

Rochester Youth Soccer Association

Traveling Soccer Manual

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Change Log:

10/15/2006	Updated Committee members and added MYSA Accident Coverage section
02/14/2007	Updated Committee members and a number of sections to reflect recent Travel Committee decisions
02/23/2007	Updated Tournament section
04/17/2007	Updated RYSA contacts and discipline policy (3-strike rule)
12/29/2008	Revised and updated all sections

MISSION STATEMENT

Traveling Soccer shall be to promote, foster and perpetuate the game of soccer on the youth level (under the age of 19) in Rochester and the surrounding areas. We support a program that provides athletic development and training at all levels of talent and desire. We are committed to providing a pathway for the dedicated to reach the highest levels of personal performance. Our goals are as follows:

- I. Provide a developmental program for U-9 through U-12 boys and girls, to include:
 - A. Technical training in fundamentals (dribbling, shooting, passing, receiving, goalkeeping)
 - B. Introduction to the principles of team play
 - C. Teach soccer rules and sportsmanship
 - D. Functional training
 - E. Travel to other communities for league play and tournaments

- II. Provide a competitive program for the committed U-13 through U-19 player
 - A. Work with the individual on techniques and tactics
 - B. Training in the specifics and strategies of each position as a team player
 - C. Teach soccer rules and sportsmanship
 - D. Travel to other communities for league play and tournaments
 - E. Field competitive teams

This program is affiliated and governed by-MYSA and USYSA, which are affiliated with the U.S. Soccer Federation (USSF) and the Federation Internationale de Football (FIFA). More information about these organizations can be obtained by writing or accessing the following locations:

Minnesota Youth Soccer Association (MYSA)
11577 Encore Circle
Minnetonka, MN 55343
800-366-6972, 952-933-2384
Fax: 952-933-2627
Web: www.mnyouthsoccer.org
Email: mysa@mnyouthsoccer.org

U.S. Youth Soccer (USYSA)
1717 Firman Drive, Suite 900
Richardson, TX 75081
800-4SOCCER
Fax: 972-235-4480
Web: www.usysa.org
email: nationaloffice@usyouthsoccer.org

TRAVELING COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

- ◆ The organization of RYSA Traveling Soccer is as shown in Section 1.3.
- ◆ The terms of office shall run from August 1 through July 31 of the following year.
- ◆ Committee members shall be selected as described in the RYSA Bylaws and Operating Procedures.
- ◆ Voting rights at regular committee meetings shall be confined to the voting Committee members.
- ◆ All coaches and interested parents are encouraged to attend committee meetings and provide input.

TRAVELING COMMITTEE POSITIONS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Voting Members:

Chair	RYSA Executive Committee member, oversight of travel soccer operations, recommends appointments for open positions to the Executive Committee, appoints ad hoc committees as needed.
Secretary/Treasurer	General records and correspondence, records and distributes committee meeting minutes, schedules and reserves space for meetings. Budget preparations, oversees collection and disbursement of traveling soccer funds, maintains RYSA Traveling Soccer records, and recommends to chair and committees on any major expenditures and projects.
Master Coordinator	District representative, overall coordination of the team formation process and communication with traveling coaches..
At-Large Member	Committee assigned responsibilities.

Non-Voting Members:

Boys/Girls Coordinator(s)	Selection Committee member.
Executive Director	Travel Committee member.
Coaching Director	Selection Committee member.

Non –Committee members:

Equipment Coordinator	Provides soccer balls, cones, corner flags, pinnies, first aid kits and other items as required.
Tryout Coordinator	Coordinates the tryout process for U11 – U17 travel teams. This includes field reservation, evaluator scheduling, volunteer scheduling, player registration and tryout data consolidation.

SELECTION PROCESS

Coordinators

The duties of the Coordinators shall be to:

- Act as the primary point of contact for parents regarding travel soccer concerns.
- Act as an advisor to the team coaches on MYSA administration.
- Participate on the Selection Committee.
- Advise the Master Coordinator & DOC of any coaching concerns from parents.

- Compile tryout data, coaches input, commitment statements, and any other pertinent player data to be used by the Selection Committee in assigning players to teams.

RYSA Traveling Soccer Selection Committee

The Chair and the Master Coordinator will choose the Selection Committee. The size of the Selection Committee will be not less than three and not larger than nine. The duties of the Selection Committee are as follows:

- Decide which age groups need to be combined
- Review and approve the DOC head coach recommendations
- Assign players to teams based upon “blind” rankings from the Tryout Coordinator, input from the previous season coaches, players’ commitment level, and the needs of each team by position.

