



2025 BYSL HANDBOOK



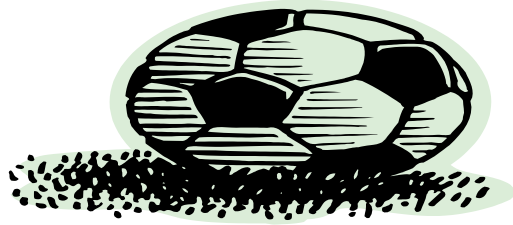
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Brunswick Youth Soccer League (BYSL). It is the purpose of the BYSL to introduce soccer to the youth of Brunswick. We hope to provide an enjoyable and rewarding experience for your youth and to all those involved.

The goals of the program include:

- To teach the fundamentals of soccer in a supportive and instructional manner to youth grades K through 8.
- To provide a physically demanding, emotionally stimulating, and socially enriching activity for youth and their parents.
- To demonstrate and encourage good sportsmanship, appreciation, and respect for teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and fans.
- It is our philosophy to provide every player with the opportunity to participate equally and fairly in all our games.

BYSL is a cooperative effort with the Brunswick Parks and Recreation Department.



LEAGUE HISTORY

The BYSL started in 1976 with fewer than 50 players. Today, we have the largest youth sports program in Brunswick with over 700 youth participating.

The popularity of soccer has grown along with BYSL, as seen by the establishment of very successful Brunswick school teams and several club teams. Virtually every player involved in higher levels of competition has played in the BYSL.

BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCCER

Based on the history of many cultures and nations, some sort of soccer has been played for thousands of years. The name “soccer” was probably coined in England around 1880. The Native Americans were playing a primitive form of soccer when the colonists first arrived in this country.

Soccer took many years to come of age in the United States although there were several geographic regions where soccer was popular. English textile workers in such places as Fall River, MA and Philadelphia, PA started playing soccer in the early

1800's. The first official soccer game in the U.S. was the historic Princeton vs. Rutgers match in 1869.

Soccer generally has taken a back seat to baseball and football in the U.S., although its popularity is growing rapidly. The worldwide appeal of soccer makes it the most played sport and watched sport in the world. World Cup games have brought as many as 200,000 spectators to one game. The popularity of soccer probably springs from skills, stamina, team play, sportsmanship, and companionship. It is a great body builder and greatest of all, it's fun.

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Vice President

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*Rules and Training
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Aaron Cropley

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ROLES

The BYSL is operated entirely by volunteer coaches, assistant coaches, referees, and team parents who donate their time and energy to create a rewarding experience for the youth of Brunswick. All parents are asked to contribute to and share in the league's success.

PARENTS' ROLE

BYSL parents have the greatest influence on each child's level of enjoyment. The following Parents' Code of Ethics is provided as a guide.

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth soccer by following this code of ethics.

I will encourage good sportsmanship at every game and practice. I will remember the game is for children and not for adults.

I will place the emotional and physical wellbeing of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.

I will insist that my child plays in a safe and healthy environment.

I will provide support for the coaches and officials working with my child.

I will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco free sports environment for my child and agree to refrain from their use at all youth soccer events.

I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, officials, and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.

I will do my very best to make soccer fun for my child.

Your child, his/her teammates, and opponents should hear only encouragement from the sidelines. The coach should be the only one "coaching" during the game. Encouraging your child and his teammates after the game is very important for young children. Teaching good sportsmanship in victory and defeat is an important skill that can begin at home.

The league goal is that participants have fun and that everyone participates.

Practice and preach commitment and the idea that soccer is a team sport in which one relies on the others.

All parents are asked to volunteer, when possible, to become familiar with league rules and to join in the fun. Parents are also asked to transport their child to practices and games on time and notify coaches when an absence is anticipated. You should check with the coach about his/her policy for parents leaving children at practices and games. ***It is your responsibility*** to be on time to pick up your child.

