

## **RULE 302 SMALL- SIDED PROGRAM RULES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Washington State Youth Soccer Association Small Sided Program is a modification of the adult game for age appropriate play. This format increases the number of players on the field by one each year from U-7 through U-10. This is done for a number of reasons:

- The number of players on the field is developmentally appropriate for children to experience and develop the motor skills necessary in soccer. It exposes the player to appropriate tactical decisions for their age. It also meets the needs of the player's social development.
- The system creates a comfortable environment for the new youth coach. By increasing the number of players incrementally each year. The new coach is able to focus on creating developmentally appropriate practice sessions without the fear and need to focus on teaching specific field positions. With the emphasis on teaching the individual player, the concern for team results is minimized.
- By increasing the number of players on the field and rosters incrementally, it is easier for the coach to deal with the challenge of new players being added to the team. Often times, the new players added to the team are playing soccer for the first time. The use of small-sided games maximizes player contact time with the ball, which aids in the improvement of these new players and their integration into the team.
- The use of smaller field sizes reduces the strain on field space. Several age groups are able to share the same space, or, in most cases, more teams can play in the existing field space.

Implementation of the program will take place over the next five years. Starting in 2002, all U-7 teams and below will play 3 v. 3. In subsequent years, these teams will move through the format of the WSYSA Small-Sided Program. By the year 2006 the program will be fully implemented throughout Washington State. Nothing prohibits the implementation of the program earlier should a jurisdiction choose to do so.

### **SEASON**

Each League Administration will determine the season and number of games.

### **INSURANCE**

1. Any injury, whether in practice, in the game, or in transit, must be reported to the coach as soon as possible.
2. All insurance matters are handled through the Washington State Youth Soccer Association Office.

## **Rule 302.1 Field of Play**

(a) The following specifications are applicable to all small-sided competitions within the WSYSA:

U-11: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 80 yards and the minimum length is 50 yards. The maximum width is 50 yards and the minimum width is 35 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA

U-10: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 55 yards and the minimum length is 35 yards. The maximum width is 35 yards and the minimum width is 30 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA, except the goal area shall be 6 yards; the penalty area shall be 14 yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be 10 yards.

U-9: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 45 yards and the minimum length is 35 yards. The maximum width is 30 yards and the minimum width is 25 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA, except the goal area shall be 4 yards; the penalty area shall be 10 yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be 10 yards.

U-8: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 40 yards and the minimum length is 35 yards. The maximum width is 25 yards and the minimum width is 20 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA, except the goal area shall be 2 yards; the penalty area shall be 6 yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be 6 yards.

U-7: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 35 yards and the minimum length is 30 yards. The maximum width is 25 yards and the minimum width is 20 yards. Interior markings shall conform to FIFA, except the goal area shall be 2 yards; the penalty area shall be 6 yards. No penalty mark shall be used. The center circle shall be 6 yards.

U-6 and below: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. The maximum length is 30 yards and the maximum width is 20 yards. No interior markings shall be used except center circle, halfway line and corner kick arcs. The center circle shall be 6 yards.

(b) The following goal and field marking specifications are applicable to all small-sided competitions administered within the WSYSA:

U-11: Goal size maximum 8' x 24' (recommended)

U-10: Goal size maximum 8' high by 12' wide

U-9: Goal size maximum 6' high by 8' wide.

U-8, U-7 and U-6: Goal size maximum 6' high by 6' wide

Goals: In case permanent goals are not available, portable goals are acceptable but must be staked down to ensure player safety at all times. For U-7 and below, in the event that there are no permanent or portable goals, traffic cones may be set up or any other safe object may be used to mark the goals. In this case the top of the goalkeeper's hands will determine the "imaginary" height of the crossbar.

Field markings: The outside edge of the field may be indicated by chalked or painted lines not more than 4" in width.

### **RULE 302.2 Game Duration and Ball Size**

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Game Duration</u>	<u>Ball Size</u>
Under-11	Two 30-minute halves	#4
Under-10	Two 28-minute halves	#4
Under-9	Two 25-minute halves	#4
Under-8	Two 22-minute halves	#3
Under-7	Two 18-minute halves	#3
Under-6	Four 5-minute periods	#3

There shall be five (5) minute breaks between halves/periods.

