

GARLAND SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

LEAGUE RULES

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GARLAND SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

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GARLAND SOCCER ASSOCIATION, INC.

LEAGUE RULES

INTRODUCTION & STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. *Purpose:*** The Garland Soccer Association, Inc. (hereafter referred to as GSAI) has been formed to create and maintain a soccer program for the residents of Garland, Texas; both of the City and the Independent School District. This program is provided in order to organize a competitive activity by which to foster and promote good sportsmanship, clean and healthy fun, development of athletic skills, and fellowship among players, coaches and spectators.

All participants are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which supports the purpose of the GSAI at all times. In the event of conflict or disagreement, all participants are advised to pursue any such problems through the established and proper channels. Any case of significant or continued activity which causes disruption to the overall purpose shall be dealt with by GSAI to the extent necessary to remove or eliminate such disruption(s).

- B. *Authority:*** GSAI is a member in good standing of the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA); which in turn, is affiliated with the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the official soccer governing bodies of the USA and the world, respectively. As such, GSAI is the official Garland soccer program recognized by the entire world, and has been given jurisdiction over organized soccer within the prescribed physical boundaries.

All teams (coaches and players) and parents, by the act of their forming teams, submitting contracts and rosters, and payment of fees, agree to accept the authority of and to abide by the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations, all decisions of the Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") and NTSSA Code of Ethics/Conduct.

The voting membership of GSAI is made up of the coach of each registered team. Only this group may vote on changes to GSAI By-Laws, League Rules and/or for members of the Board.

The Board is empowered to set all playing laws and operating rules and regulations within the structure of the By-Laws.

- C. *Application:*** The GSAI Rules and Regulations are designed specifically for the youth play. However, all adult teams shall be guided by these rules in order to enjoy GSAI facilities and NTSSA affiliation.

RULE 1. SOCCER YEAR

The Soccer Year shall begin September 1 and end on the following August 31.

RULE 2. PLAYING SEASON

A. Will normally consist of two (2) playing seasons:

1. Each season will usually be based on a ten (10) game playing schedule.
2. Each division has the option for an inter-division Cup Tournament, with Board Approval.
3. The season playing dates shall be set by the GSAI Board, with consideration of weather patterns and a minimum of conflict with other organized sports.
4. A playing season has begun for all divisions on the day the first regularly scheduled game is played by any team in the Association. The playing season has ended for any division when the last scheduled game for that division's Cup tournament is complete, if played.

NOTE: It is recommended that coaches and/or managers contact the players still eligible to play on the teams no later than February 1st in the spring and no later than August 1st in the fall. This will let the players know the team is going to participate again this season, and the coaches and/or managers will know who is returning and who is not.

RULE 3. ORGANIZATION MEETINGS

In order to develop and maintain two-way communication, various organizational meetings are to be held. It is the intent of GSAI that all participants not only receive all pertinent information about the program but also have adequate and continuing opportunity to make their inputs to the program. The following are considered by GSAI to be minimum and required for each playing season:

A. General meetings initiated by the Board:

1. At least two (2) weeks prior to opening day.
2. All teams must be represented (refer to By-Laws for rule on proxy voting).
3. An office member/staff will establish a record of attending teams, notifying appropriate Directors of teams failing to attend.
4. The meeting shall cover: Registration; any revisions of Rules and Regulations; changes to forms, administrative procedures or responsibilities; deadlines; or any questions or problems from the floor. With proper notification, revisions to the By-Laws may be addressed.

B. Division meetings initiated by the Director:

Each Division Director shall conduct at least one organization meeting for all the coaches/teams representatives before playing schedules are established. The Director shall submit a report of the agenda and the attendees to the Board. These meetings shall cover:

1. Division organization (number of teams, team color policy, division structure, field maintenance policy, net policy, tie in standings, trophy policy, and post season tournament procedures.)

NOTE: Should two teams in the same age division (i.e., Under 10 Boys) desire the same name, the first choice for that name shall rest with the team which has used the name in GSAI competition the longer. The addition of adjectives, numbers or Roman numerals to a proper name will be acceptable if the coaches involved agree to the manner in which the teams are differentiated.

2. GSAI By-Laws and Rules and Regulations, with special emphasis on revisions.
3. Any questions or problems brought out by team representatives for action by the Board.

C. Team meetings initiated by the coach:

GSAI strongly recommends that each coach/team representative conduct a meeting with at least one of the parents or guardians of each player. These meetings should be held prior to the start of scheduled play and cover at least:

1. GSAI By-Laws and Rules and Regulations, especially for new participants.
2. Team rules with emphasis on practice schedules, team support, notification procedures, and required equipment.
3. Schedules, fees and post season plans.
4. NTSSA/GSAI conduct regulations, with specific notification on NTSSA Rule XI.
5. A brief review of the significant Laws of the Game for additional enjoyment of the game itself.
6. Any questions or problems brought out by the parents for action or consideration by the Board.

RULE 4. AGE REQUIREMENTS

A. Age Division Brackets:

Players will be bracketed by age according to NTSSA and USYSA as follows:

- Under 6 (3, 4 & 5 years old)
- Under 8 (6 & 7 years old)
- Under 10 (8 & 9 years old)
- Under 12 (10 & 11 years old)
- Under 14 (12 & 13 years old)
- Under 16 (14 & 15 years old)
- Under 19 (16, 17 & 18 years old)

Note: A player's age shall be counted as of July 31 of the immediately preceding soccer year.

1. Routine:

- a. Players will normally be expected to participate in their regular age bracket.
- b. Players who have not attained the proper age to be eligible for Under 12 play shall not be allowed to play up on competitive (select or tryouts) teams or in tournaments designated as competitive (this includes recreational all-star teams).

2. Special Age Considerations:

- a. A player with advanced ability may play in the next age level with permission of that Age League Director. Except U6 may not play up.

A player may return to the proper age level provided:

- There is mutual agreement between parents and coaches.
- Proper releases are processed.
- Full season fee is paid.
- The player shall automatically be prohibited from participating in the next two (2) sanctioned games played by the new team. The only exception to the two (2) game prohibition shall be if such a transfer takes place between playing seasons, which includes all post season tournaments.

- b. A player with significant mental or physical deficiencies may petition GSAI to play in a division one age group lower than his actual age indicates. The petition, along with the GSAI recommendation, will be forwarded to the NTSSA Executive Committee for a decision.

However, such player must be of physical size so as not to gain an undue advantage over the other players in the younger division. A copy of each petition must be forwarded to the GSAI Board.

RULE 5. TEAMS

All teams registering to compete in the Fall, 1982 season, and subsequent seasons are expected to comply with team formation rules.

A. Leagues:

Teams shall be composed of age groupings as follows: (Ages for team grouping are established as the player's age on July 31 of the immediately preceding Soccer year).

1. Major League

Under Nineteen (19)

Under Sixteen (16)

Under Fourteen (14)

2. Minor League

Under Twelve (12)

Under Ten (10)

3. Preparatory League (Non-competitive)

Under Eight (8) (Players must be 6 years old on or before July 31 of the immediately preceding soccer year.)

Under Six (6) (Players must be 3 years old on or before July 31 of the immediately preceding soccer year, except that players 3 years old on or before December 31 of the soccer year may participate in the spring season.)

4. Select League

Under 12 and older teams formed without going through the player pool and using try-outs to select individual players.

B. Coaches:

GSAI will invite individuals who will promote and uphold the purpose and goals of the Association as set forth in the By-Laws.

1. Minor and Preparatory League coaches will be required to obtain a "G" license within one year and encouraged to obtain an "F" license within two years. Major League coaches are encouraged to obtain an "F" license within one year and an "E" license within two years. Select League coaches are encouraged to obtain a "D" license within one year. All assistant coaches are encouraged to obtain the appropriate license for their age group. The purpose of the clinics is to introduce modern soccer coaching methods, raise the level of play within GSAI and provide for the development of the players to their full potential.
2. A coach's invitation shall be periodically reviewed at the start of every season to determine if he/she is promoting and upholding the goals of GSAI. A coach's invitation may be withdrawn if he does not promote and uphold the goals of GSAI. In addition, any 3 members of the Association may petition the A & D committee to review a coach's invitation. The review will be conducted per the A & D Committee guidelines.
3. A coach, assistant coach or a parent must be present with and responsible for the team and spectators during any game. Otherwise, the team must forfeit. Coaches should refrain from instructing from the sidelines. This will promote player thinking and communicating during the game. Limited positive instruction will be permitted from coaches in the Under Six (6) and Eight (8) divisions.
4. Registration of coaches
 - Effective September 1, 1997 each coach, assistant coach and manager of a team shall be required to register with NTSSA each soccer year and must be officially listed on the team roster.
 - To register, every coach/asst. coach/manager shall successfully comply with the Risk Management evaluation process and submit the appropriate coach's registration fee (if applicable), with the team paperwork at the time of team registration. Team registration will be refused without the proper documentation and fees.
 - Any coach/trainer offering or participating in individual/team practices or training sessions, soccer camps, skills camps, and/or similar activities involving youth players, must be registered with NTSSA.

C. Team Size:

- Under 12 thru Under 19: 18 Maximum
 - Under 10: 14 Maximum
 - Under 8: 12 Maximum
 - Under 6: 8 Maximum
1. In Under 12 thru Under 19 a coach must carry a minimum of 14 players on his roster if there are players in the pool. The minimum roster size for Under 6 and 8 shall be two less

than the maximum. The minimum roster size for Under 10 shall be 9 players. The minimum roster size will be in effect if there are sufficient players in the pool.

2. A team roster including more than the maximum may cause that team to be ineligible for all NTSSA sanctioned tournament play, even though the excess number of players is dropped. The ineligibility would be in effect for the entire soccer year.
3. A coach may petition GSAI in writing for permission to exceed the maximum roster size. The petition, along with the GSAI recommendation, will be forwarded to the NTSSA Youth Commissioner for a decision.

D. Team Formation:

It is the desire of GSAI to see teams formed on a "neighborhood" basis in order to promote friendly play and to minimize transportation problems. These are considered to be "Association Teams." A team from outside GSAI applying to play within GSAI must meet the GSAI team formation rules and must be approved by the GSAI Board.

1. The formation of teams and the solicitation of coaches and new players is the responsibility of GSAI Officers and Directors. Once a team is formed and a player plays on that team, that player will normally remain with that team in subsequent seasons as long as the player desires and a "nucleus" of that team remains as a proper age bracket for the player.
 - a. Nucleus:

Shall be comprised of fifty (50) percent or six (6) returning players, which ever is less, from the previous season roster.
 - b. Returning Player:

One who has played for a team in GSAI in the most recent season, a player not meeting this definition is a new player.
2. A coach must accept all eligible returning players unless he can show ample proof that the player is a disciplinary problem and disruptive to the team. Under no circumstance shall any coach attempt to dismiss a player without GSAI approval.

