive division, as hereinafter provided. The intention of this playing rule is to prevent a less competitive team from playing in a more competitive division or a more competitive team from playing in a less competitive division. It is the intent of GCSL to provide quality playing opportunities for its members and their teams/players.

### **D. Substitutions**

1. Unlimited substitutions are permitted (unless otherwise stated) at the following times with consent of the Referee:

1. Prior to a throw-in your favor.
2. Prior to a goal kick by either team.
3. After a goal, by either team.
4. After an injury, by either team, when the Referee stops play.
5. At half time.
6. For a cautioned player.

2. Notwithstanding the preceding, the team not in possession of the ball may substitute an unlimited number of players at a throw-in when the team in possession is substituting.

### **All matches will be officiated by the three-man system**

### **F. Scheduling**

1. There is significant disruption to referee scheduling and field usage/availability caused by rain-outs, tournament conflicts and any other reason for rescheduling a game. Accordingly, teams should try to play its games as scheduled; so while all games must be played on the date scheduled (except as noted below), however, the coaches of both teams may change the date of the game to a date that is prior to the originally scheduled date. If this game is not played on or before the originally scheduled date, the game will be forfeited to the team that shows up at the scheduled field, at the scheduled time (or double forfeited if neither team shows up). For any change in a scheduled game, see F. 3., below. Once a game has been rescheduled, such date becomes the scheduled date.

2. Except as provided for in Section II. F.4., games may be rescheduled to be played up to three playing weeks after the scheduled date, as follows:

a. For games not played due to inclement weather, the teams involved are mutually responsible for rescheduling. The home team must enter the code for rain-out (RO) on the web-site rescheduling system on the day it occurs. If the teams involved have not entered the rescheduled time and location within seven days of the rain out, the Boys/Girls Director shall, without regard to the preferences from either team, establish a time and location for the match. The match shall then be played within the following fourteen days.

b. League games that conflict with Ohio South Youth Soccer Association Snickers State Cup games at the rounds when sixteen or fewer teams remain may be rescheduled. If a team is eliminated from State Cup prior to its next scheduled league game, the game cannot be rescheduled. That means a team eliminated from State Cup on Saturday plays its Sunday league game. Rules regarding league notification and rescheduling per above apply.

c. If five (5) or more players from a team are participating in a scheduled Ohio South Olympic Development Team tryout, such team can cancel the league game upon giving the opponent at least five (5) days notice.

d. Sanctioned tournament games that conflict with league games. For each season, the Operations Committee shall determine for which playing weeks games can be rescheduled to a later date due to conflicts with sanctioned tournaments, and will establish the dates by which such games must be played. The tournament team must enter the code for tournament conflict (TP) on the web site rescheduling system. League games conflicting with sanctioned tournament matches after the established dates must be played prior to the scheduled date. It shall be the responsibility of the tournament team to enter the code for this type of conflict (PP) and the name of the tournament on the web site rescheduling system. If a rescheduled date cannot be agreed upon, the tournament team shall notify the appropriate Director at least two weeks prior to the tournament conflict and the appropriate Director shall reschedule the game.

e. In the spring season, games may be rescheduled to a later date if a team experiences a shortage of players due to spring breaks. The Operations Committee will determine each spring for which weekend(s) this rule applies, and by what dates games must be played.

3. If a team is unable to play a game, for any reason, that team must notify its opponent by 8:00 PM on the day that is no less than five (5) days prior to the scheduled game date; for example, if a game was scheduled for Sunday, notice must be given by 8:00 PM on the preceding Tuesday. If notice is given within less than five (5) days, the game must be played, or it shall be forfeited by the team not playing. If forfeited, the forfeiting team, in addition to the forfeit fee provided for in Section 2.D. of the Club Registration and Team Entry Rules, shall pay the entire cost of referees for the game. If necessary, GCSL will pay the Referees and be reimbursed by the forfeiting team's club when it invoices forfeit fees at the end of the applicable playing season. If the game is not played, the home team is responsible to provide notice to its field scheduler, Referee Coordinator, and anyone else within the club who is to be advised when a scheduled game is not to be played.

