

Saratoga Soccer

AYSO REGION 27
Platinum Award Winner



2008

2007

PLAYSOCCER



Andrew Bedard Sportsmanship Awards

Each year AYSO holds tournaments at the end of the season and awards trophies. Saratoga AYSO has added a trophy for Sportsmanship awarded during the U10 tournament and the U12 tournament for the division that we host.

In the Fall Season of 2003, our son Andrew was on a team that never won a game. They did not even score a goal until more than half of their games had been played. When that goal was scored, the players and parents celebrated as if they had won a major tournament. After a game, we would often ask Andrew how he was feeling. His consistent reply was, "I feel great! It doesn't matter what the score is, if you have a great attitude, you're a winner."

In July of 2004, Andrew died because an aneurysm burst in his brain. He had lived for almost nine years, but in that short period, he lived what he believed about attitude. He loved his life. He loved people. He inspired his parents to sponsor a trophy awarding sportsmanship in the soccer that brought him so much joy.

The teams will be observed during the tournament by the referees. Points will be given based on the attitudes and behavior of the players, their coaches, and their fans. Trophies will go to players and their coaches.

Trophies will be awarded at the award ceremony at the end of the tournament.

At least half of the team must be there to receive the trophies or they will forfeit the award.



SARATOGA SOCCER BOARD
PO Box 2933, Saratoga CA 95070

WWW.SARATOGASOCCER.ORG

If you have questions or concerns about any area of Saratoga Soccer operations, please contact the positions noted below. The volunteers filling these positions for this year will be identified in your Roster Handbook and are listed on the back inside cover. The roster handbook is distributed at the beginning of the season.

QUESTION/CONCERN CONTACT

Registration	Registrar
Late Registration	Registrar
Child Abuse / Neglect	Child/Volunteer Protection Advocate
Name & Address Corrections	www.saratogasoccer.org
Divisions/Teams	Division Manager
Fields	Fields Director
Practice Fields	Practice Field Scheduler
Communications	Communications Chairperson
Accident Reports	Safety Director
Safety Issues	Safety Director
Refereeing	Regional Referee Administrator
Coaching	Regional Coach Administrator
Concessions	Snack Shack Commissioner
Uniforms	Purchasing Commissioner
Picture Day	Picture Day Chairperson
Sportsmanship	Sportsmanship Commissioner

(*See back cover for names of the board members.)

We ask that you please contact the individual board member by email. With over 1200 players and 800 volunteers, there are far too many people to talk with everyone in the league for every question or issue. If you feel the issue is urgent (a safety issue for example) or warrants a telephone conversation, please be respectful of the hour at which you place the call. If no one is available, leave a short message with a slow and clear return number. Again, our board members and staff contribute a significant amount of time away from their families and other activities to running the league. If at all possible, let them have their time at home undisturbed by "Soccer" phone calls.

Our web page www.saratogasoccer.org contains many helpful and valuable tools. You can sign up for email broadcasts that are focused to your particular interest and you can also get the current field conditions when inclement weather greets you for the days activities. Please review how these things work before you need them.



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www.saratogasoccer.org

Please check this website for the latest information. Times and locations of events can change from the production of this publication.



Welcome

Welcome to Saratoga Soccer, AYSO Region 27 in our 34th year. In February Saratoga Soccer was awarded its 6th consecutive Platinum Award! This honor recognizes the quality of our program, the dedication and hard work of each family. Saratoga Soccer is much more than an athletic program; it promotes youth development and family fun. Our program is based on a few principles: Everyone Plays, Balanced Teams, Open Registration, Positive Coaching and Good Sportsmanship.

Joining AYSO is a commitment to these five philosophies, which we teach as part of our Kid Zone program. Players and parents have the chance to make new friends, learn teamwork and discover the fun of playing soccer. The youngest players in Under-5 (U5), U6 and U8 divisions play for fun and enjoyment. No standings are kept, everyone is a winner, and each player gets an award at the end of the season. In the older divisions the focus remains on having fun, but there is also an element of competition. Helping children make wise choices of activities and encouraging full participation will benefit the players throughout their lives.

For parents, this is an opportunity to be involved in an exciting program with your children. Everyone is a volunteer on the local level. We ask that every family take one volunteer job to help make the league run. In order to have a viable program, every other family needs to be a Coach, Referee or Team Rep, who form the backbone of our league. There is nothing more valuable to your children than your time. Please be mindful to do your part until the very end of the season. Be involved!

Visit our web site www.saratogasoccer.org often. To get official league news, signup on our e-mail lists. Help us reach new families; let your fiends know that there is the best soccer program in America right here in Saratoga!

I welcome all players and parents to our AYSO family!

Mark Chapman
Regional Commissioner



How to Use this Handbook

This handbook is provided to all families participating in Saratoga Soccer to inform you of the rules and requirements of Saratoga AYSO. To make it as easy as possible for you to understand how AYSO works and what you need to know to participate, the handbook is divided into sections based on your individual responsibilities.

All parents, regardless of your individual volunteer jobs, should read the sections entitled "Principles of AYSO" and "Important Information for Parents". In addition, parents should take time (together with their children) to read the section "Important Information for Players". Finally, please read the section on your child's Division so that you understand how the season will be conducted, and what might be different this year from prior years. All families participating in Saratoga Soccer are required at a minimum to read, understand and comply with these sections of the handbook.

Other sections of the handbook are organized by job responsibility, by Division, by chronological order for events during the season, and as general reference material. You are encouraged to read the entire handbook.

Coaches, Team Reps and Referees should be sure to read the appropriate sections of the handbook outlining their individual job responsibilities. Coaches and Referees should also read the section on Game Procedures.

Region 27 is part of AYSO and operates according to AYSO's *Standard Regional Guidelines*. In the event that concepts in this handbook contradict those of AYSO's *Standard Regional Guidelines*, AYSO's Guidelines will prevail. A copy of AYSO's *Standard Regional Guidelines* is available at <http://soccer.org/Resources/Downloads> select "Governing Documents"



Principles of AYSO

Saratoga Soccer is Region 27 in Area J within Section 2 of the American Youth Soccer Organization. Started in 1974, Region 27 is a charter member of AYSO, which is a nationwide, non-profit youth soccer program founded in 1964 in Torrance, CA. AYSO's mission is to develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs that promote a safe, fun, family environment based on the following five philosophies:

1. EVERYONE PLAYS - This is the motto of the AYSO organization. Our goal is to enable all children to play soccer. Players are welcome to join regardless of their ability or experience. Minimum playing time for all players in Saratoga AYSO is 3/4 of the game.

2. BALANCED TEAMS - Teams within each Division are formed to give all teams equal strength. It's more fun to play when teams are close in ability!

3. POSITIVE COACHING - AYSO is committed to helping children develop healthy attitudes about competition. We INSIST that our coaches stress the positive. AYSO is committed to providing competitive programs, but that competition must be enjoyable to all involved. Children especially thrive in a positive and encouraging environment.

4. OPEN REGISTRATION - All interested players are welcome to register for the regular season (limited only by league capacity—and not by ability). Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for registration. Scholarships can be obtained for those who need them by contacting the Registrar.

AYSO VIP Program provides a quality soccer experience for children and adults aged 5 and up whose physical or developmental challenges make it difficult to successfully participate on mainstream teams

5. GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP - We insist on a positive environment based on mutual respect, not a "win-at-all-costs" attitude. All our programs are designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

From its small, local beginnings in 1964, AYSO has become the largest recreational soccer program in the country, with nearly 650,000 players and 250,000 volunteers. Its rapid growth and wide acceptance can be attributed to the AYSO philosophy and to the help of volunteers who administer the program, always conscious that AYSO soccer is FOR THE KIDS!

More information on AYSO can be found on the AYSO Home Page at:

www.soccer.org



AYSO is open to all players from age 4 to 18, and players are divided into Divisions by age group, as follows: (“U” stands for “Under” for example U-10 is 8 and 9 year old children.)

AYSO Division	Player Age (as of July 31)
U-19 Division	16-18
U-16 Division	14-15
U-14 Division	12-13
U-12 Division	10-11
U-10 Division	8-9
U-8 Division	6-7
U-6 Division	5
U-5 Division	4

All players are placed in Divisions by birth date. Exceptions to this policy during the fall season are extremely rare and are made only when league and player requirements coincide, and require approval by the Saratoga Soccer Board. Exceptional playing talent is not considered a sufficient reason to change Divisions

Important Information For Parents

Saratoga Soccer is run completely by parent volunteers and depends on your help. All families are asked to fill at least one volunteer job, and many families fill two or more positions. All volunteers must fill out an adult volunteer application every year using www.eayso.org. This form is required each season and can be updated as needed, reprinted, and submitted to the league. Because we are an organization working with children, this form requires the volunteer's social security number, driver's license number, personal and professional references, and must be submitted by the volunteer with picture identification. Volunteers who are unable to be present at registration will have to make arrangements for a board member to accept their application.



An important concept in AYSO is the “AYSO Team,” often illustrated with the diagram. The AYSO Team is composed of Coaches, Referees and Parents who unite to create a positive environment for kids to play soccer. Each part of the AYSO Team has important responsibilities to fulfill in order to ensure our children have a positive experience.

Parents are asked to keep the following points in mind:

All Referees, Coaches, board members and any other officials that you may meet in Saratoga Soccer are volunteers. Please keep in mind that the Saratoga Soccer program can only be offered based on the goodwill of these individuals. Each of these individuals is just as busy as you are, yet has chosen to dedicate the time required to provide this program for the benefit of your children. We tolerate ABSOLUTELY NO antagonism or harassment towards any AYSO volunteer. If you have constructive criticism to provide, please think twice, then contact the appropriate league official (see "Who to Contact for Assistance" inside the cover).

With over 1,200 children on over 100 teams, Saratoga Soccer simply does not have the ability to manage "special requests". In extreme circumstances, requests for exceptions should be submitted to the Regional Board in writing.

AYSO is very sensitive to all cultures, religions, and family values. It is impossible, however, to honor all significant religious holidays, cultural events, and etc. due to the vast diversity in our area. AYSO encourages all participants to remember that soccer is a game and that family, school, and personal beliefs come first.

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Requests to place your child on a particular team or in combination with his/her friends cannot be accommodated except where (a) two members of the same family play in the same Division, or (b) a Head Coach names an Assistant Coach.

Please make sure your child gets to practice on time and with the proper equipment. **DON'T FORGET THE SUN SCREEN!** Although we recognize that Saratoga children have busy lives and sometimes will have conflicts, the primary instruction in soccer skills, strategy and teamwork will take place in practice, and your child will miss much of the value of our program if they do not attend practice on a regular basis.

Please pick up your children from practice on time. Remember that Saratoga Soccer is not a baby-sitting service.

Practices are scheduled at the discretion of Coaches, and may be canceled at the Coach's discretion.

Soccer is often played in the rain, however due to field constraints you should check the “Field Status” page on the website, www.saratogasoccer.org. In the event of bad weather, this will be updated by 7 AM. We cannot play or practice on most fields in the rain or if the fields are wet.

Your child needs appropriate equipment to play soccer safely. Required equipment includes shin guards and a soccer ball for practice. Soccer balls come in different sizes and it is important that the child has the correct size ball for his/her Division, as follows: U-5, U-6 & U-8 use a Size #3 ball; U-10 & U-12 use a Size #4 ball; and U-14 and up use a Size #5 ball. Soccer cleats or turf shoes are strongly recommended, but sneakers are acceptable. If shoes have screw-in cleats, the stud must be part of the cleat, not the shoe. Baseball or football shoes have a front cleat that is dangerous and are not acceptable. If any family finds the cost of equipping players to be a financial burden, please contact the Registrar; Saratoga Soccer will try to assist, by providing used or excess equipment that may be available.

Your child will be provided a uniform consisting of a shirt, shorts and socks. Wash uniforms in warm water and dry in a warm (NOT HOT) dryer. Do not iron uniforms. On Picture Day, your child will receive a sweatshirt, which can be worn to practice or to games (but not during games unless the Referee allows it due to weather conditions).

Please stay well back from the field of play. Most fields have a spectator line painted at least 6 feet back from the touchline. If a spectator line is provided, stay behind the line and encourage others to do the same (only Players and Referees—not Coaches—are allowed in front of this line during play). Players may briefly step off the field during active play and need room to maneuver. The Assistant Referee needs room to run along the touchline and to see the



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entire length of the field. No one may stand behind the goals or behind the goal lines during play. The Technical area is the 10 yards either side of the halfway line, reserved for the players and coaches.

