Parent Guide for IAFC Recreational Soccer

Revised April, 2015

IAFC PHILOSOPHY

We believe that all children have the right to play soccer in a safe and rewarding environment, in a manner that is free from criticism and ridicule, and where every team member will have qualified and compassionate leadership and coaching that prepares them for full participation in soccer, at a level commensurate with their maturity and ability. All children will be treated with dignity, and have an equal opportunity to strive for success. *Above all, we believe that every child should have fun playing soccer!*

Parents should know that the REC Program is about enjoyment of the game, balanced teams, and a positive playing environment.

THINGS TO KNOW REGARDING IAFC REC SOCCER

1. GAMES

REC U4-U10 will play regular season games at home against other IAFC teams. REC U12 and up play in the GYSA inter-district league and will have both home and away matches against other Metro Atlanta Clubs. Expect Saturday games every weekend during the season for all age groups. REC teams U12 and up are also subject to Sunday games.

Game schedules: The schedule for intra league games between IAFC teams U4-U10 is normally provided at least one week prior to the start of the season. U12 and up teams, which are inter-scheduled, are provided with a schedule as soon as they become available from GYSA. Teams U4-U10 typically have just Saturday games. U12 and up generally have Saturday games, but also may have a few Sunday games. All home games are scheduled through the IAFC Field/Game Scheduler.

Season: The season is generally 10 weekends and for the fall, games run from September-November, and for the spring, games generally run from March-May.
Game Cancellations: The policy regarding game cancellations is to follow the decision of the club. If the league states they are open for play, show up at your scheduled game time and be prepared to play. If the referee or an IAFC Staff member decides the field or conditions make the game unplayable, then the coaches shall be responsible for rescheduling the game, if desired, through the IAFC Game Scheduler. The Game Scheduler is the only person authorized to coordinate field availability and referees for makeup games. For games with other clubs where it is an away match, always call the club's weather line or check the website for field status

2. GAME CONDUCT

Parents are to be encouraging and positive to all players, coaches, and referees in their comments and actions.

Players and coaches are to sit on OPPOSITE sides of the field from spectators. Parents are not to be on the field during games, unless waived on by a referee due to injury or a coach due to injury.

Certain people will need to help the coaches at U4-U8 to collect balls to put back into the field of play. At these age groups, throw-ins are not utilized and the coach or helping sideline parent gently rolls (NOT THROWS!) the ball back into play when it goes out to keep the game moving and a coach might ask for help in keeping track of loose soccer balls. Please help if needed.
Learn the game: visit our website to view the coach's page and helpful links to youth soccer! Remember, this program is about the enjoyment of the game!

3. PRACTICES

Attendance is expected by all players! Since there is a direct correlation between practice attendance and improvement, players should attend as many practices as possible. Illness, school, and religious activities or family emergencies are reasonable excuses for an absence.

Parent attendance: At U5 and U6, parents attend the practice with their child or ensure that another parent is responsible for their child if they can't be present. At U7 and U8, we highly recommend parents attend practice. If a problem persists with your child, a coach may require you to attend to help with disruptions.

Practice Gear: All players should bring a soccer ball to practice, along with water, shinguards (worn under socks), and cleats or athletic shoes.

Field Cancellations/Inclement Weather: Please get in a habit of checking the website for field closings for the most up to date field status. IAFC attempts to make a decision about field closings by 3pm the day of practice and by 7:30 am the day of games. If the weather looks iffy for practice time, please check the website just before you plan to leave.
We do not practice in thunder and lightning. If thunder or lightning is in the area, please clear the fields immediately and seek shelter in a building or car. You must wait 30 minutes from the last bolt of lightning or thunder in order to resume activity.

4. TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Team assignments are governed by our team assignment policy, which, in a nutshell, encourages the development of balanced teams with an equal distribution of skill levels, sex, age, and race. In most cases, assignments made in the **fall will remain intact through the spring season**. However, the league has the authority to correct imbalances that may have occurred and make any necessary changes.

5. UNIFORMS

Uniforms need to be purchased by any new U5 and up player to the league! Uniforms are available for purchase on AYSA.net. **Each player should bring both jerseys to games to avoid any conflict!**

U4 players ONLY do not need uniforms and will receive a t-shirt on the first game day.

6. COMMUNICATION

Please supply email, cell phones, home phones to the coach or team parent for your team. Always check the website if dealing with inclement weather.

7. VOLUNTEER!

The coach is doing all that he or she can to help your children and so we ask you all to volunteer to help the team. Each team needs to assign a person to be:

-Team manager/parent: The team manager/parent is in charge of organizing the team and helps with communication, organization, and overall logistics for the season.

-Game Day Linesmen

-General assistance when a coach must be late, is sick, or has a conflict.