**NOTE: This paragraph does not allow teams to reschedule games whenever they choose; nor does it supersede any of the above paragraphs ... it merely addresses a team's responsibility to pay**

**Referee fees when it is not going to play its scheduled game, regardless of the reason therefore.**

4. The Operations Committee may allow teams to play more than one week after the end of the season, if, in its discretion, circumstances justify such an extension such as rain outs in the final two weeks of the season.

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## **G. CLUB GUEST PLAYER**

**INTRODUCTION:** A team may use in any league game up to two club guest players. **The use of a club guest player should be facilitated by the club DOC as a tool for furthering a player's development and evaluating his/her ability, and should not be used merely to improve the place in which a team finishes in the standings. Whether guesting on a team in his/her own age, or an older age, a club guest player's ability should be commensurate with the competitiveness of the team for which he/she is guesting. The spirit of permitting guest players is their use should not affect the outcome of the game in a manner different than if the player(s) for whom he/she is guesting had played.**

While a club guest player may also be used when a team is short players due to various reasons, it is not intended for use when the team still has a sufficient number of rostered players available; nor as a means of allowing a club to intentionally roster too few players; nor as a means to avoid rostering new players to replace those who are injured or have left the team. The use of club guest players should be limited, and should not be used in every game, whether for purposes of evaluation, or because the team is continuously short players; and do not forget, the coach's responsibility is to his/her rostered players before to a club guest player. The following are the specific rules that apply:

**NOTE: A COACH, PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME, SHOULD DETERMINE THE TEAM USING THE CLUB GUEST PLAYER IS COMPLYING WITH CLUB GUEST PLAYER RULES. NOTE: A COACH, PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME, SHOULD DETERMINE IF THE TEAM USING THE CLUB GUEST PLAYER IS COMPLYING WITH CLUB GUEST PLAYER RULES. BECAUSE A REFEREE MIGHT NOT BE AWARE OF THESE RULES, BRING A COPY TO EACH MATCH**

1. A team may use in any league game up to two club guest players. A club guest player must be rostered to a team within the club of the team for which he/she is guest playing, must be age appropriate, and the team to which the club guest player is rostered must be playing that season in the GCSL league, MVYSA or Premier divisions of BPYSL.
2. A player rostered to a first division team may not guest play for a team in its own age group that competes in a less competitive division. A player rostered to a First Division team may only guest play on an older team in his/her club that plays in First or Second Division. A player not rostered to a First Division team, can not guest play for a team in any age group that is more than two lesser competitive divisions than the division in which the team to which the club guest player is rostered plays. A player rostered to a BPYSL premier division can only guest play in GCSL Div 1 or 2. A player rostered in MVYSA must follow GCSL rules above, with respect to within 2 divisions.
3. A U8 player may guest on a U8 or U9 team, only
4. A U9 player may guest on a U9, U10 or U11 team, only.
5. In U-14 and younger ages, a player rostered to an older team cannot guest play on a younger team.
6. A club guest player cannot play in more than two games a day, and must have at least the time equivalent of a one game break between games in which he/she plays.
7. A club guest player must honor the commitment to the team to which he/she is rostered, and is not permitted to miss any part of the game of their rostered team in order to guest play.
8. Including club guest players, a team cannot dress more than the maximum number of players that can be rostered in the team's age. A coach cannot tell a rostered player to miss a game in order to use a club guest player.
9. Before the game begins, the coach who is using a club guest player must notify the Referee and opposing coach he/she is doing so, and give the opposing coach a completed Club Guest Player

Information Sheet, which form is available on the Rules Guide link on the GCSL website. In the absence of this form, the player cannot guest. NOTE: Prior to the game means it can be given as late as the time the referee checks passes prior to the beginning of the game; it does not have to be given any sooner but it should be given early enough so the opposing coach can review the Information Sheet and each guest player's pass without delaying the start of the game.