The procedure shall be:

Step 1: Coach submit his written request to the Division Director who shall interview all interested parties and decide if the request is to be granted.

Step 2: The Director's decision may be appealed in writing to the A & D Committee. The A & D Committee shall address the issue within seven (7) days.

Step 3: The A & D Committee decision may be appealed in writing to the GSAI Board.

Note 1: "Player dismissal" shall be defined as including the failure or refusal of any coach to invite or notify a prior season player when the team is being reestablished for a new season.

Note 2: In the event a player is dismissed from a team during a season, the A & D Committee shall determine if any fee refund is appropriate.

3. Player Pool:

All new or transfer players must go to the player pool. A team which is playing in a preseason tournament may petition the GSAI Board to be allowed to draw from the player pool prior to the division coaches meeting.

- a. All coaches must submit their Team Information form showing which players are returning, desired team size, and neighborhood school from which they will draw, before players will be assigned to a team.
- b. Players will be assigned (rostered) to teams, at the age group director discretion, by one of the these two methods:
 - use of coordinating committee.
 - random draw by neighborhood schools by the coaches.
- c. The creation of "neighborhood" teams with players of the same year of birth will be prime consideration when assigning players from the player pool. The formation of the "new" team in an area shall be subject to the availability of area players in the pool to meet the minimum roster requirements of the existing team. All existing teams requiring players in the same area shall be assigned the minimum roster requirements before any more players are assigned to any team in that area.
- d. A returning player playing on a team outside his neighborhood may request to be placed in the player pool for placement on a neighborhood team. This player will be given priority in the player pool so if the Director is unable to place the player on a neighborhood team, that player may return to the former team.
- e. Under 12 thru Under 19 may actively seek players to be added to the player pool if **no** players are available in the player pool;
 - if the player is not presently registered on an existing team and the player did not play on a returning recreational or select team during the previous season,
 - only the *coach of record* may actively seek players.

- f. If a person becomes the head coach of a new team formed by GSAI in the current season, the coach may request their child be rostered to the new team he/she is coaching. In order for any person to request their child be transferred to a returning team they are coaching, they must have been the head coach of record for the previous two outdoor playing seasons, or asked to be the head coach of the returning team by a majority vote of the GSAI Board of Directors.
- g. If a player refuses a team assignment in their neighborhood or school zone, that player shall be placed at the bottom of the player pool. A second refusal by a player will disqualify that player from placement on any team for the remainder of the season. The player shall have the option of remaining in the player pool for the next season or withdrawing his name.
- h. Any recreational coach who knowingly and/or willingly drops a player from their roster, or advises that player not play for their team, whether through direct contact or coercion shall be called before either the GSA A&D committee or Board, and if found to be in violation of the offense, may be suspended from coaching.

E. Select Competition:

GSAI will provide separate divisions for select and invitational type competitions for the Under 12 Division and the Major League.

1. Team formation of select teams will be by qualified coaches who have received the approval of the GSAI Select team Review Committee. Tryouts will be held in strict accordance with NTSSA (see NTSSA 3.10 Rule 10 listed in index).
2. A coach should make the selection of players quickly so as to allow the placement of players who do not make the team. A player who had players who do not make the team. A player who had played with an Association team the previous season shall have the option of either going back to his former team or going into the player pool.
3. If a select team fails to qualify for a select league play, the coach may retain the players from his last "Association" team roster provided he meets the nucleus rule. All other players may return to their former team or go into the player pool for reassignment to other teams, but may not be assigned to the remaining nucleus of their select team.
4. Select competition shall not be allowed for Under 6, Under 8, Under 10 or Under 10 players playing up.
5. Players who are not eligible for Under 12 play are *not* "free agents" and are not eligible to attend tryouts.

F. Participation:

During any playing season the following rules of participation shall apply to all youth players:

1. Players may not participate in more than two (2) practice sessions per week except as authorized by the Director.
2. The GSAI week begins on Sunday and ends Saturday.
3. Any practice sessions shall be limited to two (2) hours of physical activity. Preparatory League (Under 6 & 8) shall be limited to one and one-half (1 1/2) hours of physical activity.
4. Coaches, or any parent working directly with a team, may not engage in any special training sessions with individuals or partial teams in addition to the two (2) practice sessions a player is allowed per week. The only exception shall be the case of a parent working individually with his own child or the case of special clinics after receiving Director's permission.

RULE 6. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. Standard Registration Forms:

Players must be registered with only one team at a time, except for players who may also be members of official school teams. All registration documentation must be complete and submitted to the Association 48 hours prior to the first regular season game.

1. Player Registration:

A properly executed registration form shall be filed for each player on every team registered with GSAI each soccer year. The only requirements for registrations during the year will be for any player added to the team.

 - a. The registration shall be in effect from September 1 through August 31.
 - b. Registration forms for players added during a playing season must be submitted to the Association at least 48 hours before the player's participation in a scheduled game.
 - c. Players may not be added after a season mid-point without Board approval. Requests shall be explained in writing.
 - d. A player is registered from the moment the player or the player's agent signs the registration form and pays the appropriate fees.

2. Age Verification:

All players are required to present proof of age when they register to play. Proof of age shall consist of a birth certificate, or birth registration issued by an appropriate agency, Board of Health records, passport, alien registration card issued by the United States government, a Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card (DD Form 1171) issued by the Uniformed Services of the United States or a certificate issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service attesting to age or a certificate of an American citizen born aboard issued by the appropriate government agency. *Hospital, baptismal or religious certificates will **not** be accepted.*

3. Releases:

Releases are required for any player who:

- a. Joins GSAI from any area outside GSAI jurisdiction unless that area is not part of any USSF affiliate.
- b. Moves from the GSAI area during a soccer year if the player chooses to play in the "new" area (the player has the right to continue play in GSAI for the balance of the soccer year, if preferred).
- c. Lives in the GSAI area but chooses to play in another association.

NOTE: Players requesting to go into the player pool or from disbanded teams do not have to obtain a release.

B. Team / Player Fees:

Payment of all fees is required prior to the start of scheduled play each season. Such fees include:

1. GSAI registration fees.
2. NTSSA fees, (which includes insurance premiums).

C. Penalties:

Any team or player not properly registered will forfeit all games in which the team or player participated. The participation by an unauthorized player(s) shall result in the forfeiture of the game(s). The coach and player(s) shall be required to appear before the A & D Committee. A violation of this rule shall result in the offending Coach, Assistant Coach or Manager/Administrator being suspended for a minimum of one year from all soccer related activities.

D. Miscellaneous:

Accident insurance is through NTSSA. This insurance covers players, coaches, and officials during any official soccer participation, including travel to and from that activity.

RULE 7. DIVISIONAL PROCEDURES

A. Game Reports:

1. Game reports are the official records of any game played and as such, shall constitute the information of record in any game appeal.
 - a. Game reports shall include the following:
 - Name and jersey number of all players present for the game.
 - Name, jersey number, and reason any player did not participate in the game according to Rule 7, Section B.
 - Game particulars (teams, score, date, time, etc.).
 - Identity of players who scored goals.
 - b. Game reports should include:
 - A realistic referee appraisal.
 - Field and equipment conditions (lack of nets, poor lines, tall grass).
 - c. Reports for a Saturday game shall be submitted on that Saturday. Reports for other games shall be submitted on the next following Saturday on which Association games are played.

Failure to submit game reports according to this schedule may result in that team having one (1) point taken from its season standings .

NOTE: Any coach having serious objections to the performance of a referee may register a formal complaint with the Referee Director who will then address it with the Referee Committee and act accordingly. The complaint must be in writing, stating all game particulars (teams, field, day, time, etc.) and report specific instances of referee performance or impropriety. Generalization or personality conflicts will not be addressed. Such complaints must be submitted within 72 hours of the game in question.

B. Mandatory Playing Time:

1. In order that players have an opportunity to develop their abilities and skills, learn teamwork and sportsmanship, GSAI requires that each "Association Team" member be played a minimum of 50% in every game (*including Cup Tournament games*), except for illness, injury or disciplinary reasons, in which case the coach must notify the player, the parents of the player, and the opposing coach prior to the beginning of the game that the minimum time has been reduced.
2. The registration forms will include a statement regarding mandatory playing time. GSAI requires that parents be advised of this rule when registration forms are signed.
3. The game report will include a section requiring the coach to report:
 - Players who participated according to this rule.
 - Explanation for any case where a player did *not* participate according to this rule.

4. Parents of players who are not given minimum playing time and a plausible explanation may appeal in writing to the GSAI Board in care of the A&D Chairman.
5. Failure of a coach to abide by this rule can lead to suspension or GSAI can revoke a coaches invitation to participate in the Association.
6. In youth recreational tournaments, each player is required to play a minimum of 50% of each game, including overtime. All players on a team must be invited to each tournament the team participates in.

C. Standings:

GSAI shall use the following three (3) point system to establish divisional team standing. (no league standings will be kept for the preparatory league).

To the winning team	3 points
To each team in a tie game	1 point

* NO POINTS AWARDED FOR GOALS or SHUTOUTS*

NOTE 1: A game forfeited by a team shall be record as a 1-0 "win" for the other team for a total of three points.

NOTE 2: If a team drops from the division during a season, all remaining games for that team will be recorded as forfeits.

D. Trophies:

GSAI will provide trophies in order to recognize player or team accomplishments, a follows:

1. Under 6 & 8: Each player will be given a memento to commemorate the season.
2. Under 10 through Under 16 divisions:
 - a. Trophies will be given to each player on the first place team in each division.
 - b. Second place teams will be awarded trophies in divisions of four (4) or more teams.
 - c. Third place teams will also be awarded trophies in divisions of six (6) or more teams.
 - d. Fourth place teams will also be awarded trophies in divisions of eight (8) or more teams.
 - e. GSAI will *not* provide duplicate trophies in the event of ties in the GSAI standings. The official tie-breaker procedure is:

If two teams are tied for a position in the standings which would result in the awarding of trophies, the winner of the position will be determined by:

- **Head-to-Head Competition:** If one game was played between the two teams, the winner claims the higher position in the standings. If they tied, or split two games, then,
- **Fewest accumulation of misconduct points greater than two, for League play that season, (1 point for Yellow and 2 points for Red or dismissal).** The team with the fewest accumulation of misconduct points handed out to players, coaches and spectators will take the higher position on the standings. If still tied,
- **Number of Wins:** If one of the teams has more wins, it claims the higher position in the standings. If still tied,
- **Goals Against:** The team with the fewest goals allowed in the game(s) played between the teams tied for the position will take the higher position in the standings. If a tie still exists,
- **Play-off or Coin Flip:**
 - If the teams are tied for first place (only), a play-off game to determine the winner be scheduled by the Director.
 - If the teams are tied for any other position in standings, the tie shall be broken with a coin flip.

