



# ***CLASSIC***

**Montgomery Soccer, Inc.  
Classic Program Manual  
Fall 2017-Spring 2018**

# **CLASSIC LEAGUE MANUAL 2017-2018**

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# FOREWORD

This manual has been developed as a reference guide, providing information to enhance your understanding of MSI programs.

Since it is a reference guide, you are encouraged to refer to it frequently. It will answer most of your questions as well as the questions of your players and their families. **Coaches: no matter how long you have been with MSI, please read the Important MSI Rules.** New coaches should take time to read the complete manual.

If you do not find what you need here, please contact the MSI Office or visit the MSI website. MSI staff will be happy to help you (refer to the list of staff on the inside front cover).

*This manual is an official publication of the programs and rules of Montgomery Soccer, Incorporated. It supersedes all previously published manuals.*

# MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Montgomery Soccer, Inc. is to promote the game of soccer to the youth of Montgomery County through programs that emphasize each child's enjoyment, skill development, personal growth, passion for the game and team experience, consistent with the principles of Fair Play and Good Sportsmanship.

# HISTORY

MSI was organized in 1971 by a small group of parents who were interested in seeing their children learn to play and enjoy soccer. Today MSI has grown from a handful of families and their children into a well-organized youth program that attracts more than 14,000 boys and girls during Spring and Fall play.

# ORGANIZATION

## AFFILIATIONS

MSI is affiliated with two state associations, Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA) and the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA) for its Premier, Classic and Recreation programs (Players in the District of Columbia are officially part of VYSA.)

MSYSA is affiliated with the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA or U.S. Youth Soccer), which, in turn, is affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF or U.S. Soccer), and it is a member of FIFA, soccer's world governing body.

## MSI OFFICIALS AND THEIR DUTIES

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Board of Directors, consisting of the following elected officials, governs MSI:

#### CHAIRMAN

As the principal executive officer, the chairman supervises and controls all of the business and affairs authorized by the Board. The chairman also serves as the Chair of the Executive Committee.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> VICE CHAIRS

The vice chairs perform duties prescribed by the board or the chairman. In the absence of the chairman, the 1<sup>st</sup> vice chair is authorized to perform all duties of the chairman. In the absence of both the chairman and the 1<sup>st</sup> vice chair, the 2<sup>nd</sup> vice chair is authorized to perform all duties of the chairman.

#### SECRETARY

The secretary records all votes and minutes at all meetings of the Board.

#### TREASURER

The treasurer is the chief financial officer who has charge and custody of all funds and prepares reports to the Board at least four times a year as well as to the full membership at the Annual General Meeting in January.

#### PARLIAMENTARIAN

The Parliamentarian advises the Chairman, other officers, committees, and members on matters of parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian is frequently used to assist with procedure during board meetings and the creation or revision of by-laws.

Standing committees are appointed each year by the chairman.

The Board has open meetings at least four times a year. The date, time and place of meetings are published on the MSI website. An annual general meeting (AGM) is held once a year in January. Every registered coach receives written notification of the AGM, by email.

## PAID STAFF

MSI employs a staff who handles the day-to-day operation of MSI and who are responsible to the Board of Directors, but do not have voting power. Refer to the inside cover for a list of employees at the time of publication. An updated list is posted on the MSI website.

**The Director Of Operations** oversees the Recreation and Classic programs, including the day to day operations of all Montgomery Soccer leagues and programs. **The Director of Player Development** oversees the Academy and Premier programs.

## CLASSIC PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

**Classic Liaisons** are experienced, Classic coaches or managers with good administrative, technological, communication and problem-solving skills. MSI selects liaisons to serve as the first point of contact for coaches and managers who have questions. They also help coordinate 1-4 conference coordinators in their age group and are proactive about resolving issues. Liaisons attend two meetings per year. Typically, liaisons devote 1-2 hours per week during the season to these tasks.

**Classic Registrars** are skilled volunteers for and are dedicated to registering players and teams for the MSI Classic League. Each team is assigned a specific registrar to handle their team registration.

**Other Volunteer opportunities** are available for coaches, managers and parents to become involved with as members of various committees within MSI. Examples include the Sportsmanship committee, Sponsorship committee, Coach & Player Development committee, Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee (PRDC), Membership committee and Skills Evaluator. If you are interested in volunteering for any of these positions, please contact the Director of Operations.

## MSI PROGRAMS

### RECREATIONAL PROGRAM

The term "recreational," describes an open program in which players do not tryout for teams, but are placed on teams by Age Group Commissioners (AGCs). Players of all abilities are invited to register and enjoy the game. The coaches are all volunteers. A player may not play concurrently on both a Recreational team and any select team in any league (where players are carded by US Club Soccer, the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA), or the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA)).

Open teams are initially formed by volunteer AGCs, with neighborhood location taken into account when possible. AGCs place on-time returning players and new players on teams, following MSI placement procedures. **Coaches and parents do not place players on teams and may not guarantee placement to potential players.** After the initial season, players will be placed on their current teams if registration deadlines are met, and new players are placed in the order of their registration, as space allows. Transfer requests will be honored on a space-available basis.

The Recreational Program is available from the fall of kindergarten through spring of the 12th grade.

### KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

MSI extends its very popular Recreational Program to kindergarteners, with an emphasis on fun-based introductory games and skills development. The program runs 5 Saturdays each season. Players are NOT formed into competitive teams and do not play an organized league schedule. Rather, each week involves small group games designed to promote individual skill development and enjoyment of the game. Each session will conclude with informal small-sided game play.

### CLASSIC PROGRAM

The MSI Classic Program offers a more competitive level of in-house play to teams from age groups U-10 through U-19. It is a "Select" program in which players must try out and be selected for teams. Classic players may not play on Recreational teams, and they may only play on one Classic team per season in age groups U10-U12. Players on U13 teams and older may 'double card' i.e. play on 2 Classic teams only if the 2 teams are in different age groups.

Playing under the guidance of coaches holding the NSCAA Junior Level VI Diploma, the USSF D-License or higher, or the Classic Coaching Course, the Classic Program provides skillful players the opportunity to continue their development to the highest level possible in Montgomery County and nearby areas. For that reason, Classic seeks out those players and coaches who demonstrate a greater commitment and interest in learning and playing the game. For some, the Classic Program is just the beginning of a youth's competitive soccer experience that may be fully realized at varying levels throughout their association with the game. For others, the program provides the challenges and level of play that promotes and nurtures growth as a soccer athlete.

### CLUB-SPONSORED PREMIER AND ACADEMY TEAMS

Premier soccer is the most competitive level of youth soccer. MSI sponsors teams, in the boy's National Capital Soccer League (NCSL) and Washington Area Girls Soccer League (WAGS). These leagues provide competition among the best U-9 through U-19 youth teams in the greater Washington metropolitan area. Premier players may not play on Recreational teams.

Experienced, well-qualified coaches generally holding a minimum of NSCAA Junior Level VI Diplomas or "D" Coaching Licenses are selected by MSI to coach Montgomery Soccer Club Premier teams, which are formed through a tryout process. The Premier program demands a great commitment from both players and

their parents since Premier players can expect more intense training and travel to out-of-town tournaments, often on holiday weekends. Premier coaches are often asked to provide support to other MSI coaches and programs, as necessary.

The Academy Program is designed to meet the needs of those younger players who exhibit an exceptional capability and commitment to the game for their age. A small, qualified group of U9 and U10 players are selected to play on MSC teams that are coached by individuals who have shown a commitment to emphasizing player development and enjoyment of the game for younger players.

### **ADAPTIVE /TOPSOCCER PROGRAM**

The Adaptive/TOPSoccer Program is a partner of Special Olympics Maryland and serves children ages 3 to 21 with disabilities such as mental retardation, severe learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, and impaired vision or hearing --- any child who would benefit from specialized soccer skills training. The focus is on development, training, and participation, rather than on competition, and is a great opportunity for children with special needs to learn new skills, build physical fitness and self esteem, and have fun playing soccer! Many of our players choose to take advantage of training and competition opportunities designed to meet Special Olympics criteria for advancement in Special Olympics competition at a local and regional level.

The TOPSoccer program takes place over 5 weekends during the fall soccer season..

### **COMMUNITY SOCCER PROGRAM**

Community Soccer is a county program developed by MSI to provide social services in the neediest school communities. Through our Community Soccer Program, MSI offers team organization, volunteer training, uniforms and equipment, scheduling, and other on site support to school children who have no other opportunity to play organized sports.

Participating in MSI Community Soccer provides several advantages for a local school community. The Program offers healthy physical activity that promotes a player's physical development as well as pride in his/her individual accomplishments, team, and school. Equally as important is the involvement of adults. MSI Community Soccer helps to develop adults' skills as organizers, team managers, and coaches, and provides opportunities for parents to get more involved in their kids' lives. The long-term success of the Program depends on our success in developing community volunteers and coaches.

### **SUMMER PROGRAMS**

MSI offers a 4v4 Summer Program for high school players, based upon MSI's 4v4 Rules of the Game. The program is open to high school students, including those entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall and seniors who graduated the previous spring. MSI also offers various "mini-camps" and other training programs throughout the summer.

### **MSI TOURNAMENTS**

MSI sponsors tournaments or friendlies in late March and on Labor Day weekend. Visit the MSI website for more information.

# CLASSIC TEAM COMPOSITION

## AGE GROUPS FOR MSI Classic

Fall 2017/Spring 2018

Age Group	Format	Ball Size	Roster Size	Game Length
U10 (8/1/07-7/31/08)	7v7	4	13 players*	2 30-minute halves
U11 (8/1/06-7/31/07)	8v8	4	14 players	2 30-minute halves
U12 (8/1/05-7/31/06)	8v8	4	14 players	2 30-minute halves
U13 (8/1/04-7/31/05)	11v11	5	18 players	2 35-minute halves
U14 (8/1/03-7/31/04)	11v11	5	18 players	2 35-minute halves
U15 (8/1/02-7/31/03)	11v11	5	21 players	2 35-minutes halves
U16 (8/1/01-7/31/02)	11v11	5	26 players	2 40-minute halves
U17 (8/1/00-7/31/01)	11v11	5	26 players*	2 40-minute halves
U18 (8/1/99-7/31/00)	11v11	5	26 players*	2 40-minute halves
U19 (8/1/98-7/31/99)	11v11	5	26 players*	2 40-minute halves

\* 21 Players is maximum number for any game roster. Up to 5 reserve players allowed to be carded. The only players allowed to play are those on the game roster at that particular game. Only three multiple rostered players are allowed on the 26 player roster.

Classic play begins with the U-10 age group in the Fall of the year. Teams are formed on a “seasonal” year basis, from August 1 through July 31 of the following year. A team must play in the age group of its oldest player or one age group older. The prospective coach of a player who wishes to “play up” two age groups must complete a “2 year exemption request” and have it approved by MSI, after the team has its preliminary roster entered. MSI encourages players to play no more than one age group older. Teams from U10-U15 are only allowed 2 players that are playing ‘up’ two age groups. At the High School age group, exceptions are considered to the maximum number of players playing 2 years ‘up’ as long as all the players are in High School and/or MSI considers that the team has demonstrated a sufficiently competitive level of play in previous seasons. Any High School team interested in rostering players that are not yet in High School should contact MSI for consideration.

