



San Marcos Area Youth Soccer Organization

Recreational League Handbook

Rev. Feb2015

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1 OPERATIONS

San Marcos Area Youth Soccer (SMAYSO) is a 501©(3) non-profit organization. All SMAYSO leadership, with the exception of the Director of Coaching (DOC) and some administrative staff, are volunteers.

1.1 Mission Statement

San Marcos Area Youth Soccer Organization is a Texas non-profit, tax exempt organization formed to promote, foster and advance the cause of soccer for youth at all levels of play within its territory. It shall be the mission of San Marcos Youth Soccer Association to educate, provide administrative service, promote, and stimulate interest in the game of soccer with one purpose in mind: to ensure that each player has an enjoyable soccer experience while moving toward his or her personal goal.

1.2 Executive Board

The SMAYSO Executive Board is the governing board and is responsible for the internal structure and policies.

1.3 Coaches and Trainers

SMAYSO coaches and select team trainers are led by the DOC.

To learn more about and obtain contact information for SMAYSO Executive Board, General Board, and staff, visit www.smsoccer.org.

1.4 Governing Soccer Entities:

- US Soccer Federation
- US Youth Soccer Association
- South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA)
- Alamo Area Youth Soccer Association (AAYSA)
- San Marcos Area Youth Soccer Organization (SMAYSO)

1.5 Contacts

- President – Erik Svendsen president@smsoccer.org 512-971-1271
- Vice President – Jim Neff vp@smsoccer.org
- U10 and under Commissioner (Rec) – Jason Hickey jasonrhipkey@gmail.com
- U11 and above Commissioner (Rec and Select) – Ian Shott ian@chapsurvey.com
- Fields/Uniforms – Stephen Sundquist
- Director of Referees – Ian Shott <mailto:smaysorefassignor@gmail.com>
- Director of Coaching (DOC) – Scott Moore <mailto:scottmooresoccer@gmail.com>
- Registrar – Karen Bentley <mailto:smaysosurgeregistrar@gmail.com> 512-392-0972

2 COMMUNICATION

In order to ensure players and families receive the most current information in an expeditious manner, SMAYSO primarily uses electronic methods. SMAYSO treats player and family information in a confidential manner and does not provide email distribution lists external to the club. Internal

distribution is limited to the Registrar. On request the Registrar will provide each commissioner an age specific distribution list.

3 SMAYSO RECREATIONAL LEAGUE

The SMAYSO Recreational program fosters a fun learning environment for children of all skill levels interested in learning soccer fundamentals.

SMAYSO collaborates with KidSafe-approved volunteer parent coaches to focus on individual player skills development while ensuring players have a soccer experience that enables them to develop an appreciation of team work and good sportsmanship in a fun environment.

While the “soccer experience” in this league focuses primarily on having fun rather than competition by participating in playful activities, SMAYSO provides each coach with structured exercises which will enable players to develop a basic foundation of soccer skills.

3.1 Level of Play

The Recreational League includes the following Divisions:

3.1.1 Division IV (Recreational, age levels U5-U10)

Recreational level of play for U10 and younger players. This level is open to all players wishing to participate. Teams should be formed in a fair and balanced manner with no selective elimination of players. All U10 and younger teams play small-sided games in accordance with the rules of US Youth Soccer.

3.1.2 Division III (Recreational, age levels U11-U19)

Recreational level of play for U11 through U19 players. This level is open to all players wishing to participate. Evaluations may be completed to allow coaches the opportunity to identify the skill level of the players and to be used to balance teams. Teams may play intra-association through AAYSA, or may play only with other SMAYSO teams.

3.2 Club Curriculum

All coaches will be required to follow the published club curriculum. The curriculum will be a combination of the US Soccer curriculum and the English FA curriculum. Failure to follow the curriculum will warrant a meeting with the DOC who will determine the appropriate course of action.

3.3 Age Groups

Age will be determined by the player’s age as of midnight on July 31st of the year in which the player could be registered for fall season play. Teams are normally formed so that players are placed on the youngest team for which they qualify.

