

**BRADDOCK ROAD YOUTH CLUB
RECREATIONAL SOCCER
PARENTS' HANDBOOK**

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BRYC RECREATIONAL SOCCER PARENTS' HANDBOOK

I. INTRODUCTION

Braddock Road Youth Club Recreational Soccer is an activity to be enjoyed by players and parents/guardians/families alike. Even though you as a parent or guardian may not be as active a participant as is a coach or a League Director, you can still get involved in the action while on the sidelines. This handbook has been prepared with the hope that many of your questions about our BRYC Soccer program and soccer in general will be answered. If you have a question that isn't answered, don't hesitate to contact your League Director.

It is important to note that fair play and good sportsmanship are first and foremost for BRYC players and spectators. Please, at all times, respect the coach's actions and the referee's decisions.

If you find you like the game of soccer from the sidelines, then think seriously about getting actively involved in the BRYC Soccer program. BRYC Soccer is a player-parent/guardian program. Without parent/guardian volunteers, BRYC Soccer cannot continue to be the premier program in Northern Virginia. Please contact your League Director or the Commissioner at 703-354-7101 or <http://www.brycsoccer.org/> and offer your help to the program.

* * * * *

Top 5 Things Parents Should Do:

1. Pay attention when watching your child play. There will be a test in the car on the way home!
2. Stay positive. Cheer, don't yell!
3. Support each player on the team, not just your child--he/she can't do it alone!
4. Set a good example and never yell at the coach or referee.
5. Volunteer! Being involved in your child's soccer organization is fun and you'll make many wonderful friends, both parents and children.

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This handbook is dedicated to the volunteers who are making the game of soccer an enjoyable, exciting, and rewarding experience for the boys and girls of Braddock Road Youth Club.

II. STANDARDS FOR PLAYERS, PARENTS/GUARDIANS, AND SPECTATORS

A. GUIDELINES FOR ALL

- Conduct yourself with honor and dignity at all times. (Your actions reflect on your team, club, and soccer.)
- Be fair always, no matter what the outcome.
- Know and obey the laws of the game.
- Work for the good of your team.
- Accept the decisions of the officials with good grace.
- Be generous when your team wins.
- Be graceful when your team loses.
- Believe in the honesty of your opponents. Remember that the players on the other team are your opponents, not your enemies.
- Never encourage, condone, or participate in any activities that may intentionally injure players and spectators, or result in damage to soccer facilities.
- Develop and encourage an appreciation of the game of soccer.

B. GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Provide transportation to and from all practices and games, ensuring that the player is prompt not only in arriving but also his/her departure.
- Stay and watch practices as well as games and lend the young players your support in a positive manner. Do not point out their mistakes, leave that up to the coach, and be sure to compliment them on their accomplishments as well as their efforts.
- If unable to attend the practice or game, instruct your child not to talk with or leave practices or games with strangers.
- Ensure that your child brings all necessary equipment to and from all soccer games and practices.
- Be available to kick the ball around with your child when you are invited to do so.

- Avoid material rewards. Build an attitude of **"the rewards lie in the fun of being able to play."**
- Avoid too much competition, too soon--it can slow down a child's progress in skill development.
- Be a good listener. Make them feel important and let them know that they are contributing to a team effort.
- Be positive and encouraging. Never criticize. Suggest an alternate way if they are not performing correctly..."Hey, that is pretty good, but why don't you try it this way."
- Discuss any issues with the coach in private.
- Make yourself available and volunteer all the time you can spare to support your soccer community
- **ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO BE A CHILD.**

C. GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE SPECTATORS

- Let them play; remember that you are not a player on this team.
- Coaching from the sidelines is not proper unless you are a member of the team's coaching staff. Don't yell out instructions. Limit your remarks to positive cheering.
- Don't criticize the other team. This does not show good sportsmanship and gives children mixed messages about being "good sports."
- Don't criticize or hassle the referee. He/she is often using knowledge in his/her decision-making process that may be unfamiliar to you; furthermore, youth referees in particular deserve support and encouragement as much as the players.
- Remain within the proper spectator bounds. Individuals who crowd the touch lines instead of remaining behind the spectator lines create obstacles for assistant referees, coaches, players, and other spectators. Those who situate themselves behind the goal areas create an unfair distraction.
- Don't leave orange peels, juice boxes, soda cans, or other trash on the fields. Please be responsible for your child's developing habits, and be alert to this frequent act of carelessness.
- Use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any tobacco products at any field during any event in which BRYC is a participant is forbidden.

- Leave your pets at home. Fairfax County health regulations prohibit animals on school property, and for the safety and health of all players, coaches, officials, and spectators, BRYC policies prohibit animals (other than service animals) at any field during any event in which BRYC is a participant.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

A. REGISTRATION

Registration for each soccer season will be conducted online through the BRYC Recreational Soccer website (www.brycsoccer.org). An in-person registration will also be held each soccer season (usually in conjunction with team photos) for those without electronic access. Registration consists of the parent or legal guardian filling out the appropriate form in either electronic or paper format. Payment is due in full at the time of registration. No child may practice or play for BRYC before he/she is registered. Late registrants may be accepted at the discretion of the appropriate League Director, Deputy Commissioner, or Commissioner.

B. REFUNDS

Limited refunds will be provided after a player is registered. BRYC Recreational Soccer will grant requests for refunds for withdrawal from the program as follows:

- Fall Soccer – before August 1, for any reason.
- Spring Soccer – before March 1, for any reason.

Between the above cutoff dates and the beginning of league play, requests for refunds will be granted for the following reasons only: Medical emergency (broken arm, etc.), relocation from the area, or transfer to a BRYC Travel Soccer team. After league play has begun, no refunds will be granted.

In all cases where a refund is granted, a charge will be deducted to cover overhead administrative costs. The refund amount will be the same whether a player registers early, on-time, or late. No amount of a late fee will be refunded. The above dates and conditions must be strictly observed to qualify for a refund. Only the Commissioner has the discretion to waive/consider any changes to these conditions. The Commissioner will only consider such cases after presentation of the facts and a recommendation from the League Director.

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to initiate and follow up on refund requests. All refund requests must be submitted in writing (e-mail acceptable) to the appropriate League Director or the Registrar. Refunds will be processed at the end of the season.

C. LIABILITY AND CONDUCT FORM & MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

All parents or legal guardians are required to complete and sign a Liability and Conduct form and a Medical Release form for each player. Players who are 18 years of age at the time of registration are required to co-sign their own forms with their parent or legal guardian. The forms are available from your League Director or through the website.

The purpose of these forms is to briefly explain BRYC Recreational Soccer policies pertaining to players' safety, parent/guardian and player conduct and liability, and to authorize emergency medical treatment. This is for the protection of the players, parents, coaches, and BRYC Recreational Soccer staff members.

While BRYC strongly stresses safety, there is always the possibility of injury. Therefore, forms must be completed and signed. This will permit the coaches to immediately take an injured player for emergency treatment. Coaches must have the completed liability forms with them at all times, both at practices and games.

If a parent/guardian chooses not to sign the Medical Authorization form, he/she must be present at all practices and games in case a need for emergency treatment arises. Coaches may not permit a player to participate in a practice or game without a signed medical release form, or, alternatively, a parent/guardian at the field at all times. Failure to either sign the forms or be present at practices and games will result in the player not being permitted to practice or play.

D. RISK MANAGEMENT/PLAYER PROTECTION

BRYC is committed to providing a safe environment for its members and participants, and to preventing abusive conduct in any form. Every member of this organization is responsible for protecting our participants and ensuring their safety and well-being while involved in sponsored activities. We encourage parents to become as active as possible in sponsored activities, matches, practices, and other events. The more the parents are involved, the less likely it is for abusive situations to develop.

BRYC Recreational Soccer will not knowingly recommend or knowingly allow for placement in a position that would involve direct contact with a child any person who has: (a) been convicted of any felony, crime of violence, or crime against a person; (b) an arrest record for any offense involving sexual misconduct; (c) a documented or demonstrated history of drug abuse or alcohol abuse within the past five (5) years; (d) failed to complete the Risk Management Disclosure Form; or (e) demonstrated a pattern of behavior that would have a detrimental effect on children.

To aid in providing a safe environment for our players, participants, and staff, we appoint all coaches, officials, and volunteers--and anyone else affiliated with our organization--as protection advocates. Every member of this organization is responsible for reporting any cases of questionable conduct or alleged mistreatment toward our members by any coach, official, volunteer, player, parent, sibling, or spectator.

