

BERKSHIRE COUNTY YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE

Bylaws

I. Purpose

The BCYSL shall provide at least a fall and spring league for competitive town teams. The winning teams in each age group in the Spring season are eligible to represent BCYSL at the Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC).

II. Age Levels

Players will be grouped in age according to USYSA guidelines. The BCYSL age divisions are:

- Boys and Girls Under 16 years of age
- Boys and Girls Under 14 years of age
- Boys and Girls Under 12 years of age
- Boys and Girls Under 10 years of age

III. Affiliation

- A. All players, coaches, assistant coaches, coordinators and any other individuals working within BCYSL and its participating clubs and teams must be affiliated with the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association (MYSA) and all the appropriate paperwork and fees must be remitted for the current season to the same
- B. All adult personnel must have completed and submitted the required KidSafe Form to Mass Youth Soccer in accordance with the policies set forth by MYSA under the KidSafe Program
- C. All players, coaches, assistant coaches, coordinators and any other individuals working within the clubs of the BCYSL must have a signed Zero Tolerance Policy on file with their club.
- D. All clubs participating in the BCYSL must be represented before it by both an affiliated Club Coordinator and Assistant Club Coordinator without exception. At least one of these individuals is expected to attend both the pre-season Club Coordinators meeting and the Team Entry Deadline meeting. Failure to do so will result in a \$25 fine to the club and possible exclusion from League play.

IV. Rosters

- A. Team Size
For the spring season, the maximum team size is 18 players plus 3 alternates. All 21 players can play during league play; however only 18 players can play at MTOC and at most MYSA sanctioned tournaments. There is no roster limit for the Fall season.
- B. Roster Changes
Rosters for MTOC must be finalized with the BCYSL Registrar by May 15th. No changes will be approved after that date. Any roster changes must be consistent with MYSA rules, and communicated to and approved by the Registrar prior to the change. A check made out to BCYSL in the amount of \$10 must accompany each roster change request.
- C. Dual Rostered Players
All MAPLE or other Premier League players playing on a BCYSL team must have this information noted in the far right column on the MYSA roster (please use an asterisk *)
- D. Out of Town Players
All players are required to play with the club representing the town of their residence. In general, school districting will be a greater factor than postal districting in making a determination. Waivers may be applied for and may be granted by the Executive Board under the following circumstances:

1. Grandfathering
If a player has played with a team previously, they may continue to play though their residence has changed
2. School Choice
If a player attends school in another town they may play on the team with their schoolmates
3. Stranding
If there is no team in the town of their residence for their age division or they have been cut from the club representing their town then they may play for another town

V. Registration

- A. Rosters
All rosters must be submitted to the League Registrar on the official MYSA roster form, typed and in triplicate. This form must be signed by the head coach and the club's registrar. All players must be listed in alphabetical order by last name and with uniform numbers. This Roster form must be submitted at the mandatory pre season Coaches Meeting. Any team not represented at this meeting by a listed coach will be fined \$25 and their rosters will not be processed.
- B. Player Passes
All rosters must be accompanied with all of the player passes listed on the roster, including the coaches, or they will not be processed. All passes must have current photos and signatures or they will not be processed. All passes will be laminated by the BCYSL Registrar.
- C. Out of Town Players
Any players having a listed residence different from the town that their club represents must have a completed and approved waiver form on file with BCYSL
- D. Zero Tolerance Forms
All players being listed on a roster must also have a completed Zero Tolerance Form on file with their club.

