



# MICRO SOCCER MANUAL FOR UNDER 6



*COACHING GUIDELINES,  
RULES OF PLAY AND OTHER  
REGULATIONS COVERING  
MICRO SOCCER WITH THE  
PICKERING SOCCER CLUB*

MANUAL FOR USE BY  
COACHES, ASSISTANT  
COACHES AND  
COORDINATORS



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## **EXECUTIVE & BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010/11**

Web: [www.pickeringssoccer.ca](http://www.pickeringssoccer.ca)

E-mail: [admin@pickeringssoccer.ca](mailto:admin@pickeringssoccer.ca)

### **EXECUTIVE**

President	Phil Frampton
Executive Vice-President	Corrado Roccasalva
Vice President – Operations	Lisa Fernandez
Treasurer	
Secretary	Cliff Schmitt

### **DIRECTORS**

Referee-In-Chief	Mario Iozzi
Full Field	Cheryl Modica
Mini Field	Lisa Lahey
Micro Field	Gino Sgovio
Boys Competitive	
Girls Competitive	Franco Taverna
Indoor, Events & Tournaments	Liz Keen
Webmaster	Lisa Fernandez

### **STAFF**

Business Development Manager	
Office Administrator	
Office Clerk	Nina Cancellara
Head Coach	Tony La Ferrara
Screening Officer	

### **CLUBHOUSE HOURS**

Monday/Tuesday – 12:00 noon – 5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday/Thursday – 3:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Friday – 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Saturday/Sunday – Closed

**Club Telephone:** 905-831-9803

**Club Address:** 1735 Bayly Street, Unit 14  
Pickering, ON L1W 3G7



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## **WELCOME!**

Welcome, all, to another exciting season of soccer. On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I want to thank all of you for volunteering your time and energies for the benefit of the children of our community.

As you go through the manual, keep in mind that the program you will be coaching in is a tried and true format. The program has been in place since 2000, and every year it provides a great format for the children to play in. The main principle behind this format is to provide them with a field size that will allow them to participate and enjoy the game. Another aspect is that they will 'touch' the ball more, which will improve their abilities and confidence.

The rules outlined in the manual are intended to provide a level of play that will not be overwhelming for them, and at the same time, provide a good base for them to proceed to the next level (age group).

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE V.P. OPERATIONS, PICKERING SOCCER CLUB**

On behalf of the Executive and Board of Directors of the PICKERING SOCCER CLUB, we would like to welcome back the returning coaches, as well as the new coaches coming onboard to the Micro Soccer Program. We had a successful, fun filled year in 2010 and look forward to a exuberant repeat in the 2011 season.

Micro Soccer is a non-competitive, fun filled evening program for the boys and girls, their parents and coaches. There are no standings kept at the Micro Level, as this is a recreational program. We ask for the game sheets to be filled in to recognize our sponsors and for insurance formality reasons. Please ensure they are returned to the field Coordinator and/or Gino Sgovio, Director of Micro Soccer.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Gino at [micro@pickeringssoccer.ca](mailto:micro@pickeringssoccer.ca) or me at [operations@pickeringssoccer.ca](mailto:operations@pickeringssoccer.ca). You may also call the clubhouse at (905) 831-9803 and leave a message, but both Gino and I are extremely responsive via email. If we don't hear from you, we don't know what you're thinking or experiencing!

The Club has coaching clinics available to you in order to make your coaching experience enjoyable. Watch our Web Site at [www.pickeringssoccer.ca](http://www.pickeringssoccer.ca) for details to be announced.

Lisa Fernandez,  
Vice President Operations  
Pickering Soccer Club



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**AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL CONCERNED,**

**SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED TO PARENTS AS WELL AS TEAM**

It is with great pleasure that I have joined the Pickering Soccer Club as the new Micro Director and I look forward to working with all our new coaches, returning coaches and assistant coaches.

Micro Soccer is geared to the ages of Under 3 to Under 6 and promotes the basic fundamentals of introductory soccer for all, with a FUN FIRST focus. This is a NON-COMPETITIVE division and we expect everyone on and off the fields to conduct themselves in a friendly and non-aggressive nature.

In the past on rare occasions there has been aggressive and intimidating behavior towards referees, players and other coaches. This WILL NOT be tolerated, by the club or myself. Should I be informed of any such incidents of this sort of behavior, I will contact the party directly first, however should the situation re-occur, then more stringent measures will be taken, up to and including, removal of the offending party from any involvement at the team level.

The Club also has policies and measures to deal with abuse, and these will be implemented as needed and have been used in the past. For the vast majority of you, this will not apply. Those who fail to recognize that this is a NON-COMPETITIVE division and should always promote fun levels of play will be dealt with in appropriate manner.

I can always be reached at [micro@pickeringssoccer.ca](mailto:micro@pickeringssoccer.ca) should you need to get in touch with me anytime.

I look forward to working with you all this upcoming season, have fun and stay safe.

Regards,

Gino Sgovio,  
Director, Micro Soccer  
Pickering Soccer Club  
[micro@pickeringssoccer.ca](mailto:micro@pickeringssoccer.ca)



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## **COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS**

The person who takes on the responsibility of coaching a soccer team in the Micro Division is a special kind of person with special qualities, who volunteer their time and effort to develop well rounded individuals, not only in their athletic endeavors, but in their daily lives.

1. A coach is responsible for teaching players that officials are an important part of the game.
2. A coach is responsible for encouraging good conduct by players and parents on and off the field at all games. The laws of soccer forbid abusive language and racial innuendos.
3. A coach should be appropriately dressed to reflect the tone of the sport, and should encourage players to do the same. Coaches are required to wear their coach shirt at ALL games.
4. A coach must insist on all players wearing shin pads, and appropriate footwear at all times, and full uniform on game, picture and trophy days.
5. A coach must maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, maintain the principles of fair play and promote good sportsmanship.
6. A coach must arrive at games and practices without alcohol on his/her breathe. The coach must not smoke, at the games or practices.
7. Remember that winning is desirable, but winning at any cost defeats the purpose of the game. Losing can be a triumph when the team has given its best.

By accepting a position as coach with the Pickering Soccer Club you must agree to conform to all of the above and understand that failure to do so could result in disciplinary action and may result in termination of coaching duties.



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## **ZERO TOLERANCE**

The Pickering Soccer Club supports zero tolerance as it relates to all forms of abuse: verbal, physical, emotional, and sexual.

All relationships within the Club context – whether involving members of the Board of Directors, Club employees, coaches/managers, players, parents, volunteers, outside suppliers or referees – must be based on mutual trust and respect. Any act of abuse is a betrayal of that trust.

The Club will investigate and act upon all complaints or reports of inappropriate behaviour.

This Zero Tolerance Policy attempts to respect diverse individual and cultural viewpoints while protecting individuals from real or perceived abuse.

### **Definitions of Abuse:**

1. **Verbal Abuse** – Verbal abuse includes remarks that are rude or threatening in nature and that tend to demoralize or demean another person. Words that degrade another person constitute a form of verbal abuse.
  - a) Verbal abuse includes racial or ethnic insults. All complaints of verbal abuse will be investigated by the Club and may be reported to police with the consent of the victim or, in the case of a minor, a parent.
2. **Physical Abuse** – Physical abuse refers to inappropriate behaviour such as punching, pushing, slapping, kicking, spitting or pinching another individual. All complaints of physical abuse will be investigated by the Club and may be reported to police with the consent of the victim or, in the case of a minor, a parent.
3. **Emotional Abuse** – Emotional abuse signifies the lack of sensitivity on the part of anyone associated with the Club towards another individual. In particular, Club officials (Board members, coaches, and managers) should be aware of the power that is inherent in such positions and strive for sensitivity in dealing with individuals in positions of supervision (players, Club employees, volunteers) and with parents. Emotional abuse includes racial, physical or ethnic insults. All complaints of emotional abuse will be investigated by the Club.
4. **Sexual Abuse** – Sexual shall be defined as:
  - a) sexual intercourse or other forms of physical sexual relations between at least one individual associated with the Club and another person where the activity is not consensual
  - b) any and all sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual relations with a minor
  - c) touching of a sexual nature and
  - d) behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature

The Club will immediately report all complaints of sexual abuse to the police.