NOTE: If the tie-breaker is required to determine the first place team, the other team shall be awarded second place honors. If the tie is between two teams for one remaining place of honor in the standings, the "losing" team shall receive no trophies.

f. No trophies will be given in the Under 19 division.

E. Sub-Divisions:

Any division (age group) consisting of a large number of teams may choose to form sub-divisions for ease of scheduling, separating teams of widely divergent skill levels, etc. Such a practice is strictly at the option of the Director.

1. The Director should develop a specific procedure for placing teams in various sub-divisions.
2. Each sub-division will be awarded trophies for the first and second place teams, and to the third place teams, according to Part D, 2 of this rule.

F. Game Schedules:

The Facility and Equipment Director shall make a recommendation to the Board of Directors to determine the use of the playing fields for scheduling purposes. The quantity of teams, the condition of the fields, and the current Parks and Recreation Department Facility Use Agreement in effect will be considered in the determination.

1. The initial playing schedule will provide for each team in Under 8 and older to have a minimum of half its games scheduled on the declared home field.

G. Closing Ceremonies:

Season closing ceremonies may be held on GSAI fields if approved by the GSA Board of Directors.

H. Tournaments:

1. Some typical tournaments open to all/most teams are:

- a. GSAI Cup Tournament

May be held during a mid-season break or after the completion of a regular season, at the discretion of the GSA Board of Directors.

Open to all "Association Teams" in Under 10 through Under 19. (No trophies will be given in Under 19.)

- b. Garland Invitational Tournament

A Garland Invitational Tournament may be held in the Spring season during a mid-season break or after a completion of the regular season at the discretion of the GSA Board of Directors.

All GSAI "Association Teams" and outside Association teams (who are playing within the GSAI league during that Spring season) will be accepted provided the team is in "good standing" and applies before the application deadline, pays appropriate fees and the age group is included in that year's tournament.

- c. NTSSA Sanctioned and Controlled Tournaments

Each Age Director is responsible for determining which team will represent GSAI in the NTSSA Tournament of Champions.

2. Travel Requirements:

Any team wishing to travel to any USSF tournament outside NTSSA must file plans with and obtain travel authorization from NTSSA. Further, pictured I.D. cards must be obtained from the NTSSA office for all team members.

RULE 8. POSTPONED GAMES and RESCHEDULING

The procedure covering the postponement and rescheduling of games shall be:

A. Weather Related:

1. GSAI has been given responsibility and authority to control access to the playing fields in the event of inclement weather. Coaches are charged with the responsibility of contacting the "Rain Out Number" or their Director two hours before game time.
2. Even though the fields are considered playable by GSAI, the referee has final authority to postpone a specific game due to weather or field conditions.
3. Any game called because of weather during the first half shall be replayed.
4. Any game called because of weather after five (5) minutes of the second half shall stand as an official game. Championship playoffs and Cup Tournament finals will be replayed regardless of elapsed time (except as noted in part 5 of this section).
5. If circumstances dictate that a Championship playoff or Cup Tournament final game cannot be rescheduled, the winner shall be determined by a flip of a coin.

B. Referee No-Show:

A game shall be considered postponed if a qualified referee is not at the field 30 minutes after game start time, unless it is known that he/she is held up by an earlier game yet in progress. The home team shall notify the pertinent Age Group Director who shall notify the Referee Director, and reschedule the game.

C. Mutual Agreement:

The Director may choose to postpone any game if requested by both coaches at least 48 hours before game time.

D. Rescheduling of Games:

Rescheduling of games for any reason shall be done such that the teams affected must have a minimum of five days notice. Rescheduling of games includes any changes that affect the date, time and/or complex. An exception to this rule may be applied if all teams affected mutually agree to play with less than five days notice. In case of field closures, moving games within the complex without changing game times is still allowed on a non-interference basis with other previously scheduled games.

RULE 9. EQUIPMENT

A. Association Provided:

GSAI will provide, whenever possible, the following equipment for teams which play their regular and post season tournament games scheduled on GSAI fields:

1. *Goal Nets and Corner Flags* - One set of goal nets and four (4) corner flags will be provided for each playing field. The Director of the division to which the field is assigned shall be responsible for the net and flags, including the condition and location of these items.

NOTE: The Director shall assist teams participating in sanctioned tournaments at other locations, which require the teams to provide nets and/or flags.

2. *Nets* - There is no law requiring the use of nets, but since GSAI provides them, it is intended that they be used:
 - a. Before the first, or only, game of the day, both participating teams install nets and corner flags.
 - b. After the last, or only, game of the day, both participating teams remove and stow nets and corner flags.
 - c. Each Director shall develop a policy for pickup and delivery from/to "home base" of the nets and flags.
 - d. It is the decision of the referee to determine whether a game will be played without nets. The referee shall allow fifteen minutes for the home team to provide nets.
 - e. No protest on the outcome of any game due to lack or condition of nets will be permitted.
 - f. The Directors are liable for the whereabouts of the nets for the field(s) assigned to their division.
 - g. If nets were available but not provided by the home team with fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled game time and the referees determined that the game would not be played without nets the home team will forfeit.
 - h. Any team that does not take down and properly return equipment is subject to discipline by the A & D Committee including monetary responsibility for missing equipment.

3. *Game Balls* - Each season GSAI will provide every team with a quality ball for use as the game ball. Each team shall present this or a comparable ball to the referee for his selection of the game ball. At the conclusion of the season, the game ball shall become the property of the team. If a team should disband during a playing season, the ball shall be returned to GSAI.
4. Omitted September 2009

B. Facilities:

1. GSAI has a basic agreement with the Garland Parks and Recreation Department wherein the City will line the fields during one season per year. GSAI chose City maintenance during the spring season to avoid conflict with the fall football program. While it is the goal of GSAI to obtain year-round City maintenance, it shall be the responsibility of each division to maintain their field(s) in any season in which the City does not. Each team (coaches and/or parents) is obligated to participate in field maintenance when requested by the Director. Each Director shall establish a specific plan for maintenance and advise all teams of their part.
2. Practice sessions are not allowed in the Winters Soccer Complex except for the NTSSA Olympic Development Program and the GSA Tournament of Champions representatives. In both cases, practice sessions must be on a non-interference basis and requests for field usage must go through the Office Manager or the Facility and Equipment Director. Special permission may be obtained from the league office to hold practice sessions at Audobon Park. A permission application must be filled out and submitted along with a field usage fee set by the GSAI board before permission will be granted. All practice applications are subject to termination by the GSAI board at any time and without warning. Failure to gain permission before holding practice sessions will cause the offending coach to appear before the A&D Committee and the offending team will be subject to a \$100.00 fine to be paid before the team is eligible to participate in any further games sanctioned by GSAI including all regular season games and tournament games held on GSAI fields.. When field conditions and usage requirements warrant, the Board may choose to permit exhibition or practice games on GSAI fields. In such circumstances, permission may be given by the Fields & Equipment Director on individual game basis only. These games will require both teams to be in full uniforms and the use of a licensed referee in uniform. The referee pay is the responsibility of the teams. A user fee will be assessed for the use of the fields at the discretion of the GSAI board.

3. Spectator bleachers have been provided by the Parks Department for many of the playing fields and GSAI will attempt to obtain sets for the fields having none. The bleachers shall be used in the following manner:
 - a. The home team and their spectators shall occupy the West or North Side of the field, depending on the direction of the field.
 - b. Visiting teams and their spectators shall occupy the opposite side of the field.
 - c. All spectators shall remain on their side of the field and behind the touch line while a game is underway unless permission is obtained from the referee.
4. Under the discretion of the GSAI board, soccer camps and soccer academy sessions may be held at either Winters or Audubon park. In both cases, these sessions must be on a non-interference basis and requests for field usage must go through the Office manager or the Facility and Equipment Director.

C. Miscellaneous:

1. Each team will be responsible for the proper disposition of trash on their side of the field at the end of the game.

RULE 10. CONDUCT

Conduct of coaches, players, and parents or spectators is expected to be high caliber when such individuals are participating in NTSSA or GSAI sponsored events, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, any misconduct (including, but not limited to profanity, abusive language, and/or obscene gestures) shall be dealt with in a decisive manner, in accordance with GSAI regulations, NTSSA Rules and Regulations, 3.11, Rule XI "Discipline" and/or the City of Garland, as may be appropriate.

A. Coaches:

GSAI coaches (and assistants, whether listed officially on team rosters or not) are expected to act and teach in sportsmanlike, ethical and gentlemanly ways.

1. Actions that are deemed to be unsportsmanlike or unethical are considered to be detrimental to soccer and to GSAI. Such actions should be reported in written detail to GSAI so that they may be investigated by Appeals and Disciplinary Committee (to be referred to as the A & D committee).
2. A coach suspected of unsportsmanlike or unethical conduct may be asked to appear before the A& D Committee. If found guilty, the coach may be reprimanded, restricted from coaching, or suspended for some specified period or number of games, depending on the severity of the incident.
3. Cautions or ejections to coaches, assistants coaches (registered or not) or team managers issued by the referee shall be dealt with in the following manner as a minimum:
 - a. Cautions (Yellow Card): The accumulation of two (2) cautions in any season shall require one game suspension; that being the next scheduled game actually played by the team. Suspensions will be carried forward to the next season if necessary. No appeal shall be allowed under this system.
 - b. Ejection (Red Card): Automatic one game suspension; that being the next scheduled game actually played by the team. Suspensions will be carried forward to the next playing season if necessary. No appeal shall be allowed under this system.
 - c. Violent conduct by a coach, assistant coach (registered or not) or team manager may result in additional penalties up to and including lifetime suspension.

