

WCSA RECREATIONAL SOCCER GUIDELINES

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1. WCSA

The WCSA is a non-profit, public, education soccer organization with the purpose of advancing the cause of soccer within its area of jurisdiction. WCSA is affiliated with the West Virginia Youth Soccer Association and the United States Youth Soccer Association. WCSA sponsors both a recreational league, composed of four clubs, and the travel ("select") teams in the River Valley Soccer Club, as well as an adult league.

WCSA is led by a Board of Directors. The members of the Board of Directors can be found on the WCSA website at www.wcsaonline.com.

2. RECREATIONAL LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY

The primary goal of the recreational soccer program of the WCSA is for the players to have fun within a learning/teaching environment. The recreational program is not about winning, it is about teaching, so that children have fun, learn to love the game of soccer, and to become as skilled a soccer player as possible. The single most enjoyable aspect of soccer for the players is kicking the ball. Small-sided games are used for U-6, U-8, U-10, and U-12 to provide each player more opportunities for contact with the ball.

3. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Teams may only participate in games approved by the WCSA Board of Directors.
- Only properly registered players in good standing with the WCSA (i.e. not suspended) are allowed to participate in league games. The playing of an ineligible player for any length of time is prohibited. The person(s) responsible for allowing the ineligible player to participate shall be referred to the WCSA Disciplinary Board.
- Regularly scheduled WCSA games are mandatory. A coach cannot withdraw the team he represents from any scheduled competition as a means of protest. Non-appearance for regularly scheduled WCSA games without prior agreement with the opposing teams' coach will result in reference of the offender to the WCSA Disciplinary Board, unless a valid reason for non-appearance is supplied to the Recreational Coordinator. The Recreational Coordinator is the final authority on the decision to reschedule the game.
- In inclement weather, games shall be played as scheduled and only the referee in charge or the club president of the hosting site will have the authority to cancel such games.
- If a player misses three sessions in a row or five sessions in any ten-session period, the player may be subject to removal from the WCSA program. Removal of a player can only be done with the approval of the club president and

WCSA Registrar. A session is defined as a scheduled practice or a scheduled game for which the player had adequate notification.

- A player who commits at the beginning of the season to play both travel and recreational team soccer may not quit the recreational team without quitting the travel team unless the player has prior approval of the recreational and travel club presidents and the WCSA Recreational Coordinator.
- Any injury to or damage caused by a WCSA participant must be reported to the appropriate club president who is in charge of the insurance and safety program.
- No one except participating players will be permitted to stand within 5 feet of the touchline or within 5 yards of the goal line during the play of a game.
- Refunds before the start of the season, as defined by the first scheduled game, and requested in writing will be made minus any expenses already incurred, if approved by the board. All requests for refunds will be directed to the WCSA registrar.
- Use of tobacco is prohibited at all WCSA sites during practices or games.
- Animals are prohibited from all WCSA sites, excluding service animals.

4. SPORTSMANSHIP

- At the conclusion of each game, the participating teams will line up on separate sides of the mid-field line and exchange gestures of good sportsmanship. This activity will be observed by the game officials. Failure of players to participate in this display of good sportsmanship will receive a "red card" resulting in their suspension from the following game.
- It is the duty of each player, coach, parent, and other persons in attendance at WCSA activities to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Anyone who exhibits behavioral tendencies which are detrimental to the enjoyment of the game for others is subject to removal from the game or suspension from the WCSA. Specific problems are to be referred to the WCSA Disciplinary Board.
- Any person displaying gross unsportsmanlike conduct resulting in an ejection (red card or two yellow cards in one game) must serve a suspension for the following regularly scheduled WCSA game. The ejected person may be brought before the WCSA Disciplinary Board for consideration of extended or permanent suspension by recommendation of either the presiding referee, either coach, or the president of the club with which the person is registered. The club president shall hold the player pass card of the offender and it is the coach's responsibility to retrieve the pass card following the suspension.