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## Reporting Guidelines and Procedures

1. Violations of the Zero Tolerance Policy should be reported immediately to the Club headquarters by the victim(s) and/or by those close to them (a parent, a teammate, a coach etc.).
2. A complaint can be communicated verbally, initially, to a Club official or employee but must be followed up in writing (letter and/or email). If the complaint involves physical or sexual abuse, the Club official or employee will contact the police if the individual alleging abuse has not already done so and with the individual's consent.
3. All complaints of abuse will be immediately investigated by the Club.
4. All complaints to the Club must be in written form before a complaint is dealt with. However, the Club will immediately report criminal activities to the police (with the consent of the individual alleging abuse) without a written complaint.
5. Once a written complaint has been filed with the Club, a Discipline Committee consisting of a least three Board members will discuss the complaint with the individual alleging abuse (note: in the case of sexual abuse, the Club may designate a Club official of the same gender as the individual alleging abuse to contact the victim).
6. A Board member assigned to lead the investigation into the complaint will schedule a Discipline Hearing within ten (10) business days of notice in the individual(s) whom the complaints has been filed against. The individual(s) who are named on the complaint shall be contacted by registered mail and requested to appear at the Discipline Hearing.
7. In the case of Physical Abuse such as fighting, kicking, etc the Discipline Committee will decide between a Discipline by Review or Discipline by Hearing process to determine appropriate penalties and/or suspensions.
8. Discipline shall be heard by three (3) Board members one of whom is to be a certified Discipline Chair. If a certified Chair is not available within the Club the Region will be asked to provide a certified Chair for these purposes.
9. The committee shall hold a hearing and invite the individual(s) named on the complaint to be present at the hearing. Only individuals called by the committee shall be allowed to participate in a hearing. The committee shall then deliberate incamera following the meeting with the individual(s) who are named on the complaint.
10. The decision shall be communicated to the individual alleging abuse and the individual named in the complaint within ten (10) working day of the Hearing.
11. Penalties for contravening the Zero Tolerance Policy can range from a permanent suspension from the Club, suspension for a specified period of time, and a probationary period where the individual is allowed to continue with the Club. All committee decisions are final.
12. OSA guidelines for suspensions and penalties may be used as guidance in rendering suspensions for physical abuse issues such as Violent Conduct (fighting, kicking, etc).
13. Individual(s) who are charged with a criminal offense involving Club related incidents shall be immediately suspended from the Club pending resolving of the charges. No Discipline Hearing shall take place when an individual is facing criminal charges for Club related incidents. Club members who are convicted of a Criminal Code of Canada offense are subject to suspension or removal.
14. Any individual who is convicted of a criminal offense resulting from sexual or physical abuse shall be banned for life from the Club.



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15. Individual(s) who violate the Zero Tolerance Policy for non-criminal activities may apply for reinstatement to the Club in writing one month prior to the end of a time specified penalty.

### **Handling Incidents of Abuse during a Recreational League Game (physical, verbal or emotional abuse)**

1. The referee must stop a game if an abuse incident involving a coach, player or parent/spectator occurs during a game.
2. If a coach is the source of the abuse, the referee will advise the coach that the game will be abandoned if the abuse continues.
3. If a parent/spectator is the source, the appropriate coach will be informed that the game will be abandoned unless the abuse ceases. If the spectator is not associated with either team, both coaches will ask the spectator to leave.
4. The game will be restarted by the referee only if the abuse ceases.
5. The incident shall be reported to the Club Head Referee by the referee in charge immediately following the game completion or abandonment.
6. If the abuse continues, the referee will abandon the game.
7. He/she must immediately report the incident to the Club Head Referee and fill out a Special Incident Form.
8. In cases of physical abuse on a referee, a "Referee Assault Form" must be completed by the referee.

The Club will report all incidents of a criminal nature immediately to police.

### **Application – This Zero Tolerance Policy applies to:**

1. All elected Club officials
2. All Club employees
3. All coaches
4. All managers
5. All players
6. All parents
7. All referees
8. All volunteers
9. All service providers having contact with anyone associated with the Club

All elected Club officials, volunteers, Club employees, coaches, managers, and referees must sign a form acknowledging their understanding and acceptance of the Zero Tolerance Policy. This Zero Tolerance Policy shall be posted on the Club's website at all times and communicated to parents and players at the beginning of every program cycle. Ignorance of the Zero Tolerance Policy shall not be considered a valid defense against a complaint.



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## **WHAT IS MICRO SOCCER?**

Micro Soccer is a format for children Under 3, Under 4, Under 5, and Under 6 enabling them to progressively become educated about the game of soccer, without overwhelming them with details.

Under 6 expands on the basics learned in Under 5 in the following ways:

- A greater number of children are on the field at any time resulting in lots of ball contact and a chance to develop skills;
- Goalkeeping is enhanced, but no field markings etc. are used to distract them from the fundamentals of the game;
- The introduction of goal kicks, corner kicks, and fouls; and
- The introduction of a referee.

## **COACHING MICRO SOCCER**

You, as a coach (or assistant), are the key to a positive experience for the children. Your role is the following:

- HELP the children to develop skill;
- ENCOURAGE those who may be shy or uncertain as to what to do
- DEMONSTRATE to those with better skills the proper attitude that all good players should have, and that is TEAMWORK.

At the beginning of the season, some of your players may not want to participate right away, encourage them to do so, but they will jump in when they are ready. Others will be very enthusiastic, and will need to learn to understand that it is a team sport, and that they won't always have the ball. The most important thing to stress to all of them is that fair play is as important as the skill level. Stress a sense of teamwork, and you will see a big change in your team. The best way to assess any team is to look at them at the beginning of the season, and then again at the end. If they, as a whole, have improved, then you have really been a successful coach. The greatest example you can, as a coach, demonstrate to the children, is to not be aggressive, play fair, and remember why you are there.

### **NOT TO WIN, NOT TO LOSE, BUT TO HAVE FUN.**

The coach and assistant are in control of their team at all times. The club provides the framework for you to operate in, but ultimately, it is the coaching staff that has the most influence on the children. A child will remember for many years influences a particular coach has had on them, both positive and negative. So, give them your best side, and that will go a long way.



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## **A STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO THE SEASON**

Please plan for the following events and activities through the season:

1. **Coach meeting:** This is the opportunity, particularly for those who are new to all of this, to ask questions. Details are provided to you, so if you don't understand something, ask the director or any other member of the board, or the office staff. We are here to help.
2. **Equipment pickup:** The specific date and time will be given to you. If you cannot make this date, let your director know. A control sheet will be established for every team, with details about the coach, assistant and equipment you should have on pickup. Also included with the equipment will be at least 2 copies of this manual and your team roster, which you will use to contact parents.