VI. Game Schedules

- A. Changes
 1. Schedule changes will be permitted after the team entry deadline but only with the consent of the coaches of both teams. All requests for game changes must be made to the Referee Assignor who will inform the League of the request and verify that each coach is agreeable and that the fee has been paid. The team making the request must remit a certified check in the amount of \$100 for each change to the League Treasurer before the change will be considered by the Assignor. All teams are allowed the opportunity to block out conflicting dates prior to the creation of the season schedule and are expected to research any possible conflicts beforehand
 2. Any team attempting to change a scheduled game by directly contacting their opponent and/or assigned referee shall be fined \$200 and brought up before the League's Executive Board for consideration for suspension or ban from participation in BCYSL
- B. Cancellations
 1. Games shall be played as scheduled unless there is no referee present or the field is unplayable due to weather or unsafe field equipment
 2. The home coach is responsible for notifying the opposing coach and referee of a cancellation no later than two hours prior to the scheduled start of the game. If such notice is not made then only the referee can cancel a game and will make their determination at the field
 3. For any cancellation that is made prior to the start of the game, the official will be compensated 50% of the normal fee by BCYSL at the conclusion of the season
 4. Any match that is abandoned after it has started will be subject to Section VII. Local Playing Rules (B)(8). The official will retain all of their fees regardless of how much of the match was played.

C. No Show Teams

Any team that does not appear within 15 minutes of a scheduled game will be charged with a forfeit loss and assessed a \$100 fine. The official will be paid their normal fee by the BCYSL at the end of the season

D. Rescheduling

1. Any canceled game or abandoned match, not played to "official" completion, must be rescheduled
2. Make-up dates for canceled games are to be handled by the Club Coordinators for the teams involved and the League's Referee Assignor. Coaches are expected to work through their Coordinators.
3. Rescheduling, but not the actual game, must take place within 7 days of the canceled game. After 7 days the game will be posted as a NP or No Play.
4. The home team will be expected to take "the lead" on rescheduling
5. The League's Executive Board shall be notified of any team avoiding rescheduling in an attempt to gain an advantage in the League's standings. Such teams shall be assessed a loss, reviewed and subject to fines and disciplinary action.
6. If a game is deemed relevant to playoff positioning it will be automatically rescheduled by the League's Executive Board at a site and time of the Board's choosing

E. No Show Officials

In the occurrence of an official not being present at the start of a game, the following provisions exist

1. Option A – Do not play game and refer to rescheduling procedures
2. Option B – Play game as an unofficial "Friendly" and refer to rescheduling procedures
3. Option C – Play with an official that is agreed upon by both coaches, game result will stand

** Note: Both coaches must sign a makeshift scorecard and indicate Game or Friendly and remit it to the League's Scorekeeper by mail

VII. Local Playing Rules

A. Current FIFA International rules with United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) modifications shall govern play with the exceptions listed herein. If a team is playing in another league, the team shall abide by the constitution and bylaws of that league as appropriate.

B. Length of Games

1. U16 games will consist of two 40 minute halves
2. U14 games will consist of two 35 minute halves
3. U12 games will consist of two 30 minute halves
4. U10 games will consist of two 25 minute halves
5. Time is running time; time may be extended at the discretion of the referee
6. No overtime period except in playoff games and in accordance with Section XI. MTOC Berths (C)(4)
7. The half-time interval shall be 10 minutes unless both coaches request less
8. An official game is one where three-quarters of the game has been played

C. Substitutions

1. The number of substitutions is unlimited
2. With the consent of the referee, substitutions may be made at the following times:

- i. Prior to a throw-in in your favor
- ii. Prior to your opponents throw-in so long as your opponent is also substituting and your sub is already in the midfield substitution area
- iii. Prior to a goal-kick by either team
- iv. After a goal by either team
- v. For an injured player when the referee stops play. The opposing team shall also be permitted an equal number of substitutions
- vi. At half-time
- vii. Note: substitutions are NOT allowed on corner kicks or free kicks

D. Equipment

1. Uniforms

- i. Players shall wear uniforms consisting of matching shirts, shorts, and socks.
- ii. Pants may not be worn in such a manner as to cover shorts or visible under uniform shorts. Exceptions shall be made to this rule for the goalkeeper only with the approval of the referee

2. Shin Guards- are mandatory at all games and practices

3. Jewelry- is not permitted

4. Game Balls

- i. The home team shall provide the referee an acceptable hand stitched game ball.
- ii. Teams shall use an official size 5 ball for U14 & U16 games and a size 4 ball for U12 & U10 games.
- iii. Water absorbent balls (i.e. leather, etc.) shall not be used if significant moisture is present on the playing field

5. Casts- No player wearing a hard cast shall be permitted to participate in a BCYSL match. Soft casts, splints and braces will be allowed so long as any stiff or hard parts are sufficiently wrapped in a soft protective material.

