

# ODESSA SOCCER ASSOCIATION

## GENERAL RULES

It is the intent of Odessa Soccer Association (OSA) to abide by the rules and laws of the North Texas State Soccer Association (NTSSA) and the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA). The following are the OSA's General Rules and Laws of the Game. Some are specific to OSA and some of the more often used NTSSA and USYSA rules are stated for convenience. In the event of a conflict between OSA rules and NTSSA/USYSA rules, the stricter of the two will apply. All coaches and players are encouraged to be familiar with NTSSA/USYSA rules.

### ARTICLE 1 PLAYER REGISTRATION

**1.1** All youths who reside in Ector County Independent School District (ECISD) and who are between the ages of four and nineteen may register with the OSA.

**1.2 Proof of Age:** Players will provide proof of age when they register to play for the first time with OSA. Proof of age will consist of birth certificate, Board of Health records, passport, or United States alien registration card.

**1.3 Age Divisions:** will be comprised of players who are, before the first day of August of the immediately preceding soccer year,

**1.3.1** Under 19 years of age

**1.3.2** Under 16 years of age

**1.3.3** Under 14 years of age

**1.3.4** Under 12 years of age

**1.3.5** Under 10 years of age

**1.3.6** Under 8 years of age

**1.3.7** Under 6 years of age

**NOTE:** Age divisions may be further divided into pure age groups (U5, U6, U7, U8, etc.).

**1.4 Soccer Year:** The soccer year begins September 1 and ends August 31 of the following year. A player's age on July 31 will determine what age division the player will play in for all seasons beginning after August 1. (Example: a player who is 7 years old before August 1 will play in the Under 8 age division during the fall season after that August 1 and during the next spring season.)

**1.5 Recreational Players:** A player is registered as a recreational player from the moment the player or the player's agent signs the OSA registration form and pays the appropriate fees to the Association, subject to all appropriate OSA, NTSSA and USYSA rules.

**1.6 Non-recreational Players (club, select):** A player is registered as a non-recreational player and rostered to a non-recreational team from the moment the player or the player's agent signs the USYSA registration form and pays a portion of the fee to that team, subject to all appropriate OSA, NTSSA and USYSA rules.

**1.7 Playing for Teams:** No youth may play in any league game without having completed the registration process outlined for the class of team on which he/she is playing. The registration process is not completed until all the necessary registration forms and fees have been turned in to the Registrar of the OSA and the player has been placed on team's roster.

**1.8 Non-recreational Team Paperwork:** All paperwork and fees for non-recreational teams must be submitted to the Registrar of the OSA on or before September 1 of the same soccer year. Add/Delete forms, complete with all necessary supporting documentation and all fees, must be submitted to the Registrar no later than one week prior to any soccer activity which will involve or exclude the players listed on the form.

**1.9 Playing Outside of OSA:** Any team composed of players residing in OSA's jurisdiction which desires to participate in a League conducted by another USYSA sanctioned association will register with and pay their fees to the OSA. Such a team will then apply to the Board of Directors for a release to play in such a League.

**1.10 Teams from Outside OSA:** Any team composed of players residing outside OSA's jurisdiction wishes to participate in a League conducted by the OSA must first register with their home association and pay such fees and insurance as may be due to their State Association through their home association and obtain a release from their home association to participate in the League operated by the OSA. Any team playing in a League operated by the OSA will pay the fees set by the OSA, will be subject to the playing rules and regulations of the OSA.

**1.11 Rostered Players:** Players may only be registered with one pure gender team at any given time during the soccer year. Players U11 and older may be dual rostered on a pure gender team as well as a COED team.

**1.12 Refund of Registration Fee:** A full refund of the registration fee will be made if a player registers and the OSA cannot provide a team upon which the youth can play. For players that have been placed on a roster, NO refund of the registration fee will be given.

**1.13 Scholarships:** All scholarships (registration, tournament, camp, etc.) must be approved by the OSA Board of Directors. The number of scholarships and corresponding scholarship criteria associated with tournaments or camps, that are awarded by the tournament or camp providers/directors, must be approved by the OSA Board in advance of the event.

## **ARTICLE 2 RECREATIONAL PLAYER ASSIGNMENT**

**2.1 New Players:** Is a youth player that has not ever played for OSA.

**2.2 Returning Players:** Those players that were registered with the OSA for the previous season, will automatically be placed on the team for which they played the previous season if the team still exists and if the returning player registered by the normal registration deadline. Those players who were not 4 years of age by July 31 of the current soccer year but turned 4 years of age by December 31 of the same soccer year will be assigned to a team in their pure age group the following the Spring season. That is, the player will stay in the U5 pure age group and will not be allowed to play up.

**2.3 Former and Past OSA Players:** Players that did not play the immediate previous season for OSA will be assigned to teams using new player assignment policy.

**2.4 Established Team:** Coaches and players, constituted as a team in the previous season, may remain as a unit provided they meet the league eligibility and age requirements. The minimum number of players remaining on a team and forming the nucleus for that team, in order to remain as a team, is:

**2.4.1** Three (3) players for an Under-5 or Under-6 team

**2.4.2** Four (4) players for an Under-7 or Under-8 team

**2.4.3** Six (6) players for all other teams.

**2.4.4** If an existing team has the minimum number of returning players but there are not enough new players to add to the recreational team for it to continue as a team, the players will be placed on another team in their neighborhood area or adjacent area. All the players from the discontinued team will not necessarily be assigned to the same new team, but will be assigned just as any other player in that neighborhood pool are assigned.

**2.4.5** In the event an existing team loses its coach, the Registrar will assist the team with the selection of the successor coach.

**2.5 Requests:** OSA will **NOT** honor any request unless the request is an **EXTREME** circumstance. Any request to be considered by the OSA must be submitted in person to the Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled meeting prior to the end of registration for that season. Requests can only be approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall define extreme circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

**2.6 Player Assignment Criteria:** New players are assigned and new teams are formed by the following criteria, in the following order. There is a "first-come-first-served" policy. It is based on the date that the completed OSA registration fee is paid.

**2.6.1** Age group (under 6, under 8, etc).

**2.6.2** In the interest of competitive balance, players may further be divided into divisions within an age group, in order to create teams made up of pure age groups players (U5, U6, U7, etc.).

**2.6.3** Whenever possible, players will be assigned to a team on a territorial basis by; (a) neighborhood school or the team with the most players from the same neighborhood school, (b) cluster of adjacent neighborhood schools or zones established by the registrar. A player may list the magnet school they attend as their neighborhood school.

**2.6.4** When a player can't be assigned according to criteria .1, .2, and .3, they will be placed on the team with the fewest number of players or by blind draw.

**2.6.5** A-player may invite a friend living within the jurisdiction of OSA who has never registered with OSA to join his/her existing team. The player will be placed on that team if the request is in writing from the prospective new player and there is an opening on the team.

**2.6.6** If all rosters in an age group are full, players without a team will be placed on a waiting list.

**2.7 Recruiting:** Prospective players may be invited to register with OSA by a coach, player or parent if the prospective player has not played soccer for OSA previously. OSA prohibits a coach, player or parent from any form of recruiting, invitation to play, or inducement to returning or former players from another team. See Article 7 for illegal recruiting.

**2.8 Changing Teams:** A returning player may ask to be placed on a different team by following section 2.5 of these rules. The player will then be assigned according to new player assignment policy.

**2.9 Players Playing Up:** Parental and/or player request that a player be allowed to PLAY UP in a League for players older than the player may be made on the OSA registration form each soccer year. The OSA Board will consider the request and decide if allowing the player to PLAY UP is in the player's best interest. If such a request is allowed, the player will be placed on a team according to player assignment policy. When considering a request for a player to PLAY UP with an older sibling (brother or sister) of the same gender, the OSA Board will consult with the older sibling's team coach. If such a player is allowed to play up, that player will be assigned to the same team as the older sibling.

**2.10 Grandfather Clause:** Players who have been approved to PLAY UP by the OSA Board and have completed a full season playing up do not need to continue to write a letter each season or year requesting to PLAY UP.

**2.11 Teams Playing Up:** No teams U10 and younger will be allowed to PLAY UP. A team U11 and older formed or continued in accordance with these team formation rules in a League may request to PLAY UP in the next older League. The coach of record will submit a request for the team to PLAY UP to the President or Vice President of the League in which the team desires to play. That request must include some form of documentation that a majority of the players' families support such a request. The OSA Board will decide if it is in the best interest of the team, the legal League of that team, the proposed League, and the Association for the team to PLAY UP. If a decision is made to allow the team to PLAY UP, individual players (or their parents) may request that they be removed from that team and assigned to another team in accordance with the neighborhood pool policy. Additional players may only be assigned to that team from the neighborhood pool of the older League.

**2.12 Assignment of Players:** The registrar will assign players according the assignment policy and submit for review and approval to the OSA Board. The OSA Board will have the authority to over rule the registrar if such action is consistent with OSA player assignment criteria.

**2.13 Official Team Member:** A player becomes an official team member after payment of the required registration fee, the acceptance of their registration form by the registrar, and approval by the OSA Board.

**2.14 Final Rosters:** Rosters will be frozen after the third regularly scheduled Saturday games for the season. After that date no players will be added until the next season.

## **ARTICLE 3 NON-RECREATIONAL PLAYER ASSIGNMENT**

**3.1** Non-recreational teams will be formed in accordance with NTSSA rules and regulations.

### **ALL STAR TEAMS**

**3.2 All Star Teams:** OSA has chosen to make All Star teams the vehicle for recreational players who wish to play soccer in a more competitive environment. All Star teams may be formed in the Under-11 through Under-19 Leagues. Every player legally eligible to participate on the All-Star Teams is invited to attend practices for the All Star team for their own age group and to compete for positions on the All Star teams. All Star teams will compete in open (club) soccer tournaments.

