



House League Coaches Guide

This reference guide has been developed for you. It is the official publication for McLean Soccer for recreation coaches. It describes the organization of McLean Soccer's house league and contains the information you will need to help your team have a successful season. Please take the time to read it and refer to it frequently.

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MYS PURPOSE

The purpose of McLean Youth Soccer Association (MYS) is to promote the growth of and appreciation for the game of soccer by providing opportunities for the youth of McLean and surrounding communities to participate in organized programs of soccer.

STRUCTURE

MYS is affiliated with the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA) and the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA).

MYS policy decisions are made by the MYS Board of Directors. Elections are held at the annual membership meeting each Spring. The Board normally meets on the last Wednesday of each month. Board meetings are open, unless closed by majority Board vote and during "Executive Sessions". The Age Group Coordinators are the backbone of the recreation organization. They are responsible for placing all players on teams or conducting team formations where applicable. They act as resource persons for coaches and parents. If you have any questions or concerns during the season, please contact your AGC. AGC's report to the Recreation Commissioner, who is an elected and voting member of the Board.

GUIDELINES FOR PLAY

THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF LIST OF SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT MCLEAN YOUTH SOCCER (MYS) RULES

Every player must play at least 1/2 of a game. In the U6-U8 age groups no player may play 4 quarters before all players play 3 quarters. The emphasis should always, in all age groups, be on equal playing time. Winning is secondary to learning to play the game.

House coaches cannot determine the selection of players for their teams. House coaches ARE PROHIBITED FROM RECRUITING players either from other teams or from anywhere else. It is proper to advise players and parents that they may request a specific team, but that team assignments are made at the complete discretion of the Age Group Coordinators (AGC) and/or Commissioner.

Player assignments or team formations are made to assure that competition among house league teams remains balanced.

If there is bad weather or field conditions are poor MYS will make a decision to play or cancel. This applies both to games and practices. You may check the field status here or call the club's Inclement Weather Line, 703-761-1601 to find out if fields are open and practice and games are on or off. If there is no message your team is expected to be at the field, ready to play, at the scheduled time (see Game Cancellation).

Coaches are responsible for equipment assigned to them and must sign for it on a seasonal basis. Upon leaving, coaches must return all equipment to either the Quartermaster or their Age Group Coordinator.

- Metal cleats are banned. Certain fields may have other types of restrictions.



- Shin guards are mandatory for all practices, scrimmages and games.
- Only players registered and assigned to your team may play in your game.
- Please do not violate this rule as insurance will be invalid if you do.
- Pets are prohibited from attending games sponsored by MYS. Coaches are asked to communicate this rule to their parents before the first game each season.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The conduct of MYS coaches on the playing field establishes how MYS is perceived by players, parents, and the public. Parents who entrust their children to MYS should feel confident that the standards being taught and demonstrated are consistent with the highest standards of good sportsmanship.

It is vital that coaches maintain and teach the highest standards of sportsmanship. Coaches set the tone and provide the example for the conduct of their players, assistants and spectators and should strive to demonstrate good sportsmanship. Every MYS coach is expected to read and follow these guidelines:

Players will be instructed to play according to the Laws of the Game and be encouraged to play to win without taking unfair advantage over an opponent.

Coaching from the sidelines is permitted provided:

- The tone of voice is encouraging and not a harangue;
- It is done in the bench area (between the penalty boxes);
- It is done from your sideline.

EJECTIONS

Coaches who are ejected (red card) **MUST LEAVE THE GAME AREA IMMEDIATELY**. Spectators can also be required to leave the game area if their behavior is inappropriate. In the event that the coach is required to leave and there is no other responsible adult able to supervise the team, the game shall be terminated, and the game shall be recorded in the standings as a forfeit in favor of the opposing team and entered as a 1-0 score. A player receiving a red card shall remain on the sideline under the supervision of his coach.

PROFANITY

Under no circumstances at all will any coach use profanity at any youth, parent or official, or abuse, either physically or psychologically, any youth on his team or any other team, even in jest. In addition, MYS has jurisdiction over all spectators of soccer events and may refer spectators who use profane language to the Chairman of the Rules & Discipline Committee.

COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

Good sportsmanship is one of the principle aims of MYS. Your attitude as a coach will set the tone for your players. Therefore, we ask that you exemplify good sportsmanship as a coach and encourage your team members to act similarly.

Please remember that you are responsible for the conduct of your players, team officials and spectators. Physical abuse or violence, foul and abusive language, harassment of players or referees **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**. Such conduct will be reported to the Director of Rules &



Discipline even in situations where cards were not issued. Based on such reports, the Director of R&D may take disciplinary action in accordance with the rules. Any incidents of physical violence or (verbal) assault directed against a referee or assistant referee will be subject to an automatic review by the R&D Committee and **WILL BE REPORTED TO THE STATE REFEREE ADMINISTRATOR FOR POSSIBLE LEGAL ACTION.**

In regard to parent participation, some of you may be fortunate enough to have a parent volunteer to carry out the administrative duties for your team. Many coaches have found it advisable not to ask for volunteers, but to assign specific parents to play a role in the administration of the team (i.e., forming a telephone tree, assigning others to bring refreshments, etc.)

As a coach you have a responsibility to the parents to hold all practices and team gatherings open to anyone interested. In addition, MYS encourages you to have at least one additional adult at each practice.

Coaches are reminded that the safety of the players is of paramount importance. You are expected to use good judgment regarding practices and games if there is cause for concern about the players' health or possible injury.

It is the clear policy of MYS to prohibit child abuse, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment and discrimination by everyone involved in our activities. All coaches and volunteers must complete and submit a Kids Safe form.

Finally, it is important to remember that our primary objective is to give all our youth a positive play and learning experience. All coaches should remember (and should remind parents) that all of our players enjoy being "yelled for," but no one, at any age, enjoys being "yelled at." When we are not careful, what we are yelling on the sidelines easily becomes "yelling at" those on the field, even when we think we are "yelling for" them. Constantly watch your own conduct, as well as the conduct of your parents on the sidelines, and be sensitive to when you are crossing that fine line.

LEVELS OF COMPETITION

MYS has two levels of competition. The House League (Recreational) is comprised of our majority of players who are assigned to teams individually by MYS according to birth year. The Travel League is comprised of teams which compete with other community-based leagues. For more detailed information on the levels of travel play available through MYS, please click on the Travel section link.

ASSIGNMENT OF PLAYERS IN HOUSE LEAGUE

All registrations are entered into a database accessible, AGCs are responsible for assigning players to teams or conducting drafts, depending upon the age group. Coaches in the house league cannot assign players to their team or request players to be put on their team. Returning players (i.e., those from the immediate prior season) have first priority for team membership in the non-team reformation age groups (U9 and older) when registering on-time, unless a parent specifically requests a change. Otherwise, the primary priority for the AGC is to establish balance between the teams in the age group. The AGC is given great latitude to achieve such balance. This can be done in many different ways, including wide discretion in the assignment of players to teams (in non-team reformation age groups) and divisionalizing teams within an age group.



Late registrations should be directed to the Administrator who will forward them to the AGC. When all teams have reached their roster maximums the AGC may create a waiting list. No teams will be filled beyond their roster maximum shown in Law III of the House League Rules.

It should be understood that registering a child to play does not guarantee that he/she will be placed on a team, or, if assigned to a team, that the team will practice or play its games close by.

Players can continue to be added to team rosters by the AGC until the maximum roster has been reached. Coaches, however, have the option of not accepting players after the third game of the season.

Please refer to Team Formation document for additional information.

AGE GROUPINGS FOR HOUSE TEAMS

Children are assigned to teams on the basis of when they were born and whether they are boys or girls. Boys and girls will be placed in their respective groups unless girls indicate they wish to play with boys (boys may not play in the girls group). The age groupings run from August 1 through July 31. Players in the same grade at school may be in different soccer age groups. Older children may be organized into combined age groups depending upon the number of players/teams.