### **302.3 Number of Players**

Teams shall have no more than the following number of players and roster sizes:

<u>AGE GROUP</u>	<u>#OF PLAYERS ON THE FIELD</u>	<u>ROSTER SIZE</u>
U-11	9	14
U-10	6	10
U-9	5	9
U-8	4	8
U-7	3 (no goalkeeper)	6
U-6 and below	3 (no goalkeeper)	6

### **302.4 Substitutions**

(a) Substitutions may be made, with consent of the referee:

- (1) Prior to a throw-in, in your favor;
- (2) Prior to a goal kick, by either team;
- (3) After a goal, by either team;
- (4) After an injury, when the referee stops play, by either team;
- (5) At half time;
- (6) When the referee stops play to caution a player, only the cautioned player may be substituted, prior to the restart of the game.

(b) The number of substitutes shall be unlimited unless a competition superseding the jurisdiction of the WSYSA determines otherwise. Each player will play a minimum of **50%** of the total playing time. Substitutions will be allowed in order to give an opportunity for all players to get equal playing time and to balance rather than to run up the score.

(c) Players not on the field of play must remain two (2) yards behind the touchline and not within the distance of the goal area for the particular age from the corner of the field.

(d) A cautioned player shall be substituted for immediately and not return until the next legal substitution.

### **302.5 Player's Equipment**

(a) **ALL PLAYERS SHALL WEAR SHINGUARDS.** Socks must be worn up and over the shinguards.

(b) All players shall be in uniform to play. A minimum "official" uniform is the standard league shirt (with a number). Goalkeepers shall wear shirt colors that distinguish them from other players.

(c) Standard approved soccer shoes or gym shoes shall be worn by all players. A player may not play in their bare feet.

(d) A player shall not wear anything that may be dangerous to other players or to themselves.

(e) All or any member(s) of a team may wear extra protective clothing against the cold, including gloves without dangerous, protruding or hard objects, provided that:

- (1) The proper team uniform is worn outermost; and
- (2) Any hat should be without peak, bill or dangling or protruding object of any kind; however, the goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed hat; and
- (3) Referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.

(f) No player wearing a cast or splint shall be permitted to play in any regularly scheduled game.

(g) No player shall be allowed to play in any regularly scheduled game with an injury or a known medical condition, which can be aggravated by playing.

(h) Protective orthopedic devices, prosthetic devices and any equipment, gear, appliance or apparatus that is protective for a known medical condition may be worn during a regularly scheduled game provided that:

- (1) The equipment, gear, device appliance or apparatus has been approved by a licensed physician, prostheticist, therapist or other practitioner trained or licensed to prescribe, design, select and/or fit such devices;

- (2) A letter is on file at the WSYSA office from a licensed physician, prostheticist, therapist or other practitioner trained or licensed to prescribe, design, select and/or fit such devices, stating (i) that he or she is licensed to prescribe, design, select and/or fit such devices; (ii) that the device is properly fitted; and (iii) that the device is suitable for use in youth soccer competition;
- (3) The player, or coach or team manager who is present, has with him/her written confirmation from the WSYSA that the required letter has been received; and
- (4) The referee determines that the device conforms to Law 4 of the Laws of the Game.

### **302.6 Officiating:**

(a) The home team will be responsible for providing referees. In the event that a referee is not present, both coaches will mutually agree upon one. If one cannot be agreed upon, each coach will referee one-half.

(b) Assistant Referees will be used whenever possible to assist the referee. Young players or willing adults may also be used.

### **302.7 Charging the Goalkeeper**

(a) In all Under-11 age groups and below: No player shall make physical contact with the goalkeeper, harass the goalkeeper or attempt to play the ball once the goalkeeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree whatsoever.

(b) Note: Also included in “having control of the ball” is, if the goalkeeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands.

### **302.8 Coaching**

Soccer presents an excellent opportunity to learn, develop, and establish group behavior, friendly relationships, fair competition, doing things in an organized manner, enjoyment and many other items. Above and beyond anything else it must be fun!

(a) The coach or designated adult (18 years or older, unless approved by the Association) should attend every practice and every game. All coaches, team managers, and assistants must fill out the required Washington State Patrol forms and comply with all Risk Management requirements. There must be an approved adult at all functions.

(b) The coach should, as soon as possible, have a team and parent meeting. Utilize this time to explain your club rules and regulations as well as other basic rules of the game.

(c) The coach should appoint an assistant coach and a team manager.

(d) The team manager should hand out your team game schedule and travel instructions and announce your team practice times and fields.