A player who has graduated from high school but still falls within the age group birth date guidelines as reflected above IS eligible to play in the Classic program.

A girl may play on a boys team in her age group or one age group older but a boy may not play on a girls team.

## FORMING A CLASSIC TEAM

MSI is a house league, with all teams, players and volunteer coaches participating as “members” of the MSI organization. MSI Classic teams are deemed to be organized by and for the benefit of the youth players that make up each team. Each of those players shall be represented by their parent(s) in all matters relating to the management of the team. In discussions about how the team shall be organized and function, the wishes of all parents shall be taken into consideration, with a democratic approach to all decisions. Essentially, the wishes of a majority of parents shall guide the team. However, it is important to recognize that every group requires leadership, and that teams are encouraged to provide their Head Coach with the latitude to make reasonable decisions for the benefit of the team, so long as those decisions do not substantively contradict the wishes of the majority.

### MSI Classic Team Naming Rules

- Team names will reflect each team’s status as an MSI member by indicating “MSI” as the first portion of the team name. Within the MSI Classic League, since all teams are MSI teams, the “MSI” prefix will be dropped in league schedules. However, if a team participates in a sanctioned, organized competition other than those organized and run within MSI (such as a sanctioned, outside tournament), the team shall be entered and listed with the MSI prefix, eg, “MSI Potomac Lightning”
- Team names may not be reflective or suggestive of any organization other than MSI. This will include

- use of common nicknames for more than one team.
- Appeals for exceptions to this rule will be considered on an extremely limited basis. An example of the kind of exception that is more likely to be approved would be an instance where a parent of two children is the volunteer coach of each of their MSI Classic teams, and would like to have a common nickname for both teams.
- Team nicknames are subject to approval by MSI, and must meet all standards of appropriateness as determined solely by MSI.

### **Adult Officials for MSI Classic Teams**

MSI Classic teams are required to have 2 adults as the team carded officials are allowed to have a maximum of three carded officials. The Head Coach and the Manager must be carded.

All MSI Classic teams must have a parent volunteer identified as the Team Manager or Parent Representative. This volunteer helps with communication between the league and the team and can then perform, or assign to others, the many administrative duties that are required to support a team such as registering the players, team finance, purchasing uniforms, obtaining a practice field, assisting with set up and take down of field equipment, applying to play in tournaments and social activities.

Each MSI Classic team must have a parent volunteer identified as the Team Treasurer. This may or may not be the same person as the Team Manager or Volunteer Head Coach. The Team Treasurer may not be related to any individual receiving compensation from the team.

Most MSI Classic teams are coached by parent volunteers however teams may utilize professional trainers/coaches who may be compensated for their services, and those trainers/coaches may be carded as a Head Coach or Assistant Coach for the team, as well, for purposes of player and adult official registration. A paid Coach may not be the Team Treasurer.

Coaches or trainers may not under any circumstance, require or pressure players/parents to participate in any aspect of additional training, camps, travel etc.

All coaches and trainers (carded or otherwise) must submit to an MSI-conducted background check (which must be completed prior to any involvement with MSI Classic players or teams). MSI reserves the right to deny carding privileges to any coach or trainer at MSI's sole discretion.

MSI will maintain a list of coaches or trainers who wish to work with MSI Classic teams. MSI teams wishing to utilize a non-carded trainer must check with MSI to confirm that said trainer has successfully completed a background check prior to utilizing his/her services. MSI reserves the right to establish minimum and/or ongoing coaching credentials for coaches and trainers.

### **U10-U12 Age Groups**

All new coaches (U-10 through U-12) must apply for their position and are selected based on their expertise, experience, training and coaching philosophy. They must also obtain the MSI Classic Coaching Certification or the NSCAA Junior Level 6 Diploma within one season of forming a Classic team unless they already hold an "E" coaching license or higher. The MSI website contains more specific information.

MSI conducts one hour Skills Evaluation sessions to evaluate players wishing to play soccer on U-10, U-11, and U-12 Classic teams. The evaluation for field players consists of the opportunity to play in several different small sided games in a 25 x 35 yard area, with and against a variety of teammates and opponents, while being evaluated by a variety of MSI Classic coaches. The evaluation for goalkeepers includes an opportunity to demonstrate their skills (catching, diving, etc.) to an experienced goalkeeper coach and then possibly play in the small sided games as a goalkeeper.

Classic coaches then hold tryouts for their teams. New players may join these teams in one of the following three ways:

1. Passing the MSI Classic Skills test, attending individual Classic team tryouts and thereby being selected by a Classic coach (noted as "E" on roster),
2. Being previously carded within the most recent seasonal year by another Select league, attending individual Classic team tryouts, and thereby being selected by a Classic coach (noted as "P" on roster),
3. Attending individual Classic team tryouts and being selected the coach to fill one of that team's three wild card roster slots (noted as "W" on roster).

Coaches must indicate the method by which players were added to their roster via E, P or W.

**A Classic player may not play on an MSI Recreational team. U10-U12 players may also not play any other Classic team or on any other travel league team (i.e. NCSL, WAGS, ODSL).**

## **U-13 AND ABOVE**

Coaches of pre-formed teams may register to join the Classic Program in the appropriate age group and are included as space permits. Each age group may be limited to a maximum number of teams. Coaches fill their rosters from tryouts, but no Classic Skill Evaluation is necessary for players.

## **TEAM REGISTRATION**

Teams register directly with MSI via the online registration found on the MSI Classic website under Registration>Team Registration. Registration is generally due in mid-June for the Fall season and mid-January for the Spring season.

## **FEES AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF MSI CLASSIC TEAMS**

### **WHAT THE MSI FEE COVERS**

MSI charges a team fee to enter the Classic League. The team fee covers the team's portion of league expenses which includes the following items and services: game day fields, league administrative fee, referees, trophies, field equipment, MSI league education and training, video lending library, patches, the MSI website, coaching shirt, and a team ball. It also includes state and national affiliation fees to cover the team's player registration forms, insurance and passes. The fee is generally set by the MSI Board of Directors prior to registration for each season and must be paid in full by mid-June for the Fall season and mid-January for the Spring season.

### **INDIVIDUAL PLAYER FEES**

Each Classic team may assess players additional fees to cover the following expenses: uniforms, coaching fees, practice field permits, tournament costs, additional team equipment and supplies, and training clinics. Each team determines its own fees and **MUST** provide an accounting of team expenditures to parents.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF MSI CLASSIC TEAMS**

The maintenance and reality of absolute transparency is critical for all MSI Classic teams. In order to ensure that all parents on a team are able to effectively participate in the management of their child's team, the following rules must be followed as relate to the financial management of MSI Classic teams.

Every aspect of team finances must be conducted by a team treasurer who is a parent volunteer and is not related to any individual receiving compensation from the team. All aspects of financial management must be performed by the team treasurer, including the following:

- A team budget must be prepared in advance of the start of every seasonal year (defined as the period beginning on August 1 and concluding on July 31), and must be available for review by the parents of team players in upcoming seasonal year. This budget should provide reasonable detail as to the type and amount of expenses anticipated, with separate line items provided for each.
- The team budget must highlight the exact nature of any intent to compensate any individual(s) for trainer services. This highlight must include the exact services (and frequency) to be provided and the exact compensation associated with those services. As an example, a budget may indicate that a trainer is being hired for the fall season to conduct 2 practices per week for 10 weeks (20 practices), and to coach 8 league games and 4 tournament games. The total (or itemized) compensation for those itemized services must be reflected.
- All collection of player fees and any other monies must be conducted by the team treasurer.
- All deposits of player fees and any other monies must be conducted by the team treasurer, and must be deposited into an account that is not related in any way to an outside organization.
- All expenditures of team funds (including commitments for expenditure) must be conducted by the team treasurer, and must be within the spirit of the team budget (in other words, the team budget is a guiding document that may be updated within reason).
- Player fees may not be required to be collected for more than the upcoming seasonal expenses, as defined as Fall, Winter, or Spring seasons.
- At the conclusion of each season, the budget must be updated to provide a full accounting of team finances. The original budget figures should be presented alongside the actual income/expense figures, with an indication of any funds remaining. This financial update must be made available to all team parents.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

MSI offers Classic players financial aid to teams that provide a copy of the Montgomery County Public Schools' Free and Reduced Meals form (FARM), and their roster during the first month of the season. Coaches or managers should contact their Classic Liaison for more information.

## **PLAYER REGISTRATION (CARDING)**

### **WHAT IT MEANS TO BE CARDED**

The process of registering individual players to play in a competitive league is administered by MSI and is often referred to as "carding." Registration ensures team membership for the entire seasonal year, which begins August 1 and ends July 31 of the following calendar year.

With few exceptions, players cannot be released from a select team before the end of the seasonal year (July 31) unless they wish to be released. A player may request a transfer to another team. This request must be initiated by the player in writing on the appropriate form and then approved before the player may join the new team. The transfer must be initiated **between** playing seasons. No team transfers will be approved once the playing season has begun. **A coach may not refuse to transfer a player.** If the original coach is not willing to sign the transfer form and release the player pass to the new coach, the Head Registrar can approve the transfer.

**No players carded to Classic, Academy, or Premier teams may be registered in the MSI Recreational program.**

### **PLAYER REGISTRATION PROCEDURE**

Full details on the player registration process are available on the MSI website, [www.msisoccer.org](http://www.msisoccer.org), under CLASSIC>REGISTRATION>PLAYER AND ADULT OFFICIAL REGISTRATION, but some general rules are summarized below.

All players must register in the MSI Classic player registration system and must be reflected on the team roster that is submitted to the registrar. To register a new player, the coach or manager must submit the following information to their MSI Classic Registrar:

1. The player registration form properly filled out by the coach and parent.
2. Copy of proof of birth. (certificate of birth, valid passport, etc.). Or last season's **actual** player pass
3. Photo of player (1"X1" hard copy).

Typically, initial registration packets are due to a Classic Registrar between August 1 and 14 for teams playing in the Fall and between March 1 and 10 for teams only playing in the Spring. The deadline dates will be posted on the MSI website each season.

The method of preparing the roster and carding the players is overseen by the MSI Director of Operations. Directions for this process can be found on the MSI website.

Players can be carded and added to a team roster during the course of a seasonal year, if properly carded and registered by **9:00 pm the Wednesday** before participating in a Saturday league game. In addition, no players may be added to a roster after the 6<sup>th</sup> game of a season has been played.

Player registration cards are the property of the player, but should be held by the coach or manager, since they must be presented at Classic games along with the current roster, tournaments and other sanctioned functions. A copy of the stamped current roster must be provided to the referee each game.

Playing a player not listed on the team's roster will result in a forfeit of the game in which that player participated. The coach will also be subject to possible sanctions by the PRDC.

### **CHECKING PLAYER PASSES**

Each Classic team **must** have its current official stamped roster and player passes at every game. Prior to the start of each game, the center or assistant referee **is required** to check player passes against each player and roster. The referee must be given a **copy** of the stamped roster. Team managers should have players and cards ready to show referees at least 15 minutes prior to game time. Keeping player cards in alphabetical order and having players learn to line up in the same order will make the process go much quicker.

