

**SHORT-SIDED GAMES
DIVISION U6 & U8
REGION 13 GUIDELINES**

INTRODUCTION

The goal of Division U6 & U8 play (in addition to fun, physical and mental development, and introduction to the game of Soccer) is to introduce age-appropriate ball handling skills. Region 13 has implemented short-sided games for Divisions U6 & U8. Short-sided games are achieved by splitting each team into two "squads" with the same number of players (plus or minus 1) on each squad. On game day, both squads will play simultaneous games on adjacent smaller fields. Touching the ball is the central purpose of the game from a training perspective and the "score" of the game never counts and should not be actively considered.

SPECIAL RULES

This section contains Region 13's special rules for Division U6 & U8 play. However, all Referees are urged to read these rules in connection with those that apply to play in Divisions U10 and higher. Many of the issues covered in upper division play are also applicable to Division U6 & U8 Referees. More importantly, the more you know about refereeing, the more fun you will have.

FIELD / BALL / GOALS

- Small rectangular fields.
- No Penalty Area.
- No Corner Arcs.
- The Goal Area may be defined by a semi-circle.
- The Center Circle has a 5 yard radius.
- A size 3 ball is used.
- Goals are small, free-standing units provided by the Region.

PLAYERS / EQUIPMENT

- No minimum or maximum number of players.
- No Goalkeeper.
- Every player must be given the opportunity to play the entire game but some players may need or want to come off the field from time to time and this should be permitted. Referees should allow coaches to decide about the number of players unless they disagree. If the coaches disagree, the Referee should help coaches arrive at an agreement for that game and refer them to their Division Coach for clarification in subsequent matches.
- Competing squads **MAY** be numerically **IMBALANCED**. If, however, competing squads are numerically imbalanced by 2 or more players (for example, 6 on one side, 4 on the other), coaches **must** encourage players to shift sides, as necessary, to even out the number of players on each squad. Coaches are encouraged to permit all players to play the entire game by shifting sides.

- Each player must wear their team uniform, including jersey, shorts and socks.
- Shin guards are MANDATORY for both practices and games.
- Personal adornments, such as earrings, bracelets, hard hair accessories, watches, etc., are NOT permitted, nor are casts or hard braces or supports.

GAME LENGTH / QUARTER AND HALF TIME BREAKS

- Division U6 -- 32 minute games, four approximate 8 minute quarters.
- Division U8 -- 40 minute games, four approximate 10 minute quarters.
- Quarter breaks should be taken when the ball otherwise goes out of play, between quarters one and two and between quarters three and four, at approximately the middle of each half of the game, and should be kept as brief as possible, all at the Referee's discretion. The game clock SHALL BE RUNNING during all quarter breaks. In the event there are substitute players, they may be rotated into the game at quarter breaks.
- Half Time break between quarters two and three must commence at the expiration of one half of the game time, i.e. 16 minutes for Division U6 and 20 minutes for Division U8, and shall be five minutes in duration. The game clock SHALL NOT RUN during the Half Time break.
- The Referee must **END THE GAME ON TIME**.

COACHES ON THE FIELD

- Division U6 -- For the entire season, one coach from each team MAY be on the field with each squad, for player support and coaching purposes only.
- Division U8 -- For the September games only, one coach from each team MAY be on the field with each squad, for player support and coaching purposes only. Thereafter, no coaches are permitted on the field for coaching purposes. Coaches may enter the field to care for an injured player when signaled by the Referee.

REFEREES

- The Referee shall be the sole authority on the field, in accordance with FIFA Laws, AYSO rules and Region 13 policy.
- Players, coaches and spectators must accept the Referee's ruling, even if they feel the call was incorrect. Remember, Referees at this level are also new to the game.
- Coaches and spectators must provide an example of good sportsmanship and tolerance and at all times by treating the Referee with respect. It is never appropriate to claim or suggest that the Referee determined the outcome of a play or game.
- One or two center Referees may officiate any particular game, at the Referees' discretion. There shall be no Assistant Referees for Division U6 & U8 games.