3.4 Coaching

Coaching responsibilities for Recreational level teams are fulfilled by volunteer parents whose responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Obtain a KidSafe Card after successfully completing a background check
- Conduct fun-based training sessions
- Coach during games
- Host team meetings during the seasonal year
- Serve as the primary point of contact for parents regarding the communication of a potential grievance
- Communicate with the team manager regarding practice & game schedules, tournaments, and other team-related activities.

Parents who coach more than one team should not schedule practice sessions to occur simultaneously. Practice should occur in series, not in parallel.

3.5 Team Manager

The role of the Team Manager is typically fulfilled by volunteer parents whose responsibilities includes, but are not limited to, the following:

- Obtain a KidSafe Card after successfully completing a background check
- Communicate information to the team in a timely manner

3.6 Season

Fall (August to November) and Spring (February to May) are individual seasons.

3.7 Game Frequency & Playing Time

8-10 matches per season. SMAYSO has a 50% play rule requiring that each player be given the opportunity to play at least 50% of games at which they are present.

3.7.1 Team Standings

SMAYSO will not maintain standings for U10 and below.

It is unsportsmanlike to run-up scores by >5 goals. In these instances, coaches should focus on maintaining possession and developing other player skills to benefit their team.

3.8 Practices

U6: Once weekly; may occur Monday through Friday based on coach availability.

U8/U10: Once or twice weekly with the team and one group practice (by age) with the DOC and/or his staff.

3.9 Cost

Price is age-specific. See website registration page for details. Pricing includes uniforms.

3.10 Team Photos

Team photos are scheduled to occur early in the season and before the scheduled game of the day.

4 AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

4.1 Recreational Coach of the Season Award

This award is given to one recreational coach from each age group (U6, U8, U10) each season. Before the end of each season, the registrar emails coaching nomination forms to all parents. The award is based strictly from input by parents.

4.2 End of Season Party

Teams may convene for an end of season party at their discretion. This is a great opportunity for us to show support and appreciation to our players and parents.

4.3 End of Season Recreational Tournament

At the end of each season, SMAYSO will host a recreational tournament for all in-house teams U6 to U10.

4.3.1 U6/U8

U6 and U8 teams will typically play two games. No scores will be kept and no winner will be determined.

4.3.2 U10

U10 teams will play a single elimination consolation bracket tournament to determine an overall winner. Although no scores will be kept, results of games will be used to determine who will play for a championship and who will play for consolation.

4.3.3 Trophies or Medals

Trophies or medals will be awarded at the end of each team's last game of the day.

5 INSURANCE COVERAGE AND MEDICAL INJURIES

Excess accident coverage is automatically provided to registered members of South Texas Youth Soccer Association (STYSA) as a part of the registration fee paid to the State. This policy provides for coverage for registered players, coaches, trainers, and other officials, during sanctioned events including regularly scheduled practices and games. For players or members who have health insurance coverage this insurance acts as secondary coverage. For players or members that do not have other health insurance coverage, this coverage acts as primary insurance. Members are covered:

- While participating in STYSA sanctioned play, practice, or other scheduled soccer group activity under the supervision of an authorized official acting on behalf of STYSA.
- While traveling as an organized group directly and uninterruptedly to and/or from such play or practice at the direction of an authorized STYSA official.

Use the following STYSA website link for details regarding insurance coverage:
www.stxsoccer.org/risk/insurance/index_e.html

6 FIELD CARE

Trainers, coaches, players, and parents are responsible for assuring all game and practice areas are clean from trash and/or debris prior to vacating the premises. All coaches, volunteers, and parents are expected to comply with parking rules.

7 SMAYSO POLICY

7.1 Zero Tolerance

SMAYSO prohibits enforces a Zero Tolerance Policy regarding behaviors, comments, and actions that endanger or threaten the environment of good sportsmanship and safe play for all soccer participants. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Use of foul language, criticism, abusive or derogatory comments toward referees, coaches, team managers, volunteers, commissioners, parents, board members, or any other individuals.
- Interference with referees, coaches, team managers, or opposing teams.