This requirement is **not optional** and a referee's refusal to check players' passes/roster shall be immediately reported to the MSI Office following the game.

MSI/MWRSA referees will allow an MSI Classic game to begin on time when there is a team (or a player) without player passes at the field, and that team (or player) has until halftime to produce the passes. If the team is not able to have the player passes at the field by halftime, the game will continue, but the game will be recorded as 1-0 in favor of the opposing team **with** player passes. Referees assigned to the game WILL referee this game in its entirety.

The player passes must remain at the field until the successful completion of the match. Players arriving late to games after player passes have been checked cannot enter the field until the referee has checked their player pass against the team roster.

## **ROSTERS**

The following rules apply to the formation of team rosters:

1. The roster for Fall season play, dated August 1, is also used for the Spring season. The registration year (or roster life) runs from August 1 to July 31 of the following calendar year.
2. Maximum roster sizes: U10=13; U11-U12 = 14; U13-U14 = 18; U15 = 21; U16-U19 = 26. High School teams may have an additional 5 reserve players registered and carded as long as their roster has a maximum of 21 for any one game. The reserve players will only be allowed to play in the games at which they appear on the roster.
3. Secondary registration, commonly known as "multiple rostering or double carding," is allowed for players who would like to play on an MSI Classic team and another carded team. Subject to the rules of the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA), a player who is on the roster of a U-13 or older Classic team may also be on the roster of another carded team at the same time. (If the secondary team is another Classic team, it must play in a different age group of the Classic League.) Each U-13 or older Classic team may have no more than 3 players who are on multiple rosters at a given time. MSI prohibits a player on a U10, U-11 or U-12 Classic team to be on the roster of any other carded team at the same time. U16-U19 may not have any more than 3 multiple rostered players on their 26 player roster.
4. No players carded to Classic may be registered in the MSI Recreational Program.
5. MSI strongly discourages any teams from recruiting players from other MSI Classic teams during the season.

# **COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Good sportsmanship is a guiding principle of MSI. Coaches set the tone for players. Therefore, MSI requires coaches to exemplify good sportsmanship and to encourage team members to act similarly. Coaches are also responsible for the behavior of their team's spectators at the games. Please refer to the detailed guidelines in the Sportsmanship section of the Rules of the Game.

## **TEAM SPORTSMANSHIP LIAISON**

Coaches must designate a Team Sportsmanship Liaison (TSL) prior to the start of each game. The TSL will accompany the Captain of the team to meet with the referee prior to the match. The match MAY NOT BE STARTED until both teams have identified their TSLs. The TSL will assist the coach in maintaining the good sideline sportsmanship of spectators. The TSL need not be the same person for every game and may not be the coach or assistant coach or the sideline referee if a parent has been asked to fulfill that duty. They should be familiar with the rules in this manual and the procedures in the event a red card is given during a game. No coach or spectator may enter the field under any circumstance without the referee's permission.

## **PRACTICES**

The coach, subject to permit approval, determines practice days and times. (See Fields and Their Use.) **No more than two practices a week may be held once the season begins.** Scrimmages are considered practice sessions.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Coaches are required to hold open practices and team gatherings. As a result, more parents will get

involved. **MSI policy states that coaches must have at least one additional adult at each practice. It is important that an adult is present to assist the coach and is available in the event of an emergency or injury.**

## **PLAYER SAFETY**

Safety of all participants in our practices and games is a paramount concern for MSI. In August of 1994, US Youth Soccer (the national governing body for youth soccer in this country) approved the KidSafe Risk Management Program. MSI supports the intent of this program. MSI will not knowingly allow any person convicted of a crime of violence, physical abuse, sale of illegal substances, or any other offense that would indicate a pattern of behavior that would have a detrimental effect on children to be placed in a position that would involve direct contact with children.

MSI is affiliated with the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA) and U.S. Youth Soccer. MSI Classic affiliated players and coaches are provided insurance coverage under an umbrella policy of MSYSA. This includes liability coverage for "carded" volunteers and coaches. In order to minimize your risk exposure, MSI requires that all coaches and assistant coaches should:

- Become fully familiar with all MSI, MSYSA, US Youth Soccer, and FIFA rules, policies, and requirements, particularly those concerning sportsmanship, conduct of coaches, and safety
- Enroll in mandated MSI or NSCAA coaching courses and continue your training and education
- Learn proper first aid procedures and review first aid brochure distributed by MSI.
- Do not allow any unregistered players to practice or play games with your team
- Do not allow players to practice or play unless they are properly equipped, including shoes and shinguards.

### **Team Policies and Requirements**

All team parents are permitted to attend or observe any MSI practice. Parental involvement is the best way to assure a good experience for the children.

All teams are required to have a first aid kit, and coaches are required to review the first aid information given to them.

It is always safest to have a cell phone at the playing field and contact numbers for every player's family in the event of an emergency.

### **Protection of Players**

The registered coach or a registered assistant coach should be in attendance at all team functions. If neither is attending, the coach must appoint another adult to act as supervising coach.

Players must wear shinguards at all times, whether playing or practicing.

Coaches and parents should make sure players drink plenty of water during practices and games.

Do not play or practice if dangerous conditions exist. These include: thunderstorms in the immediate area, fields ordered closed by county authorities, standing water on the fields, or extremely hot weather.

### **Fields and Goals**

Never allow your players to climb on or hang from goals. Coaches and parents should be aware that some playing fields in the county have large but movable goals. While we have been assured that these goals are safe, additional caution is warranted.

Check the goals and field before each practice or game for hazards, holes, sharp objects, etc.

If it is necessary to move goals, always use great care and always have enough adults to move goals safely. If it is your responsibility to set up the field, make sure you have enough adults to move the goals to the proper position, if necessary. Children should not help move goals under any circumstances.

Do not use a goal that is damaged, weakened, or otherwise in disrepair. Please report any such problems to your MSI League Coordinator or the MSI Office at 301-762-4674.

### **Header Policy**

US Soccer has adopted new safety guidelines that will limit the ages at which "heading" is allowed, and limit the frequency of "heading in practice" for older age groups. MSI will comply with these new rules effective

immediately. All coaches are required to adhere to the following restrictions:

- *Players aged 10 or younger MAY NOT HEAD THE BALL during either practices or games.* MSI and referees will enforce this restriction for Recreational KG through Grade 5, Classic age groups U10 through U11, and Premier age groups U09 through U11. In any instance where a player is deemed to have deliberately headed the ball during a game in these age groups, the referee shall award an Indirect Free Kick (IFK) to the opposing team from the spot of the header. If that spot is inside the Goal Area (6-yard box), the IFK shall be taken from the nearest point on the horizontal line defining the top of the Goal Area.
- *Players between ages 11 and 13 MAY HEAD THE BALL during games, but are limited to heading the ball in practice for a total of 30 minutes practice time each week, with no more than 15-20 headers allowed per player in total.* MSI will enforce this restriction for Recreational Grade 6 through Grade 7, Classic age groups U12 through U13, and Premier age groups U12 and U13.
- Coaches should be aware of any circumstance where they may have a player who is “playing up” one or more age groups, and therefore may have greater restrictions for themselves as compared to the age group in which they compete. It is the age of the individual player that governs the restrictions they may have under these new guidelines. Coaches are responsible for ensuring compliance in these exceptions; referees will officiate on the basis of the age group designation for the game.

Coaches are encouraged to watch the video link given below, which includes specific instruction from the US Youth Soccer Association on how to teach proper heading technique.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7u5m\\_48dUY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7u5m_48dUY)

### **Parent Responsibilities**

A soccer team isn't a babysitting service. It's critical for a responsible adult to be there to pick up the child when practice is due to end; it's unfair to a coach and potentially dangerous to the child not to be there. If you're unable to make it on time, make other arrangements to ensure that your child is picked up in time.

All parents are encouraged to participate actively in the team's activities, including attendance at practices and games. Please provide assistance to the team if requested by the coach or team manager. This can include bringing snacks to practice or games, setting up or taking down equipment, making phone calls, or helping at practices and games.

Parents should support the team, should cheer for all players on the team, and refrain from criticizing other players, the coach, or the referee.

Parents must be aware that soccer is a contact sport and that injuries will happen. Particularly at young ages, serious injuries are relatively rare. Parents should not expect the referee to call a foul every time their child is knocked down and must refrain from criticizing the referee. Much contact is perfectly legal and sometimes even if a foul was committed, the referee will allow play to continue if the team against which the foul was committed has maintained possession of the ball. In particular, parents of young children cannot feel they have the sanction to run out on the soccer field whenever their child is “injured.” Most such injuries are shaken off quickly, and parents running out on the field simply compounds the confusion and the risk of further injuries.

### **Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior by Adults**

The physical and emotional well being of our players and their families must be a primary concern for all adults involved with MSI. Adults who are filling the role of coach, assistant coach, administrator, board member, game official, or adult volunteer, must be aware that they hold a position of some authority and responsibility over youth players. People in positions of authority must make sure not to abuse their authority to the detriment of others. By establishing formal guidelines for behavior, everyone will know what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is not. Our goal for establishing codes of conduct is to help to provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for our members and their families.

#### **1. Physical Contact**

Adults and others in positions of authority must be aware that physical contact can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate the player. Physical intimidation, physical punishment, or threatening a player with physical harm are not appropriate behaviors and will not be tolerated. However, reasonably requiring players to do push-ups or running for misbehavior, although not endorsed by MSI, would not likely be considered inappropriate.

Sexual contact of any kind between adults and players is prohibited whether or not the contact is consensual. Hazing or any type of initiation to a club or a team is prohibited. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

## **2. Social Contact**

Adults should not spend time or socialize alone with players. Pulling a player to the side for additional instruction in plain view of the remainder of the team would be an exception to this rule. However, an adult in a one-on-one situation with a child is generally considered inappropriate and should be avoided. Another exception would be if a young child was the last one waiting for a ride home from practice, the coach should not leave the child until the child's parent or ride home has arrived.

## **3. Health and Well-Being**

Adults share the responsibility for the player's health while at practices, scrimmages and games. Adults must have a player's medical release forms with them at all times. **Teams must have a first aid kit at all practices and games.** Kits that meet the minimum requirements are available at the MSI Office. See the back of this manual for first aid kit suggestions. Coaches should have an emergency plan in place so that, if someone is hurt in a practice or a game, the coach knows who to call, where emergency personnel might take the injured party, and how to contact family members.

MSI considers the safety of the players of paramount importance. Coaches should exercise good judgment regarding practices and games. Play should be suspended when dangerous weather threatens. See "Dangerous Weather" in the Rain Policy section of this manual for guidelines. The conditions of the field and goals must be conducive to safe play. Weather conditions must also be reasonably safe from lightning or extreme temperatures.