Soccer is a contact sport, and there are situations where a player may be knocked down, or appear to be tripped by an opponent. Although serious injuries are rare, bumps and bruises are common. The Referee is responsible for determining whether continued play poses a danger of aggravating the injury. Play may be allowed to continue until a natural stopping point, and quite often in the meantime the child will have recovered and be back in the game. Please trust the Referee to recognize which situations are fouls and which are not, and which situations are dangerous and which are not. We are all concerned when a child goes down on the field, however no one is to go onto the field until the Referee requests assistance. When the Referee makes such a request, the child's Coach as well as the opposing Coach may attend to the player.

The use of tobacco products and alcohol is prohibited at all AYSO activities where children are present. This includes games, practices and team parties.



Many people love dogs and AYSO is a family organization.

However, many people have an aversion to dogs as well, and fear contact with them. By local code, No Dogs are allowed on school grounds. Saratoga Soccer recommends that you leave your dogs home for all practices and games. Coaches should work with their parents to understand and implement this recommendation. Should a dog be an issue, the Referee has the authority to suspend and even terminate a match if the coaches are unable to correct the situation.

Unless you have signed up to coach, please do not actively coach during the games. Parents and spectators are to give positive encouragement, not tactical advice or negative comments. If you want to help out, please come to practice, and ask the coach!

Our custom is that during the season you will be assigned duties to help the team, which may include bringing refreshments for halftime, providing snack shack tokens after the game, etc. The Team Rep usually coordinates these activities, and it is expected that all parents will assist in these activities. Please help in cleaning up orange peels and other trash left over after the game.

AYSO Snack & Drink Recommendations

Snacks are provided by the "snack parent" for players on game day. At halftime, the "snack parent" should have fruit slices and possibly a water container to replenish the water bottles. Team Representatives will sign up snack parents and each family will be responsible for at least one week. If it is your turn, please do not disappoint the kids, they really look forward to the snacks at half time and after the game.



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For halftime, some excellent low-fat energy sources are graham crackers, hard pretzels, bread sticks, bananas, grapes, watermelon, cantaloupe and oranges. You should cut (and peel if necessary) the fruit into chunks to make it easier for the players to consume during halftime. At halftime, avoid high-fat foods because fats exit the stomach slowly and may cause cramping during games. At half time, water is obviously always a necessity; however, most children should plan to bring their own water bottles to games (and practices) with their name on it. AYSO discourages the usage of disposable, single use plastic water bottles because of their environmental impact.

After the game, you may want to congratulate the players with special treats such as cookies, brownies, granola bars, etc. It's also nice to provide a fruit drink. Gatorade, PowerAde and juice boxes are excellent liquid sources of energy and provide players with alternatives to water. Do not bring caffeinated beverages, such as sodas and coffee, to games for the players because caffeine is very dehydrating.

Please come to all games and cheer for the players of both teams. For parents of younger players, avoid the urge to be too demanding of your child; allow your child to enjoy the game at his/her own pace, and be tolerant of mistakes. Influence your child by cheering loudly for the positive things, not dwelling on the negative. Remember, this is their game, not yours. For parents of teenage players, recognize that your child still wants you to come and watch the game, even if they don't act like it.

Consider Referee mistakes and other events, which don't go your way to be opportunities to show your child how to handle misfortune with dignity and grace. If you have questions, discuss them calmly with the Referee after the game. If the Referee makes any indication that such a discussion would not be welcomed, please respect that decision also.

Saratoga Soccer publishes "The Kicker", a periodic newsletter to parents, volunteers and players within Saratoga Soccer. Issues will be mailed to you at your home address. Updated information and past issues of "The Kicker" are available on the website.

Saratoga Soccer relies on your commitment as a volunteer to run the program, and most volunteer jobs require at least 16 hours of work during the course of the season. It is expected that every family will take on at least one volunteer position. For those families unable to do this, League Sponsorships are also available for \$350. In addition, Corporate Sponsorships are available for \$500 and up. Corporate Sponsorships banners get prominently displayed at Congress Springs Park during the season where every weekend over 3000 players, friends, and families enjoy soccer.

Kid Zone

In recent years, the national media has focused on the negative, even violent, behavior of players, coaches and parents involved in youth sports. In a proactive effort to counteract this trend of violence, AYSO and Saratoga Soccer have initiated a program called Kids Zone.



As part of AYSO's education agenda, Kids Zone is a dynamic program targeted to eliminate negative sideline behavior. It is aimed toward producing a thoroughly positive impact on everyone involved in youth soccer. To execute this program, three basic elements are involved:

1. The Pledge. We will request AYSO parents to sign a pledge that holds them to the Kids Zone standards.
2. The Badge. This is a pin-on button bearing the program's logo. This will be worn by program supporters at games, and will serve as a reminder of the importance of positive sideline behavior.
3. The Sign. A large banner, which lists positive behavior standards, will be posted at the entrance of participating fields. Parents and spectators who will abide by these standards are welcome -- all others are not.

In order to make this program work, we need your help! Be **SOMEBODY** who cares!

Important Information for Players

DRESSED FOR SOCCER!

Congratulations and welcome to Saratoga Soccer! Whether this is your first year in soccer or you are an experienced veteran player, you are promised a season of fun and excitement! It's important that you understand that your team will count on you to remember the following items:

First, we expect that you will have fun this season and make lots of new friends, both on the team you join and on other teams.

You should be at each practice and every game, arriving on time and properly equipped. Your teammates and your Coach count on you to be there and to be prepared. [In U-5 & U-6 Divisions, you will have practice just prior to the game on Saturdays.] If you cannot be at a practice or a game, you must call your Coach in advance!

For weekday practices, you must wear your shin guards, soccer shoes (or sneakers), and long socks to cover the shin guards. Bring a ball and a water bottle. If the weather is cold, bring a sweatshirt.

Water for the players at games and practices is critical for all ages of players. Bring a full water bottle, with your name on it, to all practices and games. AYSO discourages the usage of disposable, single use plastic water bottles because of their environmental impact.

Apply sun screen at home before games and practices. Even if it is not hot. Then apply again at the field if needed. Parent should bring shade tents and umbrellas (Kept back from the field), hats, etc.

Climbing on soccer goals or nets is extremely dangerous and is not allowed. It is also dangerous to kick balls or throw items over the sound wall. This will not be allowed as well.

For games, you must wear your full uniform including shirt, shorts, and socks. Socks must be on the outside of the shin guards (not underneath and then pulled down over the top). You may not wear a hat, bandanna, knee or elbow pads (in some cases the Referee may allow the goalkeeper to wear a hat or kneepads). Cycling or sliding shorts may be worn as long they are under the regular shorts and match the color of the shorts. If the weather is cold, the Referee may allow players to wear sweatshirts underneath the uniform shirt.

Do not wear any jewelry to games or to practice. Do not wear watches, necklaces, earrings, friendship bracelets or removable retainers. Pierced earrings or anything else are dangerous and not acceptable under any conditions (even if



tape or Band-Aids are used to cover the earring). Do not choose to get pierced during soccer season; you will have to remove the studs if you want to play or practice!

If you wear glasses, a retaining strap is highly recommended. If you wear hair clips, they must be soft (no hard metal or plastic). Long hair should be tied back with soft "scrunches" or elastic bands.

You may wear a knee brace or other type of support if your parents or doctor recommend it, but the brace must have no exposed metal or other hard surface that might be dangerous to you or to other players. The Referee may inspect a brace before each game and decide whether to allow it

You may not wear any type of cast or splint with a rigid member. Splints with hard plastic buckles exposed are not allowed as well. Padding a splint will not be allowed and the referee cannot let you play even if you remove them for the game. An ACE type bandage is acceptable if there are not metal components securing it in place.

The Referee will inspect your uniform and equipment before each game. Your shirt must be tucked into your shorts when you report for lineup. Remember that just because the last Referee allowed you to wear something unusual does not mean that the next Referee will do the same thing!

You may not chew gum or eat anything while you are playing, except during the halftime break. On hot days, children may need a quick drink of water during the game. This is permissible if it is done during a break in play and does NOT delay the restart. An example of this would be if there was a time consuming injury break. Players could migrate to the touchline and, without leaving the field of play, get a sip of water from a spectator or coach.

Always show respect to your teammates, your opponents, your Coach and the Referee. The Laws of Soccer do not tolerate abuse of opponents, or arguing with the Referee. Accept that the Referee will sometimes make mistakes, just like you do.

If you are injured during the game you should kneel down so that the referee will stop play and call your coach onto the field. If you are going to walk or ride your bike to and from practices have your parents give your coach a letter explaining that this is alright with them.

If the weather is bad for practice or games, check the website www.saratogasoccer.org for your field's condition.



Important Information for Coaches

Coaching soccer can be one of the most rewarding activities for adults interested in helping children. In AYSO, we require that all coaching be positive and encouraging at all times. Coaches that follow a philosophy of winning being the most important thing or of driving the children extremely hard to ensure their best efforts are not part of our program. At the same time, good Coaches will be demanding and set high expectations for the players, but will do so fully aware of the child's need for a positive experience, and with understanding that different children may have different abilities and developmental needs.

The fundamental goal for all AYSO Coaches is to encourage each child's interest in sports, and to keep all the kids involved regardless of their individual abilities.

You are required to attend certain Coach meetings and age appropriate training sessions. If you are an experienced Coach, we need you at these meetings to be a mentor to novice Coaches. Besides, something changes each year and you'll need to know!

Coaching more than one team in a season is possible, but advanced written permission of the Coach Administrator, Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate and Appropriate Division Managers is required. Juggling practice and games schedules is challenging. Players need to have a coach that will be at every game and practice. Some accommodations can be made for the practice schedule, but it is not possible for the game schedule. If you need to coach for two of your kids, ideally you would be the head coach for one child and the assistant coach the other. Then for the next season, switch.

Coaches are required to attend the following activities: Initial Coaches Meeting, Team Assignment Night*, Uniform and Equipment Distribution*, Midseason Referee/Coaches Meeting, and Coach Player Evaluation. Asst. Coaches are also required to attend all activities above, except those marked with an asterisk (*).

Assistant Coaches are expected to attend all practices and games. There is no difference in the time commitment expected for Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches. During registration (or prior to Team Formation Night) Head Coaches may designate one (and only one!) Assistant Coach.

Saratoga kids have busy lives and will have a lot going on besides soccer. While we encourage players to be at each practice and every game, we ask Coaches to understand about time conflicts. It is quite typical to have players on the team that can come to only one practice per week. If a player cannot make either practice, please contact the Head League Commissioner.



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All players who are present for a game are entitled to play three quarters of that game. This is true even if the player missed any or all practices.

Your Division Manager is your main contact for questions and information about Division events, schedules and activities. Only the league may in extremely rare circumstances reschedule a game.

Parents and players will often follow the example you set in behavior towards opponents and Referees. Treat Referees with dignity and respect regardless of mistakes that may be made. During the game, behavior of the parents of your team is primarily your responsibility, and you should try to calm parents who seem to be setting poor examples for the kids. If you have questions on calls made by the Referee, discuss them calmly after the game.

For U-8 Division, at most one practice session each week is scheduled. For U-10, one practice a week is required and a second practice is optional. For U12 and older, two practices are scheduled. Practice must be conducted on the fields and times assigned to your team. If you need to change the field or time, contact the Practice Field Scheduler. We will try to accommodate the request but it may not be possible. Coaches need to attend team assignment nights where the practice fields are assigned and conflicts can best be handled. Please avoid interfering with practices of other teams. Issues around field permits and liability insurance require that the assigned places and time be strictly observed.

You must have two adults, one of which is the same gender as the players, at any practice session. In case of injury, one adult can take the child to a medical clinic while the other remains with the other players. When the Coach or Assistant Coach cannot be there, the Team Rep should be at practice or should arrange for another parent to attend. If there is another team practicing at the same field and same time, the Coach who is alone can arrange in advance for the Coach of the other team to serve as backup. Coaches, Assistant coaches, or other team parents who have the responsibility of the team **MUST** have the signed children's parental release forms at all team gatherings. This is to include practices, games and even team parties.

If goalposts are used during practice, coaches must ensure that they are secured with either stakes or sandbags and returned to locked storage after play. Coaches need to provide direct supervision when the goals are being moved.

