



Soccer Association of Montgomery Recreational Rules of Play Maryland SoccerPlex Rules & Conduct Policy

All SAM rules herein are final. Questions or concerns may be brought to the attention of the league commissioner by a team official (head coach, assistant coach or team manager). Parental concerns should be sent to the league through the team coach or manager.

All SAM participants shall practice good sportsmanship, fair play, safety and sound fundamentals at all practices and games.

The SAM TEAM reserves the right to remove any coach, player or team whose conduct is considered detrimental to the best interest of SAM and the teams within the league.

***SAM rules are based on FIFA Laws of the Game with modifications.
Modifications are specified below.***

Injuries

Please call the athletic trainer to help assist with any injuries. Number is 240-801-2006

Playing Time

All players are required to play a minimum of 50% of every game. It is recommended that no player play more than 50% of the game as a goalkeeper.

Lopsided Rule

When a team reaches a five goal (5) lead the leading team must remove one player. When the lead drops below five goals (5), the leading team may put a player back on the field.

Equipment & Uniforms

All players must wear the SAM issued uniforms and also have shin guards under their soccer socks. Cleats are recommended, but not required. Metal cleats are not permitted.

Jerseys should be tucked in at all times.

Safety eyewear is mandatory for those players requiring prescription lenses.

All jewelry, including pierced earrings, must be removed, (no rings, bracelets, necklaces, etc.).

- Earrings need to be fully removed prior to the start of the game. Covering them with tape or a Band-Aid is not permitted.

Long hair may be tied back. Hard clips and accessories are not permitted.

Field Equipment

All equipment is to be left as it is set-up. Goals are not to be moved, laid-down or stood upright. If you feel there is a problem with the positioning of a goal, please contact SAM Soccer at 301-528-1480 and someone will verify the positioning and move the goals if required.

Rosters & Age Divisions

Players are not permitted to play on two (2) SAM teams within the same age group in the same season. Players are not permitted to “play-up” more than one age group. (*Extenuating circumstances that would result in an exception to this rule may only occur with approval from the league administrator. See appendix B for the Request for Exemption for Player to Play Up Two Years form*). Players are not permitted to “play down”.

Coaches are not to recruit players from other teams. They are also not to add/drop players from their team without permission of the league administrator. All rosters are created by SAM, not coaches.

All age verification must be done before the season starts so rosters are accurate.

Minimum Number of Players

Teams must be ready to play at the scheduled kickoff time. The minimum number of players required to play is listed below in the age-specific rules. If teams do not have the minimum number of players, they will be granted a ten (10) minute grace period. If the minimum number of players is not present after the grace period, that team will forfeit the match. For Under 8, Under 9, and Under 10 age groups, the minimum number of players to start the game shall be five (5). For all other age groups, the minimum number of players shall be seven (7).

Carded Players or Unregistered/Illegal Players on Teams

Players possessing a player card for playing in a travel league (MSYSA, US Club Soccer, MSI Classic, MSI Travel or SAM SELECT) are considered travel players and are not permitted to play on SAM recreational teams.

Teams using a carded or unregistered player will forfeit all games in which that player participated. Additionally, carded players will be removed from the roster.

In addition to forfeiting the game, other sanctions for the use of carded or illegal players may be the deduction of standings points, suspensions or removal from the league.

Sanctioning – Players

If a player receives a red card, he/she may not participate in the team’s next game but MAY attend the next game as long as he/she is not in uniform or other team wear. After the sit out game, the team must complete the Red Card Sit Out Form (see Appendix A) and submit to the league within 48 hours of the completion of the game. Failure to do so may result in a minimum of one additional sit out for the player or his/her coach.

Sanctioning – Coaches and/or Spectators

Coaches are responsible for their players and parents/spectators and may be issued a red or yellow card in the event the team’s spectators behavior is unacceptable and can’t be controlled in the eyes of the referee.

Referees are authorized to warn coaches using a yellow card for the first warning and issue a red card if the warning is not adhered to. Failure to follow the referee’s direction may result in forfeiture of the game and potential disciplinary action from SAM Soccer. If a coach receives a red card, they will be ejected from the game and will not be permitted to attend the next scheduled game at a minimum. Coaches who receive a red card must immediately leave the field and sit in their car and/or leave the complex and may not return to the field after the completion of the game.

Spectators might be shown red or yellow cards. In instances when they are asked to leave the field by a referee, it constitutes a red card offense regardless of whether one is actually shown. If a spectator is removed from the game, they must immediately leave the field and sit in their car and/or leave the complex and may not return to the field after the completion of the game. If a spectator receives a red card, they may not attend the team’s next game.

