

AYSO PLUS GUIDELINES

(Effective September 1, 2008)

PROGRAM

The AYSO PLUS program is a pilot program, for U11 – U14 players (Boys & Girls), currently offered in Areas 11-K, 11-L and 11-Q and **[available to other areas with the Section Director's approval.]** This program is designed to provide a more competitive level of play to those players who possess the appropriate skills and abilities.

JURISDICTION

As is the case with all Inter-Area programs (Interplay), the AYSO PLUS program falls under the jurisdiction of the Section Director. The Area Directors from the participating Areas administer the program, with one of the participating Area Directors serving as the program director on a rotating basis and providing scheduling administration/support as well as referee administration/support for the program. The Program Director for the fall 2008 season will be the Area Director for Area 11-K, followed in fall 2009 by the Area Director of Area 11-L and in fall 2010 by the Area Director of Area 11-Q. Should any other Area(s) join the program, that Area Director will be placed into the rotation in such a manner to ensure a minimum of three (3) years participation by that Area in the AYSO PLUS program prior to assuming the Program Director position.

Each Area Director is responsible for overseeing/verifying that the AYSO PLUS program requirements are met as pertain to player eligibility, coach eligibility, team formation, field support and referee support by those Regions within their Area that elect to participate in the AYSO PLUS program.

Any issues requiring special jurisdiction will be brought before the participating Area Directors with resolution determined by a majority vote by same. Any inability of the Area Directors to come to an agreement will be adjudicated by the Section Director of Section Eleven.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Each Regional Commissioner of a Region electing to participate in the AYSO PLUS program is responsible for his/her Region's compliance with player eligibility requirements. Player eligibility, as pertains to age requirements to participate in a specific gender/age bracket, shall be as defined by the AYSO National Support and Training Center.

Eligible players must have registered with AYSO and have participated in a scheduled Regional team tryout. **[As defined by National regulations, a Plus player may not play on another AYSO team during the same season, nor will they be eligible for All-star play.]**

The AYSO National Support and Training Center player database shall be the source of determining the players' current registration status.

Gender/age bracket placement of players shall be based on their age as of July 31 of the current registration year. AYSO PLUS permits placement based on single year age increments.

Failure by a coach to prove eligibility of a player placed/playing on a team and/or placing/playing an age ineligible player on a team may result in the expulsion of the player, coach, and/or the entire team from the AYSO PLUS program, or such other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the participating Area Directors, who shall convene to serve as a Disciplinary Board in such instances. The participating Area Directors shall also determine if any culpability on part of the applicable Regional Commissioner existed in such instances, with the possibility of sanctions being administered as well.

COACH ELIGIBILITY

All AYSO PLUS coaches need to have completed AYSO's Advanced Coach training as well as being Coach Safe Haven certified. In addition, each coach must be a trained and certified referee. Each Region is to attest to compliance, with Area oversight and submit their list of coaches to the AYSO PLUS Director by July 15 each year. Each Area Director will review the list of their coaches for the program, as of August 1 of the current registration year and advise of training/certification deficiencies, if any, to the AYSO PLUS Director.

In the case of training/certification deficiency, the applicable coach will be given until September 1 of the current registration year to obtain the necessary training/certification (Note: ample opportunities for Advanced Coach training/Coach Safe Haven certification are available during this time period in the Tri-Area and/or adjacent proximity).

If the deficient coach fails to obtain the necessary training/certification by September 1 of the current registration year, his/her Region will be given forty eight (48) hours to select a replacement coach for the team or disband the team if a qualified replacement coach cannot be found. **(Since the goal of the program is to prevent teams from being disbanded at such a late date, each region with a coach or coaches deficient in training/certification as of the July 15 deadline shall appoint an alternate coach who is trained/certified who will take over the team should the original coach fail to complete the necessary training/certification by September 1.)**

REGIONAL SUPPORT

Officiating – Regions must provide an adequate number of referees who are capable of supporting the various age/gender brackets of teams entered for a specific age/gender bracket. Hosting Regions are responsible for providing referee coverage for AYSO PLUS games. Regional Commissioners to attest to compliance, with Area concurrence.