Tryout Coordinator

It is the responsibility of the Tryout Coordinator to run tryouts for RYSA. The Tryout Coordinator, in conjunction with the RYSA Director of Coaching, will establish a tryout procedure and schedule. The Tryout Coordinator along with the RYSA Director of Coaching and the RYSA Director of Operations will:

- Recruit/appoint qualified neutral evaluators.
- Obtain the following materials:
 - registration paperwork for sign-in tables
 - balls and cones (from equipment coordinator)
 - clipboards, evaluator forms, pencils, and stapler
 - numbered tryout jerseys for players to wear
 - other equipment that may be necessary
- Assign volunteers for sign-in tables

Tryout Guidelines

The tryouts shall be scheduled in accordance with MYSA rules. The tryouts will test technical skills and tactical skills. A tryout fee may be charged.

Attendance at tryouts is **MANDATORY for placement on the top team in a U13 – U19 age group** - top level teams require a higher degree of commitment. Provisions shall be made for players who miss tryouts because of injury, illness, or other reasons acceptable to the Tryout Coordinator (e.g., funeral attendance).

Team Formation

RYSA Traveling Soccer will have single-age tryouts and will field primarily single-age teams with the objective of fielding a Premier level team within each age group whenever possible.

Teams will be formed in order from the highest competitive level to the lowest level. The highest level team is selected first, then the next highest level, until all teams have been selected for an age group. This will allow players to play at their skill level. This may cause stronger and weaker teams within the same league.

If the number of players does not warrant single-age teams at a level, the Selection Committee will work to combine the age groups and to accommodate the greatest number of players.

A player may not register for both a recreational and traveling team. However, a recreational player may be recruited for a traveling team based on the needs of the traveling team. See the “Substitute Players” section.

Player Selection and Notification

RYSA Traveling Soccer will provide all players with the opportunity to advance to the highest level team in their age group if they demonstrate the skills, attitude, commitment, and teamwork required at that level of play.

In the team formation process teams are formed from the top team to the bottom team in progression. In the first pass of the top team selection, the roster for a full sized team will consist of approximately the top two-thirds players from the previous summer coach’s ranking and the remaining players selected by the Selection Committee from the tryout data and previous year rankings. All players during this phase are identified by a tryout number and not by name. If a non-parent coach is identified for this team, the roster, with names, is given to that non-parent coach for their review. If a parent coach is identified for this team, the roster is used to select that coach and then the roster, with names, is given to that parent coach for review. Head coaches do have the ability to request changes to their roster. Any request for changes is made through the Girls/Boys Coordinator responsible for that age group to the Selection Committee. This is done by the responsible Coordinator giving the Selection Committee the initial roster, again without names, along with the ranking and tryout information for the player(s) requested. The Selection Committee will weigh each player move up and down individually and either approve or not approve the request based on the data available to the committee. This process is repeated for the second, then third team and so on, until all teams in an age group are formed. Final team rosters will be set by the Selection Committee. All data used in the selection process will be kept confidential within the Selection Committee and will not be shared with players, parents or other coaches.

As a general rule players will not be moved up or down more than one team. There are multiple exceptions, one example would be a strong player, from another club or town being placed on a team other than the bottom team, because of input from another club’s coaching director or an MYSA/ODP coach. Another case may be where a player registers after the teams are formed and there is no room for that player. In this case the player may be placed on a team outside the general rule.

When player selection is complete, RYSA will contact each player by letter in December to inform them of their head coach’s name and their team assignment. Due to a variety of factors, some age groups will take longer than others to finalize. No players will be contacted until all “loose ends” have been taken care of for their age group.

RYSA works hard to place all registered players on a team, but occasionally we are forced to cut players (with appropriate refund) due to inequitable numbers or lack of coaches.

Player Release and Refund Policy

Spring/Summer Registration. - After registration, requests for refunds must be made in writing via letter or via e-mail or can be made in person. Players requesting to drop prior to November 30 will receive a refund for fees paid at registration time less \$20 and **will not be released** by RYSA (unless required by MYSA rules). Players requesting to drop prior to December 31 will receive a refund for fees paid at registration time less \$50 and **will not be released** by RYSA (unless required by MYSA rules). Players requesting to drop after December 31, with the exception of players suffering a season ending injury or placement on an over rostered team, **will receive no refund and will not be released** (unless required by MYSA rules).