**3.3 Formation of All Star Teams:** All Star Teams are temporary teams formed by the selection of players from among the Recreational teams in a particular league. The process of team formation will be as follows;

**3.3.1** Coaches or players interested in forming or playing on an All Star team must notify the OSA Board in writing of their intent to start or participate on an All Star team. Coaches, players, or parents are not to attempt to form an All Star team by any other method than that specified by OSA.

**3.3.2** Once an interest has been identified, OSA will notify all players in that particular league of the formation of an All Star team. Players and coaches will be asked to submit All Star application forms to OSA.

**3.3.3** From those teams, coaches and players submitting forms, OSA will select a head coach and assistant coach. The list of interested players will be provided to the coach. Additional players from the League can be added throughout the year.

**3.4 All Star Coaches:** The head coach of an All Star team will be selected by an All-Star Team Committee comprising of the President, Vice-President and Age Group Commissioner. Selection criteria shall include, but is not limited to, the coaching license earned by the coach, his demonstrated skills in teaching individual and team soccer skills, his ability and willingness to comply with and teach the Laws of the Game and the spirit of the game, and his ability to work with diverse personalities who may be associated with the All Star team. Assistant coaches will be selected by the head coach, but must be approved by the All-Star Team Committee.

**3.5 Player Eligibility:** A player who was not at least 10 years old on or before July 31 of the previous soccer year (i.e. is not a legal U11/12 player) may not participate in All Star team practices and may not be selected to participate with an All Star team even though that same player may be playing up in the U11/12 League. A Recreational player who is at least 10 years old on or before July 31 of the previous soccer year may participate in All Star team practices and be selected to an All Star team in the League where that player is a legal player OR to an All Star team in the League where the player usually plays if the player is playing up with an older age group.

**3.6 All Star Player Selection:** The All Star team head coach will select the players to be listed on the All Star team roster for each tournament in which the All Star team is entered. The player selection must be monitored and approved by an independent coach appointed by the All Star Committee for the purposes of ensuring a fair selection process. The coaches will consider the individual player's performance in League Games, All Star team practices, the player's attendance at All Star team practices, the player's demonstrated individual skills, and the player's dedication and dependability. The All Star team head coach will also be expected to consult with the coaches of the individual player's Recreational team. Each individual Recreational player in a League shall have an equal chance to be selected to that League's All Star team(s). All Recreational team players in any League will be considered for a place on the League's All Star team roster. Each player selected for an OSA All Star team must be listed on the current roster of one of the Recreational teams within the League which the All Star team represents.

**3.7 Preliminary Practice:** All players in a League will be invited to attend 2 preliminary practices. The purpose of these practices will be to develop and assess the skills of all players participating.

**3.8 All Star Team Practice:** Once the All Star team is selected, practices will be limited to once each week during recreational regular season; and will comply with OSA team meeting guidelines before and after recreational regular season.

**3.9 Multiple League All Star Teams:** To allow all players the opportunity to participate in the All Star program, a league may form multiple All Star teams. These additional team(s) can participate in the same tournament as the original All Star team or may participate in other tournaments scheduled for the same time period. If a particular tournament offers competition in specific age groups (i.e., U-11, U-12, U-13, etc.) a League may form an All Star team limited to players legally eligible to participate in such age groups.

**3.10 Recreational Play Comes First:** OSA does not intend to promote All Star teams at the expense of the Recreational teams in any League. Each registered player is expected to participate in scheduled League games and tournaments with that player's Recreational team rather than with the League's All Star team(s) whenever there is a scheduling conflict between the Recreational team and the All Star team. The Association may re-schedule League games in order to eliminate conflicts with possible All Star team tournaments.

**3.11 Roster Size:** An All Star team roster may have a minimum of 12 players and a maximum of 18 players.

**3.12 Playing Rules:** The playing rules will be the same as for competitive (select) teams of the same age.

## **ARTICLE 4 PLAYER RELEASES AND TRANSFERS**

**4.1 Guest Players:** Guest players are players that have been registered for the entire current season to another NTSSA team. Guest players may play on another team in tournaments, if the tournament allows such, and all NTSSA guest player requirements are met.

**4.2 Guest Player Transfers:** A player who has been a guest player on a soccer team may not be placed on the roster of the host team OR on the roster of any team coached, managed, or administered by any individual who coached, managed, or administered the host team until the soccer year during which the player was a guest player has ended and one more soccer year has passed unless the OSA approves the player's addition to the team roster.

**4.3 Injured Players:** Any injured player that wishes to keep his/her roster spot will be required to pay the full amount of the OSA registration fee, complete an OSA registration form, and turn it into the OSA office before the end of normal registration. This special situation must also be supported by documentation from the player's attending physician. The documentation must include a detailed explanation of the injury which prohibits the player from participating in soccer activities, reason why this injury prohibits the player from participating in soccer activities and an estimated date of complete recovery. This documentation must be submitted no later than the deadline of normal registration.

## **ARTICLE 5 COACHES**

**5.1 Risk Management Form:** Each coach must sign a Risk Management Form with the OSA each year before any team function may be held.

**5.2 Practicing With Other Players:** No coach, assistant coach, trainer, or team representative may practice any soccer related activity with any OSA registered player who does not appear on his current OSA 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 team's coach, substitutes for that coach at practices or games for the convenience of the requesting coach.

**5.3 Playing With Unregistered Players:** Only registered players will be permitted to play in competitions under the auspices of this Association. A team which uses unregistered players will automatically forfeit all games in which said players have participated. A violation of this rule will result in the offending Coach, Assistant Coach/Administrator being suspended for a minimum of one year from all soccer related activities.

**5.4 Coaches' Development Program:** Each coach of a team within the OSA is expected to participate in the Association Coaches' Development Program. The soccer programs offered by OSA are for the good of the youth playing within those programs. For that reason the coaches are expected to improve their personal coaching skills and techniques in order to offer their players the best instruction possible. OSA standards for coach development are:

**5.4.1** New Coaches - attainment of a State G Coach's License before the end of the first season of coaching.

**5.4.2** Continuing Recreational Coaches - recommend attainment of or evidence of progress toward a State F Coach's License or the local equivalent.

**5.4.3 NTSSA Coaches Clinic Reimbursement:** Upon proof of completion, OSA will reimburse all registered OSA coaches the expense of any coach's clinic that NTSSA sanctions or condones providing that the coaches clinic is in conjunction with the age group the coach is currently instructing within the following guidelines taken from the NTSSA coaching development program. As shown in the following table, OSA will also reimburse all registered OSA coaches for the next higher license as well up to a "D" license.

| <u>Age Group</u> | <u>NTSSA Guideline</u> | <u>Next Higher License</u> |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| U5 - U8          | "G" Clinic             | "F" Clinic                 |
| U9 - U11         | "F" Clinic             | "E" Clinic                 |
| U12 - U14        | "E" Clinic             | "D" Clinic                 |
| U15 - U18        | "D" Clinic             | -----                      |

**NOTE:** Under no circumstances will OSA reimburse a coach not involved in coaching recreational players/teams or a coach not following the table listed above. OSA will only reimburse the cost of the clinic, but not any other costs associated with taking the clinic (i.e. travel expenses, meals, etc.).

## **ARTICLE 6 CLINICS, CAMPS, PRIVATE LESSONS, ETC.**

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

**6.1.1** The clinic, camp, etc. must be available to all interested persons for each age group offered through an open invitation.

**6.1.2** OSA must receive written notice from the coach, administer, sponsor, etc. at least 10 days prior to the clinic, camp, etc.

**6.1.3** Each individual, team, club and/or organization hosting any soccer clinic, camp, etc. must require written registrations of each participant that includes the following information:

**6.1.3.1** Player's name

**6.1.3.2** Name, address and phone number of individual(s), team(s), club(s) and/or organization(s) affiliated with and/or hosting the clinic

**6.1.3.3** Name(s) of coach(es) at clinic

**6.1.3.4** Name & date(s) of clinic

**6.1.3.5** Name of player's current team and home association

**6.1.3.6** 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, private lesson, etc. should report same, in writing, to the OSA and to the Youth Commissioner of NTSSA. The NTSSA Youth Commissioner will deal with the alleged violations in accordance with NTSSA rules and regulations. Recruiting is any action or statement, made by anyone, either verbally or in writing, which encourages or entices a player to register with a particular coach, team, club, and/or organization.*

**6.1.4** The host of the clinic, camp, etc. must keep all registration forms for one (1) year from the date of the

camp, clinic, etc. so that they will be able to produce on demand from OSA 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.

**6.1.5** This rule does not apply to any clinic, camp, etc. sponsored by the OSA for the Association players where the registration publicity is conducted by OSA. Any publicity must indicate that this camp, clinic, etc. is sponsored by the Association.

**6.2 Private Lessons:** Between September 1 and May 31 of the 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 (complete an NTSSA release form). The person giving the private lessons must retain the acknowledgment slip and be able to present same when requested by OSA or NTSSA.

**6.3** A player who has attended a camp, clinic, etc. hosted (coached, managed, administered, etc.) by one coach (or one team's coaches/parents) may not be placed on the roster of the host coach or on the roster of any recreational team coached, managed, or administered by any individual who hosted the camp until the soccer year during which the player attended the camp has ended and one more soccer year has passed unless the OSA approves the player's addition to the recreational team roster. Exception is players that were rostered with the host coach the immediately preceding OSA season.

**6.4** Failure to comply with these rules may result in the offending coach, assistant coach, manager/trainer, and/or team representative being suspended from any and all soccer activities for a period of not less than one (1) year.

**6.5 OSA Sanctioned Soccer Academies:** OSA will support the NTSSA Academy program according to the following rules.

**6.5.1** A "Soccer Academy" is a group of Under 9 through Under 10 registered OSA recreational players who desire to participate with other players without following the recreational team formation rules. Players must register with their home association (OSA) and must be on a recreational team. Academies are to be governed by NTSSA Youth Associations, and NTSSA Youth Associations may host as many Soccer Academies as they deem desirable. Academy teams are governed by the league in which they participate. (If more than one association is involved in an academy league an A&D committee should be in place.)