All AYSO PLUS games shall be officiated using the Diagonal System of Control, i.e. one referee and two assistant referees.

The use of “club linesmen” is encouraged when an insufficient number of assistant referees are available. The Dual (two-man) System of Control is **not** allowed.

Regional Referee Administrators shall assign “neutral” Referees of appropriate skill and ability to all AYSO PLUS games assigned to their region. Unless otherwise approved by the Area Referee Administrator, Referees shall be a minimum of two years older than the oldest players in the division to which they have been assigned.

Fields – Regions must provide an adequate number of fields, based on a formula of .75 game slots per team entered. There is a requirement for Saturday and Sunday play. Fields/equipment need to be age appropriate. In cases where fields supplied are not adequate to support the total number of teams, schedule pairings may reflect a TBD in place of field location and game time. For those games to be played, the Regions [or Area] involved will have to make arrangements to provide a site, if possible, as well as referee support. Participating regions are responsible for properly preparing all fields used. Field set-up and take down is the responsibility of the hosting region. Regional Commissioners to attest to compliance, with Area concurrence.

PLAYER ID CARDS AND TEAM ROSTERS

Coaches shall prepare ID cards for each participating AYSO Plus player and for a maximum of two coaches per team. The ID cards shall bear the name, recent photo of the respective player or coach and the signature of the Regional Commissioner. ID cards must be laminated.

Properly completed and laminated ID cards for all players and a maximum of two coaches and a team lineup card shall be presented to the Referee by each team prior to the start of each AYSO PLUS match.

Coaches must wear ID cards visibly on their person during all games. Cards may be clipped on jackets or shirts, or worn on neck lanyards.

Team rosters for teams participating in the AYSO PLUS program must be received by the AYSO PLUS Director no later than August 15, 2008 and shall include:

- Regional and divisional identification.
- Coach’s and Assistant Coach’s names, address, home and work phone numbers and email addresses.
- Player information: name, address, phone number, birth date, and AYSO Registration Number.
- Team number, uniform colors and team name (if available).
- Signature of the Regional Commissioner certifying players and coaches.

No team without a properly completed team roster submitted to the AYSO PLUS Director shall be allowed to participate in AYSO PLUS play.

Copies of all revised rosters shall be forwarded to the AYSO PLUS Director as soon as possible. Revisions shall occur when:

- A player drops from a team.
- The total amount of player drops, for whatever reason, lowers the number of permanent rostered players to eleven (11). At that point, the team will be allowed to add one (1) player. This player cannot be drafted from another AYSO team whose season is still in progress. The additional player must be approved by the Regional Commissioner, the Area Director and the AYSO PLUS Director.

For each AYSO PLUS team, a team representative must have a team roster and both ID cards and copies of AYSO Registration Forms (medical release forms) for each participating player and an ID card for the coach(es) at all AYSO sponsored events (games, practices, scrimmages, parties etc.).

TEAM FORMAT

Participating Regions are allowed to enter teams in the U11 through U14 gender/age brackets.

Single year age bracketing is permissible – and recommended. Regions may opt for “combo” teams (two (2) year gender/age brackets) where they feel that such action may be in their best interest. In such cases, the age of the oldest player will determine the placement of the team as regards gender/age.

In order to enter a team in the AYSO PLUS program, the Region must have a minimum of 75 players in that same gender/age bracket in their Fall Recreational program.

A Region is limited to entering one (1) team in each (single year) gender/age bracket.

Teams must be formed according to the approved tryout procedures.

The maximum number of players on a team in AYSO PLUS shall be fifteen (15).

Guest players are not allowed in the AYSO PLUS program.

At no time is inter-regional recruitment of players allowed without the prior approval of each of the Regional Commissioners and Area Directors concerned. Recruitment without prior approval may result in sanctions by the participating Area Directors, who shall convene as a disciplinary board in such instances.

TRYOUT PROCEDURES

- **All participants** in a tryout **must be registered** with AYSO **prior** to the tryout or sign a waiver protecting AYSO in case of injury. On site registration may be done for anyone not registered prior to arriving to the tryout.