A standard BRYC Risk Management Disclosure Form will be completed by all club

members who have regular contact with children, including, but not limited to, the following: Coaches, assistant coaches, substitute coaches, trainers, administrators, and other volunteers who have direct contact with players. The BYRC Risk Management Disclosure Form will be valid for one (1) season. Those completing the form shall agree to be subject to a yearly sensitive criminal history check as a condition of their participation in any BRYC program. No volunteer will be accepted into the program and no rosters or other materials will be distributed until and unless a criminal background check has been completed, the results reviewed, and the volunteer is approved.

E. GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

The following guidelines of behavior and procedures are established for our staff, volunteers, and participants. All members of this organization, as well as parents, spectators, and other invitees, are expected to observe and adhere to these guidelines.

1. Abuse of any kind is not permitted within our organization. This means we do not tolerate physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse or misconduct from our players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents, or spectators.
2. Physical and sexual abuse, including, but not limited to, striking, hitting, kicking, biting, indecent or wanton gesturing, lewd remarks, indecent exposure, unwanted physical conduct, any form of sexual conduct or inappropriate touching, are strictly prohibited within our organization.
 - a. Physical Conduct
 - (1) Adults and others in positions of authority must be aware that physical contact can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate a player. Physical intimidation, physical punishment, or threatening a player with physical harm are not appropriate behaviors and will not be tolerated. However, reasonably requiring players to do push-ups, running, or the like for misbehavior would not likely be considered inappropriate.
 - (2) Sexual contact of any kind between adults and players is prohibited whether or not the contact is consensual.
 - (3) Hazing or any type of initiation to a club or team is prohibited.
 - (4) Corporal punishment is prohibited.
 - b. Social Conduct
 - (1) Supervision: Adults must be prudent when participating in team social activities. Proper, non-provocative attire will be worn at all BRYC-sponsored activities. One-on-one contact between an adult team representative and any player must be conducted in the view of at least one other adult. A minimum of two adults, at least 21 years of age, must be at each team activity, to include practices, games, and parties.

- (2) Chaperone Ratio: When traveling overnight with youth participants, children who are not lodged with their parent(s) should be paired up with other children of the same gender and similar age group, with chaperones in separate but nearby rooms. Adults should respect the privacy of players. If showering or changing room facilities are available, schedules should be made such that adults and children have separate use.
3. Emotional abuse or verbal abuse is also prohibited. These include, but are not limited to, such forms of abuse as: Insulting, threatening, mocking, demeaning behavior, or making abusive statements in regard to a person's race, gender, religion, nationality/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or age.

Language:

- a. Offensive or vulgar language, to include name-calling or harassment of a player, coach, official, or spectator, by adults or children, is unacceptable. BRYC events, including games and practices, should be family oriented events. Adults should model positive communication skills.
 - b. Language that is denigrating in nature, content, or tone or refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religion in a denigrating or negative manner is not acceptable.
 - c. Inappropriate language or threatening language used toward an official, coach, player, parent, or spectator may be grounds for removal from a game or the premises or both.
4. Health and Well-Being
 - a. Adults share the responsibility for the player's health while at practices, scrimmages, and games. Adults should have a player's medical release forms and medical kits with them at all times. Coaches should have an emergency plan in place so that if someone is hurt in a practice or a game, the coach knows who to call, where emergency personnel might take the injured party, and how to contact family members.
 - b. First aid
 - (1) In the event of a medical emergency, appropriate action must be taken immediately.
 - (2) It is recommended that each coach and/or program administrator have a first aid kit at the game/practice site at all times.
 - (3) The first concern is always to make sure the player is not seriously injured. Never move a player who may have internal injuries. If serious injury is suspected, clear the field or court and summon medical help. It is recommended that standby medical help be present at all tournaments.
 - (4) If it will not hurt the player more, remove him/her from the field or court to the sidelines away from spectators.
 - (5) Officials will not allow a player to participate in a uniform that has

blood on it. It is recommended that extra clothing be carried as a precaution. Many referees will allow a T-shirt of the same color as the jersey to be worn should an accident happen.

- c. Any head injuries resulting in disorientation should result in a player remaining out of the game.
 - d. Any bleeding that occurs must be administered to with latex gloves and properly sterilized bandages. All bleeding must be stopped prior to re-entering the game. Any bandages, uniforms, or other items that have come in contact with the blood must be properly disposed of.
 - e. Adults transporting players must model safe driving techniques and enforce seat belt use for all vehicle occupants.
 - f. The conditions of the field or facility must be conducive to safe play. Weather conditions must also be reasonably safe from lightning, high winds, or extreme temperatures.
 - g. Adults should be aware of the signs of neglect and abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) of the players. Signs of this should be reported to the local law enforcement agency.
 - h. Never leave a player unattended.
5. Coaching Guidelines: It is the responsibility of the coach to set the standard of behavior. It is also incumbent upon the coach to control the actions of the coaching staff, players, and spectators.

To further protect our youth participants, as well as our coaches, officials, and volunteers, we strongly advise that no adult allow him/herself to be alone with a child or with any group of children during sponsored activities. In particular, we recommend that coaches or other adult members of this organization:

- Do not drive alone in a vehicle with a child participant, other than his or her own child, without permission from the other child's parent or guardian, except when required by medical or other emergency.
- Do not take a child alone to the locker room, bathrooms, or any other private room.
- Do not provide one-on-one training or individual coaching unless another adult is present.
- Have all conversations with youth participants within view of others, in the gym or on the field, not in a private location or office.
- Do not socialize individually with youth participants outside of team- or league- sponsored or parent-approved activities.

F. TEAM ORGANIZATION

1. Player Eligibility:

- Eligibility is determined by date of birth.
- All players must be properly registered. Coaches may not register players
- The maximum number of players per team is determined by age and league. Your League Director has the current parameter sheet

- Play-ups are discouraged. Requests for play-ups may be presented by a League Director on a case-by-case basis to the Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner, and then only when the player's date of birth is within 60 days of the age group cutoff. The Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner will only consider requests for play-downs when accompanied by appropriate medical documentation.
- A player may only play and/or practice on one (1) BRYC soccer team per season. No player will be permitted to play recreational soccer for BRYC while participating with any travel soccer program, in or out of BRYC, within the same season. Although a player may participate in BRYC Recreational Soccer and high school soccer during the same season, the player should be made aware of his/her commitment to each team when involved with more than one team.

A player may withdraw from the program at any time. The coach shall notify the League Director immediately. Refunds will be issued in accordance with the previously stated refund policy.

2. Team Structure:

Teams are formed on a neighborhood/school basis. To the extent possible, housing subdivision boundaries, school district boundaries, and natural boundaries are used to form teams. Attempts are made to honor reasonable carpool requests so long as the neighborhood concept is not disrupted. Requests for specific coaches will not be honored. Late registrants are assigned to teams on a space-available basis and may have to play outside their neighborhood. Rosters will not be changed except in the most extreme or uncontrollable circumstances, in which a League Director may request a roster change, subject to final approval by the Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner.

3. Team Communications:

Each player's family will receive information from the coach, to include:

- Game schedule as produced by the League Director.
- Practice schedule and location.
- Time and location for team photographs.
- Scheduled clinics for coaches, players, and parents.
- Refreshment schedule (which family brings what and when).
- End of season party date and location (if desired).

Each family should receive a team roster and/or telephone tree to be used for relaying team information.

BRYC encourages the involvement of as many parents as possible. Coaches should recruit at least one assistant coach who will participate regularly, a team parent and/or telephone coordinator, and field maintenance team.

G. UNIFORMS/EQUIPMENT

1. Uniforms:

Players are expected to take pride in their appearance when representing BRYC. All players will wear a BRYC Recreational Soccer uniform, which will be worn external to any other clothing. The required uniform consists of the following:

Available from BRYC:

- Royal blue and silver/gray jersey with number
- Team socks in royal blue and silver/gray
- Black shorts
- Goalkeeper jersey (one provided per team)

Player provides:

- Shin guards
- Appropriate footwear
- Eyeglass strap

Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn by all players at all practices and games--NO EXCEPTIONS. Socks must be worn pulled over the top of the shin guard. Shin guards should cover 80 percent of the shin and may not be altered, such as by cutting retaining straps.