E. Rosters & Player Passes

1. Coaches shall provide the referee with a copy of the team roster and the pass cards for the players and coaches on that roster prior to the start of the game. If pass cards and rosters are not available at the start of the game the game shall be played as scheduled with a 3-0 forfeit loss recorded for the team without cards and roster unless cards and roster are retrieved and presented by the end of the match.
2. A maximum of three coaches are allowed to be on the sidelines during a game
3. Referees shall return the pass cards at the conclusion of the game except for pass cards of ejected players or coaches. These will be retained and forwarded directly to the Head Referee

F. Misconduct

1. General

Any behavior by a player, coach, spectator, or referee that is judged unbecoming or inappropriate shall be referred to the Head Referee for review and action

2. Players

i. Yellow Cards

A player receiving a yellow card must leave the field of play but may return at the next substitution

ii. All on-field behavior whether sanctioned by the referee or not is subject to review by the League

3. Coaches

Any coach ejected from a game will be reviewed by the Head Referee in accordance with Section VII. (F)(4) for further suspension or ban

4. Misconduct Reviewed

All cards will be reviewed by the Head Referee and suspensions or bans levied at his/her discretion in

coordination with the Coordinators of the two clubs whose teams were involved in the incident. If a mutual agreement to a suspension or ban cannot be reached among those three then a Disciplinary Panel will be convened to seek a resolution to the issue.

- i. The Disciplinary Panel will be appointed by the Executive Board and chaired by the Head Referee. It shall be made up of a minimum of four of the League's Club Coordinators or their designees with the exception of the two clubs whose teams were involved in the incident, they are ineligible to sit on the Disciplinary Panel. Any decisions that the Disciplinary Panel reaches shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Board and the two clubs whose teams were involved in the incident.
- ii. Appeals- Decisions made by the Disciplinary Panel may be appealed directly to the Executive Board. A non-refundable \$200 fee must accompany a completed Appeal Request Form within 10 days of the rendering of the Disciplinary Panels decision. The forms and fees shall be sent by certified mail directly to the League's Secretary.

G. Minimum Team Strength

A team will be assessed a forfeit loss if less than 8 players (including goalkeeper) are available 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. For U-10 games, the minimum number of players is 5. If at any time during the match the number of available players should drop below these minimums then the match shall be immediately terminated and a forfeit loss given to the team in violation.

H. Field

1. The home team shall provide a properly lined field with 5' corner flags, properly anchored goals and secured goal nets.
2. All fields will carry an additional restraining line 3 yards off of the touchline on the spectators side of the field extending from goal line to goal line
3. A technical area for each team will be laid out on the players side of the field. Each technical area will be a box measuring 5 yards by 15 yards. This box will be located 3 yards off of the touchline and 10 yards from the halfway line.

I. Positioning

1. Teams
Players and coaches will remain within the boundaries of their respective technical areas at all times during the game unless substituting or unless they have been given permission by the referee to leave
2. Spectators
All spectators must remain on the side of the field opposite the teams and behind the restraining line. No spectators are allowed behind either goal line.

VIII. Score Reporting

- A. Each club will have a designated Score Reporter who will report directly to the League's Scorekeeper
- B. Each club's score reporter will report all of their clubs scores via one e-mail, both home and away for each weekend of play, by the end of the day Tuesday or within 48 hours in the case of a make-up or rescheduled game
- C. Failure to do so shall result in a \$10 non-reporting fine for each unreported score. An additional \$10 fine per unreported score shall be levied for each 7 days that passes after the first week.
- D. U-10 teams are also required to report scores in the same manner. This information is used for team placement, and in accordance with USYSA policies, will not be used to keep standings
- E. Any coach reporting a false result will be immediately suspended from the BCYSL and reinstated only after a majority vote of the board.

IX. Match Protests

All protests must be entered within two days after the match. Any protests will be referred to the Executive Board for review and decision. The special board meeting will be chaired by the President and must have at least two other board members present. The decision of the Board is final. Any protest must be accompanied with a \$50 fee from the town protesting. The fee will be returned only if the protest is upheld in whole or part.