5. AGE GROUPINGS

The playing season for WCSA recreational soccer extends from August 1 of one year to July 31 of the following year. The appropriate age group for any player is determined on August 1 of the year and remains the same for the entire 12-month playing season. All players must be a minimum of 4 years of age on August 1 to register for WCSA league play anytime during the playing season. Per WCSA By-laws (Article Five: Teams) no child will be allowed to play in any age group other than their own without the written request of the parent or guardian. Club presidents may refuse requests for players to play above their appropriate age group.

Age Group	Players Age on August 1
U-6	Under 6 years of age
U-8	Under 8 years of age
U-10	Under 10 years of age
U-12	Under 12 years of age
U-15	Under 15 years of age
U-19	Under 19 years of age

6. TEAM SIZES

	U-6	U-8	U-10	U-12	U-15 and Up
Minimum roster	6	8	6	8	11
Maximum roster	11	15	11	15	21 on Team 18 on Game Roster
Players on field	3 v 3 (no goal keeper)	4 v 4	6 v 6	8 v 8	11 v 11
Minimum players on each team for a game	2	3	4	6	7

In case a team is short of players but is within the guidelines, the opposing team may reduce its number of players on the field to an equal number. Or, the coaches of the opposing teams may agree to have the under-manned team "borrow" players from the other team to enable the maximum number of players to play. This can occur only if the coaches agree prior to the start of the game.

In the event of an ejection during the course of the game, the opponent does not have to reduce in kind by the number of players ejected.

7. TEAM FORMATION GUIDELINES

- The goal of the team formation process is to form recreational soccer teams that are equally competitive within and between clubs.
- Pre-season player evaluations may be held by WCSA or member clubs to enable balancing of skilled players among all the teams in each age group.
- Players will be placed on teams by club using a "blind" draft procedure of all eligible players in each age group.
- To insure that team formation guidelines and the draft procedure are followed by all coaches, league officials will closely monitor the player draft. A WCSA board member or club officer should be present with each age group during the entire draft process.
- No additions after draft may be made to team rosters unless approved by the representative club registrar and the WCSA Registrar.
- A player may be a member of only one recreational WCSA team at any time.
- "Guest" players are not permitted. Only those players rostered on the two teams scheduled to play a given game may participate in the game. However, "borrowing" of players from one team by the other is permitted, as described in Section 6.
- Teams shall not be formed on a major/minor league basis under any circumstance.
- Two teams constitute the minimum required for regular league competition.
- Girls will automatically be placed on all-girl teams unless placement on mixed teams (i.e., mostly boys teams) is requested by the player and parents or if there are insufficient girls to form a league in a specific age group.
- Team names shall bear no resemblance to a religion or nationality.
- All Wood County Clubs will have their team drafts on the same day/time and at the same location.
- Any time a club has only one team per division, that team shall have no more than 20% of its players who are playing outside of their home club (a player's home club is defined as that club field which is nearest to the player's residence). The WCSA board of directors shall decide all questions concerning this rule.
- The board reserves the right combine players from two or more clubs to form teams, if one or more clubs has an insufficient number of players in any age group. Players who do not wish to play on a combined team may withdraw from the league and get a full refund of their registration fee, if they withdraw prior to the first game of the season.

8. DRAFT PROCEDURE

1. The Registrar will record personal data for each player on an index card (e.g. player's name, date of birth, number of seasons playing experience, previous coaches' ratings, etc). A notation will be made on the card if there are special circumstances that should be considered when forming teams (see below for special circumstances allowed).
2. U-10, U-12, and U-15 teams shall be drafted with only one coach. U-6 and U-8 teams may be drafted with one coach and one assistant coach. After draft, teams may have a total of 4 coaches.
3. Coaches in each division of each club will, as a group, review the personal data available about each player in their division. Using this information and any personal knowledge the coaches may have about a player's abilities, a rating will be assigned to each player. An "A" rating will be assigned to a player who is determined to be very highly skilled for his age group; a "B" rating denotes above average skills; and a "C" rating represents all other skill levels. A "C" rating is assigned to any players unfamiliar to the coaches and whose personal data does not provide an indication of above average ability. The ratings will be agreed to by a consensus of the parties responsible for that draft, such as coaches and/or board members, and then recorded on the back of the index card.
4. "A" players and travel players will be drafted first. The oldest year in that division is drafted next; then the youngest year of that division is drafted.
5. After all players have been rated, the index cards (including cards for the children of coaches and assistant coaches) will be divided into groups by assigned ratings. Starting with the players who have been assigned "travel" rating, index cards will be shuffled and placed face down on a table. On a rotating basis, each coach will be given an index card until all "travel" cards have been distributed. The same process will be followed for selection of players ranked as "A" and then for Players ranked as "B" and then "C". The order of rotation for player selection shall be determined by some random means.