Appropriate footwear (sports shoes or sneakers) shall be worn. Any footwear is acceptable so long as the referee deems it is not dangerous to the player, his or her teammates, or opponents (i.e., worn-out sections of footwear in which sharp objects may be protruding would be unacceptable). Metal cleats are forbidden.

Watches, necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, unzipped jackets, hats, hoods, barrettes, any metal or hard objects worn in hair, or other items that may constitute a potential danger to the player and/or any other player shall not be worn. Taping over pierced ear studs is specifically not permitted. Medical alert and religious jewelry may be worn if made sufficiently safe to the satisfaction of the referee, such as by taping to the body.

Except for that approved for the goalkeeper (hat with bill made of slow-recovery foam—standard baseball caps with long brims are not appropriate), headgear shall not be worn on the playing field. EXCEPTION: Headwear worn in accordance with religious beliefs and customs is exempted.

Players wearing glasses must use a safety strap. Safety lenses are recommended.

If a player is wearing a cast, splint or other hard material, he/she may not participate in BRYC games without appropriate padding or covering, to be approved at game time by the referee. Padding should be one or two layers of slow-recovery foam

taped over the cast. Players with a soft cast, cloth brace, or similar item wrapped with soft material may play at the discretion of the referee.

In judging the suitability or safety of a player's uniform and equipment, the referee's decision is final.

2. Equipment:

BRYC provides appropriate field equipment for each league and team equipment to each coach. Because a limited number of soccer balls are provided to coaches, players are asked to each bring a ball to practice.

3. Ball Sizes:

The leagues will use ball sizes as follows:

- Under 5 through Under 8 Leagues use a Size 3 ball
- Under 9/10 through Under 12 Leagues use a Size 4 ball
- Under 13/14 and older leagues use a Size 5 ball

H. SEASON

1. Scheduling:

BRYC sponsors two soccer seasons annually: Fall, August to November; and Spring, March to June. Specific dates will be published on the website.

2. Practices:

Preseason practice will normally begin two (2) weeks prior to the season's first scheduled game, and shall not exceed three (3) sessions per week. For practices after the first game, teams are limited to a maximum of two (2) sessions per week. An exception is made for the U5 and U6 Leagues, which are limited to a total of two (2) hours of practice per week.

I. GAME: DURATION, SUBSTITUTIONS, AND CANCELLATIONS

1. Game Duration Schedule:

Age Group	Field Players	Half Duration (1)	Substitution (2,4)
U5 League	3	8-minute quarters	Any stoppage
U6 League	3	8-minute quarters	Any stoppage
U7 League	4	10-minute quarters	Any stoppage
U8 League	5	12-minute quarters	Any stoppage
U9 League	6	25 minutes	See (3)

U10 League	7	25 minutes	See (3)
U12 League	8	30 minutes	See (3)
U14 League	11	35 minutes	See (3)
U16 League	11	40/45 minutes	See (3)
U19 League	11	40/45 minutes	See (3)

- 1) Coaches must ensure breaks do not exceed 2 minutes between quarters and 5 minutes between halves.
- 2) Substitutions are only allowed with the permission of the referee. The referee will generally allow substitutions at the stoppages listed.
- 3) Substitutions allowed at own throw-in, any goal kick, after any goal, injury (see below), halftime, cautioned player. When the possessing team substitutes on a throw-in, the defending team may also substitute as many players as they wish.
- 4) If the referee stops play to allow tending to an injured player, that player must leave the field. If no substitute is made, the injured player may return to the field at any time with the permission of the referee. The referee will usually allow both teams to substitute during an injury stoppage, with the exception of SFL matches, which allow only for substitution of the injured player.

NOTE: When age groups are combined, the league will play by the rules governing the oldest age group in the league.

Games shall be started within five (5) minutes of the scheduled start time (within 10 minutes for BRYC/VYS/SYC matches, within 15 minutes for HSGHSL and SFL matches). If a referee does not show, the coaches shall contact both the Referee Director and League Director. Every attempt should be made to play the game as scheduled. BRYC policy dictates that BOTH coaches must agree on the substitute official in the event that no referee can be provided by the Referee Program. If both coaches do not agree on a substitute official, the game will be rescheduled. No game protest will be allowed once the coaches have agreed to play the game.

2. Minimum Number of Players:

Games shall be played as scheduled if a minimum number of players is available. If one of the scheduled teams does not show or does not have the minimum number of players five (5) minutes past the scheduled start time, the game shall be recorded as a 1–0 forfeiture. If a game is underway with the minimum number of players and a player is injured and can no longer play, the team with fewer than the minimum must forfeit and the forfeit will be recorded as 1–0.

The minimum number of players for a 5v5 game is three (3). The minimum number of players for a 6v6 game is four (4). The minimum number of players for a 7v7 game is four (4). The minimum number of players for an 8v8 game is five (5). The minimum number of players for an 11v11 game is seven (7). The minimum number of players required for 3v3 and 4v4 games is left to the discretion of the game official. When one team has only the minimum number of players, the opposing team is not required to play down, except in the Under 5 through Under 10 Leagues which are to play at equal strength (except for extenuating circumstances, e.g., a “blowout” as identified in

Section K(1)).

3. Substitutions:

The BRYC Recreational Soccer Program assures that players will play at least one-half of each game (three quarters for U5s through U8s) regardless of players' abilities, unless a player is injured or subject to disciplinary action as outlined in Section N(1). It is imperative that all coaches follow this rule. Violations will result in sanctions against the coach.

Substitutes shall enter the field of play at the halfway line when recognized by the referee during a stoppage of play.

4. Cancellations:

The referees, Deputy Commissioners, or Commissioner have the responsibility to cancel or postpone a game because of weather, poor field conditions, bad conduct from players, coaches or spectators, or other extenuating circumstances. League Directors decide which games will be replayed, but the actual rescheduling of games is done by the Field Director in consultation with the Referee Director, with input from the Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner. There is no guarantee that games can be rescheduled, particularly if there is more than one cancellation or a cancellation occurs at the end of the season, but the program will do its best to do so.

In the event that games are canceled due to weather conditions, coaches should contact their players as soon as the information is available. Players may also contact the BRYC Soccer Hotline at 703-354-7101. If coaches do not hear from their League Directors or hear about weather conditions on the Hotline, they should assume that games will be played.

Please note that each field is individually assessed for playable conditions. All games on all fields are not canceled in the event one field is determined unplayable; assessments are made on a field-by-field basis. Once games have started for the day, referees, Deputy Commissioners, or the Commissioner make the call to cancel play. Coaches do not have the authority to cancel a game.

BRYC policy dictates that games terminated because of weather or field conditions after one-half of the game has been played will be considered to have been completed. The score of the game at the time of the termination shall stand.

J. CONDUCT AT GAMES

1. League Directors: League Directors are expected to monitor the conduct of the games and to assist in maintaining proper decorum.

2. Players, Coaches, and Spectators: Coaches, in addition to teaching skills, will impress upon players a sense of sportsmanship, fair play, and mutual respect for others. One of the most effective methods for instilling this sense is personal example. Experience has shown that the spectators can best be controlled by the coach of the team for which they are providing support. Referees are authorized to terminate a game when spectator interference is such as to prevent the proper conduct of the game.

While each coach is held personally responsible for the attitude and behavior of his/her team members and their spectator supporters during the conduct of the game, the referees have primary responsibility for maintaining overall discipline and decorum on the playing field, and action taking place on areas adjacent to the field which have a direct bearing on the conduct of play. In carrying out their responsibilities, referees will ensure that they control players and others in a courteous and considerate manner without sacrificing firmness. All referees involved with the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program are expected to adhere to the spirit of the USSF/FIFA Referee Code of Ethics.

Competing teams, with affiliated spectators, will occupy opposite sides of the field. "Home" and "Away" status and the side each is to occupy will be designated by the League Director and indicated on the league's game schedule.

A team's area is bounded by a line parallel to the touch line and extending 15 yards in each direction from the half-way line, on the team's assigned side of the field. Coaching from outside this area during a game shall not be permitted. If persistent infractions occur, the referee shall stop the game and warn the offending coach. The referee will award an indirect free kick against the offending team at the point where the ball was at the time the infraction occurred. Continued violations by the coach, assistant coach, or spectators will result in the coach being sent-off from the field.

Spectators must stay within the spectator area parallel to the touch lines. Only the coach may be in the area between the spectator box and the touch line. This aids Assistant Referees in maintaining a clear line of sight and leaves a clear space for throw-ins. In no case are coaches or spectators to be between the penalty line and the goal line or behind the goals or end line. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that they and their team's spectators remain within the circumscribed area.