Players requesting to drop, due to season ending injury, after December 31 and prior to the first team practice, will receive a refund for fees paid at registration time less \$50 upon receipt of a doctor's note indicating that the injury is season ending and a completed MYSA Voluntary Drop Form. Players requesting to drop, due to placement on an over rostered team, after December 31 and prior to the first team practice, will receive a refund for fees paid at registration time less \$50 and **will be released** by RYSA.

Fall Registration - There is no refund for the Fall season if a player drops, except for season ending injury. Players requesting to drop, due to season ending injury, prior to the first team practice, will receive a refund for fees paid at registration time less \$50 upon receipt of a doctor's note indicating that the injury is season ending and a completed MYSA Voluntary Drop Form.

Roster Size and Substitute Players

The maximum number of players per team is defined by the MYSA as:

- twelve (12) for U9 and U10 teams
- fourteen (14) for U11 and U12 teams
- eighteen (18) players per team for U13 through U19 teams

RYSA limits rosters to the following maximums, unless the head coach agrees to adding additional players:

- U9/U10 – 10 players
- U11/U12 – 12 players
- U13-U15 – 16 players
- U16-U19 – 18 players

When a team falls below the minimum number of players on a roster:

- eight (8) for U9 and U10
- ten (10) U11 and U12
- thirteen (11) for U13 up through U19

a coach should recruit additional players. Approval of the Girls or Boys Coordinator is required prior to any recruiting can take place.

Recreational or unattached players can be added to a traveling team after the traveling teams have been formed only with the approval of the Master Coordinator and the age group Boys/Girls Coordinator. If a player then rosters on both a recreational team and a traveling team, the recreational team takes precedence. This means that the recreational team has preferential use of that player.

For a single game, a coach may request a “play-up” (MYSA maximum of 3) from a lower division or lower age team provided his total number of team players does not exceed roster limits. The coach requesting a play-up must personally ask and get approval from that player’s head coach. While RYSA encourage coaches to help out when another team is shorthanded, a coach is not required to approve a play-up if he/she feels that it would be detrimental to their team or that player. Higher division players (such as Classic 1) should not be played up on a higher age group, lower division team (such as Classic 2 or 3.)

If we have more than one team at the same division level, at the same age, players from one team are not allowed to substitute on the other team for league play. This is considered a “play-across” and is illegal according to MYSA rules. Likewise, a player cannot “play-down” to a lower age group or division level. MYSA permits a Premier player to play up to only another Premier team. Violations of “play-up” rule will subject the team to forfeiture of games affected and further sanctions from MYSA.

Rules regarding substitute players vary at tournaments. Read tournament rules carefully. In some cases playing across is legal.

A substitute (play-up) should never be in the starting line-up (unless he/she is the only goalkeeper or is needed to field a full team.) The substitute may use the jersey of the missing player. Substitute players should not receive more playing time than regular team members.

Roster-Up Requests (to play at an age group above a player’s actual age)

RYSA Traveling has a goal to field the highest level team possible in each age group while offering the highest level of competition possible to the greatest number of players within our program. A parent may request to have a child roster-up for two reasons: to be exposed to a higher level of competition or to play with school grade peers. Roster-up requests for exposure to a higher level of competition are made to the Director of Coaching. If the Director of Coaching feels the request is warranted, the player may be asked to tryout with the older age group. The Director of Coaching will notify Master Coordinator of the decision (and the Tryout Coordinator, if the player is asked to tryout at the older age). Roster-up requests for playing with school age peers are made to the Master Coordinator. If the Master Coordinator - in conjunction with the Age Group Coordinators - is satisfied that the player can compete at the older age group, the player will be allowed to roster-up and may be asked to tryout with the older age group. The Master Coordinator will notify Director of Coaching of the decision (and the Tryout Coordinator, if the player is asked to tryout at the older age). All roster-up players are reviewed by the Selection Committee during the selection process. A player moving up one year does not guarantee that the player will move up every year.

The Selection Committee reserves the power to roster-up a player(s) if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the program (i.e., move a goalkeeper up an age group to balance the number of available keepers within certain age groups.)

Coach Selection and Education Guidelines

The following are general guidelines used in selecting coaches. There may be instances where the Director of Coaching, with Selection Committee concurrence chooses to depart from these guidelines.

There shall be a head coach appointed for each team each season by the Selection Committee based on the recommendation of the Director of Coaching. The criteria for selecting coaches include: previous experience, license level, willingness, time availability and past performance.

When more than one candidate exists for a given team, the Director of Coaching shall recommend the head coach based upon comparisons of the above criteria as well as the best interest of the players involved and the program in general.