10. No club guest player is permitted to play in any game in which he/she does not have their player pass.
11. The uniform of a club guest player must be the same as the team for whom he/she is guesting.
12. A club guest player receiving a red card in a game in which he/she is guesting will serve the suspension in the next match(es) of the team to which he/she is rostered, and cannot guest play for another team during the period of suspension.

**H. TRY-OUTS.**

OSYSA has passed a tryout rule under Section 18.0 A Player’s right to Choose effective Jan 1, 2018 through October 31, 2018. At the end of that time the rule will be revisited and either approved or changed for the following year. Below is from the OSYSA bylaws:

18.12 To facilitate the opportunities that may be available to players during tryouts, all competitive leagues and programs are prohibited from holding tryouts for teams for the following seasonal year until on or after the following dates:

Age Groups	Dates
U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U18, U19/20	The Tuesday after Memorial Day (5/29/18)
U13, U14, U15, U16, U17	The Monday after Memorial Day (6/4/18)

Before the fall league season concludes, there shall be no try-outs prior to October 24. This rule does not prevent the try-out of an individual player to determine if he/she shall be rostered to a team while a season is in progress. However, having several individual players try-out for the purpose of being added to the team the following season is prohibited.

**SECTION II - GAME RULES**

**A. Official Game**

1. A game shall be considered official after one (1) full half of play (the second half does not have to start). If less than one-half is completed and the game is called, the whole game must be replayed.
2. If a game is called because of gross misconduct, the Conduct Committee will decide the disposition of the game score. A Referee report will be required.
3. A team will wait 10 minutes for its opponent to arrive. If a team fails to appear, it will forfeit the game.

**B. Playing Rules**

1. Each team must bring its US Youth Soccer player passes, a copy of their GCSL Team Roster, League Guest Player Roster form to every game.

2. Player and coach passes (US Youth Soccer) shall be presented to the Referee prior to the start of the game. These passes shall remain in the Referee's possession until the end of the game. If a team, in its entirety, or any one player or coach does not have its player or coach pass(es), each player and coach without a pass shall, on a sheet of paper, write their name, address, birth date and telephone number; each coach shall do the same, except he/she does not have to provide a birth date. Such team's opponent may retain the sheet and ask the Registrar to verify the players and coaches were properly rostered at the time of the game.

3. Team Rosters and League Guest Rosters (if applicable) must be made available to the Referee upon request.
4. The home team gets to wear its primary color jersey that it has identified in the schedule and the visiting team is obligated to wear a jersey whose colors don't conflict; it should not wear something that does. If the home team wears a jersey different from what is noted in the schedule and there is a conflict then it is obligated to change. The Referee's judgment is final as to whether there is a color conflict.
5. Goalkeepers may not be fair charged while holding the ball. The penalty for violation of this rule may be a yellow or red card. Any goal scored by the goalkeeper being knocked into the goal will be disallowed. A Referee may suspend a game for lack or failure of a team's coach(es) to control its parents/ spectators, poor team behavior or other unsportsmanlike circumstances. **NOTE** - each coach is responsible for the behavior of his/her sideline players, parents and fans and a coach can be yellow or red carded for their misbehavior. The suspension shall be reported to the League Conduct Committee, which shall ascertain the facts and decide upon what penalty, if any, should be imposed. Disciplinary action may include, though is not limited to, (a) reprimand; b) forfeiture; (c) recommendation to the Board of trustees of a more severe penalty. **See GCSL By-law XIV concerning mandatory penalties.**
6. A Referee may suspend a game for lack or failure of a team's coach(es) to control its parents/ spectators, poor team behavior or other unsportsmanlike circumstances (Note - each coach is responsible for the behavior of his/her sideline players, parents and fans and a coach can be yellow or red carded for their misbehavior). The suspension shall be reported to the League Conduct Committee, which shall ascertain the facts and decide upon what penalty, if any, should be imposed. Disciplinary action may include, though is not limited to, (a) reprimand; (b) forfeiture; (c) recommendation to the Board of trustees of a more severe penalty. **See GCSL By-law XIV concerning mandatory penalties.**
7. The League Conduct Committee may suspend the appropriate parties immediately pending a hearing of the League Conduct Committee on the matter. It is intended that the League Conduct Committee will act within two (2) weeks of receipt of the written complaint. Any failure to comply with the decision of the League Conduct Committee will be referred to the Operations Committee and, if necessary, to the Board of Governors.
8. The coach of each team that played a game, whether his/her team won, lost, or tied, shall report and record the game scores on the GCSL website no later than the night on the day the game was played. Failure to record the score on the GCSL website will result in the team or teams not reporting the score to be given a loss, and be subject to the same fee as if the team forfeited. In the event that the score reported by the two coaches is different, the coach of each team and the club representative of each team will be emailed reporting the discrepancy in scores. The two Club Representatives and coaches are responsible to determine the reason for the discrepancy and correct the wrong score by the evening following the game. If the discrepancy is not corrected by the following evening, the Boys or Girls Director will be notified of the existence of the discrepancy and will determine the correct score.
9. Forfeits are recorded as two-zero (2-0) win. A forfeit is the decision of the Boys or Girls Director, and may be entered only by him/her. However, if a team is involved in a tie-breaker to determine its place in the standings, see III.B.3.
10. Each team player is required to have a uniform consistent with the Laws of the Game (USSF & FIFA) and, in addition, the team will have identical uniforms for each player with matching jerseys, shorts, and socks with no variations. For inclement weather, warm-up pants may be worn. US Youth Soccer AND GCSL require all players to have proper uniforms and appearance during amatch; therefore, each player must have their jersey tucked in and socks pulled up over their shin guards. Referees will be instructed to check players for proper equipment and appearance. Players not abiding by this ruling will not be allowed to participate in the game.