No one may enter the field of play at any time without the referee's permission.

Referees will use that amount of discipline required to control players, coaches, and spectators, so as to ensure the proper conduct of the games. Available to referees for control of players, coaches and spectators is a variety of actions, based on FIFA Laws, ranging from a verbal warning to a caution (yellow card) and sending-off (red card) from the game. Cautions and sending-offs precipitated by spectator actions will be addressed and credited to the coach, who will depart the field and/or sit out games, as necessary, in accordance with BRYC rules.

Any referee issuing a caution or a send-off to a player or coach will record the individual's name, offense, team and date, and report same to the Referee Director, who in turn will notify the appropriate League Director. A player or coach who receives a red card will be sent-off from that game. If a player is sent-off, his/her team may NOT substitute for that player. The referee may require that player or coach to leave the site of the playing field or subject his/her team to forfeit the game. The sent-off player or coach will also not be permitted to play or coach in the next game played by his/her team. If a red card is issued at the last game of the league season, the red card will carry over into the following season.

If a player or coach is issued a second red card, the League Director will refer the individual to the Commissioner for further disciplinary action. The Commissioner will assemble a Discipline/Sanctions Panel to review the case. The player's family or coach, and all others concerned, will be notified within five (5) days of the decision reached.

In the case of serious or repeated infractions by players or coaches, the appropriate League Director will follow the procedures listed under Players' Discipline and Coaches' Sanctions.

3. Unreasonable Conduct: The Recreational Soccer Program's mission is to provide an enjoyable, age-appropriate, developmental environment for playing the game of soccer. While it is understandable that tensions can exist in any competitive endeavor and produce undesirable results, it is recognized that incidents may occur that will exceed the limits of acceptable conduct, outside the scope of this manual. It is mandatory that, under such circumstances, rational and level-headed judgments be made that reflect the fact that BRYC operates for and with the youth. Accordingly, if, in the opinion of the referee, a player is found guilty of serious foul play or violent conduct, the offending player will immediately be sent-off from the game (red carded). No substitution from the offending player's team may be made. At the conclusion of play, the referee will forward the name of the offending player to the Referee Director, who will immediately inform the appropriate League Director, Deputy Commissioner, and the Commissioner. An automatic one-game suspension for the offending player shall be imposed. Further disciplinary action may be considered. In all violations of FIFA Law 12 and its Board Decisions, a review shall occur as soon as practical, but a final decision shall be determined and sanctions rendered within 14 days or prior to the next game in which the offending player is eligible to play, whichever is sooner.
4. Alcohol, Illegal Drugs, & Tobacco Products Policy: No BRYC player, coach, official, parent, or any spectator will use alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco products at any field during any event in which BRYC is a participant.
5. Pet Policy: In accordance with Fairfax County Public School regulations, and for the safety and health of all players, coaches, officials, and spectators, no dogs or other animals (other than service animals) will be allowed at any field during any

event in which BRYC is a participant.

K. STANDINGS

1. Blowout Scores:

Blowout scores run contrary to the spirit of BRYC Recreational Soccer. This is a recreational league and the concept is to make the sport enjoyable for all the players. In no case should the final score differential exceed five (5) goals. Thus, if a team (full or minimum strength) is dominating the scoring, the coach who is leading must put into effect a strategy to create greater equality between the teams.

The leading team may rotate their forwards and defenders, put their best scorer in at defense or at goal, or have the players create a passing game (such as aiming for a certain number of passes in a row). Another strategy teams can use to control scoring is to play down a player (i.e., on a substitution, bring two players off the field and only put one back on). If the team continues to score, they may play down more players, to the minimum.

2. Standings/Awards: Determination of league standings will be based on:

- Three (3) points for a win
- One (1) point for a tie
- Zero (0) points for a loss

The team with the most points at the end of the season will receive first place, and the team with the next highest number of points will receive second place. When more than one division exists, there will be two first place and two second place winners – one in each division. Medals or trophies may be given for first and second place in each division of the U12 and U14 Leagues. There are no standings maintained nor medals given for the U5, U6, U7, U8, U9, or U10 leagues. For those leagues that maintain standings, League Directors will post standings weekly on the league bulletin board at the game field.

3. Tie-Break Procedure:

In the event of two or more teams having accumulated an equal number of points at the end of regular season play, the following tie-break procedure will be used:

- 1) Head-to-head standings.
- 2) Most wins.
- 3) Most wins in division (when two or more divisions in league).
- 4) Least number of goals allowed.
- 5) BRYC tie-break chart (as defined in the *Policy Manual*).
- 6) Tie breaker (coin toss).

A specially designed BRYC patch is presented to each registered player each season.

L. ALL-STAR PROCEDURES

The All-Star tournament is an opportunity for BRYC to showcase our Recreational Soccer Program and to acknowledge players who have demonstrated exceptional performance. The objective of tournament participation is to demonstrate to our peers, players, and parents the quality of our program, coaches, and players. Accordingly, coaches and players are selected to represent BRYC in the tournament based upon attitude, ability, commitment, and performance.

The League Director will select the All-Star coach based on his/her willingness, experience, soccer knowledge, and ability to represent BRYC in an exemplary manner. In order to choose the most competitive team from each age group, the All-Star coach will ask each coach in his/her league for a list of nominees. Players should be nominated based on a combination of skills, attitude, and commitment. The All-Star coach should choose at least one nominated player from each regular season team and may choose additional players from the list of nominees or select additional players based on his/her personal observations and evaluations or specific needs of the All-Star team, e.g., defenders, a goalkeeper, etc. The number of players on the All-Star team roster will be set by the tournament officials based on age grouping and other criteria.

M. GRIEVANCES, PROTESTS, AND COMPLAINTS

1. Grievance:

A grievance may originate with any individual having an interest in the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program and should be submitted to and resolved by the appropriate League Director. Grievances deal with BRYC policy, procedures, and rules. The grievance process may not be used to contest game results. The League Director's resolution of a grievance may be appealed, in writing, to the appropriate Deputy Commissioner. Only matters of "grave consequence" to the Recreational Soccer Program or the community may be appealed beyond the Deputy Commissioner, i.e., to the Commissioner.

2. Protest:

A protest contests the outcome of a game. Protests may originate only from the coach or acting coach of one of the teams involved in the game being contested, and must be brought to the appropriate League Director's attention within 24 hours of the game's conclusion. An appropriate record of protest issues and conversations (to include dates, times, circumstances, and parties involved) will be maintained by both parties in support of the process. If the League Director is unable to resolve the matter, or if the complainant wishes to appeal the League Director's decision, the appeal must be written and delivered to the appropriate Deputy Commissioner within 72 hours of notification of the League Director's

decision. A copy of the written appeal must be given to the appropriate League Director within the same 72-hour time frame. The written protest MUST contain the date, time, and place of the game, the nature of the protest (which FIFA Law or BRYC rule was misapplied), and the remedy requested. Please note: Protest procedures will not be used as a referee evaluation process. Also to be remembered: Misapplication of the Laws (or rules) may be the basis for a protest; however, the referee's judgment insofar as it affects play or the outcome of a game does not form the basis of a protest. The referee's decision on factual points, such as whether the ball went out of play or the direction of a throw-in, is final.

3. Complaints:

Complaints regarding officiating may originate only from coaches or acting coaches and may be directed either to the appropriate League Director or the Referee Director. You are reminded that only by maintaining your composure during the game will you retain your credibility with BRYC Executive Committee members after the game.

N. DISCIPLINE AND SANCTIONS

1. Players' Discipline:

If a player is unruly or presents persistent problems for a coach and will not respond to the coach's request to behave in an appropriate manner, the coach may insist that the player's parent/guardian attend practices and games. If the problem is severe, the coach can keep the player from practicing or playing in a game. Coaches taking such action must inform the League Director and the player's parent/guardian before taking the action, or when that is not possible, within 24 hours of taking action.

Any incidents of violent conduct, serious foul play, cautions, sending-offs, or other violations of the BRYC Code of Conduct will be reviewed to determine if additional penalties should be imposed, to include suspension or dismissal from the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program.

2. Coaches' Sanctions:

Coaches, as representatives of the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program, are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the BRYC Code of Conduct in such areas as comportment, behavior, speech, and action, as well as to follow all the rules and regulations of the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program as outlined in the *Policy and Procedures Manual*. If coaches do not conform to these expectations, then the Club has the right and duty to impose sanctions. Such sanctions may include but are not limited to forfeiture of game(s), suspension, or dismissal from the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program.