**6.5.2** Coaches, trainers, administrators, etc., of Soccer Academies must have satisfactorily passed the criminal background check and information sent to NTSSA.

**6.5.3** Soccer Academy play is in addition to recreational play. Players may join any Soccer Academy of their choosing within their age group, and are not required to obtain a release from their NTSSA recreational team to participate on an Academy team. Players must present a form of proof of registration signed by their home association registrar each time they participate with an Academy. Players may join as many Soccer Academies as they like as long as the Soccer Academy is recognized by a North Texas Soccer Member Youth Association. No formal contract or written commitment may be signed by or on behalf of the player to commit a player to an Academy team. The Academies may charge a fee to cover expenses in addition to the player's recreational soccer registration fees. Academy players are limited to one (1) practice per week. Academy players may only play in one (1) Academy game per week, except tournaments. Academy players may participate in only one Academy tournament at a time. Violations of this rule shall result in sanctions against the offending party (coach, assistant coach, manager, parent, or other team representative), which could include suspension from all soccer activities for a period of time.

**6.5.4** Member Associations may provide league play if they have enough teams, or may coordinate with other Member Associations to provide a league or games between Soccer Academy teams from different home associations. Age division play will be designated as Under 9 or Under 10. Scores and standings will not be kept.

**6.5.5** Soccer Academy teams are not considered "registered recreational teams," and therefore do not have to follow recreational team formation rules. Soccer Academy teams may not enter NTSSA sanctioned tournaments unless the tournament has specified a "Soccer Academy" bracket. In that event, players must declare which Soccer Academy team they will play with in the tournament and may only play for one team in a tournament. Soccer Academy teams may not travel out of NTSSA as a team to play in tournaments.

**6.5.6** Soccer Academy rosters may change from week to week to accommodate players desiring to change

Soccer Academies, or to accommodate players who want to play on one team one week and another team the next week.

**6.5.7** The purposes of the Soccer Academies are to:

**6.5.7.1** Provide recreational players who have aspirations of becoming a more accomplished player an avenue to test and enhance his or her skills.

**6.5.7.2** Provide recreational players an opportunity to train with more experienced coaches.

**6.5.7.3** Provide recreational players an opportunity to investigate the level of play with which they are comfortable, which players they would like to play with, and for which coaches they would like to train.

**6.5.8** Recruiting is not allowed on Soccer Academy teams. Soccer Academies are to be used for training and for the further development of recreational players, not recruiting.

**6.5.9** For the purpose of this rule, all players participating in a Soccer Academy who are also registered with an OSA recreational team, in the event of a conflict, consider the OSA recreational team to be their primary team and the Soccer Academy team as a secondary commitment.

**6.5.10** The following are additional rules for Soccer Academies provided by OSA for OSA Soccer Academies, specifically:

**6.5.10.1** Each week, one (1) Soccer Academy session will be held on Sunday afternoon in each city, Odessa and Midland.

**6.5.10.2** Soccer Academies are restricted to Under 9 and Under 10 players registered with OSA or MSA and rostered on a recreational team.

**6.5.10.3** Soccer Academy teams are restricted to one (1) tournament according to the following schedule:

**6.5.10.3.1** September 1 – November 30

**6.5.10.3.2** December 1 – February 28

**6.5.10.3.3** March 1 – May 31

**6.5.10.3.4** June 1 – August 31

**6.5.10.4** Odessa Soccer and Midland Soccer will develop a unified Soccer Academy program and work together for the development of recreational players.

**6.5.10.5** Soccer Academy teams will not participate in any Academy tournaments on weekends that OSA and MSA have local tournaments, MSA's Turkey Shootout and OSA's West TX Blowout.

**6.5.10.6** Soccer Academy teams must identify Academy tournaments that they will attend prior to local recreational league scheduling to allow OSA and MSA to schedule around potential conflicts.

**6.5.10.7** Soccer Academy coaches must also commit to supporting the Skills Clinics organized by MSA and OSA to include the education of recreational coaches as well as skills sessions for U5 thru U8 players.

**6.5.10.8** Soccer Academy players must be registered with MSA and OSA and playing on a recreational team with full participation (a minimum of 75% of the team's activities) on that team for each season of Soccer Academy participation.

**6.5.10.9** Soccer Academy players are restricted to one (1) academy session per week.

**6.5.10.10** OSA will identify which area will be used for Soccer Academy sessions.

**6.5.10.11** OSA and MSA will provide all necessary advertisement for the Soccer Academy. No additional advertisement from any Club, coach, parent, etc., or any other organization is permitted.

**6.5.10.12** If enough Soccer Academy teams are available, OSA and MSA will consider having an Academy League for Academy teams.

## **ARTICLE 7 ILLEGAL RECRUITING**

**7.1** Illegal recruiting occurs when any coach, assistant coach, trainer, or team representative who is associated in any way with any USYSA affiliated youth team discusses, or attempts to discuss, the chances, probabilities, possibilities, or benefits of a player whose name appears on the official roster of another OSA team becoming a member of that individual's associated team.

**7.2** 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/her 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:

**7.2.1** 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 his choice of team.

**7.2.2** This rule applies to verbal discussions, letters, and brochures as well as radio and television advertisements. Failure to comply with this rule will 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.

**7.3** Any allegation of illegal recruiting must be made in writing and submitted to the OSA Board. The OSA appointed A&D Committee will investigate the allegations and decide whether illegal recruiting has occurred. The OSA intends to deal severely with any individual found to be guilty of illegal recruiting. The OSA also intends to deal severely with any person who attempts to interfere with the A&D Committee's investigation of allegations of illegal recruiting.

**7.4** Any decision made by the A&D Committee and any sanctions imposed by the A&D Committee may be appealed by any concerned party to the OSA Board.

## **ARTICLE 8 RULES OF THE GAME**

**8.1** Games sanctioned by the OSA will be played under the rules published in the current edition of Federation International Football Association (FIFA) Laws of the Game and Universal Guide for Referees (or its successor publications) except as modified by the OSA with the permission of the NTSSA. The following modifications to the current edition of Laws of the Game are the rules which will be enforced in OSA league play.

**8.2** All players and coaches registered with the OSA have voluntarily agreed to participate in the OSA soccer league. By doing so, they have also agreed, implicitly or otherwise, to abide by the rules and regulations of the OSA and the governing bodies with which the OSA is affiliated; the NTSSA, the USYSA, the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and the FIFA.

**8.3** **Field Size:** OSA has worked with the Odessa Parks and Recreation Department to obtain fields appropriate to the Leagues playing within the Association. The current field dimensions utilized by OSA are as follows:

|                             | <b>Under 5/6</b>   | <b>Under 7/8</b> | <b>Under 9/10</b> | <b>Under 11 &amp; Up</b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Field Length                | <u>40-50 yards</u> | 50-70 yards      | 70-80 yards       | 100-130 yards            |
| Field Width                 | <u>20-30 yards</u> | 30-50 yards      | 40-50 yards       | 50-100 yards             |
| Center Circle Radius        | <u>5 yards</u>     | 8 yards          | 8 yards           | 10 yards                 |
| Goal Area outside Post      | <u>3 yards</u>     | 6 yards          | 6 yards           | 6 yards                  |
| Goal Area into Field        | <u>3 yards</u>     | 6 yards          | 6 yards           | 6 yards                  |
| Penalty Area outside Post   | <u>N/A</u>         | N/A              | 14 yards          | 18 yards                 |
| Penalty Area into Field     | <u>N/A</u>         | N/A              | 14 yards          | 18 yards                 |
| Penalty Spot from Goal Line | <u>N/A</u>         | N/A              | 10 yards          | 12 yards                 |
| Penalty Arc Radius          | <u>N/A</u>         | N/A              | 8 yards           | 10 yards                 |
| Corner Arc Radius           | <u>1 yard</u>      | 1 yard           | 1 yard            | 1 yard                   |
| Goal Width, Inside          | <u>6 feet</u>      | 12 feet          | 7 yards           | 8 yards                  |
| Goal Height, Inside         | <u>3-4 feet</u>    | 6 feet           | 7 feet            | 8 feet                   |

**NOTE:** Coaches, substitutes, parents, and other spectators will remain at least 6 feet away from the side touchline of the field. No coaches, substitutes, parents, or spectators are allowed at either end of the field at any time.

**8.4 Playing Time:** Each recreational team player, when present at a game, will play a **minimum of 50%** of the total playing time during league games, unless the player's time has been reduced for medical or disciplinary reasons. Non-attendance at practice may be cause for disciplinary action. The coach must notify the player, the parents of the player, and the appropriate Age Group Vice-Commissioner (and receive the commissioner's permission) prior to the game in which a player's time will be reduced for disciplinary reasons. The opposing coach as well as the officiating Referee must be notified prior to the beginning of the game that the minimum time has been reduced.

**8.5 Referees:** Referees will be provided for U7 games and older. Depending on availability, referees may be provided for U6 games as well. For U5 games, a coach or parent from each team will officiate the game together.

**8.6 Termination of Games:** When the Referee deems it necessary to suspend or terminate the game, he will submit a detailed NTSSA Referee's Report of Misconduct to the OSA Board within 48 hours. Reports will be deemed to be made when mailed.

**8.7** In applicable age divisions, in the event a coach or parent is disrupting the game or harassing the referee, the referee may stop the game, find the board member on duty, the board member on duty may ask the parent or coach in question to leave the complex and the game may continue. In the event the parent or coach in question does not leave, the game will be abandoned.

