

## NORTH HURON SOCCER LEAGUE

# RULES & GUIDELINES 2017

April 5/2017

**Player Attire** – Each player is expected to wear the appropriate attire while playing. This includes soccer cleats, shin guards fully covered by long socks, and a team jersey completely tucked into their shorts. All teams shall have sufficient pinnies for all players on the team, and of a colour that contrasts significantly with the jersey colour. *No jewelry, extra thick headbands, arm bands, bracelets or other accessories* are permitted. “Hard” casts are not permitted due to the chance on injury to other players. Players may not chew gum or any other candy while playing. Only the goalkeepers may wear a hat as a sun shield.

**Ball Size** – For age groups U9 & U11 the ball size shall be #4. For all older groups U13, U15 and U18 the ball size shall be #5. The home team is responsible to provide two (2) game balls, and to have one of the two balls ready for play at all times.

**Game Duration** – The game duration for each age group shall be as follows:

U9	2 – 30 min HALFS, 60 min FULL TIME
U11	2 – 35 min HALFS, 70 min FULL TIME
U13	2 – 40 min HALFS, 80 min FULL TIME
U15, U18	2 – 45 min HALFS, 90 min FULL TIME

A five (5) minute break in play action shall occur at the half. This time may be adjusted for weather or light conditions at the referee’s discretion. During the season, all games shall end at ‘FULL TIME’ with no O/T. Games shall not be scheduled on Sundays.

**The Pitch ( Field ) Setup** – The ‘field area’ includes the actual field plus the area within earshot of anyone at the play area. For the U9 age group, please see accompanying link at end of Rules. For all older age groups, every effort shall be made to use a full size field ( 50 yd x 100 yd ). The field shall be suitably lined and cut to an appropriate length. Corner flags are mandatory.

***Both teams shall be located along one side of the play area on opposite sides of the center line. All spectators ( parents, siblings, etc ) shall be located along the opposite side of the play area across the field. The only exception will be in Blyth.***

Only players and game officials are permitted on the field during play, unless there is an injury stoppage, and the player requires assistance. No one is permitted behind the nets, or along the goal lines while the game is being played.

**Nets** – For all age groups (except U9 as described in link at end of Rules), the minimum dimensions of the nets shall be 24 ft wide and 8 ft high. The mesh shall be firmly secured to the net structure, and to the ground. The game officials shall inspect both nets prior to the start of each match, and after any incident where the mesh could have been compromised.

**Team Numbers/Player Eligibility** – Each team shall have a minimum of 7 players, including the goalkeeper, before a game can start. A team not able to meet this minimum number, or not showing for the game, shall forfeit the game. The game may be delayed, at the discretion of the game officials, to permit a team to assemble the required number of players.

Any number of girls are permitted to play on a boys team. No restrictions apply to the number of girls on the pitch during a boys game at any time. No boys are permitted on a girls team.

**Pre-Game Start** – Before the start of the game, the referee shall call the captain(s) of each team to center field, and outline his/her expectations for player conduct while in the field area. After this, a coin toss will be used to determine ball possession and which end of the field each team will defend at game start. The visiting team will ‘call’ the coin toss. **THE TEAM WINNING THE TOSS WILL CHOOSE THE END OF FIELD TO DEFEND.** *The losing team gets the ball.* The ends are reversed at HALF TIME.

**Kickoffs** – The teams must be on their side of center for a KICKOFF. Only the kickoff team may have players inside the circle at center field. The ball must clearly move(**in any direction**) before any other player on the kickoff team can touch the ball. The player who ‘kicks off’ (who can be standing in the opponents half) cannot touch the ball again until another player has made contact with the ball. The ball is considered in play as soon as the ball is touched by the kickoff team. *If the ball is touched twice in a row by the same player during the kickoff this will be an indirect kick for other team.*

**Player Substitutions** – Player substitutions can occur (after being acknowledged by the referee) on any goal kick – either in your own defensive end or in the opposition end. Substitutions can also occur on your own throw-in. Should the opposing team substitute on their throw-in the defending team is entitled to substitute as well at that same stoppage of play. It is suggested that coaches instruct their players going into the game to proceed to the halfway line at the time of substitution. When the referee acknowledges the substitution those players should wait until the players being substituted for approach the vicinity of the touchline and then proceed onto the field in an orderly manner. Additionally the goalkeeper may be substituted at any time with either a player on the field or a player on the bench after the referee has been alerted . The former goalkeeper isn’t required to go to the sidelines initially before a substitution on the field may take place.

