



## **Freedom Park Youth Soccer Program**

### **IN HOUSE LAWS OF THE GAME: 3 – 5/ 6 – 8 YEAR OLDS**

#### **SECTION ONE: GENERAL RULES**

- I. PLAYING RULES AND ELIGIBILITY – FIFA rules apply if not modified within. The rules of the Freedom Park Youth Soccer Program are to be strictly adhered to and will be enforced by all members of park district staff.
  - i. All players will register and play at their current grade level, unless otherwise approved by park district personnel.
  - ii. Any youth meeting the Program requirements will be eligible to participate.
- II. SPORTSMANSHIP, TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, PROFANITY, JEWELRY - The actions of the players, coaches, and referees, must be above reproach. Coaches must make sure their conduct is proper in every respect and must make sure that their players and spectators do the same. The use of tobacco is strictly prohibited on the playing field, on the players' bench, and by any player. Alcoholic beverages and any substance abuse in any form are strictly prohibited within the confines of the parks. The use of profanity and obscene gestures by any player, coach, referee, spectator, family member or parent/guardian is prohibited. Players will be prohibited from wearing any form of jewelry. Players found to be wearing jewelry will be told to remove it by the referee. Medical alert or religious bracelets/necklaces are not considered to be jewelry, but must be secured to the body.
- III. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY - All parents/guardians, referees, and coaches will be required to sign a Code of Conduct
  - i. Parents must shoulder responsibility and take initiative to make the program successful. Each parent should join in the total effort. There is opportunity for all to participate. Parents, spectators and family members must make sure their conduct is proper in every respect, demonstrate GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP and make sure their children and players follow the same conduct.

- ii. Each coach is ultimately responsible for the conduct of their team's spectators. If there is a problem with disruptive spectators, the referee is to warn the coach of the offending spectators. The coach shall then speak to the involved parties in an effort to rectify the situation. Should this fail, the spectators may be asked to leave the field and the coach may receive a yellow or red card. In extreme cases, the referee can suspend the game.

IV. CLEAN-UP - All coaches, players, and parents/guardians are responsible for making sure all garbage is properly disposed of at the end of all games. This includes schools as well as Park District fields. Please help keep our fields, stands, and parking lot areas clean.

#### V. SCHEDULING

- i. SEASON SCHEDULE – The league plays outdoor soccer. As such, play is separated into fall and spring seasons. The spring season runs from approximately the end of April until the end of July. The fall season runs from approximately the end of August until the end of October.

- 1. Each regular season will have at least 7 scheduled games, followed by a playoff tournament.
- 2. The top 4 teams will play a single elimination tournament for the championship.

- ii. SCHEDULE CHANGES - There will be no changes in a team's scheduled game date, time, or location unless authorized by the League Coordinator or district program staff. All games scheduled at the start of the season should be played as scheduled except for the following circumstances:

- 1. In the event of Park District cancellation due to inclement weather
- 2. In the event of Park District needing to cancel for other reasons
- 3. It is not acceptable or permitted to request a game reschedule for the following reasons:
  - a. Too few players – Games will be played short sided if necessary
  - b. Coach and/or assistant is unable to make the game – Parent should be recruited to coach

- iii. RESCHEDULING OF RAIN OUTS AND SUSPENDED GAMES - The League Coordinator or Program staff will attempt to reschedule all games, however, reschedules are not guaranteed. Games may be made up during a regularly scheduled practice.

- iv. GAMES PER WEEK – Teams will typically play one or two games per week, at certain times the schedule may require three. Game day/time will be determined based on field availability and league age.
- v. PRACTICES – Teams will typically practice one or two days per week. Practice days/time will be determined based on field availability and league age.

#### VI. Standings

- i. Running standings will be kept throughout the season to determine the teams that will make the playoffs.
- ii. Tie-breakers will be 1) forfeits, 2) head-to-head record, 3) head-to-head goals/goals against differential, 4) overall goals/goals against differential.

