

Tidewater Women's Soccer League

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TWSL OUTDOOR RULES OF PLAY

1. LEAGUE PARTICIPATION:

- A. To participate in the league a player must have paid the MDCVSA annual insurance premium prior to registration. The fiscal year for the insurance is January 1st through December 31st.
- B. The current registration fee must be paid by credit card online.
- C. The registration fee amount will be determined prior to player registration. The amount will be no greater than to allow for the purchase and repair of necessary equipment, and the cost to operate the league including field maintenance, league affiliation, and game officials.
- D. Each registered player will be considered an affiliate player with MDCVSA. This allows players to participate in area tournaments. They will need to provide a valid, government issued picture ID.
- E. If a player needs to drop from their team, the Registrar must be notified prior to the beginning of the season games for a full refund. After games have started, refunds will be issued less a \$20.00 service fee through the first week of play. Refunds will not be approved after the first week of play.
- F. A \$25.00 service fee will be imposed on all returned checks.

2. TEAMS:

- A. Team size and the number of teams will be determined at the conclusion of registration by the Board of Directors
- B. Teams will be assembled by the Board of Directors at Team Formation.
- C. The minimum age for Open Division players is 18 years old by the first game of the season. The minimum age for Over-30 Division players is 30 years old by the first game of the season. Any exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis by the Board.
- D. New players must have their age verified via a valid, government issued picture ID by a member of the Board before they can play.

- E. The Board reserves the right to alter team rosters if necessary.
- F. Late registered players will be added to teams at the Board's discretion.
- G. Teams will play 7v7 or 11v11, unless otherwise specified by the Board. The goalkeeper is included in the number of players on the field.

3. PRACTICES:

- A. A team can practice at any time they so choose.

4. SCHEDULE:

- A. Games shall be played in accordance with the schedule set up by the Board. Each team will play as close to eight games per season as possible.
- B. There will be no postponements except in the case of extreme emergency and/or weather conditions.
- C. At the discretion of the Board, games may be cancelled and rescheduled. Make ups for cancelled games are not guaranteed. They will be scheduled based on field and date availability, and may be scheduled on any day of the week.
- D. A game that is abandoned, after the first half has been played, is considered complete and will not be rescheduled.

5. LENGTH OF GAMES:

- A. For 7v7 format, the games will consist of two 35-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The referee will maintain the official game time, which will not be stopped except for injury or other lengthy delay. Games ending in a tie will remain a tied contest.
- B. For 11v11 format the games will consist of two 40-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The referee will maintain the official game time, which will not be stopped except for injury or other lengthy delay. Games ending in a tie will remain a tied contest.

6. OFFICIALS:

- A. There will be at least one U.S.S.F. certified referee per game. If certified referees are not available, uncertified referees will be used.
- B. Before the season begins, referees will be provided a copy of these rules via the referee assignor.
- C. No game will be repeated due to a dispute of a referee's call.

- D. The official shall have the authority to call off any games on the field that they deem unsafe due to extreme weather conditions. The games may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- E. The league shall pay referees at the end of each game, or as decided between the Board and the referee assignor.
- F. Referees will be provided a score card at the beginning of each game. They are required to fill out the score card at the end of each game with the final score, a list of cards issued to any players, and any injuries that occurred during play. The referee will give the completed score card to the Board member present at the field.

7. GAME REPORTS:

- A. The designated Board member at each game will collect the score card from the referee and send the information to the respective Division Coordinator via e-mail. This information should be relayed within 24 hours of game play.

8. FAILURE TO FIELD A TEAM:

- A. If a team cannot field 5 players for 7v7 matches or 7 players for 11v11 matches, a forfeit will occur. If the two teams are interested in a scrimmage game, the forfeiting team MUST obtain players for the scrimmage by asking the opposing team to provide players from its team. If the opposing team declines to provide players, any other registered player may be used.
- B. If a team forfeits before the game, the team receiving the forfeit will be awarded a 3-0 victory against the forfeiting team. If a team chooses to forfeit after the start of the game, the opposing team receives 3 points or the sum of their own goals scored, whichever is greater.
- C. To avoid a forfeit, a 10-minute grace period is given to the team with less than 5 or 7 players. The grace period time will be deducted from the official game time.
- D. At the discretion of the Board, if a sufficient number of guest players are not available to supplement the team with low numbers, registered TWSL players, within the division, from teams not involved in the scheduled match may be used to supplement as guest players.