**Play Stoppages** – The normal play stoppages shall be at HALF TIME and FULL TIME, or when a goal is scored. The referee will indicate this by blowing the whistle two times for HALF TIME, and three times for FULL TIME, and point to center field.

The referee is not required to stop play to award a THROW-IN, FREE KICK, CORNER KICK or even for an injured player (other than suspected head injury) but at the referees discretion may do so if warranted. The referee will also stop play to have a DROP BALL RESTART for an injured player, if required for a FREE KICK to be taken, or to issue warnings, and cards. Cards may be issued after play has been stopped if an advantage had been played with the initial foul.

**Goals** – A team is awarded a goal when the ball has completely crossed the goal line into the net area when there has been no reason for a prior stoppage in play. The referee will blow the whistle once, and point to center field for each goal. **Both coaches shall report the game result to the league co-ordinator for that age group. While the actual score will be reported to the league co-ordinator for that age group, the score will be recorded with a maximum goal differential of 5 and posted accordingly on the league website.**

**Game Forfeits** – Any game that is forfeited, for any reason, shall have the score of the game at the time of forfeit, or 3 – 0, whichever is maximum, recorded against the forfeiting team.

**Offsides** – An OFFSIDE will be called if there is any part of a player on the attacking team between the 2<sup>nd</sup> last player on the defending team, and the defending team's goal line at the time the ball is advanced ( kicked, headed ) by the attacking team, and the ball gets past the 2<sup>nd</sup> last player on the defending team. The attacking player must be in a position of potential advantage when in this 'offside' position *or involved in active play*. For an OFFSIDE call, the defending team is given an indirect FREE KICK from the location of the offside. There shall be no offsides on THROW-INS or CORNER KICKS or GOAL KICKS.

**Hand Balls** – Play will be stopped and a FREE KICK awarded to the opposing team if a player uses any part of the arm or hand to impede the normal movement of the ball. The ball shall be placed at the location of the HAND BALL for the FREE KICK. All players on the opposing team must maintain a distance of 10 yd from the location of the FREE KICK. The referee will have discretion to call a HAND BALL if the contact was incidental by a player trying to protect themselves. The goalkeeper may pick up the ball whenever it is inside the penalty area unless it is a direct pass from a teammate ie foot pass, throw-in from a teammate. In the event the goalkeeper picks up a direct pass from a teammate, an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the place of infraction.

**Throw-ins** – A team is awarded a THROW-IN whenever the ball has completely crossed the sideline off the field of play after contact with a player on the opposing team. Players on the opposing team must maintain a distance of 2 yds from the location of the THROW-IN. The player making the THROW-IN cannot enter the play area until the ball is back in play. The referee shall watch for proper technique and position of the player making the THROW-IN, and if not proper, shall award a THROW-IN from the same location to the other team.

**Corner Kicks** – A CORNER KICK is awarded to the attacking team whenever the ball completely crosses the goal line out of the field of play after last contacting a player on the defending team. The ball shall be placed inside the lined area in the corner of the play area. The player who ‘kicks’ cannot touch the ball again until another player has made contact with the ball. Players on the defending team must maintain a distance of 10 yds from the location of the CORNER KICK. The referee shall watch for proper technique and position of the player making the CORNER KICK, and if not proper, the kick is retaken. If there is a second touch by the same player taking the kick, there is an indirect free kick to the opposing team.

**Goal Kicks** – A team is awarded a GOAL KICK whenever the ball completely crosses the goal line out of the field of play after last contacting a player on the attacking team. The ball shall be placed in the goal area. Any player on the team may take the GOAL KICK. Players on the opposing team must be outside of the penalty area. The ball is not ‘in play’ until it has left the penalty area.

**Free Kicks** – A team is awarded a FREE KICK whenever the referee makes a call for an OFFSIDE, HAND BALL, or an aggressive tackle, or issues a YELLOW or RED card to the opposing team. The referee may also award a FREE KICK for contact between players that places a player at a disadvantage in the play. This includes contact by extension of arms, head butting, hip checking, and all other contact that impedes the player from playing the ball.

**Drop Ball Restart** – A DROP BALL RESTART is used after a stoppage in play due to a player injury, or outside interference, or any other reason where the stoppage of play cannot be attributed to the actions of player(s) on only one team.