Non-parent coaches may be given priority in some cases. Possible reasons for this may include:

1. A non-parent coach may disarm perceptions of favoritism or bias on the part of the coaching staff.
2. Our few qualified non-parent coaches are considered very valuable to the program and we strive to allow them to work within the age group(s)/gender/playing level where they prefer to coach, if possible.
3. We feel that our most qualified coaches can have the greatest impact on our players.
4. Our aim would be for these coaches to spend approximately 1-3 years with a given team and then drop back to a younger team to repeat the process.

RYSA takes the position that a change of coaches after a number of years is usually a positive experience for a team. While we do not routinely replace coaches to achieve this, we do view it as a side benefit for the team when coaching changes occur.

Head coaches for U9 – U19 teams shall be expected to have at least a USSF E license or be in the process of attaining one.

Coaches shall be encouraged to get a USSF D license if they have coached in the RYSA Traveling Soccer program for two or more years.

The Director of Coaching shall establish an education program for the coaches. This program shall consist of inter-coach as well as intra-coach education and shall be done in conjunction with RYSA clinics, where possible.

If a coach wishes to attend training schools or camps to improve his/her skills, coaches can apply for expense reimbursement for certain personal coach development expenses. The application may or may not be approved by the Director of Coaching. An application may be rejected if no funds are available for example. Coaches will be automatically reimbursed for any license or certifications done locally provided money is available. A coach may apply for more than one reimbursement during the year, but subsequent applications may be deferred until the end of year so that others have an opportunity for reimbursement.

There are a number of instructional videotapes available at the RYSA office and at the public library in the Resource Section. These have been selected and purchased by RYSA for use by coaches. They can be checked out for 7 days.

RYSA Information and Publicity

The Post Bulletin publishes a “Youth Sports Report”. When submitting a photo, provide names in alphabetical order and not in the order pictured. This provides a measure of personal security.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all traveling players to:

- ◆ Attend all team events, unless excused by the coach prior to the event.
- ◆ Inform his/her parents of information distributed by the coach or team manager.
- ◆ Show respect to all players, coaches, referees, fans and league officials.
- ◆ Play soccer within the USSF and MYSA rules.
- ◆ Place the good of the team ahead of personal wants or needs.
- ◆ Conduct themselves as gentlemen/women in public, for example, restaurants, at all times.
- ◆ Bring complete and clean uniforms, including alternate jerseys, to all games.
- ◆ Bring a ball and drinking water to all practices and games.
- ◆ Dress appropriately for weather (i.e. Jacket and wind suit pants if the weather is cold).
- ◆ **Players are expected to be absent no more than one week during the season.** Exceptions to this rule need to be negotiated between the player and coach.
- ◆ **Players who fail to live up to their responsibilities may be disciplined.**
- ◆ **Placement of players for next season may be affected by how each player lives up to the player responsibilities outlined above.**

It is the responsibility of the parents to:

- ◆ Provide or arrange necessary **transportation** for the player(s) to all practices, games, tournaments, or other events.
- ◆ Assist with **fundraising** or other events of the team or RYSA when asked.
- ◆ Provide player **fees** and traveling **expenses**.
- ◆ Assist your player in meeting the expectations of the team and coaching staff (i.e., on-time arrival).
- ◆ Plan **vacations**, camps, etc. to avoid conflict with scheduled team events. Inform coaches in advance of all absences.
- ◆ Provide **positive encouragement** to players at practices, games and tournaments as well as appropriate comments and cheering.
- ◆ Let the coach do the coaching, and let the players play their game.
- ◆ Inform the coaches of any **special needs** the player might have (allergies, injuries, medicines, etc.).
- ◆ **Assist** the coaches when asked.
- ◆ Provide appropriate **feedback** to coaches or RYSA when requested.
- ◆ Show **respect** to all opponents, players, referees, coaches and fans.
- ◆ Attend team parent **meetings**.

- ◆ **Support** the team in your area of assigned responsibility, such as game refreshments, transportation, fields, RochesterFest Tournament, publicity, picnics, calling, and out of town tournament duties.

COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the coach/coaches to:

- ◆ Not recruit for other soccer clubs during the current soccer season.
- ◆ Keep players and parents informed of their responsibilities.
- ◆ Provide a good example to the players and parents.
- ◆ Improve his/her knowledge of the game and coaching skills.
- ◆ Attain USSF and/or NSCAA licenses.
- ◆ Develop players' skills and knowledge of the game.
- ◆ Keep players and parents well informed of all practices, games, tournaments, and other events.
- ◆ Give all players the opportunity to play and develop their skills.
- ◆ Involve parents in the operation of the team. Assign specific parent responsibilities (see "Parent Responsibilities").
- ◆ Provide practice sessions that start and end on time.
- ◆ Discipline players fairly and impartially.
- ◆ Show respect to all opponents, players, referees, coaches, fans and officials at all times.
- ◆ Abide by RYSA, MYSA, and USYSA rules.
- ◆ Keep fans under control at games.
- ◆ Inform players, parents, and the RYSA Traveling Soccer Committee of a player's suspension, reasons for the suspension, and the appeal procedure.
- ◆ Inform field scheduler and opposing coach of game cancellations or schedule changes. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.
- ◆ Return equipment to the Equipment Coordinator at the end of the season.
- ◆ Recruit one or more assistant coaches with approval of the Boys/Girls Coordinator.
- ◆ Schedule at least one parent meeting.
- ◆ Maintain good communication with RYSA and MYSA.
- ◆ Provide rankings and feedback on current players to the Traveling Coordinators.

Playing Time and Positional Play

MYSA and RYSA designation of age groups

- U9-U10 – Developmental non-competitive
- U11-U12 – Developmental, competitive
- U13-U19 - Competitive

PLAYING TIME

REQUIRED (Does not apply to Premier)

- ◆ U9-U10 – 50% of the game
- ◆ U11-U17 – 33% of the game

RECOMMENDED (Does not apply to Premier)

- U11-U17 – 50% of the game

It is understood that in some games due to circumstances beyond the coach's control (e.g., no stoppage of play) it may not be possible to comply with the above recommendations. However, it is expected that these recommendations will be complied with on average over the course of the season. Coaches have the ability to adjust playing time for disciplinary reasons; the coach must inform the Director of Coaching and the Boys/Girls Coordinator responsible for their age group.

“Players should be given the opportunity to play soccer for extended, uninterrupted periods of time. This allows them to get a better feel for the flow of a soccer game. For example, it is more beneficial for a player to play for 12 straight minutes, than for him or her to play in two 6 minute periods. Substitution should be used to address injury, fatigue and lack of effort. It should not be used to punish a player for a soccer-related decision.” – Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States, USSF.

POSITIONAL PLAY

- U9-U10 – Coach and encourage players to play all positions
- U11-U12 – Teach players multiple positions and play two or more positions
- U13-U17 – Teach players multiple positions, switch positions when possible.

Players need to learn as many positions as possible. Being a well rounded player will give them more knowledge of the game and more respect for the positions their teammates play. Also, players that are pigeon holed into one position at their age group may miss opportunities in High School or ODP soccer because they can't adapt to a different position they are needed to fill.

OFFICIALS

It will be the responsibility of the Southern Minnesota Soccer Referee Association (SMSRA) to coordinate and provide referees for all home games and tournaments.

Payment of referees shall be negotiated with the SMSRA through its designated commissioners. Coaches are not responsible for payment of referees in Rochester or at other club locations except for district playoffs. Make certain that the requirements are clearly spelled out by the district commissioners. However, coaches or team managers may be asked to provide vouchers to referees as proof to RYSA that the referee did officiate the game.

A three-person referee system shall be used at all U13 and older games. The center referee and neutral linesmen must be certified. Should problems arise and three certified officials are not available, the center referee shall obtain a club linesman. This may be parents or visitors of a team playing.

GAMES

Forfeitures

Teams are responsible for any MYSA fees incurred due to game forfeitures.

Tournaments

The RYSA Director of Coaching recommends a maximum of three tournaments during the spring/summer season. Traveling teams may only play in tournaments sanctioned by the USSF. Prior to the start of the summer season games, the coach must inform the players and parents regarding the number of tournaments in which the team plans to participate.

All RYSA teams, with the exception of Premier and U17 & older, are required to register and play in the RochesterFest Tournament. U16C1 teams can request an exemption to not play in RochesterFest. The exemption request – submitted to the Travel Chair – must indicate what tournament they would prefer to attend and why they would prefer to attend that tournament in lieu of RochesterFest. The request will be reviewed and decided by the Travel Chair, Tournament Director, and the Master Coordinator. There are no registration fee refunds for any team not attending RochesterFest.

*All tournament registration fees, **other than RochesterFest**, are the responsibility of the team.*

The team must obtain approval for travel as required by the MYSA or USSF regulations. This involves obtaining a travel permit from the MYSA office, filling it out, and returning it to MYSA with any appropriate fees. The purpose of the travel permit is to cover the team for insurance purposes.

The travel permit fee is much lower if the form is submitted well in advance of the team's travel dates.