**8.8 Player or Coach Send-Offs:** When the Referee cautions or sends off a player or coach, he will submit a detailed NTSSA Referee's Report of Misconduct to the OSA Board within 48 hours. Reports will be deemed to be made when mailed.

**8.9** The Referee is empowered to request, and the coach is required to comply with, the removal of any spectator adversely affecting the game.

## REFEREES

**8.10 Player Assistance:** For age groups U8 and under, referees will assist players for both teams in positioning for restarts (throw-ins, indirect kicks, kick-offs, corner kicks and goal kicks).

**8.11 Assistant Referees:** Assistant Referees will not be provided for U6 through U8 games.

**8.12 Referee and Linesmen Assistant Referee Assignment:** Referees will be assigned in accordance with USSF Referee Assignor Program. A summary of the program is:

**8.12.1** Referees are assigned by the Referees Coordinator, or an assignor under the direction of the Referee Coordinator.

**8.12.2** It is the intent to use only referees that have successfully completed and are registered with NTSSA.

The use of unregistered referees is approved only in emergency situations when approved by the referee coordinator. In these circumstances, the decisions of that person serving as an emergency referee are just as binding as if he were a registered referee.

**8.12.3** Referees and Assistant Referees will be rotated on a regular basis among leagues.

**8.12.4** Assignors are encouraged to listen to complaints about officiating. The assignor should direct complaints to be filed in writing.

**8.12.5** It is the intent of OSA to assign referees at least 3 days in advance of games.

**8.12.6** Maximum recommended number of assignments a day per referee is 3 games.

**8.12.7** All Referees and Assistant Referees officiating recreational games are compensated by OSA.

## 8.13 UNDER 5 and UNDER 6 MODIFIED RULES

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

**8.13.1 Substitutions:** Players may be replaced only at the end of each quarter, except for injuries and other minor emergencies. Each player must play at least 2 quarters of each game. No player may play 4 quarters in any game until all other players have played at least 3 quarters of the game.

**8.13.2 Number of Players:** 3 per side on the field at a time.

**8.13.3 Roster Size:** Maximum OSA roster size is 6 players. More than OSA maximum may be placed on the team with the coach's permission or at the request of the coach.

**8.13.4 Minimum Players Needed to Start a Game:** 2.

**8.13.5 Minimum Players Needed to Continue a Game:** 2.

**8.13.6 Scoring:** No score is to be kept during any game.

**8.13.7 Goalkeeper:** Goalkeepers will not be used.

**8.13.8 Ball Size:** Number 3

**8.13.9 Length of Game:** 32 minutes, divided into four 8 minute quarters with a 5 minute ~~rest~~ at half time.

**8.13.10 Offside:** None.

**8.13.11 Free Kicks:** Indirect only.

**8.13.12 Penalty Kicks:** None.

**8.13.13 Restarts:** If the ball goes wholly out over the touchline, the game will be restarted with a kick-in. In the U5 age division, if the ball goes out over the touchline only by a few feet, simply nudge the ball back into the field of play (parent or player) and continue play. Multiple, formal restarts take too much time and overly interrupt the flow of the game.

**8.13.14 Goal Kicks and Corner Kicks:** Normal goal kicks and corner kicks will be performed. Do not allow play to continue past the goal line or behind the net.

**8.13.15 Slide Tackling and Slide Kicking:** Not allowed.

**8.13.16 Coaches on the Field of Play:** One coach from each team will be allowed on the field of play only to assist and encourage the players and position players. One of the coaches will act as referee and keep time, that is, if no referee has been assigned to the game. Opposing coaches may jointly referee the game, if desired.

**8.13.17 Game Cards:** Each coach will complete a game card indicating which quarters each player on the team played.

**8.13.18 Player Involvement:** All attacking players must be in their attacking half of the field for a goal to be scored.

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

## 8.14 UNDER 7 and UNDER 8 MODIFIED RULES

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

**8.14.1 Substitutions:** Players may be replaced only at the end of each quarter, except for injuries and other minor emergencies. Each player must play at least 2 quarters of each game. No player may play 4 quarters in any game until all other players have played at least 3 quarters of the game.

**8.14.2 Number of Players:** 5 per side on the field at a time, no goalkeeper.

**8.14.3 Roster Size:** OSA recommended roster size is 8 players. Maximum OSA roster size is 10 players. More than OSA maximum may be placed on the team with the coach's permission or at the request of the coach.

**8.14.4 Minimum Players Needed to Start a Game:** 4

**8.14.5 Minimum Players Needed to Continue a Game:** 4

**8.14.6 Goalkeeper:** Goalkeepers will not be used. OSA prohibits positioning a player in front of the goal specifically for defending shots.

**8.14.7 Ball Size:** Number 3

**8.14.8 Length of Game:** 40 minutes, divided into 4 quarters of 10 minutes each with a 5 minute halftime.

**8.14.9 Offside:** None. However, in the spirit of the game, a player may not station himself within the opposing team's goal box with the intent of scoring. Such a "goal tending" foul will be punished by an indirect free kick.

**8.14.10 Free Kicks:** Indirect only. Goals may not be scored from a free kick unless the ball is touched by a second player, other than the kicker, before it crosses the goal. The second touch may be made by a second player from either team.

**8.14.11 Penalty Kicks:** None.

**8.14.12 Throw Ins:** Players making an improper throw in will be given a second chance. If the second attempt is also taken improperly possession will be given to the opposing team.

**8.14.13 Slide Tackling and Slide Kicking:** Slide tackling is not allowed. Slide kicking is allowed if no other player is within 5 yards of the player doing the slide kicking.

**8.14.14 Coaches on the Field of Play:** No coaches or parents will be allowed on the field during play. No coaches or parents are allowed behind or near a goal.

**8.14.15 Player Involvement:** All attacking players must be in their attacking half of the field for a goal to be scored.

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

## **8.15 UNDER 9 and UNDER 10 MODIFIED RULES**

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

**8.15.1 Substitutions:** Shall be made at the following times:

- 8.15.1.1** Before a throw in by the team in possession.
- 8.15.1.2** Before a goal kick, by either team.
- 8.15.1.3** When the referee stops the game for an injury by either team.
- 8.15.1.4** After a goal is scored, by either team.
- 8.15.1.5** At the start of a second half, by either team.
- 8.15.1.6** After a yellow card, the carded player may be substituted.

**NOTE:** The referee must be informed prior to any substitution including the goalkeeper, including at the start of the second half.

**8.15.2 Number of Players:** 7 per side on the field at a time, one of which is the goalkeeper.

**8.15.3 Roster Size:** OSA recommended roster size is 10 players. Maximum OSA roster size is 11 players. More than OSA maximum may be placed on the team with the coach's permission or at the request of the coach.

**8.15.4 Minimum Players Needed to Start a Game:** 5

**8.15.5 Minimum Players Needed to Continue a Game:** 5

**8.15.6 Goalkeeper:** Goalkeeper is considered to have possession of the ball when some part of his/her body, other than his/her foot, is touching the ball and the ball is not moving.

**8.15.7 Ball Size:** Number 4

**8.15.8 Length of Game:** 50 minutes, divided into 2 halves of 25 minutes each with a 5 minute halftime.

**8.15.9 Offside:** Conforms to FIFA Rules

**8.15.10 Free Kicks:** Conforms to FIFA Rules

**8.15.11 Penalty Kicks:** Conforms to FIFA Rules

**8.15.12 Throw Ins:** Conforms to FIFA Rules

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

## 8.16 UNDER 12 MODIFIED RULES

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

**8.16.1 Substitutions:** Shall be made at the following times:

- 8.16.1.1** Before a throw in by the team in possession.
- 8.16.1.2** Before a goal kick, by either team.
- 8.16.1.3** When the referee stops the game for an injury by either team.
- 8.16.1.4** After a goal is scored, by either team.
- 8.16.1.5** At the start of a second half, by either team.
- 8.16.1.6** After a yellow card, the carded player may be substituted.

**NOTE:** The referee must be informed prior to any substitution including the goalkeeper, including at the start of the second half.

**8.16.2 Number of Players:** 11 per side on the field at a time.

**8.16.3 Roster Size:** OSA recommended roster size is 15 players. Maximum OSA roster size is 18 players. NTSSA maximum is 18. More than OSA maximum may be placed on the team with the coach's permission or at the request of the coach.

**8.16.4 Minimum Players Needed to Start a Game:** 7

**8.16.5 Minimum Players Needed to Continue a Game:** 7

**8.16.6 Goalkeeper:** Goalkeeper is considered to have possession of the ball when some part of his/her body, other than his/her foot, is touching the ball and the ball is not moving.

**8.16.7 Ball Size:** Number 4

**8.16.8 Length of Game:** 60 minutes, divided into 2 halves of 30 minutes each with a 5 minute halftime.

**8.16.9 Offside:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

**8.16.10 Free Kicks:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

**8.16.11 Penalty Kicks:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

**8.16.12 Throw Ins:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

## 8.17 UNDER 14 AND UNDER 16 MODIFIED RULES

**8.17.1** All rules are the same as for U12 with the exception of; U14 the game time which is 70 minutes divided into 2 halves of 35 minutes each and the ball size is a number 5; U16 the game time which is 80 minutes divided into 2 halves of 40 minutes each and the ball size is a number 5

## 8.18 COED Modified Rules

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

**8.18.1 Substitutions:** Shall be made at the following times:

- 8.18.1.1** Before a throw in by the team in possession.
- 8.18.1.2** Before a goal kick, by either team.
- 8.18.1.3** When the referee stops the game for an injury by either team.
- 8.18.1.4** After a goal is scored, by either team.
- 8.18.1.5** At the start of a second half, by either team.
- 8.18.1.6** After a yellow card, the carded player may be substituted.

**NOTE:** The referee must be informed prior to any substitution including the goalkeeper, including at the start of the second half.