SMAYSO actively enforces this policy. Individuals violating any aspect of the policy will be immediately dismissed from SMAYSO facilities and may be permanently banned for the remainder of the season, and/or from the league. SMAYSO will notify law enforcement officials regarding circumstances involving physical altercations and/or assault or battery of any players, referees, coaches, or parents regardless of the claimed purpose of age of the offender(s).

SMAYSO strives to create a safe and fun environment where youth may come together to play and learn physical and leadership skills. Please help support this environment by adhering to the policy while enjoying your child(ren) playing soccer.

7.2 Uniform Kit

Players will receive one shirt, one short, and one pair of socks before the beginning of the season and after assigned to a team.

Players should provide their own shin guards to be worn during all games and practices.

7.3 Team Formation

SMAYSO Recreational teams are created according to the following process:

7.3.1 Setting Number of Teams

Together with the commissioners and the Registrar, the President or Vice President will set the number of teams in each age group while considering the following:

- The minimally ideal roster size
- The number of fully registered players
- Target to roster an even number of teams

7.3.2 Fully Registered

In order to be considered fully registered, each of the following must be accomplished:

- Registration forms are complete, including paying registration fee
- Submit birth certificate during registration. Players who previously submitted a copy of their birth certificates do not need to re-submit another copy.

7.3.3 Team Formation

Only players that are fully registered will be added to a team and allowed to participate in practices and games.

- ❖ Considering the process described for creating teams, it is possible for a player who fully registers to take the final spot on a team, ahead of a player who began registering at an earlier date but did not complete the registration process.
- ❖ SMAYSO recreational teams are created using an age group specific randomization method. Player skill and capability are not factors considered in team assignment.
- ❖ Teams shall be considered to be the same team as the prior season if more than half of the players remain on the team from the roster.
- ❖ Teams are not allowed to recruit players.

7.3.3.1 U6-U10

Team formation will be determined by the commissioners with input from the President, Vice President, and/or the DOC as follows:

- All fully registered players will be sorted by gender, then date of birth.
- Each coach and one assistant coach is assigned their own child.
 - Team numbers will be assigned sequentially and in repeating patterns to the list starting with the first entry on the list and proceeding to the last entry in this manner: 1,2,3,4,4,3,2,1 to ensure an even age distribution throughout the bracket. When reaching a coach or assistant coach's child on the list, they will be assigned their coach's team number and traded for the next age appropriate player on the list.
 - Rosters will be reviewed for friend requests utilizing a similar system above. If a player needs to be moved to accommodate the request, a player with the closest date of birth will be swapped from the receiving team for the request.
 - Coaches may not swap players. The commissioner in consultation with the President or Vice President may move players only as a response to an un-resolvable situation to further balance teams when needed.
 - Late registering players shall be assigned based on availability.

7.3.3.1.1 Buddy Requests

Buddy requests enable two children to play on the same team, if space is available. The Buddy Request process requires two children to specify the other during the registration process, i.e., Player A requests Player B and Player B requests Player A.

7.4 Payment and Fees

Refer to the Registration section of the website for current fees.

7.4.1 Refunds

7.5 Roles and Responsibilities

The following list includes rules and expectations for SMAYSO parents, players, coaches, trainers, and team managers:

7.5.1 Player

- ❖ Behavior and Attitude
 - Respect parents, coaches, referees, opponents, and fellow players.
 - Remain coachable; be open to constructive criticism
 - Work with a ball at home everyday
 - Do not use profanity, tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
 - Play the game fairly.
 - Demonstrate good behavior at all SMAYSO activities. Players failing to do so may be suspended from future practice sessions and games.
- ❖ Practice Session and Games
 - Attend and arrive at practice sessions and games at designated times.
 - Attend all practice sessions and games. Inform the coach if you will be tardy or absent for a practice session or game.
 - Be prepared by wearing proper shin guards and soccer shoes.
 - Remove all jewelry. Considering the prohibition regarding earrings, parents should consider not having a child's ears pierced in advance of the season such that the child is unable to remove the earrings before sessions and games.
 - Players who are bleeding or have blood on themselves or uniforms must be treated, cleaned, and change uniforms, if necessary, before returning to play.

