

# Coach Handbook



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## AYSO PHILOSOPHIES:

- Everyone Plays
- Open Registration
- Balanced Teams
- Positive Coaching
- Good Sportsmanship

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- latest San Mateo AYSO news
- review game schedules
- check Referee schedules
- keep up on league

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## Welcome

Welcome to San Mateo AYSO soccer.

This Coach Handbook was developed to help new coaches organize and run their team. It is intended as a guide, a primer, a small introductory book on coaching. We hope that you find this handbook to be useful.

The Regional Guidelines is the official policy document for AYSO soccer in San Mateo. It is published each year and is included in your coach's packet. Throughout this handbook, you will find notes referring to specific sections of The Guidelines. Where conflicts in tradition or policy appear to exist, be aware that the language of this handbook is deliberately less exact and that you may always refer back to The Guidelines for the Region's policy.

## Before you start...

### Getting your Practice Field

San Mateo AYSO receives permits for a very limited number of practice fields and time slots. Permitted fields will be assigned to Divisions U8 through U14 on a best effort basis. Teams unable to secure a field are encouraged to make use of open space in the city's non-permitted parks and schools.

Signup for practice fields occurred at the coaches' meeting when you received your team information and supplies.

Due to the limited number of practice fields available, your cooperation and flexibility in the sharing of practice space is required. Please note that High School athletic programs have priority in the use of High School fields. Please do not attempt to remove a school athletic function from your assigned field even if you do have an AYSO use permit. In most cases, school coaches will accommodate your use of a small portion of the field if politely asked.

Practice may not start until the "Practice Begins" date in this season's calendar.

For any questions regarding practice field assignment, coaches may call Field Director or your Division Coordinator. See the *Regional Guidelines, "Regional Board"* for contact information. You will find the first practice date in the online calendar at [www.aysosm.org](http://www.aysosm.org) or call your Division Coordinator.

## Ok, I Have A Team; Now What?

Included in your packet are a computer printout roster and the players' registration and medical release forms. **Look over the registration forms to verify that they match the roster.** Next, check the player gender and birth dates to ensure they've been assigned to the proper playing division. The *Regional Guidelines, "The AYSO Team – Team Assignments"* contains updated birth date ranges for your division.

If there are any problems with your team or the medical release forms that you received, call your Division Coordinator immediately.

### Call your players!

Contact all of your players and schedule your team meeting. The team meeting is where most coaches make contact with their players, introduce themselves, and advise them of the logistics of the upcoming season.

You will probably want to host your team meeting prior to the first day of practice allowed. Even if your preferred meeting date seems far in the future, call the players now to confirm their interest in playing soccer and to let them know that they have a coach.

The information on the medical release form is all of the information we were provided with. If you cannot contact a player, try calling the parents work numbers, the emergency contacts, using directory assistance or driving by their house. Telephone numbers change and players have been known to move.

If a problem is identified, contact your Division Coordinator. If the player has vanished, or indicated that she/he no longer wishes to play AYSO soccer, then your Coordinator will add a player to your team from the waiting list.

## The Team Meeting

The team meeting is your best opportunity to enlist the support and participation of the parents and players of your new team.

Most coaches use this time to discuss the upcoming season, and share their philosophies, rules and expectations.

Some coaches prefer that only parents attend, while most others welcome players and even their siblings and may even conduct a short

practice session after the meeting. Often the first part of the meeting will be for both players and parents followed by a period with the parents alone while the players and an assigned adult to select uniforms and choose a team name.

The key to a successful team meeting is to plan the details of your meeting before deciding upon a location and contacting parents. To assist you with this, we've identified the topics most important to cover during a team meeting and incorporated them into the following sample agenda. Additional details on these agenda items follow.

### **Sample Meeting Agenda**

- Introductions
- Talk about Spirit & philosophy of AYSO
- Hand out Parent Information Packet
- Player equipment requirements
- Select parent volunteers
- Yearbook publication & cover contest (encourage participation)
- Picture day & Action Photos
- Recruit team sponsor
- Sportsmanship program
- Practices
- Games
- Injuries & soccer accident insurance
- Participant feedback survey
- Team attendance of Earthquakes or CyberRays professional, or Stanford University or Santa Clara University soccer games

### The Spirit & Philosophy of AYSO

The AYSO philosophy, which is critical to the success of our program, stresses

- open registration
- balanced teams
- positive coaching
- everyone plays
- good sportsmanship

It is our goal in San Mateo AYSO to make this an enjoyable, positive learning experience for all players and their families, and to develop our youth in body and character with a program rich in soccer skills development, competition, fair play and sportsmanship.

### Hand Out Parent Information Packet

Make copies of handouts to be distributed to parents at your team meeting. Here is a list of some of the items that you will want to distribute:

- Team roster including phone numbers
- Game schedule
- Picture day flier
- Yearbook cover art contest flier
- Sponsorship form

You should make two additional copies of the originals of your medical release forms and have parents sign the copies at the meeting (the hospitals may not accept a photocopied signature). That way, you can retain the originals and give the signed copy to your assistant as a backup. More will be discussed about this requirement later.

### Player Equipment Requirements & Uniform Distribution

Included in the registration fee is the cost of the uniform for each player. This includes a jersey, shorts and socks. You'll undoubtedly distribute these at your team meeting. Be sure, though, to assess the size requirements of your players before handing out uniforms. If the sizes just don't work for your team, contact the Equipment Manager and arrange for an exchange.

Be sure to make parents aware that players must provide their own shin guards and soccer ball. Divisions U19 - U14 use a Size 5 ball; Divisions U12 - U10 use a Size 4 ball; and Divisions U8 - U6 use a Size 3 ball.