4. If a coach, assistant coach or team manager is the subject of a written report by a Referee, alleging assault towards a Referee, that individual will be suspended from all soccer activities pending a hearing with NTSSA A&D Committee. The suspension will take place immediately after all the following conditions have been met.
 - a. A Referee submits a written report to NTSSA, or submits it to GSAI and GSAI submits it to NTSSA, alleging assault as defined by the NTSSA Rules and Regulations, Rule 3.11 Discipline, Section 3.11.7, Misconduct Toward Referee.
 - b. The report is reviewed by the GSAI A&D Committee and the Committee agrees that the incident falls under 'Referee assault' as defined by the NTSSA Rule Book.
 - c. The individual is formally notified by GSAI that a report has been submitted to NTSSA and of the suspension.

B. Disruptive Individual at Athletic Activities:

Coaches, Assistant Coaches (registered or not), Parents or Spectators if determined to be disruptive may be suspended from the fields by a member of the GSAI Board according to the City of Garland procedure on "Disruptive Individuals at Athletic Activities" (City Ordinance No. 1202).

C. NTSSA 3.11 - Discipline

The following sections are the NTSSA Rule 3.11 Discipline. This rule governs all GSAI sponsored activities. GSAI has the right to make these rules more stringent. GSAI has chosen to include in some cases specific punishments and stricter rules, these are included below.

GSAI is charged with the responsibility of seeing this rule is distributed to every youth and senior player, every coach, team manager, league administrator and referee. It is intended that each player will make known these contents to his or her parents and spectators.

NTSSA RULE 3.11 DISCIPLINE

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3.11 DISCIPLINE

All Member Associations are directed to distribute this rule to every youth and amateur player, every coach, team manager, league administrator and referee. It is intended that the player and/or coach will make known the contents of this rule to his or her parents and spectators.

3.11.1 Authority

1. All members and participants in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of the North Texas State Soccer Association have requested to participate in our programs. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of NTSSA, their local playing association, as well as those of the United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations of which North Texas State Soccer Association is a member. The NTSSA Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws provide that it has jurisdiction over all Member Playing Associations, players, coaches, team managers, administrators, team representatives and referees who choose to affiliate. Any member or participant in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of NTSSA found in violation of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of NTSSA, their local member association, as well as those of the United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations of which North Texas State Soccer Association is a member, may be subject to publication in the monthly newsletter or NTSSA President's Newsletter of this association of their name, the type of violation, and the disciplinary action taken. Publication will be limited to individuals receiving disciplinary actions of three months or greater.
2. All Member Associations and /or Playing Leagues are directed to form their own Appeals and Disciplinary Committees and to hold hearings **--WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT**—on every player/coach/assistant coach/spectators and/or parents as required for serious misconduct. All Member Associations are required to furnish the State Office with a maintained up-to-date list of their A & D Chairman and Committee members and to include their addresses and phone numbers.
3. Should a recreational Playing League cover multiple Associations, the members of the Appeals and Discipline Committee for this league should be comprised of representatives from each available association represented. The NTSSA A&D Committee shall serve as the first level of appeal involving complaints from participants of differing Associations. If a Playing League is hosted by a primary Association, the Appeals and Discipline Committee may be comprised of members of that Association.
As guidance, if the issue at hand was as a result of play, the Playing League will handle the disciplinary matter. All other matters shall be directed to coach/individual/teams home Association.

3.11.2 Misconduct of Youth Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches

1. All Member Associations, Playing Leagues and Tournament Officials are directed to operate and keep records on a "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for all players/coaches/assistant coaches. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card. Cards issued in league play are cumulative during the entire soccer year. When a player transfers to another team his or her accumulated league play cards count against the cumulative card totals for both his or her old and new teams. Player suspensions mentioned in this section, including automatic suspensions "from all NTSSA-sanctioned activities," include all games (including indoor), organized scrimmages, friendly games, and the like, but do not include team practices.

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2. A "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" in league play will be operated as follows:
 - a. Yellow Cards One game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's third league play yellow card. Two game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's fifth league play yellow card. One game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's sixth league play yellow card.

NOTE: A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game, and those two yellow cards are then added to such individual's previous total of league play yellow cards to determine whether additional game suspensions, if any, are required. Red cards issued *solely* as a result of a second yellow in a single game will not be added to such individual's league play red card total.
 - b. Red Cards One game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's first league play red card. Automatic suspension, pending a hearing, from all NTSSA-sanctioned activities following such individual's second league play red card. Red cards issued *solely* as a result of a second yellow card in a single game will not be added to such individual's league play red card total.

NOTE: In cases where, during a single game, an individual receives a yellow card followed by a "straight red card" (as opposed to a red card issued solely as a result of a second yellow) both cards will be added to such individual's respective total of league play red and yellow cards and punished accordingly. If a Member Association's and/or Playing League's A & D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, such A & D Committee may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Member Association or Playing League may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA.
 - c. Seventh Card Any individual obtaining a seventh card in league play shall be immediately suspended pending a hearing with NTSSA A&D Committee (meaning any combination of yellow and red cards totaling seven).
3. A "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for each tournament will be operated as follows:
 - a. Yellow Cards One game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's third yellow card. Two game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's fifth yellow card of the tournament. One game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's 6th yellow card of the tournament.

NOTE: A player/coach/assistant coach receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game, and those two yellow cards are then added to such individual's previous total of yellow cards for that tournament to determine whether additional game suspensions, if any, are required. Red cards issued *solely* as a result of a second yellow in a single game will not be added to such individual's red card total for the tournament.
 - b. Red Cards One game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's first red card of the tournament. Automatic suspension, pending a hearing, from all NTSSA-sanctioned activities following such individual's second red card of the tournament. Red cards issued *solely* as a result of a second yellow card in a single game will not be added to such individual's red card total for the tournament.

NOTE: In cases where, during a single game, an individual receives a yellow card followed by a "straight red card" (as opposed to a red card issued solely as a result of a second yellow) both cards will be added to such individual's respective total of red and yellow

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3.11.3 Misconduct of Amateur Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches

1. All Member Associations are directed to operate and keep records on a twelve (12) point "CUMULATIVE TWELVE (12) POINT SYSTEM" for all player/coaches/assistant coaches. Offenses resulting in the cautioning of a player/coach/assistant coach by the referee (yellow card) are allowed points according to their seriousness ranging from one (1) to four (4) points. Appeals of cautions (yellow cards) are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the caution. Points are cumulative during each soccer season. When a given player/coach/assistant coach accumulates twelve (12) points sanctions are applied as described in Rule 3.11.3 (3). A player transferring to another team will carry over his or her accumulated points to his or her new team. Reports of these disciplinary actions are to be sent to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee at North Texas State Soccer Association Office.
2. The points of the "CUMULATIVE TWELVE (12) POINT SYSTEM" will be allocated as follows:
 - a. 12 points Sent off from game due to Serious Foul Play, Violent Conduct, Spitting at Opponent/Person, Denies Goal Scoring Opportunity or Offensive, Insulting or Abusive Language
For ejection from a game due to misconduct after receiving a caution, except for twelve (12) point offenses as stated above, points will be based on two (2) cautions.
NOTE: If the Member Association A & D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, the Member Association may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess points for the yellow card. The Member Association may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA.

The **CAUTION** points are to be allocated as follows:

- a. **FOUR POINTS*******
 - (1) Deliberate tripping, tripping and other "tactical", deliberate, physical fouls.
 - (2) Foul tackle from behind.
 - (3) Interference by other players when the referee is speaking to a player after an offense has been committed.
 - (4) Continued dissent of a decision in an attempt to unsettle the referee.
- b. **THREE POINTS*******
 - (1) Deliberate, tactical obstruction.
 - (2) Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game.
 - (3) Shirt pulling and other similar tactics.
 - (4) Deliberate, encroachment at free-kicks.
- c. **TWO POINTS*******
 - (1) Deliberate hand ball designed to break up attack.
 - (2) Time wasting, including that by the goalkeeper.
 - (3) Moving arms up and down to obstruct an opponent.
 - (4) Gesticulating in front of a player taking a free-kick or thrown-in.
 - (5) Fails to respect required distance or unsporting behavior at a penalty kick.
 - (6) Other unsporting behavior.
- e. **ONE POINT*******
 - (1) Entering or leaving the field without the referee's permission.
 - (2) Player leaning on a teammate to gain an extra height.
 - (3) Pulling oneself up by the goal post or crossbar to gain an advantage.

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3. **ACCUMULATED CAUTION POINTS SANCTIONS**
 - a. **Twelve (12) Accumulated Caution Points - One Game Suspension**
 - b. **Six (6) More Points - Two Game Suspension**
 - c. **Six (6) More Points - Suspension pending A&D Committee Inquiry**
4. **SEND-OFF**
 - a. **One Send-off - One Game Suspension**
 - b. **Second Send-off - Two Game Suspension**
 - c. **Third Send-off - Suspension pending A&D Committee Inquiry**
5. **FINES**
 - a. **Teams Exceeding The Accumulated Point Limit - \$50.00**
 - b. **Teams Exceeding The Accumulated Point Limit Second Time in Soccer Year - \$100.00**

** All fines must be paid within thirty (30) days of infraction to the North Texas State Soccer Association.

This is the **minimum disciplinary punishment taken by all Member Associations on ejections. Nothing herein prevents a Member Association from enacting more severe sanctions. Each case should be judged on its own set of circumstances and degree of misconduct or violence, the latter of which must be dealt with swiftly and severely.

6. Any misconduct by a Coach justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee as well as the Member Association with which the coach is affiliated. The Member Association shall promptly (within five (5) days after receipt of the report) rule on the report and send its decision to the State A & D Committee. The Committee will determine the extent of the punishment, if any, in addition to that taken by the Member Association.
7. The State A & D Committee will make its decision based entirely upon the written reports before it, including that of the affected coach, should he or she submit a report. Hearings will not be held by the Committee unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one.
8. A coach whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to his or her players, parents and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the A & D Committee of both the Member Association involved and the NTSSA.
9. Game suspensions for caution points and/or expulsions:
The suspension is to be served by the player/coach/assistant coach/manager/or team representative at the next scheduled game (regular league games, makeup league game, playoff, championship, cup games, local or state tournament game) that the player's team is involved in. A suspension imposed by NTSSA shall be recognized by all affiliated organizations after proper notification. The lack of a hearing or referee report on the suspension/expulsion of the offender shall not nullify his suspension (to sit out) the next game.
10. All game suspensions must be reported to the State. When an ejection or game suspension under the caution point system is issued to a player, the Member Association or league to which the player is affiliated will forward a copy of the referee's Misconduct Report of the ejection or a copy of the league's Disciplinary Committee report on suspension due to the excessive Caution Points directly to the **NTSSA State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee**, together with the action taken by the Member Association. The **State A & D Committee** will determine the extent of punishment, if any, in addition to that prescribed by the Member Association, taking into consideration the severity of the misconduct. Each additional caution and/or ejection of said player during the remainder of the soccer year will also be forwarded to the Committee for review and possible further action.

