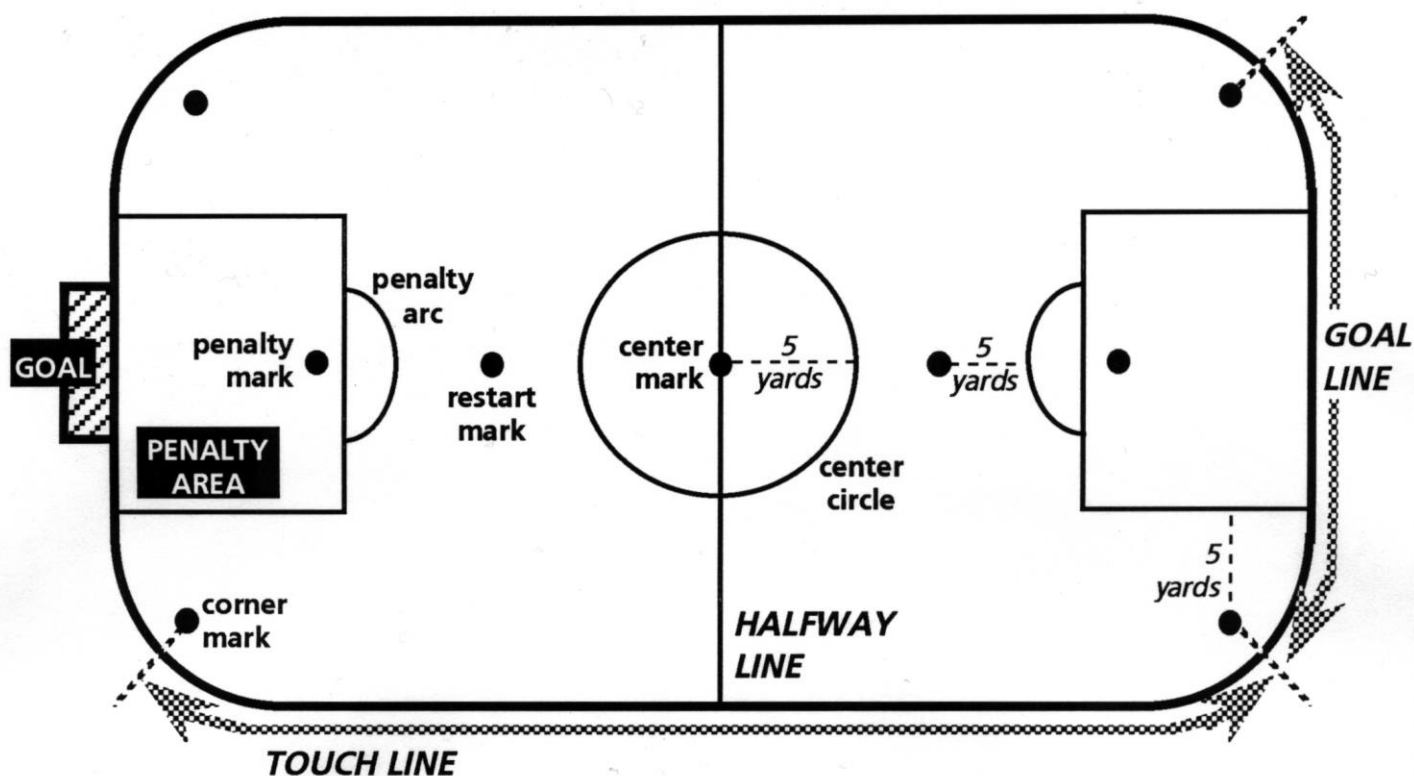




WIDeworld
SPORTS CENTER

Indoor Soccer Rule Book

Facility Policies / League Regulations
Rules of Play / Rule Clarifications



Big George's
AUDIO VIDEO

**References to the male gender made herein with respect to players, team officials, referees, and all other individuals are made for purposes of simplification only and apply to both males and females.

Facility Policies

Parking

Parking is permitted only in areas marked for parking. Vehicles parked in other areas will be towed away at the owner's expense.

Handicap parking spaces are reserved for vehicles with proper handicap identification. All other vehicles parked in handicap spaces will be towed away at the owner's expense.

Behavior

Team coaches are responsible for ensuring that all individuals associated with their teams observe WWSC rules, regulations, and policies.

WWSC reserves the right to expel any individual or team from WWSC property, without refund of registration fees or other monies paid to WWSC, for misconduct committed therein.

Actions by spectators, coaches and/or players may result in match penalties, suspension or termination of a match, and, in some cases, forfeiture of the match and other disciplinary sanctions. Any individual or team may be ordered to leave the WWSC property for any reason at any time.

Verbal and/or physical abuse of WWSC referees or staff will not be tolerated.

Prohibited Activities/Substances

The following activities are cause for forfeiture of match or expulsion from WWSC:

bringing alcohol or tobacco products onto WWSC property

bringing gum, candy or food on the field or in the team bench area

bringing glass containers into the team areas

Lost-and-Found Items

WWSC assumes no responsibility for items lost, stolen, or damaged on facility property. Found items are stored by the east field exit door. Items will be retained for the duration of the current season only. Lost water bottles, socks, towels, and other frequently abandoned or lost items of lesser value will not be retained.

Injuries / Medical Emergencies

It is recommended that managers and coaches at each match carry medical release forms, first aid kits, and extra uniforms (a player with a bloody uniform may not be permitted to continue playing).

In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached in an emergency, WWSC reserves the right to solicit emergency care for an injured player, including paramedic assistance or hospital care, as may be deemed necessary under the circumstances.



League Regulations

Seasons

An ADULT soccer year will consist of varying seasons from 8–10-week sessions. Teams will play once a week.

A YOUTH soccer year consists of two seasons:

- Fall (Nov-Dec: 8 games) • *Winter (Jan-Mar: 12 games)

Please see our Indoor Soccer Calendar for dates and deadlines.