The team roster is a VERY IMPORTANT DOCUMENT, and is not to be altered (i.e.: no trading of players). Any adjustments to rosters can only be made by me. Very serious ramifications can result when a child is not where they are supposed to be. Also, do not play a child who is not on your roster, there are serious ramifications if they are injured. Plan your meeting place: Prior to calling parents, it's a good idea to have a meeting place and time established prior to the season start and helps in straightening out small issues such as uniforms (sizes), and provides a distribution prior to the first night. The last thing you want to worry about at the field on the first night is what you're going to do about a pair of shorts that are too big or too small. So, you have a meeting prior. You can have your team meeting anywhere (except on Pickering Soccer fields... we don't have the permits until late May). Some places coaches have used in the past are McDonald's, someone's home, a backyard, and the office of PSC can arrange for you to meet at the clubhouse, check with the office staff to book.

3. **Contact Parents:** Once you have your team roster, contact the parents using the phone number noted with each child, explain who you are, and provide your name and phone number. It is imperative that you contact the parents as soon as you can, as other children will be contacted by their coach, and it doesn't take long for parents to call the office of PSC to find out why their child's coach hasn't called.
4. **Prepare for First Team Meeting:** Try to anticipate the questions that will be asked by parents and reflect on your answers prior to the team meeting.

As a guide, at a minimum, prepare to provide information as listed in 5.b below. Coming prepared to the meeting will help the parents have confidence in your organization and preparedness to coach their kids. It is important that parents have confidence in you as a coach as well.

5. **First Team Meeting:** At the meeting, the children, parents and you get to know each other. At the team meeting, you should try to achieve all of the following tasks:
  - a. Assign uniforms, if one doesn't fit properly, start exchanging with others on the team. It is recognized that not all uniforms will fit a particular child, so if you can't rearrange the uniforms within the team, contact your coordinator, or me, to see what can be done.
  - b. At a minimum, give the parents the following information:



- i. The season schedule;
  - ii. How best to contact you;
  - iii. Instructions on what to do if there is a problem on game night (weather is dealt with later in the manual );
  - iv. When and where to be on the first night;
  - v. Instructions on when to meet each game night. Ask parents to be at the field 15 minutes prior to the time noted for your game, this gives you time to organize, and set up. You may be the second game of the evening on a given field (7:30), so if the first game is not finished, simply wait.
  - vi. Instructions on how you will organize the team on game days. Plan to have a designated area by the sideline where your players will be when not on the field, so you don't have to go looking for little Johnny or little Susie when it comes time for them to go on the field. Obviously, there will be a child, particularly early in the season, who may not want to leave mom or dad's side. This will be fairly rare, but if it occurs, let them do their thing, they will either join the team soon, or may not want to be there. You will all know fairly soon;
  - vii. An orange or treat schedule - this takes the burden off the coach to provide refreshments and adds some organization to this activity. Once you hand out this schedule, put the onus on parents to rearrange their nights among themselves and emphasize that it is up to them to ensure that the team has refreshments on their designated nights. A template is provided for this later in the manual ; and
  - viii. A glossary of soccer terms - this will help everyone speak the language of soccer on the field and give the players the knowledge they will need to understand what is happening at all times.
- c. Speak generally about how to encourage children on the sidelines. Remind parents that the key is having fun, learning about soccer teamwork and sportsmanship. Please refer to the rules and my open letter to remind parents of their role in ensuring a healthy, sportsmanlike environment for the children at the field.
6. **Prepare for First Game:** Understand the layout of your field, and the format you are playing under prior to your first game. Don't wait until game night to learn about these things.
  7. **Follow your schedule:** Note the time each week, and the field, they will inevitably change from week to week. If you don't understand something, ask your coordinator or director.
  8. **Club Festival/Picture Day:** The next event will be picture day, which will be noted on your schedule as to the day. Picture day is at Kinsmen Park. You will receive specific information well in advance of picture day, so you will know what time your team is slotted for. Parents will ask for this info, so as soon as you know, pass it on.
  9. **MINIFEST:** This is noted on your schedule, and details will be sent to you well in advance. Minifest is essentially a 2 game tournament played on a Saturday in late



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August, after which, the children get their trophies. It is set up like this to compensate those age groups (U4 to U7) who do not have playoffs.

During Minifest, equipment supplied to you must be turned in at the designated area following your 2<sup>nd</sup> game. If items are broken, used (first aid kits as an example), they are turned in as they are. You do not turn in equipment bags, jerseys and any other items not noted on your inventory control sheet signed at the beginning of the season at equipment pickup. Children keep their uniforms, the ball supplied to them and any other items they may be given.

Minifest ends your season, and hopefully, it has been fun and a great learning experience for all involved.



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## **MICRO SOCCER RULES:**

**Please note** that the referee assigned to your game is in charge of all aspects of the game, in accordance with these rules, and the rules of the game as established by FIFA and OSA. Referee abuse (by coaches, assistants or parents) is not tolerated and will be dealt with by the club's disciplinary committee.

**COACHES AND ASSISTANTS ARE REMINDED THAT PARENTS CONNECTED TO YOUR TEAM ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACHING STAFF REGARDING CONDUCT.**

## **PRE-GAME RULES**

1. The field layout for Under 6 is as noted in the diagram provided later in the manual. Please adhere to it.
2. Portable goals are stored in a shed at Woodlands. **You use the larger nets in the RED BAGS, do not use the Pugg nets.**
3. Team Roster: Each Under 6 team will have a maximum of 12 players on their roster. You may not have 12 players on the roster when the season begins; these spots will be filled as registration continues. You are only permitted to play children who are on your roster. Do not play other children who may be there, nor may players be traded from one team to another, except by the divisional director, or under provisions set out regarding teams with less than the minimum number of players for a particular game. You must have a minimum of 6 players for each game, so you are able to field the required 5 players (4 runners and a goalkeeper), and have at least 1 substitution player.
4. There are no practices, games begin at the scheduled times, provided the prior game has ended. Games at 6:00 will not continue past 7:00.
5. The minimum number of players: The minimum number of players that a team needs to start the game is 6. Should a team have less than 6 players, then the game can still be played, but there must be players from the opposing team brought over to the team with insufficient players. Splitting the 2 teams into equal numbers of players would also be an acceptable way to solve this.
6. Changes to players may occur at any time, but coaches are reminded that the club has a 'fair play policy' in force. **Every player must play equal time.** This rule will stay in force as long as there is an adherence by coaches to it. Should there be complaints about play time, I will assess the situation, and if necessary, we will go back to a slotted time format of changes every 5 minutes. Changes should be made, ideally, when there is a stoppage in play (ball goes out of bounds is a good example), however, children should not be out on the field too long, especially when it is hot. Play begins at the start of the game and after halftime by having 1 of the coaches rolling the ball toward centre and have the children start playing. When a goal is scored, the team who were scored upon has possession of the ball at their goal, with the other team well within their end of the field. When a ball goes out of bounds over the sidelines, one coach rolls the ball gently back into play.
7. There are no penalties, free kicks (either direct or indirect), corner kicks nor goal kicks. If a child commits a foul (such as a hand ball, or an infraction against another player), then play should continue, with the player's coach explaining why it was wrong. Simply telling them usually is enough.
8. Severe infractions that are continuous, or if a parent/coach is involved, require a report



to be submitted to the director as soon as possible following the game.