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11. The **NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee** will issue its decision based entirely upon the officials' reports and any other written reports before it, including that of the affected player, should he or she submit a report. A hearing will not be held by the Committee unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one because of the nature of the case.
12. **Extreme Violent Conduct:**
The State Member Association's Appeals and Disciplinary Committees are directed to extend severe punishment to those players, coaches, and assistant coaches guilty of extreme violent conduct while participating in a match and for violence toward any person or property after being ejected, while on the touchline, or approaching or leaving the game site.

3.11.4 Misconduct of Spectators

1. Each team (youth and adult) in NTSSA is responsible for the conduct of its spectators. The referee shall have the authority to caution and/or send off the coach or acting coach from the field for the misconduct of the spectators associated with the team. Therefore, the coach/assistant coach/team manager is expected to control his spectators, especially on nonenclosed fields. If he is unable to do so, Member Associations, Playing Leagues and/or Tournament Officials are directed to take appropriate actions toward the identifiable, unruly spectator, or if unidentifiable, towards the team itself. Member Associations, Playing Leagues and Tournament Officials shall report spectator misconduct to the State A & D Committee for review and further action if warranted.
2. Suggested action for misconduct of spectators is:
 - a. Suspend the spectator from attending future matches.
 - b. Report spectator to the local Park & Recreation Department.
 - c. Require team to forfeit any games at which spectator is present on the touchline (cannot keep them off public street or out of parking lot.)
 - d. Require offending team to pay for presence of police at the game.
 - e. and/or refuse registration to the offending team.
 - f. Cause the spectator to be placed under a municipal "peace bond".

3.11.5 Misconduct and Punishment of Teams

1. **Youth Association Teams**
 - a. When, during the current soccer year, the players/coaches/assistant coaches of a given team have accumulated a total of seven (7) send-offs in league play (*including* red cards issued as a result of an individual receiving two yellow cards in a single game) or any combination of cards totaling 25 the Member Association and/or Playing League shall notify the team and the State A & D Committee. The team will be fined \$100.00 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the seventh (7th) send-off or any combination of cards totaling 25. The coach and the players of said team may also be required notified to appear before the committee to explain the team's continued misconduct. Failure of the Member Association or Playing league to notify the State A&D Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of a team's seventh (7th) send-off or any combination of cards totaling 25 will result in a fine of \$ 100.00 per week for each week such notice is late. Red cards or send-offs assessed against that team's spectators or against that team during tournament play will be reviewed to ascertain team misconduct tendencies.
 - b. When the players/coaches/assistant coaches of a given team have accumulated a total of four (4) send-offs in a tournament (*including* red cards issued as a result of an individual receiving two yellow cards in a single game) Tournament Officials shall notify the team and the State A & D Committee. The team will be fined \$100.00 payable to NTSSA within thirty (30) days of receiving notice of the fourth (4th) send-off. The coach and the players of said team may also be required to appear before the committee to explain the team's continued misconduct. Failure of Tournament Officials to notify the State A&D Committee within fourteen (14)

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calendar days of a team's fourth (4th) will result in a fine of \$ 100.00 per week for each week such notice is late. Red Cards or send-offs assessed against that team's spectators or against that team during league play will be reviewed to ascertain team misconduct tendencies.

2. Amateur Association Teams

- a. When the players/coaches/team representatives/spectators of a given team have accumulated a combined point limit for that team, based on five (5) points per scheduled league game, per season, as described in the "**CUMULATIVE TWELVE (12) POINT SYSTEM**" in Rule 3.11.3, the Amateur Member Association will notify the North Texas State Soccer Association Appeals & Disciplinary Committee. (Example: For a ten (10) game season, the combined point limit will be fifty (50) points.) The team will be required to appear before the NTSSA Appeals & Disciplinary Committee to explain the team's continued misconduct.
- b. The North Texas State Soccer Association will not hesitate to deny teams, coaches, managers, team representatives or players within its jurisdiction, the privilege of further participation in all or selected soccer activities within its jurisdiction for repeated offenses and for serious offenses considered to bring the game into disrepute. A probation period and/or other sanctions may be rendered to teams, coaches, managers, team representatives or players for violation of this rule.

3. All Association Teams

- a. The NTSSA holds the team and coach jointly responsible for the conduct of his or her players, parents, and spectators.
- b. A coach whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to his or her players, parents and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the A & D Committee of both the Member Association involved and the NTSSA.

3.11.6 Games Directly Sponsored by NTSSA

Misconduct involving any participant (player, coach, parent/spectator) of State-sponsored games, as opposed to Member Association league play, will be reported directly to the Tournament Officials of the State Cup and Games Committee and will be forwarded to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee immediately after the occurrence for appropriate disciplinary action.

3.11.7 Misconduct Toward Referee

1. North Texas State Soccer Association has exclusive jurisdiction over assault or abuse of officials, both referee and assistant referee, in any competition by the State or Member Associations. This jurisdiction includes:
 - a. All USSF registered referees (adult and youth).
 - b. Any non-licensed person serving in any emergency capacity as a game official.
 - c. Any coach, parent or junior assistant referee, serving as a game official.
2. If there is an assault/abuse of any game official by any person, including players, coaches, managers or spectators; a report of the alleged assault/abuse will be submitted immediately to the appropriate State Commissioner (Amateur Men's, Amateur Women's, Youth or Indoor) and the A&D Committee Chairman, Olympic Development Program Chairman and the Chairman of the State Referee Committee. This subcommittee, chaired by the appropriate commissioner, shall review and investigate the report(s) as submitted, and upon proper investigation shall determine the seriousness of the alleged assault/abuse report(s) in a timely manner.

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3. Should the majority of the members of the subcommittee listed above in paragraph 3.11.7.2 determine there is sufficient evidence to consider the incident a referee assault, a formal assault hearing will be held within thirty (30) days of verification of the incident. An intentional act of physical violence upon a game official as defined in 3.11.7.1 above shall be deemed "referee assault" in the NTSSA under the terms and conditions of USSF Policy 531-9.

NOTE: Referee assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee (an act intended to bring about a result which will invade the interests of another in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.). Assault includes but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee's uniform or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.

4. Assault hearings shall be conducted by the State Executive Committee in the following manner:
 - a. The alleged offending party is requested to be present at such hearings, however, if he is not present, the State Executive Committee will act upon the matter with the information before it.
 - b. The game official(s) are required to be present at the hearings. However, if they are not present, the State Executive Committee will act upon the matter with the information before it.
 - c. It is intended that the officials' reports be clear and that no explanations are required at the hearing. Only the State Executive Committee will question the official(s). If the offending party or any other party or any other person(s) need explanation, such queries will be addressed through the Chair.
 - d. The player, coach, manager, or official committing the referee assault is automatically suspended as follows:
 - (a) for a minor or slight touching of the referee or the referee's uniform or personal property, at least 3 months from the time of the assault;
 - (b) except as provided in clause (c) or (d), for any other assault, at least 6 months from the time of the assault;
 - (c) for an assault committed by an adult and the referee is 17 years of age or younger, at least 3 years; or
 - (d) for an assault when serious injuries are inflicted, at least 5 years.

5. Any party found to have committed the act of referee assault shall have the right to appeal, within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision, to the USSF Appeals Board, following USSF Bylaw 705.

6. Assault On Officials By An Amateur Player:

Should a player (male or female) be found guilty of referee assault, the State Executive Committee may, at its discretion, impose upon the team of which the player is a member, the requirement of posting a \$1,000.00 cash bond to be held in the treasury of NTSSA without interest for a period of one (1) year after posting. This cash bond will be required to be posted before the team may engage in any further games within the boundaries of NTSSA. Should any other member of said team be found guilty of a referee assault during that one (1) year period, the team shall forfeit the bond, and another similar bond will be required before the team can continue in competition. If no member of the team commits a referee assault during that one (1) year period, the bond will be returned to the person or persons designated to receive such payment. No member of such team which has failed to post such bond will be permitted to register with another team until that member has posted a \$50.00 bond with NTSSA; nor shall any new member be allowed to register on that team until such member has posted a \$50.00 bond, such bonds to be held under the same terms and conditions as the team bonds.

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7. Referee Abuse:
- a) Should the subcommittee, as noted in paragraph 3.11.7-2 above, determine the action referee abuse as explained in paragraph (1) below, it shall impose not less than a three (3) game suspension. A formal hearing will not be held unless it is requested. Should a formal hearing be held, it shall be chaired by the appropriate Commissioner in accordance with paragraph (3.11.7-2) and the procedure of hearing shall be the same as 3.11.7-4.
 - (1) Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment. Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: using foul or abusive language toward a referee; spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property; spitting at (but not on) the referee; or verbally threatening a referee. Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as, "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece", shall be deemed referee abuse.
 - (2) Findings of this subcommittee and/or hearing may be appealed directly to the State Executive Committee within seven (7) days of the date of the letter of notification to the offending party. Copies of this notification shall be sent to the offending party, the coach, and/or team manager, if applicable, complainant and the President of the Member Association in which the abuse took place.
8. Any assault or abuse charges must be postmarked within forty-eight (48) hours (unless there is a valid reason for later reporting). No complaints will be processed by NTSSA if not received within thirty (30) days of the alleged incident.
9. Misconduct at a Referee
Should the subcommittee, as noted in paragraph 3.11.7-2 above, determine the action as misconduct at a referee but less than abuse or assault, it shall impose not less than a three (3) game suspension. A formal hearing will not be held unless it is requested.

Misconduct at a referee means persistent statements or physical acts directed toward a referee during or after a game, that do not constitute referee assault or abuse as provided under Federation Policy 531-9, but that mistreat the referee or are inappropriate or unacceptable statements or acts, and may include the following:

- a.) excessive incidences of foul or abusive language at the referee;
- b.) statements that diminish the authority of the referee;
- c.) statements or acts that serve to intimidate without threatening physical harm to the referee.

Examples of misconduct that arise under the description above include the following:

- a.) confronting the referee without physically threatening the referee;
- b.) spitting on the ground or in the air but not at the referee;
- c.) throwing or kicking an item as a sign of disrespect or dissent but without the chance of hitting the referee;
- d.) re-entering the field.

These are only some of the examples of possible misconduct and are not allinclusive, but apply only in the following situations:

- a.) if a proceeding is brought against an individual for referee assault or abuse, or both, under Federation Policy 531-9; or
- b.) if the individual is ejected from a game and, after the ejection, engages in conduct that is misconduct under this policy.