**8.18.2 Number of Players:** 11 per side on the field at a time.

**8.18.3 Roster Size:** OSA recommended roster size is 15 players. Maximum OSA roster size is 18 players. NTSSA maximum is 18. More than OSA maximum may be placed on the team with the coach's permission or at the request of the coach. OSA will attempt to organize each COED team with half male players and half female players.

**8.18.4 Minimum Players Needed to Start a Game:** 7 (minimum of 3 female players)

**8.18.5 Minimum Players Needed to Continue a Game:** 7 (minimum of 3 female players)

**8.18.6 Goalkeeper:** Goalkeeper is considered to have possession of the ball when some part of his/her body, other than his/her foot, is touching the ball and the ball is not moving. The Goalkeeper may be male or female.

**8.18.7 Ball Size:** Number 4 (U11 and U12), Number 5 (U13 and older).

**8.18.8 Length of Game:** 60 minutes, divided into 2 halves of 30 minutes each with a 5 minute halftime.

**8.18.9 Offside:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

**8.18.10 Free Kicks:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

**8.18.11 Penalty Kicks:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

**8.18.12 Throw Ins:** Conforms to FIFA Rules.

**8.18.13** Each team must consist of male and female players.

**8.18.14** A minimum of one male player is required to be on the field at all times and no more than fifty percent (50%) of the eligible number of players on the field at any one time, excluding the goalkeeper, may be male.

**8.18.15 Scoring:** Goals scored directly by a female player will count two (2) points (except goals scored from penalty kicks). Goals scored directly by a male player will count one (1) point.

### **ALL PLAYERS PLAY AT LEAST 50% OF EACH AND EVERY GAME!!!**

**8.19 Unintentional Hand Ball:** It is NOT an intentional hand ball if a player attempts to protect vital areas of his/her body by placing hands or arms across them to keep them from being struck by the ball. Play will be allowed to continue for an unintentional hand ball. However, if, in the opinion of the referee, the player tried to gain advantage by deflecting or otherwise controlling the path of the ball, a hand ball foul may be called.

**8.20 Red Cards:** Any player, coach or assistant coach sent off (red carded) during a game will not be allowed to participate in the remainder of the game. The player may not participate in the team's next game which had been scheduled as of the time of red card issuance. The coach may not participate in the team's next game which had been scheduled as of the time of red card issuance. Violation of this rule may result in additional penalties, including indefinite suspension.

## **ARTICLE 9 PRACTICES AND GAMES**

**9.1 Team Activities:** Soccer activities for recreational teams will be limited to:

**9.1.1** 3 activities of 1 hour duration each week for Under-6 (U5/U6) and Under-8 (U7/U8) teams.

**9.1.2** 3 activities of 1-1/2 hour duration each week for Under-10 (U9/U10) teams.

**9.1.3** 4 activities of 1-1/2 hour duration each week for Under-12 thru Under 19 Leagues.

**9.1.4** These activities will usually be two/three practices and one game per week. Double header games (two games in one day) will count as one activity.

**9.2** Each team's coaches and players should shake hands with the other team after each game.

**9.3** Parent/coaches will limit comments to players during game time to positive comments.

**9.4** No alcoholic beverages will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.

**9.5** The HOME team (the team listed first on the official schedule) and the VISITING team will occupy opposite touch-lines. The HOME team will sit on the north or west side of the field.

**9.6 Starting Season Practice:** Recreational teams may practice with players after they have been registered and assigned to the team (returning players are automatically assigned to a team so may practice after being registered). The RECREATIONAL team may hold regularly scheduled practices each week until the team has played its last game for that season, including all tournaments in which the team participates.

**9.7 Forfeits** - A team will forfeit any game in which:

**9.7.1** A team fields an ineligible player or a player under suspension.

**9.7.2** A team has a suspended coach appearing at a game to coach.

**9.7.3** A team fails to field a team with required minimum number of players within ten (10) minutes of the scheduled starting time according to the Referee's watch. If neither team can field the minimum number of players, the game will be recorded as a loss for each team. In the event of a team forfeiture OSA may require the following: first offense of a soccer year a loss will be recorded, and letter of reprimand will be placed in the coach's file; second offense of soccer year a loss recorded, and coach will be suspended from all team activities through the next game; third offense during soccer year offense loss recorded, and coach suspended for remainder of season and until reinstated by OSA A&D Committee.

**9.7.4** A team violates the minimum playing time requirements for any player on the team.

**9.7.5** A coach who removes his team from the field during a game for any reason will receive a red card and his team will forfeit that game, without possibility of appeal. The OSA Board, at its discretion, may request the A&D Committee to conduct a hearing which could result in additional penalties for the coach.

**9.8** When a game is forfeited, the score will be recorded as 1 - 0. Since any forfeiture may affect the final standings of

that league, the appropriate age division's Vice-Commissioner will make a complete inquiry concerning the forfeit.

**9.9 Division Standings:** Standings will be kept for U10 and above only. It is the goal of OSA to schedule teams in a division to play each other twice, where possible. In the event all teams in a division play each other at least twice, the last 2 games will count towards standings. In the event teams play some others once and some twice, only the 2nd game will count for those played twice. In the event the 2nd game cannot be played due to foul weather the 1st game will count. Points to determine division standings will be assigned as follows:

**9.9.1** Win = 3 points

**9.9.2** Draw = 1 point

**9.9.3** Loss = 0 points

**9.10 Tie Breakers:** In order to determine a Tournament of Champions (TOC) representative teams that are tied in points for first place at the end of the season, then the NTSSA tournament tie breaker method will be used to determine the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place teams. The Tie Breaker method is as follows:

**9.10.1** Head to Head game results for any and all games played that season - winner will advance.

**9.10.2** Most number of "shutouts" in that season - team with most "shutouts" will advance.

**NOTE:** Shutout is defined as holding the opposing team to zero (0) goals.

**9.10.3** Goal differential: The team with highest goal differential against common opponents will advance (maximum of five (5) goal differential per game).

**9.10.4** Fewest goals allowed: The team with fewest goals allowed against common opponents will advance.

**9.10.5** Fewest accumulation of caution points: 1 point for yellow and 2 points for red. Fewest accumulation of caution points will advance.

**9.10.6** Penalty Kicks: winner will advance.

**9.11 Tournament of Champions (TOC) Representative:** The OSA TOC representative will be the first place team in the U10, and older age divisions U12, U14, U16, and U19 divisions. In the event the first place team can't go, then the second place team will be asked to represent OSA at TOC.

**9.12 Trophies or Medals:** All recreational players will receive participation trophies or medals. For U10 and older age groups, individual trophies or medals may be presented to the members of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams in each division. In those cases where two or more teams tie in points for a place in a division, members of each team (except the championship team) will receive individual trophies or medals.

## EQUIPMENT

**9.13** Every player must wear shin guards. No player may play or practice without shin guards.

**9.14** A player may not wear anything that may endanger themselves or another player. This includes necklaces, hair bows, bracelets, watches, earrings, and shoes with metal cleats. Shin guards are also dangerous when not covered by the socks.

**9.15** In cold weather, players may wear sweat shirts and pants, but the uniform shirt must be worn over the sweat shirt.

**9.16** Players are allowed to wear sliding shorts under their shorts, but they must be the same color as the uniform shorts. Each player must wear the same color.

**9.17** The referee shall be empowered to bar any player from the field who violates or otherwise disregards items listed above or in any way may be a danger to the other players on the field.

**9.18** Coaches and players must provide their own soccer balls for games.

**9.19 Uniforms:** OSA will provide T-shirts for all U5 and U6 teams, but OSA will not provide uniforms for any other teams. For ages U7 and older, teams must provide their own uniforms. Uniforms may not include references to alcohol, pornographic or tobacco related products and/or companies. In the event two teams have a similar color uniform, the home team will be required to change to an alternate color uniform or wear pennies (scrimmage vests).

**9.20 Practice Location:** OSA teams practicing at public parks should notify the OSA and receive permission prior to practicing at any public park area. This policy is in place to limit conflicts with other athletic associations and other soccer teams.

**9.21 Game Field Practices:** Each team is allowed 2 practices per season on game fields. These 2 practices must be reserved with the Vice President. No team will practice on any game field of any size other than these 2 practices per season. Teams violating this policy may be required to forfeit games or be subject to other disciplinary action by OSA.

**9.22 Team Pictures:** Will be taken during the season and must be scheduled with the photographer. Make-ups may be scheduled with the photographer.

**9.23 Rescheduling Games:** Other than "no play days," teams will play games as scheduled. Rescheduling will only be considered for **EXTREME** circumstances, when submitted to the Vice President at least 10 days prior to the regularly scheduled game, and if approved by the Vice President. Submitted requests can be in writing, via e-mail, or by telephone.

**9.24 No Play Days:** On the date of the pre-season Coaches meeting, a request for "no play days" will be provided to all known coaches. Coaches will indicate up to 2 "no play days" and return to OSA by a date specified by the Vice President. "No play days" are regularly scheduled division game days which the coach indicates he/she can't play. "No play days" will be defined as a regularly scheduled weekday the division plays (Monday through Friday) or an entire weekend. A coach can choose any of the following for no play days; two weekends, one weekend and one week night, or two weeknights. Other than no play days, coaches and teams will be expected to play games as scheduled.

**9.25 Coaches' Boxes:** There are coach's boxes (containers) at the fields for each coach. Mail and hand-outs from OSA are placed in the coach's box on a weekly basis. Each coach will be required to check the box each week and distribute all information to team parents.

**9.26 Nets:** The home team with the first regularly scheduled game for the day on each field will put up the nets. Both teams involved in the last regularly scheduled game for the day on each field will take the nets down.

## **ARTICLE 10 FOUL WEATHER PROCEDURES**

**10.1 Decision to Cancel Game:** Unless otherwise notified by the appropriate age group Vice Commissioner or other OSA board member, all teams must report to the playing field for their assigned games. Any team failing to have the minimum number of players available will forfeit the game. A Board Member on duty for the day, or in a board member's absence, the Referee will be the sole judge of whether the game may begin.