9. Players should not be standing in front of the other team's goal. This only promotes poor sportsmanship, and is not going to teach the child.
10. Equipment for players consists of the following: Team uniform as supplied by the club (jersey, shorts and socks). They are also required (mandatory) to wear shin pads and soccer shoes. Shin pads are worn on the INSIDE of the socks, and must be of a material which will protect and stay in place (in other words, a magazine is not a shin pad). Shoes must be of a rubber cleat, not metal. Players who may not have an exact jersey (i.e.: it's in the wash), may play as long as the jersey they wear is close to their proper jersey. This rule must not be used routinely.
11. **NO JEWELLERY ALLOWED!** The Jewellery Law (FIFA Law No. 4) is being strictly enforced by the club. This must be adhered to by coaches – and, **NO TAPING IS ALLOWED.** It is there for the protection of all players, including the one who may be wearing it. Jewelry is defined simply as any item worn by a player that is not part of their uniform. This includes, earrings (stud or hoop), necklaces, wristbands (of any description), ankle bracelets, hair clips and the like. There are 3 exceptions:
  - a) A medic alert bracelet and/or neck chain is allowed if it is *secured to the body* with tape, with the ailment description exposed,
  - b) Players may play with a hair band which will keep hair out of their eyes, these are not rubber bands, but hair bands that go around the head,
  - c) Any item which is acknowledged as being of a religious nature, should be left intact *secured to the body* and noted to the coordinator and/or myself as soon as possible.
12. The home team is the team first noted on the schedule (ie : 7 vs 2, 7 would be the home team) supplies the game ball. The ball should be properly inflated, and be in good condition. The ball size is 3 (noted on the ball with a 3). Game sheets are supplied, and each team should fill out their half of the game sheet, with the home team coach receiving both halves prior to the start of the game. It is appropriate to fill out your game sheet prior to arrival at the field, deleting any players from the sheet by scratch if they are not there. After the game is over, both coaches mark with an asterix (\*) the player who will be MVP for this game. A note about MVP selection. It is important to each child that they not feel left out, so please ensure that each player receives at least 1 per season. The HOME coach is responsible to get the MVP from each team to the coordinator after the game; please do this as soon as possible by phone, email or direct delivery to the coordinator. The game sheets can be given to the coordinator when you see them next. A note about the game sheet: it is an important document and should be treated as such, important for disputes, insurance etc. It is appropriate for coaches to make notes on the back of the game sheet should an incident occur, and provides a document which can be use later by the club if necessary. If you have no coordinator, I will act in that capacity.
13. Parents should be encouraged to be on one of the 2 sidelines, with the players and coaches on the opposite side. This is a club rule at later ages, and starting them young will start it off right. However, it is not mandatory at this age. Coaches should designate an area on the sideline that is a team only area. This can usually be achieved with the use of a 'team blanket ', which gives the children a focus area. Parents should be encouraged to not be in that area unless you have requested that they be there. **NO PERSON IS PERMITTED TO STAND BEHIND EITHER GOAL OR ALONG THE GOAL LINE**



AREA.

14. Coach Location: 1 coach from each team is allowed on their half of the field, and is not to interfere with the play, players nor referee.
15. Cancellations and Inclement Weather: Please note that any game nights that are cancelled on the schedule are cancelled for a reason. Also, check the website of PSC on game day if there may be a shut down of a particular field, or a complete shutdown.

Primary reasons for shutting down game nights are rain and heat. The club has a procedure in place for these. A decision is made between the City of Pickering and the Pickering Soccer Club by 4 pm daily as to whether a particular date will be cancelled. If it is, it is noted on the homepage of our website.

If it is cancelled, call parents as soon as you can, if they haven't called you. If, at 4pm, the fields are not closed, then assume your game is a go. Do not call off a game night yourself, as the other team will probably show up.

If the field and/or weather at game time are not co-operating, the referee makes the decision at that time. Should the weather deteriorate during game play, the referee will assess, and shut things down if it gets bad. If lightning is present in the area (either general or specific area), do not continue play and advise everyone to leave immediately.

**16. POLICY 16-3 – EQUAL PLAYING TIME POLICY FOR THE HOUSELEAGUE  
(THIS IS AN ACTUAL POLICY THAT FORMS PART OF THE  
BYLAWS OF PICKERING SOCCER CLUB)**

***One of the major aims of the Pickering Soccer Club is to promote, develop, and govern the game of soccer in the City of Pickering. One of the ways to achieve this aim is to provide equal playing time for all players participating in our House League program. All directors, Coordinators and coaches should ensure that this policy is followed. We ask that parents monitor this policy as it applies to their child/children. If a parent believes that their child is not being treated fairly, they should discuss their concern with his/her coach. Should the concern not be effectively addressed, then the parent should contact in writing the appropriate house league director.***

17. By accepting a position as coach with the Pickering Soccer Club you must agree to conform to all of the above and understand that failure to do so could result in disciplinary action and may result in termination of coaching.



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## **GAME RULES**

**Please note:** if there is a referee assigned to your game, they are in charge of all aspects of the game, in accordance with these rules, and the rules of the game as established by FIFA and OSA. Referee abuse (by coaches, assistants or parents) is not tolerated and will be dealt with by the club's disciplinary committee.

In the absence of a referee, with the agreement of both coaches, a parent can be assigned to referee the game. Alternatively, a coach can "referee" if both coaches are in agreement. In this instance, it would be appropriate for each coach to "ref" one half of the game.

**COACHES AND THEIR HELPERS ARE REMINDED THAT PARENTS CONNECTED TO YOUR TEAM ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACHING STAFF REGARDING CONDUCT.**

1. **Play Time and Substitutions:** Changes to players may occur at any time, but coaches are reminded that the club has a 'fair play policy' in force. Every player must play equal time. Changes should be made, ideally, when there is a stoppage in play (ball goes out of bounds is a good example). Using good judgment will ensure that this rule will work.

Please note that the referees are not required to monitor this, however, changes cannot be made without the referee's authorization and acknowledgement.

2. **Play:** Play begins at the start of the game and after halftime by having a kickoff at centre, and has the children start playing, with the team not in possession of the ball well within their own half. When a goal is scored, the team who were scored upon has possession of the ball at centre, with the other team well within their end of the field. When a ball goes out of bounds over the sidelines, the referee will indicate which team does the kick in.
3. **Free kicks:** All free kicks are indirect (the ball must be kicked/touched by 2 different players to be in play, especially for a goal to be scored) and are called by the referee. Opposing players must be a minimum of 6 yards from the ball on a free kick.
4. **Goal Kicks:** These occur when the attacking team puts the ball out of play over the goal line except if a goal is scored. All players are moved back from the goal (about 20 feet), and the ball is placed in front of the goal by the referee. The referee will indicate when to take the goal kick. The goalkeeper then kicks the ball into play.
5. **Kick Ins:** This is a rule instituted by the OSA for young players up to U10. It replaces the throw in. All players on both teams are to be at least 10 feet (3 metres) from the ball when it is struck. This will ensure that no player is close enough to the ball to be struck by it when it is kicked.
6. **Fouls:** If a child commits a foul (such as a hand ball, or an infraction against another player), the referee will make the call.

Should play become rough, particularly if it is 2 individual players, this would be a good time to change them. Should play become extremely rough, with multiple children involved, they should be removed, and if necessary, the game stopped by the referee.

Severe infractions that are continuous, or if a parent/coach are involved, a report will be submitted to the director as soon as possible following the game by the referee. Referee will also make a report to the head referee of the club for his attention.

Sliding tackles are not acceptable and this must be stressed to the children.



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7. **Injuries:** If a player is hurt on the field, get the referee's attention, and they will stop play, and see to the injury (player may be able to continue, or may need to be brought off the field). A wound that is bleeding requires the child to be immediately brought to the sideline and attended to.



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## **GLOSSARY OF SOCCER TERMS:**

Your child will be better engaged and better understand what is happening in the game with a solid understanding of these few simple terms. Please help your child learn and understand these terms.

