

US YOUTH SOCCER

Revised April 10, 2009

ADDENDUM

MODIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GAME FOR U12

Law 1 The Field of Play dimensions are smaller to accommodate the eight-versus-eight game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of ten- and eleven-year-old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Field Markings: per FIFA with the exception of the center circle, penalty area, penalty mark and penalty arc.

Goals: the goal, 6 x 18 feet, is the same for the U10 and U12 age groups. By using the same size goal for both age groups clubs will have to buy fewer goals. Any goal must be properly anchored to the ground.

Law 2 The Ball: must be a size four. The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, headed, dribbled, caught, thrown and passed.

Law 3 The Number of Players: The eight-a-side game includes the goalkeeper. The smaller number of field players will provide the opportunity for the children to further develop their physical and technical abilities. These are valuable traits for all soccer players to develop. With fewer players on the field each child has an increased number of contacts with the ball and has more actual playing time. Additionally the players will be required to make more decisions and experience repeating game situations frequently. The work rate and involvement of players will be more consistent. While learning both offense and defense, players will become well rounded and will understand more readily the roles and importance of teammates. The smaller field dimensions and number of players on the field of play will require more concentration on transition, which is a vitally important tactical concept for the players to learn.

The minimum number of players to begin a match for preteen players in SSG should be one (1) less than the number required on the field. That is for U12 the minimum will be seven (7) and for U10 the minimum will be five (5). There should not be a minimum for U8 and U6 and clubs,

administrators, coaches and referees should be encouraged to allow players from the team with sufficient numbers to 'loan' a player or two to the team that is short players and then PLAY.

The rationale for substitutions at any stoppage is to give more playing time as noted. Allowing subs at any stoppage is on the same page as FIFA. The only thing that we need remember is that play must be stopped for all substitutions; we can never allow on-the-fly substitution.

Law 6 The Assistant Referees: per FIFA. Use registered referees or club linesmen/women.

Law 7 The Duration of the Match: per FIFA with the exception of the halves being 30 minutes each.

Law 8 The Start and Restart of Play: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

Law 10 Goal Scored: shall conform to FIFA and the sections concerning Winning Team and Competition Rules shall conform to US Youth Soccer guidelines.

Law 12 The rule on the goalkeeper's distribution still allows for the ball to be punted the entire length of the field; it just can not go directly into the opponents' penalty area

Law 13 Free Kicks: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

Law 14 Conform to FIFA with the exceptions that the penalty mark is ten yards from the center of the goal line and those players other than the kicker and defending goalkeeper are at least eight yards from the penalty mark. The distance of eight yards conforms to the radius of the center circle. The distance of ten yards from the center of the goalmouth for the penalty mark fits within the reduced dimensions of the penalty area and is a reasonable distance for the kick.

Law 17 The Corner Kick: per FIFA. The distance the defending players must be away from the ball until it is kicked is the same as the radius of the center circle.

⇒ Roster Size: The recommended minimum roster size is eleven and the maximum recommended roster size is thirteen.

⇒ Playing Time: refer to the Effective Playing Time chart.

ADVANTAGES OF PLAYING SMALL SIDED GAMES

- ❑ More time with the coach
- ❑ Energetic workouts due to playing both offense and defense
- ❑ More efficient use of field space
- ❑ Matches can be played simultaneously across a full size field
- ❑ Children are physically more efficient in smaller space
- ❑ Children are actively involved for a longer period of time
- ❑ It takes less time to score a goal or advance to goal
- ❑ Greater success rate for the players

US Youth Soccer Recommendations

- ❖ Opposing coaches, players and parents should shake hands after each match.
- ❖ Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
- ❖ Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field.
- ❖ No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.

❖ Coaches of U12 teams should attend the U10/U12 Youth Module coaching course and the Grade 9 referee course.