7.5.2 Parents

- ❖ Supervision
 - Supervise your child at all activities.
 - Do not interfere with coach and/or player practice sessions/games until team is dismissed.
- ❖ Alcohol and Tobacco
 - Do not consume alcohol or use tobacco at soccer facilities where practices and games occur, including parking lot.
 - Do not attend any soccer related activity or facilities if intoxicated.
- ❖ Positive Support
 - Be a parent, not a coach or referee.
 - Respect fellow parents, coaches, referees, opponents, and players.
 - Support your son/daughter in a positive manner.

- Give consistent encouragement and support to children regardless of the degree of success, the level of skill or time on the field.
- Stress the importance of respect for coaches through discussions with children and highlight the critical nature of contributing to the team and its success.
- Leave coaching to coaches and do not criticize coaching strategies or team performance.
- Avoid placing pressure on children about playing time and performance.
- ❖ Pre-Practice Session and Games
 - Assist player in attending and arriving at practice sessions and game kickoffs at designated times.
 - Properly equip players with shin guards, soccer shoes, shorts or warm-ups, and water.
 - Remove all players' jewelry.
 - Inform coach if player will be tardy or absent for a practice session or game.
- ❖ Practice Sessions and Games
 - Please do not:
 - Coach during games or practices (to prevent player confusion).
 - Interfere, after you child has joined the team for practices or games, until the team is dismissed by the coach.
 - Go onto the field during practice sessions and/or games
 - Sit on top of or beyond the sideline. Instead, sit 5 feet from the sideline in the designated area, which is typically on the opposite side of the field from the team.
- ❖ Grievances
 - See Grievance Policy section

All parents will be required to complete a Parent Sideline Conduct Form. This form indicates that the game is for the players and the players alone. Comments from the sideline should only be encouraging and positive. If necessary, SMAYSO will convene a committee to review, evaluate, and determine if policy was violated. Based on the outcome of the committee meeting, individuals may be suspended from future club activities.

SMAYSO strives to create a safe and fun environment where youth may come together to play and learn physical and leadership skills. Please help support this environment by adhering to policy while enjoying your child(ren) play soccer.

7.5.3 Coach

- ❖ Respect parents, coaches, referees, opponents, and players.
- ❖ Communicate with the team manager regarding practice and game schedules, tournaments, and other team related activities.
- ❖ Ensure players understand and adhere to Players Code of Conduct (see appendix)
- ❖ Communicate with age group commissioner and/or DOC regarding grievances received and/or policy violations.
- ❖ Host team meetings during the seasonal year.

- ❖ Participate in STYSA required Coaching Clinics.
- ❖ Complete background check
- ❖ Dress like a coach. Ensure KidSafe card is available at all times.
- ❖ Arrive at practice sessions, games, and meetings before designated start time.
- ❖ Plan for fun based practice session specific plan
- ❖ Encourage players while providing constructive feedback regarding areas for development.
- ❖ Adhere to 50% playing rule.
- ❖ Ensure only players who are fully registered participate in practice sessions and games.
- ❖ Serve as the primary point of contact for parents regarding the communication of a potential grievance.
- ❖ Policy Compliance: Adhere to and ensure the team complies with expectations established by SMAYSO.

7.5.4 Team Manager

- ❖ Manage administrative activities
- ❖ Act as the primary source of timely email communication with the team
- ❖ Ensure soccer related questions are directed to the coach.
- ❖ Game Snacks: Develop a game day snack schedule and assign snack duty equally among each family.
- ❖ Parent Contact List: develop and distribute
- ❖ Policy Compliance: Adhere to and ensure the team complies with expectations established by SMAYSO.
- ❖ Team Managers are not allowed to coach or train players unless they meet the minimum SMAYSO coaching requirements.