-U4, U5, and U6 teams will need to pick up and drop off the pop-up goals in the shed at Arizona Fields to use at the field for practice and games. A schedule will be provided to coaches, and coaches may request help in coordinating the pick-up and drop-off.

-U12 and up – players will need to present player passes to the referee at the start of each game. IAFC will provide the player pass template but coaches will require assistance taking player photos for the passes and laminating them.

8. WHAT TO DO IF A CONFLICT ARISES?

First, contact the coach if you have an issue or concern. The next person to contact is the Age Group Coordinator, who is the person in charge of all coaches of a certain age group. If the AGC cannot help, either contact the REC Administrator or the Rec Chairperson. These people will , in turn, bring any issues then to the IAFC Staff, the Director of Coaching and the Executive Director.

ENJOY YOUR SEASON!!

III. RULES OF THE GAME

U4 RULES OF THE GAME

Equipment Ball size: 3 for U4.

Pre-game: Coaches should introduce themselves. Coaches need to make sure no one is wearing jewelry of any type—including pierced earrings (if someone has pierced ears, they can either remove them for the game or cover them with athletic tape). One exception- **MEDICAL ALERT** jewelry may be worn, but it must be covered with athletic tape or secured. Players are checked to make sure they are wearing shin guards and are wearing socks OVER the shin guards. Players' cleats are checked for metal studs. The coaches can determine which team kicks off and the other team selects which goal it will defend.

Playing time: 2 ten-minute halves. Halftime is 5 minutes. Please make sure you keep track of time and tell the coaches to get their players back on the field. Each game that starts later or lasts longer than the allotted time makes the next game start even later.

 # Of Players 3v3 and **NO GOAL KEEPER**. This includes a player who is standing in goal acting like a goalie. All players should be encouraged to move around the field.

Substitutions: Free substitutions.

Offsides: Offsides is not penalized. However cherry picking should not be encouraged—in other words, a forward player should not hang out in front of the goal waiting for the ball. If a coach notices this behavior he should remind the players to play the whole field.

Throw Ins: There are no throw ins, corner kicks or goal kicks. When the ball goes out of bounds, the coaches (or parents) are responsible for putting the ball back into play, by **ROLLING** the ball into the area where the ball left the field. The ball should not be thrown into the air or toward either goal.

Slide Tackling: Players should be encouraged to remain on their feet. We do not encourage slide tackling. A slide tackle is not an automatic foul or penalty. For definition purposes, a slide tackle is a player going to the ground in an attempt to take the ball from an opposing player.

Free Kicks: No free kicks.

Penalty Kicks: No penalty kicks.

Post-game: Players line up to shake hands. Coaches should watch the players to make sure they actually do shake hands and encourage good sportsmanship.

U5 & U6 RULES OF THE GAME

Equipment Ball size: 3 for U5 and U6.

Pre-game: Coaches should introduce themselves. Coaches need to make sure no one is wearing jewelry of any type—including pierced earrings (if someone has pierced ears, they can either remove them for the game or cover them with athletic tape). One exception- **MEDICAL ALERT** jewelry may be worn, but it must be covered with athletic tape or secured. Players are checked to make sure they are wearing shin guards and are wearing socks OVER the shin guards. Players' cleats are checked for metal studs. The coaches can determine which team kicks off and the other team selects which goal it will defend.

Playing time: Four 8-minute quarters. The players get a 1-minute water/substitution break after the first 4 minutes of each quarter. Halftime is 5 minutes. Please make sure you keep track of time and tell the coaches to get their players back on the field. Each game that starts later or lasts longer than the allotted time makes the next game start even later.

 # Of Players 3v3 and **NO GOAL KEEPER**. This includes a player who is standing in goal acting like a goalie. All players should be encouraged to move around the field. If both teams are larger, coaches can agree to 4 v. 4.

Substitutions: Substitutions policies should be agreed by the coaching before starting play. Substitutions can always be made if there is an injury on the field. Otherwise, the coaches should choose between one time per quarter, during the water break OR free subs.

Offsides: Offsides is not penalized. However cherry picking should not be encouraged—in other words, a forward player should not hang out in front of the goal waiting for the ball. If a coach notices this behavior he should remind the players to play the whole field.

Throw Ins: There are no throw ins, corner kicks or goal kicks. When the ball goes out of bounds, the coaches (or parents) are responsible for putting the ball back into play, by **ROLLING** the ball into the area where the ball left the field. The ball should not be thrown into the air or toward either goal.

Slide Tackling: NO SLIDE TACKLING. Players should be encouraged to remain on their feet. A slide tackle is not an automatic foul or penalty. For definition purposes, a slide tackle is a player going to the ground in an attempt to take the ball from an opposing player. If the tackle is careless, reckless or uses excessive force, or the tackler first contacts the ball handler instead of the ball, a foul should be called. If the tackle is from behind the tackle should be considered reckless and a foul should be awarded.