**10.2** If a game is suspended because of field or weather conditions before the second half of play has begun, that game will be replayed in its entirety. If the second half of play has begun, that game will be considered a full, complete game. The OSA Vice President will make all reasonable efforts to reschedule games not played due to field or weather conditions if play days and referees are available. In the event a team refuses to play because of questionable field or weather conditions, the coach will protest the situation to the Referee. The Referee's decision may be appealed to the appropriate age group Vice Commissioner or Board Member on duty, then to the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE 11 GAME PROTESTS**

**11.1** All protests of game matters will be submitted in writing to the appropriate age group Vice Commissioner (or the OSA Board) within 48 hours of the game, accompanied by a protest deposit of \$50.00. If the protest is upheld, the deposit will be refunded. If the protest is denied, the deposit will be forfeited to the OSA.

**11.2** The Vice Commissioner and/or the OSA Board will review the protest with the protestor to determine the situation and validity. A game may only be protested if:

**11.2.1** A team knowingly playing an unregistered, ineligible, or suspended player; or,

**11.2.2** A team's suspended coach is present and coaches the team; or,

**11.2.3** There is a violation of the 50% minimum playing requirements for any player; or,

**11.2.4** 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.

**11.2.5** No protests can even be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the Referee during play.

**11.3** If the protest is judged valid for hearing, the Vice Commissioner will accept the protest and the deposit and forward them to the Chairman of the A&D Committee within 24 hours of receiving them.

**11.4** The A&D Committee will receive a protest through its Chairman and will meet to consider the protest within 5 days of its receipt. All notified parties, coaches, players, and Referees will be notified of the protest hearing and will be requested to be present. Failure to attend after being requested to do so may cause default of the protest or require other action to be taken.

**11.5** The A&D Committee will not assume that a game result protest should be upheld strictly on the basis of a protest being valid because a the Laws of the Game has been broken or for any other valid reason. Game protests and the entire circumstances surrounding the game, including the determination that said outcome of the game was or was not affected by the protestable events of the game, will be considered.

**11.6** Decisions of the A&D Committee may be appealed to the OSA Board of Directors.

**11.7** There will be no protests of games played in the Under-9 Leagues and younger. If a team violates minimum playing time requirements for any player, the matter will be handled as a complaint against the coach.

## **ARTICLE 12 DISCIPLINE, PROTESTS, GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS**

**12.1** The A&D Committee of the OSA is the judicial branch of the OSA. Appeals about actions and/or decisions of OSA officers, coaches, and referees will be filed with the Chairman of the Appeals and Discipline Committee unless an alternate review process is specified in some part of the By-Laws or the Rules & Regulations of the OSA. Protests and grievances will also be filed with the Chairman. The referees of OSA sanctioned games will file a NTSSA Referee's Report of Misconduct with the Chairman for ALL incidents in which the referee issues a CAUTION, SEND OFF, or suspends a game or alleges misconduct by any person (this includes cases of alleged referee abuse - the referee must file a copy of the Report with the Chairman even though the incident will be adjudicated by the NTSSA).

**12.2** All comments in this chapter regarding the actions of the NTSSA, its officers, and its committees are explanatory in nature and do not bind the NTSSA in any way. The actions of the NTSSA, its officers and committees are governed by the NTSSA Administrative Handbook. The explanations included herein are intended to inform the members of the OSA of their rights and obligations due to the OSA 's membership in the NTSSA. In case of conflicts between this chapter and the NTSSA Administrative Handbook, the NTSSA Handbook will be the definitive document.

**12.3 Authority:** All members and participants in youth soccer within the jurisdiction of the OSA have requested to participate in OSA's soccer leagues. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the By-Laws and Rules & Regulations of the OSA, as well as those of the NTSSA and of the United States Soccer Federation, including its United States Youth Soccer division. The OSA By-Laws provide that it has jurisdiction over all players, coaches, team managers, administrators, referees, and teams who choose to affiliate with OSA.

**12.4 Hearings:** The A&D Committee of the OSA will hold hearings WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT on every player/coach/assistant coach cautioned or ejected and on referee's reports of serious misconduct by spectators and/or parents. These hearings will, unless absolutely impossible to schedule, be held and decisions communicated to the involved parties and league officials before the individual involved is scheduled to play another game sanctioned by the OSA. The use of tape recorders (audio or video), court reporters, and the presence of attorneys (in their professional capacity) at hearings conducted by either the A&D Committee or by the Board of Directors acting as an appellate body is not allowed.

**12.5 Misconduct of Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches:** If the Chairman of the OSA A&D Committee or the OSA Board of Directors receives three (3) written complaints against any coach, or one (1) written complaint against any coach by the appropriate age group Vice Commissioner, the coach will be summoned before the A&D Committee or the OSA Board Directors for judgment on the ability to continue coaching youth soccer. These complaints must be made on separate occasions (games, practices, etc.) during the season and may include written complaints from other coaches or from the parents of players on the coach's team which are received by the Vice Commissioner and misconduct reports by the Referees.

**12.6 Twelve (12) Point Caution System:** OSA will operate and keep records on a twelve (12) point "Caution System" for all players, coaches, and assistant coaches. Offenses resulting in the cautioning of a player, coach, or assistant coach by the referee (yellow card) and offenses resulting in the sending off of a player, coach, or assistant coach by the referee (red card) are assessed points according to the severity of the infraction with minimum points ranging from one to twelve 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 the entire soccer year (September 1 to August 31).

**NOTE:** If the OSA A&D Committee determines that a SEND OFF (red card) was issued for an infraction that was not an "expulsion" offense in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, the Committee may reduce the SEND OFF (red card) to a CAUTION (yellow card) and assess points for the CAUTION. The Committee may not, however, do away with the card altogether.

**12.6.1 The minimum points to be allocated are:**

**12.6.1.1** Twelve Points for:

**12.6.1.1.1** Send Off from game due to serious foul play, violent conduct, or foul or abusive Language;

**12.6.1.1.2** Send Off from game due to misconduct after receiving a caution will be assessed points based on two (2) cautions.

**12.6.1.2** Four Points for:

**12.6.1.2.1** Deliberate tripping, tripping and other "tactical", deliberate, physical fouls;

**12.6.1.2.2** Foul tackle from behind;

**12.6.1.2.3** Interference by other players when the referee is speaking to a player after an offense has been committed;

**12.6.1.2.4** Continued dissent of a decision in an attempt to unsettle the referee.

**12.6.1.3** Three Points for:

**12.6.1.3.1** Deliberate, tactical obstruction;

**12.6.1.3.2** Persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game;

**12.6.1.3.3** Shirt pulling and other similar tactics;

**12.6.1.3.4** Deliberate encroachment at free-kicks.

**12.6.1.4** Two Points for:

**12.6.1.4.1** Deliberate hand-ball designed to break up attack;

**12.6.1.4.2** Time wasting, including that by the goalkeeper;

**12.6.1.4.3** Moving arms up and down to obstruct an opponent;

**12.6.1.4.4** Gesticulating in front of a player taking a free-kick or throw-in;

**12.6.1.4.5** Encroachment or ungentlemanly conduct at a penalty-kick;

**12.6.1.4.6** Other ungentlemanly conduct.

**12.6.1.5** One Point for:

**12.6.1.5.1** Entering or leaving the field without the referee's permission;

**12.6.1.5.2** Player leaning on a teammate to gain an extra height;

**12.6.1.5.3** Pulling oneself up by the goal-post or cross-bar to gain an advantage.

**12.6.2** These are minimum disciplinary punishments to be taken by the A&D Committee. Nothing herein prevents the Committee, or the Board of Directors as an appellate body, 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.

**12.7 Accumulated Caution Point Sanctions:** When a given individual accumulates a total of twelve (12) points, he/she will be suspended from the next game in which his/her team is scheduled to participate and his/her excess points over twelve are carried over.

**12.8** When a given individual accumulates a total of eighteen (18) points, he will be suspended from the next two games in which his outdoor team is scheduled to participate and his excess points over eighteen are carried over.

**12.9** When a given individual accumulates twenty-four (24) points, he/she will be suspended from all soccer activities pending an inquiry by the A&D Committee.

**12.10** A player transferring to another team will carry his or her accumulated points to his new ~~outdoor~~ team.

**12.11** These are minimum disciplinary punishments to be taken by the A&D Committee. Nothing herein prevents the Committee, or the Board of Directors as an appellate body, 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.

**12.12 Send Offs:** Whenever an individual is sent off from a game, that individual must leave the area where the game is being played. If that individual is a player, his team must finish the game with one fewer players than it had on the field before he was sent off; and that individual is automatically suspended as outlined below from the next game(s) in which his/her team is scheduled to participate. These sanctions are applied automatically whenever an individual is sent off and will be enforced even without any hearing being held by the A&D Committee. These sanctions cannot be waived by any appellate body unless the referee who sent off the individual has misapplied the Laws of the Game.

**12.13** The first time a given individual is sent off from a game during a soccer year, he/she will be suspended from the next game in which his team is scheduled to participate, unless the individual was sent off for fighting in which case he will be suspended from the next two games in which his team is scheduled to participate.

**12.14** The second time a given individual is sent off from a game during a soccer year, will be suspended from the next two games in which his team is scheduled to participate.

**12.15** The second time a given individual is sent off from a game for fighting during a soccer year OR the third time a given individual is sent off from a game during a soccer year, he/she will be suspended from all soccer activities pending a hearing by the A&D Committee.

**12.16** These are minimum disciplinary punishments to be taken by the A&D Committee. Nothing herein prevents the Committee, or the Board of Directors as an appellate body, 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.