X. Standings

- A. Standings will be kept for all age groups above U-10
- B. Standings in each age group will be determined by points from highest to lowest
- C. During league play a team is awarded three points for a win and one point for a tie
- D. If at the end of a season two teams are tied in points then the following tie breaking system will be used:
 - 1. The result of head-to-head competition-
If two teams played each other and split games and their records were otherwise identical, regardless of the scores of their games against each other, they would still be considered tied
 - 2. Record against common opponents, game by game, from best to worst team-
If both teams are tied for a place in the standings then their record against the highest placing team would be considered in terms of win/loss. If they both had the same result then their record against the next highest placing team would be compared and so on down to the last place team. If one team won and the other lost during any round of comparisons then the winner would break the tie and take the place.
 - 3. The team with the most shutouts
 - 4. If the tie breaking is being done only to determine playoff seeding then a coin toss will be performed by the League's Scorekeeper without the coaches being present to determine seeding
 - 5. If the tie breaking is being done to determine an automatic MTOC berth or a final place in the playoffs
 - i. An additional game will be played between the tied teams at 6pm on the Wednesday following the last weekend of regular season play at a field to be determined by the Executive Board
 - ii. If the Executive Board determines that a playoff game cannot be played in time for MTOC due to weather conditions then a coin toss will be performed by the League President without the coaches being present to break the tie

XI. MTOC Berths

- A. Qualification
 - 1. Only teams playing in BCYSL are eligible to receive MTOC berths from the League
 - 2. Teams who cannot field a squad for MTOC are ineligible for a MTOC berth regardless of their regular season record and may not participate in any playoffs. In the event that a team drops out of the BCYSL playoffs or MTOC after being awarded a berth, a replacement may be appointed at the complete discretion of the Executive Board. Such a team will be subject to a drop out fine of up to \$300.
- B. Placement
 - 1. The best team in each division based on BCYSL regular season standings and/or tiebreakers will automatically represent BCYSL in their division at MTOC.
 - 2. If there is a wild card berth in the division then the 2nd and 3rd best teams in the division based on BCYSL regular season standings and/or tiebreakers will playoff for the berth.
- C. Playoffs
 - 1. A playoff will always be held to determine the BCYSL entry for MTOC wild card berths unless weather or other circumstances prevent one from being held. In such a case the final berth will be awarded at the discretion of the Executive Board with respect to the regular season final standings in each division

2. Locations and Game Times
Fields and game times for each divisional playoff will be set by the Executive Board prior to the regular season. There will be ABSOLUTELY NO CHANGES in the schedule once it is set. Any team unable to field a legal squad will forfeit and be subject to a "drop out" fine.
3. Breaking Tied Playoff Games
 - i. No playoff game may end without a winner
 - ii. Any game ending regular time in a tie will play an overtime period of 15 minutes with the first team to score being declared the winner (Golden Goal).
 - a. The first 5 minutes of the period will be played with reduced sides of 9v9 (which includes the Goalkeeper, 8 field players and 1 keeper)
 - b. At the first stoppage of play after the 5 minute mark, rosters will be reduced to 7v7 for the remaining 10 minutes of the overtime period
 - iii. If after the 15 minute Golden Goal overtime the game is still tied then a minimum five round penalty kick shootout will determine the winner in accordance with FIFA rules. The shootout must continue until a winner is determined. Only players on the field at the end of the final overtime period are eligible for the shootout.