**Corner kick:** A type of restart where the ball is kicked from the corner in an attempt to score; awarded to one team when the ball crosses the other team's goal line last touched by the other team.

**Drop ball:** A method of restarting a game where the referee drops the ball between 2 players facing each other. This occurs usually after a stop in play due to injury or some other distraction such as a stop in play due to all the players stopping to look at a helicopter flying overhead.

**Free kick:** A kick awarded to a player for a foul, such as a hand ball committed by the opposition; the player kicks a stationary ball without any opposing players within 6 yards of the kicker. All free kicks in U6 are indirect free kicks (2 touches of the ball by 2 players before a goal can be scored)

**Goal kick:** A type of restart where the goalie kicks the ball away from the goal; awarded to a team when the ball crosses their team's goal line last touched by a player on the other team. **All players except the goalkeeper must be about 20 feet from the ball when struck.**

**Goal line:** The field boundary running along its width at each end; also called the end line; runs right across the front of the goal; the line which a ball must completely cross for a goal to be scored.

**Hand ball:** A foul where a player touches the ball with his/her hand or arm (anywhere from the shoulders to the fingertips); the opposing team is awarded an indirect free kick (in U6). The interpretation of this rule is solely at the discretion of the referee. The rule is defined as 'hand to ball', rather than 'ball to hand'. Simply put, it is not handball if the ball touches a player's 'hand' (as described above), but must be 'hand to ball', meaning the player must have intent to touch the ball.

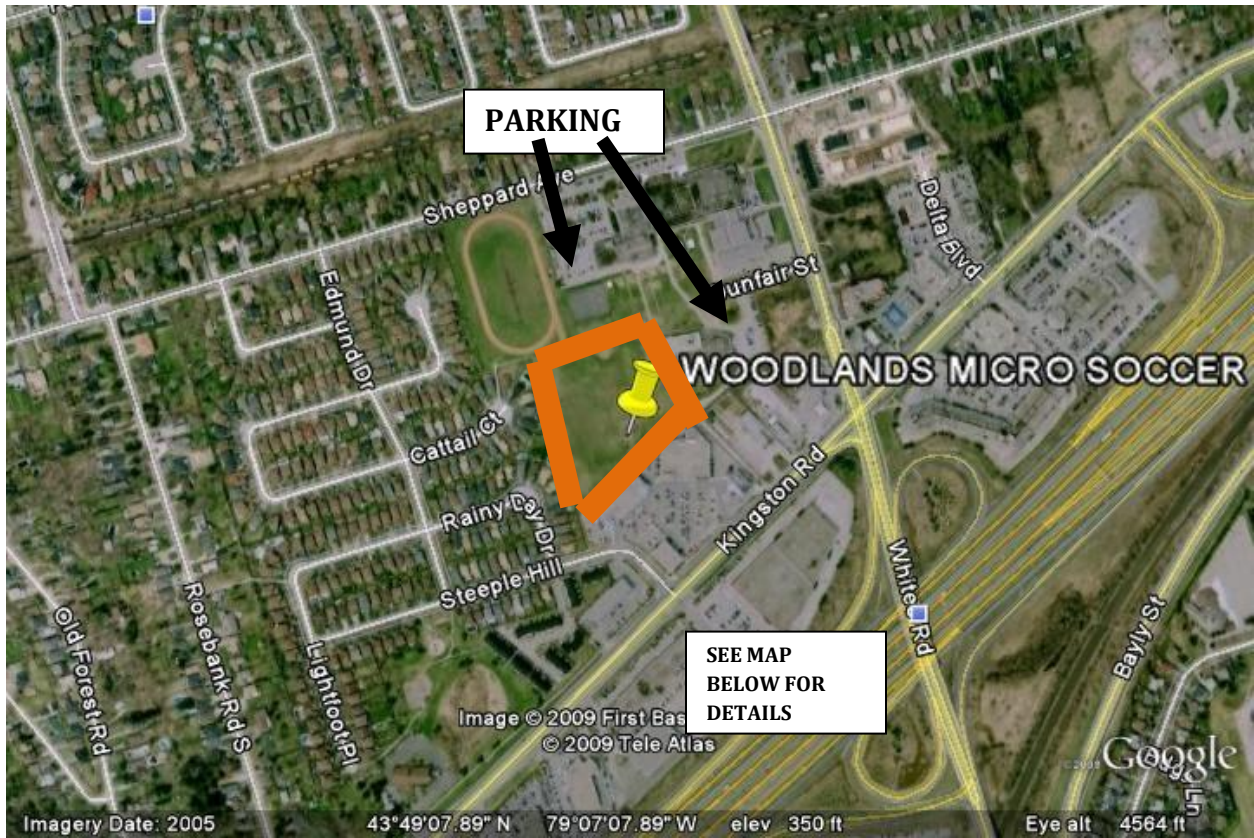
**Kick-in:** A type of restart after the ball goes out of bounds where the player, as awarded by the referee, kicks the ball into play from the sidelines. **All other players must be a minimum of 10 feet from the ball.**

**Midfield line or centre line:** A line that divides the field in half along its width - In U6, this line physically does not exist; rather it is a reasonable mid distance between the 2 goal lines.

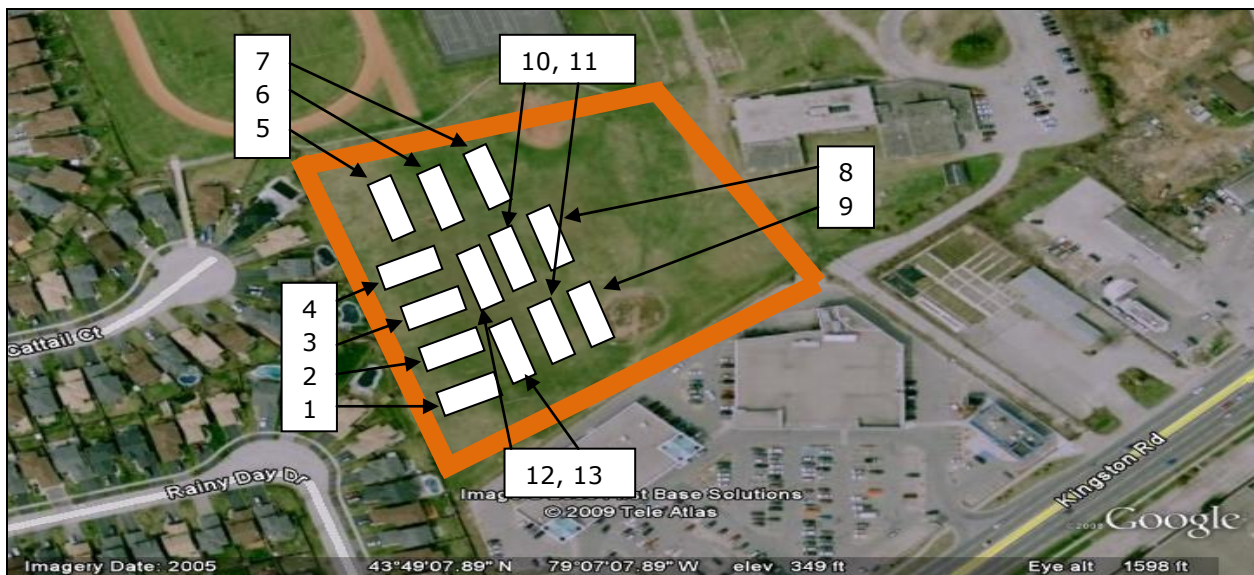
**Out of bounds:** When a ball is outside the boundaries of the field, having completely crossed a sideline or goal line. Play stops when this happens and usually a kick in, corner kick or goal kick is awarded depending on which line the ball crossed and who last touched it.