- MSI is governed by the FIFA Rules of the Game, which state that jewelry (including pierced earrings) is not allowed on the playing field.
- Most **eyewear** on the market today is safe, and sport goggles are also available. There is no directive from FIFA or USSF restricting eyewear of any kind, as long as they are deemed "safe" by the referee. Straps are not required, but recommended to prevent the loss and possible breakage of the glasses.
- A child with a **cast** may play at the discretion of the referee, who must determine whether there is a safety issue. MSI stands behind the referee's decision. It is recommended that the player wishing to play with a cast wrap the cast in at least 1" thickness of "bubble wrap" or a similar material, and arrive early to the game in order to speak with the referee. Without such safety cushioning, the referee shall not allow the player to participate.

Any head injuries resulting in disorientation should result in a player remaining out of the game or practice.

Any bleeding that occurs must be administered to with latex gloves, and properly sterilized bandages. All bleeding must be stopped prior to re-entering the game. Any bandages, uniforms or other items that have come in contact with the blood must be properly disposed of. The referee shall require a player who is bleeding or has an open injury to leave the field for treatment.

Adults transporting players must model safe driving techniques and enforce seat belt use for all vehicle occupants.

Adults should be aware of the signs of neglect and abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) of the players. Signs of this should be reported to the local law enforcement agency.

## **4. Language**

Offensive or vulgar language by adults or children is unacceptable. MSI events including games and practices should be family oriented events. Adults should model good communication skills.

Language that is denigrating in nature, content, or tone or refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religion is not acceptable. Insults and demeaning nicknames directed at players are not permitted.

Inappropriate language or threatening language used toward an official, coach, player, or parent may be grounds for removal from a game or the premises or both, and may incur additional sanctions.

## **5. Violations**

Violations will be handled in accordance with existing MSI policy. Signed, written complaints about misconduct by MSI players, coaches, or parents will be investigated by MSI's PRDC, as appropriate. In accordance with USYS procedures, complaints of referee abuse will be referred directly to MSYSA and will be dealt with by the proper disciplinary process. Sanctions can include counseling, probation, fines or suspensions from all MSI or from all US Youth Soccer activities. Anonymous complaints cannot be addressed by MSI.

If the circumstances of the complaint indicate a probability of criminal behavior, MSI will report the matter to the appropriate legal authorities.

Any person witnessing a violation of these guidelines should report the incident to the MSI office in writing.

## COACHES TRAINING

### COACHING CLINICS

MSI conducts coaching clinics at various times during the year. Most clinics are open to anyone and are free of charge unless otherwise indicated. They include sessions for volunteers learning soccer for the first time, as well as sessions for experienced coaches. The clinics provide an exceptional opportunity to learn principles and techniques, organization of practices, conduct of the game, first aid procedures and the laws of the game. The clinic schedule is published via email announcements and/or on the MSI website.

### COACHING LICENSES

MSI requires all Classic coaches to have at least the Classic Coaching Course certification or the NSCAA Junior Level VI Diploma (or equivalent) and offers Classic Coaching courses twice per year prior to the start of each season. Coaches will have a one-season grace period to acquire their license. U10-U15 Coaches are required to attend the Positive Coaching Alliance Double-Goal 1 training. MSI also encourages coaches to pursue more advanced licensing as their players' skill level progresses. Information about these courses is available on the MSI website.

### COACHING AIDS

- Equipment - As a service to players and coaches, MSI sells soccer balls, nets, flags, practice cones, scrimmage vests, field paint, paint wands and first aid kits. These items are available at or near cost at the MSI office. MSI does not sell shinguards or soccer cleats.
- Books - The bookstore has a wide assortment of books for soccer coaches, players and fans.
- DVD's - Instructional DVD's are loaned at no charge from the MSI Office during office hours. A \$30.00 refundable deposit is required for each DVD checked out.

### YOUTH COACHES

High school students may volunteer as head coach or assistant coach of a soccer team and earn credit for community service towards their graduation requirement. Head coaches who are under 18 **must** have an adult sponsor, preferably a parent, who will be responsible for administrative coordination of the team and must be present and responsible for the team throughout the season. This adult will be responsible for administrative coordination of the team and must be present and responsible for the general behavior of the team and spectators at games and practices. The adult sponsor must assume this responsibility by registering as an MSI volunteer at the MSI website.

## FIELDS AND THEIR USE

### GENERAL PROVISIONS

MSI competes with many other county and private organizations for access to fields. MSI uses more than 100 fields each season, and the competition increases each playing season. Fields are crucial to soccer, and it's extremely important to cooperate in full with the ICB, the Montgomery County Recreation Department, the City of Rockville, City of Gaithersburg, the Maryland Soccerplex, and the Maryland Park and Planning Commission, who issue field permits.

Everyone associated with MSI can help in keeping the assigned fields playable by following these rules.

1. **Do not practice on wet fields.** Any activity on a wet or soggy field, especially with cleats, will tear up the sod and could make the field unplayable for many weeks.
2. **Pick up any trash or debris** on the field after your team has played.
3. **Do not park or drive on grassy areas adjacent to fields**, or on the blacktop playground area under any conditions.
4. **Do not drive onto the field to deliver equipment, or for any other reason.**
5. **Promptly report any acts of vandalism to the MSI Office** at (301) 762-4674.
6. **In instances of inclement weather and/or saturated fields, check the weather hotline for the region in which your practice field is located. This number is provided on all MSI-issued permits.**

### **PRACTICE FIELDS**

Coaches must acquire permits for their own practice fields each season. There are school fields and park fields available for use in Montgomery County. The coach, subject to permit approval, determines practice days and times. Practice sessions should be scheduled for the convenience of a majority of players, as well as the coach. Goalposts are not a necessity for practice. Cones or other simulated goals may be used.

MSI works with Montgomery County government to "block schedule" school and park fields for its teams use. Prior to the beginning of each season (generally during July and March), MSI teams will be able to visit the MSI website at [www.msisoccer.org](http://www.msisoccer.org) for a list of fields and practice times available and submit a practice request directly to MSI for two weeknights during the season.

Applications received prior to the start of the submission window will be returned unprocessed. Applications received during the submission window will be treated equally based on the choices provided on the application. Applications received after the close of the submission window will be processed on a first-come first-serve basis after the applications received during the window have been processed. Historical use precedent will not apply when issuing permits.

### **GAME FIELDS**

MSI uses a variety of field sizes for game play. Every effort is made to coordinate field dimensions with each age group consistent with younger players' strength, endurance, and skills.

#### **Approximate Field Dimensions (width x length):**

7 v 7	40-50 x 60-70 yards
8 v 8	45-55 x 65-75 yards
11v11	55-75 x 90-120 yards

Many sites in Montgomery County are too narrow to achieve the ideal three-to-two length-to-width ratio. When lining these fields, we work as wide as possible. It is sometimes necessary to include part of a dirt baseball infield or to pull weeds to make room for a corner flag.

### **FIELD SET-UP AND EQUIPMENT**

It is the Conference Coordinator's responsibility to oversee the use of field equipment in his/her conference. When a rainout occurs, the Conference Coordinator should make arrangements for the equipment to be transferred to the next week's set-up coach..

Teams designated as home team for the first game of each playing day are generally scheduled to set up the nets and flags. MSI prepares the field lining each week for Classic games. There are no set up or take down requirements at the Maryland SoccerPlex and several other fields have unique set up and take down arrangements that will be communicated to teams by the league.

Some fields may have **portable goals** that require setup. They are occasionally padlocked together and frequently will require coaches to move them to the endlines. Padlock combinations will be provided to the appropriate coaches. If the locks cannot be opened, please call the MSI office at 301 762-4674. In addition, make sure that these goals are secured with the portable goal kits that MSI provides.

### **MSI Portable Goal Policy**

Increasingly, Montgomery County school and park ball fields are utilizing portable goals for soccer, frequently necessitating their movement in order to be utilized for either practices or games. In recognition of the safety issues associated with the movement of these portable goals, the following policy statement must be adhered to by all MSI teams:

*"In no event shall children be allowed to participate in the movement of portable soccer goals in association with any MSI activity. In those cases where portable goals must be moved, this effort must be accomplished solely by willing and able adults. It is recommended that at least six adults work as a team in moving these goals, and that children be kept a considerable distance away at all times. If the portable goal is one of the extremely heavy varieties, more than six adults may be required. All portable goals must be anchored securely."*

### **HANGING NETS**

Bring a step-ladder or stool to stand on. Roll the top of the net over the top of the cross bar. Attach the metal snap-link back under the bar, through the net, and up over the top of the bar back onto itself. Use the same wrap around technique to attach the net to the posts. Use the attached stakes to secure the net to the ground. If the nets do not fit properly, please contact MSI.

### **FIELD TAKE-DOWN**

Generally, the team designated to take down the field equipment after the last game of the day (generally the last visiting team of the day) is responsible for removing the field equipment, storing it, and using it to set up the field the following week. At some fields, this may involve moving and relocking portable goals (see Portable Goal Policy above). Specific instructions will be given to each division and can be found in the NOTES/IMPORTANT INFORMATION of the online schedules found on the MSI website. If your team fails to return the equipment at the end of the season, or fails to take down (and loses the equipment) during the season, you will be billed for its replacement value.

When rainouts occur in the middle of game day, the coaches on the field must take responsibility for the equipment, take the equipment down and/or make every effort to contact the coach responsible for takedown that day.

### **MSI OFFICE/WAREHOUSE**

MSI has a warehouse where field equipment is stored between seasons. Field equipment is distributed from the warehouse prior to the first game and returned there at the end of the season by the final take-down team for maintenance and inventory.

### **EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The cooperation of all coaches is requested when rainouts occur in the middle of the day or in the case of a game forfeit. **DO NOT LEAVE FIELD EQUIPMENT UNATTENDED ON FIELDS!**

**IF YOUR TEAM FORFEITED OR CANCELED A GAME, LEAVING A HOLE IN THE SCHEDULE, YOUR TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FIELD EQUIPMENT UNTIL THE FOLLOWING GAME BEGINS!**

## **PRESEASON PREPARATION**

### **CONFERENCE FORMATION**

Normally, teams are placed in single age conferences. If a single age conference has five teams or fewer, it may be combined with the next older or younger age group for league play.

### **DIVISION STRUCTURE**

Age groups are subdivided with 5 -12 teams in each division. Placement in divisions will be based primarily upon performance of the team during the previous season.

In determining division structure, the following general principles apply:

- a. Teams are expected to play Fall and Spring seasons. If a team withdraws and later applies for re-entry into the Classic Program, that team may be considered a new team and will be placed in the lowest division of its age group.
- b. If there is no space available to place a new team in the appropriate age group, MSI may offer the team the opportunity to play in the next higher age group, provided there is room.
- c. Teams must submit an application and check by the Classic registration deadline in order to be considered for the current season. If the applicant is not accepted, the check will be returned before the season begins. New coaches must submit an application by March 1 of each year to coach a U-10 team the following Fall season and by December 1 for the Spring season.
- d. In age groups where there is more than one division, for placement the next season, the top two teams from the lower division will move to the next higher division and **generally** the bottom two teams will move down a division. Division structure is at the discretion of MSI in order to provide a competitive playing environment.

## SCHEDULES

The MSI Classic League plays an 8 game schedule with a scheduled raindate. (Some divisions require 9 games and a scheduled rain date.) Schedules are determined approximately two weeks prior to the start of the season and are posted on the MSI website for your convenience. U11 teams will generally play 2 games per season at the Maryland Soccerplex..Teams U-12 and older will generally play at one or two different local fields and may have 3 or 4 games at the Maryland SoccerPlex. At least 25% of the games may occur on Sundays.