3. Parent, Guardian, and Spectator Sanctions:

Parents, guardians, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the BRYC Code of Conduct, the Standards for Players, Parents/Guardians, and Spectators, and adhere to the rules and regulations of the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program as outlined in the *Policy and Procedures Manual* and *Parents' Handbook*. If parents, guardians, and spectators do not conform to these requirements and expectations, then the Club has the right and duty to impose sanctions. Such sanctions may include but are not limited to forfeiture of attendance at game(s) and practices, suspension, or dismissal of the parent's or guardian's child(ren) from the BRYC Recreational Soccer Program.

4. Discipline/Sanctions Panel:

The consideration of disciplinary and sanctions issues is at the discretion of the Commissioner, who may appoint a panel to deal with the matter. The panel may be composed of the following: The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner(s), League Director(s), Referee Director, and other members of the Recreational Soccer Executive Committee, as the Commissioner deems appropriate. Anyone directly involved in the matter in question must excuse him/herself from consideration of or adjudication on that particular issue. Sanctions and disciplinary decisions must be issued in writing.

5. Adjudication Committee:

The Adjudication Committee is a standing committee of at least three members nominated by the Commissioner and approved by the Recreational Soccer Executive Committee for the purpose of hearing appeals of actions taken by the Commissioner or the Discipline/Sanctions Panel. Adjudication Committee members who participated in a matter when before the Commissioner or Discipline/Sanctions Panel must recuse themselves from serving on the Adjudication Committee for that appeal. The Adjudication Committee members will elect their own Chair, who may vote when there is a tie. A quorum for Adjudication Committee meetings is three.

The Adjudication Committee is empowered to deny or uphold an appeal, vacate a decision and refer the issue back to the Commissioner for reexamination, reverse a decision, or some combination of the above. The Committee may also sustain a decision, but modify punishment to mitigate or increase the severity.

6. Appeals Process:

Sanctions and disciplinary decisions issued by the Commissioner or Discipline/Sanctions Panel may be appealed to the Recreational Soccer Adjudication Committee. The appeal cannot be based solely on the fact that the appellant is unhappy with the decision and is seeking a retry of the matter. The appeal must be based on any errors in process, procedure, or precedent that the appellant believes the Commissioner or Discipline/Sanctions Panel made in reaching the decision. The

appellant may demonstrate that relevant facts were ignored or misconstrued in the original fact-finding process, or that there was no reasonable evidence to support the decision.

The appellant, within seventy-two (72) hours of receiving written notice of a sanction or disciplinary decision made by the Commissioner or Discipline/Sanctions Panel, must send a written appeal by certified mail to: BRYC Recreational Soccer Adjudication Committee, P.O. Box 2084, Fairfax, Virginia 22031. The appeal must cite the errors made by the Commissioner or Discipline/Sanctions Panel in reaching the decision, the remedy requested, and include the appeal fee of \$100, payable by check to BRYC. If the appeal is upheld, the fee will be returned; if the appeal is denied, the fee will remain with BRYC.

Any sanction or other disciplinary measure imposed by the Commissioner or Discipline/Sanctions Panel remains in effect during the appeal process unless temporarily set aside by the Adjudication Committee.

Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the Adjudication Committee, or designated alternate, will review the appeal to determine if it was properly filed and the nature of the matter being appealed. If the Chair determines that an appeal is validly submitted, he/she will initiate action to resolve the issue. This may be accomplished by consulting other Adjudication Committee members by telephone or e-mail, convening a meeting of the Committee, or convening a hearing. The Chair will contact the appellant, the Commissioner, and the Discipline/Sanctions Panel and set a date when all written materials to be considered in the appeal must be received.

If a hearing is deemed appropriate, the Committee will meet within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the appeal unless a delay is needed for good cause. The Committee will request to hear from the appellant, the Discipline/Sanctions Panel, and the Commissioner. Written statements to be used in the hearing must be in the hands of the Chair at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the hearing. The Chair may waive this requirement for good cause.

Upon resolution, the Chair will notify the appellant, the Commissioner, and the Discipline/Sanctions Panel of the decision. Decisions of the Adjudication Committee are final within BRYC Recreational Soccer. The next avenue of appeal is to the BRYC Board of Directors.

O. BRYC CODE OF CONDUCT

BRYC competition will be governed by the principles of good sportsmanship. All participants are asked to practice the principle that a reputation is built not only on playing ability, but also sportsmanship. The code applies at both practices and games.

1. Coaches and Players:

- Each coach will ensure that his/her conduct sets the proper example for team members and spectators. Each player will ensure that his/her playing conduct is that of a young lady or gentleman fairly competing to the limits of his/her ability.
- Both will know the *Laws of the Game* and abide by them. Coaches are to instruct the teams in such a way as to motivate each player to compete according to the laws.
- Both will show respect for officials. Coaches are to refrain from questioning official decisions, especially in a disrespectful or abusive manner. Players are to refrain from addressing officials or commenting on their decisions.
- Both will show respect for the coaches and players of the opposing team and demonstrate appropriate gestures of sportsmanship at the conclusion of a game. Be humble and generous in victory and proud and courteous in defeat.
- Both will maintain control of emotions and refrain from using abusive language or profanity, humiliating remarks, and/or gestures of ill temper, or physical assault upon another player, coach, official, or spectator.
- Both will follow all field/facility rules and regulations, respecting the property of others.
- Coaches will ensure that team spectators conduct themselves with sportsmanship and maturity while in attendance at game sites and assist the game officials in maintaining control of spectators.
- Any BRYC coach who violates the soccer policies, laws, or procedures will be subject to dismissal or denial of future coaching within BRYC.
- If a parent on the sidelines causes a coach to receive a caution or sending-off (yellow or red card), the coach will have to take the penalty and any suspension.
- If a parent causes a coach to be sent-off (red card), the coach must sit out the minimum suspension (the remainder of that game and the next game).
- If an official is physically assaulted, the Club will remove the coach from the program if he/she is the offender. If a player is the offender, he/she will be removed from the program. If a parent is the offender, he/she will be barred from all BRYC soccer-related activities, as may his/her children if the Commissioner sees fit.
- If a coach and/or player is assaulted on the game or practice field, all participants will be suspended, pending an investigation by the Commissioner. The Commissioner may bar those involved from participating in the program.

2. Spectators:

- Will ensure that his/her conduct shall reflect courtesy, sportsmanship, good citizenship, and a positive example for the players.
- Will show respect for the *Laws of the Game*.
- Will show respect for officials and refrain from questioning decisions or from addressing them.
- Will cheer for their team in a positive, supportive manner, refraining at all times from making hostile, negative or abusive remarks about the opposing team or their own team players.
- Will enter field/facility quietly, refrain from coming into the playing area or from throwing foreign objects or other material into the area, and exit in an orderly manner at the conclusion of the event.
- Will follow field/facility rules and regulations, respecting at all times the property of others.
- Will demonstrate appropriate gestures of sportsmanship at the conclusion of a game, win or lose.
- Will be responsible for ensuring that their children do not violate these codes.

3. Officials:

- Shall maintain the utmost respect for the game of soccer.
- Will conduct themselves honorably and maintain the dignity of their positions.
- Shall honor a contractual obligation.
- Will endeavor to attend local meetings and clinics so as to best know the *Laws of the Game* and their best interpretation.
- Will strive to achieve maximum teamwork with their fellow referees and assistant referees.
- Shall be loyal to fellow referees and assistant referees and never knowingly promote criticisms of them.
- Shall be in good physical condition.
- Will control the players effectively by being courteous and considerate without

sacrificing firmness.

- Shall assist fellow officials to better themselves and their work.
- Shall not make statements about any game except to clarify an interpretation of the *Laws of the Game*.

IV. SOCCER QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What are the objectives of BRYC Recreational Soccer?

The general objectives of the Recreational Soccer program are for children to improve their basic athletic ability, learn soccer techniques and skills, learn and practice good sportsmanship, and have fun. The Recreational program differs from the Travel Soccer program, which is for more competitive and committed players and requires players to try out and be selected by a coach. The youngest Travel Soccer age group is Under 9.