6. Once all index cards have been distributed, the teams are essentially formed. There are, however, circumstances under which trades of players from one team to another team can be made. These circumstances are (1) moving the child of a coach and one assistant coach to the parents' team; and (2) honoring a parent's request to allow two or more children of the same immediate family to play on the same team. These are the only circumstances under which players can be traded from one team to another. No trades will be made to deal with carpool requests or a parent's preference that a child play for a specific coach.
7. The coach trading to move their child to the team initiates the trade. When trading the child of a coach/assistant coach, a "like" exchange will be made. The team receiving the traded player must receive a player rated equal to or higher than the original draft. The exchange takes place by the coach initiating the trade placing all of the index cards with equally rated players face down on the table. The other coach involved in the exchange then selects one of the cards, thereby completing the trade.
8. When trading for the purpose of allowing two or more children of the same immediate family to play on the same team, the coach with the oldest player will initiate the trade (i.e., the oldest player will remain on the team determined by the original blind draft). Younger siblings will be added to the older sibling's team with "like" exchanges as described above. With twins, the Player with the first alphabetical first-name will remain with the original blind draft team.
9. After the draft is completed, each team must complete a team roster for use by the WCSA Registrar. The WCSA board member or club officer monitoring the draft for that age group shall sign each completed team roster and collect them for the Registrar.
10. Players registering for league play after the draft process has been completed will be assigned to teams by the Registrar and appropriate club registrar.

9. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

A. Fields

The field size, markings, goal area, penalty area, corner area, and goals will generally be according to FIFA laws or the recommendations contained in USYS brochures titled "The Official US Youth Soccer 3x3 Program for Under 6", "The Official US Youth Soccer 4x4 Program for Under 8", and "The Official US Youth Soccer 8x8 Program for Under 10". Field size is dependent on the space available. Exact field layout and goal size for all fields will be determined by the WCSA club president responsible for the fields.

	U-6	U-8	U-10	U-12	U-15+
Recommended dimension	20 x 30 yds	40 x 30 yds	60 x 40 yds	90 x 50 yds	FIFA
Center Circle	3 yds	5 yds	8 yds	8 yds	10 yds
Corners	3 ft arc	3 ft arc	3 ft arc	3 ft arc	3 ft arc
Recommended goal size	4 x 6 ft	7 x 10 ft	6 x 18 ft	7 x 21 ft	8 x 24 ft
Goal area	3 yd arc	6 x 10 yds	6 x 16 yds	6 x 16 yds	6 x 20 yds
Penalty area	none	none	14 x 35 yds	14 x 35 yds	18 x 44 yds

B. Balls

Division	Ball
U-6, U-8	Size 3
U-10, U-12	Size 4
U-15+	Size 5

C. Players Equipment

- All players on the field of play must wear shin guards during all practice sessions and games.
- Watches, rings, earrings, other jewelry, or anything the referee deems unacceptable or dangerous to any players will not be worn during WCSA practices or games.
- Each player will be properly dressed while on the field of play. Properly dressed includes wearing a WCSA approved jersey, shin guards, socks covering the shin guards, safe shoes, shorts or pants, and any other requirements stipulated by the referee.
- In inclement weather, players may wear additional clothing, provided it is worn under the issued uniform.
- Players fitted with any type of cast, air cast, or splint may not participate in league games or practices.