## **SECTION 2 - PLAYERS, FIELD AND EQUIPMENT**

- I. PLAYER ATTENDANCE - Players are encouraged to attend all games and practices. If a player is unable to attend a practice or a game, a courtesy call should be made to the coach as soon as possible.
- II. UNIFORMS/EQUIPMENT - All players must wear their issued team uniform during the game.
  - i. In cold weather players will be able to wear sweatshirts, jackets and/or long pants under their uniforms. Gloves and hats may be allowed.
  - ii. Jerseys must be tucked in.
  - iii. Shin guards are strongly suggested.
  - iv. Footwear - Tennis shoes or soft-cleated soccer shoes are acceptable but soccer cleats are recommended. No metal spikes are allowed.
- III. SUBSTITUTIONS - There are unlimited substitutions during the course of a game.
  - v. Substitutions may occur during any of the following occasions: between quarters/halves, either team's throw-in, either team's goal kick, after a scored goal, after an injury and when play is stopped.
- IV. PLAYING TIME - Each player shall play a minimum of 50% of the game, providing equal playing time for all players.
- V. COURTESY RULE / SLAUGHTER RULE - The slaughter rule dictates that if a team is winning by three (3) goals, the coach in the lead should begin to pull back his/her players. When up by four (4) goals, the winning team must remove a player and when up by six (6) goals the winning team must remove a total of two players. If a team is up by six goals (6) with 5

minutes remaining in the game, this will be considered a slaughter situation and the referee will end the game. This is not optional for either the winning or losing coach.

- VI. CASTS – A player with a cast must submit a medical release signed by his/her doctor to the park district. Players may play with a soft “cast” if, in the opinion of the coaches, the cast is not a hazard to the individual or any other player on the field. Soft casts must include at least one inch of foam padding on either side of the cast.

### **SECTION 3 - REFEREES**

- I. All games will be officiated by a referee who is certified.
- II. There will be at least one referee at all games.
- III. If, by ten minutes after the scheduled game time, the referee has not arrived and both coaches have spoken to the Soccer League Coordinator, coaches can agree that they will officiate the game. If they do so, they will take the field and each coach should officiate one half of the game. The coaches will then be responsible for officiating the game to the best of their ability.
- IV. All decisions of the referees are considered final and not subject to dispute by coaches, players or spectators.
- V. No one is allowed to argue judgment calls with the referee. Doing so is grounds for ejection via red card. Should an infraction take place that demand the showing of a red card to a coach, said coach must leave the park promptly upon designating a responsible adult from their team to finish the game.
- VI. A coach can respectfully request an explanation of a call at half-time or following the game.
- VII. Each referee has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in the FIFA rules.
- VIII. Physical contact with a referee is not permitted and will not be tolerated. Anyone making contact with a referee will be immediately ejected and suspended from further participation in all Park District programs pending review of the incident by the park district staff. It shall also be noted that physical contact with a referee can result in being reported to the police department and subject to arrest and prosecution.
- IX. Questions and/or comments regarding referees are to be directed to the Soccer League Coordinator, or Program staff.
- X. Referees will note any incidents that occur during a game on their game card. Incidents will then be followed up by the Park District using an Incident Report Form.

## **SECTION 4 - GAME RULES**

### **I. STARTING THE GAME**

- i. Each team can have a maximum of seven (7) players on the field at one time, and must have a minimum of five (5).
- ii. Each game will begin with a kick-off in the center circle of the field.

II. PROTESTED and/or APPEALED GAMES - There will be no protested games. There will be no appeals. The referee's decision/ruling is absolute and final.

### **III. FORFEITS**

- i. All games will start on time regardless of the amount of players. Teams will then have seven (7) minutes to field the designated minimum for game play.
  1. If at that time the designated minimum has been reached, the game will continue and be determined official.
  2. If one team does not field the designated minimum, the game will end and be determined a forfeit.
  3. In the event neither team fields the designated minimum, the game will end and both teams will receive a forfeit.
- ii. A forfeit will result in a loss in the standings and will be designated with an (F).

### **IV. PLAYING CONDITIONS**

- i. Rain
  1. A game stopped due to rain is at the referee's discretion.
  2. Any game stopped due to rain or storms during the first half of the game is not an official game. The game will restart with the score being zero – zero (0-0).
  3. Any game stopped during the second half of the game will be over and the team leading at that point is considered the winner.
- ii. Poor Playing Conditions
  1. In the event of poor playing conditions and/or bad weather, the Park District will make the decision if the game(s) should be played. Once the game has started, only the referee can stop the game.
- iii. Electrical and Thunderstorms

1. All games and practices must be stopped and the players cleared from the field/park. Any coach refusing to comply will be immediately suspended until the Park District staff reviews the incident.
  - a. There will be a mandatory thirty (30) minute wait, from the last lightning seen or thunder heard, to see if the storm passes before any play can be resumed. However, the game or practice must be canceled if the severe weather has continued for thirty (30) minutes.
2. At the referee's discretion, if the storm passes the game can restart from the point where it left off provided the field is playable and weather conditions are safe.