**Sideline:** A line that runs along the length of the field on each side.





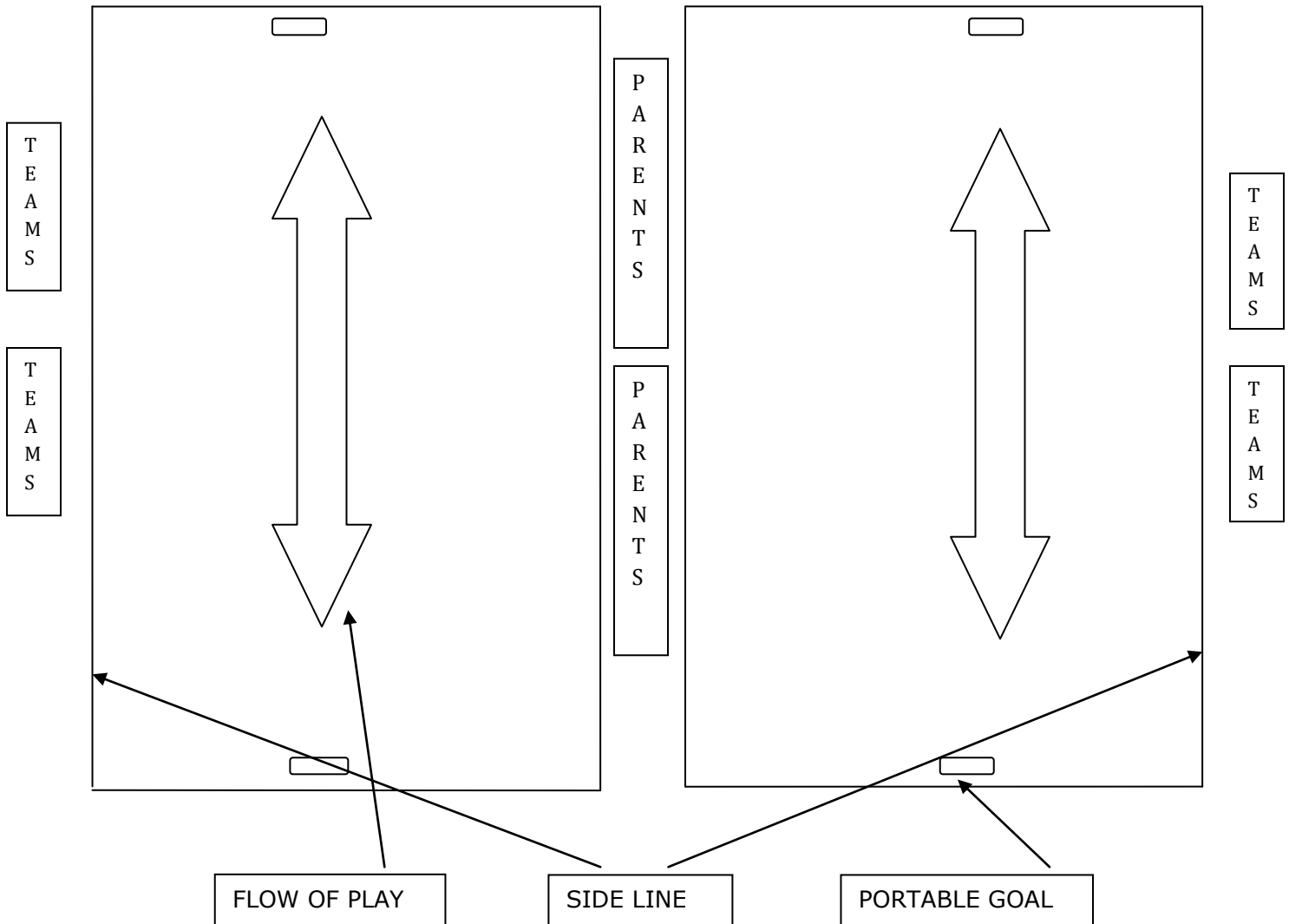
WOODLANDS MICRO SOCCER FIELDS ARE LOCATED BEHIND AND TO THE SOUTH OF DUNBARTON HIGH SCHOOL WHICH IS LOCATED AT WHITES RD AND SHEPPARD AVE. PARKING IN THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT.





## **FIELD LAYOUT FOR MICRO SOCCER**

Your designated field at Woodlands will be noted on your schedule. The diagram below is an example of what 2 fields side by side look like.



SIDELINE LENGTH IS APPROX. 100 FEET

GOAL LINE IS APPROX 75 FEET.

THE FIELD WILL HAVE PERMANENT MARKINGS, NO NEED TO MARK OFF WITH CONES.

CENTRE YOUR PORTABLE GOAL MIDWAY ALONG THE GOAL LINE. THE FLOW OF PLAY IS AS INDICATED BY THE LARGE ARROWS.

IDEALLY, PARENTS ARE ON ONE SIDE OF THE FIELD, TEAMS ARE ON THE OTHER.



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## **FIRST AID BASICS FOR SOCCER**

***THIS MATERIAL IS NOT MEANT AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR A PROPERLY CERTIFIED FIRST AID COURSE.***

While it may be possible to limit the number and severity of injuries with injury prevention strategies, one wrong step or a collision on the field can result in a sudden, painful injury. When this happens, you need to be prepared to act quickly. Ideally, you will have access to a well-stocked first aid kit or have medical help nearby.



### **HAVE AN EMERGENCY PLAN!**

It is important to have a well thought out plan for dealing with injuries. It is best to have a written response plan for emergencies. Keep this in your coaching bag where you can pull it out and refer to it if necessary. Some points to consider in your plan:

- Is a first aid kit available?
- Do I have all of my players' medical consent forms and emergency contacts with me at all times?
- Where is the nearest phone?
- How do I get first aid and paramedics/ambulance?
- Do any of my assistant coaches or parent volunteers know first aid?
- Who will go for help if I need to attend to an injured player?
- Who will supervise other players if I need to summon help?
- Do my assistant coaches and players know the emergency plan?

The primary goal of sports injury first aid is to stop activity and prevent further injury or damage.

### **Injury Prevention**

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Prevent injuries in every way possible. Some important steps that can help you in your injury prevention plan include the following:

- Emphasize proper skill development
- Inspect practice and game fields (e.g. holes, sprinkler heads, other hazardous objects)
- Teach your players sound conditioning habits (including proper warm-up, stretching, cool down, and access to plenty of fresh water)



### **PREVENT DISEASE TRANSMISSION**

Place an effective barrier between you and the victim's blood when you give first aid. Examples of such barriers are: the victim's hand, a piece of plastic wrap, clean folded cloth, rubber or latex gloves.

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water immediately after providing care.



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## Common Soccer Injuries and their Care

Whenever a player is injured, be certain to inform the parents or guardians of the injury, even if it seems minor and the athlete is able to continue with the practice or game.

- Muscle sprains and strains
- Tears of the ligaments that hold joints together
- Tears of the tendons that support joints and allow them to move
- Dislocated joints
- Fractured bones, including vertebrae.

Most sports injuries that require immediate treatment are called "**acute injuries.**" These injuries occur suddenly and generally cause the following symptoms or conditions:

- Pain and swelling
- Cuts and abrasions
- Fractures
- Sprains or Strains
- Concussion

The first treatment for most acute soft tissue injuries (bruises, strains, sprains, tears) is to prevent, stop and reduce swelling. When soft tissue is damaged, it swells or possibly bleeds internally. This swelling causes pain and loss of motion, which limits use of the muscles.