(e) The coach is responsible for his own behavior as well as that of his players and spectators. Discuss what you expect of parents during games. Remember this is just for fun.

(f) Every player must play in each game at least **50%** of the playing time unless they are not able to play due to illness or injury.

(g) All coaches should attend an appropriate level-coaching clinic prior to the start of the regular season.

(h) Coaching from the sidelines is permitted but not recommended. Coaching must be done in a civil manner and the tone of voice will be informational and encouraging, not demanding or critical.

(i) It is every coach's obligation and duty to attend coaching and referee clinics in order to acquire information that, in turn, may be passed on to the players. Below are recommended clinics for the indicated age groups:

<b>AGE GROUP</b>	<b>COACHING CLINIC</b>	<b>REFEREE INSTRUCTION</b>
U-6	U-6 Certificate or Module 1	Basic
U-7 & U-8	U-8 Certificate or Module 1	Association/Club
U-9	U-9 Certificate or Module 2	Association/Club
U-10	U-10 Certificate or Module 2	R-2 Required
U-11	"E" License	R-2 Required

(j) At home games, you are responsible for field preparation (check with your club) and for referees. Contact the visiting coach at least **three (3)** days before the scheduled game to reaffirm the time, directions to the field, and to share team colors (home team changes jersey color if visiting team is the same color). If the visiting coach is not contacted he/she should contact the home team coach.

(k) Make sure that you have a game ball properly inflated before the game starts.

(l) Make sure that all of your players are properly equipped, fit and emotionally ready to play.

(m) In case of injuries during the game, assure that the player is properly attended to. Check his/her condition after the game and follow up with a call to the home in the evening.

(n) In the event an injured player requires medical attention, he/she must have a written release from the doctor before returning to practice or play with the team.

(o) Proper warm up of all players should take place for approximately 20-30 minutes prior to the start of the game.

(p) Prior to the start of the game, meet and greet the visiting coach. After the game, exchange with them some friendly, positive comments. Be sure to thank the referees and shake their hands. Have the players line up at the center of the field to shake hands with the opposing players.

### **302.9 THE RULES OF PLAY:**

#### **(a) Start of Play**

(1) The ball will be placed at the center of the field by the referee and the game will start with one player taking a kick into the opponent's half of the field, after a given signal by the referee. At the time of the kickoff, every player will be in his/her half of the field. Every player of the opposing team, to that of the kicker, shall be:

**U-11 and U-10            ten yards from the center mark.**

**U-9 and below            six yards from the center mark**

(2) The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player. **PUNISHMENT:** For any infraction of these laws the kickoff shall be retaken.

(3) A goal shall not be scored directly from a kickoff without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team.

#### **(b) Restart of Play**

(1) After a goal has been scored, the game shall be restarted in like manner by a player of the team that gave up the goal.

(2) To start the second half, the game will be restarted with the kickoff by a player of the opposite team to that of the player who started the game.

(3) Restarting play after temporary delay: In the case of a temporary suspension due to an injury or any unusual situation, if one team is clearly in possession of the ball, the game shall be restarted by an indirect free kick by the team in possession of the ball at the point where the ball was when play was suspended. Should there not be clear possession at the time play is suspended due to an injury or any unusual situation, there will be a drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The ball shall be deemed "in play" when the ball has touched the ground.

#### **(c) Ball in and Out of Play**

(1) The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or whole touchline, whether it is on the ground or in the air,

(2) The ball is out of play, when the referee has stopped the game.

#### **(d) Method of Scoring**

(1) A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the whole of the goal line on the ground or in the air between the goal posts and under the cross bar.

(2) In the event that cones are used for markers, the height of the crossbar will be determined by the height of the goalkeeper's arms.

(3) In the case the goal marker (cone) is knocked over or moved as a result of a direct hit by the ball as it crosses the goal line, the goal will not be allowed. In this case, the ball shall be put into play by either a goal kick or a corner kick, depending on who touched the ball last. The ball striking the inside of the goal marker and deflecting into the goal shall constitute a good goal. As in all judgment calls, the referee's decision will be final.

(e) Offside Rule

(1) The offside rule will not apply to any U-9 and below team, however, the intent of the rule will be followed. Positioning a player in front of the opponent's goal irrespective of the location of the ball on the field is contrary to the aims of the program. The referee shall take appropriate action to prevent this kind of play (an indirect kick to the offended team and instructional statements to the violating players and coach.)