**Penalty Kicks** – A team is awarded a PENALTY KICK for the following infractions by a player on the defending team in the penalty area ( 18 yd box ):

1. An intentional hand ball by a player, other than the goalkeeper
2. Any infraction that would warrant a DIRECT FREE KICK if it occurred outside the penalty area

The ball shall be placed 12 yds from the goal line, centered on the net. Any player on the field may take the PENALTY KICK. All other players must maintain a distance of 10 yds from the ball, and be outside the 18 yd box and behind the penalty mark. The ball is considered in play as soon as the kicker makes contact. The kicker cannot touch the ball again until another player, including the goalkeeper, has made contact with the ball.

***Game Officiating – The crew shall be age-appropriate for the games they are officiating. Preference is for the referee(s) to be two (2) age groups older ie U15 age referee for U11 age game, but, if the referee(s) have the aptitude AND fortitude, they may referee games only one (1) age group younger. For tournament games, the officiating crew shall consist of either two (2) referees, OR one (1) referee and two (2) linepersons.***

**Roster Sheets** – The coach(s) shall complete the game report sheet ( roster sheet ) with name of opposing team, date, location, etc, and sign before giving to the referee at the start of each game. All players assigned to the team must be included in the roster. Players unable to play should have their name crossed off in the roster. Players suspended from playing shall be identified in the roster by a capital “S” or the word “suspended” written beside their name. Players who have been called up shall be added at the bottom of the roster and identified by a capital “C” or the word “call-up” beside their name. The referee shall collect a roster sheet from each team, and verify that the jersey numbers on the roster sheets match the players for each team before the start of the game.

The referee shall track the goals, YELLOW cards, & RED cards for each player in the roster. Players/coach(s) that are to be referred to the league for multi-game suspensions shall have the capital “M” written in the Ejection/Red card column, or beside the coach’s name.

**Yellow Card** – A player can be given a warning for any of the following offenses. A repeat occurrence, or any offense of a sufficiently severe nature, or any action that shows disrespect towards any player, coach, or the referee will result in a YELLOW card:

1. “unsportsmanlike behavior” – this includes hard fouls considered reckless, holding an opponent, deliberately taking a HAND BALL infraction to prevent an opponent from gaining possession of the ball, saying or doing things to confuse or distract an opponent such as jumping in front of a FREE KICK, preventing the goalkeeper from putting the ball in play, adopting any threatening posture, intentionally deceiving the game officials, or any other action or comment which, in the opinion of the referee, is unsporting
2. intentionally impeding the goalkeeper’s movement to play the ball

3. any dissent, by words or actions, including verbal abuse
4. persistently breaking the rules
5. delaying the start of play after a stoppage
6. failing to maintain proper distance on a corner kick, free kick, goal kick, or throw-in
7. disregard for any referee's instruction or warning
8. too many players on the field – card to last player entering the play area

A player who receives a YELLOW card is sent off the field, and may not be eligible as a substitute player for a period of 5 minutes. The team may replace the player – the team does not play short. The referee will report any YELLOW cards to the league co-ordinator for that age group.

**Red Card** – A player **must** be shown a RED card for any of the following offenses. The player will serve a minimum one (1) game suspension, and will be ineligible to play the next scheduled game. A RED card is issued for:

1. a serious foul which includes the use of excessive force or brutality towards any player
2. violent conduct with the intent to injure any player, coach, or referee
3. intentionally making contact with the goalkeeper trying to pickup the ball
4. deliberately taking a HAND BALL infraction in the penalty area to prevent a scoring opportunity
5. fouling an opponent to prevent an obvious scoring opportunity ie tripping, holding to stop a breakaway
6. using offensive, insulting, or threatening language or actions towards anyone
7. arguing with, or making any physical motion towards the game officials
8. receiving a 2<sup>nd</sup> YELLOW card in any one game

The player receiving the RED card must leave the field area before play resumes, and must not return. Any undue delay, in the opinion of the referee, could result in a game forfeit. A substitute player is NOT permitted. The referee will report any RED cards to the league co-ordinator for that age group.

**Additional Suspensions** – The league may increase the number of games in the suspension for the following offenses. A minimum additional three (3) game suspension will be served by any player or any coach for:

1. failure to immediately leave the field area
2. returning to the field area
3. any aggressive/violent conduct towards anyone ( game official, player, coach, spectator )
4. any comments or actions with racial overtones towards anyone
5. spitting at anyone
6. using suspended/ineligible players – both coach(s) and player(s)

The player/coach must meet with league officials, and serve the suspension before re-instatement. All suspensions will carry over into playoff games until fully served.