If a coach or spectator receives a red card, he/she may not attend the team’s next game. After the sit out game, the team must complete the Red Card Sit Out Form (see Appendix A) and submit to the league within 48 hours of the completion of the game. Failure to do so may result in a minimum of one additional sit out for the player or his/her coach. Sit Out Forms must be completed for coaches, players, or spectators if an ejection has occurred.

Team Sportsmanship Liaison (new for Fall 2018)

At each game, all U8 and older SAM teams will be required to designate one person from their team to be the Team Sportsmanship Liaison (TSL). We are confident that many difficult issues that arise at SAM games can be avoided if each team designates one adult from their team to fulfill the role of TSL.

Role of the TSL

- Prior to each game the TSL from both teams should identify themselves to each other and to the referee. We suggest that the TSLs accompany the team captains to the center circle at the beginning of the match to meet with the referee. **THE REFEREE SHOULD NOT START THE MATCH UNTIL BOTH TSLs HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED.**
- The TSLs should discuss with the referee and coaches what role the TSL will take in the event the sidelines begin to negatively impact the match or the referee's ability to do his/her job, including:
 - Ensure the team spectators/parents remain in the area of the field designated for spectators.
 - Be the "cooler head" should sideline behavior become extreme.
 - Be the first point of contact should the referee feel he/she needs help due to inappropriate sideline behavior.
- TSLs should promote a "positive" sideline atmosphere for both players and spectators, and discourage the use of negative comments directed at players, coaches, or referees, or sideline jokes or humor that may not be appropriate in a public or group setting.
- If sideline behavior results in a SAM Code of Conduct or Rules and Discipline (R&D) hearing, the TSL may be asked to participate.
- The TSL does not need to be the same individual at every game but should always be someone who takes the responsibility seriously and who is not afraid to address poor behavior by a fellow team parent.
- It's important that the TSL be present on the parent's sideline so it should not be the coach or manager.
- TSLs are responsible for addressing inappropriate behavior for their OWN TEAM ONLY. They are not to address the opposing team's behavior.

Referees

Referees are scheduled for every game U8 and above. If the referee does not arrive at the scheduled start time, the game may be played with volunteer referees agreed upon by the coaches. Referee "no shows" must be reported to the SAM Soccer Program Manager by the team coaches so appropriate action can be taken with the referee assigning association.

Games & Practices

Teams cannot play their games or hold a practice unless a "SAM-approved" coach or assistant coach is present. "SAM-approved" coaches, assistant coaches and volunteers **MUST** have completed a background check and concussion test by the August or March coaches' meetings each year. All team activities must be supervised by at least two adults.

Benches & Spectators

Only players/coaches may occupy the provided benches.

No coaches or spectators are allowed on the field or behind the goal line during the game with the exception of when injuries occur and the referee has given permission. Coaches must remain between the top of the penalty areas while on the sidelines. Coaches and spectators must stay on their team's half of the field until the completion of the game. Coaches cannot cross the half line to coach their team even when the teams have switched sides.

All spectators must stand/sit completely off the field and, on natural grass fields, in the taller grass to limit damage to the fields. For full-sided games and small sided games on synthetic fields, spectators are to be on opposite side of the field from the players/coaches. For small-sided games natural grass fields, spectators must sit behind the teams.

Kick-Offs

The ball does not have to go forwards any more. The ball can go directly backwards from kick off.

Throw-Ins

U6/U7 teams can either make throw-ins or play with kick-ins. In U8 and above age groups, throw-ins will be used. The referee will make the determination if the throw-in is legal. Both feet must be on the ground and the ball must be thrown from behind the head with both hands.

Goal Kicks

For U6 and U7 games, there are no goal kicks. For U8, U9 and U10 games, all players must stand behind the build out line when goalkeeper distributes the ball. U11 and above, goal kicks are taken from the 6 yard box.

Build Out Lines

These lines allow for goalkeepers to pass, throw or roll the ball out from the defensive third of the field to his/her teammate. **NO PUNTING OR DROP KICKS ARE ALLOWED.** The opponent must retreat back behind the build out line. Once the ball leaves the goalkeepers hands, the opponent may then pressure the ball once again. Play resumes as normal. Build out lines will be used for the U8, U9, and U10 divisions.

PLAYERS CANNOT BE PENALIZED FOR AN OFFSIDE OFFENSE BETWEEN THE HALFWAY LINE AND THE BUILD OUT LINE, PLAYERS CAN BE PENALIZED FOR AN OFFSIDE OFFENSE BETWEEN THE BUILD OUT LINE AND THE GOAL LINE

Heading

No heading is allowed for players playing in the 11U and below age groups. *In adherence to these new [youth header] requirements, referees have been instructed by U.S. Soccer of the following rule addition:* When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate *header* occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

Noise Makers

Noise makers, including air horns, are not allowed at games.