10. PRACTICES

- There will be no practices by any recreational team until after the draft. A practice is any session involving soccer drills or strategy which includes a parent or coach, more than three members of a single team, and is restricted by team membership or age group.
- No practice will last longer than 1 ½ hours (less time is recommended for U-6 and U-8 teams) and not more than two practices per week are permitted. A maximum of three practices a week may be held during the three weeks prior to the first scheduled game.
- Practice sessions (especially for the younger players) should focus on doing, moving, and having fun. Younger players do not like to stand in lines and have short attention spans and practice time should be planned accordingly.

11. GAME DURATION

Division	Game Duration	Half Time	Quarter Breaks
U-6	6 minute quarters	5 minutes	2 minutes
U-8	12 minute quarters	5 minutes	2 minutes
U-10	25 minute halves	5 minutes	N/A
U-12	30 minute halves	5 minutes	N/A
U-15	35 minute halves	5 minutes	N/A
U-19	45 minute halves	5 minutes	N/A

- All team members should arrive at the playing field a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
- Length of quarters, halves, and breaks is at the discretion of the referee, but a minimum half-time of 5 minutes shall be allowed for all games.
- If a game has been stopped by the referee before the completion of the time specified in the rules for any reason stated in Law V of "FIFA, Laws of the Game", it must be replayed in full.
- All games during the regular season resulting in a tie at the end of regulation time will remain a tie.

12. PLAYING TIME

All registered players in attendance at the start of regular season games or league tournament games must play in at least half of the game, including overtime. A player arriving after the first half of play is completed may be played at the discretion of the coach. Exceptions may be granted for illnesses, injury, and disciplinary reasons. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure all players play the required amounts in each game. Coaches failing to provide required playing time for all players on their team will be referred to the WCSA Disciplinary Board.

13. SUBSTITUTIONS

Free substitution will be allowed in all age groups in accordance with USYSA Rules, but only with the referee's permission, during specified breaks in the game play. Coaches must have players prepared to enter the playing field before the game break occurs. Per USYSA rules in 2003, the times when substitution are allowed are:

- By the team in possession of the ball at immediately before a throw-in
- By either team:
 - prior to a goal kick
 - prior to a kick-off
- per instruction of the center referee

14. SPECIAL U-6 AND U-8 PLAYING RULES:

- For games, teams will be divided up into two groups with the Blue Division for the more skilled players and the Gold Division for the lesser skilled players. U-6 and U-8 games will have two fields available for simultaneous Gold and Blue Division games. Players must remain in their division for an entire game, unless both coaches agree to the change.
- Goal kicks may be taken from any point inside the goal area. Opponents must be on their own half of the field until the ball is kicked.
- All fouls will result in a direct free kick with all the opponents three yards away from the ball.
- There are no penalty kicks. No free kicks can be taken from within the opponent's goal box.
- No offside rules are observed.
- No score shall be kept.

U6 Special Rules

- Coaches, assistant coaches, or parents act as referees. One coach from each team is allowed on the playing field for the entire game.
- No one can pick up the ball in the field of play (no goalkeeper).
- Players (from either team) are not allowed inside the goal area unless the ball is in the goal area.
- In U-6 there are no throw-ins. Balls kicked out of play on a touchline will be returned to play with a kick-in. Balls kicked out of play on the goal lines will be returned to play with a goal kick or corner kick.
- All free kicks are direct. A goal can be scored directly from a free kick.

U8 Special Rules

- If no referees are assigned by WCSA to the game, Coaches, assistant coaches, or parents may act as referees.
- In U-8 throw-ins, players will be given two attempts to properly throw the ball into play before the ball is kicked into play. The referee/coach will explain any improprieties regarding an improperly thrown ball before allowing the re-throw to occur.
- All free kicks are direct.
- Goalkeepers will be changed each quarter. No player shall play goalkeeper more than half of each game.