If a player is seriously injured in a practice or a game or any other serious incident occurs, it is the coaches responsibility to fill out and send an incident report to the Safety Director. This form is available on the website.

If a player is returning from any injury or illness that caused him/her to miss a practice or game, the parent should sign the Participation Release form (also on the website) and give it to the coach before the player participates again. Since



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the parent may not be aware of this, the coach should carry a few blank copies with him to games and practices.

There are certain techniques which are appropriate for soccer but not for younger players. Heading is generally not taught before U-10, and even in older Divisions no child should be forced to head the ball during practice. Slide tackles should be strongly discouraged until at least U-12. Incorrect slide tackles will be considered deliberate fouls and merit a conference with the coach and player by the referee.

After practice, make sure all the children are picked up before you leave. If you have to leave, make sure there is another adult there who will stay with any remaining children until they are picked up. Never leave a child alone after practice. Children may not walk home alone after practice unless the Coach has received instructions **IN WRITING** from parents or guardians. You should make sure parents know what to expect if they are not on time (e.g. "if you're over 10 minutes late, I'll ask you to stay and help for the next practice").

Although during team formation great care was taken to balance teams as equally as possible, it is inevitable that each year some teams are stronger than others. Do not get discouraged if your team does not appear to have as much talent. You still have an important job to do to make sure the kids have fun and develop as best they can. Contact the Regional Coach Administrator for advice.

Because of varying team strength, it is possible for strong team to run-up the score and cause a blow-out. A blow-out is defined as winning by a more than a 5 goal margin. Once a 2 or 3 goal margin develops, coaches should start making subtle adjustments on the field to slow their team rate of scoring. This should be done in a respectful ways so are to not humiliate the other team.

Clearly this cannot be made-up as the game is underway; In advance of your first games, all coaches should communicate with your parents about and practice with your players your strategy. Teams with win by more than a 5 goal margin will be penalized in the standings.

In case of bad weather, always go to the website www.saratogasoccer.org, and check on the field status. If the Regional Commissioner (RC), Regional Referee Administrator (RRA), or field commissioner makes a decision to cancel games due to weather conditions, the website will be updated by 7 AM. Coaches will then (with help from the Team Rep) notify all players and parents. On the field, only the RC, RRA and the Referee assigned to the game have the authority to cancel a game due to field or weather conditions (such as rain) that may present a hazard to the players.

At practices, the coach must resolve weather related safety issues.

The following is the position of the AYSO National Referee Commission regarding severe weather:



"It is said that lightning can strike from a clear blue sky that is within a ten mile radius of a storm. It is therefore strongly recommended that practices and games be terminated immediately upon hearing thunder or seeing lightning".

"If you can see it - flee it; if you can hear it – clear it."

If you see lightning or hear thunder - avoid open spaces, trees, fences; find shelter in a substantial building or car with windows closed. If caught in open space: crouch down, keep 15ft from other people. Wait for 30 minutes after last thunder/lightning before resuming activity. Do not attempt to move goalposts, umbrellas, team's flags or bleachers either during a storm.

Prior to the start of the game, you must provide the Referee an official lineup card listing all players in numerical order by uniform number including the players who are absent. Notify the referee of any known absences.

Please make sure you are aware of rules that affect Coaches during play. All coaching must be positive, encouraging and/or instructional. You may not use tobacco or alcohol at any AYSO activity with children present. Coaches must remain within the technical area during play (10 yards each side the halfway line and behind the spectator line). Once the game has started, Coaches may not enter the field without permission of the Referee. If a player appears to be injured, the Referee will determine whether continued play presents any possibility of more seriously injuring the player, and may allow play to continue to a natural stopping point before returning to examine the injured player. If the Referee feels the player needs attention, the Referee will invite the Coach to enter the field to attend to the player.

Saratoga Soccer provides access to some trained coach mentors through our Coach Development training program. These coaches are brought in to help our coaches teach our players as well as mentor our coaches. Each team will be scheduled for 1 or more practice times to work with a AYSO Coach Instructor. These times will be scheduled during team assignment night and with the Coach Development Coordinator throughout the season. Saratoga Soccer encourages our coaches to work with the AYSO Coach Instructor prior to their scheduled practice in order to receive the full benefit that these coaches can provide. Any questions regarding this program should be directed to the Regional Coach Administrator.

Player evaluation forms are distributed at the Mid-Season Referee/Coaches Meeting, and must be completed prior to receiving your team pictures on Picture Distribution Day.

At the end of the season, Saratoga Soccer does not permit teams to purchase trophies for players. The only awards given to players are those which are awarded by Saratoga Soccer or by Area 2J.



Important Information for Team Reps

As a Team Rep you have an important role to play in the success of the team throughout the season. Your role is to support the Coach by organizing team activities (please refer to the job definition for a list of activities). Keep in mind the following points:

Team Reps have to be trained and certified. This involves a short course on the job and the equivalent of Safe Haven that all volunteers who work with children directly are required to take.

Please take an active role in helping the Coach. The Coach's role is time-consuming and your help is important. Keep asking what you can do to help.

The Team Rep should organize the pre-season Parents' Meeting and the customary end-of-season team party. It is customary to agree with other parents on appropriate tokens of thanks for the Coaches, to be presented at the end-of-season team party. Saratoga Soccer suggests an upper limit of about \$25 in value for these gifts, and it is important to get agreement from all parents in advance and to be sensitive to the inability of some families to make large contributions if more than \$5-10 per family is required. Plaques with the team picture are provided for the Head Coach and for the Assistant Coach who are registered and trained for that job. If you are uncertain who is registered as Assistant Coach for your team, contact the Regional Coach Administrator (RCA).

The Team Rep should verify with the Coach that there would be at least two adults at each practice and game. If only one Coach can be present, the Team Rep should attend or make arrangements for another adult to attend.

The Team Rep is responsible for sweatshirt and picture distribution to the players or parents. Many teams also choose to create or to purchase a team banner, and the Team Rep should coordinate such activities with other team parents.

Please make sure that any trash (orange peels, paper cups, etc.) generated during a game or at practices is cleaned up and all recyclables are put in the recycle containers before you leave the field. Use low trash snacks wherever possible.

It is customary to provide the players some form of refreshment after the game. Saratoga Soccer provides tokens, which can be purchased at the Snack Shack for this purpose. Do not substitute money—it is against AYSO policy to provide any sort of monetary reward for playing.

At the end of the season, Saratoga Soccer does not permit teams to purchase trophies for players. The only awards given to players are those which are awarded by Saratoga Soccer or by Area 2J.

Important Information for Referees

The job of Referee is one of the most important jobs in Saratoga Soccer. Without Referees, no games can be played! Under soccer Laws, the Referees are given wide discretion to use their own judgment with regard to rough play and fouls that occur during play.

The Laws of Soccer are much simpler than the rules of many other games, so learning the Laws is not difficult. The requirements for becoming a Referee are that you enjoy working with children and are willing to learn the Laws and apply them during the game. Saratoga Soccer provides training classes for all Referees, so previous experience in soccer, although helpful, is not required.

The job of Referee is a good job for people who are interested in working directly with the children but who do not have time available during the week. Essentially all Referee time commitments are on weekends. The job of Referee is open to all: men, women, and experienced players age 12 and over.

The primary duty of a Referee is to ensure the safety of the players. If it looks dangerous to you, it probably is a foul. Be sure to put the safety of the children above all other considerations. "Safe, fair and fun!" is the Referee's motto.

Beginning Referees must attend a two-day Referee clinic, and must pass a simple test on the Laws of Soccer.

All Referees (both beginning and experienced) must complete the AYSO Safe Haven program (usually included in Referee training) and attend the Mid-season Coach/Referee Meeting. Returning Referees are asked to attend the Returning Referee Update meeting held in late summer. These are opportunities to catch up on any changes and updates that have been created.

Referees in younger Divisions are encouraged to help teach the Laws to the players. A brief explanation of an unusual call helps everyone. Allowing players to ask questions for a short period prior to the game is appropriate at all age levels. Avoid coaching the players—your remarks should focus on explaining the Law, rather than telling players how to play soccer. Being available after the game for questions is a good way to promote better communication.

Referees are strongly encouraged to develop their skills through more advanced training. Upon passing the entry-level test, Referees receive a Regional Referee Badge. After 1-2 years of experience in U-10 Division or higher, it is recommended that Referees attend an Intermediate Referee course and obtain an Intermediate Referee Badge. Higher badge levels are advanced, and national.

Referees are organized into pools responsible for particular age groups. Each pool has several experienced leads available for guidance and mentoring of

newer referees. Referees are allowed to schedule their own games for maximum flexibility and convenience. A strong support structure ensures that new referees receive all the instruction and help required to be competent and confident in their assignments.

Please keep in mind that the players and Coaches put in lots of time during the week to prepare for the game. They have the right to expect a competent Referee. It's important that you take your job seriously, and work hard to provide a fair game for everyone. Taking a little time each week to review the Law Book, or to discuss a call with your Team Leader, are important ways to ensure you are on top of the Laws of the Game. Arriving at least 15 minutes before the game is a courteous way to express your commitment to both the players and your fellow volunteers.

Refereeing is an important job. It is on a par with the coaches as far as responsibility to the kids who play AYSO soccer. It is important that you do the two games per weekend for which you are responsible. If you have a sudden schedule change, make sure you cover your assignments and notify the Regional Referee Administrator (RRA)

If you have a special question, you may email referee@saratogasoccer.org. Your particular question may be selected to be included in the "Ask the Referee" web page.

Occasionally the positive atmosphere of a game is disturbed by antagonistic comments from Coaches or spectators. The Referee has the right to suspend the game until a Coach, spectator or unruly player has left the area. If the individual refuses to leave, the Referee has the right to terminate the game. The outcome of a terminated game, as far as league standings are concerned, is decided by the Regional Commissioner and will normally be a forfeit. A Referee also has the right and duty to suspend the game until any dogs present are removed from the field.

Any unusual discipline issues (yellow cards, red cards, Coach or spectator harassment or ejections, cautions or sendoffs) should be noted on the back of the game scorecard and reported immediately to the Regional Referee Administrator (RRA).





U-5 Division

Under-5 Division is the youngest division of Saratoga Soccer. This age is a time of exploration and discovery for young kids. AYSO has created our U-5 program to foster this in a non-competitive, fun and simple environment for the players and the parents. No scores are kept. There are no winners or losers. Because of the young ages of these players, Parents MUST attend practices and games with their children in U-5.

Players are split in to U5 Boys and U5 Girls divisions. Prior to the opening day, teams may hold up to two team meetings for the purposes of introductions, communication with parents, and distribution of uniforms. Other than these initial meetings, NO practices are to be held except during the half hour immediately prior to Saturday games. Coaches and parents are asked to observe the spirit of U-5 Division ("Saturday-only, just for fun") by avoiding informal get-togethers that are essentially practices under a different name.

All U-5 division players and coaches attend the U-5 Soccerfest on Opening day prior to Opening Ceremonies. The Soccerfest is an hour-long activity where our AYSO Coach Instructors teach the kids, parents and coaches some basic soccer skills as well as play some fun games. The first weekend after Labor Day, we start the regular format. Two teams will meet for one hour. The AYSO coach Instructors and team coaches will then lead the combined teams in actives (practice). The coaches split each of their teams into two sub teams of generally 4 to 5 players: those that can play without assistance and those that need help. These sub teams typically play no more than 3 at a time against the similar sub team of the other coach. The other 1 or 2 players are substitutes. There are two simultaneous games.

The games are managed by the coaches. In general, no one else should be on the field. If a player requires assistance, parents or coaches may briefly join the kids on the field to encourage and help. There are no formal substitutions at this age; Coaches are to rotate the players frequently so that all kids get the same amount of playing time each weekend. Parents should NOT direct, only cheer.

The laws of Soccer are modified to suit the age of the players, including no penalty kicks, no offside and no goalkeepers. The Coaches will not position players directly in front of the goal (as virtual goalkeepers). Players may be encouraged to play defensive positions but should be taught to go to the ball and kick it away when it comes into their area. U-5 Division is casual and instructional. The goal is for the players to have FUN as well as to learn the basics of good sportsmanship and team play in a positive and non-competitive environment. Coaches will complete player evaluations in the second half of the season. These must be turned in before the team's pictures and player participation awards (every player gets each) will be distributed.