League/Division Structure

Leagues are formed based on the following groups.

Gender

•Boys• Girls

• Men• Women

• Co-Ed (Male and Female players on the same team)

Age Level

• Youth Leagues: Under-8 through Under-18

• Adult Leagues: Open, Over-25, Over-30, and Over-40

Competition Level

• Recreational (Div 4) • Intermediate (Div 2 or 3) • Competitive (Div 1)

Division by Skill/Ability Level

Each league will contain teams of varying levels of skill and experience; therefore, divisions may be formed to group teams by estimated playing ability.

Gender

Co-ed (Male/Female) teams are recommended to include a minimum of five (3) women on their roster. Coed teams must have at least two women on the field. If only one woman is present at game time she cannot be replaced by a male player.

** If only 2 females are present at the time and both teams come to an agreement prior to the game. The team may be permitted to play with 1 on the field and 1 female sub. **

** Female players are permitted to participate in boys' or men's leagues. As of 9/01/13, adult female players may play on more than one team per coed division.

Adult Coed Roster Guidelines

The purpose of the coed roster guidelines is to fairly and more accurately gauge the skill levels of the various coed divisions (1-4). In the spirit of these guidelines, team managers should do their best to register and roster their teams, per game, according to the following guidelines. WideWorld reserves the right to move teams up or down divisions based upon team performance and our best judgment of a team's skill level.

Player Definition: a D1 player is defined as any field player or goalie that has played collegiately or has registered, rostered, and played on a D1 Men's or Coed team at WideWorld within a year of the current team's registration.

Division Guidelines:

Division 1 (Competitive) – a Division 1 Roster is compiled of any player, male or female that wishes to compete at the highest skill level possible.

Division 2 (Intermediate) - a Division 2 Roster is compiled of up to two (2) D1 male players and up to three (3) D1 female players. The goalie may have played at any divisional level.

Division 3 (Intermediate/Rec) – a Division 3 Roster is compiled of up to one (1) D1 male player and up to two (2) D1 female players. The goalie may have played at any divisional level.

Division 4 (Recreational) – a Division 4 Roster is not compiled of any D1 male players or goalies, and up to one (1) D1 female player.

Age Levels

Please refer to "Age Group Chart" on our website

New Rule as of 2013-14:

Youth Divisions: formed by matching together teams of comparable skill level and age. Teams are designated as club teams or recreational teams. Recreational teams include teams pre-formed by friends, through Rec&Ed, or WideWorld's House Recreational League. Club teams are teams formed through state-sanctioned tryouts.

All youth rosters are considered "open rosters," which means that you can add players at anytime, and from any team. There are no restrictions. Teams are highly encouraged, however, to only add players of equal skill level to their designated league.

Adults (Age 18 and Over) may play at an adult age level lower (younger) than specified, but not at a higher (older) one.

Competition Level

When registering, teams are asked to indicate the competition level at which they feel they should be placed.

Beginner/Recreational Team (Div 4) A team that may contain some beginning players, and is interested in playing in an environment that is not very competitive.

Intermediate Team (Div 2 or 3) A team containing a mixture of experienced and inexperienced players who wish to play in a semi-competitive environment.

Competitive Team (Div 1) A team that desires to play at a high intensity level.

*Please read through the Adult Coed Roster Guidelines

Special Eligibility Requirements

Over-25 Women's Recreational League:

Players also registered on a team playing in Over-30 Women's Recreational division may play in this league.

House Teams (Individual Applicants)

Occasionally, WideWorld is able to create a "house" team of individual applicants.

Once an adult team is formed, the players must select their own manager. For youth teams, a coach will be provided by WideWorld Sports Center.

House teams are generally placed in recreational divisions and may be composed of players from varying age groups.

Assignment of Teams and Scheduling of Matches

While we seek to accommodate all requests and preferences in terms of league/division placement and time blocks for games, our top priority in assigning teams and scheduling games is to assemble leagues that are as competitively balanced as possible. Therefore, WWSC reserves the right to create new divisions or combine existing divisions and/or competitive levels, and to place a team in a different age level, competitive level, or division when necessary.

In doing so, WWSC may weigh such considerations as a team's past performance or management's estimation of the playing style or overall skill or ability level of the team.

When a younger adult team is joined with an older adult division, for example, Over 25 mixed with Over 30, the older teams may bring younger Over 25 players to the game. When two Over 30 teams within the division play each other, all players must be Over 30. The same rule will apply for any division designated as a mixed age-division. All teams will be defined by the age group that they register.

WWSC will consider a team's preference to play on certain days of the week when scheduling, but cannot offer any guarantees as to the placement of a team within time-block preferences.

U7-U14 youth divisions will be given priority in terms of time block assignments.

Rescheduling of Matches

Matches can be rescheduled, but only at the discretion of WWSC management. In the event of extreme weather, facility problems, or scheduling errors, WWSC will accommodate all teams. In the event of cancellations, WWSC will contact the Team Managers.

If teams would like to reschedule for other reasons, they must follow WWSC's reschedule policy. An online document of WWSC's field availability has been created for your convenience, and is available per season. To reschedule, just follow the directions provided in the Field Availability link on the homepage of WWSC's website.

Rosters/Waivers and Player Eligibility Information

Team Managers must complete their team's roster by having each player on their team complete the online membership profile, and roster onto their respective team of each participating season. All players must be rostered on a registered team before they can step on the field of play.

For youths under 18 years of age, the online signature must be read and submitted by a parent or legal guardian who assumes responsibility for the player's conduct.

Referees can obtain official copies of each team's roster in the front office to verify player eligibility. It is not the responsibility of the team manager to provide a roster for each game.

We emphasize the importance of planning ahead by making sure your roster contains enough players to cover for injuries, vacations, etc. Youth teams are permitted up to 18 players on the roster, while adult teams may roster up to 30 players (only 18 can play in any one game). Teams are encouraged to sign up possible emergency substitutes who might be able to play if problems arise, even if they don't plan on playing.