## UNIFORMS

All team uniforms must be acquired and worn in accordance with MSI Classic rules, as follows:

- All uniforms must be purchased from the designated MSI-approved vendor(s) in order to support an available inventory of replacement uniform pieces. Orders for MSI Classic uniforms **must** be placed through Rockville Soccer (301-309-6902) to take advantage of the deeply discounted prices negotiated for the benefit of MSI teams, to support and to assure the timely delivery of the uniforms. Teams not following this policy may be fined.
- Teams must wear an adidas uniform in any style of their choosing, except the color and style line that MSI Premier (MSC) teams are wearing.
- Teams must have two sets of jerseys of distinctly different colors, in order to facilitate 'home' and 'away' status at any given game. The jerseys must display an eight inch number on the back.  
**Names of players are not allowed on the jerseys.** A common pair of shorts and socks may be worn, without regard to color. All jerseys must be screened with the official MSI Classic logo on the left chest, as provided to the designated MSI-approved vendor(s), unless a waiver has been granted.
- No other screenings or applications may be applied to uniforms or team/player equipment (such as backpacks, team bags etc.) without advance approval by MSI. Such approval will be limited to team nicknames that are in compliance to official team name policy and neither reflective nor suggestive of any organization other than MSI. This rule is intended similarly to exclude any type of visual representations, such as (but not limited to) patches, sublimations, stitching etc.

If an organization is interested in providing sponsorship support of MSI programs in general, they should contact MSI's Executive Director (see website for contact information). If an organization is interested in providing sponsorship support in association with one or more MSI Classic teams, please refer to the 'MSI Classic League Sponsorship Program' section of this manual. Team names that do not include a sponsor are allowed on jerseys.

**Shinguards are mandatory.** Socks must be pulled up over the top of the shinguards. Metal cleats are banned in all MSI leagues and activities.

# GAME RULES AND PROCEDURES

## GAME START AND FORFEITS

To field a team, each side is required to have the following minimum number of players:

7 v 7	5 players
8 v 8	6 players
11 v 11	7 players

The start of the game may be delayed by the referee for up to 15 minutes to allow a team to obtain the minimum number of players. When both teams have at least the minimum number of players, the game must start, even if one side has fewer players on the field. Late players may not enter play until they receive permission from the referee.

In the event that either team does not have enough players, the coach with insufficient numbers of players may agree to forfeit the result of the game, yet still play an "**official exhibition**". In this event, the teams may share players, as long as all participating players are registered players with an MSI team during the current season. Referees are instructed to referee the "official exhibition", per the terms of MSI's contract with MWSRA (the referee association).

A team that is forfeiting a game must contact the opposing team 24 hours prior to the game by telephone and via email. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN A FINE. All obligations concerning field and equipment set up and take down must still be met by the forfeiting team. If the forfeit or cancellation leaves a hole in the schedule, the forfeiting team is responsible for the field equipment until the following game begins.

A game is considered complete if it has been played through the first half before being terminated by the referee.

## CANCELING AND RESCHEDULING GAMES

Each season we allow head coaches the opportunity to submit schedule requests before the schedules are created, and we receive hundreds of requests. While we cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet your request, we will make every effort possible.

There are times when scheduling problems arise unexpectedly during the season, and coaches wish to reschedule games. **MSI does not reschedule games during the season**, nor is it the responsibility of your Conference Coordinator to reschedule games. (Exceptions are made for teams playing in State Cup games.) If you cannot field the minimum number of players for a game, you may follow the options below:

1. Trade scheduled game times with another game, within your conference on the same day, with the approval of all four teams involved, and notify your Conference Coordinator and MSI.  
OR
2. Notify MSI and the opposing coach that you are forfeiting the game, **within 24 hours of game time**, in which case your opponent will take the 1-0 win.
3. Contact the opposing coach and ask if s/he is willing to play the game at another time, at a permitted practice field with **volunteer** parent referees.
  - a. the opposing coach may decline and take the 1-0 win,
  - b. the opposing coach may agree to play a friendly game without official referees but not count the score, in which case the score remains a 1-0 forfeit,
  - c. the opposing coach may agree to reschedule the game on a practice field using volunteer referees, and record the score. While this is not an official game due to the absence of MWSRA referees, MSI will accept the score if it is agreed by both coaches. (Please note that once the game is started, no judgments made by the volunteer referees, or the final score, may be appealed to MSI).

When a game is canceled and creates a hole in the schedule, referees sometimes leave the field and abandon the remaining games. If option 2 or 3 above is chosen, please notify the MSI office as early as possible, in order to contact referees and confirm that the other games will still be covered. Coaches are required to notify the MSI office as soon as possible when a game is being canceled so that the referee can be notified. If a game is abandoned without notice in the middle of the day, referees will often leave the remaining games uncovered unless instructed to return.

## CHECKING PLAYER PASSES

Each Classic team **must** have a copy of its stamped current official roster and player passes at every game. Prior to the start of each game, the center or assistant referee **is required** to check player passes against each player and roster. The referee must be given a **copy** of the stamped roster. Team managers should

have players and cards ready to show referees at least 15 minutes prior to game time. Keeping player cards in alphabetical order and having players learn to line up in the same order will make the process go much quicker.

This requirement is **not optional** and a referee's refusal to check players' passes/roster shall be immediately reported to the MSI Office following the game.

MSI/MWRSA referees will allow an MSI Classic game to begin on time when there is a team (or a player) without player passes at the field, and that team (or player) has until halftime to produce the passes. If the team is not able to have the player passes at the field by halftime, the game will continue, but the game will be recorded as 1-0 in favor of the opposing team **with** player passes. Referees assigned to the game **WILL** referee this game in its entirety.

The player passes must remain at the field until the successful completion of the match. Players arriving late to games after player passes have been checked cannot enter the field until the referee has checked their player pass against the team roster.

## RULES OF PLAY

**MSI games are governed by FIFA rules of play with certain modifications appropriate to youth play. The MSI MODIFICATIONS OF FIFA RULES are as follows:**

**Forfeiture of Game:** In addition to FIFA Law V(d), a referee can suspend or terminate a game because of derogatory remarks directed at the referee or opposing team by a player, coach or spectator. A coach or spectator receiving a red card must leave the field immediately and move at least to the parking lot. He or she may not return to the field at the end of the game, or be on the sidelines at the following game. The jurisdiction of the referee begins upon his arrival at the parking area and continues until he leaves the parking area. The use of communications devices to instruct the coach's replacement is prohibited. Returning to the game field during or after any MSI games played that day will result in mandatory coaches' review and additional one game suspension. Failure to leave the field will result in mandatory coaches' review and termination of the game. S/he may coach another team at another field. If the coach is required to leave and there is no other responsible adult available to supervise the team, the game will be declared a forfeit in favor of the other team with a final score of 1 - 0.

**Referees:** Please call 301.762.4674 and select the "game day emergency" option **if the referee has not arrived by game time.** MSI encourages all teams to use parent volunteers to officiate games in which there is no referee, understanding that this decision is irreversible once play has begun, and scores may not be contested.

**Substitutions:** May be made with the consent of the referee at the following times:

1. prior to a throw-in by either team only when team in possession chooses to substitute
2. prior to a kick-off
3. prior to a goal kick by either team
4. prior to a corner kick by either team, only when team in possession chooses to substitute
5. upon issuance of a yellow card (only players involved may be substituted. If so, the opposing team may substitute a like number)
6. on an injury – only players involved may be substituted; if so, opposing team may substitute a like number.

**Referees Signals:** Referees are requested to use hand signals to indicate the nature of fouls and the direction of the kick. Referees are not required to discuss calls with players or coaches.

**Goalkeeper Privileges:** A goalkeeper may not be charged, interfered with, or impeded in any manner while in possession of the ball.

**Coaching from Sidelines:** It is intended that coaches will educate and inform their players rather than direct their play. Sideline coaching must adhere to the following guidelines:

- the tone and language are instructive,

- it emanates from the sidelines between the two 18-yard lines,
- it is directed from each team's sideline

In keeping with the FIFA rule, coaches are not permitted to provide players with a constant flow of directions during play. Violation of this rule is considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

**Red Cards (Automatic Suspension):** Receipt of a red card by a player, coach or spectator results in immediate ejection from the field of play and a minimum one-game suspension from the next league game with **no appeal**. A coach or spectator receiving a red card must leave the field immediately and move at least to the parking lot. He or she may not return to the field at the end of the game, or be on the sidelines at the following game. The jurisdiction of the referee begins upon his arrival at the parking area and continues until he leaves the parking area. If a red card is issued, the offending person is prohibited from attending the team's next game. **A sit out form indicating that the person was not at the next game must be completed and submitted to MSI within 48 hours of the game.** Failure to leave the field after receiving a red card will result in mandatory coaches' review and termination and forfeiture of the game. S/he may coach another team at another field. If the coach is required to leave and there is no other responsible adult available to supervise the team, the game will be declared a forfeit in favor of the other team with a final score of 1 – 0.

**Any ejection of a coach, player, or spectator constitutes a red card offense whether or not the card is actually shown and all associated penalties must still be served by the offending person.**

**Yellow Cards:** Player must leave the game immediately and sit 5 minutes, after which the referee may allow for the return of the player in a normal substitution. The five minute sit out period does not include halftime. Substitution is allowed during the sit out, enabling the team to play at full strength. (If there are no substitutes available, the team must play "short" during the sit out period.)

See the Sportsmanship Section of this manual concerning cards.

**Home Team/Visiting Team:** Before a game starts, the home team provides the game ball and decides which side of the fields its spectators and players will occupy during the game. Exception: At games played at SoccerPlex, all players and coaches will occupy one side of the field and all spectators the other side, opposite their own team bench. The **visiting team** must wear the jersey color it has designated prior to the start of the season as its preferred color, and in case of color conflict, the home team must change.

#### **PLAYING TIME (U10, U-11 AND U-12 AGE GROUPS)**

**MSI requires that every player on the roster in the U-10, U-11 and U-12 age groups who is present for the entirety of a game must play at least one half of the game. Violations of this rule may lead to forfeiture of the game(s) and / or additional sanctions.** (Important note: This does not mean that everyone plays an equal amount of time; it means that everyone must play at least fifty percent of every game.)

U10: Goalies may only play one half of each game in goal. U11-12: One goalkeeper may play the entire game as long as every field player plays a minimum of half the game.

#### **REDUCED PLAYING TIME AS DISCIPLINE**

Any player in the U10-U12 Classic League who does not attend a majority of practices and games without notifying their coach with a legitimate excuse for the absence, or players who are causing consistent discipline problems on a team, may be penalized by reduction in their  $\frac{1}{2}$  game required playing time. If a pattern of attendance problems exists with a player that is detrimental to the team and grossly unfair to the other players, coaches are expected to make an effort to mitigate the problem by engaging in constructive dialogue with the offending player and his or her parents.