9. LEAGUE PLAY:

League play will be governed by the current Laws of the Game adopted by FIFA and the USSF as amended by these rules or by agreement in a meeting by the Board of Directors.

- A. **Substitutions:** Substitutions can be made on the fly at any time; the subbing player must be off the field before the substitute may enter.

B. Equipment:

- a. Footwear: Players may wear molded rubber cleats or tennis shoes. NO SOFTBALL CLEATS OR STEEL CLEATS!
- b. Shin guards: The use of shin guards is mandatory.
- c. Field Equipment: Equipment will be furnished by a Board member or TR prior to the start of each game as needed.
- d. Soccer balls: Size 5 game balls will be provided by the league. Practice balls must be provided by players.
- e. Teams will wear royal blue (away) and white (home) shirts for games. All players must wear shorts or pants, socks, and their respective colored shirt. Goalies are permitted to wear any color except white or royal blue.

C. Out-of-Bounds:

- a. Balls landing and staying behind the net are out of play.
- b. A corner kick is awarded if the ball was last touched by the keeper or a defensive player, and goes out-of-bounds by crossing their goal line. All corner kicks are played as direct kicks. Opponents must be at least 10 yards (30 feet) from the ball at the time of the corner kick.
- c. A goal kick is awarded if the ball was last touched by an offensive player and goes out-of-bounds by crossing the defending team's goal line.
- d. A throw-in is awarded when the ball goes out-of-bounds along the sidelines. The team who did not touch the ball last will be given the throw-in. The opponents may be no closer than 2 yards (6 feet) from the point at which the throw-in is taken.

D. Indirect Kicks:

- a. Fouls that will result in an indirect kick are the following:
 - i. Dangerous Play
 - ii. Obstruction
 - iii. Preventing the keeper from releasing the ball
 - iv. Keeper handling the ball after it has been deliberately passed back from their own player
 - v. Keeper taking more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball
 - vi. Keeper handling the ball on a throw-in from their own teammate
- b. A goal may not be scored directly from an indirect kick. Rather, the ball must be touched by a second player before a goal can be scored.
- c. If the ball goes into the defending team's goal directly from an indirect kick, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team.
- d. If the ball goes into the kicker's own goal from an indirect kick, a corner kick is awarded to the defending team.
- e. Opponents must be at least 10 yards (30 feet) from the ball at the time of the kick.

E. Direct Kicks:

- a. Fouls that will result in a direct kick are the following:
 - i. Handling, kicking, tripping, jumping, charging, striking, pushing, holding, or spitting at an opponent
 - ii. Being careless and/or reckless, using excessive force, or a deliberate hand ball
- b. A goal may be scored directly on a direct kick.
- c. Fouls that take place outside the penalty box will be awarded by a direct kick where the foul occurred.
- d. Opponents must be at least 10 yards (30 feet) from the ball at the time of the kick.

F. Penalty Kicks:

- a. All fouls that occur inside the penalty box, and would typically result in a direct kick, will be awarded a penalty kick.
- b. For 11v11 games, the ball will be placed at the penalty kick line or mark within the penalty box.
- c. Due to the reduced field size for 7v7 games, the ball will be placed in the center, at the top line of the penalty box. This line may also be referred to as the 18 yard line.
- d. During penalty kicks, all non-kicking players, except for the goalie, must remain outside the penalty box and the penalty arc, and be positioned behind the ball until the ball is kicked.
- e. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line until the ball is kicked.
- f. After the ball is kicked, it is considered 'live'. If it rebounds off of the goal or keeper, and stays on the field, anyone can play it.

G. Offsides: Offsides will be called and will result in an indirect kick.

H. Slide tackling: NO sliding or slide tackling is allowed. Any field player who slide tackles will be warned verbally by the referee for the first offense. A yellow card will be issued the second time. This does not pertain to the goalkeeper making low slides to the ball.

I. Restarts: After a goal is scored, the game will restart with the ball at center field. This is a direct kick.

J. Goalkeeper Rules:

- a. Goalkeepers may handle the ball only in the designated goal area. The keeper's body may be out of the box as long as the ball stays in the box.
- b. Goalkeepers can roll, throw, kick, or punt the ball. The keeper may place the ball on the field and kick it, however once the ball touches the field, it is considered in play (live ball).
- c. Goalkeepers have no more than 10 seconds to put the ball back into play.