U-6 Division

Under-6 Division is one of the youngest divisions of Saratoga Soccer. This age is a time of exploration and discovery for young kids. AYSO has created our U-6 program to foster this in a non-competitive, fun and simple environment for the players and the parents. No scores are kept. There are no winners or losers. Because of the young ages of these players, Parents MUST attend practices and games with their children in U-6.

Players are split in to U6 Boys and U6 Girls divisions. Teams typically field NO MORE than 5 players. While more players are new to soccer, we try to spread returning and new players equally to each team. Prior to the first day, teams may hold up to two team meetings for the purposes of introductions, communication with parents, distribution of uniforms and initial skill evaluation. No practices are to be held except during the half hour immediately prior to Saturday games. Coaches and parents are asked to observe the spirit of U-6 Division ("Saturday-only, just for fun") by avoiding informal get-togethers that are essentially practices under a different name.

All U-6 division players and coaches attend the U-6 Soccerfest on Opening day prior to Opening Ceremonies. The Soccerfest is an hour-long activity where our AYSO Coach Instructors teach the kids, parents and coaches some basic soccer skills as well as play some fun games. The first weekend after Labor Day, we start the regular format. Two teams will meet for one hour. The coaches lead their teams in 25 minutes of soccer games (practice). Coaches then organize their teams for a game. Each team typically fields 5 players at a time, the other 2 players are substitutes.

The games are managed by the coaches. In general, no one else should be on the field. If a player requires assistance, parents or coaches may briefly join the kids on the field to encourage and help for the first one or two games. There are no formal substitutions at this age; Coaches are to rotate the players frequently so that all kids get the same amount of playing time each weekend. Parents should NOT direct, only cheer.

The laws of Soccer are modified to suit the age of the players, including no penalty kicks, no offside and no goalkeepers. The Coaches will not position players directly in front of the goal (as virtual goalkeepers). Players may be encouraged to play defensive positions but should be taught to go to the ball and kick it away when it comes into their area. U-6 Division is casual and instructional. The goal is for the players to have FUN as well as to learn the basics of good sportsmanship and team play in a positive and non-competitive environment. Coaches will complete player evaluations in the second half of the season. These must be turned in before the team's pictures and player participation awards (every player gets each) will be distributed.



U-8 Division

Under-8 Division is formed from players that are 6 and 7 years of age on July 31, and is divided into a boys Division U-8B and a girls Division U-8G. Teams have 5, 6 or 7 depending on the number of registered players and the number of teams. Teams are balanced based on returning player's skill levels and a uniform distribution of new players. Teams are assigned during Team Assignment Night in late July, and players will learn what team they are assigned to by the middle of August. Practices can start in Mid August.

The Opening Season Soccer Festival (a series of short games) is held on both Saturday and Sunday of the weekend prior to Labor Day. One game is played on each following weekends (usually Saturday) after Labor Day weekend. The last game is two weekends prior to Thanksgiving.

In the U-8 Division there are 7 players on the field at a time without goalkeepers. It is expected that Coaches will not position players directly in front of the goal (as virtual goalkeepers). Players assigned to play defensive positions should be taught to go to the ball and kick it away when it comes into their area. Attacking players should be taught to dribble and pass around defender and score. Players should play an equal amount of both positions during the season. Finally, no player should sit out one quart every game while another player plays 4 quarters each game.

Volunteer Referees will officiate the game. During the regular season, games will be 40 minutes in length (two 20-min halves with a 5-min halftime). The game is stopped briefly midway through each half to allow "quarter" substitutions. Some rules are changed to fit the age of the children. Penalty kicks are not taken, a foul that would normally result in a penalty kick is taken as a direct free kick just outside the penalty area. The offside rule is not enforced, except in situations where the spirit of the law is being deliberately violated by positioning an attacker near the other team's goal.

Score is kept during the game, so there is a winner of the game, but no season standings are kept so there is no concept of "first place in U-8". Game results are quickly forgotten, usually most quickly by the players themselves. AYSO strongly discourages Coaches or parents from maintaining or referring to team records in U-8.

No regular season tournaments are held for U-8. Each child receives a participation award at the end of the season. Coaches will complete player evaluations in the second half of the season and turn them in before the team's pictures will be distributed.



U-10 Division

U-10 Division is formed from players that are 8 and 9 years of age on July 31, and is divided into a boys Division U-10B and a girls Division U-10G. Teams are formed with a team formation process, and players will learn what team they are assigned to by the middle of August. To create balanced teams, players are assigned to teams based on prior year rankings or evaluations from the player evaluations. A new player to Saratoga Soccer who has not attended a New Player Evaluation session will be withheld from team assignment until a player evaluation is complete. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the player attends his/her scheduled session.

The Opening Season Soccer Festival (a series of short games) is held on both Saturday and Sunday of the weekend before Labor Day. Standings are not maintained during the Opening Season Soccer Festival. These short games are intended to provide players, coaches, and officials an opportunity to begin the season without the pressure of trophies or standings. They can try new ideas and give the kids a chance to experiment with concepts learned in preseason practices.

During the regular season, one game is played each Saturday. Games are 50 minutes in length (two 25-min halves with a 5-min halftime). The game is stopped briefly midway through each half to allow "quarter" substitutions. The last regular season game is three weekends prior to Thanksgiving.

U-10 Division typically uses 9 players per team, including one goalkeeper. All normal soccer Laws are used, including penalty kicks and offside. Goalkeepers are limited to no more than two quarters of play in goal, and must participate at least one additional quarter in a field position. Every player should have the opportunity to play Every position during the season. U10 is too soon to specialize players. Finally, no player should sit out one quarter of every game while another player plays 4 quarters in each game.

Season standings are maintained and will be posted on our web site at www.saratogasoccer.org. Up to 9 points are awarded for each game (See Season Standings on scoring). The standings at the end of the season are only used for seeding the Ending Season Tournament. No trophies or awards are given for the standings at the end of the season.

All U-10 Division teams will play in the Ending Season Tournament. The Tournament is held on both Saturday and Sunday, two weekends before Thanksgiving. The Tournament format is a round robin of short games. The first place team in the Tournament (and sometimes second and third) will receive awards denoting their finishing place in the tournament.. All other teams in the tournament will receive participation awards. Depending on the number of teams, U-10 Divisions may be divided into two groups for Tournaments.

See Special Program Information later in this handbook for additional opportunities for your team!



U-12 Division

U-12 Division is formed from players that are 10 and 11 years of age on July 31, and is divided into a boys Division U-12B and a girls Division U-12G. Teams are formed with a team formation process, and players will learn what team they are assigned to by the middle of August. To create balanced teams, players are assigned to teams based on prior year rankings or evaluations from the Player evaluations. A new player to Saratoga Soccer who has not attended a New Player Evaluation session will be withheld from team assignment until a player evaluation is complete. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the player attends his/her scheduled session.

The Opening Season Soccer Festival (a series of short games) is held on both Saturday and Sunday of the weekend before Labor Day. Standings are not maintained during the Opening Season Soccer Festival. These short games are intended to provide players, coaches, and officials an opportunity to begin the season without the pressure of trophies or awards. They can try new ideas and give the kids a chance to experiment with concepts learned in preseason practices.

One game is played each Saturday during the regular season. Games will be 60 minutes in length (two 30-min halves with a 5-min halftime). The game is stopped briefly midway through each half to allow "quarter" substitutions. It is possible that some games will be played against teams outside of Saratoga region, and if so the method for counting these games in the standings will be announced to Coaches prior to the start of the season. The last regular season game is Saturday two weekends prior to Thanksgiving.

In U-12 and above, a goalkeeper is allowed to play the entire game in that position. Under normal circumstances, a team will use at least two goalkeepers on a regular basis (to allow for absences and to allow each player to play in the field for part of the game).

Season standings are maintained and will be posted on our web site at www.saratogasoccer.org. Up to 9 points are awarded for each game (See Season Standings on scoring). The first place team in each of U-12B and U-12G (and sometimes second and third, depending on the number of teams participating) are given awards for each player at the end of the season.

The first, second, and third place U-12B and U-12G will be invited to participate in an Area 2J Tournament. The Tournament may be held on both Saturday and/or Sunday, the weekend after the end of the season but not on Thanksgiving weekend. The Tournament format is a round robin and elimination of short games. The first, second, and third place team in the Area Tournament will receive awards from the Area. A section tournament consisting of AYSO teams from Northern California may be available after Thanksgiving.

See Special Program Information later in this handbook for additional opportunities for your team!



U-14 Division

U-14 Division is formed from players that are 12 and 13 years of age on July 31, and is divided into a boys Division U-14B and a girls Division U-14G. Teams are formed with a team formation process, and players will learn what team they are assigned to by the middle of August. To create balanced teams, players are assigned to teams based on prior year rankings or evaluations from the Player evaluations. A new player to Saratoga Soccer who has not attended a New Player Evaluation session will be withheld from team assignment until a player evaluation is complete. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the player attends his/her scheduled session.

There is no Opening Season Tournament in U-14 Division. Games are played against other Saratoga teams and against other teams from regions within Area 2J, starting the weekend before Labor Day. Travel to other regions in our area is required. Games will be 70 minutes in length (two 35-min halves with a 5-min halftime). The game is stopped briefly midway through each half to allow "quarter" substitutions. The last regular season game is Saturday two weekends prior to Thanksgiving.

Season standings are maintained based on the local Saratoga Region or the entire AYSO Area, depending on the number of teams. The Area Handbook dictates league rules for these games. A copy can be acquired at www.ayso2j.org. The first place team for each of U-14B and U-14G (and sometimes second and third, depending on the number of teams participating) are provided awards for each player at the end of the season. These awards are an Area level distinction and are offered by Area 2J. For further information, please contact the U-14 Division Manager.

The first place U-14B and U-14G teams in Saratoga (and sometimes additional teams) will be invited to participate in an Area 2J Tournament. The Tournament may be held on either Saturday or Sunday (but not both), the weekend after the end of the season but not on Thanksgiving weekend. The Tournament format is a round robin of short games. The first place team in the Area Tournament (and sometimes second and third) will receive awards from the Area. A section tournament may be available after Thanksgiving.

See Special Program Information later in this handbook for additional opportunities for your team!



U-16 and U-19 Divisions

U-16 Division is formed from players that are 14 and 15 years of age on July 31. U-19 Division is formed from players that are 16, 17 and 18 years of age on July 31. Parent volunteers must fill the key positions of Head Coach, Assistant Coach, and Team Rep.

U-16 and U-19 teams are organized based on the number of interested players, and may be coed. In some years, a mixed U-16/U-19 team may be fielded. Games and Leagues are organized with other Area J and Section 2 teams. The Area Handbook dictates league rules for these games. A copy can be acquired at www.ayso2j.org. Additional rules may apply to Section 2 level games. Travel to other regions in our area or section is required. There is no formal arrangement that repeats each year, as the league will depend on player participation in other regions.

Games start on the weekend after Labor Day, and end the second Sunday prior to November 15. All U-16 and U-19 activities end prior to November 15 to observe California high school soccer regulations for players participating on high school teams. Games are 90 minutes in length for U-19, and 80 minutes for U-16. The game is stopped briefly midway through each half to allow "quarter" substitutions.

There is a Section 2 Tournament for U-16 and U-19 divisions, which may be held on the Saturday and Sunday prior to November 15. Teams are invited to the Tournament based on season results and there is no guarantee that any Saratoga team will participate.

See Special Program Information later in this handbook for additional opportunities for your team!



Special Program Information

Turkey Tournament Info

U10, U12, U14

Region 249 in San Bruno has invited all Saratoga U10, 12,14 teams to participate in a bay-area wide AYSO Soccer tournament on the Saturday and Sunday of Thanksgivings weekend. This is great fun for the team and the families that participate. There is a nominal fee per team. Team must register before October 31 (Halloween). If two teams need to combine to have enough players, that is possible, as long as Everyone Plays. Please contact the Coach or Regional Commissioner if you are interested

rc@saratogasoccer.org,

coach@saratogasoccer.org

Spring Info

U12, U14, U16 and U19

Teams wishing to stay together into Spring have the opportunity to play in the Pacific Coast Spring Soccer League. This league plays AYSO and CYSA Class 3/4 teams. Teams can also attend the Region 218 AYSO David World Cup soccer tournament in late May. There are also other AYSO tournaments in California and Hawaii for interested teams. Please contact the Spring Commissioner if you are interested

spring@saratogasoccer.org



Registration for Saratoga Soccer

Registration for Saratoga Soccer is open to all interested players of ages 4 -18 as of July 31st from Saratoga and surrounding areas. There are no geographical restrictions on players that may enroll in Saratoga Soccer. Registration for Saratoga Soccer begins on specified Saturdays in April. Please refer to this year's calendar, which is located at the back of this handbook, for specific dates and times.