Penalties for repeat offenders will be adjusted as needed by the league, up to and including indefinite suspension from the league.

**Year-end Tournaments** – All rules used during the season are applicable for the year-end tournaments except as noted and added below:

1. Each team will be guaranteed a minimum of two (2) playoff games
- 2(a). For the **U9, U11** and **U13** teams – both Boys and Girls and **U15G**, the season standings will determine the ‘A’ side and ‘B’ side for playoffs with teams being equally split into the “A” and “B” Divisions (**with divisions having at least 6 teams in the division**). In the event there are an odd number of teams in the division, the “A” side will have an even number of teams, and the “B” side will have an odd number of teams. Group play within the A and B divisions will consist of either Round Robin play or single elimination based on ranking and set out by the convenor of that Division at beginning of the year. For divisions with 5 teams, there will be a 5 Team Double Elimination format based on ranking from regular season standings.
- 2(b). For the **U15B** and **U18** Divisions – both Boys and Girls, all teams will vie for an “A” Championship. Divisions with even teams will be separated into both A and B pools consisting of either Round Robin play or single elimination based on ranking from regular season standings and set out by the convenor of that Division at beginning of the year. For divisions with 5 teams, there will be a 5 Team Double Elimination format based on ranking from regular season standings

3. If the games are tied at FULL TIME, they shall proceed to extra time with Golden Goal in effect. Extra time sessions begin with a coin toss to determine side of play. For the age groups U9-U11 there shall be a ten (10) minute session with teams maintaining the same side throughout extra time. For the age groups U13-U18 there will be a twenty (20) minute session of extra time with teams switching sides after ten minutes. The game shall be won by the first goal ( Golden Goal Rule applies ). In the event that the game remains tied after Extra time, both teams will record a tie. League Finals will follow the same format as described above but will proceed to a Shootout to determine a winner.
4. In League Finals, games tied after the Extra Time session will proceed to a Shootout following FIFA rules to determine the winner. Five (5) players chosen by each team from the players on the field shall alternate taking penalty kicks. A team may choose to change their goalkeeper to any player on the field. A coin toss will decide which team goes first. If the score remains tied after the first five shooters, it will proceed to sudden-death shootout. All players that were on the field at the end of the game must participate in the Shootout prior to a player shooting twice.
5. Only players registered with the town's minor soccer association are eligible to play
6. Players can only play for one (1) team in the same age group during the playoffs. This does not include players who regularly A/P to an older team.
7. Players assigned at season start to an older age group are not eligible to play in the younger age group.
8. Call-up players are permitted, but may only be used to 'makeup' for absent players. Call-ups may not be used to cover for suspended players – for example, if a team had a roster of 14 players during the season, call-ups can't be used to increase team number over 14. Similarly, if the team of 14 players has one player suspended, call-ups can't be used to increase team number over 13.
9. Teams providing a roster with, or using suspended/ineligible players shall forfeit the game.
10. Each team shall provide a completed team roster to the referee at the start of each game.



## Scoring Configurations and Tie-Breaking Scenarios

Both in Regular Season Games and in Playoff Games the following configuration is used:

Wins – 2 pts (including a maximum goal differential of 5 as outlined earlier in Rules)

Loss – 0 pts

Tie – 1 pt

The following applies to determining standings both at the end of Regular Season Standings and Playoff Pool Standings in the event teams are tied in points.

1. Head to Head (if 3 or more teams tied this rule does not apply)
2. Most wins
3. Goals for minus goals against (Goal Differential)
4. Goals for
5. Goals against
6. Coin Toss

## U9 Age Group – 7v7 Play

For the U9 Age Group – both Girls and Boys, the NHSL will use 7 v 7 ( 1 goalkeeper plus 6 players)– OSA - Laws of the Small Sided Game which can be found at the following link.

Addition for 2018 – **Opponents are to be on their own half of the field when a goal kick is being taken.** (In the Spirit of the Retreat Line principle found in the Laws of the Small Sided Game)

The following exceptions are noted :

The match shall consist of 2 – thirty minute halves (not 25 mins). (Law 7)

Offside calls will be made by a referee. (Law 11)

Field sizes and nets will vary depending on centre.