### Injury First Aid with Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation (R.I.C.E.)

The primary treatment to stop swelling of injured soft tissue is with the R.I.C.E. method.

- **Rest.** In this case, rest means stopping activity immediately but also resting to allow the tissues time to heal.
- **Ice.** Applying cold therapy (ice or an ice pack) is the best immediate treatment for acute injuries, because it reduces swelling and pain. Apply ice (wrapped in a thin towel for comfort) to the affected area for 10 minutes to 15 minutes at a time. Allow the skin temperature to return to normal before icing a second or third time. You can ice an acute injury several times a day for up to three days.
- **Compression.** Compression of an acute injury is perhaps the next most important immediate treatment tip. By quickly wrapping the injured body part with an elastic bandage or wrap, you help keep swelling to a minimum. If possible, it's helpful to apply ice to the injured area over the compression wrap to limit the swelling.
- **Elevation.** Elevating the injured area is another way to reduce the blood flow and swelling to the area.

### Soft Tissue Injury Step-By-Step

In summary, here is what you should do immediately when you sustain any soft tissue injury:

1. Stop the activity immediately.
2. Wrap the injured part in a compression bandage.



3. Apply ice to the injured part (use a bag of crushed ice or a bag of frozen vegetables) for 10 minutes to 15 minutes. Let the area warm completely before applying ice again (to prevent frostbite).
4. Elevate the injured part to reduce swelling.
5. Get to a physician for a proper diagnosis of any serious injury.

### **Treating Chronic and Overuse Sports Injuries**

While the most dramatic sports injuries are acute and sudden, the majority of sports injuries are slow to develop and result in vague aches and pains. The chronic pain of overuse injuries, such as tendonitis, tends to have subtle or vague symptoms that develop slowly. What begins as a small, nagging ache or pain can grow into a debilitating injury if it isn't recognized and treated early.

Treating overuse injuries requires rest, reducing exercise intensity, frequency and duration. Icing an overuse injury can also help reduce inflammation and pain. For more serious overuse injuries, physical therapy, over-the-counter medications and complete rest may be necessary.

### **Treating Other Sports Injuries**

There are many possible types of injuries that may occur while playing sports. Here is information about first aid treatment for some of the more common sports injuries:

#### **ANKLE INJURIES:**

An injury to an ankle can take the form of a sprain or a break and may have different degrees of severity. Sprains are stretched or torn tendons, ligaments, and blood vessels around the joints.

#### **FIRST AID:**

- Assume the injury could be severe.
- Immobilize the player (avoid any movement that causes pain).
- Begin the RICE routine (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) - elevation helps slow the flow of blood, thus reducing swelling.
- Have the player see a physician before returning to practice.

#### **DON'T:**

- Remove athlete's shoe and sock until ice is available.
- Have the player try to "walk it off".

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#### **BLEEDING:**

In most cases, bleeding can be controlled by placing direct pressure over the wound. To reduce risk of infection, whenever possible wear latex gloves and wash hands before (and after) treating an open wound.



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## **FIRST AID:**

- Apply direct pressure to the wound with a clean compress (use clothing if a clean compress is not available).
- Elevate the wound above the level of the heart.
- Keep the player lying down.
- If bleeding is sufficient to soak through the compress, apply additional as necessary directly over the others.
- Call for emergency help if bleeding is severe or persistent.

## **DON'T:**

- Remove old compresses; this may cause more bleeding.
- Treat any bleeding lightly.
- Let dirt get into the wound.
- Panic. Call for help if you are unsure.

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## **BLISTERS:**

Blisters typically appear as a raised bubble of skin with fluid beneath; the fluid may be clear or bloody. The blister may be torn with new skin exposed. Generally painful.

## **FIRST AID:**

- Rub ice over the area.
- Place small moleskin doughnut over the outside edges of the blister and tape to prevent further friction.
- If the blister is torn, wash area with soap and water; put ointment over the blister and cover with a protective dressing.

## **DON'T:**

- Treat a blister lightly; infection can result, causing serious problems.
- Puncture blister - let a physician do so.

## **PREVENTATIVE STEPS:**

- Properly fitting shoes and socks are essential.
- Proper conditioning is necessary to allow the skin to become accustomed to the activity load.
- Wear two pairs of socks if friction is extremely bad.

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## **BROKEN BONES:**

Fractures come in a variety of forms and may occur any place in the body where there is a bone. Remember, you are not a trained medical professional qualified to handle these many different situations.

Your job is to recognize the injury (or possible injury) and to limit further injury.



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## **SIGNS & SYMPTOMS:**

- May have heard a pop or snap, or received a direct blow to the area.
- A closed fracture will have pain, swelling, irregularity, or deformity over the injured area.
- An open fracture will have bone protruding.

## **FIRST AID:**

- Leave fractured bone in the position found.
- Immobilize the joints above and below the suspected injury.
- Cover an open fracture wound with a large clean dressing; control bleeding.
- Apply ice to a closed fracture (not to an open fracture).
- Transport the player to the hospital or call for an ambulance if you are unsure about moving the player.

## **DON'T:**

- Attempt to straighten injured limb or push back protruding bones.
- Allow player to move the injured area.
- Allow dirt into any injured area with protruding bones.

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## **CONCUSSION:**

A concussion may result from a fall in which the head strikes against an object or a moving object strikes the head. A suddenly induced turning movement such as a blow that twists the head (like a punch to the side of the face) is more likely to produce unconsciousness. However, significant jarring in any direction can produce unconsciousness.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:**

- Confusion
- Disorientation
- Memory loss
- Unconsciousness
- Fluid draining from the ears, nose or mouth
- Unequal size pupils

## **FIRST AID:**

- Assume the injury could be severe.
- Immobilize the player (avoid any movement that causes pain).

If an athlete suffers any head injury, they must stop playing and sit out the rest of the game. If they continue or return to play, you risk making a mild injury a permanent one.

Because signs of a mild concussion -- confusion, disorientation and memory loss -- may disappear within minutes and may not be reported by the athlete, athletes are often allowed to continue playing or return to a game before their brain has had adequate time to heal.



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**If a head injury causes unconsciousness, immediate medical attention is required for evaluation of the injury.** An initial baseline neurological evaluation by a physician will determine the appropriate treatment for an uncomplicated concussion. Most likely that player should not return to the sport for up to three months.

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### **DISLOCATIONS:**

Dislocations and broken bones (fractures) are treated similarly. A dislocation is a displacement of a bone end from the joint. Dislocated joints will have pain, swelling, irregularity, or deformity over the injured area.

### **FIRST AID:**

- Leave dislocated joint in the position found.
- Immobilize joint in the exact position it was in at the time of injury.
- Apply ice and elevate to minimize swelling.
- Have the player see a doctor immediately.

### **DON'T:**

- Attempt to relocate a dislocation or correct any deformity near a joint (movement may cause further injury).
- Assume the injury is minor.
- Assume there is no broken bone.

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### **HEAD AND NECK INJURIES:**

These injuries can be the most devastating of all injuries. **Permanent paralysis may result from any neck injury, so these injuries must be handled with extreme care.**

### **SIGNS & SYMPTOMS:**

- Headache, dizziness.
- Unconsciousness (immediate or delayed).
- Unequal pupils.
- Tingling sensation or numbness in arms and/or legs.
- Inability to move fingers, toes, or extremities.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Athlete not alert.

### **FIRST AID:**

- **Call for paramedic or other help immediately.**
- Make sure the athlete is able to breathe.
- Keep the player still (stabilize head and neck as you found them).
- Maintain body temperature.
- Call parents or guardian immediately.
- Pass all important information on to doctors.