HOUSE LEAGUE TOURNAMENTS

In the course of house league tournaments, it may be necessary to determine a winner because of a tie for first place. The following tournament rules should be applied but AGC's may set up their system differently. Check with your AGC.

- Award 3 points for a win; 1 point for a tie; 0 points for a loss
- Head-to-head result between two, three, four or five teams involved. Using a three way tie as an example: A beat B; B tied C; C beat A. A is 1-1-0=3 points. B is 0-1-1=1 point. C is 1-0-1= 4 points. C is the winner with three tie breaker points. If still tied, proceed below.
- Most wins during the tournament.
- Greatest goal differential during the tournament.
- Fewest goals allowed during the tournament.
- Total goals scored during the tournament.
- Coin toss.

YOUTH COACHES

Coaches and player-coaches who are 18 years old and younger must have an adult, preferable a parent, who will be responsible for the team throughout the season for administration and for the general behavior and safety of players and supporters of the team at practices and games. Youth coached teams will not be allowed to play until a sponsoring adult has consented in writing to assume these responsibilities.

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration fees are set by the Board of Directors based upon the anticipated expenses for the coming season. No player, however, is denied the opportunity to play solely on the basis of a



family's inability to pay the registration fee. MYS has a Scholarship Fund and any family can apply by filling out the Scholarship Form on our website and mailing it to the MYS Treasurer.

MYS offers preferred fees to those families who register on time. All fees are posted on our website each season.

REFUNDS

No refunds will be made.

COACH TRAINING CLINICS

Coach training is mandatory for all recreation and travel coaches in McLean. The backbone of the program is a modular "F" license course. Three age specific six-hour modules are: (1) coaching U6, U7 and U8; (2) coaching U8, U9 and U10; (3) coaching U10, U11 and U12. Each course consists of two hours of classroom lecture, two hours of on-field work and two hours of on-field demonstration with age-appropriate players. New coaches (those coaches new in an age group) are required to be certified by taking their age appropriate group course by the start of their second season. Continuing coaches (those previously coaching in an age group) must maintain continuous certification.

Please see Coach License Program for more specific information. See Coach License Course Schedule for course schedules or call the MYS Director of Coaching.

PLAYING FIELDS

Fields are crucial to MYS's program. Keeping fields in good condition is in everyone's interest. Everyone associated with MS can help in keeping the assigned fields playable by following a few rules:

Call the hotline and keep off the fields when they are closed. Any activity on a wet or soggy field, especially with cleats, will tear up the sod and can do permanent damage to the quality of the playing field.

Pick up trash or debris that may be around the field after your team has played

Promptly report acts of vandalism to the Administrator at admin@mcleansoccer.org or 703-506-8068.

MS has "adopted" almost all their County used fields and MS has a program to refurbish problem fields. MS is responsible for cleanliness of all field areas and bleachers. If you notice a problem area, please contact the Administrator.

WHERE PROVIDED, USE THE PORTABLE GOALS AND PLAY ACROSS THE WIDTH OF THE FIELD. VARY THE POSITION OF THE PORTABLE GOALS TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO THE SAME AREAS OVER AND OVER.

PRACTICE FIELDS & PRACTICES

Each coach is mailed a practice field reservation form prior to each season. They must be returned on time in order to assure that you will receive your previous practice field. If the form is not received on time your field will be released to the first coach requesting it. If you are a new



coach, you should contact the hotline, 703-761-1601, field box, for a field. The practice day and time are up to the coach and availability of fields. Practice fields will not be assigned unless all team officials have completed the Kid Safe form (see Risk Management).

FIELD SET-UP & EQUIPMENT

MYS organizes field preparation so that coaches have no involvement with this activity. The nets are left in place throughout the season and our groundskeeper lines and mow the fields each week. Corner flags are generally put up by volunteers who are paid by the season. If you wish to volunteer for corner flag set up and be paid call the Administrator. If you notice damage to any of our equipment please, call the Administrator. Please do not remove corner flags from the fields.