If the individual is found to have committed misconduct under this policy, he shall be suspended at least the next 3 scheduled games. This suspension is in addition to any other suspension and/or fine that may be imposed on the individual by an association or league.

NTSSA RULE 3.11 DISCIPLINE

Revised July, 2003

3.11.8 Misconduct of Referees

When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward any participant, spectator of a match or toward another referee, the State A & D Committee will hear such allegations and assess punishment concerning the Referee in regard to his activities.

3.11.9 Appellate Procedures

1. All those under the jurisdiction of NTSSA are reminded that they must exhaust all appellate procedures of the Member Association on all matters not covered by these Rules before the State Association can acquire jurisdiction to hear the appeal under its rules.
2. Member Associations are reminded that they may set the rules of hearings and may restrict the number of witnesses, and the time allotted to each, so long as fair hearings are held. It may also determine whether it wants to allow closed or open hearings.
3. Member Associations and their committees are urged to refuse to hear any appeal when any person is threatening a lawsuit. You should pass the appeal to the next higher forum which would hear it. This is a sport to which we are giving freely of our time, and none of us needs to take the trouble and expense to appear in court.
4. To allow the use of tape recorders, court reporters and the presence of attorneys at hearings is optional with the Member Associations.
NTSSA will refuse to allow such recording devices, and the presence of attorneys at hearings is optional with the Member Associations.
5. Should any aggrieved party resort to the courts without exhausting all avenues of appeal including through to the USSF, the State Association may, at its discretion, suspend such person or refuse to accept further registration in soccer activities within its jurisdiction.
6. An appeal of decisions pursuant to 3.11 made by Member Associations, after Member Association's appeal procedures have been exhausted, will be made to the State A & D Committee in accordance with procedures established by this section.
7. An appeal of decisions made by the State A & D Committee will be made to the State Executive Committee in accordance with procedures established in this section.
8. An appeal of decisions presented to the NTSSA will be:
 - a. In writing.
 - b. Made to the General Manager of NTSSA within five (5) days of receipt of written notice of the lower level authority's decision(s).
 - c. Fees, as specified, will be in cash or certified check and will accompany the written notice of appeal.
9. Filing fees for appeals will, under no circumstances, be waived. Fees will be refunded to the appealing party only if the previous decision is overruled. Fees will be:
 - a) **All Player Appeals - \$50.00**
(\$25.00 paid by the player and \$25.00 paid by the coach)
 - b) **All Coach Appeals & Referee Appeals - \$100.00**
 - c) **All Team Appeals - \$100.00**

3.11.10 Records

The Appeals and Disciplinary Committee will maintain a permanent file of all reports sent to it and the action taken. When any one person or a team shows a trend towards numerous misconduct reports, the Committee will contact such person or team for the purpose of warning or may call such person or team before it.

3.11.11 Association to Comply

When any Member Association, or a member thereof, fails to send in reports as required by this Rule, NTSSA will take any action it considers proper, including fine not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00). Repeated violation by Member Association can result in such association being declared not in good standing.

RULE 11. APPEALS AND DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

NTSSA has urged all members associations and their committees to *REFUSE* to hear any protest or appeal when any person is threatening lawsuit. The matter will be directed to NTSSA. The use of tape recorders, court reporters and the presence of attorney at GSAI and NTSSA will not be permitted.

PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY:

The Appeals and Disciplinary Committee is responsible for the investigating, hearing and disposing of, in an equitable manner, all matters that are contrary to the By-Laws and Rules of the Association. All players, coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, parents, spectators, administrators, and others who are registered in GSAI and/or participate in soccer activities within the jurisdiction of Garland Soccer Association, Incorporated shall abide by the By-Laws and Rules of Garland Soccer Association, Inc., and will be subject to the decisions made by the GSAI A&D Committee.

A. Committee Procedure:

1. Notice of Alleged Infraction of the By-Laws or the Rules: Upon receipt of written notification, the A&D Committee shall conduct a confidential investigation by questioning any person with first-hand knowledge of the facts. The investigation must include an interview with the accused unless it can be determined no further action, including the preferring of the charge(s) is necessary or warranted. For the protection of parties who may be innocent, the investigation will avoid revealing details as much as possible.
2. Preparation of the Charge(s): If necessary, the Committee will prepare the charge(s) that will be brought against the accused and the specifications(s) that will be addressed by the Committee.
 - a. The charge(s) sets forth the "offense" of which the accused is alleged to be guilty.
 - b. The specification(s) states "what" the accused is alleged to have done.
3. Notification of the Charge(s): The accused is to be notified by mail, a letter notifying them of the date, hour, and place of the A&D hearing, containing an exact copy of the charge(s) and specification(s) and the statement "And is hereby cited to appear" at this meeting. The Committee chairman shall retain a copy of this notification. A copy of this notification shall be mailed to the division Director.
4. The procedure of the A&D hearing:
 - a. The hearing will be called to order by the Chairman.
 - b. The Chairman will read the charge(s) and specification(s).

- c. The Chairman will provide copies of all documents to all participants.
- d. The Chairman will advise all participants of the decorum of the hearing and it shall be maintained.
- e. The Chairman will inform the participants of the time allotted for each phase of the hearing and will call upon:
 - The Appellant's, making charge, opening statement.
 - The Appellee's, being charged, opening statement.
 - The Appellant for presentation of argument, calling of witnesses and cross-examination of Appellee through the Chairman.
 - The Appellee for presentation of argument, calling of witnesses and cross-examination of Appellant through the Chairman.
 - The Committee members for cross-examination of the Appellee and Appellant.
 - The Appellant for a closing statement.
 - The Appellee for a closing statement.

5. The Committee's Findings

- a. The Chairman then states the question on the findings as to the guilt of the Appellee as prescribed in the charge(s) and specification(s) as preferred against the Appellee.

NOTE: The charge(s) and specifications(s) can be amended to conform to facts brought out in the hearing, but not in such a way as to find the Appellee guilty of a charge(s) for which he has not been tried.

- b. Each of the specifications, and then the charge, is read, opened to debate, and voted on separately. If the Appellee is found guilty of one or more of the specifications but not of the charge, a lesser charge should be moved and voted on.
- c. If the Appellee is found guilty, the Chairman announces that the next item of business is the determination of the penalty.

6. The Penalty

- a. The determination of the penalty shall be made in the form of a motion by a Committee member. This motion is debatable and amendable by other Committee members. A Vote on this motion for penalty shall be taken by the Committee members and the results of the vote shall be recorded by the Chairman.

NOTE: If the Appellee is found guilty of a violation that states a specific penalty is to be imposed, the Committee may enforce the prescribed penalty and/or additional penalties that the Committee feels are warranted based upon the severity of the violation as revealed in the Committee hearing.

- b. If the Appellee is found not guilty, the Chairman shall record the findings and the Appellee shall be declared so.

B. Appellate Procedures:

1. Any coach or player may appeal an A&D Committee finding to the GSAI Board by the following:
 - a. File a written notice with the GSAI Secretary within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of written notification of the A&D Committee ruling.
 - b. Include a \$15.00 deposit which will be refunded only if the GSAI Board overturns the ruling by the A&D Committee.
 - c. Upon receipt of the written notice, the board shall schedule the time and place of the hearing for the appeal of the A&D ruling. The Board shall immediately notify the following:
 - The coach of the team or individual(s) against or for whom the appeal is filed; and
 - The Chairman and members of the A& D Committee, none of which will have a vote in the appellate procedure or be present during closed deliberation.
2. Any coach or player may appeal a finding of the GSAI Board to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee of NTSSA as prescribed by NTSSA Rules.

C. Violations:

1. Upon written receipt of an alleged violation of the By-Laws and/or rules, the A&D Committee procedures shall be followed.
2. A coach, player, spectator, Board Member, or any other member of the Association that is found guilty of violating the rules and/or By-Laws of NTSSA or GSAI shall be penalized the prescribed penalty, if stated, and/or any additional penalty imposed by the A&D Committee.

D. Suspension:

1. Suspension must be served even if carried over to the next season. A player or coach under suspension who chooses to not participate in a season must fulfill that suspension in the season in which he return to active participation.

- a. Coaches: GSAI requires that a suspended coach may not appear at the soccer complex* while under suspension.
- b. Players: GSAI requires that a suspended player may appear at the soccer complex only so long as he is not wearing any part of his uniform.
- c. Team: A team must forfeit any game that a coach or player participates in, if the coach or player is under suspension. The violation of the suspension will be submitted to the A&D Committee for further action.

NOTE: Soccer complex is defined as the property within the public access roads that surround the playing fields designated as PARD responsibility, this does include the parking lot.

E. Game Protest:

1. There are only two acceptable causes for the protesting of a game after it has been played. They are:
 - a. A team knowingly plays a unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player; or
 - b. There has been an obvious error made in the application of the Laws of the Game that directly affects the outcome of the match, and the referee admits it,
2. No protests can even be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the referee during play. The Laws of the Game clearly state in Law V (Referees) that... “A referee shall be appointed to officiate each game...his decisions on points of fact connected with the play shall be final, so far as the result of the game is concerned”. A game cannot be protested because one coach, or both for that matter, thinks the referee was incompetent. This is a matter to handle through the local referees’ group or the State Referee Committee.
3. Any protests relating to the grounds, goal posts, cross bars, or other appurtenances of the match shall not be entertained by any protest committee or board unless an objection has been lodged with the match referee before the commencement of the match. The referee shall require the responsible team to remove the cause of objection if this be possible, without unduly delaying the process of the match. If the objection remains, the coach may write a brief protest and submit it to the referee prior to fielding his team. At the conclusion of the game, the referee shall note the fact of the pre-game protest on the game report, sign the written protest, returning it to the coach.
4. When an objection has been lodged, the coach must formally submit the protest in writing to GSAI even if his team won the match. No objection or protest shall be withdrawn (because the protestor won the match) except by consent of the GSAI A&D committee.

5. A coach may remove his team from the field of play before time has expired by informing the referee of his intention during a stoppage in the game. A coach who does remove his team from the field automatically forfeits the game and must submit a written report of reason for abandoning the game to the A&D Committee within seven (7) days.

NOTE: A protest can be made if there is a valid reason for protest per Rule 11.E.1 or 2.

NOTE: Leaving the field of play without notifying the referee is a cautionable offense.

6. A team that knowingly plays an unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player shall forfeit all of the games in which the player participated. A coach, assistant coach, and/or manager of the team playing such player shall be suspended for a minimum period of one year. The player will be subject to being suspended for one year.

