



## Guidance for Referees – Fall 2018

Thanks for refereeing Pelham Rec Soccer. The aim of the Rec Soccer program is to provide a fun and instructive soccer experience for all participants – including referees. This guidance summarizes relevant rules and provides some tips to ensure that refereeing is easy and enjoyable. Importantly, remember that the referee is *the* authority figure on the field. Players should treat you accordingly and coaches, parents and spectators should model good behavior towards you. With the objectives of Rec Soccer in mind, we urge you to exercise your authority politely but firmly, and with confidence in your training and ability. If you have any questions about this guidance, or about any incidents or behavior that you observe over the course of the season, please reach out to the Rec Soccer Co-Commissioners listed below. As Co-Commissioners, it is important to us that you feel supported in this role.

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### *Getting started*

- Coaches are responsible for moving goals, positioning markers and otherwise preparing the field for play. Likewise, coaches are responsible for moving goals and collecting markers at the end of the session. Referees should arrive prior to the scheduled kick off time and inspect the field and goals before play begins.
- Referees should also inspect players prior to play. This should be done in the center of the field not the sidelines. Regarding player's attire, note that:
  - Players must wear *soccer* cleats and shin pads;
  - Players should wear long socks over their shin pads to hold them in place;
  - Players should tuck their shirts in;
  - No hard casts or arm braces are permitted unless they are properly padded, and;
  - Players must remove all their jewelry.
- Referees should ask coaches to provide two volunteers to be line persons.
- Games start with a coin flip; the winner chooses either to kick off or side of field.
- NB: The high school athletic director and the Town of Pelham control access to the fields and make decisions about field availability. The best source of information about closures is the Pelham Rec hotline (914-738-6644).

### *Coaches, parents and spectators*

- Introduce yourself to the coaches before the game. We have met with our coaches and reminded them of their obligation to model good behavior towards you. Coaches also know that they are responsible for the behavior of parents and spectators.
- If coaches have questions for referees about specific in-game decisions, they should raise them only during a quarter- or half-time breaks, or after the game. Both coaches should be present for any such discussion, which should occur in the center of the field, away from players and spectators.
- Any such discussions among referees and coaches should be brief and calm. If coaches fail to observe this rule, please contact the Co-Commissioners listed above as soon as possible.
- In the event of indiscipline (whether among players, coaches, parents or spectators), the referee should stop the game, call the coaches onto the field, and ask them to enforce standards of good sportsmanship. Younger players can be asked to sit out a quarter and older players can be carded for bad sportsmanship.
- Coaches and spectators may not sit or stand on the touchlines (goal sides of the fields) during game play. The game can be stopped to move them. Spectators' chairs and/or belongings must at least six feet from the playing area. Spectators must allow linesman plenty of room to follow the ball along side the lines.

### *During the game: general stuff*

- Center kick-off: all quarters and halves start with a center kick-off. Alternating teams have possession at the beginning of each quarter or half.
- Substitutions are permitted when the ball is not in play (i.e. from throw-ins, goal kicks, corners, etc.). Coaches should call and signal to you that they wish to make a sub. Ensure that players have left/entered the field before restarting play.
- In the case that an injury occurs on the field, use your judgement regarding whether and how promptly to stop play and allow coaches to enter. In general, we advise that you:
  - Stop play immediately if a player is bleeding, or their injury is visibly serious, or a player is down on the field near the ball and is in danger of being kicked;
  - Stop play within 15-20 seconds if a player is down, but has no visible injuries and is not in danger from other players or the ball, allowing time for a shot on goal, the ball to go out of bounds, or possession to change;
  - Do not stop play for a crying player who is ambulatory. Small children fall a lot. Parents may get upset. Coaches may either call the player off the field, or quickly pick them up and take them to the sideline.
- No heading is permitted. If a player heads the ball, explain the rule to him or her and award an indirect free kick to the other team.
- Only a goalkeeper in his/her penalty area may handle the ball.
  - For grade levels 1/2, a handball in front of goal results in a throw-in for the other team (there are no penalty kicks).
  - For grades levels 3/4 and above, a handball in the penalty area is penalty kick.

*During the game: age-level specific info*

- Grades 1/2
  - 10 minute quarters, 2½ minute break between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, and 5 minute half time break. 40 minutes play, 50 minutes in all.
  - No goalies. We advise coaches to discourage players from allowing players to act as a surrogate goalie by standing in front of his/her goal.
  - Size 3 ball.
  - One coach from each team may be on the field during game play but they should not interfere with the game.
  - To the extent possible, use your role as referee to teach the players about the rules of the game.
  - Throw-ins must be done correctly. Demonstrate the proper throw-in technique to players and allow them multiple tries if necessary.
  - In general, only call handballs that are clearly intentional.
  - No slide tackling.
  - No offside.
- Grades 3/4
  - 12 minute quarters, 2½ minute break between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, and 5 minute half time break. 48 minutes play, 58 minutes in all. Teams change sides at halftime only.
  - Play 7v7 (including goalies) but we advise coaches to be flexible depending on attendance. If coaches wish to play 6v6 or 8v8 they should discuss this with you first.
  - Size 4 ball.
  - Throw-ins must be done correctly. Demonstrate for the first week of the season. Each team gets one re-do per game for the first infraction only.
  - Call obvious off sides. Explain the off side rule if needed.
  - Players may not kick or attempt to kick the ball when the goalie has possession of it in his/her hands.
  - No slide tackling.
- Grades 5/6/7
  - 15 minute quarters, 2½ minute break between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, and 5 minute half time break. 60 minutes play, 70 minutes in all. Teams change sides at halftime only.
  - Play 9v9 (including goalies) but we advise coaches to be flexible depending on attendance. If coaches wish to play 8v8 or 10v10 they should discuss this with you first.
  - Size 4 ball.
  - Players may not kick or attempt to kick the ball when the goalie has possession of it in his/her hands.
  - All other rules of soccer are enforced, including offside.
  - Coaching from sidelines only, outside playing area.
  - No slide tackling.