2. How is the club organized and operated?

Braddock Road Youth Club was created in 1966. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Virginia corporation. The Recreational Soccer program was established in 1968. The program follows Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) rules as much as possible. A staff of volunteer officers (including a Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, League Directors, Referee Director, etc.) sets policy and administers the program. Club operating costs for equipment, referees, insurance, and administration are covered by registration fees. All volunteer officers and head coaches receive a partial waiver of the registration fee for one child.

3. How does BRYC assure the quality of coaching?

Coaches are parent volunteers or other individuals who enjoy participating in and teaching soccer. To ensure quality coaching, BRYC Recreational Soccer adopted a licensing requirement for all coaches. BRYC will pay for training courses if coaches agree to coach within BRYC for at least two seasons after completing the course. Courses are provided year round and have shown to be effective for teaching coaches how to handle both practices and games.

4. How does BRYC assure the quality of refereeing?

BRYC has had a United States Soccer Federation (USSF) certified referee program since 1978. Referees receive USSF training, which requires 16-18 hours of instruction and a passing grade of 75 percent on the USSF test. USSF annually requires 5 hours of recertification training with testing. BRYC officials receive an additional 3 to 4 hours of training and instruction each season through regular meetings. All BRYC youth officials start as assistant referees and after 10 games are eligible to take the BRYC center upgrade test, which is designed to ensure that our younger officials are ready to take on the responsibilities of working in the center.

5. Can my child play on more than one soccer team?

A player may only play and/or practice on one BRYC team per season. No BRYC Recreational Soccer player may be on the official roster or receive a player registration card from any travel team in any league (BRYC or other). A Recreational Soccer player may,

however, be a guest player in tournaments that allow Recreational Soccer players. A player may participate in both BRYC Recreational Soccer and high school soccer during the same season, although the player needs to be aware of his/her commitment to each team.

6. Why aren't friends always on the same team?

There are times when children from the same neighborhood are assigned to different teams. There may be too many children in the neighborhood for one team. Or, there may be two volunteer coaches in the area and the children are then divided between them. Third, a child who registers late is put on a team where space is available. And lastly, a child may be put on a team outside the neighborhood to honor a carpool request. Such requests cannot always be fulfilled, but League Directors try to be flexible in accommodating parents' needs.

7. My child didn't get the coach I asked for. Why not?

BRYC does not honor parents' requests for coaches because such a practice often would require League Directors to assign children to teams based outside their neighborhoods. Also, honoring requests for coaches could lead to concentrations of highly skilled players onto specific teams.

8. Last year, my daughter was on a great team that won their league championship. This year, she is on a different team. Did her old team get broken up to keep them from winning?

Not necessarily. Teams are structured geographically around the residence of the coaches who volunteer for that particular season. Many factors must be taken into consideration in team formation. Depending on coaches' locations, several neighborhoods may be represented on the same team, or neighborhoods may be split with players on two or more teams. Team rosters will differ from season to season even with a returning coach depending upon the number of players registered in a given season within various geographical areas. In older leagues, however, an attempt is made to spread All-Star players as evenly as possible among the teams in a league to make teams as competitive as possible while maintaining the neighborhood concept.

9. Why are some teams strong year after year?

Most teams change from season to season because families move in and out of neighborhoods, children switch sports, there is turnover in the coaches, or (in combined age leagues) children move up to different leagues. Even with this high turnover, it is possible for a team to be strong each season simply because the same one or two highly skilled children from the neighborhood play every season.

10. Why is practice (or games) so far from my home?

Each season, BRYC receives an allotment of field times and locations from Fairfax County. The club then divides the allotment among Recreational Soccer and its other programs (travel soccer, football, softball, etc.) following county guidelines. Game fields are assigned by

matching age group to field size, with the older leagues getting the larger fields. Practice fields are assigned based on preseason requests from coaches, field availability, team size, and age group. It is often difficult to grant a coach's first request, so the best possible alternative is given.

11. Our daughter's coach had each of the girls bring a ball to practice. Don't our fees cover this sort of thing?

Your daughter's coach was smart. In order to maximize limited practice time, experienced coaches realize that it is best to keep every player constructively busy. Coaches' clinics constantly emphasize the value of one ball per player at practice, but if BRYC were to provide a ball for every player, your fees become unrealistic. Instead, we provide a small number of balls to each team for games and scrimmages and hope that you will provide a ball for your child to use at practice.

12. My son's coach makes the kids juggle at practice, but I don't see the importance of it. Does this really help on the field?

Yes, it is important. While one can always find a few coaches who do not consider juggling significant enough to be a part of the soccer training, most good coaches recognize that juggling teaches eye-body-ball coordination, thus developing in the player an ability to comfortably handle the ball on the playing field using almost every part of his/her body.

13. Our U14 child's coach spends a significant amount of practice time in small-sided scrimmages. Shouldn't he spend most of the practice in scrimmages with 11 players on a side, since that's how they play their games?

While there is certainly value in 11-on-a-side scrimmages, your coach is concentrating on developing the skills of all the players on the team. A full-size soccer game is merely a combination of many small-sided games. It has been estimated that professionals only touch the ball for 5 minutes during a 90-minute game, so you can imagine how little real practice your child would get with the ball if his/her team only played 11 on a side.

14. Why does my five-year-old play small-sided soccer? Shouldn't she be learning to play 8v8 like the older players?

Logic dictates that the fewer the amount of players who must share the ball, the greater the number of times that each will touch it. More touches equal more fun and better skill. Having too many players for an age group will result in a human beehive, which makes it virtually impossible for any player to effectively make use of such basic soccer skills as dribbling and passing.

15. I love watching my son play because he's such a good kicker. That's why we thought soccer would be the best sport for him. Now, however, he has a coach who discourages kicking the ball to the other end of the field. Who picks these coaches, anyway?

Coaches are almost always motivated soccer parents who feel they have something to contribute to the soccer program, and we always need additional volunteers. In reference to your child's soccer style, you might be interested to know that, in most cases, short ground passes are far superior to the high, booming kicks that merely clear the ball. (Too many games are reduced to long contests between two teams that end up resembling a ping-pong match.) Your coach is apparently attempting to teach the players the use of strategy as they steadily work the ball toward the goal area using short, accurate ground passes to one another.

16. How important are dribbling skills?

Every soccer player needs to be capable of close, controlled dribbling, but overuse leads to ball-hogging and fatigue while at the same time destroying team tactics. The good player knows to dribble until challenged, passing off to an open player just seconds before the opposition attempts to steal the ball.

17. I love the game of soccer except for the tackling. I don't like to see a player go after another like that.

Soccer tackling is totally different from the tackling in American football, so be careful not to confuse the two. In soccer, the player is not permitted to "go for the man," and to do so, even if the man is not harmed, constitutes a foul. The object must be, at all times, an attempt to get the ball. There are legal and acceptable methods for doing this, including the fair charge and the sliding tackle.

18. What is a "fair charge" anyway? It looks like pushing to me.

A player may push with his/her shoulder against the shoulder of another player while he/she is within playing distance of the ball. When a player charges, he/she must have at least one foot on the ground, cannot have his/her hands or arms extended from his/her body, and cannot use his/her hands, arms, chest, or hips while charging. What may look like pushing to you can be perfectly legal in the game of soccer.

19. I've been watching my children play soccer for 5 years and I still don't understand offside.

That's very understandable. The offside law is often misunderstood, even by experienced spectators.

Offside was conceived when early soccer buffs discovered that the game was no fun at all if the opposition was allowed to plant a player right in front of the opponent's goal with the sole purpose of picking up long passes in order to plop the ball easily into the net. To keep the rascals at a competitive distance, the offside law was devised.

A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponent's goal than both the ball and two opponents. One of those opponents is usually the goal keeper, so an attacking player who wants to stay onside will try to keep a defender and the goalie between himself and his opponent's goal. **IT IS NOT AN OFFENSE IN ITSELF TO BE IN AN OFFSIDE POSITION.** A player in an offside position is only penalized if (in the opinion of the referee) at the moment the ball touches or is played by a teammate, he (1) gains an advantage from being in an offside position, (2) interferes with an opponent, or (3) interferes with play. Three exceptions - there is no offside offense if a player receives a ball directly from a goal kick, a throw-in, or a corner kick.

20. How far should opposing players be from the ball when a free kick is taken?

Ten yards.