- **All players** in the gender/age bracket of the tryout being conducted are eligible to try out.
- A minimum of two (2) tryouts will be held.
- Regions are to notify all players who tried out as to their status, positive or negative, on the AYSO PLUS team within a reasonable amount of time after the tryouts for that particular Region have concluded.
- All players will wear numbers for tryouts. Evaluations will be as blind as possible.
- Coaches are strongly encouraged to use a short-sided game format to evaluate players. Coaches may also use additional skill tests.
- Advanced Coaches (at minimum) or those with higher level coaching licenses will conduct the evaluations that create raw scores. Regardless of coaching license held, a parent of a player trying out for AYSO PLUS may not participate as an evaluator for his/her child's gender/age bracket. The Regional Coach Administrator also should be involved in the AYSO PLUS tryout process.
- The AYSO PLUS coach may not be involved in selection of "Top 10"; however, the AYSO PLUS coach should observe all players throughout all the tryouts
- When all tryouts have been completed, the Region will calculate scores for all participants and establish a rank order of participants.
- Once players are rank ordered, the Region will conduct an interview of the players and their parents to evaluate needs and commitment to the AYSO PLUS program. Players and families may be eliminated or rank order downgraded based on lack of commitment or other issues that may negatively impact the team.
- The Region will select the most capable players based on the rank order and interviews. The selection committee should consist of the Regional Commissioner, the Regional Coach Administrator, the Regional AYSO PLUS coordinator and any other designees by the Regional Commissioner.
- A reasonable amount of preference may be given to the coach's child. However, if the coach's child clearly does not qualify based on the talent of the players participating in the tryout, the Regional AYSO PLUS Coordinator shall bring this to the attention of the regional selection committee. The AYSO PLUS coach may continue as the coach without their child if he/she chooses, or the Regional AYSO PLUS Coordinator may appoint a replacement coach of the team with prior Regional Board Approval.

- Coaches are encouraged to select as large a team as allowed by AYSO rules (U11-U14=15 players).

The Region (with Area assistance if needed) will develop and provide to each AYSO PLUS team the materials, numbers and method for conducting tryouts. Regions (with Area assistance) are encouraged to “share” those individuals qualified to be evaluators with other Regions.

UNIFORMS

All uniforms and equipment shall be in accordance with AYSO National Rules and Regulations.

The Referee is the final authority on the safety of any player's uniform and equipment.

AYSO PLUS teams should be provided with uniforms similar to those provided to other Fall League teams. A second (traveling) jersey is recommended.

Regional funds are not be expended for any additional player uniforms, warm-ups, backpacks, etc.

All players must wear shin guards of an acceptable size and quality during games, practices and scrimmages, covering half of the leg from the knee down as a minimum, and worn completely under the socks.

Braces meeting the requirements of AYSO National Rules and Regulations may be worn during games, if deemed safe and allowed by the Referee. Casts and splints are not allowed, even if covered by soft foam wraps.

The goalkeeper on each team must wear colors (jersey or scrimmage vest) that clearly distinguish him from other players on both teams to the satisfaction of the Referee.

The Home team in a match is responsible for wearing uniform jerseys (or scrimmage vests) that clearly distinguish them from the other team. In case of color conflicts, the Home team is required to change uniform colors.

PRACTICE/TRAINING

Teams are **NOT** permitted to begin practice or engage in any other training activity prior to August 1st. Only players on the official roster of the team are permitted to participate in team training. Practice games with non-AYSO PLUS teams are permitted with the approval of the region(s). A 1 to 8 ratio (adults to players) must be maintained and gender guidelines adhered to per AYSO Safe Haven Guidelines (i.e. – girls' teams coached by a male need to have a female adult present at all team activities and vice versa).

GAMES

The gaming schedule/standings for the AYSO+ 2008 season will be posted on the Area 11-K website (ayso11k.org). The other participating Areas should post links to this website.