11. Only coaches on the team's roster are allowed on the side of the field with the team. All other persons must be on the spectator side of the field.
12. Each player must wear shin guards during a match

### **C. Game Officials**

1. The three (3) man FIFA/US Soccer/US Youth Soccer Referee System shall be used in all games in which U-10 and older aged teams are competing.
2. Before the start of the game each team shall pay its share of the Referee fees. The Referee fees are established in the League Rules.
3. If the Referee assigned by the home team fails to appear within 10 minutes after the scheduled start of the game, a certified Referee, appropriate for the age group of the teams playing, and willing to, shall officiate the game. If no Referee is available/willing, the game shall be rescheduled on the visiting team's home field in accordance with the rain-out rule.
4. In the event no one is found to serve as Assistant Referee, the home team will provide a club linesman. A Referee cannot refuse the use of a club linesman, however, a certified Referee, regardless of the person's club affiliation, will always serve as an Assistant Referee prior to using a club linesman. In no event is a two-man Referee system to be used. Penalty for use of a two-man Referee system shall be forfeiture of the match by each team.
5. A Referee or Assistant Referee appointed under the provisions hereof shall be paid the applicable fee provided for in the GCSL fee schedule. A club linesman is not paid.
6. If an Assistant Referee fails to show, and a club linesman is used, each team shares the cost of the Referee and the home team pays the cost of the Assistant Referee. Neither official is paid an amount greater than provided for in the GCSL fee schedule.
7. If neither Assistant Referee shows, and a certified Referee is not found to replace both of them, two club linesmen will be used, and the home team pays the cost of the Referee provided for in the GCSL fee schedule, and not a greater amount.
8. Each coach with a complaint concerning Refereeing is to submit his/her written complaint to his/her Club Representative or his/her Referee Coordinator. The Club's Representative and/or the Referee Coordinator is to discuss this complaint with the other team's Referee Coordinator. If the complaint is not resolved, the coach, Club Representative, or Referee Coordinator may file a written report with the home team's Referee Coordinator and the GCSL Referee Coordinator. All complaints concerning Referees must be put in writing (e-mail acceptable). The GCSL Referee Coordinator is not to be contacted until the procedure above is concluded. In addition, the coach should never phone the GCSL Referee Coordinator.
9. The League Referee Coordinator is to keep a file of all written reports on Referees and determine and record the necessary action with respect to all complaints.