K. Slaughter Rule:

- a. In a fully fielded 7v7 or 11v11 match, when the winning team gets ahead by five goals, one of its players must come off the field. If the losing team scores, a player from the winning team may return to the field.
- b. In a fully fielded 7v7 or 11v11 match, for every two goals scored in excess of the five goal lead, the winning team will have to take another player off the field. The losing team must score two goals before a player from the winning team may return to the field.
- c. If the winning team is not fully fielded, the five goal slaughter rule will still apply, but the seven goal slaughter rule will not.

L. Penalties:

- a. The following infractions will (at the referee's discretion) result in a two-minute penalty for the player responsible:
 - i. Ball intentionally hitting the lights and/or scoreboard.
 - ii. Sliding or Slide tackles.
 - iii. Continual rough play and persistent infringement of the rules.
 - iv. The team may substitute a player onto the field for the penalized player unless a red card was given. If the player receives a red card they will not be replaced. (see section 10, paragraph B)
 - v. Yellow carded players will automatically receive a 2-minute penalty. The team may substitute a player on to the field for the yellow carded player.

10. MISCONDUCT:

A. Yellow Card, Caution:

- a. A player, spectator, or bench personnel shall be cautioned for:
 - i. Entering or leaving the field without permission of the official (unless making a substitution).
 - ii. PERSISTENT INFRINGEMENT of any rules of the game.
 - iii. Objecting (by words or action) to any decision by an official.
 - iv. Unsportsmanlike conduct, including use of vulgar or profane language toward another player or the official.
 - v. Sliding or slide tackling (after a verbal warning – see section 9, paragraph I).
- b. A yellow carded player must be substituted. They may return after two minutes of play have passed. The referee will keep the time and let the player know when they may return to the field.
- c. Referees will "officially" yellow card players who continue to commit fouls after being verbally cautioned. Upon receiving a second yellow card, the player will be "officially" red carded, ejected for the remainder of the current game, and suspended for the next regularly scheduled game played for that season.

B. Red Card, Disqualification:

- a. A player, spectator, or bench personnel shall be disqualified for:
 - i. Exhibiting violent conduct or serious foul play.
 - ii. Using abusive language
 - iii. Any subsequent act of misconduct after having been cautioned (CAUTION MAY BE VERBAL OR YELLOW CARD).
 - iv. An intentional handball in the penalty box that prevents a goal scoring opportunity.
- b. Anyone who is disqualified must leave the vicinity of the playing area for the remainder of the game, and will not be allowed to participate in the next regularly scheduled game played for that season. There will be no replacement of the disqualified player. The referee may stop the game until the disqualified person leaves. The referee may also end a game if the disqualified person refuses and the offending team chooses to forfeit.
- c. Games required to be missed will carry over to the next season.

C. Multiple Cards:

- a. Player participation in Tidewater Women's Soccer League sponsored matches may be disallowed if a player's actions result in an accumulation of excess cards.
- b. Participation within TWSL is dependent upon the number of cards one receives:
 - i. 2 Yellow Cards in a game = RED CARD = 1 game suspension, minimum
 - ii. 4 Yellow Cards in a season = 1 year suspension
 - iii. 2 Red Cards in a season = 1 year suspension
 - iv. Any combination of 2 red cards or equivalent of 2 red cards = 1 year suspension

D. Suspension:

- a. Players, coaches, and/or spectators who disrupt play or create an incident before, during, or after a game may receive a personal/team game suspension, followed by a suspension from the next scheduled game. This suspension will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- b. Absolutely no fighting will be tolerated. Any fight, serious foul play, or violent conduct may result in an immediate one year suspension from TWSL dated from time of incident.
- c. The Tidewater Women's Soccer League will not tolerate abusive behavior towards players, coaches, staff, or referees under ANY circumstances. ANYONE who acts in a violent physical manner or threatens ANYONE will forfeit the refund of all registration fees paid, and will be disqualified from participation in the Tidewater Women's Soccer League for a period of not less than 6 months. Disqualification decisions shall be made by the Board.

If a Board member is involved in the incident, they shall be prohibited from voting on such decision.

11. APPEAL POLICY:

- A. Appeals must be made in writing to the TWSL Board within 3 days of the action under protest. The Board will review the relevant facts and render a determination to the protester within 7 days receipt of the written protest.

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