Region 27 strives to have the registration process run as smoothly as possible and keeping with that we have instituted pre-registration with National AYSO database program called eAYSO. The website is www.eayso.org and full instructions are located on our website saratogasoccer.org. Upon the assigned registration dates (see calendar) you must have with you 1 copy of the eAYSO player form for each player and 2 copies of the eAYSO Adult Volunteer Application. The Adult Volunteer Application MUST have the information of the adult coming into registration for photo ID confirmation.

Registration fees are \$150 per child; however discounted registration is available for those who register early. Volunteer jobs available during Early Registration are Coaches, Referees, Board Members, or other critical positions essential to AYSO operation as defined by the Board. For Advanced Registration, the registration fee is \$100 per child. This discount is provided in part since volunteers in these positions may spend money from their own pockets to help them complete their duties. There is also a multi-child family discount of \$25 per child for the 2nd or more children.

Registration is usually in May (see this year's calendar for specifics). Registration for U-5 & U-6 Divisions is often held open until the first game in September.

The ability to pay the registration fee is not a requirement for participation in AYSO. Families that are unable to pay the fee are encouraged to contact the Registrar, as scholarships are available and easy to obtain.

Each family that participates in Saratoga Soccer is asked to fill at least one volunteer job, typically requiring 16 hours during the season (and many families fill multiple jobs). For more details on sponsor issues and benefits, see page 44.

At registration, volunteers for Head Coach Positions may designate one (1) Assistant Coach for their team.



IMPORTANT: Although it is our desire to have every child who wishes to play soccer included in our program, as a practical matter Saratoga Soccer registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The number of available Coaches, Referees, practice fields and/or playing fields, may limit registration within each Division. Once a Division has been filled, a waiting list is created from which additional players may be admitted if additional Coaches (which are usually the limitation!) are identified. Families that are willing to fill critical volunteer positions (such as Head Coaches and Referees) are given priority on the waiting list. Also, families that have just recently moved into the area are given priority on the waiting list.

The National AYSO organization has developed a software program to form balanced teams. Saratoga Soccer's implementation of this program is to evenly distribute first & second year players (in each division) to each team and then balance teams based on player evaluations. The division manager then makes player substitutions necessary for only the coach's child, designated assistant coach's child, and siblings playing in the same division. Finally, any necessary mathematical re-balancing is done. Please Note: Careful consideration by the coaches when preparing player evaluations is vital to the success of the Balanced Teams philosophy in AYSO.

REFUNDS: Refunds of registration fees and league sponsor fees are available. Please notify the Registrar in writing by July 1. Following that date, refunds are available with the possibility that, in some cases, the cost of the uniform and other non-recoverable costs (pictures, sweatshirts, etc.) will be deducted. If a uniform has been issued, it must be returned to the coach before a refund can be made. Refund requests should be sent to:

Registrar, Saratoga AYSO Refund Request
PO Box 2933
Saratoga CA 95070

Team Assignments

Players are assigned to teams during the team formation process and Team Assignment nights conducted by the Head League Commissioner. At this time, as much information as is available on player skills are used to provide evenly balanced teams for the season. Teams are assigned to Coaches by blind draw, and the Division Manager will make player substitutions necessary to switch the Coach's child (and Assistant Coach's child, if an Assistant Coach has been named by the Head Coach) to the team selected, and to rebalance teams if necessary.

Each team is assigned a Coach, Assistant Coach and Team Rep when sufficient volunteers for those positions are available.

Players may not request to be placed on a particular team, with a particular Coach or together with friends except for the following:

(1) Coaches will be placed on the same team as their children unless otherwise requested; (2) siblings of the same gender within the same Division will be placed on the same team; and (3) the Head Coach may name one Assistant Coach (whose child will be placed on the same team).

Practice times and fields are assigned during Team Assignment Night, based on preferences of the Head Coach, from a list of fields and times available for that Division. Practices for Divisions U-8 through U-19 will start not earlier than August 1 and may start as late as the first week of September. In Divisions U-8 through U-19, players will receive notification of the team they are on by the middle of August.

Following Team Assignments and before the first game of the season, the Team Rep or Head Coach will organize a Parent Meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to meet the Coaches and other parents, to ensure that all parents have a clear understanding of AYSO philosophy and parent expectations, and to discuss practice schedules and other details of the season. This is a good time to organize car pools, discuss refreshment schedules, etc. It is also a great time to emphasize the policies of our community regarding pets attending games or practices, parking restrictions, and the issues of after game cleanup- and good neighbor behavior.

Practice and Game Fields

Saratoga Soccer uses a number of fields in the Saratoga area for practice and for games. The same local ordinances and rules apply to practice days as well as game days. Field status for games and practices are on the web at www.saratogasoccer.org

Teams in U-14 Division and above may play in neighboring areas, including West San Jose, Cupertino, and Prunedale. Please refer to the Saratoga Soccer web site at www.saratogasoccer.org for directions to all fields, including fields outside Saratoga. Each game or practice location may be divided into a number of playing fields, which are identified on the site maps on the website www.saratogasoccer.org.





Opening Season Soccer Festival

U5, U6, U8, U10 and U12 Divisions will play in the Opening Season Soccer Festival the first weekend of the season. U5 and U6 play on Saturday from 11 Am to Noon only. U8, U10 and U12 play on Saturday and Sunday.

Teams will play 1 or 2 short games each day in a round-robin format. Standings are NOT kept for any of these games. Coaches and spectators are discouraged from attempting to keep standings to allow everyone the opportunity to experiment and tryout new ideas without the pressure of winning or losing

U-12 Division games will be 35 minutes, U-10 Division games will be 30 minutes, and U-8 Division games will be 25 minutes. These game times are typical but may vary due to field availability. Any changes will be noted on the Opening Season Soccer Festival schedule. Each game will have a 5-min halftime. Each player must participate for at least half of each game, and Coaches are encouraged to observe the "3/4 rule" by having each child participate in at least three of the four halves (of the two games) each day.

The purpose of the Opening Season Soccer Festival is to generate some excitement about soccer among the players, and to allow Coaches the opportunity to try players in several different positions if they wish. The results of the Opening Season Soccer Festival do not count towards regular season standings.

All U5 & 6 division players and coaches are invited to attend the U 5 & 6 Soccerfest on the Opening Season Soccerfest prior to Opening Ceremonies. This is an hour long Soccerfest where our AYSO Coach Instructors teach the kids some basic skills as well as play some fun games that reinforce these skills. Each player is given a token for the snack shack for his or her participation.



Season Standings

Season standings for U-14, U-16 and U-19 Divisions are maintained by the Area Scorekeeper under Area rules and are not covered by this handbook.

No season standings are maintained in U-5, U-6, and U-8 Divisions. U-8 game results are used to provide additional data points when considering the player evaluations for subsequent seasons. In addition scores will be monitored to ensure that coaches are limiting blow-outs (win by more than 5 goals

Depending on the number of teams in each division, some games may be designated as "practice" or "provisional" games on the season schedule. These games normally do not count towards the season standings, unless later games between the same teams are rained out. Please contact your Division Manager if you have any questions regarding which games will be counted towards season standings.

Season standings for U-10 and U-12 Divisions are maintained by the Regional Scorekeeper. Standings are typically posted each week on the web site at www.saratogasoccer.org. Standings are based on a point system as outlined below:

Win 6 points	Plus 1 point per goal up to 3 additional points* *Blow Outs (more than 5 goal differential -1 point per goal over 5 goal differential)
Tie 3 points	Plus 1 point per goal up to 3 additional points
Loss 0 points	Plus 1 point per goal up to 3 additional points
Forfeit 8 points	Points go to the team that was not at fault, 0 to the other

The final standings for the U10 and U12 divisions will be determined based on the average points per game. This is calculated by totaling all points earned during the official regular season play and dividing this total by the number of games that team played or forfeited during the official regular season. This will result in average points per game.

At the end of the regular season or a tournament, if a tie exists between two or more teams for any of the top positions, applying each of the following tiebreakers in succession, until the tie is resolved, will break it:

1. Head-to-head competition
2. Fewest goals allowed
3. Most goals scored up to 5 per game
4. Highest sportsmanship score
5. Flip of a coin



Game Procedures

The following procedures will be followed for all games within Saratoga Soccer:

Games in Saratoga Soccer are played under:

- (a) FIFA Laws of the Game
- (b) AYSO National Rules and Regulations
- (c) AYSO Region 27's Regional Handbook
- (d) Section 2 and Area J Handbooks in upper divisions.

Inter-area games are played in accordance with the Area 2J Handbook (www.ayso2j.org). Where a situation is not covered in the Area Handbook, the Regional Handbook is followed. Should a situation arise which is not covered by either handbook, the Regional Commissioner will have the authority to decide the issue and his/her decision will be final.

Games will start on time. If the previous game is running late, the Referee will conduct team inspections and the coin toss off the field, so that the teams are ready to start as soon as the field is available. If the game starts late, the Referee is to subtract time from each quarter so that the game ends prior to the scheduled starting time of the next game.

Lineup cards will be prepared by Coaches in advance, and presented to the Referee prior to the start of the game. Coaches are encouraged to mark planned substitutions on the card for each quarter, noting players out that quarter with an "X". Any absences should be noted along with the reason for the absence (e.g. "illness", "injury").

The Referee will conduct a team inspection a few minutes prior to the scheduled game time. This is also an opportunity for players to ask questions on rules or enforcement. Following the inspection, team captains (as designated by the Coach for each game) will be introduced to each other and to the Referee. The coin toss will take place, with the winning team choosing which goal to attack for the first half. The losing team will kick off to start the game.

Teams should rapidly take positions on the field following the coin toss. The Referee will ask the goalkeepers to ensure the team is ready to play, and then blow the whistle to commence the game.

The Referee will stop the game briefly, at a time roughly midway through each half, for "quarter" substitutions. Quarter substitutions should be simple and quick! Coaches are asked to avoid complicated position changes at the quarter

break, and if possible to avoid goalkeeper changes at this time. Coaches may not enter the field during the quarter break, unless invited by the Referee. Have the

players entering the game ready to go, and make sure they know what position they will be playing. The clock continues to run during quarter substitutions so that following games can start on time.

Halftime will be approximately 5 minutes in duration. Coaches and parents should ensure that all players get plenty of water during halftime. The Referee will blow the whistle to signal the players back to the field. Once the whistle is blown, players should promptly return to the field and take their positions to play the second half.

During the game, players may come to the sidelines for attention (such as a drink of water, asthma inhalers, etc.) while game play continues in another part of the field. In such situations, the player should remain standing on the field and any person assisting the player should remain off the field.

The Referee will blow the whistle to signal the end of the game. Following the end of the game, each team will give a cheer for the other team and form a line to shake hands with the other team. The players should also be encouraged to thank the Referees and shake their hands.

Players and parents are reminded that the authority of the Referee begins when he or she enters the field and continues following the end of the game, and players may receive a red card for offensive language or violent conduct even though the game has ended.

Following the game, Coaches and parents are encouraged to discuss with Referees any questions on the game, unless the Referee makes any indication that such discussions are not welcomed at that time. The Referee has the option of refusing such discussion, and this decision is to be respected by all parents and Coaches. During the game, the Referee is responsible for keeping the game flowing and will usually defer any discussion on rulings until after the game.

Referees are given full authority with respect to conduct of the game, including determining playing time, disciplinary measures (yellow cards or red cards), and suspending the game for field conditions, spectator behavior, or any other reason that in the Referee's judgment warrants such suspension.

All calls made by the Center Referee are final. Calls may not be appealed. Concerns or issues may be brought to the attention of the RRA and/or the RCA.



Soccer Accident Insurance Plan

Soccer has a low injury rate and is generally considered a safe sport. However, participants in any athletic activity may suffer injury. You should be aware of the steps to take if your child sustains an injury. The AYSO reimbursement plan pays only for those eligible expenses NOT covered by group or individual insurance carried by parents or guardians of registered participants and only after submission of the claim to the primary insurance carrier.