### **D. Inclement Weather/Official Game**

1. Each home team is responsible for notifying their opponents as soon as possible if their fields are closed due to inclement weather.
2. In any of the circumstances outlined below occurs, the Referee should immediately suspend the game:
  - a. If thunder is heard, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter.
  - b. If lightning is seen, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter.
  - c. If a thunderstorm is heard or seen coming or your hair stands on end, the game should be suspended and the fields cleared. Everyone should immediately go to a safe shelter. Do not wait until it rains.
3. If the game official does not immediately suspend the game when any one of the points above has occurred, the head coach from each team can agree that one of the four criteria listed above has occurred and they are to withdraw their teams from the field. If this action is taken, then both coaches must submit a written report to the GCSL Executive Director outlining the circumstances, the facts concerning the

weather conditions at that time, the fact that the two coaches were in agreement and the name of the officials at the game. If an official and one of the coaches do not reach the conclusion to suspend the game and any one of the four points listed above are believed to have occurred, the coach that supported the suspension of the game is to send a written report to their league outlining the facts and the names of the officials.

4. No one should take or retake the field, start or re-start the game until all of the lightning and thunder or other hazardous weather has left the area. Specifically, no one should retake the field for a minimum of 30 minutes after the last lightning is seen or thunder is heard, or the dangerously high winds have passed.
5. If a game is ended due to weather prior to the conclusion of the first half, the game will be re-played in its entirety. If a game is ended after the first half has been completed, the score at the time the game was ended will be the final score.

### **E. Ejections**

1. Any player ejected from a game will receive at least a one game suspension.
2. Any player guilty of fighting with another player on or off the field will be given at least a three game suspension.
3. Any player, coach, assistant coach, manager, or spectator guilty of striking a Referee will be subject to a minimum ten game suspension.
4. The penalty for abusive language toward a Referee by a player, coach, assistant coach, manager, or spectator will be an automatic three game suspension.
5. The Referee shall retain the card of any ejected player and forward the card with an explanation to the Referee Coordinator within 48 hours of the end of the game. The Referee Coordinator shall inform the Executive Director of all red cards.
6. The Referee Coordinator shall review all ejections of players, coaches, assistant coaches, managers, or spectators. If it is believed that a more severe penalty is warranted, the Referee Coordinator shall refer the matter to a hearing by the GCSL Conduct Committee for handling.
7. Anyone ejected from a game has to leave the vicinity of the field on which it is being played and move to a location where the game is not visible.
8. **See Section XIV of the GCSL By-Laws for more specific penalties.**

### **F. 9v9 Playing Rules**

Unless otherwise specified, the rules in use by US Youth Soccer shall apply except as modified herein.

1. The field shall be rectangular and 70-80 yards long and 45-55 yards wide
2. Reduced size fields may have penalty areas that are 14 yards long by 36 yards wide.
3. Full size penalty areas that are 18 yards long by 44 yards wide may also be used.
4. Goals are 7 feet high and 21 feet wide.
5. The maximum number of players on the field at any one time is nine, one of whom is the goalkeeper.
6. Roster sizes are addressed in section B.3. above.
7. Coaches are encouraged to play all players at least 50 % of the total playing time; however, this is not a requirement.
8. A team may not play with less than six players on the field.

### **G. 7v7 Playing Rules**

Unless otherwise specified, the rules in use by US Youth Soccer shall apply except as modified herein.

1. The field shall be rectangular and 55-65 yards long and 35-45 yards wide
2. Reduced size fields may have penalty areas that are 14 yards long by 36 yards wide.
3. Full size penalty areas that are 18 yards long by 44 yards wide may also be used.
4. Goals are 6.5 feet high and 18.5 feet wide.
5. The maximum number of players on the field at any one time is seven, one of whom is the goalkeeper.

6. Roster sizes are addressed in section B.3. above.
7. Coaches are encouraged to play all players at least 50 % of the total playing time; however, this is not a requirement.
8. A team may not play with less than five players on the field.
9. Build Out Line
  - a. Build out line should be equidistant between the penalty area line and halfway line
  - b. Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball into play (punts and drop kicks are not allowed).
  - c. After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal
  - d. The opposing team must also move behind the build out line during a goal kick until the ball is put into play.
  - e. If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the infringement occurred.
  - f. The build out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called. Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the build out line.

