

LOWER MERION SOCCER CLUB

FALL INTRAMURAL PROGRAM – LEVEL 4 GAME RULES

The following is a brief description of the rules that will be used for level 4 age divisions (the Seniors and Electrons Divisions). The rules have been modified so as to maximize player enjoyment. Coaches are always asked to remember that the primary objective of the program is **ENJOYMENT OF THE GAME OF SOCCER**.

LAW I -- THE FIELD

- Approximately 70 yards long, 50 yards wide
- The field will have a midfield line which runs from one sideline to the other
- Goalie boxes are 14 yards long and 35 yards wide

LAW II -- THE BALL

- Size 4 ball

LAW III -- NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- Maximum of 16 players on a roster
- Teams play 9v9 (eight field players and a goalie)
- All players are to get EQUAL playing time. Star players and coaches' children are NOT to be given extra playing time
- Teams are to change goalies at halftime. They should change goalies at most one time each half.
- Minimize the number of times substitutions are made to avoid time wasting
- Substitutions may be made at the following times:
 - When your team has a throw in or when the opposing team has a throw in (but only if they substitute)
 - When either team has a goal kick
 - When play is stopped because of an injury
 - At halftime
 - After a goal has been scored
- Special LMSC Intramural Rules For Lopsided Games:
 - A team losing by three goals is to add an extra player. Play continues 10v9.
 - A team with a four-goal lead must remove one player from the field. Play continues 10v8.
 - A team with a five-goal lead must remove another player. Play continues 10v7.
 - A team with a six-goal lead must remove another player. Play continues 10v6.
 - A team with a seven-goal lead must remove another player. Play CANNOT continue 10v5. **The game ends. The team with a seven-goal lead forfeits the game.**
 - **US SOCCER RULES REQUIRE A TEAM TO HAVE A MINIMUM OF SIX PLAYERS ON THE FIELD IN 9V9 SOCCER.**
 - **REVERSE THE ABOVE ACTIONS WHEN THE LEAD BEGINS TO SHRINK.**

LAW IV -- PLAYER EQUIPMENT

- Players should wear soccer shoes with rubber cleats. Sneakers are allowed, but are not as safe
- SHIN GUARDS ARE MANDATORY
- Navy (or black) shorts
- White soccer socks worn OVER the shin guards
- Loose fitting sweat pants are allowed on cold days. Long pants should be avoided since they restrict player movement
- Goalies must wear a yellow pinnie shirt color (provided by the coach)
- Earrings MUST be removed or at a minimum completely taped up so they cannot get yanked off
- Arm casts may only be worn if it does not cover the elbow and is totally covered in bubble wrap or foam rubber. The player must also have medical clearance from his / her doctor in order to play
- Necklaces must be removed or tucked under the shirt so they do not fly around and hit someone in the eye. It is preferred that the necklace is taped to the player's chest
- Bracelets and watches must be removed
- Baseball hats may not be worn since the brim of the hat can injure an opponent

LAW V -- THE REFEREE

- One referee per field
- The referee is responsible for keeping game time, **starting the game on time** and ending the game on time. It is important that the referees get the coaches to start the game on time
- It is very important that the referee start the on time so that he / she does not have to cut playing time at the end of the game
- If there is no referee, the coaches will need to find someone else to officiate
- **Coaches are not to yell at or try to intimidate the referee.** If they should disagree with a call, they should talk to the referee in private in between periods or after the game. Referees are to report any coach or adult who is verbally abusive to the LMSC Officers

LAW VI -- ASSISTANT REFEREES (LINESMAN)

- Assistant referees (AR's) will not be assigned. If needed, the referee may ask for another person to signal if a ball has gone out of play

LAW VII -- DURATION OF THE GAME

- Games consist of two 25 minute halves.
- The referee will need to end the game right on the hour so that the next game can start on time
- There will be a five minute break at halftime.

LAW VIII -- THE START OF PLAY

- Opponents must be in their own half of the field and at least eight yards from the ball
- Both teams will switch sides and direction of play for the second half.
- Play starts with a pass to a teammate. Teams may NOT simply blast the ball down the field. International rules now state that kickoffs may go in any direction (previously kickoffs had to go forward).