The use of any ineligible or undocumented players in a match will result in the forfeiture of the match, and possibly the suspension of up to one year to the coach and/or Team Manager responsible, and a suspension of up to one year to the offending player. Similar penalties apply to any situation in which a player or coach is found to have supplied WWSC with fraudulent or incorrect information, or has failed to provide WWSC with proper documentation.

New Rule as of 2014-15:

Adult goalkeepers that are younger than the registered age division may only play if both team managers give their consent AND receive approval from the WideWorld Manager on duty at the time of the match. There will be no limitation on the goalie if they do play.

Player Identification

All adult players (age 18 and over) must, at all times, be prepared to present a valid picture identification card, such as a driver's license, state ID card, passport, or school/college ID card, if requested by the referee or management.

Eligibility Protests and Inquiries

Protests regarding the eligibility of an opposing team's player must be presented to WideWorld Management before the end of the match. Play will not be stopped in order to deal with the protest; it will be handled either before the match, during halftime, or after the match.

In a youth match, management will record the protest on the back of the scoresheet. WWSC will then investigate the protest and determine disciplinary sanctions if necessary.

In an adult match, management will ask the player in question to present valid picture identification. If the player fails to demonstrate to the satisfaction of management that he/she is documented on the team's official roster, the referee notes this on the back of the scoresheet along with the player's name and other relevant details. The player is expelled from the match. WWSC will then determine disciplinary sanctions.

A player who fails to comply with these procedures shall be assumed to be an ineligible player.

WWSC may request validation of a player's eligibility at any time, and proof must be shown to WWSC within 48 hours of request.

Match Results

Points for match results are awarded as follows:

- 3 points for a victory
- 1 point for a draw
- 0 points for a loss
- \$25 fine is assessed for forfeits in which an opponent does not show up to a game, or fails to provide at least 48 hours notice of forfeiture to the opponent AND WideWorld Management. Teams that forfeit/no-show are automatically ineligible to win their respective division.

Forfeits

In the event of forfeiture of a match, a score of 5-0 is recorded against the team responsible for forfeiture, and a \$25 fine is assessed to the team managers Registration Account.

If a team cannot field the minimum number of players (indicated in Rule 3), after 10 minutes past the scheduled match time, the match is declared a "no-show" forfeit. If both teams "no show," the official result shall be 0-0.

In the event of a "no-show" forfeit, players from teams scheduled for that hour may scrimmage or practice for the remainder of the scheduled time.

A team that fails to show up for a scheduled match without informing WWSC at least 48 hours in advance will be fined \$25.00. The fee will be added to the team's season balance, and will not be permitted to play in any further matches until the fine has been paid.

If a match is abandoned or terminated due to any reason, including a team having fallen below the minimum number of required players, use of illegal players, or misconduct associated with a team, WWSC may, at its discretion, declare the match a forfeit and penalize the guilty team accordingly.

Forfeited matches can be rescheduled as long as BOTH teams agree to reschedule, and the forfeiting team pays a \$25 Referee Fee prior to the rescheduled match.



Complaints

The team's coach is the only individual authorized to submit complaints to WWSC management on behalf of a team regarding the decisions of the match referee or the conduct of the opposing team or facility staff.

Any questions or complaints must be presented **in writing** by the **team's coach/manager** to WWSC management no later than 24 hours after the conclusion of the match.

If anyone other than the coach (including players, coaches, family or friends of players, and other associated spectators) approaches management with complaints will be directed to submit the complaint through their **team's coach/manager**.

Absolutely no complaints by *any individual* may be directed toward referees or staff; such activity may be penalized by expulsion from the facility and further disciplinary sanctions to the associated team.

Determination of League/Division Winner

In the event that teams in the same league/division finish the season tied on points, their places will be determined by statistical superiority in the following criteria, in this order:

1. **results of head-to-head matches**
2. **goal difference in head-to-head matches**
3. **number of wins**
4. **goal difference for the entire season**
5. **goals scored against the team for the entire season**
6. **goals scored by the team for the entire season**
7. **coin toss**

Disciplinary Sanctions

Player misconduct will be sanctioned in the following manner:

Players who are expelled during match play must sit out a minimum of two weeks unless WWSC deems the offence unworthy of an extra game suspension. Additionally, WWSC reserves the right to extend the suspension time based on the severity of the misconduct. In the case of a bye-week, a player may be suspended for up to 3 weeks.

A player who is expelled (shown the red card) during a match, or is guilty of other serious misconduct before, during, or after a match while on WWSC property, will be suspended from participation with any team at WWSC until after they have served the entire suspension for the team with which they were playing at that time

A player who has been cautioned (shown the yellow card) three (3) times in the same season, regardless of how many teams they play on, shall be suspended from his team's (i.e., the team they were playing with at the time the third yellow card was received) next match, and from participation with any team at WWSC until after they have served out the entire suspension (i.e., 1 week). After this suspension, his disciplinary record is cleared

A player expelled (shown the red card) twice within a 6-month period shall be suspended for a period of eight (8) weeks.

A player expelled (shown the red card) three times within a 12-month period will be suspended indefinitely from future participation at WWSC

Misconduct by team officials will be sanctioned in the following manner:

A team official guilty of misconduct shall be suspended from his team's next match

A team official who has been expelled from a match shall be suspended for the remainder of the season

WWSC may suspend indefinitely, and without refund of any monies paid, any individual or team associated with violent or offensive behavior, property damage, referee abuse, or other violations of facility policies.

Such conduct may subject a team to severe disciplinary sanctions, including a permanent ban from participation at WWSC.



Rules of Play

Laws of the Game

WWSC's rules of play for indoor soccer are based on IFAB's *Laws of the Game*, which apply except where otherwise stated in the *Rules of Play*.