COACH'S ROLE

The BYSL coaches often have the most challenging and rewarding jobs. Each coach will:

- Compete fairly.
- Organize one practice per week (Divisions 2/3 – JH).
- Provide instruction and encouragement to all players.
- Be a role model for good sportsmanship.
- Answer parent and player questions or seek answers from league officials.
- Appoint a team administrator who will support the coach with administration.
- Conduct a parent/player meeting at the beginning of the season.
- **Strive to rotate the players through all positions on the field during the season.**
- **Strive for equal playing time for all team members.**

The most rewarding experience for a coach is to observe a child's growth, both in soccer skills and relationships with other teammates.

SOCCER PLAYER'S ROLE

The BYSL asks its players to help the league be successful. Each player can do this by:

- Displaying good sportsmanship.
- Being respectful of all players, referees, coaches, and opponents.
- Listening to the coach and participating when called upon to do so.
- Helping and encouraging teammates.
- Allowing teammates to participate.
- Always Doing one's best.
- Having fun.

REFEREE'S ROLE

Referees in Divisions I through IV provide on-field rule enforcement and sometimes instruction. Referees are asked to provide consistency between teams

and games. They are encouraged to help players increase their understanding of game rules. Referees will emphasize the teaching of rules rather than only the identification of infractions. Referees are individual volunteers committed to fostering a positive experience for the youth soccer players.

LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

BYSL is divided into seven divisions based on the grade and gender of the player. The following information applies to all participants in the league.

Registration fee includes a team shirt which players wear for each game and keep at the end of the season. In addition, players should wear shorts, long socks, shin guards and preferably soccer cleats. Shin guards covered entirely with long socks are mandatory during all practices and games. Without essential safety equipment, children will not be allowed to play. In warm weather, shorts that allow easy movement are recommended. For safety reasons, the following are not allowed on the playing field: pants or shorts with metal zippers, jeans or corduroys, hooded sweatshirts, jewelry (including body piercing of any kind), watches, earrings, and hard hair ornaments. Eyeglasses should have approved safety straps.

Each player must bring a ball to practice. A size three ball is recommended for division K and K1. Size four for Divisions 2 through Division 4, and size five for those in the Junior High Division. The smaller ball for younger players allows for more agility, making skills easier to learn.

The coach will provide a season schedule, including the time and location of each game and practice approved by the League President.

Each family will be contacted by the “team coach or assistant coach” to provide nutritious snacks for one or more games during the season.

No player may be added or traded to any team without the authorization of the League President.

RAIN POLICY

Games are played unless heavy rain has made the fields unplayable. Notification to parents/players of game cancellations will be by a phone call from the team coach or appointed representative. The BYSL President and the Brunswick Parks & Recreation Department consult on Saturdays and decide whether all games are cancelled. All coaches must observe this decision. *If games are cancelled they will be posted on the Brunswick Parks & Recreation Department* www.brunswickme.org/departments/parks-recreation and posted on the Brunswick Parks & Recreation Facebook page www.facebook.com/BrunswickParksandRecreation.

- **IF INCLEMENT WEATHER CAUSES CANCELLATION OF UP TO TWO GAMES DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEASON THOSE GAMES WILL BE MADE UP. THE OFFICIAL MAKE-UP WILL BE SCHEDULED THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY (8 days later) FOUR (4) HOURS LATER THAN THE ORIGINAL START TIME.** Exception: If coaches want to communicate directly with each other and schedule make-up games during scheduled practice times during the week, that is acceptable to the league **only if the League President is informed and approves.** Referees will not be provided for games in the middle of the week.
- **IF INCLEMENT WEATHER CAUSES MORE THAN TWO GAMES TO BE CANCELLED DURING THE SEASON THOSE GAMES WILL NOT BE MADE UP.**
- **IF THE LAST GAME OF THE SEASON IS CANCELLED IT WILL BE MADE UP THE NEXT DAY (SUNDAY), FOUR (4) HOURS LATER THAN THE ORIGINAL START TIME.**
- **NIGHT GAMES WILL NOT BE MADE UP.**

SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES

In the case of a severe weather *warning*, the ranking league official should notify all participants, spectators and staff and be alert for lightning, hail, or heavy rain. At the first sign of thunder and/or lightning the area will be cleared immediately. If after 30 minutes, there has not been any additional thunder and/or lightning the facility may be reopened, and play may be resumed. It is important to wait the full 30 minutes. If the thunder and lightning continue the area will remain closed until the storm clears. Again, it is important to wait 30 minutes after hearing the last thunder roll or seeing the last flash of lightning. There may be instances when a storm moves into the area rather rapidly and without much warning. In this case the ranking official may need to take appropriate and immediate action to clear the area.



DIVISION K- GRADE K CO-ED

Teams meet on Saturdays for one hour. There is a thirty-minute instructional practice followed by a thirty-minute game. Team snacks are after the game. All snacks must be in original wrappers if sharing.

The basic skills of dribbling, passing, and throwing the ball into play are also covered. Coaches from both teams instruct as well as referee on the field during play. The game ball is a size three.

Parents play an important role in this division. Discuss with your coach if you want to help on the field.

The major objectives of Division K are to become comfortable with the ball, to learn the team concept, and to learn the basic rules. This division does not use goalies.

The simplicity of these modified pre-soccer games allows children with a wide range of interests and the ability to enjoy playing soccer at their own developmental level. These games provide each child with lots of chances to touch the ball. Very young children stay interested and enjoy the game when “ball touch” is high.



DIVISION 1- GRADE 1 CO-ED

Teams meet on Saturday for 60 minutes. There is a 30-minute instructional practice followed by a 30-minute game. The game consists of two halves and a short half-time. The season begins with five field players and no goalies on each side. The game ball will be a size three.

Coaches may be on the field during the games to referee and instruct players on positioning, throw-ins, goal kicks, and free kicks. No direct kicks or penalty kicks will be awarded. Offside will not be called.

Parents are encouraged to participate with their children during practice. Parental involvement at this level ensures the success of each child by maintaining their interest in the skills and the game.

As the season progresses and the children demonstrate proficiency in the five-on-five game, additional players may be added, one at a time, to a

maximum of six players per team on the field at a time. Both coaches must agree upon added players, but no more than a total of six players per team may be on the field. This division does not use goalies.

The young players of Division 1 enjoy the simplicity of this modified game, and it allows the development of skills appropriate to this age level. It keeps children on various developmental levels interested in the game because it provides a great deal of “ball touch”.

The major objectives of Division 1 are ball control, team concept, passing, rule comprehension, introduction of positions, and defense.

DIVISIONS 2/3

General:

Divisions 2/3 play on a rectangular field, depending on the availability of space and age.

These Divisions will have Boys and Girls divisions, 2/3 boys and 2/3 girls will have their own divisions. Coaches from both teams or parents will ref these games.

A player is given two chances to make a successful throw-in. The referee may instruct the player on the correct procedure after the first throw. A second incorrect throw results in possession of the ball by the opposing team by throw-in.

There will be only one practice session a week, not to exceed 60 minutes. Coaches will set the schedule for a weeknight with the approval by League President.

The major objectives for this division are ball control, passing, throw-ins, rule comprehension, defense, learning the positions, corner kicks, and teamwork.

In a goal kick situation, the defense will give the ball clear by kicking from inside the goalie box. The attacking team must return to the midfield line and set up their defense. All penalty kicks will be indirect kick not on goal.

These Divisions will play the game and will be held on a 30 x 47 field with 7 v 7 players per team (including the goalie) on the field at a time. They will be using 12 X 6 goal. The game is played with Size 4 ball.