Free Kicks: All kicks are indirect (i.e., a goal cannot be scored from a free kick—the ball must be touched by another player from the same team before going into the goal). If a handball occurs, a player from the other team gets a free kick.

Penalty Kicks: No penalty kicks.

Post-game: Players line up to shake hands. Coaches should watch the players to make sure they actually do shake hands and encourage good sportsmanship.

U7 ADDITIONAL RULES OF THE GAME

Equipment Ball size: 3 for U7 and 4 for U7/8 and U8. Refs should bring a stopwatch, whistle and coin for the toss. Don't be shy about using the whistle! Wear an approved referee shirt (either the yellow club referee t-shirt or, if you are state licensed, a striped referee shirt), black shorts and black socks.

Pre-game: Refs and coaches should introduce themselves. Players line up and the ref checks to make sure no one is wearing jewelry of any type—including pierced earrings. One exception- **MEDICAL ALERT** jewelry may be worn, but it must be covered with tape or secured. Players are checked to make sure they are wearing shin guards and are wearing socks OVER the guards. Players' cleats are checked for metal studs. Players should thank the ref for being at the game. The ref calls for team captains and a coin is tossed to determine which team kicks off, the other team selects which goal it will defend.

Playing time: Four 12-minute quarters. The players get a 1-minute water/substitution break after the first 6 minutes of each quarter. Halftime is 5 minutes. Please make sure you keep track of time and tell the coaches to get their players back on the field. Each game that starts later or lasts longer than the allotted time makes the next game start even later.

Number Of Players: 4v4 and no goalkeeper. If teams are larger, coaches may agree to 5 v. 5. If a team plays with a sweeper, that player should be encouraged to move around, not stand in front of the goal like a keeper. NO CHERRY PICKING! Coaches MAY NOT be on the field during game time.

Substitutions: Substitutions policies should be agreed by the coaching before starting play. Substitutions can always be made if there is an injury on the field. Otherwise, the coaches should choose between one time per quarter, during the water break OR free subs.

Offsides: Offsides is not penalized. However cherry picking should not be encouraged—in other words, a forward player should not hang out in front of the goal waiting for the ball. If a coach notices this behavior he should remind the players to play the whole field. A referee may remind a player or a coach about this guideline.

Throw Ins: There are no throw ins, corner kicks or goal kicks. When the ball goes out of bounds, the coaches are responsible for putting the ball back into play, by rolling or gently tossing the ball into the area where the ball left the field.

Slide Tackling: NO SLIDE TACKLING. Players should be encouraged to remain on their feet. A slide tackle is not an automatic foul or penalty. For definition purposes, a slide tackle is a player going to the ground in an attempt to take the ball from an opposing player. If the tackle is careless, reckless or uses excessive force, or the tackler first contacts the ball handler instead of the ball, a foul should be called. If the tackle is from behind the tackle should be considered reckless and a foul should be awarded.

Penalty Kicks: No penalty kicks. If a handball occurs, a player from the other team gets a free kick. A goal cannot be scored from a free kick—the ball must be touched by another player from the same team before going into the goal.

Post-game: Players line up to shake hands. Coaches should watch the players to make sure they actually do shake hands and encourage good sportsmanship.