V. For practices, the coaches are responsible for making these decisions.

#### VI. PLAYER INJURY

- i. In case of an injury, play will stop when the referee blows the whistle. The whistle will be blown when the team with the injured player has possession of the ball. In serious instances, play will immediately stop.
- ii. All players shall take a knee while the injured player is being attended to.

#### VII. BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

##### iv. Out of play

1. The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the line on the ground or in the air.
2. The ball is out of play when the referee has stopped play.

##### v. In Play

1. The ball rebounds from a goalpost, crossbar, or corner flag and remains in the field of play.
2. The ball rebounds from the referee when they are on the field of play.

#### VIII. OFFSIDE

- vi. There is no off-side called in age groups from 3-8 years.
- vii. Coaches are advised to teach the basics of offside in 6-8 years and encourage trying to play on-side during games towards the end of the season. Please do not encourage playing off-side on purpose (cherry picking).

#### IX. THROW-INS

- viii. Throw-ins are handled in the following manner:

1. When the whole of the ball passes over the touchline, either on the ground or in the air.
2. Throw-in is taken from the point where it crossed the touchline.
3. It is awarded to the opponents of the last team that touched the ball.
4. Teams will receive two chances to perform a proper throw-in in order to emphasize the importance of learning the fundamentals.

X. CORNER KICKS - Corner kicks are to be performed when the ball crosses the back line out-of-bounds on the field and is sent there by the defending team. The attacking team takes the corner kick from the corner circle.

XI. GOAL KICKS - Goal kick is awarded when the ball crosses the back line and is sent there by the attacking team. The defending team takes the goal kick from the edge of the goal box.

#### XII. FOULS

- i. All fouls will be at the referee's discretion.
- ii. All fouls will result in a free kick.

#### XIII. FREE KICK

- i. For both direct and indirect free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken.
  1. A goal is awarded if a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal.
  2. A goal can only be scored on an indirect free kick after another player touches it.
  3. The kicker does not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.
  4. Slide tackling is not permitted. Any offense will result in a direct free kick being awarded to the opposing team and a yellow card for the offending player.

#### XIV. PENALTY KICKS

- ii. A penalty kick is awarded against a team that commits an offense inside its own penalty area\* and while the ball is in play. \*Referees will decide the penalty area at the start of each game.

- iii. A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.
  - iv. No players except the kicker and the goal keeper are permitted in the penalty area until after the ball is kicked.
- XV. METHOD OF SCORING - A goal is scored when the ball completely crosses the goal line, between posts and beneath crossbar.
- XVI. TIE GAMES - Games ending in a tie during the regular season shall remain a tie. In the playoffs, there will be a five (5) minute overtime period. If still tied after the overtime period, it will move to a shoot-out.
- XVII. DURATION OF A GAME
- v. Games shall be divided into two twenty (20) minute halves.
  - vi. There shall be a half-time break of five (5) minutes.
- XVIII. MISCONDUCT - the method that a referee uses to indicate misconduct on behalf of a player or coach is by showing a Yellow Card or Red Card.
- vii. Yellow Card
    - 1. In the event that a player/coach receives a yellow card, it shall be a warning. A second yellow card results in a red card.
  - viii. Red Card
    - 2. If a player/coach receives a red-card, the player/coach shall immediately be removed from the game. Suspension shall follow for the next scheduled game.
      - a. Suspension - The player/coach shall not be permitted to attend the next game as a player/coach or spectator.
      - b. An Incident Report will be filled out by the Park District with in the same day of the offense and reviewed by the Executive Director.
      - c. Enforcement of the suspension is the responsibility of the park district staff, soccer coordinator, and referee.
- XIX. ENDING THE GAME - Upon completion of the game, both opposing teams and coaches shall meet on the field and shake hands.