KICKOFF

- A coin toss will determine the team kicking off at the beginning of the game. The second half will commence with a Kickoff by the other team. The winner of the coin toss must choose which goal to defend, the loser kicks off. Teams switch

ends at the half and squads switch fields so that players on any team have the opportunity to play with all the players on the other team.

- After a goal has been "scored", a Kickoff shall be taken by the team scored upon. All opponents must be outside the center circle, i.e. at least five yards away from the Center Mark.

THROW-INS

- Opponents must be five yards away from the ball on a Throw-In.
- In the event a Throw In is taken improperly, a second Throw-In by the same player should be allowed after the Referee explains the proper method to the player. If the retake fails, the Referee and others should praise the effort, instruct, and a Throw-In awarded to the other team. However, the Referee should be mindful of the skill level and ability of the age group involved and judge the Throw-In accordingly without detracting from the flow and spirit of play.

GOAL KICK

- A Goal Kick may be taken at any point along the Goal Area Arc, or anywhere within the Goal Area.
- Opponents must be at least five yards away from the ball.

CORNER KICK

- A Corner Kick shall be taken near the intersection of the Goal Line and Touch Line, at the discretion of the Referee.
- Opponents must be at least five yards away from the ball.

FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- A **Direct Free Kick** (DFK) shall be awarded at the point of infraction, or at the top of the defending Goal Area, whichever is **further** away from the defending Goal Area, **for all fouls including deliberately handling the ball or any misconduct**. A goal MAY be scored directly from a Direct Free Kick.
- All opponents must be at least five yards away from the point of **any free kick**. Defenders may, however, form a line in front of their goal.
- Referees **should not** use yellow or red cards in Division U6 & U8 games. Misconduct will result in a Direct Free Kick. The Referee should counsel the offending player on the importance of player safety and sporting behavior in such instances. In the unlikely event an extreme situation develops, it should be handled mainly by the coach.
- In the event the Referee determines that a coach or spectator should leave the game area, the coach will comply and/or assist in enforcing the Referee's decision with regard to any spectator.
- Penalty Kicks shall not apply. In all instances, the Referee should explain the infraction and/or reason for the Referee's call to the offending player.
- The Referee has the discretion and authority to terminate any game.

"NO PARKING" IN OR ADJACENT TO THE GOAL AREAS

The purpose of the No Parking rule is to avoid having a player simply standing near either goal and having no opportunity to play the ball. The objective of the No Parking rule is to enhance every player's opportunity to have maximum touches on the ball. The spirit of the No Parking rule is that there shall be **NO GOAL TENDING AND NO "CHERRY PICKING"**. Coaches must cooperate in this regard and assist the Referee in enforcing this rule. Sometimes the players themselves decide to park near the goal and this should be discouraged by the coach and Referee.

- No Defender or Attacker may be positioned or stand in, or immediately adjacent to, either Goal Area. Either side may enter either Goal Area to play the ball, but they must then exit with the flow of play. Coaches may not "stake out" a player in a position to score or essentially use a player as a goal keeper.
- The Referee shall have sole discretion to determine if the "No Parking" rule has been violated.
- If in the Referee's opinion the "parked" player is not involved in the play, the offending player should be instructed by the Referee and must relocate.
- If in the Referee's opinion the "parked" player is involved in the play, the offending player should be instructed by the Referee. In such circumstance, a Direct Free Kick shall be awarded the attacking team if the offending player is a member of the defending team. A Direct Free Kick shall be awarded the defending team if the offending player is a member of the attacking team.
- If an attacking team is awarded a Direct Free Kick, it should be taken from the top of the Goal Area. If a defending team is awarded a Direct Free Kick, it should be taken from the point of infraction.

OFFSIDE

- The offside rule is not enforced in Division U6 & U8.