Any coach penalizing a player must inform the MSI office by email at [msi@msisoccer.org](mailto:msi@msisoccer.org) by 10:00 a.m. the Friday prior to each game. A coach who finds it necessary to use this option in more than one instance, or with more than two players in a single game, must report the reasons in writing to the MSI office. Games in which a player(s) did not play one half of a game and MSI was not notified will be subject to forfeiture and/or additional sanctions.

#### **INJURED PLAYERS**

The referee shall require a player who is bleeding or has an open wound to leave the field for treatment. If a substitute is available, the player's coach may substitute. The injured player may return to the game at the earliest legal opportunity, provided the referee is satisfied with the player's condition.

Any head injuries resulting in disorientation should result in a player remaining out of the game or practice.

## SIDELINE PROCEDURES

- **No coach or spectator may enter the field without the referee's permission.**
- Opposing teams and their spectators must occupy **opposite sides** of the field, wherever possible. The home team has choice of sides.
- At games played at the SoccerPlex, all players and coaches will occupy one side of the field, and all spectators the other side, opposite their own team bench. Do not move SoccerPlex benches.
- Spectators, coaches and players are only allowed on the sidelines between the penalty areas.
- No one is allowed behind the end lines or goals.
- **Team spectators may not give instructions to players on the field.**
- **Coaches may not give instruction to the opposing teams players, or coach from their opponent's touchline, between the 18-yard line and the end line, or behind the end lines or goals.** Violation of this rule is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and may result in sanctions.

## U10 DIVISION

Standings are not reported for the U10 divisions. Scores are recorded to facilitate division placement for the following season.

## REFEREES

### USSF REFEREE ASSIGNMENT

MSI contracts the Metropolitan Washington Soccer Referees' Association (MWSRA) to assign referees for Classic games. The MWSRA is an independent organization whose **referees are not employees of MSI**. The Association provides referees for most area youth soccer games, as well as high school and college varsity play.

### USSF REFEREE TRAINING

MWSRA sponsors an eighteen-hour course prior to each fall and spring. For those with desire and ability, MWSRA offers rapid advancement short time commitments for training, into senior amateur soccer (adults), high school varsity and junior varsity games, NCAA college games and even the professional leagues.

Soccer's growth in popularity has placed severe pressure on the Referee's Association, resulting in a chronic shortage of experienced referees. Some adult referees at our games have been recently recruited and trained, and do not have the experience of more seasoned referees. MSI asks coaches to be patient with these new referees and encourage them to continue developing and gaining experience. Please notify the MSI office in writing of any specific problems or concerns you have with your game officials, so that we can recommend additional training for them.

For information on becoming a USSF certified referee or an MSI junior referee, please visit the MWSRA website at [www.MWSRA.org](http://www.MWSRA.org). or the MSI website respectively.

### MSI LEAGUE RULE CARD

MSI games are played under FIFA rules with certain modifications printed on the MSI Official League Rule Card that is shown to the referee before each game. A rule card is given to every coach at the beginning of each season. Coaches or TSL's should review this card with the referees prior to the start of each game.

### REFEREE RESPONSIBILITY

The referee's major responsibility to maintain control of the game extends to coaches and spectators, as well as players. MSI understands this responsibility and cooperates in guaranteeing that it is observed.

In soccer, as in many other sports, referees are given discretionary leeway to make judgment calls. Players, coaches and spectators alike often misunderstand this liberty. Players and spectators sometimes question a referee's calls, particularly in a closely contested game, and feel strongly enough to lodge a complaint with MSI against the referee. The vast majority of these complaints involve judgment calls, in which the referee's opinion or judgment prevails. **Therefore, judgment calls may not be appealed.** Some examples of judgment calls include the following situations: whether a ball is in play or out-of-bounds; whether a foul occurred; whether or not a player was offside. On-field criticism does not set a good example for players. It also discourages and demoralizes referees.

On the other hand, please notify the MSI office about those situations in which a referee's behavior is inappropriate during play. Inappropriate behavior may include the use of abusive language, over-familiarity with players or inappropriate physical contact with players.

**An appeal of a referee's ruling may be made only when the situation involves the misapplication of a**

**rule.** For example, a penalty kick is taken, bounces off the crossbar and the penalty kicker plays it into the goal. The referee says that it is permissible for the shooter to play the ball without it touching anyone else. The referee has clearly misapplied the FIFA rule. To file a complaint or appeal, see the Appeals and Complaints section of this handbook.

### **REFEREES ON THE SIDELINES**

Coaches and spectators who are also referees must remember to remove or camouflage their referee uniform when they are coaching or cheering their teams. It is of paramount importance that the assigned referee be the only authority figure present.

### **MSI RAIN POLICY**

#### **LEAGUE-WIDE CANCELLATION**

In the event of inclement weather, MSI posts an announcement on its web site ([www.msisoccer.org](http://www.msisoccer.org)) concerning the status of league games, sends email announcements, and activates a telephone tree when necessary. **It is the coach's or manager's responsibility to monitor the MSI website and contact individual team players and families. On game days, MSI does not recognize the Montgomery County text alert system for field closures. The information provided on the MSI website will be the final determinant of the status of games.**

MSI uses Montgomery County School and Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission guidelines for field use and game cancellation. Decisions to cancel games are not made hastily.

Considerable thought and discussion are involved in an effort to avoid canceling games or adjusting schedules.

**Once MSI has canceled games for the entire day league wide, it is impossible to reverse the decision for games later in the day.** When games are canceled, referees and families make alternative plans. Sudden warmth and sunshine do not mean fields are actually playable. Your patience concerning cancellations is appreciated. Please understand that the safety of your children is our greatest concern.

**If you are not notified concerning cancellation of your game, assume that the game will be played as scheduled. Stay in contact with your coach/manager for the most current information regarding games.**

#### **FIELD-BY-FIELD CANCELLATION**

There are instances when the decision to play is made field by field. It could mean that, if you have two children playing in the MSI program, one plays and the other does not. Conditions can deteriorate during a day allowing only part of a schedule to be played. Field conditions and weather systems can vary greatly within the county. Also, in weather conditions with extreme heat and humidity, MSI may reduce the length of playing time and even mandate the games be divided into quarters to allow for ample rest and fluid intake. Our intention is to provide safe conditions for our players and to honor permit regulations for field use with county schools and parks.

Once games have started, referees are instructed to use common sense and suspend play when dangerous weather threatens, even if the storm has not yet broken. Their decisions should err on the side of safety and caution. Immediately upon suspension or termination of a game, players and spectators must leave the field and surrounding area, returning to places of safety (i.e., cars).

When thunder or lightning occurs, the game is immediately stopped, and the game clock is stopped. If there are 15 minutes or less remaining in the game, the game is terminated with the game score reported as an official completed game. If more than 15 minutes remain in the game, participants must wait the appropriate time – typically 25-30 minutes without additional thunder or lightning – before continuing the game. If the game has not reached the half-time, and the game cannot be restarted because of continuing inclement weather, the game is NOT an official game. If the game is stopped during the 2nd half with more than 15 minutes remaining, but the game cannot be restarted because of continuing inclement weather, the game is an official game.

The clock will stop during a delay and will resume when play restarts. Exception: In the event of a thunder/lightning delay with less than 15 minutes left in the game, the game will be terminated and the score will stand as of the time of termination.

#### **Game Day Emergencies**

For a true game day emergency that must be addressed immediately, please call the MSI office phone number (301.762.4674). In most cases, you will be referred to the cell phone of the MSI staff member who is on call that day.

#### **TERMINATED GAMES AND FINAL SCORES**

If a referee terminates a game because of field or weather conditions, it will be considered a complete game if the first half has been completed. The score will be final as it stands at the time the game is terminated. If the game is terminated prior to or during the first half, the score will revert to 0 - 0, and the game will be played at a later date. If some games in a division are unable to be re-scheduled, special "average points per game" may be used to determine final standings.

#### **DANGEROUS WEATHER**

**By way of definition, dangerous weather exists if any of the following conditions are present:**

1. Any lightning is observed.

2. Thunder is heard, regardless of the presence of lightning.

"Generally speaking, if an individual can see lightning and/or hear thunder he/she is already at risk. Louder or more frequent thunder indicates that lightning activity is approaching, increasing the risk for lightning injury or death. If the time delay between seeing the flash (lightning) and hearing the bang (thunder) is less than 30 seconds, the individual should be in, or seek a safer location. Be aware that this method of ranging has severe limitations in part due to the difficulty of associating the proper thunder to the corresponding flash."

"High winds, rainfall, and cloud cover often act as precursors to actual cloud-to-ground strikes notifying individuals to take action. Many lightning casualties occur in the beginning, as the storm approaches, because people ignore these precursors. Also, many lightning casualties occur after the perceived threat has passed. Generally, the lightning threat diminishes with time after the last sound of thunder, but may persist for more than 30 minutes. When thunderstorms are in the area but not overhead, the lightning threat can exist even when it is sunny, not raining, or when clear sky is visible."

"When available, pay attention to weather warning devices such as NOAA weather radio and/or credible lightning detection systems, however, do not let this information override good common sense."

Reprinted with permission from [www.lightningsafety.com](http://www.lightningsafety.com).

### PERSONAL LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS

**1. PLAN** in advance your evacuation and safety measures. When you first see lightning or hear thunder, activate your emergency plan. Now is the time to go to a building or a vehicle. Lightning often precedes rain, so don't wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities.

**2. IF OUTDOORS...**Avoid water. Avoid the high ground. Avoid open spaces. Avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. Unsafe places include underneath canopies, small picnic or rain shelters, or near trees. Where possible, find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle such as a car, truck or a van with the windows completely shut. If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should:

A. **Crouch down.** Put feet together. Place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder.

B. **Avoid proximity** (minimum of 15 ft.) to other people.

**3. IF INDOORS...** Avoid water. Stay away from doors and windows. Do not use the telephone. Take off headsets. Turn off, unplug, and stay away from appliances, computers, power tools, & TV sets. Lightning may strike exterior electric and phone lines, inducing shocks to inside equipment.

**4. SUSPEND ACTIVITIES** for 30 minutes after observing lightning or hearing thunder.

**5. INJURED PERSONS** do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Apply First Aid procedures to a lightning victim if you are qualified to do so. Call 911 or send for help immediately.

**Prepared by the  
National Lightning Safety Institute, Louisville, CO.**

# AWARDS

## **U10 DIVISION**

Scores and standings will not be published in the U10 divisions, but every team will receive participation recognition at the end of the season.

## **TROPHIES**

For age groups U11 and above, individual trophies are awarded to the members of teams with the highest number of points in their division. Division standings are based on points from every game. In cases where all games were not able to be played in a division (i.e. certain games were rained out and unable to be rescheduled) an "average points per team" would be used.

### **Ties**

First place - When the season ends, ALL TEAMS TIED FOR FIRST PLACE EARN TROPHIES. **No tiebreakers are used to determine one winner. If there is a tie for first place, no second place trophies are awarded.**

### **Second Place Trophies**

Second place trophies are awarded under the following conditions:

- Six or more teams are in the division
- No teams are tied for first place
- If there is a tie, duplicate trophies are awarded

<b>Game Points:</b>	Win = 3 points
	Tie = 1 point
	Loss = 0 points

## **POSITION ROUNDS**

For divisions with 8 teams, MSI uses a position round pairing for the final games. Team standings will be strictly determined by the points gained in each match played through the 7th game to determine the pairings for the final games--or position rounds.