**12.17 When to Serve Suspension:** An automatic game suspension for accumulated points and/or a SEND OFF is to

be served by the player, coach, or assistant coach at the next scheduled game (regular league game, makeup league game, play-off game, championship game, cup game, or tournament game) that the team of the player, coach, or assistant coach is involved in. The lack of a hearing on the suspension of the offender shall not nullify his or her suspension.

**12.18** When a SEND OFF or a game suspension under the Caution System is issued to a player, the OSA A&D Committee will forward a copy of the Referee's Report of Misconduct of the SEND OFF or a copy of the OSA A&D Committee's report on suspension due to excessive points directly to the NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee, together with the action taken by the OSA. The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of punishment, if any, in addition to that prescribed by the OSA, taking into consideration the severity of the misconduct. Each additional CAUTION and/or SEND OFF of said player during the remainder of the soccer year will also be forwarded to the State Committee for review and possible further action. 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 submit a report. A hearing will not be held by the State Committee unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one because of the nature of the case.

**12.19 Misconduct by Coach:** Any misconduct by a coach justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee as well as the OSA A&D Committee. The OSA A&D Committee shall promptly (within 10 days after receipt of the report) rule on the report and send its decision to the State A&D Committee. The State Committee will determine the extent of the punishment, if any, in addition to that taken by the OSA.

**12.20** The NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee will make its decision entirely upon the written reports before it, including that of the affected coach should he submit a report. Hearings will not be held by the State Committee unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one.

**12.21** A coach whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to his players, parents, and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the OSA A&D Committee.

**12.22 A&D Directive From the OSA Board:** The OSA A&D Committee is 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 sent off, while on the touch-line, or approaching or leaving the game site, or by any other form of communication.

**12.23 Misconduct of Spectators:** Each team in the OSA is responsible for the conduct of its spectators. Therefore, the coach, assistant coach, and team manager are expected to control the spectators. If he/she is unable to do so, the OSA will take appropriate actions toward the identifiable, unruly spectator, or, if unidentifiable, towards the team itself. The action of the OSA shall be sent to the NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee for review and further action if it feels it is warranted. Possible disciplinary actions for the misconduct of spectators are:

**12.23.1** Suspend the spectator(s) from attending future matches.

**12.23.2** Report the spectator to the Odessa Parks and Recreation Department for possible park access restrictions.

**12.23.3** Require the team to forfeit any games at which that spectator is present on the touch-line and refuses to leave the soccer complex.

**12.23.4** Require the offending team to pay for the presence of police at the game.

**12.23.5** Revoke and/or refuse registration to the offending team.

**12.23.6** Cause the spectator to be placed under a municipal "peace bond".

**12.24 Misconduct and Punishment of Teams:** When the players, coaches, and/or spectators of a given team have accumulated a total of twenty-four (24) points for CAUTIONS (yellow cards) OR a total of forty (40) points for a combination of CAUTIONS (yellow cards) and SEND OFFS (red cards), the OSA A&D Committee will suspend the team from all OSA sanctioned play until the coach and players of said team appear before it to explain their team's continued misconduct.

**12.25 Team Hearing with NTSSA:** The OSA will suspend the team from all soccer related activities and notify the NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee who will require the coach and players of said team to appear before the committee to explain their team's continued misconduct. At this point the NTSSA A&D Committee will have exclusive jurisdiction over this matter. When the players, coaches, and/or spectators of a given team have accumulated a total of:

**12.25.1** Thirty two (32) points for a combination of CAUTIONS (yellow cards) and SEND OFFS (red cards) during tournament play OR

**12.25.2** Forty eight (48) points for CAUTIONS (yellow cards) OR

**12.25.3** Sixty four (64) points for a combination of CAUTIONS (yellow cards) and SEND OFFS (red cards)

**12.26** The OSA 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 violations of OSA rules.

**12.27 Misconduct Toward Referee:** The NTSSA has exclusive jurisdiction over assault or abuse of officials, both referees and assistant referees, in any competition by the State or OSA. This jurisdiction includes:

**12.27.1** Any and all USSF registered referees (adult and youth).

**12.27.2** Any and all non-licensed person serving in any emergency capacity as a game official.

**12.27.3** Any coach, parent, or junior linesman serving as a game official.

**12.28** 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 NTSSA A&D Committee Chairman. A copy will also be immediately submitted to the Chairman of the OSA A&D Committee. This committee, chaired by the NTSSA A&D Committee Chairman, 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.

**12.29** Should the majority of the members of the NTSSA A&D committee determine there is sufficient evidence to consider the incident a referee assault or referee abuse, a formal hearing will be held within thirty (30) days of the verification of the incident. An intentional act of physical violence upon game officials shall be deemed "referee assault" in the NTSSA under the terms and conditions of the United States Soccer Federation Policy 531-9.

**12.29.1** If the committee determines there is sufficient evidence to consider the incident as referee abuse, the committee, at its discretion, may suspend the individual involved until the hearing on the alleged assault.

**12.29.2** Should the committee determine the action committed to be Misconduct Towards a Referee rather than Referee Assault or Abuse, it shall impose an administrative punishment of a three (3) game suspension. A formal hearing will not be held unless it is requested by the suspended party. Should a formal hearing be requested and held, it shall be a NTSSA Executive Committee hearing.

**12.30 State Executive Committee Hearing:** Assault hearings shall be conducted by the State Executive Committee in the following manner:

**12.30.1** The alleged offending party is requested to be present at such hearings; however, if he/she is not present, the State Executive Committee will act upon the matter with the information before it.

**12.30.2** The game officials 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.

**12.30.3** It is intended that the officials' reports be clear and that no explanations are required at the hearings. Only the State Executive Committee will question the officials. If the offending party or any other party or any other person needs explanation, such queries will be addressed through the Chair.

**12.31** If any assault is found to have been made on an official, the State is obligated to suspend the person making the assault from all soccer activities for a minimum of one (1) year. Stiffer penalties may be imposed by the State Executive Committee at its discretion. If the State Executive Committee finds the actions to be a case of referee abuse it shall impose not less than a three (3) game suspension.

**12.32** Any party adjudged guilty of referee assault shall have the right to appeal, within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision, to the United States Soccer Federation Appeals Board, following Bylaw 705.

**12.33 Referee Abuse:** Should the North Texas State Referee Assault/Abuse Subcommittee determine the action to be referee abuse as explained 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 State Youth Commissioner and the procedure shall be the same as that used by the State Executive Committee to hear cases of alleged referee assault.

**NOTE** Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act 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; 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.

**12.34 Misconduct of Referees:** When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward any participant or spectator of a match, the NTSSA Executive Committee will hear such allegations and assess punishment of the Referee in regard to his activities.

**12.34.1** When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward another referee the State Referee Committee shall hear such allegations and deliver to the State Executive Committee its findings and punishment of the referee in regard to his activities.

**12.34.2** When any referee is alleged to have mis-interpreted the Law of the Game but does not admit to such mis-interpretation, the complainant will submit a letter to the OSA Referee Coordinator who will present the matter to the OSA Board.

**NOTE:** If the referee admits to have mis-interpreted the Laws, the complaint will be handled as a game protest and will be submitted with the appeal deposit of \$50 to the A&D Committee Chairman.

**12.34.3** When any referee is alleged to have carried out his duties in less than a professional manner, the complainant will submit a letter to the OSA Referee Coordinator who will present the matter to the OSA Board. The OSA Board will deliver its findings and punishment of the referee in regard to the alleged breach.

**12.35 Appellate Procedures:** All complaints, protests, grievances, misconduct reports, and appeals of the decisions or actions of any official of the OSA will, unless directed elsewhere in the OSA By-Laws and General Rules, be submitted, in writing, to the Chairman of the A&D Committee within forty-eight (48) hours of the matter concerned. The Committee may, at its discretion when requested in writing to do so, waive the time limit for filing matters before it, but in no case will grant an extension of more than ten (10) days. Many matters submitted to the Committee must be accompanied by a cash bond (see the later paragraph about filing fees).

**NOTE:** A grievance a wrong, real or fancied, considered as grounds for complaint against an unjust act.

**12.35.1** The A&D Committee will act on all matters submitted to it within five (5) days after receipt of the complaint or report by the Chairman. All involved parties (referees, linesmen, coaches, players, parents) will be notified of the hearing date and time and are expected to be present. However, if any person is not present, the Committee may proceed with the hearing. The Committee will hear all sides of the incident according to the Committee's established procedures, and then will request that all involved parties leave so that the Committee may deliberate on the matter (no decision will be made by the Committee while the involved parties are present). The Chairman of the Committee will make the results of the Committee's deliberations known to all involved parties as soon as possible.

**12.35.2** The Board of Directors of the OSA may bring any matter directly before the Board as a judicial body when the Board feels it is necessary in order to render a decision and to speed the normal process for matters of utmost

importance.

**12.35.3** All decisions of the A&D Committee, except those which are appealed directly to the NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee, may be appealed to the Board of Directors of the OSA. Those decisions which are appealed directly to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee are enumerated in other sections of the General Rules. All decisions by the OSA A&D Committee which are appealed to the Board of Directors, and most of those which are appealed to the State, require the posting of a cash bond of \$50.

**12.35.4** All decisions of the Board of Directors of the OSA may be appealed to the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee of the NTSSA. Such appeals may require the posting of a cash bond.

**12.35.5** All decisions of the Appeals and Disciplinary Committee of the NTSSA may be appealed to the State Executive Committee.

**12.35.6** All appeals at all levels are subject to a complete rehearing of the initial incident or action. No appeal level will lessen the punishment assessed by a lower level in any case in which the lower level decision is upheld. Higher appeal levels may, at their discretion, increase the punishment assessed by a lower judicial body.

**12.35.7** All those persons under the jurisdiction of the OSA are reminded that they must exhaust all appellate procedures of the OSA before they may appeal to the NTSSA or other governing bodies.