All games shall be played as scheduled (date, time and venue). Games not played, for whatever reason, will NOT be rescheduled by the AYSO PLUS program, with the only exception being a re-schedule of games involving teams in a position to win an award.

In cases of games cancelled by adverse weather conditions (rain, poor air quality or act of God), if both coaches agree on a date, time and venue, games cancelled by rain may be rescheduled by coaches on a venue located in either team's region, with applicable referee support to be provided by the region (or Area) where the rescheduled game is to be played. The scores for completed games will be reported on the Plus schedule in the normal manner and will count in the final standings. To allow flexibility in rescheduling games, the final standings will not be determined until after November 17, 2008, which allows for an additional week and weekend (the open weekend of November 15, 2008) as an additional opportunity to make up games previously cancelled by rain. The final standings will be determined based upon average points per game for each team (total points divided by number of games played) to account for any inequities in number of games played. Example: team A plays 10 games and has 61 points and team B plays 11 games and has 66 points. Team A wins because their point average is 6.1 (61/10) vs. 6.0 (66/11) for team B.

No team will be allowed to secure a place in positions 1 – 4 in the season standings as a result of not playing a scheduled game due the conditions described above. In such case(s), the respective Area Director(s) will reschedule the match.

If a team does not show for a scheduled game, their opponent will be awarded a 1- 0 victory by forfeit, i.e. 8 points to the winning team. **[The Program Director may impose other sanctions if the forfeiting team gains an advantage by the forfeit.]**

If either of the teams is not ready to play at the scheduled kick-off time, the Referee may allow a grace period of up to ten (10) minutes before canceling the game. A team not ready to play at the scheduled time shall forfeit that game and the team shall lose by a score of 1-0, i.e. 8 points to the winning team.

The coaches, substitutes, and spectators of the two teams watch the match from opposite sides of the field of play unless the Referee gives permission for them to be on the same side, in which case they will remain on separate ends of the field. Home teams shall have the choice as to side of field. Teams and spectators will only be allowed in areas approved by the Referee.

Coaches are responsible for reporting game scores to the Area 11-K website (ayso11k.org). The Referee is responsible for reporting all misconduct, including the cautions or send-off of players, coaches, or spectators or any other area of concern including unsafe conditions etc. to the Misconduct Reporting email address within twenty-four (24) hours of the game. The Misconduct Reporting System will make

appropriate distribution of the Misconduct Report. (Subject to change based on Program Director rotation)

If the Referee terminates a game before completion because of actions by players, coaches and/ or spectators, the game shall be deemed a forfeit by the offending team and shall be recorded as 1-0, i.e. 8 points for the winner.

If the game termination is due to actions by both teams, or if it is undetermined, the game shall be deemed a forfeit by both teams and no points shall not be recorded in the standings. However, the game itself will be recorded as such and count in the computation of average points/game in determining standings.

If a game is suspended prior to completion due to inclement weather or any other unforeseen circumstances, the game score will stand as recorded by the Referee, provided one half or more of the regulation game time had been played at the time of suspension.

If less than one-half of the regulation game time had been played at the time of the game suspension, the game will be rescheduled and played in its entirety at a later date and time. If the game is not rescheduled for any reason, the game shall stand as a NOT-PLAYED game, irrespective of the score at the time of game suspension.

GAME SCORING

The format of play and determination of standings shall be based on the number of teams participating in a specific gender/age bracket and may include average points per game as a method of determining standings for brackets with an uneven number of teams and/or games played.

For standings in regular season games, points shall be awarded as follows:

- a. Win 6 points
- b. Tie 3 points
- c. Loss 0 points
- d. Shut Out 1 point
- e. Goals For 1 point per goal (3 point maximum)

A maximum of ten (10) points may be awarded to a team in any one game.

THREE POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR EACH SEND-OFF (EJECTION) RECEIVED BY A PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR.

A tie is an acceptable result in pool play games and shall be recorded as such.

No team shall be allowed to benefit themselves in pool play scoring by their own forfeit, such as assuring their final standing above another team over which they have a 9 point lead prior to the forfeit. If necessary, scores shall be adjusted to avoid such benefit.