7. All protests of a game due to player or referee errors must be:

- a. Made in writing,
- b. Submitted to a GSAI Officer within five (5) calendar day after the game,
- c. Accompanied by a fee of:
 - \$15.00 (Regular or Playoff game)
 - \$25.00 (Any tournament game)

NOTE: If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned and the A&D Committee hearing the protest will decide if the game should be replayed based on the effect of the error on the outcome of the game.

AMENDMENT

These League Rules may be amended as follows:

1. By a majority vote of the members present and voting at any meeting duly called for that purpose, providing notice of the meeting and the proposed amendments have been given to the members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.
2. By a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any regular meeting of the members provided that a majority of the total membership is present and that notice of the meeting has been given at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.
3. Amendments shall become effective upon adoption.
4. Rule changes adopted by NTSSA shall be included in GSAI rules by a review of the Board of Directors (does not require a vote of the members).

Revised July, 2003

3.10 YOUTH CONTRACTS AND RELEASES

3.10.1 No coach, assistant coach, trainer, or team representative may practice any soccer related activity with any NTSSA registered player who does not appear on his current NTSSA roster or is not considered to be a free agent by current NTSSA Rules and Regulations except for a coach, who at the request of another teams coach, substitutes for that coach at practice or games for the convenience of the requesting coach. A free agent is a player in the U-11 through U-19 age division who desires to try out or be selected for a competitive team between July 1 and August 31 of the present soccer year. **NOTE:** The above does not include indoor soccer.

3.10.2 Between August 1 of the prior soccer year and May 31 of the current soccer year, NTSSA registered players may attend soccer camps (clinics), academies, private lessons etc., hosted and/or coached by individuals, teams, clubs and/or organizations other than the player's current coach, team, club and/or organization as long as the soccer camps meet the following criteria:

1. The clinic, camp, academy, must be available to all interested persons for each age group offered through an open invitation.
2. Each individual, team, club and/or organization hosting any soccer clinic, camp, academy, etc., must require written registration of each participant that includes the following information:
 - a. Player's name
 - b. Name, address and phone number of individual(s), team(s), club(s) and/or organization(s) affiliated with and/or hosting the clinic
 - c. Name(s) of coaches at clinic
 - d. Name and date(s) of clinic
 - e. Name of player's current team and home association
 - f. A statement signed by the player's current coach/manager stating that he or she is aware that the player is attending the camp, clinic, academy, etc.
 - g. The following disclaimer:

"The recruiting of players for the benefit of any individual, team, club, and/or organization is strictly prohibited. Any person having knowledge of any player recruitment at or through this soccer clinic, camp, academy, private lesson, etc., should report same, in writing, to the Youth Commissioner of NTSSA. The NTSSA Youth Commissioner shall deal with the alleged violations in accordance with NTSSA Rule 3.10. (Recruiting is any action or statement, made by anyone, either verbally or in writing, that encourages or entices a player to register with a particular coach, team, club and/or organization.)"

- h. Parent signature acknowledging that he/she has read and understands the disclaimer. Date of signature. (If player is 18 years or older, player should sign also.)
3. The host of the clinic, camp or academy, etc., must keep all registration forms for one (1) year from the date of the camp, clinic, academy, etc., so that they will be able to produce on demand from a Member Association and/or NTSSA a copy of the registration form to verify compliance with this rule in the event charges of rule violations are alleged against the hosting individual, team, club and/or organization as stated above.
4. This rule does not apply to Member Associations that sponsor clinics/camps/academies, etc., for their players, where the registration publicity is conducted by the Member Association. Any publicity must indicate that this camp/clinic/academy, etc., is sponsored by the Association. The Member Association must monitor the program to assure that no recruiting activities occur.
5. Between August 1 of the prior soccer year and May 31 of the current soccer year, players requesting private lessons from any person must obtain a written statement from their current coach stating their knowledge of the private lessons. The person giving the private lessons must retain the acknowledgment slip and be able to present same when requested by a Member Association or NTSSA.

NTSSA Rule 3.10 YOUTH CONTRACTS AND RELEASES

Revised July, 2003

- 3.10.3** Failure to comply with 3.10.1 and/or 3.10.2 may result in the offending coach, assistant coach, manager/trainer, and/or team representative being suspended from soccer activities for a period of not less than one (1) year.
- 3.10.4** If the complaint is intra-association, then the complaint will follow the Member Association's rules for filing complaints. Any appeal from a Member Association's decision would then follow the ordinary process of appeals from Member Associations.
- 3.10.5** Should the complaint be of an inter-association matter, then the complainant will file his complaint directly with the State Youth Commissioner, who shall render a decision. Either party may then file an appeal with the State Executive Committee of NTSSA according to the Bylaws of the North Texas State Soccer Association.
- 3.10.6** A competitive (select) player is obligated to his competitive team for the soccer playing year for competitive players from the time he signs a contract until the end of the subsequent soccer playing year (August 1 of the prior soccer year through May 31 of the current soccer year). Any release to transfer to another NTSSA competitive team will be allowed only in limited circumstances. A written request for a release with the purpose of being able to transfer to another competitive team must be filed with the NTSSA office to be decided upon by the Competitive Soccer Committee which shall be chaired by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner or his designee. This shall be done between the dates of December 1 and January 31 for U-11 through U-14 and December 1 and March 15 for U-15 through U-19 only. Upon receipt of the written request for transfer, the NTSSA office will forward a copy of the transfer to the player's current coach or manager for a written response. The Competitive Committee will render a decision based on the written reports received. Any appeal of this decision must be received by the NTSSA office in writing within five (5) days of receipt of the original decision and must be accompanied by a fee of \$50 (refundable at the Competitive Soccer Committee's discretion). Upon receipt of the appeal, the Competitive Committee will schedule a hearing with all parties being invited to attend. Any appeal of the decision of the Competitive Soccer Committee after the hearing must be made directly to the Executive Committee of NTSSA within five (5) days. A player may leave a competitive team and go into his home Member Association recreational player pool at any time before April 30 of the current soccer year with the written permission of the Youth Commissioner. Any recreational player currently rostered to a recreational team and wishing to be released to join a competitive team may do so only between December 1 and March 15, and may do so only with the written permission of the Member Association in which he is currently rostered. A competitive registration form must be completed prior to the players' transfer to a competitive team.
- 3.10.7** Release: Means the withdrawal of a player from a roster during the current seasonal year. Any player rostered to a team is bound to that team for the entire seasonal year unless the player requests a release or is released involuntarily. A player release shall be submitted to and approved by the NTSSA Youth Commissioner in writing on the form provided, stating the reason for the request on the release.
1. A player may be released from a team involuntarily only if the player is unable to play for one of the following reasons.
 - A. The player has violated rules of the U.S. Soccer Federation, USYSA, NTSSA or NTSSA Member Associations.
 - B. The player has moved beyond a reasonable travel distance. Determination of what constitutes a reasonable travel distance is subject to definition by NTSSA.
 - C. The player is injured in such a manner that the player will not be able to participate for the remainder of the season.
- 3.10.8** No coach, assistant coach, trainer, team representative, registered player, parent or advertisement may offer any kind of inducement to recruit a player to play on his respective team. Coaches are responsible for the actions of all of the above listed participants on their team. Forms of inducement include but are not limited to:

NTSSA Rule 3.10 YOUTH CONTRACTS AND RELEASES

Revised July, 2003

Free T-shirts, free uniforms, college scholarships, free or discounted travel costs and/or negative statements which could affect the decision of a player regarding choice of teams. This rule applies to any type of communication, including but not limited to: verbal discussions, letters, brochures, printed or broadcast advertisements, and the use of the Internet and/or E-mail. Failure to comply with this rule shall result in the offending party being suspended from all soccer activities for a period of not less than one (1) year, except allegations against registered youth players are subject to review before punishments are considered. Complainant will file his complaint with the Youth Commissioner, who shall render a decision. Either party may file an appeal of the Youth Commissioner's decision with the NTSSA State Executive Committee according to the Bylaws of the NTSSA.

3.10.9 SOCCER PLAYING YEAR FOR COMPETITIVE PLAYERS

1. The USSF-Youth Division and NTSSA have established the seasonal year as being from September 1 through August 31. However, these rules provide that a competitive player is a free agent beginning July 1. That player will continue to be a free agent until the player and /or his parents or guardian have signed a contract with a team. The period of August 1 of the prior soccer year through May 31 of the current soccer year is considered the soccer-playing year for competitive players. During the soccer-playing year, players are not allowed to tryout, practice, or participate with any other team, unless they are registered as a guest player with another team, in which case the proper release must be signed by all parties. Practice with a team on which a player is registered as a guest player is permitted only if the practice dates are included on the guest player release. After May 31 (the end of the soccer playing year for competitive players), players may practice with other teams without any required guest player release, although formal tryouts may not be held until July 1 and players desiring to sign with a new (different) team may not sign any contract or otherwise commit to a team for the following year prior to July 10. Players desiring to return to the team on which they played the soccer year immediately preceding may sign a contract as a returning player beginning July 1. Signing of contracts with a new (different) team and/or club is not permitted prior to July 10. (This does not include indoor soccer.)
2. Failure to comply constitutes a violation of current NTSSA directives concerning illegal recruitment and shall be punishable by suspension of the guilty parties, i.e., coach, assistant coach, team manager for a minimum of one (1) year. Allegations against registered youth players are subject to review before punishments are considered and punishment periods are at the discretion of the Youth Commissioner committee hearing such allegations.

NOTE: If a player currently registered to a team and/or his parent should contact a coach, assistant coach, or team manager to try out for another team, the above stated procedure must be followed.
3. If a player is released from a team in accordance with NTSSA rules for releasing competitive players, he/she is a free agent.

CHAPTER 11 CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT

11.1 NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR COACHES

This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical, and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of the sport of soccer. (The term "Coach" shall include, but is not limited to Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s), Manager/Trainer and/or Team Representative.)

ARTICLE I RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS

1. The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players. Winning should be the result of preparation and discipline with emphasis placed on the highest ideals and character traits.
2. Coaches shall instruct players to play within the written laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
3. Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
4. Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.
5. Demands on players' time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals and progress. Motivation for excellence should include academics as well as athletics.
6. Coaches must never encourage players to violate NTSSA recruitment, eligibility, or guest player rules and policies.
7. Under no circumstances should coaches authorize or encourage the use of medicinal or performance enhancing drugs. Players should be directed to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician's instructions regarding treatment and recovery. At no time should a player be put at risk by returning from injury prematurely or by being forced to play while injured.