1. If a player is injured at practice, notify the Coach immediately. If injury occurs during a game and the Referee did not see it, try to get the Referee's attention but do not go on the field of play until asked by the Referee to do so.
2. If it looks as if the injured player should possibly see a doctor, seek medical care immediately.
3. AYSO Incorporated has a Soccer Accident Insurance Plan that covers each registered player and registered volunteers for injuries incurred while participating in scheduled games and practices. The Soccer Accident Insurance Plan pays only for those eligible expenses not covered by your public, group, or individual insurance, less a \$100 deductible. If you do not have a Soccer Accident Insurance Plan brochure and would like one, please contact the Safety Director or write: AYSO, PO Box 2933, Saratoga, CA 95070.
4. As all claims must be submitted to the National Office within ninety (90) days of the injury, it is imperative that accidents be reported to the Safety Director immediately.
5. Coaches and referees are to report any serious injury to the AYSO Safety Director **using the incident report form available on the AYSO website**.. The Safety Director will assist parents or guardians in making a claim. (COACHES are responsible for submitting paperwork for ANY injury that is referred for medical attention, even if non-emergency.

www.soccer.org



Saratoga Soccer Organization

AYSO Incorporated is a non-profit corporation run by an Executive Director and a National Office Staff under the direction of a Board of Directors.

A Regional Board and staff is appointed by the Regional Commissioner and administers Region 27, Saratoga Soccer. The Board is responsible to the Regional Commissioner for the Region's operation, and like the Regional Commissioner, serves in a volunteer capacity. The Regional Board includes the following positions.

Officers

The regional board shall, at a minimum, consist of the regional commissioner, the regional treasurer, the regional risk management / safety director, the regional coach administrator, the regional referee administrator, and the regional child and volunteer protection advocate. The regional board may create, designate, appoint, or elect such other voting board, or non-voting staff, positions including one or more assistant regional commissioners, a regional secretary, a regional coach trainer, a regional director of referee instruction, a regional director of referee assessment, age division directors, a director of playing fields, a regional registrar, a team parent coordinator, a director of public relations, a statistician/scheduler, a director of purchasing, a director of volunteer recruitment and development, a regional auditor and such other positions as the regional board may from time to time deem desirable. In addition, there may be such members-at-large as the board shall create. All members of a regional board understand and agree that they are fiduciaries of, and owe a duty of loyalty to, AYSO and agree to be bound by its Bylaws, Policies, Rules and Regulations. The following are the job descriptions.

Position descriptions for all positions may be found and downloaded from the AYSO web site www.soccer.org, or may be obtained by calling the Supply Center to order the complete list. For specific position description requests, please call the Certification Associate at the National Support & Training Center. Every volunteer should have a copy of their position description, and current copies should be kept in the region for succession planning purposes.

A brief and general overview of the duties and responsibilities of the six mandatory board positions follows.

Regional Commissioner (RC)

The AYSO volunteer position of regional commissioner is intended to have the responsibility and the authority to manage the day-to-day business of the region, within the framework of the AYSO operating regulations.



Regional Treasurer

The AYSO volunteer position of regional treasurer is intended to have custody of all funds and securities, evidence of indebtedness and other valuable documents, and shall deposit funds and securities in the name and to the credit of the region in a bank or depository.

Regional Risk Management / Safety Director

The AYSO volunteer position of regional risk management / safety director is intended to be responsible for all aspects of the region’s safety and oversee the equipment, nets, fields, and clean-up for fields of the region.

Regional Coach Administrator (RCA)

The AYSO volunteer position of regional coach administrator is intended to administer a quality coaching program within the region.

Regional Referee Administrator (RRA)

The AYSO volunteer position of regional referee administrator is intended to implement, monitor, and maintain the AYSO National Referee Program including program delivery, staff development, communication, and coordination at the regional level.

Regional Child and Volunteer Protection Advocate (CVPA)

The AYSO volunteer position of regional child and volunteer protections advocate is intended to oversee the child and volunteer protection program in the region in accordance with the AYSO Safe Haven program.

Regional Registrar

The AYSO volunteer position of registrar directs and manages the registration of all players. This position insures the successful registration of the players and the parent volunteers according to AYSO policies and procedures.

Parent volunteers conduct all Saratoga Soccer activities. We are always looking for people who have the time, commitment and passion to serve our kids. If you are interested in helping out in a board position or other critical job, please contact the Regional Commissioner



2008 Saratoga Soccer Budget

Operating Year is July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009

	Fall 08	Spring 09
Estimated Players	1150	400
Early Fee per Player	\$100	\$100
Regular Fee per Player	\$150	\$110
2nd Child Fee per Player	\$125	Returning/New
Estimated Revenues Income		
Registration fees	\$144,000	\$40,000
Sponsors	\$5,000	\$ -
Fund Raising, Snack Shack	\$4,000	\$ -
Player Camp Fees	\$9,600	\$ -
Interest	\$ 4,500	\$500
	\$162,600	\$40,500
Estimated Expenses		
Payments to AYSO	\$20,000	\$1,000
Uniforms and Sweatshirts	\$50,500	\$7,100
Equipment	\$5,000	\$2,000
Field Expenses	\$55,000	\$6,500
Awards, Trophies, Pictures	\$14,500	\$4,000
Camp and tournaments	\$10,000	\$ -
Scholarships	\$2,000	\$500
Training and Meetings	\$13,000	\$1,000
Postage, Bank Fees, Supplies	\$4,000	\$400
Newsletter, Handbook, Web	\$6,000	\$ -
Clinics and AYSO trainers	\$17,000	\$11,000
Field Improvement	\$45,000	
	\$242,000	\$33,500
Estimated Cash Increase (Decrease)	(\$79,400)	\$7,000
Prior Year Cash Balance	\$130,000	
Estimated FY End Cash Reserve		\$57,600

Saratoga Soccer offers two types of sponsorships. League Sponsorships (\$350.00) support the league, are not associated with any specific team, and do not have a promotional value. Corporate Sponsorships (\$500.00) are not associated with a specific team, but do include a banner displayed at the main field. Corporate Sponsorships are available for \$500 and up. Corporate Sponsorships banners get prominently displayed at Congress Springs Park during the season where every weekend over 3000 players, friends, and families enjoy soccer.



General Rules and Regulations

Team names, which are commercial in nature, are not permitted. Teams may not be named after sponsors or after sponsor's products. If any team name is called into question, the name shall be subject to approval by the Regional Board.

A minimum of 7 players is required to play a game. A team that cannot field the minimum number of players within 10 minutes of the scheduled game time will forfeit that game. [For divisions using less than 11 players per team, the minimum number of players is also reduced—at least 2/3 the usual number of players.] If a team starts a game with less than the normal number of players, the opposing team must play with no more than 1 additional player (e.g. if one team has 8 players, the other team plays with 9). Late arriving players may be added with the Referee's permission to maintain the 1-player advantage until the teams are at full strength. In such circumstances the 3/4-game play rule often cannot be achieved for the opposing team, and substitutions should be managed to provide roughly equal playing time for all players (no more than 1 quarter difference in playing time for any two players). If during play any player is sent off (red card), that player may not be replaced for the rest of the game (e.g. if on the short team, the other team plays with a two player advantage; if on the team with the extra player, the teams continue play at equal strength). If a team with only the minimum number of players has one player sent off, the game is suspended; the result will be deemed a forfeit unless the other team has already scored 3 goals, in which case it will be deemed a 3-0 win (9 pts).

All players are required to play a minimum of 3/4 of each game, provided that player arrives on time, properly equipped, and is not under disciplinary suspension. A player that arrives during the first quarter must play at least two quarters, and a player that arrives before the end of the third quarter must play at least one quarter. If a player is recovering from illness or injury, the child may play less than 3/4 with the Referee's permission. The 3/4 rule may be modified only by the Board of Directors and only with the approval of the Area Director. Attendance at practices is not a cause to reduce playing time.

If a child is injured during a game, the Coach has the option of replacing the child or playing with one less player while the child receives attention. If a substitute is used, the injured player may not return to the game until the next quarter (unless they return to replace another injured player). If no substitute is used, the injured child may return to the game with the Referee's permission. If a substitute is used, it is the injured child who is given "credit" for that quarter for the purposes of the 3/4 rule.

A player who receives a red card during a game will be suspended from further



participation in that game and also from the next scheduled game, even if the following game is a tournament game. If the red card is due to a technical rule violation (such as a deliberate foul to deny an obvious goal scoring opportunity) that did not involve aggressive behavior or abusive language, the Regional Referee Administrator has the option to reinstate the player for the next game. A third yellow card during a single season will result in a suspension from the following game. A player who is suspended may attend the game but may not wear his/her uniform.

If a Coach or spectator is unable to refrain from making derogatory remarks to players, other Coaches, Referees or other spectators, or uses foul or abusive language, the Referee may suspend the game until that Coach or spectator leaves the field. If an unruly player, Coach or spectator refuses to leave the field, the Referee may terminate the game. Any Coach who is ejected from a game is suspended from participation in the next scheduled game, even if that game is a tournament game. A Coach who is suspended may not attend the game, even as a spectator.

Pins and awards for post-season Tournament in U-10 Division will be awarded based on the number of teams competing, as follows:

First Place	All Divisions
Second Place	5 or more teams
Third Place	8 or more teams

In unusual circumstances it may be necessary to discipline players for activities or behavior detrimental to the objectives of AYSO. With the consent of the Division Manager, a player who is disruptive at practice may be suspended from practice, or a parent of the player may be required to attend practice. The Regional Commissioner may suspend a player from participation in games, or may drop the player from participation in the AYSO program, due to extreme aggressive behavior, continued infringements of AYSO rules, or parent/spectator behavior which is judged detrimental to the league. Striking a Referee, Coach or other official will result in a minimum two-year expulsion from AYSO.

This handbook is not intended to be a complete summary of all Regional Policies. Complete rules and Bylaws for FIFA, AYSO, Area 2J, and Region 27 can be obtained from the Regional Commissioner.



Dispute Resolution

1. General Policy

It is the policy of the region to resolve all disputes involving persons involved in the region in an amicable way, if possible. Compromise should be emphasized whenever possible, and personality conflicts should be avoided. If disciplinary action is found to be necessary, it is the region's policy to take only the minimum action necessary. All means available should be taken to avoid legal action. It is the policy of the region to avoid punishing the players for the conduct of the parents except when there is no other solution (e.g., where a parent cannot or will not cease his or her disruptive behavior). It is the policy of the region to avoid wiping out years of good memories of AYSO and good service to AYSO, and that suspension or removal procedures are to be used only as a last resort. Voluntary resignation is preferable to a suspension or removal procedure. It is the policy of the region to avoid publicizing the suspension or removal proceedings beyond those persons who need to know, and to respect the privacy of the individuals involved. However, the regional commissioner or regional board should notify the area director, the section director, the National Support & Training Center or members of the AYSO Legal Commission of the pending proceedings pursuant to the operating regulations, and must comply with all applicable regulations and laws requiring suspension for abuse and similar events.

2. General Due Process Procedures

Disputes involving day-to-day activities of the region should first be addressed and resolved, if possible, by the appropriate board member in charge of the activity and/or then by the entire regional board, if necessary. Disputes arising out of game conduct should first be addressed and resolved, if possible, by the regional referee administrator and/or then by a disinterested review board appointed by the regional commissioner and/or then by the entire regional board, if necessary. If it is determined that it is necessary that a person involved in the region needs to be disciplined, or that his or her participation in the region should be limited or terminated, then the regional commissioner or the regional board shall give notice to such person of such intention, initially by telephone, FAX, in writing via email or in person. Notice should always be followed by a written confirmation delivered via certified mail. Such notice shall specify the action to be taken and the reasons therefore. Such notice shall further notify such person that he or she, upon request, will be given a reasonable opportunity to explain why such action should not be taken. Such opportunity to respond may be in person at a hearing, by telephone or in writing. The regional commissioner or regional board may appoint a disinterested hearing board or committee of

neutral persons to consider such discipline. After such opportunity to respond has been given, the regional commissioner, regional board, hearing board or committee shall make its determination and announce it in writing to all persons concerned.

3. Suspension

The regional commissioner or regional board may suspend a person involved in the region from further involvement in the region's activities if there is found to be an imminent danger to players or to the program by his or her continuing involvement, or if it is determined the person has been arrested or is under investigation for a crime that, if convicted, would rule out the person's continued involvement. Notice must be provided and a hearing conducted, if requested, according to the procedures described in Paragraph Two above. A suspension is considered to be temporary in nature, and any such suspension may be removed or set aside by a majority of the regional board at any time.

