



## 2026 Middle School Soccer Rules & Regulations

### **NCSAA ROSTER RULES**

NCSAA's roster rules are posted at [www.ncsaasports.com](http://www.ncsaasports.com). Schools are expected to know and follow NCSAA's roster rules and guidelines at all times. National Sports ID will lock at the Week 3 Deadline on April 8 for the final time. Any player who expires after this date will NOT be permitted to be added back to the roster. It is 100% the responsibility of the School, Athletic Director, Coach, and Player to be on top of your team's expiration dates. NCSAA will NOT be sending reminders.

### **NCSAA FORFEIT RULES**

NCSAA's forfeit rules are posted at [www.ncsaasports.com](http://www.ncsaasports.com). Schools are expected to know and follow NCSAA's forfeit rules and guidelines at all times.

### **DIVISIONS**

- Elementary Coed Recreational (Grades K-1)
- Elementary Coed Recreational (Grades 2-3)
- Elementary Boy's Competitive (Grades 4-5)
- Elementary Girl's Competitive (Grades 4-5)
- Middle School Boy's Varsity (Grades 6-8)
- Middle School Girl's Varsity (Grades 6-8)

### **RECREATIONAL DIVISION**

Our Recreational Division will not keep an official score or have standings or playoffs. These games will be designed to introduce the student-athletes to the sport of flag football without the pressures of winning or losing.

**Field of Play:** Approximately 100 yards x 50 yards

**Goal Size:** 8'x24'

**The Ball:** Size 5

Home team provides the match ball.

**Equipment:** Shin guards are required. No steel or center cleats allowed. No jewelry is permitted during play. Goalkeeper must have a different colored jersey, shirt or penny to be distinguishable. [For the safety of our participants, no student-athlete is allowed to play with a cast on (soft or hard) – even with a doctor's note. We will NOT allow any padding to be put over it. There will be no exceptions to this rule.]

### **Coaches and Spectator Conduct/Responsibilities**

Family members, parents, and spectators are required to observe the contest from the areas NCSAA designates for spectators.

- Participants, coaches, parents, and family members must conduct themselves appropriately during game play. Foul language will not be tolerated and will lead to removal from the field.
- Inappropriate, rude, or confrontational behavior by a coach, player or spectator may lead to disqualification from the game and possible suspension. These decisions are made at the sole discretion of the League Officials.

**The Coach is the only person allowed to talk to the official before, during and after the game.**

### **Number of Players**

The maximum number of players on the field per team at any one time is eleven (11).

All players not playing in the game must be 3 yards behind the touch lines.

Teams may play with lesser players if necessary. Teams with less than 7 players will result in a forfeit in league standings.

### **Duration of the Game**

Each game will consist of 2 – 25 minute halves. *(Updated after the 3/15/22 Coaches Meeting)*

Halftime will be 3 minutes long.

Play will be started with a kick-off at the center mark of the field.

The opposing team must be 10 yards from the ball at kick off and each re-start.

A coin flip will take place at the beginning of each game. The team that wins the coin flip will get to choose if they would like kick-off or choose a side to defend. The visiting team calls the coin flip.

Teams shall rotate sides and kick-off at halftime.

**Mercy Rule:** There will be a 7 goal Mercy Rule. Once a team has reached a 7 goal lead the score is frozen and becomes the official score of the game. The remainder of the game will be played as a scrimmage.

### **Substitutions**

- Substitutions are unlimited and allowed during any out of bounds, stoppage of play and for injuries.

### **Free Kicks**

The referee, according to the infraction, will award direct and indirect free kicks. Standard FIFA rules will apply.

Penalty Kicks: Penalty kicks will be placed twelve (12) yards from the goal line.

### **Offsides**

The offside rule will be in effect and taught in this age group. However, it will be called at the referee's discretion, for plays in which offsides is blatant. Any player directly involved in a play, that is in an offside position will be called offside and a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the foul. As the offside rule is subject to the referee's discretion and the referee may not have assistant linesmen at the field, criticism directed to the referee is dissent and will not be tolerated.

### **Cards**

The referee will show yellow (caution) and red (sending off) cards in accordance with the laws of the game. A red card results in ejection from the game. (Two yellow cards is one red card.) Red cards shown for serious infractions may result in ejection for the remainder of the season with reinstatement only with the permission of the league coordinator.

### **Jerseys**

It is the responsibility of all teams to either have:

- A.) Reversible game jerseys with numbers on both sides -OR-
- B.) Pinnies of a different color with them at all times
  - The away team must wear pinnies in the event that both teams have identical game jerseys or the officials deem it necessary. Failure to have pinnies or reversible jerseys may result in a forfeit loss.
  - Games will NOT be delayed/postponed/rescheduled due to not having pinnies

**Slide tackling is not allowed.**

**Headers ARE allowed in Middle School Soccer.**

Standard FIFA rules will be followed for rules not addressed here.

### **Score Reporting**

The officials will report the score. Both home and away team can report scores at [www.ncsaasports.com/score-reporting.html](http://www.ncsaasports.com/score-reporting.html).

### **Divisional Tie Breakers**

Two teams tied for one place:

- a. Head to head score,
- b. Total goals allowed during league play,
- c. Point differential (total points scored – total point allowed),
- d. Coin toss

Three or more teams tied for one place

- a. Total goals allowed during league play,
- b. Head to head score,
- c. Total goals scored,
- d. Draw for seed (1-2-3-4 etc)