UNIFORMS AND PLAYER EQUIPMENT

The uniforms shall consist of a jersey, alternate jersey, shorts, and one pair of socks for each player. The uniforms for all RYSA Traveling Soccer teams will be consistent in color and quality. **Team exceptions will not be allowed.** RYSA will distribute the home and away jerseys to each player who purchased them at registration. The player will retain these jerseys and the assigned number for future seasons. Players may not trade numbers. Players must purchase the uniform shorts and socks. Damaged or lost jerseys must be replaced by the player at the player's expense. No logo or advertisement may be added to the uniform without approval of the RYSA Traveling Committee. For player safety reasons, names are not to be added to the uniform.

The white uniform jerseys are somewhat "see-through". Therefore, all sports bras worn under these jerseys are to be white in color. Slider shorts are allowed as long as they match the shorts (navy blue). Any visible portion of the uniform must match throughout the team

Players are required to wear shin guards and appropriate cleats at all practices and games.

TEAM EQUIPMENT

Each team will be provided with a ball bag containing practice balls and two game balls. All players are required to provide their own ball for practices. Each team will also be provided with a set of 'extra' jerseys, cones, pinnies, four corner flags and a first aid kit.

Each head coach will be responsible for the equipment provided and for turning it in at the end of the season. Prompt equipment return is necessary for efficiency in inventory and replacement.

FIELDS

*Due to the danger posed by tipping of unanchored or improperly anchored goals, coaches and players **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to move goals on any fields at any time. Any goals that are found to be unanchored are to be reported to Rochester Park & Recreation immediately.*

Field maintenance will be done in conjunction with Rochester Park and Recreation. RYSA will assign fields for practices and games after consultation with RYSA Recreation Soccer, Rochester Park and Recreation, and the Adult Leagues. Every effort will be made to assign practice fields so that teams of the same age and sex are together to facilitate scrimmages. Coaches wishing other arrangements or extra practice time must contact the RYSA Practice Field Coordinator.

Please help us keep our fields in the best shape possible. **DO NOT** warm up in the goal mouths of game fields. Stay out of the goal mouths of practice fields as much as possible.

ACQUIRING FUNDS

FUND-RAISING AND SPONSORSHIP

As a general rule, all funds received from businesses, individuals, fraternal and social clubs, and so on shall go into the general treasury. However, a team may receive up to a \$1000 sponsor fee per sponsor. Any sponsorship funds received above the \$1000 limit must go into the general RYSA fund. Funds raised by the players/parents work such as car washes, selling candy, and working at refreshment stands shall remain with the team. Earned funds remaining in a team's account at the end of the season should be rebated to the parents. Coaches/teams not complying with the above will be disciplined up to and including expulsion and loss of all support.

FINANCIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- If requested, the Team Treasurer will write checks for the team's tournament entry fees. The team must reimburse the Team Treasurer by June 15. **No other team fees will be paid by the Treasurer.**
- Team pictures will be scheduled. Coaches will receive information on date, time and location.
- Teams pay **District** tournament and referee fees.
- Team pays for the **State** Tournament entry fee.
- The RYSA Traveling Soccer Committee will make available a stipend for coaches who do not have children in the program.
- Non-parent coach out-of-pocket expenses beyond the stipend amount are to be paid from the team treasury.

All payments for coaches or trainers other than the stipend and reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses must get prior approval from the RYSA Director of Coaching to ensure that the payment is consistent with RYSA practices and market conditions.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

A Financial Assistance Fund shall be established to assist those players who may not be able to afford the expenses associated with playing on the traveling team.

This fund shall be established through contributions from parents, businesses, and others and/or through fundraisers.

Applications for a financial assistance shall be made by a player, a coach on behalf of a player or by the player's parent or guardian. Applications shall be made in writing to the RYSA Traveling Soccer Treasurer. The Treasurer shall establish what the player is to receive. These funds may be used for traveling expenses such as registration fees, tournament expenses where players are asked to contribute, and for any other expense associated with the player's financial ability to play on a traveling team. RYSA Traveling Soccer reserves the right to limit the amount to each player based on the funds available. The Financial Aid form for team fees is located available at the RYSA office.

Individual financial assistance applications and awards shall be held in confidence between the player, coach, parent or guardian and RYSA and are based on qualification to the public school free and reduced lunch program.

No financial assistance will be given by RYSA to help cover the costs of coaches/trainers beyond the stipend and out-of-pocket expenses.

RESTRICTIONS AND SAFETY ISSUES

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Single game suspensions may be given to players for violation of the player's responsibilities at the discretion of the coach. The Director of Coaching and the Age Group Coordinator must be notified by the head coach of any suspension given.