****If teams do not have enough players for 7 v 7, coaches can add guest players to their team from other BYSL 2/3 teams only. Coaches can only add enough guest players to equal the number of players on the other team. If no subs are available, teams should keep an equal number of players on the field (e.g., 6 v 6, etc.). If Guest players are used from the BYSL 2/3 League, priority of play is given to the regular rostered players.**

OR

Coaches can agree and choose to play 6 v 6, 5 v 5, etc.

Game Rules:

Rules conform to FIFA, except as shown below.

- Due to small roster sizes, we will use 4–10-minute quarters. 2-minute break between quarters. No extra time/overtime.
- Coin toss is used to determine possession at the start of the game. Ball can be kicked backwards or forwards.

Substitutions: Unlimited substitution of players can occur on free kicks, goal kicks, goals, injuries, and at the discretion of the referee. Subs must wait at the midfield sideline prior to the referee allowing them to come in. All roster players should receive equal playing time.

Offside will be enforced.

Heading- No Deliberate heading allowed. If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area (penalty area) the indirect free kick should be taken from the goal area line parallel to the goal line nearest the point of the infringement

Fouls and Misconduct: All fouls are enforced including offside and penalty kicks if appropriate, plus: Referee should verbalize ALL infractions.

Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA, except: Opponents must retreat 10 yds. from ball.

Penalty Kick: Penalty kicks be indirect not on goal at this level.

Throw In: Foul throw-ins shall be retaken once. A second foul throw results in a change of possession and throwing in for opposing team.

Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA except: In a goal kick situation the goalie will be given the ball to clear by kicking from inside the goalie box. The attacking team must retreat to mid-field when a kick is taken.

Punting- The goalkeeper may not punt the ball (free kick only)

Spectators should remain at one sideline and give the players room for throw-ins and corner kicks. There shall be no spectators or coaches behind the goal area or on the goal line. Only coaches and medical personnel are allowed on the field after the referee determines they are needed.

It should be the goal of coaches to have every player play an equal amount of time in the games.

Play continues (running time) until a period is finished. Time will be kept by the referee. Teams will switch ends at half-time. There is no overtime.

DIVISION 4/5 Boys & Girls

Field/Players: In the 4/5B & 4/5G Division the game will be held on a max size 45 x 60 field with 8 v 8 players per team (including the goalie) on the field at one time. They will be using a 6.5 X 18.5 goal. The game is played with Size 4 ball.

****If teams do not have enough players for 7 v 7, coaches can add guest players to their team from other BYSL 4/5 teams only. Coaches can only add enough guest players to equal the number of players on the other team. If no subs are available, teams should keep an equal number of players on the field (e.g., 8 v 8, etc.). If guest players from another 4/5 BYSL team are used, priority of play is given to the regular rostered players.**

OR

Coaches can agree and choose to play 6 v 6, 5 v 5, etc.

Game Rules:

Rules conform to FIFA, except as shown below.

- 2- 25-minute halves. 5-minute break between halves. No extra time/overtime.
- Coin toss is used to determine possession at the start of the game. Ball can be kicked backwards or forwards.

Substitutions: Unlimited substitution of players can occur on throw-ins, goal kicks, goals, injuries, and at the discretion of the referee. Subs must wait at the midfield sideline prior to the referee allowing them to come in. All roster players should receive equal time.

Offside will be enforced.

Heading- No Deliberate heading allowed. If a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area (penalty area) the indirect free kick should be taken from the goal area line parallel to the goal line nearest the point of the infringement

Fouls and Misconduct: All fouls are enforced including offside and penalty kicks if appropriate, plus: Referee should verbalize ALL infractions.

Free Kicks: Conform to FIFA, except: Opponents must retreat 10 yds. from ball.

Penalty Kick: Penalty spot 10 yards from the goal.

Throw Ins: Foul throw-ins shall be retaken once. Second foul throw results in a change of possession and throw in for the opposing team

Goal Kick: Conform to FIFA except: In a goal kick situation the defending goalie will be given the ball to clear by a free kicking from inside the goalie area. The attacking team must retreat to outside the penalty area when kick is taken.