**12.35.8** The OSA A&D Committee will 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. The Committee may also determine whether it wants to allow closed or open hearings.

**12.35.9** The OSA and its Committees will refuse to hear any appeal when any person is threatening a lawsuit. Such appeals will immediately be passed to the NTSSA. This is a sport to which our local officers and officials are giving freely of their time, and none of them need to take the trouble and expense to appear in court.

**12.35.10** The OSA and its Committees and the NTSSA and its Committees will refuse to allow the use of recording devices, court reporters, and the presence of attorneys acting in their professional capacity at all hearings.

**12.35.11** Should any aggrieved party resort to the courts without exhausting all avenues of appeal including through to the United States Soccer Federation, the OSA may, at its discretion, suspend such person or refuse to accept further registration in soccer activities within its jurisdiction.

**12.35.12** Any appeal, to any reviewing body in either the OSA or the NTSSA, will be:

**12.35.12.1** In writing.

**12.35.12.2** Made to the appropriate person within five (5) days of receipt of written notice of the lower level authority's decision(s). The appropriate person is the:

**12.35.12.2.1** Chairman for the OSA A&D Committee

**12.35.12.2.2** President for the OSA Board of Directors

**12.35.12.2.3** Chairman for the NTSSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee

**12.35.12.3** Accompanied by the specified fees in cash or certified check.

**12.35.13** Filing fees for appeals will not be waived. Filing fees will be refunded to the appealing party only if the previous decision is overruled. Fees will be:

**12.35.13.1** \$50 for all matters at either the OSA A&D Committee or Board of Directors.

**12.35.13.2** \$100 for all appeals to the NTSSA.

**12.36 Records:** The A&D Committee will maintain a permanent file of all reports sent to it and the action taken. When

any one person or team shows a trend toward 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.

## ARTICLE 13 COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

**13.1 Code of Ethics for Coaches:** The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety, development and welfare of players.

**13.1.1** Coaches will instruct players to play within the laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.

**13.1.2** Coaches will not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.

**13.1.3** Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.

**13.1.4** 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.

**13.1.5** Coaches must never encourage players to violate recruitment, eligibility, or guest player rules and policies.

**13.1.6** 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.

**13.2 Responsibility to OSA:** Adherence to all OSA and NTSSA rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting, and guest players is mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of every coach to know and understand these rules.

**13.2.1** Player development and the growth of the player through participation is essential to the growth of the sport of soccer. Additionally, the coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport are maintained.

**13.2.2** Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches should be referred to the appropriate Commissioner or committee immediately.

**13.3 Responsibility to the Laws of the Game:** 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.

**13.3.1** Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the laws of the game.

**13.3.2** 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.

**13.3.3** 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, the Association, North Texas Soccer and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive constantly to teach good sporting behavior.

**13.4 Responsibility to Officials:** 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.

**13.4.1** 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 will not be taken as an encouragement to debate referee decisions during the match.

**13.4.2** On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during, and after the game. Officials

should be addressed as "Referee" or "Mr./Ms./Mrs. 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.

**13.4.3** Complaints/comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the official.

**13.5 Responsibilities Regarding Scouting and Recruiting:** It is unethical to scout any team, by any means.

**13.5.1** The use of video tape or motion picture equipment to scout an opponent's regularly scheduled games for any purpose of recruiting is unethical.

**13.5.2** All OSA and NTSSA rules pertaining to recruiting will be strictly observed by the coach, manager, and any team representative.

**13.5.3** It is unethical to recruit player(s) playing for another team.

**13.5.4** 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.

**13.5.5** When discussing the advantages of his/her organization, the coach has an ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams, and organizations.

**13.5.6** 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.

**13.5.7** Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of video tape and other electronic equipment is not allowed.

**13.6 Responsibility of Public Relations:** 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.

**13.6.1** 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.

**13.6.2** Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public while representing their team, OSA, and North Texas Soccer.

**13.6.3** Comments stressing injuries, team, personnel conflicts, or disciplinary problems as an excuse for a loss or unsuccessful endeavor are detrimental and should be avoided.

**13.6.4** It is unethical for a coach to solicit alumni, parents, booster club, or managers to pressure organizations, OSA, or North Texas Soccer 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.

**13.7 Game Day and Other Responsibilities:** 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.

**13.7.1** Opposing 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.

**13.7.2** During play, coaches have a responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible. Coaches will exhibit a respectful attitude towards players. The coach must confine himself to the coaching area (off of the field of play and between the top of the penalty areas). The attitude of the coach towards officials, spectators, opposing players and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.

**13.7.3** It will 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.

**13.7.4** The coach's foremost post game responsibility is his team.

**13.7.5** Coaches should use their influence on unfriendly spectators that demonstrate intimidating behavior towards officials and opposing teams.

## **ARTICLE 14 REFEREES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

**14.1** The Referee should faithfully enforce the Laws of the Game and any special rules of the competition of the league(s) and officiate without prejudice or favoritism to any player, team or coach.

**14.2** It is the professional duty of the Referee to constantly keep abreast of any changes in the Laws or Rules of Play and to keep physically fit. The Referee should constantly strive to improve the refereeing techniques and always accept sincere, constructive criticism from fellow referees or official assessors without malice.

**14.5** Each Referee should acknowledge fellow referees' total authority over any matches in which they are duly assigned to officiate, and should pledge never to interfere with the carrying out of their prescribed duties, before, during, or after a match.

**14.6** 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.

**14.7** As a registered 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.

**14.8** 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.

**14.9** 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, which I am not to wear my uniform while coaching my team.

**14.10** 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.

**14.11** I hereby pledge that I will always faithfully carry out my duties and obligations as a USSF referee registered with the NTSSA; 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.

**14.12** 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.

## **ARTICLE 15 CODE OF ETHICS FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS**

**15.1** 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.

**15.2** It is important to remember that as board members or administrators 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.

**15.3** Have respect for the game, players, officials, parents, coaches, association volunteers and fellow board members and deal with them in a patient, courteous and consistent manner. Board members/administrators will respect and honor the decisions made by the board, committees or general membership; and will not undermine such decisions.

**15.4** Criticism directed through the proper channels should be educational, constructive, balanced and positive. Under no circumstances should it be demeaning or detrimental to the self respect of the individuals involved. Proper channels will be defined as directly to the board member/administrator the criticism pertains to or in a meeting of the Executive Committee.

**15.5** 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.

**15.6 Regarding committee members 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 should be demonstrated at all times. 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.

**15.9** All board members will review, be familiar with, and comply with the By-laws and General Rules of OSA.

**15.10** Board members will only attempt to perform duties of fellow board members, committees, or administrators with the effected board member/committee/administrator's written permission or with written permission obtained from a meeting of the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE 16 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS**

**16.1** Children have more need for example than for criticism.

**16.2** Attempt to relieve the pressure of the competition, not increase it. A child is easily affected by outside influences.

**16.3** 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.

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

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

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

**16.7** Remember your child is involved in organized sports for their enjoyment.

**16.8** Encourage your child to always play by the rules.

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

## **ARTICLE 17 ENFORCEMENT OF CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

**17.1** Any OSA committee empowered to hold disciplinary hearings may investigate alleged violations and enforce the Codes of Ethics/Conduct.

**17.2** No alleged violation of these Codes of Ethics/Conduct may be investigated unless the allegation is made, in

writing, to the proper disciplinary committee OR unless the allegation is brought out in testimony before one of the Association's disciplinary committees.

**17.3** Persons wishing to report alleged violations of these Codes should write a letter outlining the date, time, and circumstances of the alleged violation addressed to:

**17.3.1** The Executive Committee for violations by coaches, managers, or team representatives

**17.3.2** The Referee Coordinator for violations by referees or linesmen.

**17.3.3** The Executive Committee for violations by board members, administrators, or committee members.

**17.3.4** Letters should be mailed to the above officers at the OSA.

**17.4 Consequences:** common consequences of illegal or unethical behavior include, but are not limited, to the following: reprimand, probation, suspension from coaching or board duty.

## **ARTICLE 18 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

**18.1** In the event a board member is at mid-term of a board position, is nominated for a different office and should not be elected to the different office, the board member may retain the office he/she originally held.

**18.2** Board members must be present at board meetings to cast a vote. Proxies will not be allowed.

**18.3 Keeping of Records:** All OSA records will be kept at the OSA office unless specific approval to temporarily remove such records is granted by a majority vote of the board. OSA records will include but not be limited to player/tournament/camp registration forms, minutes, financial records, check register, current rules/regulations, coaching information, uniform & equipment information, referee information, schedules and fund raising records.

**18.4 Deposit of Funds:** All cash, checks or other funds received by OSA (any board member, player, parent or volunteer) must be deposited in the general OSA account as soon as possible. Amounts of cash up to \$250 may be kept on hand to make change. When depositing funds indicate for each deposit the code (registration, tournament, camp, t-shirts sales, etc.) on the deposit slip and give the deposit slip to the Office Manager. The office manager and those approved to sign checks may make deposits. Deposits in excess of \$1,000 will be verified by 2 of the people approved to make deposits.

**18.5 Fund expenditure policy** will be as follows:

**18.5.1** Expenditures of more than \$100 must be approved in advance by majority vote of the board. Approved budgets may not be exceeded without approval by the majority vote of the board.

**18.5.2** For events requiring multiple expenditures (camps, fields, uniforms, tournaments, registration, fund raising, etc.) the coordinator of such event will present a line item budget to and obtain approval from the board by majority vote in advance of such event. Line item budgets may not be exceeded without a board approved amended budget. Within 14 days of the conclusion of such an event the coordinator will present a summary comparing budget items to actual expenditures.

**18.5.3** All financial records will be kept by electronic method at the OSA office using the accounting program approved by majority vote of the board.

**18.5.4** No reimbursable will be considered if the appropriate receipt is not submitted to OSA within 30 days.

## **End of General Rules**