21. How many steps may a goalie take before releasing the ball? I've seen them take more than seemed right.

The goalkeeper has six seconds to release the ball. There is no limit on the number of steps the goalkeeper can take. If a goalkeeper takes more than six seconds while controlling the ball with his/her hands before releasing it from his/her possession, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

22. How do you know if the referee is awarding a direct or an indirect free kick, and what's the difference?

The first time someone sees a referee signal a free kick, he/she is frequently confused. An indirect kick, which must be touched by another player before a goal may be scored, is signaled by the referee raising one hand in the air and keeping it there until the ball is touched by another player. A direct kick, from which a goal may be scored without another player touching the ball, is signaled by the referee pointing in the direction that the kick is to be taken and then dropping his/her hand. The serious infractions which result in the awarding of a direct kick are called major fouls.

23. I'm really confused. The other team's goalkeeper caught a great shot on goal and backed completely over the line, but the referee ruled "no goal." Now explain that!

In soccer, the ball, not the player, must go completely over the line before a goal can be scored. Obviously, in this case, the referee felt that, while the player did indeed cross the line, the ball was extended forward and did not completely (that is, the whole ball) cross the goal line as required. This is a good time to note that a ball must also completely cross touch lines or the goal lines to be considered out of play.

24. I'm angry over the insensitivity of some referees. When a player on our team was injured on the field, he didn't stop the play soon enough and our coach was reprimanded for coming to the player's aid!

Technically, coaches and concerned parents are not permitted to enter the field of play until

signaled to do so by the referee. However, this law is sometimes violated by genuinely concerned coaches who see only the injured youth and are anxious to come to the player's aid. Occasionally, a youth may overreact to an injury in an effort to gain attention or interfere with the flow of play (a tactic sometimes seen in professional soccer in order to alter the opposition's pace). Usually, youth injuries are genuine, although rarely serious, and referees are instructed to use common sense and concern for all player injuries. You should note that the referee is supposed to wait for a change in the advantage of play before he/she stops the action unless it is obviously a very serious injury to a player.

25. When the assistant referee at our daughter's game signaled that the ball was to be given to one team, the referee overruled him and gave it to the other. Why?

Keep in mind that the referee is in complete charge of the game and has the authority to overrule the assistant referees if he/she sees the play differently.

26. The other team was given a direct free kick, but before our players could form a wall, the opposing coach yelled for his player to take the kick. Wasn't that ungentlemanly conduct?

Not at all. The player taking the direct or indirect kick is not required to wait for the opposition to organize itself, and the kick may be taken as soon as that player is ready. If the player asks the referee to make sure that the opposing team is 10 yards away from the ball, then he/she must wait for the referee's signal before kicking the ball.

27. Why is there inconsistency among referees concerning hand balls?

As you know, soccer is a foot game. Only the goalkeeper is permitted to touch the ball with his/her hands. In order for a hand ball to be called, it must be deliberate. Just because the ball simply strikes the hand (or arm) does not constitute a hand ball. Again, it is left to the judgment of the referee. This will account for the apparent inconsistency from one referee to the next. Remember, too, that the touch line has at least 30 pairs of eyes watching a game versus the referee's one pair. Further, a referee can only call what he/she sees, not what occurs out of his/her range of vision.

28. I've heard some referees remind coaches that they are responsible for the conduct of their parents. Just what does that mean?

It means that the coach will receive the caution or sending off for spectator remarks and behavior.

All BRYC coaches are instructed before the season that the club will not tolerate verbal abuse toward the referee, the players, or the opposition's parents from the coaching staff, the players, or the spectators. If parents insist on behaving in such a manner, the referee will inform the attending coach to advise his/her abusive spectator to improve his/her behavior. If such behavior continues, the referee may award a caution to the coach. If it continues, he/she may card the coach or halt the game entirely.

29. What power does the referee really have on the field?

Absolute! In fact, only the team captains are supposed to be able to talk with the referee, although most referees understand the age of our players and the stage of their development and therefore willingly listen to both players and coaches. Many times during a game, the referee explains his/her calls to the players involved in the play. The coaches and parents have no specific rights, under the laws, to know the nature of the referee's calls. Parent jeers, shouts, hassling, or corrective comments to the referee are not welcome, and a coach may be cautioned or sent off from the game if such offensive behavior continues. Parents must keep in mind that many calls are based on judgment, experience, and the referee's position (the referee is much closer to the play than anyone on the sidelines), and the referee's decisions may be influenced by factors and guidelines not understood by the spectators.

30. Does the referee really have the power to reprimand players and coaches for unflattering remarks at halftime or after the game?

Yes. According to Law 5, the referee's authority begins when he/she arrives at the field of play and continues until he/she has left the area of the field after the game has been completed. The referee's authority extends to time when the ball is not in play, to temporary suspensions, to the halftime break, and to additional periods of play.

31. My son was pushed when attempting to score, and the referee didn't even give our team a free kick.

That's because the referee was probably applying the "advantage clause." Simply put, the referee may ignore a foul, thus depriving a player of a free kick, if the offended player is at a better advantage by not being stopped in his/her pursuit. Some players in professional soccer will deliberately foul a player to get the play stopped when there is no other recourse. The alert referee will allow the play to continue when the attacking team clearly has the advantage.

32. I've noted times when the referee seemed to deliberately ignore an infraction. What might be the reason for this?

While it is the referee's duty to see that infractions of the laws are penalized, it is also his/her responsibility to see that the game flows along smoothly from start to finish. Referees are instructed not to call trifling infractions. If he/she were to blow the whistle and stop play every time the slightest little infraction occurred (e.g., a slight lifting of the foot on a throw-in), the game would become very slow and tediously boring. This would be particularly true in games involving our younger players in which they are still learning the game and minor infractions are frequent. Continual blowing of the whistle and stopping play will chew up the little valuable playing time that the players have, when their primary objective is to get out on the field and play.

33. Is there really a rule in BRYC that states a parent can't go to the opposition's side of the field during a game?

BRYC policy and guidelines do not prohibit parents from situating themselves on the opposition's side of the field for quiet observation of their own child. However, coaching from the opposite side of the field is considered in very poor taste and not within the bounds of sportsmanship expected of the coaches and parents of BRYC. In those cases where the field does not lend itself to situating spectators on both sides, one coach is still expected to assume a position on the sidelines opposite the other coach. As a matter of information, BRYC does prohibit spectators along the touch lines from the edge of the penalty box to the goal line and behind the goal line. This is considered distracting to the goalkeeper.

34. Some coaches tell us that water is bad for the players during the game and at halftime. Others tell us it is okay. What is the proper guideline?

Most coaches find that the most serious problem players experience while performing in hot weather is dehydration. This can be a problem even in cool weather when the players are exerting themselves. When a player is thirsty, dehydration has already begun. Most coaches insist, therefore, that the players be permitted to drink whenever they wish and whatever amounts they find comfortable. Plenty of liquids should also be consumed both before and after a game.

35. I would think that jogging would be good for my young soccer player. It would help build up his legs and his stamina. Is this true?

Soccer is a game of quick, short runs and quick springs. The player will frequently find himself or herself moving from a dead stop to lightning speed in seconds and then having to stop on a dime. Your soccer player needs to do this type of exercise along with jogging in order to prepare himself or herself for his/her soccer game. Additionally, soccer is played with a ball. You know this, but we sometimes forget this when we warm up or do our exercises. Jogging for soccer can be enhanced considerably if the young player does it with a ball. If he/she can master his/her stops, starts, springs, and changes in direction with a ball glued to his/her foot, he/she will be a sought-after player by many coaches.

V. DEFINITIONS

Advantage Clause: Fouls committed against a player do not have to be called if, in the opinion of the referee, the offended player maintains the upper hand (advantage) of the situation.

Beating a Player: The act of moving around a defending player, either with the ball or by passing; getting to the ball before the opponent.

Charging: The legal method of making body contact by use of the shoulder against an opposing player while in the act of playing the ball.

Clear or Clearing: The act of moving the ball out and away from a congested area or potential scoring threat without regard to direction.

Cross: A type of pass from one side of the field to the other. Normally, a player's kick sending the ball across and into the front of the goal.

Direct Free Kick: A free kick awarded to a team when any one of ten (10) major fouls has been committed against them. The ball may be kicked into the goal (direct) without the ball touching another player.

Dribbling: The art of an individual player moving through the field of play while maintaining control of the ball, just as is done in basketball.

First on the Ball: The individual or team effort to get to the ball first, before players of the opposing team, to prevent their control of the ball.

