

St. Croix Valley Athletic Association

Soccer Coach's Reference Guidelines

(All levels)

The objectives of the SCVAA Soccer League are:

- Encourage youth and adults to participate in the sport of soccer.
- Teach youth the fundamentals of soccer.
- Learn how to win and lose in a sporting manner.
- Have fun. Enjoyment of participating in a sport is the key ingredient for everyone.
- Demonstrate and educate youth on appropriate conduct within a recreational league.

Parental support is strongly encouraged. Parents are requested to give the program their total support. The league asserts that the conduct of the parents is the coach's responsibility. Any abusive language or harassment by spectators or coaches will not be condoned. The person or persons responsible will be asked to leave the premises. If they refuse, the match will be forfeited. **Remember, the best and worst educator is the example set by coaches and parents.**

The following guidelines and rules were established in pursuit of the St. Croix Valley Athletic Association Soccer League (henceforth referred to as SCVAA Soccer) objectives.

I. Sportsmanship

- A. All coaches, referees and parents are encouraged to be examples of good sportsmanship.
- B. Coaches shall be responsible for the actions of parents and players.
- C. Poor sportsmanship shall be determined by the referee. For example, use of foul language constitutes poor sportsmanship and, after one warning, is cause for ejection.
- D. In the case of a player being ejected from a match because of poor sportsmanship, his/her team shall play the remainder of the game with one less player and the ejection will be reported to the league coordinator.
- E. Spectators will remain 1 yard off the field and behind the touchline (sidelines). Spectators are not allowed behind the goal lines **or on the sideline with the team benches.**
- F. Coaches must stay on their sideline. They are not allowed behind the goal line.
- G. Fellowship is expected. Opposing teams, including coaches, shall line up at center field for handshakes after each match.
- H. Disciplinary Guideline

1. Players and coaches can be suspended for actions detrimental to the participants and program. Players can also be suspended for parent(s) actions.
2. Individual commissions can act on all discipline issues and take whatever disciplinary action deemed necessary for the integrity of the program
3. It is recommended that the Executive Board be notified promptly in writing of any disciplinary action within an individual commission before any action is taken.
4. The Executive Board of the St. Croix Valley Athletic Association will review all disciplinary procedures/actions of an individual commission before the individual commission proceeds with its disciplinary action.
5. All parties involved have the right to appeal the decision of the individual commission or Executive Board within 30 days upon receipt of a certified letter from the St. Croix Valley Athletic Association.
6. The appeal must be in writing and directed to the President of the St. Croix Valley Athletic Association or the Commissioner of the individual commission involved.

II. Eligibility

- A. All participants must meet the grade requirements described in Section IX.
- B. All participants must have paid their registration fee and must have had a parent or guardian sign the "Waiver of Injury" form.
- C. No one shall be denied the opportunity to play because of lack of ability. There will be no tryouts.
- D. Team selection shall be via selection protocol developed by the Soccer Commission.
- E. Team rosters will be provided to the coaches prior to (or at) the coaches meeting.

III. Registration Fee

- A. Registration fees for each division shall be determined by the Soccer Commission and shall be based on the costs, which includes: shirts, whistles, nets, balls, field maintenance, etc.
- B. A late fee shall be paid for any late registrations.

IV. Participation

- A. Coaches must notify all players on their roster of practices, games, etc.
- B. No child will play 4 quarters until all players have played 3 quarters. Coaches must try to even out playing time in a game.

V. Schedules

- A. The SCVAA Soccer Commission shall determine the final schedule. The tentative schedule calls for clinic, practices, and matches to be held in August, September, and October.
- B. Schedules of each team, with match dates, times, and field locations, will be distributed to the coaches at the coaches meeting in August.
- C. Practices are to be scheduled by coaches. Field signup for practices will occur at the coaches meeting in August.
- D. Information on special events (picture night, training sessions, etc.) will be announced / distributed to the coaches throughout the season as necessary.

VI. Rain Policy

- A. Coaches of the two teams scheduled to play shall decide whether or not to play the match. The safety of the players should be the prime consideration. Factors to consider include:
 - 1. Threat of lightning or dangerous storm.
 - 2. Condition of the playing field (mud, standing water, snow, etc). c. Heavy rain.
- B. The decision not to play may be agreed upon by both coaches 1.5 hours prior to the scheduled starting time.
- C. If the coaches do not agree to postpone the game 1.5 hours before game time, both teams are expected to show up for the match. Coaches on the field at the scheduled start time may agree to postpone the game. This decision should be based on the conditions on the field at the scheduled starting time.
- D. Postponed matches shall be rescheduled by mutual consent of the coaches. Date, time, and field signup are the responsibilities of the coaches.

VII. Referees' Responsibilities

- A. The referees shall be instructive and control the safe flow of the game. All calls shall be explained to the players.
- B. Coaches perform the role of referee in Leagues K, 1/2 and 3/4. Referees will be furnished for all 5/6, 7/8, and 9-12 division games. In case a referee does not show, a coach from each team should function as a referee.
- C. The referee shall keep time. The referees must blow the whistle to indicate the end of each quarter/half, and any other stoppage of play.
- D. The referee's decisions are final. A difference of opinion on calls should only be discussed at stoppages in play, not to interfere with the game.
- E. Opposing coaches and the referee(s) are required to meet before the match begins.

VIII. Coaches' Responsibilities

- A. Serve as instructor and teacher.
- B. Exhibit good sportsmanship.
- C. Inform team members regarding schedule changes.
- D. Explain the rules to youth and parents.
- E. Officiate their team's matches (Leagues K, 1/2, 3/4).

IX. Grade Leagues

- A. Six SCVAA Soccer leagues are defined by the grade or grade equivalency of the participant as of September 1 of the soccer season.