4. Removal

The regional commissioner or the regional board may remove a person (whether or not suspended) involved in the region, from further involvement in the program. Such removal may only be made upon prior notice and after a determination is made that removal is appropriate, as the result of a disciplinary hearing described in Paragraph Two above. Such removal is only permitted when there is found to be (a) a violation of the National Bylaws or of the rules, regulations, policies or philosophies of AYSO or (b) conduct which disrupts the region's or AYSO's activities or programs.

5. Hearing Procedures

Any disciplinary hearing shall be held at a neutral location. The hearing procedures shall be communicated to and understood by all parties prior to the commencement of such hearing. All interested parties are to be informed of the date, time, and location of such hearing. A person who has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter shall not participate in any stage of the procedure. A person has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter if that person's conduct is in any way called into question by the events, or if that person is a witness to the events, has a familial relationship with any person involved in the matter, has a financial interest in the outcome, or whose judgment, for any reason, cannot be unbiased and neutral. In the event the regional commissioner has a direct interest in the outcome of the matter, any authority herein to be exercised by the regional commissioner shall be referred to the area director. A committee or hearing board of disinterested persons shall conduct the hearing as quickly and as fairly as possible, but may structure the proceedings as circumstances may require to keep them as positive as possible as well. The committee or



hearing board may ask such questions and request such documents or other evidence as may be necessary to obtain all pertinent facts, but should refrain from being overbearing with such examinations and requests. It is strongly recommended that players and other minors not be asked to participate as witnesses or to offer "testimonials" either in person or in writing unless it is absolutely necessary in order to determine any pertinent fact of the matter. The proceedings should be kept as confidential as may be necessary to protect all parties. The committee or hearing board shall listen to the facts of the situation from all interested parties. Each "side" may be permitted or requested to make their presentations outside the presence of the other if necessary to prevent undue acrimony or harm to the participants. Parties do not have the right to involve attorneys or to cross-examine other parties or witnesses, although either may be permitted within the discretion of the committee or hearing board if it believes that such participation will be helpful and positive. At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee or hearing board shall adjourn to a private session where the decision will be reached. Under no circumstances shall the committee or hearing board deliberate in the presence of the parties involved in the dispute. The committee or hearing board will then decide the issues raised pursuant to AYSO operating regulations and these regional guidelines based on the evidence submitted, and by a majority vote determine the appropriate action to be taken. Such action may include that no action should be taken against the individual accused, or that a warning or caution be given, that a written reprimand be given, that further education or probation be required, or that such person should be suspended or removed from involvement in regional activities. Where the hearing board recommends removal or where otherwise determined appropriate, the individual in question should be given an opportunity to resign voluntarily. All interested parties shall promptly be notified of such resignation or, in the absence of a resignation, of the hearing board's decision.

6. Review

Any determination made in accordance with this Article shall be final and binding on all concerned unless it is determined by the area director, or, if he/she is not disinterested, the section director, that such determination was arbitrary and capricious, or that the procedure was not fair, or that the person or persons making such determination are found not to have been disinterested. Any interested party dissatisfied with the decision or action taken by the committee or hearing board may request a review of such decision by the area director, section director or National Board of Directors, as may be appropriate pursuant to the operating regulations relating to dispute resolution and due process. There shall only be one review of each matter.



The Laws of the Game

It may surprise some Americans to learn that soccer is by far the most popular game in the world, and is played by more children and adults worldwide than any other sport. For many countries in the world, soccer (called "football" in most countries) is considered to be the "national sport", and draws more players and spectators (and television time!) than other sports. The soccer World Cup, which is played every 4 years by teams representing each nation of the world, is probably better known to more people around the world than are the Olympic games, the World Series or the Super Bowl.

Despite the wide popularity of soccer and the numerous countries in which it is played, soccer has a single worldwide governing body responsible for establishing and maintaining the rules by which the game is played. This organization is the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), and virtually all soccer games are administered under Laws established by FIFA or closely based on FIFA. Our AYSO games are played with FIFA Laws, with only minor modifications (which have been approved by FIFA) to cover issues relating to children, such as smaller fields and smaller balls for younger divisions.

The rules of soccer are referred to as "The Laws of The Game". The Laws are very simple in comparison to sports such as baseball and football, but there are still some areas that might cause confusion to people who did not grow up playing the sport. Also, there is a large difference in "cultural attitudes" towards officiating in soccer in comparison with sports like baseball. The soccer Referee is treated with great respect, and the Laws give the Referee wide discretion in applying his or her personal judgment to the game. Although this might seem at first to create a situation where Referees may be inconsistent, the game of soccer is extremely fast moving and players make up moves and strategy on the fly, so many situations occur which might never have been foreseen by a rule book. To manage these issues, experienced Referees are trained not only in the Laws of the Game but also in a concept known as the Spirit of the Game, which provides guidance as to how to apply the Laws in new situations.

There are 17 Laws of the Game, which cover everything from the size of the field to the way you must take a corner kick. The purpose of this summary is to give you a short introduction sufficient to help you enjoy the game. If you are interested in learning more about the Laws of the Game, ask any Saratoga Soccer Referee or refer to the FIFA web site (www.fifa.com).



1. Object of the Game

The object of the game is to get the ball into your opponent's goal. Players are allowed to move the ball with any part of their body except hands and arms (except for one player on each team, called the goalkeeper). For the most part, the ball is kicked, but you may also play the ball with your head, chest, knee, etc. The team that scores the most goals is the winner of the game.

2. The Field of Play

A soccer field is rectangular, with the goals being located on each end. The sides of the field are called "touch lines", since when the ball crosses this line ("goes into touch") it may be picked up by a player and thrown back into the field. The ends of the field are called "goal lines", since this is where the goals are located. A halfway line divides the field into two equal halves. On the halfway line is a center mark, from which the ball is kicked to start the game, or after a goal is scored. There is also a center circle of 10 yards radius, and all opponents must be outside this circle when the kickoff is taken.

Around each goal is a small area (6 yards deep) called the goal area. The goal area is used primarily for goal kicks (see below). A larger area around each goal (18 yards deep) is called the "penalty area". The goalkeeper is only allowed to use his/her hands while inside his/her own penalty area.

Directly in front of the goal, and 12 yards from the goal line, is a penalty mark, where the ball is placed for a penalty kick (see below). In addition there is a small arc (10 yards from the penalty mark, and outside the penalty area) called the penalty arc. The penalty mark and penalty arc affect play only during a penalty kick.

There are also flags in each corner of the field, and a small quarter circle near the flag.

The dimensions given above are for full-size fields, and are reduced in U-5, U-6, U-8 and U-10 to match the smaller fields.

(U8 fields do not have a Penalty Area only a goal area, U5 and U6 hve not goal or penalty areas)

3. Taking Kicks

There are many situations in soccer where a team is awarded a formal kick (kickoffs, fouls, and situations where the ball is being returned to active play after crossing the goal line). In these situations, there are some general rules that apply: All players on the other team must retreat at least 10 yards away; and the kicker, once s/he first kicks the ball, must allow another player (of either team) to touch the ball before s/he plays it again. For the kickoff, the center circle



marks the 10 yard distance; for other situations, the kicker may ask the Referee to estimate the 10-yard distance and to move opposing players back.

4. The Kickoff

Prior to the game, the Referee will conduct a coin toss to determine which team will kick off. The winner of the coin toss chooses which goal his or her team will attack in the first half; the other team takes the kickoff. Each team positions 11 players on the field (fewer in U-5, U-6, U-8 and U-10), and must have all players in their own half at the start. All players from the team not taking the kickoff must also be outside the center circle. A player from the team taking the kickoff kicks the ball forward to start the game, and may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it.

5. The Throw-in

If a player of one team kicks the ball completely over the touchline, the other team is awarded a throw-in to return the ball to play. The player taking the throw-in must stand behind or on top of the touchline, and must throw the ball with both hands from behind and over the head. The player must have both feet touching the ground at the moment s/he releases the ball into play.

6. The Goal Kick

If the ball crosses the goal line and was last touched by an attacking player, the defense takes a goal kick to return the ball to play. The ball is placed on the ground anywhere inside the goal area, and is kicked by a defender. Attacking players must position themselves outside the penalty area. The ball must leave the penalty area before any player may touch it—otherwise, the goal kick is retaken. For U8 the other team must be "10-yards" from the ball (Since there is no penalty area) U5 and U6, there are NO GOAL KICKS. The player kicks the ball from the goal line where it left the field of play.

7. The Corner Kick

If the ball completely crosses the goal line and was last touched by a defender, the attacking team takes a corner kick. The player taking the kick places the ball inside the small arc near the corner of the field, and kicks it back into play. U5 and U6, there are NO CORNER KICKS. The player kicks the ball from the goal line where it left the field of play.

8. Penalty Kick

An unusual and exciting play in soccer is the penalty kick. A penalty kick is awarded when a defender commits a major (penal) foul while inside his or her own penalty area. For a penalty kick, all players must leave the penalty area (and also be outside the penalty arc) except for one kicker from the attacking team and the defending goalkeeper. The ball is placed on the penalty mark; the



goalkeeper must position himself on the goal line and may not leave the goal line until the ball is kicked. The kicker will try to score a goal, and the goalkeeper will try to stop the goal. All other players must wait outside the penalty area until the ball is kicked. U5, U6 and U8, there are NO Penalty KICKS. The player kicks the point of the fouls (Our side the goal area if needed)

9. Fouls

There are two types of fouls in soccer, direct free kick fouls (DFK) and indirect free kick (IFK) fouls. DFK fouls are called when, in the opinion of the Referee, a player has committed any of the following offenses in a manner which is "careless, reckless, or using excessive force": kicking, tripping, jumping at, charging, striking, or pushing an opponent. DFK fouls are also called when a player holds an opponent, and when a player "deliberately" handles the ball. The Referee is the sole judge of whether a player "deliberately" handles the ball, and may choose not to call a foul for a ball striking a player's hand or arm when the Referee feels the player could not have avoided it.

If a DFK foul is committed outside the offending player's penalty area, a "direct free kick" is awarded to the other team from the spot of the foul. If a DFK foul is committed inside the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded to the other team. U5, U6 and U8 use DFKs only.

10. Indirect Free Kick (IFK) Fouls

There are several fouls that are considered to be less severe than DFK fouls. These include dangerous play (such as high kicking near an opponent, or continuing to try to play the ball in close proximity to other players, after you have fallen down), most goalkeeper infractions, impeding the path of an opponent while not playing the ball, and offside infractions. A IFK foul results in an indirect free kick for the other team (and never a penalty kick). The difference between a direct free kick and an indirect free kick is that the ball must touch another player before going into the goal to count as a goal. The Referee will indicate an indirect free kick by holding his or her hand straight up in the air until the ball touches another player.

11. Offside

Offside is one of the few rules in soccer that can get a bit complicated to understand and recognize on the field. There are probably more Coach and parent complaints about interpretations of the offside rule than about all other rules combined!

The purpose of the offside rule is to limit the ability of the attacking team to place attacking players behind the defense. When soccer was being developed as a sport in England, this behavior was called "sneaking" and was considered



unsporting, since lazy players would position themselves next to the opponent's goal, wait for the ball to be passed up to them, and then kick it in for an easy goal that they had done little to earn.

A player is in an offside position if he is on the opponent's side of the field, ahead of the ball and closer to the opponent's goal line than the second-last opponent. Since the last opponent is usually the goalkeeper, the second-last opponent is the last defensive player. In a sense, there is an imaginary line

attached to the last defender that marks the offside line.

An attacking player is not committing a foul simply by being in an offside position. However, that player does commit an infraction if he is in an offside position at the moment that the ball is played by a teammate (e.g., at the instant the ball is kicked towards him). Also, a player in an offside position does not commit an infraction unless s/he becomes involved in active play (again in the opinion of the Referee!).

Disputes about the offside rule usually center around the number of judgment calls that must be quickly made by the Referee and the Assistant Referee during a fast attack. Was the player ahead of the defender at the moment the ball was passed towards him or her? Did the player get involved in the play, or was there reasonable expectation that s/he would get involved?

Here are some common situations that are often misunderstood by parents and Coaches:

(a) A long kick from the defense starts an attack. Since offside is judged at the moment the ball is kicked, it is quite possible for an attacker to run past the defender while the ball is in the air, and be closer to goal and ahead of the ball before the ball gets to the attacker. This is not offside.

(b) A throw-in. Attackers cannot be called offside if they receive the ball directly from a throw-in. This is an exception.