Handball: Deliberately handling the ball with the hand or any part of the arm from the shoulder down. The penalty is a direct free kick awarded to the other team. However, the goalkeepers may handle the ball within their own penalty area.

Impeding (Obstruction): Preventing an opposing player from getting to the ball or into the flow of play by use of the body, with no physical contact, when not in position to play the ball.

Indirect Free Kick: A free kick awarded to a team when a minor foul is committed against them. The ball must touch another player (either team) before a score can be made.

Into Touch (Out of Bounds): The field boundary lines are part of the playing field. The ball must be completely over the outside edge of the line to be out of bounds or to count as a score, whether the ball is in the air or on the ground. The position of the player doesn't matter. This rule is different from basketball or football where the ball remains in play until it touches the ground or the player is out of bounds when he/she touches the ball.

Major Fouls: There are 10 major fouls. A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team (or a penalty kick if committed by a team within its own penalty area) if a player commits

any of the following offenses:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area)

Minor Fouls: An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his/her own penalty area, commits any of the following offenses:

- Takes more than 6 seconds while controlling the ball with his/her hands before releasing it from his/her possession
- Touches the ball again with his/her hands after it has been released from his/her possession and has not touched any other player
- Touches the ball with his/her hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him/her by a teammate
- Touches the ball with his/her hands after he/she has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a teammate

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player, in the opinion of the referee:

- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of an opponent
- Prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his/her hands

Marking: The act of guarding or covering a player

Offside: A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponent's goal than both the ball and two opponents. One of those opponents is usually the goalkeeper, so an attacking player who wants to stay onside will try to keep a defender and the goalkeeper between him/herself and his/her opponent's goal. IT IS NOT AN OFFENSE IN ITSELF TO BE IN AN OFFSIDE POSITION. A player in an offside position is only penalized if (in the opinion of the referee) at the moment the ball touches or is played by a teammate, he/she (1) gains an advantage from being in an offside position, (2) interferes with an opponent, or (3) interferes with play. There are three exceptions: There is no offside offense if a player receives a ball directly from a goal kick, a throw-in, or a corner kick.

One Touch: The act of passing or shooting the ball without using an additional touch to gain control.

Penalty Kick: Whenever a defender commits a major foul (one that awards a direct free kick) within the penalty area (the large area), the opponent is awarded a direct free kick from the penalty spot. Only the goalkeeper can defend, and a goal is almost as sure as the extra point kick after a touchdown.

Playing Distance: Charging or shielding are allowed within playing distance. This distance is the judgment of the referee, but, normally, if the next stride brings the player to the ball, that is playing distance.

Serious Foul Play: An offense too serious for a caution and which includes one or more of the following additional elements:

- Retaliation
- Tackling from behind
- One or both feet, with cleats showing, above the ground
- Violent or excessive force
- No chance of playing the ball

It is serious foul play when a player uses violence (excessive force) when challenging for the ball on the field against an opponent. There can be no serious foul play against a teammate, referee, assistant referee, spectator, etc. The use of violence or excessive force against an opponent under any other conditions is considered violent conduct. Punishment is sending off.

Shielding: The act of keeping an opponent from obtaining the ball by a player positioning himself or herself between the opponent and the ball, as long as the player maintains a position to play the ball. This is a legal maneuver; otherwise, it is an impeding foul.

Shot: The attempt by a player to move the ball toward the goal and into the net; a scoring attempt that is reasonably close to the crossbar or goal posts.

Tackling: The act of a defending player attempting to intercept and take the ball away from the opponent. Charging (body contact with the shoulder) is legal when combined with this maneuver in the process of playing the ball. A variation, by use of a slide (like going into second base, one leg extended) is called a sliding tackle. This method is legal, providing initial contact is cleanly made against the ball and not the opponent, and any follow-through does not take out the opponent. Any tackle from behind can be properly sanctioned by the referee as serious foul play.

Trapping: The art of gaining control of a moving ball on the ground or in the air by use of the foot or body so its motion is brought under control in the immediate vicinity of the player.

Violent Conduct: When a player is guilty of aggression towards an opponent (when they are not contesting for the ball) or towards any other person (a teammate, referee, assistant referee, spectator, etc.). The ball can be in or out of play, and the aggression can occur either on or off the field of play. The punishment is sending off.

Wall: A group of players lined up shoulder to shoulder for defense against a free kick.

VI. FIELD DIRECTORY

All directions (except North Springfield) are written for persons traveling west from I-495 (Capital Beltway) along Braddock Road. Persons traveling to the fields from a different direction should consult a Northern Virginia street map for alternate routes.

Canterbury Woods Elementary School: Right on Woodland Way to intersection with Queen Elizabeth Boulevard. Field is on hill above intersection.

Chapel Square Center: Right on Wakefield Chapel Road. Right on Holborn Avenue to Chapel Square Center on left.

Fairview Elementary School: Continue on Braddock to Route 123. Turn left on Route 123. Continue to Burke Centre Parkway and make a left. School is on right hand. Field is the lower one.

Kings Glen Elementary School: Left on Danbury Forest to school on left.

Kings Park Elementary School: Left on Southampton Drive. Right on Clydesdale Road. First right to school.

Lake Braddock Park: Left on Burke Lake Road. Right on Lake Braddock Drive. Fields are on the right just past Olley Lane. There are two fields, lower and upper. (Not at Lake Braddock Secondary School)

Laurel Ridge Elementary School: Left on Guinea Road. Continue straight through stoplight on Commonwealth Boulevard. School is on the right.

Little Run Elementary School: Right on Olley Lane. School is on the right.

North Springfield Elementary School: Travel east on Braddock Road. Right on Heming Avenue. Right on Heming Court to school.

Oak View Elementary School: Left on Sideburn Road. School is on the right across from entrance to Robinson High School.

Olde Creek Elementary School: Right on Olley Lane. Left on Athens Drive. Right on Pickett Road. Left on Olde Creek Drive. School is on the left.

Pine Ridge Park: Right on Guinea Road. Right on Little River Turnpike. Left on Woodburn Road past police station and right turn continuing on Woodburn Road. Follow for two miles past church on the left and as you make a sweeping right hand turn, park entrance is on your right.

Ravensworth Elementary School: Left on Queensberry Avenue. Right on Ellet. School will be on your left.

Wakefield Forest Elementary School: Right on Guinea Road. Right on Little River Turnpike. Right on Iva Lane to school on left. Please be careful where you park. Specifically, do not block any of the driveways to the residences.

Wakefield Park: Right into Wakefield Park/Audrey Moore RECenter complex. Field is behind the main recreation building.

Winterset Park: Right on Guinea Road. Right on Little River Turnpike. Left on Woodburn Road (just past light at Prosperity Road) to Fairfax County Police S.O.D. station. Field is behind the police station.

Woodson High School: Right on Guinea Road. Left on Little River Turnpike. Past traffic lights and left on Pickett Road. Immediate right onto drive of school grounds. North Field is directly behind the school, next to the tennis courts. South & West Fields are best accessible from the main parking lot on the west side of the school.

REMINDER NOTES

1. Coach's Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
E-Mail Address: _____

2. Assistant Coach's Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
E-Mail Address: _____

3. League Director's Name: _____
Telephone: _____
E-Mail Address: _____

4. Practice Field: _____
Days: _____
Time: _____

5. Game Field: _____

6. Date/Time of Games:
Game 1: _____
Game 2: _____
Game 3: _____
Game 4: _____
Game 5: _____
Game 6: _____
Game 7: _____
Game 8: _____
Rain Date: _____

7. Date to Bring Drinks/Snack: _____

8. Date to Assist with Field Set-Up: _____
Date to Assist with Field Take-Down: _____

9. Team Photos - Date: _____
Time: _____
Location: _____

10. Next Soccer Registration - Date: _____

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For more information about Braddock Road Youth Club
and its programs, including links to BRYC Baseball, Basketball,
Football/Cheerleading, Rugby, Softball, Travel Soccer, and Volleyball, see:

www.bryc.org

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For more information about soccer in Virginia, see:

Virginia Youth Soccer Association, Inc.

www.vysa.com

For more information and publications about soccer in general, see:

United States Soccer Federation

www.us-soccer.com

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This *Parents' Handbook* is intended as a ready reference to the rules and procedures of the Braddock Road Youth Club Recreational Soccer Program. The *BRYC Policies and Procedures Manual* is the controlling document of the club's soccer program and should be referenced for resolution of questions of policy.

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Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 2084

Fairfax, Virginia 22031