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Portable goals should be anchored at all times. Please be sure to re-anchor a goal if it is moved. On most fields MS provides sand bags to anchor portable goals. If you remove the sandbag to move the goal, replace the sandbag.

FIELD MAINTENANCE

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PETS ON GAME DAY

Pets are prohibited from attending games sponsored by MYS. Coaches are asked to communicate this rule to their parents before the first game each season.

GAME CANCELLATION

In the event of bad weather or poor field conditions, MYS may make a decision to play or cancel. Please call the hotline at 703-761-1601 or check with MYS website. If there is no message or you are not contacted by your AGC you can assume all games will be played. AGC's have the authority to cancel games later in the day if weather conditions deteriorate. Once at the field only the referee has the authority to cancel.

If, at the beginning of the day, all games are cancelled for the entire day, please stay off the fields for the ENTIRE DAY regardless of whether weather conditions improve.

REFEREES & ASSISTANT REFEREES

MYS recruits its own referees and assistant referees. They are trained and licensed by the United States Soccer Federation. MYS games are played under FIFA rules, with certain modifications. The referees and assistant referees are trained in these modifications as well. Only Board



approved modifications to the rules are allowed. Neither coaches nor AGC are allowed to make further modifications.

The referees' major responsibility is to maintain control of the game. The assistant referees assist the referee in this responsibility. This extends to control of coaches and spectators as well as players.

In soccer, referees are given greater discretionary leeway in making "judgment" calls than in any other sport. This leeway is often misunderstood by players, coaches and spectators alike. Players and spectators sometimes will question a referee's calls, particularly in a closely contested game, and feel strongly enough to want to lodge a complaint with MS against the referee. The vast majority of these complaints revolve around "judgment calls," in which the referee's judgment or opinion will always prevail.

MYS is interested, however, in knowing about those situations where a coach feels that a referee's behavior was inappropriate during play, or when a coach feels that officiating has become inconsistent. MS provides each coach a "Referee Comment Card" for each game of the season. MYS encourages all coaches to complete the card and mail it in for every game of the season. The only way our Director of Referees can see a problem pattern of one referee is to read it consistently in the Comment Card. Obtain the referee and assistant referees' names PRIOR to the game, not after. If you mail one card in all season with a complaint about a referee it will carry less weight than if you were diligent in sending your cards in all season. It is the best way to improve your referees

In the past, mistreatment of referees by coaches and spectators in particular, has made retention of good referees difficult. The best referees tend to be those with the most experience. Thus, it is necessary that MYS referees receive the respect they are due. No comment or complaint regarding officiating should be addressed to the referee. Such comments or complaints should be addressed to the Director of Referees. League officials, who are certified referees or referee instructors, will be responsible for additional training. In addition, league officials, who are certified referees or referee instructors are constantly out at the fields monitoring and evaluating our referees

MYS employs certified assistant referees in older age groups based on availability. Where certified assistant referees are not available, MYS uses club, or volunteer, assistant referees who have responsibility for noting only in and out of touch and direction.

RISK MANAGEMENT

MYS participates in the mandated US Youth Soccer program called Kid Safe. Kid Safe is a risk management program designed to foster safe circumstances for every person, and especially every child, who participates in a US Youth Soccer affiliated activity. It is a program to inform all US Youth Soccer volunteers and employees concerning the risks associated with youth programs.

All adult coaches, assistant coaches, referees and travel team managers must complete a Kid Safe volunteer application and disclosure form in order to be a volunteer. Any other adult who may be alone with children must also complete a form. Yet, we do recognize the difference between volunteerism and parental responsibility. Moms and Dads who typically drive car pools



for children or who take a child home at the end of practice to help out another parent are not required to complete the form.

Our program leaves no room for options of completing the Kid Safe form. If you are in a position that requires the form to be completed and you refuse to complete it, you will not be able to participate in our program.

The forms are kept in absolute confidentiality. The form will be updated every two to four years. It is the intent of MS, VYSA and USYSA to deny a position to any person who has been convicted of sexual abuse, physical abuse or exploitation of any minor.

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