Goalkeeper Restarts- The goalkeeper may NOT throw or punt the ball. Free kicks only

Player Equipment: No jewelry, hoodies, or hard hair clips. Players must wear shin guards covered by socks. Goalie(s) must wear different colored shirts (or pinnie) than teammates.

There will be only one practice session a week, not to exceed 60 minutes. Coaches will work with League President to set practice schedules.

Junior High Division Co-Ed

Field/Players: In the Jr. High Division the game will be held on a 50 x 70 field with 10v10 players per team (including the goalie) on the field at one time. They will be using an 8 X 21 goal. The game is played with a Size 5 ball.

**If teams do not have enough players for 10 v 10, coaches can add guest players to their team from other BYSL Jr. High teams only. Coaches can only add enough guest players to equal the number of players on the other team. If no subs are available, teams should keep an equal number of players on the field (e.g., 8 v 8,

etc.). If guest players from other BYSL Jr. High teams are used, priority of play is given to the regular rostered players.

OR

Coaches can agree and choose to play 8 v 8, 7v7, etc.

Game Rules:

Rules conform to FIFA, except as shown below.

- 2- 25-minute halves. 5-minute break between halves. No extra time/overtime.
- Coin toss is used to determine possession at the start of the game. Ball can be kicked backwards or forwards.

Substitutions: Unlimited substitution of players can occur on throw-ins, goal kicks, goals, injuries, and at the discretion of the referee. Subs must wait at the midfield sideline prior to the referee allowing them to come in. All roster players should receive equal playing time.

Slide Tackles Will not be allowed.

Throw-ins Foul throw-ins shall be retaken once. Second foul throw results in a change of possession and throw in for the opposing team

Offside will be enforced.

Heading- will not be allowed.

Fouls and Misconduct: All fouls are enforced including offside and penalty kicks if appropriate, plus: Referee should verbalize ALL infractions.

Player Equipment: No jewelry, hoodies, or hard hair clips. Players must wear shin guards covered by socks. Goalie(s) must wear different colored shirts (or pinnie) than teammates.

- There will be only one practice session a week, not to exceed 60 minutes. Coaches will work with League President to set the schedule for a weeknight.

PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

In any organization, the size of BYSL, there are bound to be some problems and some cause for complaint. Initial problems should be discussed and hopefully resolved between the parties involved (coaches, players, parents). Contact your coach once the game and post-game activities are concluded and discuss your concern. If the problem remains unsolved the Division Field Coordinator should be notified, and he or she will attempt to provide a solution.

If this is still unsatisfactory to the involved parties, they may submit a written grievance stating the specific problem to the President of BYSL. The President may schedule a meeting with representatives of the BYSL Board and the involved parties to consider the grievance and resolve the problem.

Problems or complaints about the referees shall not be discussed with the referees for any reason at any time. This rule is in place to prevent any conflict between refs and coaches, spectators, or parents. There are no exceptions to this rule. The expectation is as a BYSL coach, player, parent, or spectator you will comply with this rule and respect that the referee is the Authority on the field. BYSL is a recreational league and if dangerous play causes safety concerns the game may be stopped either by the referee or the joint consultation of the coaches and referee. No game is worth jeopardizing a child's safety. In addition, anytime you have a concern (safety or otherwise) you should communicate with your Division Field Coordinator. If an explanation is required, the coach will notify the Division Field Coordinator of the name and nature of the complaint. The Division Field Coordinator will contact the League President who will in turn investigate and report back to the coach. Remember that the referees are also volunteers.

Please contact us if you have suggestions, inquiries, or interest in the program. If you are unable to get in contact with BYSL, please email: dcoffill@brunswickme.org

Brunswick Parks and Recreation Department

220 Neptune Drive

725-6656

Monday – Friday, 8am to 4:30pm

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