League K	<i>Kindergarten</i>	Mixed Boys & Girls Teams
League 1/2	<i>1st and 2nd Grades</i>	Separate Boys & Girls Teams
League 3/4	<i>3rd and 4th Grades</i>	Separate Boys & Girls Teams
League 5/6	<i>5th and 6th Grades</i>	Separate Boys & Girls Teams
League 7-8	<i>7th and 8th Grades</i>	Separate Boys & Girls Teams
League 9-12	<i>9th through 12 Grades</i>	Mixed Boys & Girls Teams

- B. No youth may play in a league below their grade level. Exceptions to the league assignments are based on the best interests of the child and the league. Any exceptions must be approved by the League Coordinators.

X. Miscellaneous Reminders

- A. For safety on the field, players should not wear or carry jewelry, watches, phones, or baseball caps while competing.
- B. All players must wear their SCVAA jersey to compete. When the weather is cold, the jersey should be worn on top of a sweatshirt or coat if needed.
- C. The ball must completely cross a line to be out of bounds or to be in the goal.
- D. Review FIFA rules (<https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/referees/rules-of-the-game/>) and the SCVAA documents detailing exceptions for each league.

League 3/4 Division Summary

I. Coaches' Responsibilities

- A. Serving as instructor and teacher
- B. Exhibiting good sportsmanship
- C. Informing team members regarding schedule changes
- D. Explaining the rules to youth and parents
- E. Ensuring equal playing opportunity for all players regardless of skill level
- F. Officiating their team's matches

II. Player Equipment

- A. Each player is required to wear shin guards.
- B. Size 4 soccer ball; recommended
- C. Team jersey provided by VAA
- D. Molded cleats or sneakers. Metal cleats are forbidden.

III. Team Equipment

- A. Equipment bag with two size 4 soccer balls and a dozen cones/discs
- B. Set of 12 team jerseys
- C. Set of 12 yellow pinnies (use to identify goalie and if needed in scrimmage)

IV. Skill Development Goals

- A. Individual soccer skills - dribbling, shooting
- B. Team soccer skills - passing, positioning
- C. Role of player positions - offense/defense, left/center/right

V. Division Format

- A. One 60-minute team practice weekly using half of standard size field; coach's choice of practice day and location
- B. The duration of a match is four 10-minute running time quarters with a three-minute intermission between quarters
- C. Coaches also serve as referees and should actively coach and ref from the field during games
- D. Each team shall consist of seven players on the field
 - 1. Preferred format is 7 v. 7 with 3 attack, 3 defense and 1 goalkeeper per team
 - 2. Optional format is 8 v 8 with 3 attack, 3 defense, 1 midfield and 1 goalkeeper with 3 assigned to offense, 3 assigned to defense, and one goalkeeper.
 - 3. A team may play 2 players short.
- E. If a team is short more than 2 players 15 minutes after the scheduled match time, the match will be forfeited.
- F. In the event of a forfeit, players shall be borrowed from the opposing team to equalize the number on each side. A "fun" match should ensue which shall be refereed in the usual manner.
- G. Rotate players each quarter. Coaches need to develop a rotation to ensure even and varied playing assignments. Substitutions may occur only at the breaks between quarters or in the case of injury.

- H. Two points are awarded in the league standing for a win, one for a tie, and zero points for a loss or forfeit.
- I. As a recreational league, these points and league standings are not publicized. Rather, team points are used to match teams on similar abilities for Soccer Day Games (the last games of the season).
- J. Coaches are responsible to maintain the win/loss record. Coaches should inform the League Coordinator of the season record within two days after the last regular season game (i.e. in time for Soccer Days scheduling).
- K. A coin toss shall determine the choice of ends for the start of the match. The other team will have the kick-off. The team kicking off the first quarter will also kick-off the third quarter. The opponent will kick-off the second and fourth quarters.
 - 1. Team that gets to kick-off gets a buffer to start play. The size of the buffer is the circle lined at mid-field. Players of the opposing team must clear the circle until the ball is started in play.
- L. **Suggestion** - ask a parent on the sideline to keep track of game time and call quarter end so that the coaches can concentrate on the game.

VI. Rule Reminders

- A. Goal Kicks
 - 1. Any player on the defending team can take a goal kick
 - 2. On a goal kick, the ball may be placed anywhere within the goalie crease (smaller box) and kicked from the ground (not drop-kicked)
 - 3. On a goal kick, the opposing team may not enter the penalty box until the ball leaves the box.
- B. A hand ball results in a free kick **only** when the ball handling is intentional
- C. Corner kicks - At this grade level, few players have the leg strength to get the ball from the corner to the closest edge of the large box around the goal. Team on offense should have at least 1-2 players close enough to corner to receive ball.
- D. Goalkeeper can only use hands if the ball was last handled by a player from the opposing team. If ball is kicked to the goalkeeper by a teammate, the goalkeeper must handle the ball with his feet as though he were a defender.
 - 1. For goalkeeper safety, forwards should be taught that once a goalkeeper goes down to his knees (or chest) and is arm's length or less distance from the ball, they need to disengage and not kick the ball one last time.
 - 2. If the goalkeeper mishandles the ball and it pops out by more than an arm's length, the forward may re-engage the ball and attempt a shot on goal.
- E. Offside rule is NOT enforced in League 3/4
- F. Slide tackles are not allowed. A slide tackle is a player sliding on the ground in to a player and/or the ball feet first. A slide tackle will be treated as dangerous play and will result in an indirect free kick.
- G. All free kicks will be indirect free kicks.
- H. Except as noted above, the rules set forth by FIFA are followed. Please familiarize yourself with the rules of the game.