XII. Fees

- A. Fees for team entry and participation shall be decided by the Executive Board prior to each season
- B. Team entry fees shall be due and payable at the team entry deadline meeting
- C. Town coordinators shall pay all participation fees required by the BCYSL to the treasurer no later than 14 days prior to the first league game. The treasurer is authorized to collect the forfeit fee of \$150 from any town that does not pay their fees in full by the date set by the board.
- D. Referees
 1. Teams will pay the officials directly before the start of each game with each team paying their half of the fees in cash. Any situation where an official is not properly paid before the game will result in a forfeit and the assessment of forfeit fees.
 2. Officials fee structure is as follows:
\$40 for all U-12, U-14 and U-16 games
\$30 for all U-10 games
\$20 for each Assistant Referee if requested or required
 3. BCYSL will pay for all referees involved in playoff games
- E. Performance Bond
Each town shall post a bond of \$50 per team not to exceed \$150 per town prior to the first game of the season, said bond to be forfeited to the league if the team forfeits any game for any reason not permitted by these bylaws. The President shall have sole discretion whether the conditions of these bylaws have been satisfied and whether the bond is to be forfeited. All bonds not forfeited shall be returned to each town at the conclusion of the season or retained as the next year's bond at the option of the team. In case of forfeit, a new bond must be posted prior to the next league game for that town. Forfeit games will be recorded as a 3 to 0 score.

XIII. Referees

- A. Duties
Referees are expected to arrive 20 minutes before the start of the match, check rosters and passes at every game, fill out and sign the scorecard at the end of the match and enforce all of the BCYSL Local Playing Rules as well as the FIFA Laws of The Game to the best of their ability
- B. System
The referee system for officiating outdoor games will be the diagonal system of control (DSC) consisting of three

officials: one center referee and two assistant referees. When certified referees are unavailable as assistants, club or team linesmen will be utilized. Uncertified officials will not be paid.

C. Fees

Referees shall be paid in accordance with Section XII. Fees (D)(2)

D. Reports

1. Referee reports shall be submitted, if necessary, within 3 days of the game in question to the Head Referee. The Head Referee will choose to forward the report to the board or resolve the issue himself. Either way, a response shall be made to the filer of the report within a reasonable amount of time.
2. All yellow and red cards shall be reported on the scorecards and also reported directly to the Head Referee verbally or by e-mail within 3 days of the game.

XIV. Sportsmanship

A. Zero Tolerance Policy

1. Spectators

- i. No parent or other spectator shall address the Referee or Assistants at any time
- ii. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Spectators making derogatory comments to players of either team
 - b. Disputing calls during or after the game
 - c. Remarks to the referee to watch certain players or attend to rough play
 - d. Yelling at the referee, EVER, including criticism, sarcasm, harassment, intimidation or feedback of any kind before, during or after the game
- iii. The only allowable exceptions to the above are:
 - a. Responding to a referee who has initiated a conversation with a parent or spectator
 - b. Pointing out an emergency or safety issues
- iv. Penalties
In the opinion of the referee, depending on the severity of the offense, the referee may take any of the following actions:
 - a. The Referee will issue a verbal warning to the offending party
 - b. The Referee will stop the game and instruct the parent / spectator to leave the field
 - c. The Referee will stop the game and instruct the Coaches to direct the parent / spectator to leave the field
 - d. The Referee should abandon the game, if the spectator does not leave the field

2. Players

Communications between players and referees are governed by the FIFA Laws of the Game. Penalties associated with violating the Laws of the Game will be governed by the Laws themselves and Section VII. Local Playing Rules (F)

3. Coaches and Assistants

It is the responsibility of all Coaches to maintain the highest standards of conduct for themselves, their players and supporters in all matches. Failure to do so undermines the Referee's authority and the integrity of the game resulting in a hostile environment for players, the referee, coaches, assistant coaches and spectators

- i. Coaches may not interact directly or indirectly with the coaches or players of the opposing team during the game in any manner that may be construed as negative, hostile or sarcastic either by way of demonstrative actions and gestures or by ill-intentioned remarks
- ii. Coaches may not offer dissent to any call made by the officials
- iii. Coaches are not to address the Referee during the game except to:

- a. Respond to a referee who has initiated a conversation
- b. Point out emergency or safety issues
- c. Make substitutions
- d. Ask the referee to repeat a call
- e. Ask for the time remaining in the half
- iv. Coaches are allowed to ask a referee after a game, in a polite and constructive way, to explain a law or foul but not judgment calls made during the game
 - a. Polite and friendly concern can be exchanged with the referee. If the polite tone of the conversation changes, the Referee may abandon the exchange at any time
 - b. Absolutely no sarcasm, harassment or intimidation is allowed
- v. Penalties
In the opinion of the referee, depending on the severity of the offense, the referee may take any of the following actions:
 - a. The referee may issue a verbal warning to the offending Coach or Assistant Coach
 - b. The Referee may eject the offending Coach or Assistant Coach. The Coach or Assistant Coach will be required to leave the field.
 - c. The Referee should abandon the game, if the Coach or Assistant Coach does not leave the field
- vi. Any additional penalties associated with the ejection of a coach will be governed by Section VII. Local Playing Rules (F)(3)