(c) An attacking player may be standing next to the goal in an offside position when a teammate shoots directly on goal and scores. This is not offside, unless the Referee feels the player was screening the goalkeeper from the shot or so close to the goalkeeper as to have interfered with him or her.

(d) A player is in an offside position but off to the side of the goal at the time his or her teammate shoots directly at the goal. The ball bounces off the goalpost (or off the goalkeeper) and the (offside) player then kicks the ball into the goal. This is offside and the goal will be disallowed.

(e) Two attacking players have a clean breakaway with only the goalkeeper in front of them. The player without the ball runs faster and gets ahead of the



player with the ball. As the players approach the goal, the player with the ball passes to the other player. This is offside! Attacking players must stay behind the ball on a breakaway or risk being called offside.

U5 and U6 will not allow planted players near the opponent's goal. U8 the "spirit of the law" will be taught. Planted and lagging players will be encouraged to move up away from their opponents goals.

12. Advantage

Consistent with the wide discretion provided to the Referee, the Referee is allowed to use a concept called "advantage" if s/he feels that by calling the foul s/he will actually be helping the team that committed the violation. An example of this would be when a player is tripped but the ball goes directly to a teammate who has a good chance to break through the defense. Therefore, just because an obvious foul is not called, it may not mean that the Referee did not see the foul.

13. Misconduct

Fouls (both DFK and IFK) are quite common and occur in virtually all soccer games. Players should not be upset if a foul is occasionally called against them. However, a player who continues to foul, commits a serious foul, or who is guilty of unsporting behavior and/or violent conduct will face more severe penalties. Misconduct penalties in soccer include a "caution" (or "yellow card") and a "send off" (or "red card"). A player who commits a caution able offense is shown a yellow card as a warning that if the behavior continues the player will be ejected from the game. A player ejected from the game is shown a red card. A second yellow card within the same game is also an ejection, and the player will be shown both a yellow card and a red card. If a player is sent off during a game, that team may not replace that player and will play with one less player for the rest of the game.

Players who accumulate three yellow cards during one season will be suspended from the next game (even if that game is a tournament game). Players who receive a red card are suspended from participation for the remainder of that game and from the next game.

Note: It is the opinion of the AYSO National Referee Program that children under 12 years of age should not be cautioned or sent off except under extreme circumstances. Referees should consider whether children in this age group are fully aware of their actions, and that they can usually be controlled by a verbal admonishment before a caution or send-off becomes necessary. In these younger ages it is expected that referees, coaches and spectators exercise the AYSO team concepts to insure that the children are guided in a positive nurturing manner.



Saratoga Soccer 2008 Calendar

Always check www.saratogasoccer.org for changes

Table with columns: 2008, EVENT, LOCATION/TIME. Rows include dates from March to May with details on registration, board meetings, and games.



Saratoga Soccer Regional Handbook

JUNE			
1-Jun	Sun	New Player Evaluation	Redwood upper field
1-Jun	Sun	U10	1:45 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
1-Jun	Sun	U12, U14	2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
3-Jun	Tue	Regional Board Meeting	Mtn Mike's, 7-9 pm
7-8 June	Sat – Sun	Intermediate Coach Training Cupertino CA	TBD
14-Jun	Sat	Mandatory Division Manager Training	Mountain Mike's, 1:30 - 3:30 pm
29-Jun	Sun	Last Day to Drop for player full refund	
JULY			
1-Jul	Tue	Regional Board Meeting	Mtn Mike's, 7-9 pm
8-Jul	Tue	Team Formation All Divisions	
12-Jul	Sat	Late Registration Fall (Fee \$150 per child)	9 am - 11 am
15-Jul	Tue	Team Assignment Night - U19, U16, U14, U12 - Get Roster, - Select Practice Field, Name	7 pm - 10:30 pm Check website for location
16-Jul	Wed	Team Assignment Night - U08- Get Roster, - Select Practice Field, Team Name	7 pm - 10:30 pm Check Website for location
17-Jul	Thu	Team Assignment Night – U05 U06 U10 - Get Roster, Select Practice Field, Team Name	7 pm - 10:30 pm Check Website
19-Jul	Sat	Safe Haven Coaches	8 am - 10:30 am
19-Jul	Sat	U5, U6, U8, U10 Coach's Training	10:30 am - 2:30 pm or earlier
19-Jul	Sat	Team Representative Meeting	2:30 pm - 4:30 pm
24-Jul	Thu	Referee Clinic – Part 1 (New Referees must attend 7/24 or 8/14)	7 pm - 10 pm *Please confirm attendance
26-Jul	Sat	Referee Clinic – Part 2 (New Referees must attend 7/26 or 8/16)	9 am - 3:30 pm *Please confirm attendance



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26-Jul	Sat	U12 Coaches Clinic	9 am - 3:30pm
AUG			
1 - 3 August	1 - 3 August	Golden Gate Camp (Advanced Training)	TBD
4-Aug	Mon	First Possible day of Practice U14,16,19	
5-Aug	Tue	Regional Board Meeting	Mtn Mike's, 7-9 pm
4 - 8 Aug	4 - 8 Aug	AYSO Soccer Camp	CSP 8:30am 12:30pm
9-Aug	Sat	Safe Haven Coaches	8 am - 10:30 am
9-Aug	Sat	U5, 6, 8, 10 Coach's Training	10:30 am - 2:30pm
9-Aug	Sat	Team Representative Meeting	2:30 pm - 4:30 pm
11-Aug	Mon	First Possible day of Practice U8,10,12	
11 - 15 Aug	11 - 15 Aug	AYSO Soccer Camp	CSP, 8:30am- 12:30pm
14-Aug	Thu	Referee Clinic – Part 1 (New Referees must attend 7/24 or 8/14)	7 pm - 10 pm *Please confirm attendance
14-Aug	Thu	Uniform and Equipment Distribution	7:00 - 9:00pm
16-Aug	Sat	Youth Referee Training youthrefadmin@saratogasoccer.org	9am - 4pm *Please confirm attendance
16-Aug	Sat	Referee Clinic – Part 2 (New Referees must attend 7/26 or 8/16)	9 am - 3:30 pm *Please confirm attendance
16-Aug	Sun	Field Layout day / Net setup day	9am - 4pm CSP and Redwood
17-Aug	Sun	Field Layout day / Net setup day	9am - 4pm CSP and Redwood
18-Aug	Mon	Last Day of Registration for U5&6	7pm - 8 pm
20-Aug	Wed	Referee Refresher (Compulsory for all returning referees 8/20 or 8/21)	7 pm - 10 pm *Please confirm attendance
21-Aug	Thu	Referee Refresher (Compulsory for all returning referees 8/20 or 8/21)	7 pm - 10 pm *Please confirm attendance
23-Aug	Sat	SoccerFest U5, U6	12 noon CSP



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23 - 24 Aug	23 - 24 Aug	First day for U5, 6, 8, 10, 12 Open Season Festival	CSP
23-Aug	Sat	First Games Div U14	CSP
23-Aug	Sat	Referee Bar-B-Que	El Quito Park
23-Aug	Sat	Uniform Shorts Exchange	CSP, 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
25-Aug	Mon	Start of AYSO Coaching Program	Practice Fields
30-31 Aug	30-31 Aug	No Soccer Weekend	
SEP			
30-Aug	Sat	Labor Day Holiday NO GAMES	
2-Sep	Tue	Regional Board Meeting	Mtn Mike's, 7-9 pm
6-Sep	Sat	First Reg Season Games U12, U10, U08, U06 , U05	Time and Locations Per Schedule
7-Sep	Sun	First Game Divisions U19, U16	See Schedule
7-Sep	Sun	VIP Soccer Games Start	CSP 1pm - 2:30pm
7-Sep	Sun	USG Coaching Clinic	CSP 1 - 4 PM
13-Sep	Sat	Picture Day	CSP, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
13-Sep	Sat	Referee Picture	CSP, 7:30 – 7:45 a.m.
21-Sep	Sun	USG Coaching Clinic	CSP 1 - 4 PM
OCT			
7-Oct	Tue	Regional Board Meeting	Mtn Mike's, 7-9 pm
2-Oct	Thu	Mid-Season Mandatory Coaches Meeting - Player Evaluation - Coaches/Referee Meeting	7 - 8 pm
12-Oct	Sun	USG Coaching Clinic	CSP 1 - 4 PM
19-Oct	Sun	USG Coaching Clinic	CSP 1 - 4 PM
19-Oct	Sun	End of USG Coaching Program	
NOV			
1-Nov	Sat	Picture/Plaque Distribution Day [Player Evaluations Due]	CSP, 8:00am-5:00pm



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1-Nov	Sat	Last Regular Season Game U10 Uniform and Goalkeeper Recycling	CSP
2-Nov	Sun	Compulsary Coaches Meeting U12-14 Tournament Participants	7 - 9 pm
4-Nov	Tue	Regional Board Meeting	Mtn Mike's, 7-9 pm
TBD	TBD	Section 2 Tournament U19-16 (Winners of Area Season Play)	Local Areas and final at Foster City
9-Nov	Sun	VIP End of Season	SCSP 12 - 2:30 pm
8-Nov	Sat	Last Reg Season Game U10	CSP
15-Nov	Sat	Last Reg Season Game U14, U12, U08, U06 ,U05	CSP
15-Nov	Sat	U6 Goal Return, U12+ Keeper equipment Return	CSP
15-16 Nov	15-16 Nov	U10 Tournament Uniform and Goalkeeper Recycling	CSP
16-Nov	Sun	Goal/Net put-away Redwood	4pm Redwood
16-Nov	Sun	Last VIP Weekend	
22-23 nov	22-23 nov	Area Tournament – U12 and U14 Uniform and Goalkeeper Recycling	Time and Locations Per Schedule
23-Nov	Sun	Goal / Net put-away	3:30 PM CSP
27-28 Nov	27-28 Nov	Turkey Tournament	TBD
DEC			
2-Dec	Tue	Regional Board Meeting	Mtn Mike's, 7-9 pm
4-Dec	Thu	Compulsory Player Evaluation Meeting Coaches/Division Managers Uniform and Goalkeeper Recycling Spring 2009 Coach / Referee registration	7 pm - 9:30 pm

This calendar is subject to change. Check website www.saratogasoccer.org for current dates times and locations.



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REGION 27 AYSO BOARD

PO Box 2933, Saratoga CA 95070

Title	Name	Phone	Email
Regional Commissioner	Mark Chapman	W 370-7100	commissioner@
		C 621-4513	
Assistant Regional Commissioner	Scott Emery	9215231	asstcommissioner@
Safety Commissioner	Philip Costello	568-9679	safety@
Child/Volunteer Protection Advocate	Arati Nagaraj Jennifer Stern (Asst.)	872-0159	advocate@
Board Secretary	Debra Matsuhiro		secretary@
Treasurer Sponsorship Director	Terrie Creamer		treasurer@ sponsorship@
Information Technologies Commissioner	Kevin Xiao		it@
Purchasing Commissioner - Equipment, Uniforms & Sweatshirts	Srivats Ramaswami Rishi Kumar	410-7667 c 866-8874 h	uniforms@
Purchasing Commissioner - Awards & Pictures	Kamals Avadani- Sastni		awards@
Fields Commissioner -Assistant	Howard Miller	802-4034	fields@
Auditor	Nancy Rafati		auditor@
Registrar	Dianne Depositar	249-8389	registrar@
Head League Commissioner	Manny Cappello	536-2478	HLC@
Team Rep Chairperson	Carisue Bench		teamrep@
Special Programs Commissioner	OPEN		events@
Sportsmanship Director	Karlina Ott		sportsmanship@
Tournament Director	Mahesh Jethanandani		tournaments@
Regional Coach Admin.	Gary Hovey	857-9317	coach@
Coach Trainer	Mark Chapman		



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Asst. Coach Admin.	Stu Chambers	866-4353	practicefields@
USG Commissioner	Mike Kay		usg@
Regional Referee Admin.	Jordan Silver	867-7231	ref@
Director of Instruction	Dave Holt	867-7231	
Director of Assessment	Charlie Bedard	8676331	
PRO (Youth Referee) Director	Ram Kunda		youthrefadmin@
VIP Commissioner	Vance Nelson	832-6612	vip@
Spring Commissioner	Howard Miller	741-5642	spring@

Everyone Plays

Balanced Teams

Open Registration

Positive Coaching

Good Sportsmanship

PLAYSOCCER