References to Laws (i.e., Law 15 :The Throw-in) refer to the corresponding item in the *Laws of the Game*. References to Rules (i.e., Rule 15) refer to the corresponding item in the *WWSC Rules of Play*.

Certain relevant sections of the *Laws*, as well as the United States Soccer Federation's *Advice To Referees on the Laws of the Game*, have been cited herein for clarification or instructional purposes. The remaining text of the *Laws* has been omitted for the sake of brevity.

Additional information on the *Laws of the Game* and U.S. referee procedures are available at <http://www.ussoccer.com>

Note

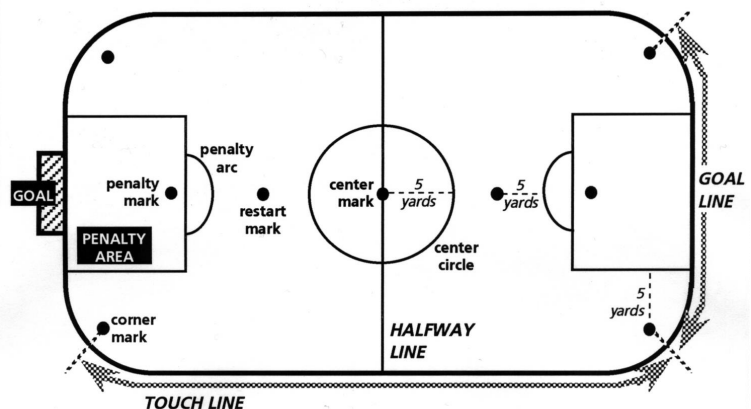
Wherever an asterisk (*) is seen, this represents the following qualification:

"Unless covered by the special circumstances mentioned in *Rule 8 - The Start and Restart of Play*."

1 - The Field of Play

The field of play is marked with lines, which belong to the areas of which they are boundaries.

See the diagram below for placements of field markings and objects.



2 - The Ball

The home team will be asked to provide a match ball of appropriate quality, material, size, and pressure for the given competition.

The choice of ball and any adjustment to its pressure is subject to the discretion of the referee.

The ball sizes by age group are:

- U8 **size 3**
- U9 - U12 **size 4**
- U13 and over **size 5**

3 - The Number of Players

A match may not begin or continue if either team consists of fewer than the minimum number of players.

A team will be penalized for allowing more than the maximum number of players on the field at one time.

The minimum and maximum number of players by age group are:

	Max.	Min.
U8 and older	6	4

In a co-ed match (High School / Open / O30 Leagues Only):

- A team must field at least two (2) female players at all times, or,
- If only one (1) female player is available, both teams may agree to allow play with 1 female 5 males.

A co-ed match may not be played if both teams cannot field at least one (1) female player.

“Mercy” Rule

A team losing by 5 or more goals is permitted to field one (1) additional player for every 5-goal increment in score by which the opponent leads. (**Maximum of two (2) additional players**)

New Rule as of 9/01/12: For all youth and adult games, results of games cannot exceed five (5) goals. For example, a score of 10-0 would be recorded as 5-0. A score of 10-3 would be recorded as 8-3.

Unlimited Substitution

There is no limit to the number of times a player may enter and exit the match.

Substitutions may be made at any time, except:

when play has been stopped by the referee to sanction misconduct

at the taking of a penalty kick

at any other time when so instructed by the referee

Substitution Procedure

To replace a player with a substitute, the following conditions must be observed:

The substitute enters the field of play:

only after the player being replaced has left the field

from within his own bench area

through the doors, and not by leaping over the dasher boards

All substitutes are subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the referee, whether called upon to play or not.

Use of Doors During Substitutions

The doors may be opened only at times when doing so does not endanger players or interfere with active play.

If any likelihood exists of active play moving toward the general area of the door, players and team personnel must refrain from opening it.

Jumping over the boards is not permitted.

Changing Goalkeepers

To change goalkeepers, the following conditions must be observed:

Substituting the goalkeeper may be done “on the fly” just as any other player enters the field of play. Players do not have to notify the official of a goalie change.

Infringements

A direct free kick from the point where the ball is located when play is stopped is awarded when a team is guilty of allowing more than the maximum number of players onto the field, or for any other violations of Law 3 :The Players.

Interference in play caused by incorrect use of the doors may be punished as dangerous play at the spot of the interference.

4 - The Players’ Equipment

Safety

We strongly recommend that players do not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player, **including any kind of jewelry**, with the exception of medical alert tags.

Any type of hard or plaster cast, or rigid medical implement such as a metal knee brace, **must be brought to the attention of the referee before the match** begins and be approved before the player can participate. Players wearing casts or splints of any kind must display to the referee the written consent of a doctor to play.

Metal braces, such as those worn on the knee, must be covered with a purpose-manufactured sleeve or other material that offers adequate protection against cuts or other injuries that may occur due to contact with it.

No headwear, caps, or metal clips or other dangerous hair-control implements may be worn unless medically required and approved in advance by WWSC management.

Players with open wounds or visible blood on their body or uniform will not be permitted to participate until the wound is properly covered and the uniform changed to the satisfaction of the referee.

Basic Equipment

The basic compulsory equipment of a player is:

Shirt of a color that matches their teammates

shirt of alternate color to be worn in case of color conflicts with opponent

shorts

socks

shin guards (must provide a reasonable degree of protection)

shoes (flat soled or turf shoes...NO cleats or turf shoes with long studs are permitted)

4.1 - Shirt

Color

The shirt’s color must match that of all his teammates, except for that of the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper must wear colors that distinguish him from the other players and the referee.

Numbers

New Rule as of 2015-16:

Shirts must be of a single, solid color contrasting that of the opponents

Numbered shirts are NOT required

Team Managers or Coaches are responsible for providing the game official the first and last name of any teammate that receives a yellow or red card at the end of matches.

Failure to provide accurate information will result in forfeiture and/or suspension from league play.

In the event that a team manager is not present, each team must provide a team representative prior to the match.