7.6 Coaching Education

7.6.1 License Recommendations

STYSA requires all coaches to receive an age appropriate coaching license within one year of coaching a team. The following are recommendations for each age group:

- ❖ U6
 - USSF U6/U8 Module
- ❖ U8
 - USSF U6/U8 Module
- ❖ U10
 - USSF U10/U12 Module
- ❖ U12
 - USSF U10/U12 Module
- ❖ U13 and above
 - USSF E license

7.6.2 Youth Soccer 101

Head and assistant coaches receive age-specific written practice plans and short demonstration videos via email from YouthSoccer 101 for 10 consecutive weeks. This service, free for our volunteer coaches, aids in practice preparation for the upcoming week.

Coaches may print and review the practice plan and watch the video clips to help them understand the correct approach to setting up and completing the drills.

7.6.3 DOC Coaching Session

Each season the DOC will hold a coaching education session for all Recreational coaches. The purpose of these sessions will be to help coaches prepare session plans, run effective practice sessions, and demonstrate coaching techniques.

7.6.4 Coaching Evaluations

To become a more effective coach, seasonal evaluations of coaches and players are necessary. Coaches will be evaluated 1-2 times per season. Evaluators may be the DOC or any DOC designated evaluator. Evaluations can occur at random or scheduled and may be during practice sessions or games. An evaluation that does not meet the standard set by the DOC will require the coach to meet with the DOC. The DOC will determine the appropriate course of action to get the coach to meet the standard. All coaching evaluations will be reviewed by the DOC. The DOC will provide valuable feedback to each coach regarding player development, coaching ability, and adherence to the club curriculum.

7.7 Player Evaluation

Players may be evaluated individually or by team. Evaluations should be conducted by both the coach and the DOC or DOC designated evaluator. The purpose of player evaluation is to ensure that each player is meeting the expectations of the seasonal curriculum. U11 and above players should have individual meetings with their respective coach to discuss strengths and areas of improvement. These meetings should be positive and help create a positive self-image for the player.

7.8 Practice Session and Games

7.8.1 Size of the Ball

- ❖ U6 = Size 3
- ❖ U8 = Size 3
- ❖ U10 = Size 4
- ❖ U12 = Size 4
- ❖ U13 and above = Size 5

7.8.2 Duration of Game

- ❖ U6 = four 8 minute quarters
- ❖ U8 = four 10 minute quarters
- ❖ U10 = two 25 minute halves
- ❖ U12 = two 30 minute halves
- ❖ U13 / U14 = two 35 minute halves

- ❖ U15/U16 = two 40 minute halves
- ❖ U17/U19 = two 45 minute halves

7.8.3 Field Sizes (yards)

- ❖ U6 = 25x20
- ❖ U8 = 35x25
- ❖ U10 = 55x40

7.8.4 Number of field Players

- ❖ U6 = 3v3 on two fields
- ❖ U8 = 4v4 on two fields
- ❖ U10 = 6v6 on one field
- ❖ U12 = 8v8 on one field

7.8.5 Absence

- ❖ Players are expected to attend team practice sessions and games.
- ❖ Coaches should be notified if a player will miss a practice session or game.

7.8.6 Rainout

Games will be rescheduled on a designated make-up day at the same time and on the same fields as originally scheduled. If the number of games cancelled exceeds the allotted number of make-up days, those games may be cancelled.

7.8.7 Other Rescheduling

Games being rescheduled for a coach's convenience must be made to their age group commissioner at least one week prior to the scheduled game date.

7.8.8 Practice Sessions

7.8.8.1 Practice Length

Practice sessions should be age appropriate and last no more than game length.

7.8.8.2 Practice Quantity

All age groups should have one practice per week minimum. Two practices per week for U8 and U10 teams are recommended.