Final season standings shall be determined by rankings based on average points per game earned by each team.

Tie breakers for standings at the conclusion of pool play shall be as follows:

- a. Head to Head Play (outcome of the game involving the tied teams).

- b. Team with the lowest number of goals against.
- c. Goal Differential: goals scored, less goals allowed, maximum differential of three (3) goals per game.
- d. Team with highest number of goals scored, maximum of three (3) goals per game (counting no more than three goals more than their opponents in any game).
- e. Lowest point deductions for misconducts and send-offs.
- f. Coin toss.

Awards will be presented to each of the four (4) top teams in each gender/age bracket.

The AYSO PLUS Director will decide on the feasibility of a post season, elective tournament that will be open to those teams (within prescribed flighting limitations) who wish to participate and can furnish the required level of referee support.

PLAYER SUBSTITUTION

U11 – U14 games shall have a substitution opportunity midway through each half, at half time and in the event of injury. The half time break will be five (5) minutes.

MISCONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the Referee in AYSO PLUS games to submit a written Misconduct Report to the AYSO PLUS MISCONDUCT reporting system within 24 hours after the conclusion of the game at which the offence occurred.

There is **no** mandatory “cooling off” period for cautioned players. It is recommended that, at the coach’s request and with the Referee’s permission, a cautioned player, or any player having difficulty controlling his emotions, may be substituted at the earliest opportunity.

The Referee must also report any behavior by coaches and/or spectators on or off the field that seriously interferes with the game and/or proper standards of conduct.

Referees shall **not** retain any Player ID Cards from players who have been sent-off.

The penalty for a player, coach and/or spectator sent-off (Red Card) from the field for any reason in an AYSO PLUS game shall be a minimum one (1) game suspension. Such suspension shall be served in the first game (not scrimmage) that is played following the game of the incident. The suspension for violent conduct or serious foul play shall be a minimum of two (2) games and the length of any suspension may be increased and other disciplinary measures applied if deemed warranted by the Area Director(s) in conjunction with the AYSO PLUS Director.

If the player sent off is a minor (under 18 years of age), he/she must leave the field in the company of his/her parent(s) or guardian(s). Otherwise, the player must leave

being accompanied by a Safe Haven certified adult. Otherwise, the player may remain in the proximity of the field, under adult supervision.

Should violators of the penalties set forth in this section refuse to immediately leave the field when requested to do so by the Referee, the game shall be suspended until the situation has been resolved. If it is not resolved, in what the Referee considers a reasonable amount of time, the game shall be terminated and the incident reported to the AYSO PLUS MISCONDUCT reporting system.

A player serving a suspension and not in uniform may attend the team's next scheduled game as a spectator, but may not participate in any manner.

An adult serving a suspension may not be present at the game (including pre and post game activities) or participate in any manner.

In the event a suspended player or coach participates in a match for which he has been suspended, the game shall be recorded as a 1-0 forfeit in favor of the opposing team. For each such event, the original suspension must be served at the next game played by the team, an additional 1 game suspension must be served at the following game, and the coach of such team must serve a 1 game suspension.

Send-Off's (Red Cards) and/or Cautions (Yellow Cards) given in AYSO PLUS games **are not subject to appeal.**

Each send-off carries a three (3) point deduction as detailed in GAME SCORING (above).

The AYSO PLUS Director, Area Director(s), with the assistance of the Area Referee Administrator(s) and the Area Coaching Administrator(s), together with the respective Regional Commissioners, shall review all inter-regional disciplinary issues not resolved at the regional level. Any disciplinary action taken must be communicated within 96 hrs of the game in which the incident occurred. Disciplinary hearings may be called if deemed necessary by the Area Director(s), or if requested in writing...

The AYSO PLUS Program will publish a weekly Misconduct Report Summary – distribution to Area Directors, Area/Regional Referee Administrators, Area/Regional AYSO PLUS Coordinators and Regional Commissioners. This report will list all cautions, send offs and information on other reports submitted by referees and shall also list those suspensions that are to be served (by gender/age bracket, player name, coach name, date and location).