In case of color conflicts between opponents, and before the match begins, teams may provide WWSC Management a set of keys in exchange for colored team vests. Keys are returned when the vests are returned at the end of the game.

4.2 - Alternate-Color Shirt

If, in the opinion of the referee, the teams’ shirt colors do not adequately distinguish from each other, the team managers from each team must mutually agree which team will change to a shirt of contrasting color.

If the kick-off must be delayed because both the home and away team lack adequate alternate shirts, the clock will be started at the scheduled time and any playing time lost cannot be compensated.

Failure to change to an alternate color, and be ready to begin play, within 15 minutes of the scheduled kick-off time may result in forfeiture of the match.

WideWorld Sports Center is not responsible for providing alternate shirts. Do not depend on WWSC to provide such equipment.

4.3 - Shorts

Long pants are permitted as long as shin guards are worn.

4.4 - Stockings

Must be long enough to entirely cover the shin guards

4.5 - Shin guards

Must be covered entirely by the stockings

Must be purpose-manufactured of a suitable material (rubber, plastic, etc.)

Must, in the opinion of the referee, provide a reasonable degree of protection.

4.6 - Shoes

Shoes must be appropriate for an artificial-turf surface. Shoes with hard plastic or metal cleats are not permitted. Shoes with multiple small rubber nubs (sometimes referred to as "turf" shoes) are acceptable. Please do not wear turf shoes with "long" studs.

5 - The Referee

The Authority of the Referee

Each match is controlled by one or two referees who have full authority to enforce WWSC rules, regulations, and policies in connection with the match to which they have been appointed.

Among other duties, the referee will:

ensure that no unauthorized persons enter the field of play

take action against players, team officials, or associated individuals who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner; and may, at his or her discretion, expel them from the field of play or from WWSC property.

The Number of Referees

For purposes of simplification, all mention of referees herein shall assume a single referee, although the statements shall apply equally to both referees if a 2-referee crew is present.

Decisions of the Referee

The referee does not stop play for doubtful or trifling offences.

The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final. The referee may change a decision, though, upon realizing that it is incorrect, provided that he has not already restarted play.

The referee's record of the score — not the scoreboard — is official.

Application of the "Advantage" Clause

The referee shall refrain from penalizing offences when doing so would result in an advantage being gained by the offending team. There is, however, no advantage when Serious Foul Play has occurred.

Forfeits

In the event that a match has been forfeited, the players present may use the remaining scheduled time for a scrimmage or to practice, but **the referee is not permitted to officiate any such unofficial competition.**

See *League Regulations* for the circumstances that may result in the forfeiture of a match.

6 - The Duration of the Match

Periods of Play

The match lasts two equal periods of **25 minutes**, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the referee and the participating teams. Any agreement to alter the periods of play (for example, to reduce each half to 20 minutes because of a late arrival by one team) must be made before the start of play.

A scoreboard clock indicates the official time, unless it is not functioning or is turned off by the referee in order to make allowance for time lost at the end of a match.

Half-Time Interval

Players are entitled to an interval at half-time of no more than **two (2) minutes**, although this may be reduced or extended if agreed upon by both sides with the consent of the referee.

Allowance for Time Lost

Due to the importance of maintaining the fixed time schedule for match kick-offs, allowances for time lost can only be made under specific circumstances within the final five (5) minutes of a one-goal or tied match, at the discretion of the referee.

Allowances may be made for time lost due to:

time-wasting

team or player misconduct

persistent infringement or tactical fouls

interruption of play by an outside agent

situations in which an injured player cannot be removed from the field

Time lost for treatment of minor injuries that do not prevent a player from being removed from the field, or for other common occurrences, cannot be compensated for.

In such situations, the referee may either reset the scoreboard clock, or turn it off and keep time for the remainder of the match on his watch.

Time may also be extended at the end of a half for the taking of a penalty kick or free kick.

7 - The Start and Restart of Play

Kick-Off

The home team decides which goal it will attack in the first half of the match. The visiting team takes the kick-off to start the match.

The following procedure is to be observed:

all players are in their own half of the field

the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are outside of the center circle until the ball is in play

the ball is stationary on the center mark

the referee gives a signal

the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves in any direction

A goal may be scored directly from the kick-off.

If a team is not ready to begin the match or cannot field the minimum number of required players after 10 minutes have passed since the scheduled kick-off time of the match, the team forfeits the match. (See *League Regulations*.)

Measurements / Distance

Opponents must be at least 5 yards away from the ball at the taking of free-kicks, kick-ins, goal-kicks, corner-kicks, and kick-offs.*

*Special Circumstances

A free kick awarded to the defending team inside its own penalty area is taken from any point within the penalty area.

An indirect-offence committed by the defending team inside its penalty area results in a direct free kick to the attacking team taken from the point closest to the foul outside the penalty area.

If play is temporarily stopped while the ball is within the penalty area, play shall be restarted with a dropped ball to the Keeper.

8 - Ball In and Out of Play

Ball Out of Play

The ball is out of play when:

play has been stopped by the referee

the entire width of the ball has crossed the entire width of the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air

the ball has struck the perimeter or ceiling (overhead) netting

**Please note that the net on the back field (South Field) hangs over the goals just above the crossbar. For consistency, the ball is considered out of play when it touches this part of the net.*

Ball Played into the Ceiling Net

It is an offence to play the ball directly into the ceiling net.

Play is restarted in the following manner:

*When the ball has been played into the ceiling net, play is restarted with a **direct free kick** for the opponent from the restart mark on the side of the field from which the ball was played.*

At no time will play be restarted using the center spot when dealing with ceiling balls.

9 - The Method of Scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the entire width of the goal line, between the goal posts and under the crossbar; provided that there was no infringement of the rules previously committed by the team scoring the goal.

A goal may be scored by means of the goalkeeper throwing the ball into the opponent's goal.

10 - Offside

Law 11 is not applied.