Lightning Detection and How It Works

The Maryland SoccerPlex is equipped with a lightning detection system. The purpose of this system is to protect patrons using the facility when dangerous storms pass through.

Sensors have been installed on the roof of the Discovery Sports Center. When dangerous conditions exist, the following steps will take place:

- Horns on the roof will sound for 15 seconds
- The 15-second blast indicates ALL patrons must immediately go to their cars
- This 15-second horn will blast when dangerous conditions have been identified, even if you do not see lightning, do not ignore this signal
- When dangerous conditions no longer exist, the horns will blast three (3) shorter blasts.

What to do When the Lightning Alarm Sounds

- Immediately leave the field and go to your car or the Discovery Sports Center
- DO NOT LEAVE THE COMPLEX
- Wait for the all clear signal (3 blasts of the horn)
- Once the all clear signal sounds, go back to the field and resume the match where you left off
- Games should be played in full (do not end early so that the next match can start on time)

The Maryland SoccerPlex Operations staff continually stays up to date with weather forecasts and radar information. If it appears that the weather will not clear and games cannot resume, the facility will close. Closure information will be posted on the SAM homepage, www.samsoccer.org and the SoccerPlex Weather Hotline, 301-528-1497.

Weather Cancellations

If a game is cancelled part-way through due to weather, use the following procedures:

- Games cancelled before half-time will be rescheduled at a time to be determined. The game will be replayed in full.
- Games cancelled during or after halftime are considered complete. The score at that time will stand.

Age-Specific Exceptions

Where age divisions are combined, the rules of the older age division will be applied. (For example, a combined U11/12 age division will follow the U12 rules.)

U6 & U7: Play at this level is very instructional. Emphasis is placed on developing basic skills, including: running, balance, positioning, rules, and ball control. Ball control skills include dribbling, passing and shooting with an emphasis on using both feet. The reduced number of players will allow for better instruction. Scores are not maintained and participation awards are given to all players.

- The number of players on the field per team is four (4).
- Roster maximum is twelve (12) players.
- Games consist of eight (8) minute quarters with three (3) minute breaks between quarters and a five (5) minute break at half time.
- There are no slide tackles; off sides and direct kicks.
- Substitutions are “on-the-fly” and are not to disrupt the flow of the game (no time outs).
- Ball size #3.
- No Heading

U8, U9 & U10: Play at this level continues to be developmental with the addition of referees in preparation for the next level. Comfort using all parts of both feet will be developed. Additional skills of shielding, turning, attacking, and play formation will also be taught. As appropriate, more advanced skills can be introduced. Scores and standings are maintained AND only champions will receive trophies. U8 players receive participation medals only.

- The number of players on the field per team is seven (7). Minimum number of players to start game is five (5).
- Roster maximum is twelve (12) players.
- Game consists of two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves and a ten (10) minute break at half time.
- The offside rule is enforced.
- Substitutions are following FIFA guidelines; enter at middle of field at stop of play.
- There will be build out lines.
- There are **no slide tackles** or direct kicks. Fouls within the penalty box result in indirect kicks only.
- The winning team coach/manager (listed first on the schedule) must report scores to SAM Soccer by emailing scores@samsoccer.org. **Scores must be reported by noon on the Monday following the game (U9 and U10 only).**
- NO U8 SCORES ARE KEPT.
- Ball size: #4.
- No Heading

U11 & U12: Play at this level continues to be instructional, and is preparing players for the full game. Comfort using all parts of both feet will be developed. Additional skills of shielding, turning, attacking, and play formation will

also be taught. As appropriate, more advanced skills can be introduced. Scores and standings *are* maintained and awards are given to division champions only.

- The number of players on the field per team is nine (9). The minimum number to start the game is seven (7).
- Roster maximum is fourteen (16) players.
- Game consists of two (2) thirty (30) minute halves and a ten (10) minute break at half time.
- The offside rule is enforced.
- Substitutions are following FIFA guidelines; enter at middle of field at stop of play.
- No heading at U11
- There are: **no slide tackles.**
- **Direct kicks and penalty kicks are allowed.**
- The HOME team coach/manager (listed first on the schedule) must report scores to SAM Soccer by emailing scores@samsoccer.org. **Scores must be reported by noon on the Monday following the game.**
- Ball size: #4.

U13 & U14: Play at this level is more competitive, 11 v 11 and is governed by FIFA rules with SAM modifications. Scores and standings *are* maintained and awards are given to the first place team.