(2) U-10 and above teams will play with the offsides rule. The referees will call the rules and the proper penalties will be assessed.

(f) Fouls and Misconduct:

(2) **FREE KICKS:** Free kicks shall be classified under two (2) headings: "Direct", from which a goal can be scored by a direct kick against the offending side and "Indirect", from which a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.

**(3) NO DIRECT KICKS SHALL BE AWARDED AT U-9 AND BELOW. ONLY INDIRECT KICKS WILL BE USED.**

(4) **Penalty Kicks will be granted ONLY at U-11 and above.** They will be taken at ten (10) yards from the goal.

(5) A **DIRECT KICK** shall be awarded for the following nine (9) intentionally committed offenses:

**Kicking an opponent**

**Tripping an opponent**

**Jumping at an opponent**

**Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner**

**Charging an opponent from behind**

**Striking an opponent**

**Holding an opponent**

**Pushing an opponent**

**Handling the ball, with the exception of the goalie, in the designated area**



(5) An **INDIRECT KICK** shall be awarded for the following offenses:

**Dangerous play, (high kicking)**

**Charging fairly (shoulder to shoulder) when the ball is not within the playing distance of the players involved**

**Obstructing the goalkeeper (there will be NO INTENTIONAL physical contact with the goalkeeper in the "penalty area")**

**Lying on the ball and not allowing others to play it**

**Unsporting behavior**

**(6) *SLIDE TACKLING WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT U-10 AND BELOW!***

(6) Consistent with the educational intent of the Small Sided Program, the referee should inform the offending player of the infraction that was committed.

(g) Throw- ins

(1) When the whole of the ball passes over the whole touch line, either on the ground or in the air, it shall be put back into play by a throw-in. The throw shall be taken from the point where it crossed the line, by a player of the opposing team.

(2) The thrower must face the field of play and must keep both feet on the ground while releasing the ball. He/she shall use both hands on both sides of the ball to deliver the ball from behind and over his/her head.

(3) For U-8 and below, several re-throws will be allowed if an incorrect throw occurs. Before the "offending" player takes the re-throw, the referee will instruct the thrower on the proper technique and then proceed with the re-throw. For U-9 there will be one re-throw allowed. At U-10 and above, FIFA Laws will be used (the throw shall be awarded to the opposing team).

(4) The thrower may not play the ball until another player has touched it. If the thrower plays the ball a second time before another player has touched it, the above re-throw rules will apply. The referee will explain the proper procedure. If the player throws incorrectly again, an indirect kick shall be awarded to the opposing team from the spot where the infringement occurred.

(5) A goal shall not be scored directly from the throw-in.

(h) Goal Kicks

(1) When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding the portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the players on the attacking team, it shall be kicked directly into play by a goal kick.

(2) A goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area.

(3) Any defending player, including the goalkeeper, may take the goal kick.

(4) The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been

touched or played by another player.

(5) A goal shall not be scored directly from a goal kick.

(6) The ball is in play when it crosses outside the goal area.

(i) Corner Kicks

(1) When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line excluding that portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar, (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the defending team, a player of the attacking team shall have a corner kick.

(2) The ball shall be placed within a three (3) foot arc from the corner flag or cone and shall be kicked into play from that position by an attacking player.

(3) A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick.

(4) Players from the opposing team to the kicker shall not approach within the distance of the center circle measurement of the ball until it is in play.

(5) If the player who takes the kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, the referee shall explain to the kicker the proper procedure of a corner kick. Then the referee shall award an indirect kick to the opposite team from a spot where the infringement occurred

(6) For any other infringement the kick shall be retaken.

(j) Miscellaneous Rules:

(7) Unless otherwise modified by these rules, the standard laws of the game will govern.

(2) **Dropkicking and punting will be disallowed at U-8 and below.**

Dropkicking and punting will be allowed at U-9 and above.

(3) **SLIDE TACKLING IS NOT ALLOWED FOR ANY AGE GROUP AT U-10 AND BELOW.** Infringement of this rule will result in an indirect free kick.

(4) Good judgement, sportsmanship and fair play should govern the decisions and actions of all of the coaches, referees and spectators.

(5) Coaches, their assistants or spectators are not allowed on the field of play during the game unless permission is given by the referee (in case of emergencies or unusual situations).

(6) **There will be no published team standings and game scores will not be recorded.**