11 - Fouls and Misconduct

Fouls and misconduct are penalized as follows:

Direct-Offences (Direct Free Kick)*

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following direct-offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:

pushes an opponent

charges an opponent

jumps at an opponent

strikes or attempts to strike an opponent

kicks or attempts to kick an opponent

trips or attempts to trip an opponent

endangers an opponent who is outside the yellow lines on the field, or in the corner of the fields by attempting to challenge for the ball, or by making an aggressive and competitive attempt to play the ball.

A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following direct-offences:

tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball

causes an opponent to collide with the dasher boards

holds an opponent with any part of his body

holds an opponent against the dasher boards in any manner

spits, in any manner

handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area)

places hands on opponent in an attempt to win the ball while opponent is facing dasher boards

Indirect-Offences (Direct Free Kick)*

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee, commits any of the following indirect-offences:

deliberately impedes the progress of an opponent (while not attempting to play to ball, or not being within playing distance of the ball)

prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands

plays in a dangerous manner

attempts an overhead ("bicycle") kick or diving header

attempts a sliding tackle in the presence of an opponent

The goalkeeper is permitted, when within his own penalty area, to slide with his body sideways or diagonally in the presence of an opponent, but only as necessary to play the ball with his hands. He may not slide-tackle feet-first for the ball.

A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following indirect-offences:

takes longer than six (6) seconds to release the ball from his hands after gaining possession of it

touches the ball again with his hands after it has been released from his possession and has not touched any other player

touches the ball with his hands after it has been intentionally kicked to him by a team-mate

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referee, a substitute:

interferes with play by leaning with their arms or body over the dasher boards

touches a ball before it has completely crossed the touch line (the imaginary line going upward from the dasher boards in the bench area)

interferes with play or endangers players by opening a door on the dasher boards when active play is moving toward or is likely to move toward that area

11.1 - Disciplinary Sanctions

Cautionable Offences (Yellow Card)

A player is shown the yellow card and cautioned, and must leave the field to serve a 2-minute timed-penalty if they commits any of the following offences:

1. *is guilty of unsporting behavior*
2. *shows dissent to the referee by word or action*
3. *persistently infringes WWSC rules*
4. *delays the restart of play*
5. *fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick*
6. *enters or re-enters the field of play incorrectly, or without the referee's permission when serving a time-penalty*
7. *deliberately leaves the field of play in order to avoid punishment*
8. *deliberately causes an opponent to collide with the dasher boards*
9. *attempts to damage WWSC property*

A player is shown the red card and expelled from the match, and team serves a 4-minute timed-penalty if they commit any of the following offences:

1. *is guilty of serious foul play*
2. *is guilty of violent conduct*
3. *spits at an opponent or any other person*
4. *denies an opponent a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity* by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area)*
5. *denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity* to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick*
6. *uses offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures*
7. *receives a second caution in the same match*
8. *leaves the bench area to get involved in a fight or altercation on the field*
9. *deliberately damages WWSC property*

*Please see Rule Clarifications, Item 11.1, for special conditions

An adult player or team official who has been expelled must leave the facility and WWSC property before the match may continue. Delay will result in the issuance of a 2-minute bench penalty for delaying the restart of play, and further sanctions.

A youth player or team official 17 years of age or younger who has been expelled shall remain seated on his team's bench until the match has concluded and comply with the referee's orders or become subject to additional disciplinary sanctions.

11.2 - Time-Penalties

2-Minute Penalty for Cautionable Offence (Yellow Card)

The 1st cautionable offence by a player is additionally punished by a compulsory 2-minute timed-penalty.

A 2nd cautionable offence by a player in the same match is punished by a compulsory 4-minute timed-penalty.

Procedure:

the player provides his first and last name, as they appear on the team's roster, to the referee

the player is shown the appropriate card(s) by the referee

the referee notifies the player and his team of the time-penalty issued

*the player leaves the field**

the penalty time begins when play is restarted

the team plays for two (2) minutes with one player fewer than the number present on the field at the time when the offence occurred

the player does not return to the field until two (2) minutes of playing time have elapsed or a goal is scored against the team serving the penalty, and a signal has been given by the referee

the referee gives a signal when the penalty time has expired

*A teammate may serve a time-penalty in place of a cautioned goalkeeper.

4-Minute Penalty for Expulsion Offence (Red Card)

An expulsion (red card) offence is punished by the issuance of a 4-minute timed-penalty.

Procedure:

the player provides his first and last name as shown on the team's roster

the player is shown the appropriate card(s) by the referee

the referee notifies the player and his team of the time-penalty issued

the player leaves the field, and if the player is an adult, the game is not restarted until he has left WWSC property

the penalty time begins when play is restarted

the player's team must play for four (4) minutes with one player fewer than the number present on the field at the time when the offence occurred

the referee gives a signal when the penalty time has expired

Expulsion Offences (Red Card)

If the removal of a player for service of a time-penalty would reduce a team's number of players below the minimum specified, the service of penalties may be delayed in sequence ("staggered") by the referee.

For the purposes of the mercy rule, players serving penalty time are considered to be active players.

11.3 - Bench Penalties

A bench penalty may be issued to a team as punishment for general team misconduct, for the conduct of its team officials, or for their failure to properly control individuals in the bench area. **Bench Penalties do not result in time-penalties for the offending team.**

Offences that may be sanctioned with a bench caution include:

Dissent or unsporting behavior by players or team personnel in the bench area

Infringements of Rule 3 (having too many players on the field, using the doors in a dangerous or careless manner, etc.)

Offences that may be sanctioned with a bench expulsion include, but are not limited to:

Use of offensive, insulting or abusive language, either by players or team personnel in the bench area

12 - Free Kick

Distance

All opponents must be at least five (5) yards away from the ball until it is kicked. Failure to yield the required distance is a cautionable offence.

13 - Penalty Kick

At the taking of a penalty kick, all players except for the goalkeeper and kicker must stand outside of the penalty area and penalty arc. Opponents must stand at least 5 yards from the spot of the penalty kick.

Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken at the end of each half, or at the end of periods of extra time in competitions when extra time is played.

14 - Kick-In

A kick-in is taken, instead of a throw-in, to restart the match after the ball has wholly crossed the touch-line, or touched the perimeter netting over the touch-line.

A goal **may** be scored directly from a kick-in.

Procedure:

The ball is placed on the yellow line for kick-ins.

All opponents must remain at least 5 yards away from the ball until it is kicked

The ball is kicked

The kicker may not touch the ball again until it has touched another player

In all other aspects, the kick-in functions in the same manner as the throw-in, described in Law 15.

15 - Goal Kick

A goal kick may be taken from any point inside the penalty area.

The ball is in play once it is kicked and is outside of the penalty area.

A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick, but not into the kicker's own goal.

Any ball that strikes the side net past the YELLOW goal line will result in a corner kick or goal kick.

16 - Corner Kick

The ball is placed on the corner mark.

Any ball that strikes the side net past the YELLOW goal line will result in a corner kick or goal kick.

17 - Miscellaneous

The Technical Area

The team's section of the bench area is considered its technical area. Only registered players, a coach or manager, are allowed in the playing area and bench. Teams in age groups **U8 through High School must be supervised by an adult 18 years of age or older in the bench area.**

Coaches and team managers must inform the referee, if requested, of the first and last name of all players, and vouch for the accuracy of this information under penalty of disciplinary sanctions.

Players and team personnel in the bench area **must not lean on the dasher boards during play**, as this can cause doors to disengage dangerously if collided into by an active player. Players must also keep hands and arms inside the bench area and not hanging over the dasher boards, where they can interfere with play.

Coaches or managers may not enter the field of play without permission of the referee. In cases of injuries to players, the referee will assess the situation and will only summon team personnel onto the field if, in his opinion, they are needed to provide medical treatment.

Rule Clarifications

2 - The Ball

Rubber is not an accepted material, and felt-covered balls are not appropriate for artificial-turf surfaces.

Kick-off time will not be delayed to add air or otherwise adjust a ball not properly prepared in advance by the home team.

3 - The Number of Players

Substitution

HELPFUL HINT

To speed up your substitutions and avoid being "caught" with too many players on the field, teams can use both of the doors available on each team area. Use one for players going in, and one for players going out, rather than having players change places through the same door.

5 - The Referee

The Number of Referees

When a crew of 2 referees works a match, both referees shall function as a team with equal authority shared between the two.

Decisions of the Referee

Doubtful means that there is doubt as to whether or not an offence occurred. In this situation, the referee errs in favor of allowing play to continue, rather than stopping play.

Trifling means that an offence did occur but has had an insignificant effect on the balance of play or the safety of players. For example, a player might deliberately attempt to handle the ball, but in doing so, touch it only so slightly with the tip of his finger that the ball's path is not changed. In this situation, the referee allows play to continue and does not penalize the offence, because to do so would introduce an unnecessary stoppage in play.

Application of the "Advantage" Clause

The referee shall make such decisions within the context of the match, considering such factors as the age and experience level of the players, and not apply the "advantage" clause blindly in situations when play is becoming violent or reckless, or when doing might confuse very young or novice players unfamiliar with the concept of "advantage."

11 - Fouls and Misconduct

Tackling

The fact the a player has played the ball in the course of a tackle is irrelevant if the player has carelessly, recklessly, or with excessive force, committed any prohibited actions in the course of his challenge.

It is entirely possible for a player to be guilty of a foul even though he made contact with the ball before making contact with the opponent, **if the player's challenge was unfair or dangerous in nature.**

EXAMPLE: A player tackles the ball away from an opponent from behind. His foot first touches the ball, but then follows through after touching the ball by kicking into the ankles of the opponent. The player may be judged as guilty of a foul because his challenge was careless or reckless, even though he "got" the ball.

Deliberate Handling of the Ball

The offence known as "handling the ball" involves deliberate contact with the ball by a player's hand or arm (IFAB clarifies this as the bottom of the sleeve of the t-shirt to the tips of the hand).

"Deliberate contact" means that the player deliberately moves the arm towards the ball. "Hand to ball, not ball to hand."

Moving hands or arms instinctively to protect the body when suddenly faced with a fast-approaching ball does not constitute deliberate contact unless there is subsequent action to direct the ball once contact is made.

Likewise, placing hands or arms to protect the body at a free kick or similar restart is not likely to produce an infringement unless there is subsequent action to direct or control the ball. The fact that a player may benefit from the ball contacting the hand does not transform the otherwise accidental event into an infringement. A player infringes the Law regarding handling the ball even if direct contact is avoided by holding something in the hand (clothing, shin guard, etc.).

The rule of thumb for referees is that deliberate handling occurs if the player plays the ball, but not if the ball plays the player. The referee should punish only deliberate handling of the ball, meaning only those actions when the player (and not the goalkeeper within his own penalty area) strikes or propels the ball with his hand or arm (upper arm to tip of fingers).

(This text was adapted from the USSF's *Advice to Referees on the Laws of the Game*)

Goalkeeper Possession

The goalkeeper is considered to be in possession of the ball by controlling it with any part of his hand or arms. Bouncing the ball is not considered a release of possession.

Due to the nature of indoor soccer and the high frequency of shots in close proximity to goalkeepers, officials will err on the side of caution when enforcing the goalkeeper possession rule.

Challenges Against the Goalkeeper

It is not an offence, in and of itself, to challenge for the ball when the goalkeeper is attempting to handle it unless the player carelessly, recklessly, or with excessive force commits any of the prohibited actions. For example, the referee may permit a controlled poke at the ball with the foot, but will not tolerate a reckless attempt to kick it with power at the same time that the goalkeeper is reaching for it. The latter shall be sanctioned as either dangerous play (if no contact is made with the opponent), or kicking an opponent.