- The number of players on the field per team is eleven (11).
- The minimum number of players to start a match is seven (7).
- Roster maximum is eighteen (18).
- Substitutions are following FIFA guidelines; enter at middle of field at stop of play.
- Game length is thirty five (35) minute halves and a ten (10) minute break at halftime.
- Ball size: #5
- Scores and standings *are* maintained and awards are given to the first place team.
- The HOME team coach (listed first on the schedule) must report scores to SAM Soccer by emailing scores@samsoccer.org. **Scores must be reported by noon on the Monday following the game.**

U15 & HS: Play at this level is at the highest competitive level governed by FIFA rules with SAM modifications. Scores and standings *are* maintained and awards are given to the first place team.

- The number of players on the field is eleven (11).
- The minimum number of players to start a match is seven (7).
- Roster maximum is twenty two (22).
- Substitutions are following FIFA guidelines; enter at middle of field at stop of play.
- Games consist of two forty (40) minute halves with a ten (10) minute halftime.
- Ball size: #5
- Players who are 19 years old, or older, as of July 31 of the current seasonal year are ineligible. Players who are not in high school are ineligible.
- The HOME team coach (listed first on the schedule) must report scores to SAM Soccer by emailing scores@samsoccer.org. **Scores must be reported by noon on the Monday following the game.**

Maryland SoccerPlex Rules & Conduct Policy

The Maryland SoccerPlex & Discovery Sports Center is a state-of-the art multi-sport athletic facility and we expect all players, coaches and visitors to treat it with respect. **This is your home as much as ours.** Any person(s) found defacing, destroying or damaging Maryland SoccerPlex & Discovery Sports Center property will be asked to leave immediately. They will be suspended from further play if circumstances warrant, without a refund. The Maryland SoccerPlex, Discovery Sports Center and SAM Soccer also reserves the right to require any player, coach, team, or visitor who engages in violent, abusive, threatening or offensive conduct to leave the premises. They will be suspended from further play if circumstances warrant, without refund. This type of behavior will NOT be tolerated.

For Natural Grass Fields:

1. No warming up in the goal area.
2. No warming up or playing on closed fields.
3. Park only in designated spaces.
4. Deposit all trash in garbage cans provided (and recycling in the blue recycling cans).
5. **NO PETS** allowed.
6. All tobacco products prohibited.
7. No alcohol.

For Synthetic Turf Fields:

1. No spitting on fields.
2. No warming up or playing on closed fields.
3. All food is prohibited.
4. Park only in designated spaces.
5. Deposit all trash in garbage cans provided.
6. No gum chewing.
7. All tobacco products prohibited.
8. No alcohol.
9. **NO PETS** allowed.
10. No tents with spikes.

SAM Soccer Code of Conduct

SAM Soccer is an enjoyable experience for all members of the community. We as an organization want you and others to follow our guidelines and procedures.

1. I will remember that children participate to have fun.
2. I will remember the game is for my child/children and not for me.
3. I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
4. I (and my guests) will be role model (s) for my child and show sportsmanship.
5. I promise to encourage my child and others in a positive manner.
6. I will show respect to the referees, the other team and parents before, during and after the game.
7. I will not use bad or inappropriate language, including racial slurs and/or abusive language.
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules and not engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct.
9. I will teach my child that doing his/her best is more important than winning.
10. I will praise my child for effort and not ridicule or yell from the sideline or in the car on the way home.
11. I will refrain from coaching my child (or others) from the sidelines unless as a designated coach.

Finally, I also agree by participating in SAM that if I fail to abide by these aforementioned rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action that will be decided upon by the SAM soccer committee.

Appendix A



SAM Soccer Sit Out Form

For each sit out required of a player or coach, the team coach or manager must print this form, fill in the information requested, present it to the opposing coach or manager for his/her signature at the following game, and mail, email, fax or deliver it to the SAM office within 48 hours of the completion of the game. Failure to submit a sit-out form on time may result in referral to the SAM League for possible further action.

This is to certify the following sit-out:

Red-Carded Player/Coach/Spectator Name _____

Team _____

Rec or Select (circle)

Age Group _____

Jersey Number (player) _____

Date sit-out served _____

This sit-out is in response to: (circle one only)

1. Red Card Ejection on _____ (date) at _____ (field)

2. League Rules & Discipline Action

Signature of Sit Out Team Coach/Manager

Printed Name

Signature of Opposing Team Coach/Manager

Printed Name

Note: Do not give this form to the referee. Please retain a copy and return to SAM within 48 hours of the sit-out. Form can be emailed to msfforms@mdsoccerplex.org or faxed to 301.540.4276.