For repeated violations of the player's responsibilities, a player may be suspended for more than one game. The coach must immediately inform the Traveling Soccer Chair in writing as to the reasons and duration of an extended suspension. Multiple game suspensions may be appealed to the RYSA Traveling Soccer Committee.

If a player's behavior threatens the welfare of the team or the coaching staff's ability to fulfill their role, the player may be placed on "probation" for a period of time. (Only the player, head coach, and RYSA Traveling Soccer Committee will be informed of this status.) The "three strike policy" (see below) will be used by the RYSA Travel organization to address behavior issues.

The Three Strike policy:

In any RYSA session or activity the three strike policy will be in place.

Definition of a **strike**: Any behavior that is non-violent and deemed disruptive, in the sole discretion of the head coach, which includes, but is not limited to, name calling, interrupting the coach or otherwise disrupting the flow of the session.

Violent behavior which includes, but is not limited to, hitting, spitting or using foul and abusive language will not be tolerated and shall constitute **all three strikes** upon the occurrence of such behavior.

The coaches shall implement the following procedures upon the occurrence of behavior meeting the aforementioned definitions:

- First strike, player sits out for two minutes
- Second strike, players sits out for 5 minutes
- Third strike, player sits out for rest of session and is suspended for one additional session.

If a player receives three strikes in one session or six strikes collectively within any three-week period during the season, the parent and the player must make an appointment with the RYSA Director of Coaching (or designee) within 48 hours. Until this meeting has occurred, the player shall not be allowed to participate in either practices or games with the team.

At this meeting the consequence for the behavior will be discussed by all concerned. The RYSA Director of Coaching and the Age Group Coordinator will have the discretion in setting the consequence which shall include probation or suspension from practices or games and can even include asking the player to leave the Club if warranted. The outcome of this meeting will be immediately communicated to the RYSA Traveling Soccer Committee. No refunds of fees paid will be given under these circumstances. Dismissal from the club may be appealed to the RYSA Traveling Soccer Committee.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Grievance Committee shall consist of the Chair, Master Coordinator and one Coordinator of the Opposite Gender as selected by the chair.

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a mechanism for resolving any RYSA policy, rule, or procedure violations. It is required that the parties involved attempt to resolve the conflict themselves before resorting to this procedure.

Grievances must be submitted in writing, using the RYSA Grievance form, to the RYSA Traveling Soccer Chair. The Chair may make a temporary ruling on the grievance prior to a decision by the Grievance Committee. This should only be in cases when the Grievance Committee cannot meet within 10 calendar days from submission of the grievance.

RYSA POLICY ON DANGEROUS CONDITIONS

The following guidelines apply to MYSA league games. Tournaments set their own policies – see the individual tournament rules and policies.

FIFA and MYSA rules allow the referee, and only the referee, to decide whether a match is played or is continued/cancelled because of playing conditions. The safety of all is paramount, independent of any cost, inconvenience or advantage due to the replay (or lack thereof) of the match. State and local referee associations instruct referees regarding suspension of play due to dangerous weather (lightning, storm sirens, etc.) and other playing conditions. The referee's decision stands.

In the event that the referee suspends play, RYSA recommends getting all to safety and waiting a brief amount of time (up to 15 minutes) to see if, in the REFEREE'S opinion, conditions improve enough to allow continued play. If play cannot be resumed, the match is ended.

MYSA policy on league games is: A league game is considered complete if play is ended MORE THAN halfway through the second half of the match – according to the REFEREE'S watch. The score at that time is considered the ending game score. If play is ended prior to this point in the game, the match is considered "not played" and must be re-played from its start at a subsequent time/day/place as agreed upon by the teams' coaches within 48 hours.

If, in the opinion of the coach(s), dangerous conditions (weather or field condition) exist at the game site prior to the start of the match, coaches of the 2 teams are encouraged to come to an agreement whether to play the match or reschedule. The coaches must confer with the referee on this decision. A coach can choose to forfeit or play under protest (inform the referee) if he/she feels that conditions are unsafe. If safety is truly the concern, forfeiting should not be an issue. A legitimate refusal to play is rarely classified as a forfeit.

Practices are generally held as scheduled during rainy conditions. (This can be valuable since a team is likely to play a game or two in the rain during the season.) However, practice will be canceled or cut short if dangerous conditions occur (lightning, dangerous winds, extreme temperature drop, etc.). Parents will be expected to monitor the weather and return to the practice field immediately if dangerous conditions occur.