Dangerous Play

Dangerous play occurs when a player commits an act that either puts an opponent or himself in unfair danger, or when a player unfairly denies the opponent a chance to play the ball by putting himself in a dangerous situation. Some acts, such as attempting a “high kick” or “playing the ball while on the ground” are not in of themselves illegal. These acts are considered dangerous play only when, in the opinion of the referee, they cause unfair danger or unfairly prevent an opponent from playing the ball.

The referee only stops play when an offence that fits these criteria has occurred.

Rule Clarification as of 2015-16: If a player plays the ball while on the ground and is within 2 yards of an opponent, the act will be considered dangerous and an automatic foul.

Slide Tackle and Playing from the Ground

A slide tackle is generally considered to be an attempt to play the ball that involves a launching of the body forward, foot-first, plus contact with the ground of any part of the body other than the feet. Simply lunging toward the ball from a static position is not considered slide and/or playing from the ground. *Please see Rule Clarification.

In general, playing the ball from the ground is not considered dangerous unless the act prevents the opponent from making a fair challenge for the ball. The decision as to whether a situation involving a player on the ground is considered dangerous is made solely at the discretion of the referee. *Please see Rule Clarification.

Rule Clarification as of 2015-16: If a player's knee touches the ground while lunging for a ball, and is within 2 yards of an opponent, the act will be considered dangerous and will be called as a foul.

If any player slides within 2 yards of an opponent, OR, lunges within 2 yards of an opponent, and their knee subsequently touches the ground, the act will be considered an automatic foul.

If the player's act occurs more than 2 yards from any opponent, and the official does not deem that a dangerous act has been committed, the official will tell the players to “play on.”

Officials should take into consideration the close proximity of players in the indoor game, and err on the side of the caution if there is doubt as to the danger that a player on the ground creates.

Impeding the Progress of an Opponent (“Obstruction”)

“Impeding the progress of an opponent” is the official term given to the offence formerly known as “obstruction.”

The new wording for the name of this offence helps to distinguish the legal act of **shielding** the ball from an opponent using his body, which is not an offence when a player is within playing distance of the ball, from the illegal act of using one's body to merely block an opponent from getting to the ball without actually attempting to play or control it. Only the latter is considered to be “impeding the progress of an opponent.”

It is important for players, coaches, and spectators to distinguish the difference between shielding and impeding, and to understand that a player within playing distance of the ball (usually about 1-2 yards) is permitted to shield the ball as long as he does not commit an offence (i.e., holding or pushing an opponent) in doing so.

Amount of Time Permitted to Restart Play

There is no set time limit within which a player must execute a restart after it has been awarded. The referee will deal with time-wasting and/or delay in the same manner as would be used in a normal (outdoor) soccer match. This may include the issuance of a caution. But the referee may not punish time-wasting or delay by changing the type of restart or its direction.

Given the faster pace of the indoor game, the referee will generally expect play to be restarted in a somewhat faster manner than is customarily allowed in outdoor soccer, but he will allow players to handle restarts in a conventional manner, provided that they do not involve time-wasting.

Placing Hands Upon the Dasher Boards

Merely allowing one's hands to make contact with the dasher boards is not, in and of itself, an offence. The referee shall only consider this an offence if the player in question gains an advantage in doing so by using the arms to block the opponent from challenging for the ball, or by using the boards to gain unfair leverage against an opponent.

The declaration by a player that he was placing his hands on the boards merely in anticipation of a challenge from an opponent is irrelevant. But in situations where a player places his hands on the boards as a necessary reflex for self-protection when moving quickly towards them, the referee shall only consider this an offence if they continue to maintain contact in an unfair manner.

Limited Contact Outside Yellow Lines and Corners of Field

New Guideline as of 2016-17: A new “Limited Contact” rule is officially in place for the 2016-17 Season for the areas of the field designated as outside of the yellow lines and in the corners of the field.

This is NOT a no-contact rule, but merely a guideline to encourage players to show caution toward their opponents near the boards and in the corners.

Officials will be asked to call a direct-kick foul for any competitive or aggressive contact outside the yellow lines and in the corners. In some situations, officials will be allowed to stop play and warn players that play too aggressively near the boards. The proper restart for a stoppage of play where no “foul” occurs is a drop-ball.

11.1 - Disciplinary Sanctions

No Referee Discretion in Applying Time-Penalties

The 2-minute time-penalty will occur for all caution-able offences.

Obvious Goal-Scoring Opportunity

Giving consideration to the smaller size of the goals and other factors unique to indoor soccer, the instructions and illustrations given in the *Laws of the Game* for judging an “obvious” goal-scoring opportunity may not always be directly applicable to incidents occurring in a WWSC indoor match. In general, in WWSC indoor soccer matches, the referee will typically demand a stricter set of circumstances to be present before showing the red card to a player and expelling him for the unlawful denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity. For example, an attacker's chance to go forward to goal one-on-one with the goalkeeper may not necessarily be considered an obvious goal-scoring opportunity in every situation, although an opportunity to shoot toward an entirely unattended goal most likely would.

The referee will also consider such factors as the perceived intent of the offender, the score of the match, the age and experience level of the players, and other circumstances in determining whether or not an expulsion is appropriate.

12 - Free Kick

Direct Free Kick or Indirect Free Kick?

HELPFUL HINT

All restarts at WideWorld Sports Center are taken as direct kicks.

There are both Direct and Indirect-Offences at WideWorld, just as in any USSF sanctioned outdoor match. For convenience and clarity purposes, WideWorld has chosen to make all restarts direct.

The only difference between a “direct” and “indirect offence” at WWSC is that a restart for an indirect offence committed in one's own penalty area is a direct free kick from the point closest to the foul outside the penalty area, as opposed to a penalty kick (which is awarded for a direct offence).

For clarification on what a Direct and Indirect-Offence are, please see Rule 11 under Fouls & Misconduct.

