

## U4 Playing Rules and Guidelines

**Field Size:** 20 yards by 15 yards

**Ball Size:** 3

**Play format:** 3 vs. 3 no goalkeeper. (Usage of hands is forbidden)

**Game Duration:** Four (7) minute quarters, with (3) minute breaks between quarters and a (5) minute half-time break

**Scoring:** No scores are kept or recorded and no team standings are kept. Coaches should demonstrate good sportsmanship and ease off their goal scoring opportunities when a differential of more than 5 goals is summative.

**Referees:** Each team should provide a parent-referee, preferably NOT the coach. Assistant coaches are ok. The home team will referee the first half; the visitor team will referee the second half. Parent-referees should be familiar with the modified U4 rules. Coaches can be referees as long as it is agreed upon by both teams in advance.

**Season Length:** Season is to be an 8 game season, unless interrupted due to weather. CISA strives to provide a minimum of 6 games for U4.

### **Coaches responsibilities:**

#### **Before the match begins the coach should:**

- a. Check players' equipment; all players are required to have uniforms (shirt, shorts, socks) and shin guards (socks must be worn on the outside and entirely cover the shin guard). Uniform are provided by the program.
- b. Shoes: Tennis shoes or soft cleated shoes – NO football or baseball cleats.
- c. Safety: No player may wear equipment dangerous to himself or others. This includes casts, metal braces, and jewelry. Earrings are specifically prohibited, including posts for pierced ears.
- d. Home team is the first team listed on the schedule.
- e. The home team provides the game ball (size 3).

### **Coaches:**

Players will have the attitude that is demonstrated by their coach. Although the coach is responsible for teaching skills and strategy, the primary focus on the game should be recreational and for fun.

- a. Coaches may remain on the field during play in order to provide encouragement and advice to players, as long as the coach does not interfere with the flow of the game or the referee.
- b. No coach or parent may stand behind or beside the goal. Spectators should remain on the sidelines.
- c. It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that all comments from the sidelines are positive.

### **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL YOUR PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, AND CHILDRENS ACTIONS!**

**Kick-Off:** Starts the game, each quarter and after each goal should be alternated each quarter. The home team has the choice of which direction to attack in the first half. Team's trade ends of the field at halftime.

- a. The kick-off must travel forwards (not backwards). The player taking the kick-off may not touch the ball a second time until someone else touches the ball first (i.e. A player cannot dribble from the kick-off). In either instance, the restart is to replay the kick-off.
- b. Goals may not be scored directly from a kick-off.

**Substitutions:** All players must play at least 50% of each match.

- a. Substitutions can only be done between quarters, except for injuries, or child initiated substitutions.

**Play:** The ball is out of play at the following times:

- a. Kick - in ball has completely crossed the touchline (sideline)
- b. Kick - in is taken by opposite team that touched the ball last.
- c. Kick - in is taken as near as possible to where the ball left the field.
- d. The parent-referee should explain any infringements to the players.
- e. A goal may not be scored directly from a kick-in.
- f. Player taking kick-in may not touch ball a second time again until it has touched another player.
- g. Goal Kick: Attacking team has touched the ball last, and the ball has completely crossed the end line without scoring a goal.

- h. Defending team places ball at goal-kick line marked on field, in the area in front of their goal.
- i. Ball is kicked forwards. The ball may not be touched by any player until it has traveled outside of the goal box.
- j. If a ball does not travel outside of the goal box, or is touched first, the kick is retaken. The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.
- k. A goal may not be scored directly from a goal kick.
- l. Corner Kick: Defending team has touched the ball last, and the ball has completely crossed the end line without scoring a goal.
- m. Attacking team places the ball at the corner of the field on the side that the ball went out on.
- n. The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it is touched by another player.
- o. A goal may not be scored directly from a corner kick
- p. Any time the parent-referee blows the whistle to stop play. In the case of an injury or other stoppage where the ball has not otherwise gone out of play, the game is restarted with a drop ball at a neutral position on the field.

#### **Fouls:**

- a. All fouls result in an indirect free kick being taken by the opposing team. There are no penalty kicks.
- b. For the purposes of the U4 program, fouls should only be whistled when necessary to maintain order in the game, or to prevent a more dangerous situation from occurring.  
Physical contact is a normal part of soccer. When a parent-referee notices a foul, or realizes one is about to occur, the opportunity should be taken to explain the violation and how to avoid it.
- c. In general, the following are judged as fouls; kicking, tripping, pushing, holding, and hitting an opponent. In addition, making contact with an opponent before the ball when tackling to gain possession is a foul. In soccer, a tackle is the action of taking the ball away from an opponent. A tackle from behind is always judged a foul.
- d. Slide tackling (sliding on the ground in order to play the ball, offensively or defensively) is prohibited.
- e. Deliberate handballs: The "hand" is considered any part of the arm or hand, from the shoulder down. A deliberate handball is judged as movement of the "hand-to-ball", where an advantage is gained by doing so.
- f. A kicked ball that deflects off a player's arm, with no intent to play the ball is NOT a handball.
- g. A player protecting their face or other body parts from a hard-kicked ball should not be called for a handball unless an obvious advantage is gained.

#### **Jurisdiction:**

- a. The referee is in control of the field and all activities thereon from the time of his/her arrival at the field until he/she has left the parking lot. REFEREE DECISIONS ARE FINAL. Any incidence of assault or violence toward a referee will not be tolerated and will be very harshly dealt with. The referee/association may involve the police in this incident. Complaints concerning the conduct of CISA referees are to be properly submitted in writing to CISA through the appropriate Age Group Commissioner and Referee Assignor. The Referee Assignor will coordinate the investigation and disposal per NTSSA and CISA guidelines.
- b. Responsibility of the referee is to insure the safety of the players and to enforce the Laws of the Game as defined by FIFA, USSF, NTSSA, and CISA.
- c. Coaches are reminded that a referee's qualifications cannot be determined by visual inspections. Referees are entitled to rest breaks.
- d. Do not approach a referee to discuss game incidents or calls during the game. Open communication with the Referee at halftime and after the game is allowed within the guidelines of Coaches Code of Ethics. The referee is still acting in their capacity as an official. If an individual continues or attempts to discuss game related incidents or calls in an inappropriate manner, please report it to an active board member.

#### **Rescheduling and Postponing Games:**

- a. The Age Group Commissioner is the point of contact to reschedule a game. Games cannot be postponed by a coach or coaches without a minimum of forty-eight hours notice to the Age Group Commissioner. The forty eight hour notice may be waived by approval of the President.
- b. Postponed games must be rescheduled no later than 72 hours after the original game time. If a game date cannot be agreed upon within 72 hours, the team that requested the postponement shall forfeit. This rule does not apply if the team requesting the postponement waives their right to bargain the makeup date and allows the opposing team to pick the date and time.
- c. Once the schedules are distributed, CISA games will be rescheduled at the Age Group Commissioner's discretion. Games may not be postponed if one team will gain an advantage by the postponement. Acceptable reasons to postpone a game include: (1) insufficient number of players due to a school function or (2) a tournament. School functions are defined as; any school sanctioned extracurricular activity in which a player participates such as a sports event, UIL competition etc. A three day weekend would not be considered a school sanctioned activity.