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## **DON'T:**

- Move the athlete.
- Leave the player unattended.
- Overstep the limits of your knowledge! **GET HELP IMMEDIATELY!**

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## **HEAT EMERGENCIES:**

### **Preventing Heat Emergencies**

- Avoid being outdoors during the hottest part of the day, if possible.
- Change the activity level according to the temperature.
- Take frequent breaks.
- Drink large amounts of fluid.
- Wear light-colored clothing, if possible.

### **Heat cramps**

- Have athlete rest in a cool place.
- Give cool water.
- Stretch muscle and massage area.

**Heat exhaustion** - Player's skin will appear pale and clammy, perspiration is profuse, may experience nausea, weakness, dizziness, headache, cramps

- Have athlete lie down in a cool place with feet elevated 8 to 12 inches.
- Give cool water.
- Loosen tight clothing.
- Remove clothing soaked with perspiration.
- Apply cool wet cloths (such as towels) or ice packs (wrapped) to the skin.
- Call 911 if player refuses water, vomits or if level of consciousness changes.

**Heat stroke** - Player will appear hot, red, will not be sweating (although skin may be wet from previous sweating), pulse will be rapid and strong, body temperature will be high (105 degrees Fahrenheit or more). **This is an immediate and life-threatening emergency!**

- Send someone to get emergency medical help (call 911).
- Get the athlete out of the heat and into a cooler place.
- Cool the player fast - immerse in a cool bath, or wrap with wet towels and fan him/her.
- Give nothing by mouth.

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## **KNEE INJURIES:**

The knee is the most complicated joint in the body, as well as the joint most frequently injured. It requires a specialist to treat knee injuries properly. Your job is to limit further injury and to get the player to the hospital.



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### **FIRST AID:**

- Help the player off the field.
- Apply ice to the injured area.
- Elevate the leg without moving the knee, if possible.
- Take the player to the hospital immediately.

### **DON'T:**

- Move the knee to examine the injury.
- Allow the player to get up and "walk it off".
- Allow the knee to move freely.
- Allow the athlete to continue participating until he/she has seen a physician.

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### **NOSE BLEEDS:**

A bloody nose is a common occurrence following a blow to the face, or in association with high blood pressure, infection, strenuous activity or dry nasal passages. Although usually more annoying than serious, any bloody nose resulting from an injury to the face should be considered as a potential fracture. If you suspect a head, neck, or back injury, do not try to control a nosebleed; instead, keep the player from moving and stabilize the head and neck.

### **FIRST AID:**

- Place the player in a sitting position leaning slightly forward.
- Apply a cold compress to the athlete's nose and face.
- Apply direct pressure by having the player pinch the nostrils with the fingers.
- Take the athlete to the doctor if bleeding persists.

### **DON'T:**

- Allow the player to blow his/her nose for several hours.
- Stick anything up the nose to stop the bleeding without the assistance of a medical professional or emergency personnel.
- Lean head backwards (player may choke on blood running down the throat).

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### **PULLS AND TEARS**

**Calf Muscle:** This injury happens during acceleration or changes in direction. It occurs when part of the muscle of the lower leg is torn away from the achilles tendon. The player may think they've just been hit in the leg and hear a "pop." there is sudden pain at the back of the leg, pain, swelling or bruising in the calf muscle, and they have difficulty standing on the toes. The torn calf muscle may spasm, and contract forcefully. The toes will point down. Bruises show up in the foot and ankle due to pooling of blood from internal bleeding.



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## **FIRST AID:**

- Begin the rice routine (rest, ice, compression, elevation) - elevation helps slow the flow of blood, thus reducing swelling. Wrap the calf to keep the blood from pooling in the foot, and keep it elevated for the first 24 hours to reduce swelling.

Eventually, the muscle reattaches to the tendon; however, and the calf is often shorter than before the injury and prone to repeat injury. A visit to a physician and or a physical therapist is recommended to ensure in fast rehab.

**Groin Pull:** The most common cause of groin pain is a muscle strain that causes localized pain and in the inner thigh, or groin. These injuries often occur during a sudden change of direction while running and quick starts and stops. These injuries are especially common in field or court sports. A severe tear can cause a sudden, acute pain and may be accompanied by swelling and bruising. They are painful to the touch, and pain increases with resistance movements, and stretching of the inner thigh and hamstrings.

**Is it a groin pull or a hernia?** The symptoms of sports hernia are sometimes mistaken for a groin pull or strain. A dull aching pain that intensifies with exercise may be the only symptom of a sports hernia. An inguinal hernia, however, typically creates a bulging protrusion in the lower abdomen or upper groin that is hard to miss. If you suspect a hernia, a visit to your physician is the next step.

## **FIRST AID:**

- Begin the RICE routine (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation)
- Avoid aggravating activities for the first one to two weeks and gradually return to sports.
- Once activity is started again, ice the muscle after exercise to reduce any swelling.
- After applying the ice, wrap the thigh to keep it compressed.

**Hamstring injuries:** Hamstring injuries are common among athletes who play sports that require powerful accelerations, decelerations or lots of running. Less commonly, a hamstring injury is the result of a direct blow to the muscle from another play or being hit with a ball. Some of the factors which may contribute to a hamstring injury includes:

- Doing too much, too soon or pushing beyond your limits.
- Poor flexibility.
- Poor muscle strength.
- Muscle imbalance between the quadriceps and hamstring muscle groups.
- Muscle fatigue that leads to over exertion.
- Leg Length Differences. A shorter leg may have tighter hamstrings which are more likely to pull.
- Improper or no warm-up.
- History of hamstring injury.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:**

A hamstring injury typically causes by a sudden, sharp pain in the back of the thigh that may stop the player mid-stride. After such an injury, the knee may not extend more than 30 to 40 degrees short of straight without intense pain. Like most sprains and strains



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hamstring injuries are usually caused by excessive stretching (tearing) of muscle fibers or other soft tissues beyond their limits.

### **FIRST AID:**

Treatment for hamstring injuries depends upon the severity of the injury. Due to the pain and limited ability to use the muscle, a third degree strain usually results in a visit to a physician for evaluation and treatment. Less severe hamstring strains may be treated at home. These general treatment steps are commonly recommended for mild or moderate hamstring injuries:

- Begin the RICE routine (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation)
- After an injury it's important to rest the injured muscle, sometimes for up to two or three weeks before the player can return to sports after the injury.
- A stretching program can be started as soon as the pain and swelling subsides.
- A strengthening program should be used to rebuild the strength of the injured muscle in order to prevent re-injury. Make sure you increase this gradually.
- A thigh wrap can be applied to provide support as the muscle heals.

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### **SHIN SPLINTS:**

The term "shin splints" actually refers to pain along the tibia or shin bone, the large bone in the front of the lower leg. This pain can occur at the front outside part of the lower leg, including the foot and ankle (anterior shin splints) or at the inner edge of the bone where it meets the calf muscles (medial shin splints).

Shin splints are primarily seen in runners, particularly those just starting a running program. Risk factors for shin splints include overuse or incorrect use of the lower leg; improper stretching, warmup, or exercise technique; overtraining; running or jumping on hard surfaces; and running in shoes that don't have enough support. These injuries are often associated with flat feet.

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### **Returning to Sports after an Injury**

So after your player has been treated for their injury, what comes next? Most athletes want to know how soon they can return to their sport. This answer tends to be different for everyone, because each athlete and each injury is unique. As a coach, keep in mind that returning to sports too soon can increase the risk of re-injury or developing a chronic problem that will lead to a longer recovery.