15. SPECIAL U-10 PLAYING RULES

- If league referees are available they will call the game, otherwise a coach, assistant coach, or parent will act as the referee. Only the individual acting as the referee is allowed on the playing field during the game. The acting referee may be exchanged between teams during half-time if desired by the coaches.
- Opponents shall be 8 yards away from all free kicks.
- No player shall play goalkeeper for more than half of each game.

16. COACHES

- A coach shall be responsible for their own conduct as well as that of all other coaches, staff, players and parents associated with their team while a game is in progress. Parents who are disrupting a game by their actions may be asked to leave the vicinity of the field by an official. It shall be the coach's responsibility to see that the offending parents leave. If a coach is ejected (red card) from a game for either his own or a spectator's behavior, they shall be required to report to the WCSA Disciplinary Board for a full review and action.
- All coaches shall ensure that their team has the highest regard for good sportsmanship and respect for game officials.
- Coaches or other persons shall not enter the field of play unless requested by the referee. (See special rules section for U-6 and U-8 guidelines.)
- Realizing that the WCSA is an instructional league, the coach and assistant coach are permitted to disperse positive team encouragement from the touchline. However, coaching during games shall be limited to the sideline area only. No coaching will be allowed from behind or around the goal area. The coach and assistant coach must be on the same side of the field. (See special rules section for U-6 and U-8 guidelines.)
- All volunteer coaches should attend a coach's clinic prior to the beginning of the season.
- Once a coach agrees to coach for WCSA, they agree to abide by the Coaches Code of Conduct as posted on www.wcsaonline.com.
- It is mandatory that a representative from each team attend the coaches pre-season meeting.

17. REFEREES

The WCSA referee has an awesome task and responsibility. Once they are given authority, they must be supported by all WCSA officials, coaches, parents, and players. ANY ABUSE OF REFEREES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

- WCSA referees will enforce the rules of competition defined by WCSA, WVSA, USYSA, and USSF (FIFA). Where WCSA and WVSA rules are not specified, the laws of USSF (FIFA) prevail.
- WCSA referees will always place primary emphasis on the welfare of players. They will officiate the game in a manner conducive to clean competition and good sportsmanship.
- Referees shall not be faulted for judgmental decisions and opinions rendered in good faith during the course of officiating a game. Coaches should address complaints of overall referee performance (not a specific call) to the WCSA Referee Coordinator.
- Referees are encouraged to give pre-game instructions to both players and coaches concerning any special conditions that may have any impact on the game.

- Referees are encouraged to verbally communicate to players and/or coaches their decisions made during the course of a game. Referees must never coach while officiating a game.
- All referees must be certified by USSF. In the event of a shortage of certified referees, linesmen may be selected from spectators or advanced players.
- If an ejection (red card or second yellow card) of a player, coach or spectator occurs, the referee shall request that the offending party leave the immediate area of the game and have no further contact or communication with the remaining players/coaches. If they refuse, the referee may terminate the game. In the event a game is terminated, the referee shall report in full, in writing, with 48 hours, the circumstance involved, the score up to that time, and any other relevant details to the respective club president and the WCSA Disciplinary Board. The WCSA Disciplinary Board will decide the outcome of the game as to replay or forfeit as well as any additional action to be taken. In all cases, a report shall be sent by the referee to the WVSA within 48 hours of the occurrence

Referee Training:

- All referees must be certified under USSF procedures
- Any Referee never before certified as a soccer referee must first certify as at least a Grade 9 referee.
- Youths must be 12 years old by the date of the first game of the next season to be eligible for training.
- WCSA will pay the initial registration fee of any referee who takes a WCSA-sponsored class and commits to referee for WCSA for that season.
- Referees are responsible for their own recertification costs, including upgrades to Grade 8 or higher

Referee Certification:

- All WCSA referees must be re-certified annually in a course offered by a USSF-certified Referee instructor.
- Each referee must pay his or her own re-certification fee at the time the class is conducted.

Referee Pay Rate - Dollars Per Game Per Referee

Age Group:	U-8	U-10	U-12	U-15	U-19
Center	8.00	10.00	13.00	15.00	18.00
Line	n/a	8.00	10.00	10.00	13.00

* Grade 9 referees should not be scheduled for games above U14. If availability of experienced referees above the age of 15 forces a Grade 9 referee to be scheduled for a U15 game, he should be paid appropriately.