INSURED PRACTICE AREAS

RYSA liability insurance covers practices at all area soccer fields, schools, public parks, and various other locations. Teams are not to practice on property not covered. For information on this contact the RYSA office.

ANCHORING OF SOCCER GOALS

Unanchored soccer goals are very dangerous to anyone on the field at any time. Each team should appoint an assistant coach or parent who is responsible to check both goals on any field of play before each game or practice. Make this an automatic start to any game or practice. Do not play or practice on any field where the goals are not anchored. Report any unanchored goals to the referee in a game situation (home or away) and report any unanchored practice field goals to the Rochester Park & Recreation at 281-6160 or 281-6164 immediately.

Most accidents with tipping of goals do not happen during soccer activity. These accidents are much more likely when neighborhood kids or younger siblings of players "lay on" goals which are not in use.

Parents: NEVER allow a child to play on any soccer goal! Even an anchored goal will tip under the weight of kids climbing or hanging on it.

PROTECTIVE HEAD GEAR, JEWELRY, EYEGLASSES

There has been much written about the dangers of heading balls by young soccer players. USSF has yet to come to a consensus on this issue. They have taken the following position regarding protective headgear in game situations: Headgear will be viewed as player equipment and the decision to allow or disallow is left to the discretion of the referee at each individual game. In other words, if the referee says “no” - the headgear will not be allowed.

The USSF rules on uniforms and equipment will be enforced. The current version of the law book says that no jewelry may be worn. Even if earrings are taped, they constitute jewelry and still are not safe. It does not matter if the player’s ears were just pierced or if the last referee allowed them.

Metal eyeglass frames are allowed if they are safe in the opinion of the referee. All eyeglasses must be held on by a strap or tape.

RYSA RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

This policy provides requirements and guidelines for Player and Coach protection. All parents and coaches must ensure that the requirements are followed. In addition, they are strongly encouraged to follow the recommendations listed here.

Definitions:

For the purpose of this document, an adult is defined as a person in the role of coach, assistant coach, team manager or volunteer who works with players. This may include an 18-year-old assistant coach on a U16 team.

A player is defined as a person who plays on a soccer team.

Requirements:

1. All people actively involved in working with the players must be registered with RYSA. This includes coaches, team managers, older sibling assistants, etc.
2. All registered adults must sign an MYSA Informed Consent/Disclosure Form.
3. There must be at least one registered adult at all team activities.
4. For the coach’s protection, a second adult must be present at all team activities.
5. When dropping off their child, parents must remain until a second adult arrives.
6. When picking up their child, parents must remain until the next child’s parent arrives. If a child is forgotten, the second to the last parent makes transport arrangements.
7. Teams are not to place the player’s name on the uniform.
8. Any incidents of “suspicious strangers” loitering at a team’s practice must be reported to the RYSA office. This is to coordinate reports of such activity at particular venues.
9. Sexual contact of any kind or type is prohibited between adults and players, whether or not contact is consensual.

10. Any “accidents” must be documented and reported to the RYSA office. This includes any situation where a player is taken for medical attention, even if this is not done immediately. For traveling teams, the team manager or coach must document this for the opponent’s team in the event a non-Rochester player was injured. This reporting is needed to ensure the required information is available for any possible insurance claims filed at a later date. (This can sometimes occur years later.)
11. Any head injury resulting in disorientation of the player (no matter how briefly) requires the player to remain out of that game. There are no exceptions!

Recommendations:

1. Parents and coaches are encouraged to talk to any non-team adults watching practices etc. (Predators tend to get nervous and seek other prey when adults pay attention to them.)
2. Adults must be aware that any physical contact with players can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary and appropriate to teach a skill, treat an injury, or console or congratulate a player. Adults must be careful to ensure they do not use contact which could be construed as placing them in a position of intimidation; i.e., physically moving a player into a position on the field by grabbing the back of their neck.
3. Transported players (other than their own children) should not be in the front seat.

Risk management is a second line of protection for children. As a parent, you must be the first line.

MYSA’s Player Protection Program; visit the MYSA website at www.minnyouthsoccer.org.

MYSA ACCIDENT MEDICAL EXPENSE BENEFITS AND ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT BENEFITS

As a registered RYSA player, there is supplemental insurance coverage for injuries or death during MYSA sponsored activities. Please refer to the MYSA Website at <http://www.mnyouthsoccer.org/about/insurance.cfm> for more complete details on this insurance coverage. All injuries that occur at practice or games must be reported to the RYSA office ASAP. MYSA must be notified within 30 days of any injury for coverage.