### **SECTION III - FINAL STANDINGS**

#### **A. Season Standings**

The final standings will be determined by the following point system:

1. Three (3) points awarded for each win.
2. One (1) point awarded for each tie.
3. No points awarded for a loss.

#### **C. Tie-Breaker System**

1. First place
  - a. If two teams tie for first place on the basis of points, there will not be a play-off; each team will be declared a co-champion, and each team moves to the next higher competitive bracket the following season. There will be no second place team.
  - b. If three, or more teams tie for first place on the basis of points, each will be declared a co-champion, but the tie-breaker beginning with III.B.2.a.2. is used to break the tie and determine which team will not be moved to the more competitive division the following season. The team which does not move is allowed to appeal for placement in the more competitive division.
2. Other than first place
  - a. When two teams tie for other than first place, the following tie-breaker system will be used:
    1. Team with most points earned from the league game(s) played between the two tied teams;
    2. Team with most league wins;
    3. Greatest aggregate net score from league games, calculated by adding the net difference from each game; that is, goals scored minus goals allowed equals net score. For any one game, the net score will not be greater than plus four (4) or minus four (4) goals, except for any game a team forfeits. See III. B. 3.
    4. Least number of actual goals allowed in league play;
    5. Coin toss.
  - b. If more than two teams tie for other than first place, the tie breaker is used to eliminate one team at a time; this means that once one team is eliminated, the process begins again for the remaining teams. As long as more than two teams remain tied, the tie breaker begins at III.B.2.a.2. Once only two teams remain, the tie-breaker begins at III.B.2.a.1. For example, if

three teams tie, the one with least wins would be eliminated. If the three teams have the same number of wins, the one with the least aggregate net score is eliminated, and the two remaining team begin the tie-breaker between themselves at 2.a.1.

3. When more than two teams are tied and the tie-breaker system is used to determine in what position each team places, if any team has won or lost a game by forfeit, in determining aggregate net score (III.B.2.a.3., above), or the least goals allowed (III.B.2.4., above), for any game it a team wins by forfeit, it shall be considered to have scored in the match the greater of (1) two goals, or (2) the average per game of actual goals scored in the games it played, and shall be considered to have given the average per game of actual goals given in the games it played. For any game a team forfeits, it shall be considered to have scored no goals for that game, and considered to have given the greater of (1) two goals, or (2) the average per game of actual goals given in the games it played. For example, in a tie-breaker, if a team that forfeits a match has given twenty one goals in seven games it played, the score of the one forfeited shall be 0-3 for purposes of III.B.2.a.2, and shall be considered to have given twenty four goals (three goals in eight games)

#### **SECTION IV - PROTESTS**

1. A coach who intends to file a protest shall notify the Referee of this intention. The notification shall be made in a courteous manner, on the field at (or by) the conclusion of the game, and must clearly state that the game will be protested. Some reference by the coach to taking further action or making some general comment is not sufficient to qualify as notice of protest. The Referee shall notify the opposing coach a protest will be filed.

2. Only questions relating to the qualifications of competitors or the application of the rules shall be referred to the GCSL Protest Committee. Decisions of the Committee on all matters of protest shall be final.

3. All protests must be documented in writing and postmarked (use of email is acceptable) and received by the GCSL Protest Committee Chairman no more than 48 hours following the game in question. If a protest is submitted by e-mail, the protest fee must be received within the same 48 hours.

4. Each protest when filed with the Protest Chairman must include:

a. Protest fee of \$100.00 (cash or check payable to GCSL).

b. Two (2) copies of the protest giving full particulars of the grounds on which the protest is lodged.

5. The protest fee will be returned if the protest is upheld by the Committee.

6. A protest may not be withdrawn once it is filed.

**NOTE:** The appeal of a penalty imposed by the Referee Coordinator resulting from the issuance of a red card is a matter addressed by the Conduct Committee.