4. Referees

It is the responsibility of the Referees to maintain the highest level of professionalism at all times. Further it is the responsibility of the referees to control the game governed by the FIFA Laws of the Game with modifications as dictated by Section VII. Local Playing Rules. Referees will:

- i. Conduct themselves in a professional manner
- ii. Answer questions posed to them as allowed per the above guidelines in a prompt and courteous manner except that Referees do not have to explain judgment calls made during the game
- iii. Maintain their integrity and independence by not being influenced by acquaintances or by the Coaches or Assistant Coaches
- iv. Penalties
Referees will be subject to the League penalties in effect at the time of the offense

B. Expectations of Parents and Players

Players are expected to participate in practices and games. Parents are expected to participate by ensuring that their children are on time and picked up for both practices and games and that they have their equipment with them. If a player cannot be present for a scheduled game or practice, the coach should be notified in advance. Parents should support the coach, help maintain discipline, and promote good sportsmanship. If problems arise that cannot be mutually resolved, they shall be brought to and resolved by the Executive Board.

C. Expectations of Coaches

Promote good sportsmanship. Do not tolerate unsporting behavior (including foul or abusive language) by coaches, players or spectators. Promote good soccer through the development of game and ball skill. Maintain rosters and other necessary records. Be present for practices and games and schedule at least one practice per week. Develop coaching talent of others.

D. Injuries During Games

Code of conduct for injury on the field is for the team in control of the ball to kick it out of bounds to stop play and for the opposing team to give it back to the team that kicked it out when play resumes.

XV. Appeals

Actions by the BCYSL Executive Board may be appealed in accordance with USYSA and MYSA bylaws governing appeals procedures. The appeals procedure shall follow the procedure outlined in the USYSA appeals bylaw. Appeals procedures shall apply to all organizations, clubs, players and coaches of the BCYSL. No affiliate of

BCYSL shall limit or deny a player, coach, team, etceteras, to appeal an action of the Executive Board. When an appeal is made to the Executive Board concerning an action they have taken, an Appeals Committee shall be established by the EB consisting of no less than four members of the BCYSL Disciplinary Panel. The BCYSL Executive Board shall determine the final composition of the Appeals Committee. Members of the Appeals Committee will not include representation from the directly involved clubs or organizations. The president or his designee of the BCYSL Executive Board shall chair the Appeals Committee but shall vote only in the case of a tie. An appeal must be made in writing within ten days of the Executive Board's ruling or action. An appeal must be accompanied by a nonrefundable \$200 check made payable to BCYSL or it will be considered incomplete. An appeal must also include seven copies of all documents pertinent to the appeal along with a completed Appeal Request Form or it will be considered incomplete. The BCYSL Appeals Committee must hold a hearing, which all parties have been notified and invited, within fourteen days of the receipt of a "completed" appeal. The BCYSL Appeals Committee will render a decision in writing to all parties in the appeal within seven days of the hearing. No party to an appeal may engage the services of an attorney. In order to participate in a hearing an attorney must be a direct party to the appeal and be acting in the capacity of a coach, player or administrator and not as an attorney. Once the appeal decision has been reached and rendered by the BCYSL Appeals Committee further appeal may be made to the MYSA Appeals Committee pursuant to the Bylaws and procedures of MYSA.

XVI. Travel

Any person required to travel to fulfill BCYSL duties will be reimbursed at the current Federal amount. Any overnight stay will be provided with a \$50/day meal allowance.

XVII. Adoption Clause and Date

- A. These bylaws incorporate and abide by the BCYSL constitution as written and executed on March 6, 2005 and any future alterations or modification made thereto
- B. These bylaws were adopted as amended on September 14, 2005