ARTICLE II RESPONSIBILITY TO NTSSA AND MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

1. Adherence to all NTSSA and Member Association rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting, and guest players are mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of every coach to know and understand these rules.
2. Player development and the growth of the player through participation is essential to the growth of the sport. Additionally, the coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport are maintained.
3. Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches should be referred to the appropriate NTSSA Commissioner, Member Association, or League Commissioner immediately.

ARTICLE III RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME

1. Coaches should be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws of the game of soccer. Coaches are also responsible to ensure that their players understand the intent as well as the application of the laws.
2. Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the laws of the game. Those coaches who circumvent the rules to gain advantage have no place in soccer.
3. Coaches are responsible for their players' actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with the intent of causing injury to opposing players.
4. If coaches permit, encourage, or condone performance which is not in the letter or spirit of the laws, they are derelict in their responsibility to players, Member Associations, NTSSA and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive constantly to teach good sporting behavior.

ARTICLE IV RESPONSIBILITY TO OFFICIALS

1. Officials must have the support of coaches, players, and spectators. Criticism of officials undermines their purpose in the game. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing officials in the presence of players.
2. Coaches should strive to develop a line of communication with officials, giving each an opportunity to better understand the problems relating to their specific area. This section shall not be taken as an encouragement to debate referee decisions during the match.
3. On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during, and after the game. Officials should be addressed as "Referee" or "Mr./Ms. Referee" and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture between official, coach, or player. Coaches must not incite players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of play.
4. Comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the official.

ARTICLE V RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING SCOUTING AND RECRUITING

1. It is unethical to scout any team, by any means whatsoever, except in regularly scheduled games.
2. The use of video tape or motion picture equipment to scout an opponent's regularly scheduled games for the purpose of recruiting is unethical.
3. All NTSSA rules pertaining to recruiting shall be strictly observed by the coach, manager, or any team representative.
4. It is unethical to recruit player(s) actively playing for another team.
5. It is unethical for a player to be recruited or enticed from the Olympic Development Program (ODP) setting, either by his ODP coach or any other coach, manager, parent or team representative.
6. When discussing the advantages of his organization, the coach has an ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams, and organizations.
7. It is unethical for any coach to make a statement to a prospective athlete which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.
8. Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts rather than hearsay and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of video tape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.

ARTICLE VI RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Coaches have a responsibility to promote the game of soccer to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, coaches, players, parents, or the media should be positive and constructive, never prejudicial or inflammatory.
2. When asked to give a recommendation concerning team, camp, coach or organization, it is in the best interest of all concerned if no less than three referrals are given in order to provide a professional unbiased source of information.
3. Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public while representing their team, Member Association, and NTSSA.
4. Publicly predicting a win is folly and serves no useful place in a coach's public image.
5. Comments stressing injuries, team, personnel conflicts, or disciplinary problems as an excuse for a loss or unsuccessful endeavor are detrimental and should be avoided.
6. It is unethical for a coach to solicit alumni, parents, booster club, or managers to pressure organizations, Member Associations, or NTSSA to alter established rules. The coach must not attempt to influence these organizations in political or financial dealings outside the framework of their own rules and bylaws.

7. The media should be allowed access to the players for comment. Players should be instructed in how to conduct themselves during an interview.

ARTICLE VII GAME DAY AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. A coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, his organization, and the sport of soccer. This is never more evident than on the day of the contest.
2. Rival coaches should meet prior to the game and exchange friendly or professional greetings. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.
3. During play, coaches have a responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible. Coaches shall exhibit a respectful attitude towards players. The coach must confine him/herself to the coaching area. The attitude of the coach towards officials, spectators, opposing players and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.
4. It shall be unethical for a coach to have any verbal altercation with an opposing coach or bench during the game. Hostile physical contact with a player is considered highly unethical.
5. The coaches foremost post game responsibility is his/her team.
6. Coaches should use their influence on unfriendly spectators that demonstrate intimidating behavior towards officials and opposing teams.

11.1.1 All Member Associations are directed to form their own ethics committee and to hold hearings -- WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT -- on alleged violations of the Code of Ethics when properly submitted.

11.2 NTSSA PARENT'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Children have more need for example than for criticism.

Attempt to relieve the pressure of the competition, not increase it. A child is easily affected by outside influences. Be kind to your child's coach and officials. The coach is a volunteer, giving of personal time and money to provide a recreational activity for your child.

The opponents are necessary friends. Without them your child could not participate.

Applaud good plays by your team and by members of the opposing team.

Do not openly question an official's judgment and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity, and sportsmanship.

Accept the results of each game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory, and to turn defeat into victory by working towards improvement.

Remember your child is involved in organized sports for their enjoyment, **NOT YOURS!**

Encourage your child to always play by the rules.

Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.

11.3 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR USSF/NTSSA REGISTERED REFEREES AND ASSIGNORS

- (1) I pledge that I will faithfully enforce the Laws of the Game and any special Rule of the Competition of the League(s) I am officiating for without prejudice or favoritism to any player, team or coach.
- (2) I recognize that it is my professional duty to constantly keep abreast of any changes in the Laws or Rules of Play and to keep myself physically fit and my training refreshed.
- (3) I will constantly strive to improve my own refereeing techniques and always accept sincere, constructive criticism from fellow referees or official assessors without malice.
- (4) I pledge that I will make myself available, whenever possible, for game assignments for which I am qualified.
- (5) If I am a State or National USSF referee, I acknowledge that my first responsibility is to State or USSF-assigned games and that I will make myself available for these assignments regardless of conflicts with local playing associations or with leagues that I may be active in as a player or as a coach.

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- (6) I do hereby acknowledge my fellow referees' total authority over any matches over which they are duly assigned to officiate, and I pledge that I will never interfere with the carrying out of their prescribed duties, before, during, or after a match.
- (7) I understand that any criticism of fellow referees should be limited to constructive criticism in quiet, private referee-to-referee discussions, and then never within hearing distance of players, coaches, or spectators.
- (8) As a registered USSF/NTSSA referee, I will always strive to conduct myself in the highest professional manner possible, including refraining from indulging in arguments or name-calling with coaches and/or spectators.
- (9) I also acknowledge that if I am also a coach, player, or spectator, that my conduct towards, and my respect for, my fellow referee doing my game is more closely noticed by all concerned. I will, therefore, strive to set a very high standard of personal conduct under these circumstances to serve as an example to all.
- (10) I understand that I should wear only the approved USSF referee uniform with the current badge of the highest grade I am qualified for, and that my uniform be clean, neat, and in a good state of repair. I also understand that if I am a coach, that I am not to wear my uniform while coaching my team.
- (11) I further understand that I should not partake of any type of alcoholic beverage before any game assignment, and that I should never smoke, eat, or drink while actually officiating.
- (12) I hereby pledge that I will always faithfully carry out my duties and obligations as a USSF referee registered with the North Texas State Soccer Association; and that I do hereby acknowledge and accept the jurisdiction of the local NTSSA- affiliated playing association I may be refereeing for, the NTSSA and USSF, and their respective Referee Committees, where applicable, over my actions, conduct, and performance as a registered USSF referee.
- (13) I furthermore understand that I may be disciplined, to include being placed on probation, suspended, or refused referee registration for significant or repetitive breaches of this Code of Conduct or any of its articles or provisions.

USSF CODE OF ETHICS FOR REFEREES (as established per USSF Policy 531-11)

- (1) I will always maintain the utmost respect for the game of soccer.
- (2) I will conduct myself honorably at all times and maintain the dignity of my position.
- (3) I will always honor an assignment or any other contractual obligation.
- (4) I will attend training meetings and clinics so as to know the Laws of the Game, their proper interpretation and their application.
- (5) I will always strive to achieve maximum teamwork with my fellow officials.
- (6) I will be loyal to my fellow officials and never knowingly promote criticism of them.
- (7) I will be in good physical condition.
- (8) I will control the players effectively by being courteous and considerate without sacrificing fairness.
- (9) I will do my utmost to assist my fellow officials to better themselves and their work.
- (10) I will not make statements about any games except to clarify an interpretation of the Laws of the Game.
- (11) I will not discriminate against nor take undue advantage of any individual group on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
- (12) I consider it a privilege to be a part of the United States Soccer Federation and my actions will reflect credit upon that organization and its affiliates.

USSF CODE OF ETHICS FOR ASSIGNORS (as established per USSF Policy 531-11)

- (1) I will maintain the utmost respect for referees and other officials of the game and I will conduct myself honorably at all times.
- (2) I will make the assignments based on what is good for the game and what is good for the referee.
- (3) As a member of the United States Soccer Federation, my actions will reflect credit upon the organization.
- (4) I will contribute to the continuous development of referees in the National Referee Development Program.

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- (5) I will conduct myself ethically and professionally in the assignment process.
- (6) I will respect the rights and dignity of all the referees and I will not criticize them unless it is in private, constructive, and for their benefit.
- (7) I will offer equal opportunity to all qualify referees and I will not discriminate against or take undue advantage of any individual or group on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.
- (8) I will cooperate fully in the timely resolution of any grievance hearing or complaint.
- (9) I consider it a privilege to be a part of the United States Soccer Federation and my actions will reflect credit upon that organization or its affiliates.

11.4 NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, STATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND MEMBER ASSOCIATION ADMINISTRATORS

None of us arrives at any administrative level, volunteer or not, without spending some "grass roots" time somewhere. We are appointed or elected to our positions because enough people had confidence in us, appreciation for what we had done in the past and assurance that we could lead them in a positive, productive future. This responsibility of accepting such a challenge, especially in a volunteer capacity, must have some guidelines.

It is important to remember that as board members we are very high profile. It is equally important that we remember that we are primarily a service organization and that we treat fellow volunteers as partners with a common goal - the organization, development and promotion of soccer. We should maintain high standards and serve by example.

Have respect for the game, players, officials, parents, coaches, member association volunteers and fellow board members and deal with them in a patient, courteous and consistent manner.

Criticism channeled through the proper quarter should be educational, constructive, balanced and positive. Under no circumstances should it be demeaning or detrimental to the self-respect of the individuals involved.

Administrators should be informed and available. As facilitators they should know the right questions, have the ability to elicit the right answers and foster creativity with accountability within their committee or area.

Regarding committeemen and other volunteers: they should be praised for time spent and jobs well done; their suggestions welcomed, evaluated and conclusions communicated to them. Abilities should be recognized and encouraged.

Above all - courtesy, self-control and loyalty. We are role models for the youngest players to the newest association. Our responsibility is to serve them well as we work toward our common goal.