18. REFEREE COORDINATOR

The referee coordinator is responsible for the training and scheduling of referees as described in the By-Laws. He or she may nominate an assistant to schedule referees for league recreational games. The assistant must be approved by the Board in accordance with the By-Laws. All expectations of the Coordinator and the Scheduler are described below. In the absence of a Scheduler, the Coordinator is responsible for everything in this section. Tournament games involving travel teams must be scheduled by a registered assigner per USSF, but the league scheduler requires no certification.

COORDINATOR DUTIES

1. Arrange for annual recertification in August and/or November of each year. The rules meetings and recertification together must total five hours.
2. Arrange for two referee classes per year (preferable Grade 9).
 - The spring class must be completed before March 15.
 - The fall class must be completed before August 25.
3. Arrange for two Grade 8 bridge classes per year, if Grade 9 referees exist.
 - The spring class must be completed before March 15.
 - The fall class must be completed before August 25.
4. Arrange for preseason rules reviews for WCSA referees, to be conducted by an instructor.
5. Advertise all classes to WCSA, WVSA, current referee rosters and local community beginning six weeks before the class is to be held.
6. Provide pay rate information for each referee to the WCSA treasurer before end of each season.
7. Maintain an up-to-date database of local referees by recording certification information provided by WVSA and instructors of local classes.
8. Provide the Scheduler with a complete list of all certified local referees each season:
 - The list must include names, ages, phone numbers, email addresses, first certification date, latest certification date, top age group to schedule for each referee in.
 - The list must be mailed to the scheduler by August 25 for the fall season and by March 15 for the spring season.

9. Provide the WSCA webmaster with a referee list for the coaches:
 - The list must include names, ages of youth referees, phone numbers, and email addresses.
 - The list must be mailed to the webmaster by August 25 for the fall season and by March 15 for the spring season.
10. Arrange for referees to be scheduled at any WSCA tournament. This must be done by a registered assignor. The assignor is not necessarily the Referee Coordinator.
11. Attend the preseason coaches' meetings the review briefly all pertinent rule changes and referee information.
12. Attend all regularly scheduled WSCA board meetings.

SCHEDULER DUTIES

The purpose of the Scheduler's position is to assist the Referee Coordinator by preparing referee schedules and collecting payment information for WSCA referees each recreation season.

1. Collect referee schedule availability information for all eligible local referees each season.
2. Publish a referee schedule no later than the preseason coaches' meeting to all referees and coaches: The schedule must:
 - Schedule referees for all U8 and higher games, but never schedule referees for U6 games.
 - Provide two referees for each U8 game.
 - Provide at least one referee for each U10 game. Three can be used if enough people are available. If is useful for training of new referees. Two referees could be assigned, but one must be designated as the center referee. USSF does not sanction two-man/two-whistle games.
 - Provide three referees for each U12 and U15 game.
 - Provide appropriately and experienced referees for each game. Do not schedule referees in games where the are of-age or too young to play.
 - Avoid using brand-new referees at center of any game (even U8) for the first 3-4 weeks of their first season.
 - Divide the games as evenly as possible among referees, per their availability on each week-end.
 - Avoid scheduling referees who coach or play during games in which they are playing or coaching..
 - Mail the schedule to all referees, the registrar or secretary for distribution to coaches, and the WSCA webmaster for publication on the WSCA website.
3. Collect payment information for all active referees by determining games refereed by age group, and provide that information to the treasurer as soon as possible after the end of the season.

19. REVISION OF RECREATIONAL GUIDELINES

These WSCA Recreational Soccer Guidelines are the general rules for recreational play as defined in the WSCA by-laws (Article Six: General Rules and Guidelines). These guidelines may be modified at any time at the discretion of the WSCA Board of Directors. Approval of modifications requires a majority vote of Board members present during any board meeting (regular or special) with a quorum present.