If any teams are tied on points, we use the applicable tie breakers to determine the pairings for the position rounds:

1. Most standing points earned in games among all teams that are tied.(i.e. head to head)
2. Most wins during the season
3. Least goals allowed during the season
4. Goal differential - No greater (lesser) than +/- 4 per game
5. Fewest penalty points
6. Coin flip

In the event that more than two teams are tied, the above tiebreakers will be applied until such time as one or more teams "fall out" of the tie. At that point, the remaining "tied teams" will return to the first tiebreaker and have the process re-applied. This process will occur until all ties have been broken.

Points continue to accumulate **only** within the pairing themselves to determine the final position. A team can never finish any higher or lower than in their pairing.

There are no overtimes, no tiebreakers, no penalty kicks in any MSI Classic games — regular games or position rounds. If games are tied at the end, causing a tie in standings....the teams will remain tied.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Good sportsmanship is a guiding principle of MSI. Coaches set the tone for players. Therefore, MSI expects coaches to exemplify good sportsmanship and to encourage your team members to act similarly. Coaches are also responsible for the behavior of their team's spectators at the games.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD**

All home team coaches are required to give a game card to the referee prior to the start of each of the games. The referee rates the players, coaches and spectators in each game. The teams receiving the highest ratings are awarded the Sportsmanship Award for the season.

### **COACHES' CONDUCT**

The conduct of MSI coaches on both the practice and game field establishes how players, parents, and the public perceive MSI. Parents who entrust their children to MSI should feel confident that standards being taught are consistent with their own. Therefore, it is vital that coaches demonstrate and teach the highest standards of sportsmanship. Every MSI coach **must** read and follow these guidelines:

1. Players are instructed to play according to the Laws of the Game and are encouraged to play to win without taking unfair advantage of an opponent.
2. Coaches will **not** dispute the ruling of a referee or assistant referee while the game is in progress and will instruct their team and spectators to refrain from doing so. **In all cases, they will follow the directions of the referee.** Clarification of a ruling may take place only with the referee's approval during an official break in play or when the referee indicates it is appropriate.
3. Coaching from the sidelines is permitted by one person at a time only under the following conditions:
  - the tone and language are instructive,
  - it occurs behind the touchline between the penalty areas,
  - it is directed from the assigned team's area.

**MSI rules do not permit coaches to provide players with a constant flow of directions during play.** Violation of this rule is considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

4. **Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players, officials, and spectators.** If a spectator's conduct warrants the issuance of a yellow or red card, it may be issued directly to the spectator. If the referee cannot identify the spectator or believes the coach has not attempted to control his spectators, the card may be awarded to the coach.

**Physical violence, foul or abusive language, or harassment of players and referees is NOT TOLERATED and could result in permanent suspension. Coaches may not coach or criticize players from the opposing team. Such conduct reported to MSI officials is reviewed even in situations where cards are not issued.**

Any incident of assault or physical violence directed against a referee or assistant referee by coaches, spectators, or players results in immediate referral to the MWSRA and US Youth Soccer or MSYSA. In addition, the Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee of MSI (PRDC) automatically reviews the incident.

5. The unsportsmanlike use of noise-making or amplifying devices is prohibited. The referee is the sole judge of unsportsmanlike behavior involving noise-making or amplifying devices.

6. When a team walks off a field in protest, they forfeit the game, and the coach may be called before the PRDC and may face sanctions.

## SANCTIONS

**Yellow Cards:** A player who receives a yellow card must leave the game immediately, but can be substituted and sit out 5 minutes, after which the referee may allow for the return of the player in a normal substitution. The five-minute sit-out time does not include halftime.

**Red Cards (Automatic Suspension):** Receipt of a red card by a player, coach or spectator results in immediate ejection from the field of play and a minimum one-game suspension from the next league game with **no appeal**. A coach or spectator receiving a red card must leave the field immediately and move at least to the parking lot. He or she may not return to the field at the end of the game, or be on the sidelines at the following game. The jurisdiction of the referee begins upon his arrival at the parking area and continues until he leaves the parking area. If a red card is issued to a coach or spectator, the offending person is prohibited from attending the team's next game. If a red card is issued to a player, the player may attend the next game but is not allowed to play and may not be in uniform or other teamwear. **A sit out form indicating that the person was not at the next game or did not play must be completed and submitted to MSI within 48 hours of the game.** Failure to leave the field after receiving a red card will result in mandatory coaches review and termination and forfeiture of the game. S/he may coach another team at another field. If the coach is required to leave and there is no other responsible adult available to supervise the team, the game will be declared a forfeit in favor of the other team with a final score of 1 – 0.

**Referees display a yellow card to indicate the offender has received a caution. A red card indicates ejection. Two yellow cards in the same game become a red card.**

**Red cards cannot be appealed.**

**Any ejection of a coach, player, or spectator constitutes a red card offense whether or not the card is actually shown and all associated penalties must still be served by the offending person.**

The following individual penalty points will be assessed to coaches or players who are awarded yellow or red cards:

Yellow Card	2 points
2nd Yellow Card in the same game	3 points + ejection (must serve sit-out in next game)
Red Card	5 points + ejection (must serve sit-out in next game)

A coach, spectator or player will be suspended from MSI participation because of the accumulation of penalty points during the season, whether assessed in league play or in MSI-sanctioned tournaments:

5 points	1-game suspension (minimum)
8 points	additional 1-game suspension (minimum)
12 or more points	additional 1-game suspension (minimum)

The PRDC and/or Sportsmanship Committee will impose additional penalties if suspensions are not served in accordance with MSI rules and procedures. These sanctions do not limit the authority of the PRDC from imposing other conditions upon future participation or additional penalties for misconduct, as deemed necessary.

### **SANCTIONS ON TEAMS ACCUMULATING POINTS**

Any team receiving 15 or more points during a season may be subject to a review by the Policy, Rules and Discipline Committee. At 15 points, the coach will receive a mandatory call from the Chairman of the PRDC. The Committee may take any action deemed necessary. Additional sanctions may include:

26 penalty points = -3 standings points

31 penalty points = additional -3 standings points

36 penalty points = additional -3 standings points

The team's coach is required to be present at this review and, regardless of the coach's attendance; the Committee may take any action deemed necessary. It is the team's responsibility to track its totals.

### **CARRYING OUT SUSPENSIONS (SIT OUT CARD)**

**A suspended coach or spectator may not appear at the game site or its vicinity before, during, or after a game for which s/he has been suspended.** If a coach/spectator appears at the game site during a suspension, his or her team shall forfeit the game(s) in question by a 1 - 0 score. Such incidents must be reported to MSI.

**A suspended player** may attend the game as a spectator provided:

- the player is not in uniform
- the player does not play.

**When a player, coach or spectator receives a red card, coaches must complete a sit-out form, have it signed by the referee and opposing coach at the following game in which the sit-out occurs, and submit it to the MSI Office within 48 hours of that game. Sit-out forms are available on the MSI website.**

**If a suspended player or coach participates in the game(s) for which they are suspended, the team shall forfeit the game(s) by a 1-0 score. If the coach fails to submit a signed, sit-out form to the MSI office within 48 hours of the sit-out, the team shall forfeit the game by a 1-0 score and the suspended player or coach must sit out an additional game. The sit-out form may be scanned by email to MSI.**

A suspension must apply to the next MSI league game that the team plays. In instances where there are forfeitures or postponed games, the suspension will be served at the next game played. All suspension actions carry forward until the entire suspension is served, irrespective of season.

### **COMMITTEE REVIEWS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

MSI reviews all game cards each week, recording sportsmanship ratings and any red or yellow cards awarded, and makes counseling calls to all coaches with poor ratings.

MSI will assess penalty points and suspension, when warranted, and forward that information to the Policy, Rules & Discipline Committee (PRDC) Chairman for disciplinary action.

The PRDC review, investigate and adjudicate complaints of unsporting conduct and/or conduct not in the best interest of MSI. The following actions may be taken against an individual player, team official, team or club:

1. **Verbal warnings and a written record.** Verbal warning and reprimands may be made by PRDC and any of its sub-committees. A written record must be kept and may be referenced in any future actions against that party. If appropriate, a copy will be sent to the club representative of any team

outside MSI.

**2. Written censure.** A written censure may be sent to the offending party by the R & DC, and any of its sub-committees. This may be referenced in any future actions against the party. A copy of the censure will be sent to the offender's coach and club representative, if appropriate.

**3. Probation and suspension.** A player, team official, team, or club may be placed on probation and, in more serious cases, may be suspended for a number of games specifically associated with that party. A suspended player may not participate in any game for which they are suspended. A suspended team official may not appear at the game site or the vicinity of a game for which they are suspended. See *Carrying Out Suspensions*, for full details.

**4. Ban from participation.** In extreme cases, upon decision of the PRDC, a player, official, team, or club may be banned from MSI participation or sponsorship for more than one year. This requires approval of MSI's Board of Directors. Those being banned may not participate in any games or practice with any team during the period of suspension. A team that does not comply with this sanction may have all MSI privileges removed. Creation of a "new" team for MSI will be limited to a maximum of six players from the banned team's roster, irrespective of the seasonal year.

## COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Two types of actions may be taken involving a referee: A complaint, which merely records the conduct, and an appeal, which requests action.

### COMPLAINT AGAINST A USSF REFEREE

Any complaint concerning a referee's conduct during a game should be submitted **in writing** to the MSI office. The complaint will be noted and if warranted sent to the MWSRA for follow-up.

### APPEALS FROM REFEREE DECISIONS

Any MSI Classic coach may appeal a decision or ruling by a MWRSA referee believed to be an incorrect application of the FIFA Laws of the Game, as modified by MSI. Judgment calls, essentially questions of fact, may not be appealed. **Red cards may not be appealed.** See the section *Referees* in this handbook.

Appeals are sent to the MSI Executive Director who is empowered to decide whether the appeal is with or without merit. The appeal must be **in writing**, and must include **all** of the following information:

1. The referee's **decisions, rulings and actions**.
2. The governing **soccer law** or rules that the coach feels were misapplied or violated.
3. The **names** of the MSI conference, teams, and coaches involved.
4. The **telephone numbers** of all coaches.

In order to file an appeal, the coach must complete the following procedures:

1. Make **four copies** of the written appeal.
2. Mail all copies to the Executive Director of MSI. They must be **postmarked within four days** following the date the game was played.
3. Attach a **check for \$100**, signed and made payable to MSI, to the appeal letter. The President and Executive Director will retain the check until the Appeals Commissioner completes action on the appeal and will return it if the appeal was upheld or cash and deposit it if the appeal was denied.

### **COMPLAINT AGAINST A COACH**

Coaches, parents, and other active and associated members of MSI may file complaints with the MSI Rules and Discipline Committee concerning unsporting conduct by an MSI coach. (See the *Sportsmanship* section of this handbook.) Complaints against coaches may result in action against the coach.