7.8.8.3 Practice Rescheduling/Cancellation

Practice sessions should not be cancelled. Players deserve the maximum number of practices available during the season. Parents and players prepare to practice on specific days and times. Last minute practice changes should be avoided. If a coach will be unavailable to hold a practice, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Work with your commissioner to find a coach available to run the practice
- Contact another coach within the same age group to schedule a multi-team practice

7.8.8.4 Session Plans

To be a quality program, coaches must be prepared. Part of the preparation will require coaches to complete lesson plans so their practices will be organized and fluid. Session plans also ensure that coaching sessions adhere to the club curriculum. At any time, the DOC or a DOC designated coach may ask to see or have you submit a copy of your lesson plan for evaluation.

7.9 Player Safety

7.9.1 Concussion Awareness

All coaches will be required to watch a concussion awareness video (<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/Training/HeadsUpConcussion.html>) and sign a document stating they did so. Coaches should educate their players on recognizing concussion symptoms. Coaches will be given sideline material to help diagnose concussions. Any player suspected of having a concussion will not be allowed to play the remainder of the game or continue practice and will not be allowed to participate again until cleared by a doctor (documentation required). Coaches failing to follow these guidelines will face disciplinary action and possible suspension. You do not have the right to gamble with player safety.

7.9.2 Hydration

Coaches must ensure that players are continually hydrated during practices and games, especially in warmer conditions. Although players typically bring their own water to practices and games, coaches are ultimately responsible for ensuring water is available to players.

7.9.3 First Aid

SMAYSO maintains First Aid kits in the clubhouse. Board members on marshal duty will also carry a First Aid kit with them while monitoring the fields. Any player with an open wound should not be allowed to play until bleeding has been stopped.

7.9.4 Emergency Action Plan

SMAYSO maintains an emergency action plan that is distributed to all coaches during the coaches meeting. This plan should be used in the case of a medical emergency.

7.9.5 Medical Release Form

Coaches or team managers should maintain a SMAYSO Medical Release form for each player on the team. This form will be distributed to all coaches during the coaches meeting. Information on this form will assist medical personal during a medical emergency.

7.10 Fundraising

Unless authorized to do so, SMAYSO members are prohibited from soliciting businesses using the club name. Reproduction of the SMAYSO logo or design is prohibited unless written authorization has been obtained from SMAYSO. SMAYSO may conduct fundraising during the regular season. These fundraising opportunities will be approved by the Executive Board and will run by committee.

7.11 Inclement Weather

While we strive to adhere to practice session and game schedules, inclement weather may cause cancellations. Field closures will be posted on the website.

7.11.1 Lightning Detector

The 5 Mile Dam complex has an installed lightning detector. The following rules apply:

- When warning horn sounds all teams must clear the fields and seek shelter.
- All teams must wait 30 minutes from the last warning horn before entering the field.

Coaches and/or parents that fail to clear players from the field after a warning horn will be subject to administrative discipline.

7.12 Complaints, Grievances, and Protests

Complaints are required to be provided, in written format, to the SMAYSO President and/or Vice President who will evaluate the basis of the complaint in an effort to determine appropriate action.

SMAYSO shall comply with AAYSA and STYSA policies and procedures with regard to grievances and protests. SMAYSO uses the STYSA Discipline and Protest Procedures and the AAYSA D&P Committee. These procedures may be found on the STYSA website at www.stxsoccer.org. It is highly recommended the originator of the protest discuss the matter with a member of the SMAYSO Executive Board prior to filing the protest.

7.12.1 Referees

Referee specific issues or concerns regarding referees may be communicated to the Director of Referees. Thereafter, issues or concerns may be communicated to the age group commissioner.

7.12.2 Coaches

7.12.2.1.1 24 Hour Rule

SMAYSO enforces the 24 Hour Rule which requires 24 hours to elapse before parents are allowed to communicate with the coach to address issues or concerns. The rule was established to allow emotions to settle for one day before issues are communicated with the coach via phone, email, or during a meeting.

Soccer specific issues should be communicated to the coach, not the Team Manager. Thereafter, issues may be escalated to the age group commissioner and/or Director of Coaching.