U7/8 All-Girls and U8 ADDITIONAL RULES OF THE GAME

Equipment	Ball size 4. Refs should bring a stopwatch, whistle and coin for the toss. Don't be shy about using the whistle! Wear an approved referee shirt (either the yellow club referee t-shirt or, if you are state licensed, a striped referee shirt), black shorts and black socks.
Pre-game:	Refs and coaches should introduce themselves. Players line up and the ref checks to make sure no one is wearing jewelry of any type—including pierced earrings. One exception- **MEDICAL ALERT** jewelry may be worn, but it must be covered with tape or secured. Players are checked to make sure they are wearing shin guards and are wearing socks OVER the guards. Players' cleats are checked for metal studs. Players should thank the ref for being at the game. The ref calls for team captains and a coin is tossed to determine which team kicks off, the other team selects which goal it will defend.
Playing time:	Four 12-minute quarters. The players get a 1-minute water/substitution break after the first 6 minutes of each quarter. Halftime is 5 minutes. Please make sure you keep track of time and tell the coaches to get their players back on the field. Each game that starts later or lasts longer than the allotted time makes the next game start even later.
Number Of Players:	4v4 and no goalkeeper. If teams are larger, coaches may agree to 5 v. 5. If a team plays with a sweeper, that player should be encouraged to move around, not stand in front of the goal like a keeper. NO CHERRY PICKING! Coaches MAY NOT be on the field during game time.
Substitutions:	Substitutions policies should be agreed by the coaching before starting play. Substitutions can always be made if there is an injury on the field. Otherwise, the coaches should choose between one time per quarter, during the water break OR free subs.
Offsides:	Offsides is not penalized. However cherry picking should not be encouraged—in other words, a forward player should not hang out in front of the goal waiting for the ball. If a coach notices this behavior he should remind the players to play the whole field. A referee may remind a player or a coach about this guideline.
Throw Ins/Corner Kicks/Goal Kicks:	Throw Ins: If the ball goes out on a blue player, a red player takes the throw in. If the throw in is performed incorrectly, the red player will be given one opportunity to try again. Corner Kicks: If the ball goes over the blue goal line off of a blue player, the red team is awarded a corner kick. Goal Kicks: If the ball goes over the blue goal line off of a red player, the blue team is awarded a goal kick.
Slide Tackling:	NO SLIDE TACKLING. A slide tackle is not an automatic foul or penalty. For definition purposes, a slide tackle is a player going to the ground in an attempt to take the ball from an opposing player. If the tackle is careless, reckless or uses excessive force, or the tackler first contacts the ball handler instead of the ball, a foul should be called. If the tackle is from behind the tackle should be considered reckless and a foul should be awarded.
Penalty Kicks:	No penalty kicks. If a handball occurs, a player from the other team gets a free kick. A goal cannot be scored from a free kick—the ball must be touched by another player from the same team before going into the goal.
Post-game:	Players line up to shake hands. Coaches should watch the players to make sure they actually do shake hands and encourage good sportsmanship.

U10 ADDITIONAL RULES OF THE GAME

Equipment

Ball size: 4. Refs should bring a stopwatch, whistle and coin for the toss. Don't be shy about using the whistle!

Pre-game:

Refs and coaches should introduce themselves and discuss substitutions and number of players on the field (see below). Players line up and the ref checks to make sure no one is wearing jewelry of any type—including pierced earrings. One exception- **MEDICAL ALERT** jewelry may be worn, but it must be covered with tape or secured. Players are checked to make sure they are wearing shin guards and are wearing socks OVER the guards. Players' cleats are checked for metal studs. Players should thank the ref for being at the game. The ref calls for team captains and a coin is tossed to determine which team kicks off, the other team selects which goal it will defend.

Playing time:

Two 30-minute halves—see info on substitutions—but coaches may agree to make quarter breaks or break at half time only. 5 to 10 minute break for halftime.

Number Of Players:

Micro rules are 6v6 including a goalkeeper. Because our teams are so full—coaches may agree prior to the game to play 7v7 including the keeper. Please make sure you let the referee know BEFORE the game begins how many players should be on the field. Our fields are not large enough to play 8v8.

Substitutions:

Before the game begins, coaches should decide and agree to either free substitutions or quarter subs—then let the referee know. If you agree to free subs please follow this process: first ask the ref for permission to substitute, players must come off the field before the substitutes enter the field. Substitutions may be made:

- By either team after a goal is scored
- By either team before there is a goal kick
- By the team with possession of the ball, before a throw in
- If there is an injury on the field

Offsides:

Offsides is not penalized. However cherry picking should not be encouraged—in other words, a forward player should not hang out in front of the goal waiting for the ball. If a coach notices this behavior he should remind the players to play the whole field. A referee may remind a player or a coach about this guideline.

Throw Ins:

If the ball goes out on a blue player, a red player takes the throw in. If the throw in is performed incorrectly, the red player will be given one opportunity to try again. If the red player is unsuccessful after the second attempt, the ball goes to a blue player for a throw in. After the first several weeks, the coaches should discuss whether a player should be given a second chance, then left the referee know.

Slide Tackling:

NO SLIDE TACKLING. A slide tackle is not an automatic foul or penalty. For definition purposes, a slide tackle is a player going to the ground in an attempt to take the ball from an opposing player. If the tackle is careless, reckless or uses excessive force, or the tackler first contacts the ball handler instead of the ball, a foul should be called. If the tackle is from behind the tackle should be considered reckless and a foul should be awarded.

Penalty Kicks:

No direct penalty kicks—in other words—no free kicks from the penalty mark in front of the goal. The ball must pass from the player taking the penalty kick to another player before going into the goal. Free kicks are awarded basically when there is a hand ball, inappropriate contact with another player (i.e. pushing from behind) or when any misconduct is observed by the ref.

Post-game:

Players lines up to shake hands. Coaches should watch the players to make sure they

actually do shake hands and encourage good sportsmanship.

U12 Age Group

- No coaches allowed on the field
- Referees officiate games
- 7 players plus a goalie on the field (total of 8)
- Size 4 ball used
- There are four 15-minute quarters
- Offside rule per FIFA
- Throw-ins, corner kicks, goal kicks all are in effect
- Each player must play half the game