Complaints must be **in writing** and should be submitted to the MSI Director of Operations. Unless the complaint is deemed inappropriate for PRDC consideration and the complainant is so informed, the complaint and all relevant information will be promptly and carefully considered by the Committee.

If the PRDC concludes that the coach did engage in unsporting conduct, it may impose sanctions on the coach or refer him/her to the Coaches Review Committee.

### **APPEAL OF PRDC DECISION**

Any penalty imposed by the PRDC or any of its subcommittees may be appealed to the MSI Board of Directors. The appeal will be considered by such Board members who are present at a special Board meeting, which will be held in conjunction with the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting. Board members who participated in the original PRDC hearing may attend any appeal hearing in their capacity as PRDC members but should refrain from participating in the Board's deliberations. Board members who have any family or personal relationship with the coach should also refrain from participating in the Board's deliberations.

The person wishing to file the appeal must notify MSI's Executive Director, who will provide instructions about what material should be provided, deadlines for receipt of this material, and to whom it should be submitted. The person must provide oral notice of his or her intent to appeal within 48 hours after receiving the notice of the penalty from PRDC, and should file the formal written notice of appeal within another 48 hours after the oral notice is made. The PRDC appeal must be accompanied by the appeal fee, a check for \$100, made out to MSI, which will be held by the Executive Director until the Board of Directors has taken action on the appeal.

Any suspension or reduction in playing time ordered by the PRDC or one of its subcommittees will be held in abeyance until such appeal is heard, as long as the person filing the appeal continues to pursue the appeal and continues to meet deadlines required by the appeals process. (However, any automatic suspensions and additional sit-outs due to red cards or accumulated cards shall be served pending the hearing.)

The deliberations on an appeal will not constitute a new hearing on the matter but will solely be concerned with whether the original committee hearing was fair, was based on accurate testimony, and reached a reasonable conclusion. The Board of Directors may affirm, modify, reverse, or elect not to review any decision made by the PRDC or one of its subcommittees. The Board may, at its discretion, hold a hearing at which all parties in interest are given the opportunity to appear. If a hearing is not held, the Board should afford all parties in interest the opportunity to submit appropriate information for consideration.

Persons filing appeals are encouraged to submit their materials in a timely manner. If the materials are not submitted at least 48 hours before the meeting where the Board is scheduled to consider the appeal, the Board may refuse to consider the information or delay its consideration of the appeal until a subsequent meeting. If the Board believes the person filing the appeal is engaging in delaying tactics, the Board may consider the appeal in the absence of the supplementary information.

MSI's President/Executive Director, working with the PRDC chair, will provide a summary to the Board, including written material and exhibits provided at the original hearing, the record of the committee's decision, any subsequent correspondence between the committees, the appellant, and MSI, and any new material submitted by the committee or the appellant. The chair of the PRDC is also invited to submit additional information, including a summary of the reasoning behind the PRDC's decision.

If a hearing is scheduled, parties in interest to the appeal, including the PRDC, the appellant, and the person filing the original complaint, will be notified of the Board hearing and will be invited to submit additional information.

The Board will review this material and will invite the person who filed the appeal to make a brief statement on his/her behalf. The Board may question the appellant. The PRDC chairs may attend the Executive Committee hearing as observers and to answer questions about the committee's deliberations and decision.

After the person filing the appeal has finished his or her statement and the Board has asked any questions, the appellant will be asked to leave and the Board will discuss the appeal. Normally, the Board will reach a decision at that meeting, on the basis of the written material and the discussion with the appellant. In unusual circumstances, the Board may decide to conduct a new hearing, which will be scheduled at a later date. The Board will inform MSI's Executive Director of its decision, who will notify the appellant, the PRDC chair, and other parties who need to be informed.

If the Board sustains the appeal, the appeal fee shall be refunded. Even if the appeal is not sustained, the Board can order the refund of all or part of the Coach's appeal fee unless it determines that the appeal was frivolous, without merit, or was submitted for reasons that are contrary to the best interests of MSI. Any appeal fee not refunded becomes the property of MSI and shall be forwarded to the MSI Treasurer for deposit to an appropriate account. The Board shall advise the Executive Director of his or her action as to the appeal fee and the Executive Director shall forward the deposit to the Treasurer or return it to the Coach, as the case may be.

No person who is subject to the MSI rules and discipline process may appeal any matter addressed by the MSI rules and discipline process to US Youth Soccer, MSYSA, or any other organization within the structure of the U.S. Soccer Federation until all appeals within MSI have been exhausted. If the MSI Board of Directors rejects an appeal, the penalty may be appealed to US Youth Soccer, subject to rules and procedures established by that organization.

No member team, player, coach, administrator, spectator, or referee may invoke the aid of the courts regarding any action occurring in an MSI league game, tournament, or other MSI activity, or any action taken by MSI or one of its committees, without first exhausting all administrative remedies made available by MSI, MSYSA, US Youth Soccer, or the US Soccer Federation.

## TOURNAMENTS

Teams are encouraged to participate in the various tournaments held in the state and surrounding area throughout the year. However, all teams must understand that league games take precedence over any tournament games and that missing a league game to play in a tournament will result in a forfeit of the league game. Tournament invitations are usually extended to specific teams, leagues or club organizations, such as MSI. Teams participating in a tournament are responsible for all fees and regulations set forth by the tournament sponsor.

MSI teams wishing to play in out-of-state tournaments or leagues should check the requirements of the tournament to determine if the tournament accepts the "house" cards issued by MSU. MSI management will assist in this inquiry if needed.

Sanctioned tournaments are those approved by the state organization of the host (such as MSYSA), or by US Club Soccer, and only affiliated teams may participate. This is true of both club-sponsored travel and Recreational tournaments, including festivals and all-star events that present trophies or other awards.

**MSI insurance does not cover unsanctioned events, and there may be other penalties for participation.** A copy of the sanction form will be included with the invitation of any sanctioned event. Check for its presence before you apply. MSI receives information on tournaments in the metropolitan area and the rest of the country. Also, check for tournaments on the MSYSA website ([www.msysa.org](http://www.msysa.org)).

Patches are usually exchanged with opponents after each tournament game as part of the handshake. When you calculate the number of patches needed, allow for coaches and managers and any playoff games. Tournament patches can be purchased at the MSI office.

At many tournaments, your players registration form's signed medical release/registration form may also act as a medical release. The Medical Release form below is **optional**. We encourage each team to reproduce it for distribution to players. The form **MUST** be notarized to be accepted by most local hospitals and HMO's. The coach should retain the forms.

## **MONTGOMERY SOCCER, INC. MEDICAL RELEASE FORM**

I hereby give permission for any and all medical attention necessary to be administered to my child in the event of an accident, injury, sickness, etc., under the direction of the person(s) listed below, until such time as I may be contacted. This release is effective until such time as revoked by me. I also hereby assume the responsibility for payment of any such treatment.

My address is: \_\_\_\_\_

My insurance is: \_\_\_\_\_ My policy number is: \_\_\_\_\_

**In case I cannot be reached, any of the following is authorized to act in my behalf:**

1. Coach \_\_\_\_\_
2. Assistant Coach \_\_\_\_\_
3. A league or Montgomery Soccer representative where my child is playing.
4. Any tournament representative where my child is playing.

Our physician is: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

My child's birth date: \_\_\_\_\_ Known allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of last tetanus shot: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's phone:(H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W)\_\_\_\_\_

This form is not required to be notarized but notarization is strongly recommended.

Signature (Parent/Guardian): _____
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Subscribed and sworn (affirmed) before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ .

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public

# FIRST AID PRECAUTIONS FOR MSI COACHES

## HEAT, FLUID INTAKE, AND SOCCER

Research on fluid replenishment is ongoing and considering that each new drink makes a new claim, it is easier to continue using water. Players should be cautious about their water intake.

They should avoid soda, especially caffeinated and carbonated sodas. Caffeine is a diuretic (you want to retain water, not urinate it) and carbonation makes you feel full, so that you don't drink enough.

Drinks sweetened solely with fructose (read labels!) can sometimes cause an upset stomach. However, fructose is such a good sweetener, its presence with other carbohydrates (glucose polymers, sucrose, and glucose) improves the drink's taste. The tastier the drink, the more kids will drink. A drawback of water is its bland taste.

Small concentrations of carbohydrates are good, but too much is not good. If there is too much carbohydrates, passage of the drink to the intestine is slowed. A solution between 6-10% is suggested. (examples: Leons EM, Gatorade, Body Fuel Hydra Fuel, Exceed, CytoMax)

Electrolytes help to move fluid across the cells of the intestine and into the bloodstream. It also helps in retaining some of the fluids ingested.

Cold drinks are absorbed fastest (around 40°F), so keep them iced.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

IN THE CASE OF SERIOUS AND LIFE-THREATENING MEDICAL EMERGENCIES FIRST AID IS THE TREATMENT GIVEN TO THE VICTIM WHILE AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS. WHEN THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT ARISES, KEEP THE FOLLOWING ADVICE IN MIND:

- Avoid excitement or panic. KEEP CALM.
- If the emergency is life-threatening (the victim is not breathing, bleeding uncontrollably, experiencing severe shock), take action immediately.
- Never move a badly injured person unless remaining there endangers lives.
- Check vital signs (breathing, pulse) and ascertain if the victim is bleeding.
- Activate the EMS (Emergency Medical Systems) immediately by notifying ambulance, fire or police.

Make sure that you are watching players at all times during practice as well as games. Avoid distractions including unnecessary conversation. This will not only help you to act more effectively during an emergency, but you may also be better prepared to prevent one if you are paying close attention to the players. Always supervise field and player equipment.

Coaches should always conduct a practice or play a game with a first aid kit nearby. Although the rate of injury to young athletes is not of significant numbers, injuries do occur, and a sideline first aid kit can be quite valuable. The contents of these kits may change as a team matures and becomes more competitive. Fewer basic medical supplies are needed by an under-8 group of players than by a team of teenaged athletes. Injuries at younger levels occur at a rate of approximately 1:1000 playing hours, compared to older groups where the rate of injury is approximately 3.8:1000 playing hours. The increased intensity of play in older age groups increases the level of injury.

Please take time to review the First Aid pamphlet included in your coaching materials before the season begins.

## FIRST AID KIT SUGGESTIONS

Following is a **suggested inventory** of first aid items. It is important that these supplies be kept clean and dry. Therefore, the container they are placed in should be resistant to dirt and weather.

### BASIC FIRST AID KIT

- Spray bottle
- Assorted Band Aids (1) box
- Butterfly Bandage (1)
- Plastic Bags (5)
- Instant Cold Pack (6)
- Ace Wrap (2) 3 inches wide
- Rubber Gloves

### ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES FOR MORE COMPETITIVE TEAMS

- Pen Light (1)
- Under Wrap (3) rolls (sometimes called pre-wrap)
- Adhesive Tape (3) 1inch
- Telfa Pads 3x3 (24)
- Steristrips (12)
- Thermometer- Oral (1)
- Bandage Scissors (2)
- Tongue Depressors (6)
- Q-Tips (12)
- Bite Stick (1)
- Mirror (1)
- Squirt Bottle (1)
- Eye Wash (1) bottle