LAW IX -- BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

- The ball is in play until it goes ENTIRELY over a sideline or end line
- Play shall continue in all cases until the referee blows the whistle
- Coaches and spectators are not to tell players to stop playing unless the whistle has sounded

LAW X -- METHOD OF SCORING

- The ENTIRE ball must go through the goal (whether on the ground or in the air)
- Coaches are asked to minimize the importance of the score
- LMSC does NOT keep the scores of games
- Standings are not kept during the season

LAW XI -- OFFSIDE

- The standard offside rule will be used. Offside is only to be called if the offending player is involved with the play or interfering with the play. A player in an offside position who is not involved in the play is not to be called for offside
- Referees and coaches need to thoroughly understand this rule
- An indirect free kick will be awarded for an offside infraction

LAW XII -- FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

- Fouls will be enforced according to standard soccer rules and will be punished by a direct kick or indirect kick, depending on the type of foul committed.
- The referee is to stop play and briefly EXPLAIN the call in 15 words or less
- In EVERY age groups, up through professional, a hand ball violation is NOT called if the ball hits a player in the arm when his arm is at his side and the player could not possibly avoid having the ball hit his arm.
- Slide tackles are ILLEGAL in all LMSC intramural divisions. This will be strictly enforced by the referees. Coaches are instructed to not allow their players to slide tackle.
- Fouls resulting in a DIRECT free kick include:
 - intentional hand ball
 - tripping or attempting to trip an opponent
 - kicking or attempting to kick an opponent
 - striking or attempting to strike an opponent
 - jumping at an opponent
 - charging an opponent
 - pushing
 - holding
 - elbowing
- A goal may be scored directly from a direct free kick. If a foul resulting in a direct free kick is committed inside of the penalty area, a penalty shot is awarded.
- Fouls resulting in an INDIRECT free kick include:
 - offsides
 - dangerous play
 - obstruction (shielding when not within playing distance of the ball)
 - the goalie picking up an intentional pass from a teammate
 - the goalie receiving the ball directly from a teammate's throw-in
 - the goalie taking more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his hands before releasing it
 - slide tackles are illegal in the intramural program and result in an indirect free kick
- **Per Rule Of US Soccer: PLAYERS IN THESE AGE GROUPS MAY NOT HEAD THE BALL.** Intentionally heading a ball will be treated as a foul with an indirect free kick awarded.
- A goal may not be scored directly from an indirect free kick. The ball must first touch another player (from either team) before entering the goal.
- If an indirect free kick is awarded in a team's offensive penalty area, a penalty kick is NOT awarded
- The referee may caution a player (issue a yellow card) for:
 - bad behavior
 - dissent of the referee
 - persistent infringement of the rules
 - intentionally delaying the restart of play
 - not giving the proper distance on an opponent's restart
 - entering or leaving the field of play without permission from the referee
- For LMSC intramurals, a player receiving a yellow card must leave the play for at least five minutes. The player may be substituted for
- The referee may remove a player (red card) from a game for:
 - serious foul play
 - violent conduct
 - spitting at anybody
 - foul or abusive language
 - intentionally fouling an opponent or handling the ball to previous a clear goal scoring opportunity
 - receiving a second yellow card in the game
- If the player receives a red card, he may not be substituted for. The team will have to play down a player

LAW XIII -- FREE KICKS

- Direct free kicks and indirect free kicks are taken from where the offense occurred. For a foul occurring inside of a team's defensive penalty area, the ball may be moved up to the top of the penalty area
- Defensive players must be 8 yards from the ball on all free kicks
- The defensive team may make a wall on the goal line for an indirect free kick in front of their goal.
- A team may score on a direct free kick.
- For an indirect free kick, the ball must touch a second player (either team) for a goal to count.
- A penalty resulting in a direct free kick inside of the opponent's penalty area will result in a penalty shot

LAW XIV -- PENALTY KICKS

- Penalty shots are taken from 9 yard away for these divisions.
- The goalie must be positioned on the goal line, but may move along the goal line
- All other players must be outside of the penalty area and behind the ball until the kick is taken.

LAW XV -- THROW INS

- Standard throw in rules apply in these divisions and will be strictly enforced.

LAW XVI -- GOAL KICK

- A Goal Kick is taken to restart the game when an attacking team player plays the ball entirely over the goal line (but not into the goal)
- Goal kicks are taken by the defensive team from the top of the goalie box. Note that this is the larger 14 yard box, not the smaller 6 yard box (which is only used in travel team games).
- A goal kick should be a pass to a teammate.
- The player taking the goal kick may not play the ball again until it is played by another player.

LAW XVII -- CORNER KICK

- A Corner Kick is taken to restart the game when a defender plays the ball entirely over the goal line (but not into the goal)
- Corner kicks are taken by the offensive team from within a yard of the corner of the field
- All opponents must be at least eight yards away from the ball
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but coaches should instruct their players to pass

LAW XVIII -- COMMON SENSE

When in doubt, common sense should be used to interpret the laws and maintain the spirit of the game