Soccer shoes, while not required, are highly recommended. Baseball or softball cleats (shoes with a "toe cleat") cannot be worn.

### Select Parent Volunteers

As you'll discover, coaching a soccer team can be a demanding and time consuming exercise. Usually, you'll have little difficulty recruiting volunteers to lend a hand. If you find yourself facing a lot of blank stares when requesting volunteers, however, don't hesitate to be a little demanding of your parents. AYSO is an all-volunteer organization, and parents need to realize that they have an obligation to contribute in order to make AYSO positive experience for their children.

Choice of volunteer positions is left up to the coach. Most coaches are looking for a Team Referee (U6 and U8 divisions only), a Team Parent, and a Banner maker(s) to assist the team.

**Team Referees.** In the U6 and U8 divisions, each team is required to have two trained team parent referees. Contact the Division Coordinator, the Referee Administrator, or visit the online calendar at [www.aysosm.org](http://www.aysosm.org) for upcoming training opportunities.

**Team parent.** The team parent is an invaluable resource that can assist you by establishing snack schedules, coordinating picture day activities, overseeing banner construction, scheduling the end-of-year party and performing a host of other duties not specifically coaching related. A Team Parent Handbook was included in your Coach's Packet. This should be delivered to your Team Parent.

**Banner makers.** Prominent on the sidelines of every San Mateo AYSO field on game day, the team banner embodies the team spirit, identity and creativity of the players, parents and coaches it represents. While banners are not a requirement, most teams will have one – especially in the younger divisions.

Team banners are usually handcrafted by parent volunteers. Some coaches, however, empower their players with banner making and leverage it as an opportunity to build teamwork and camaraderie. Other teams elect for commercially made banners, which are available in 3-5 working days for less than \$100. Organizations to contact for banners include:

- Kickers Soccer Shop – 650-593-4924 – 578 El Camino Real, Belmont
- Banners USA – 800-804-3777 – [www.bannersusa.com](http://www.bannersusa.com)
- Signastic – 650-574-8184

### Banner Contest

Each team banner is entered in the annual banner contest. See the Regional Guidelines, "Banner Contest" for the banner contest rules. Remember that commercially manufactured banners are not eligible for the contest.

### Yearbook Publication & Cover Contest

Yearbooks are included in the cost of the player registration fees. Yearbooks are available toward the end of the season and are distributed by the coach or team parent.

A contest will be held to select the cover art for this season's yearbook. The winning picture is also used on tournament t-shirts and pins. Please encourage your players to put their artistic talents to work in creating a design. Handouts of the contest rules have been included in your

coach's packet. Be sure to insert a copy in your handouts to parents.

### **Picture Day**

A Picture day Flyer and Schedule is included in the Coaches' Packet. The location and time for the team and individual pictures is listed on the schedule. Please have the team arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the team's scheduled time. Coaches are to pick up team photo envelopes from the picture day tent upon arrival.

**Make up session.** A make up day for **individuals** is described on the Picture Day Schedule. Pictures will be on a first come first served basis only. Again, the make up session is for individual photo only – no team photos.

**Photo package.** A basic photo package is included in the cost of player registration.

Head Coaches will receive one 5x7 photo with their child.

Additional photo packages are available for purchase. Order forms and envelopes will be available on picture day. A check will be needed for families who wish to place orders for additional packages, so make sure parents bring their checkbooks!

### **Other Photographs**

San Mateo AYSO authorizes a sports photographer to photograph teams during games. These photographs are offered for sale to parents at the game fields 1 or 2 weeks following the game. These pictures are not included in the registration fee and participation is optional. See Regional Guidelines, "Pictures" for additional information.

### **Find a Team Sponsor**

It is very important that all teams find a team sponsor. The sponsor participation amount is \$200 per team which represents contributes 15% of the Region's budget. Sponsors receive a commemorative plaque and are recognized on the team banner and in Regional publications.

A sponsorship form has been included in your Coach's Packet and should be provided to your sponsor. A copy of the form can also be printed from the Region's website at [www.aysosm.org](http://www.aysosm.org). Additional information is found on the form.

## Practices

At your team meeting, you'll want to provide your parents with a few details about practices. The following are a few of the points you'll most likely want to cover:

- When and where the practices will be.
- Stress how important it is that players attend practices, and that they arrive on time.
- Players must wear shinguards to participate in practices.
- Soccer shoes, while not required are highly recommended.
- Players are not allowed to wear earrings, necklaces, watches, sharp hair clips or any other jewelry during practices. It is the coach's responsibility to enforce this.
- Players should bring a soccer ball and a water bottle to every practice.
- If you're interested in having parents assist in your coordination of practices, let them know what type of help you need and ask for volunteers.
- Two adults must be present at all practices (the coach and assistant coach satisfy this requirement). At least one adult of the same gender as the players is required at all times.
- Describe how you will deal with players who are not picked up from practices on time.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that arrangements have been made for getting players safely home after practices. The parent must notify you in advance of arrangements for pickup by someone other than themselves.

## Games

During your meeting, you'll want to provide information relating to game day. Here's a few of the points you'll want to cover:

- Handout and review the game schedule and location of games.
- Describe a typical game day.
- Stress how important it is for players to attend games (that's what this program is all about!). Ask that they notify you in advance if their child will be unable to attend a game.
- Discuss the arrival time for games and how having players arrive

late impacts your lineup, the pre-game warm up period and, potentially, the players' amount of game playtime.

- Review the dress requirements for game day. Players will not be allowed to play unless properly dressed.
- Setting appropriate expectations for parent-spectator conduct is an important discussion to have at your team meeting.
- Stress the importance of **positive and encouraging** cheers for the team. Comments should put down their children, his/her teammates, or the other team.
- Make sure that your parents are aware that, like you, the referees are volunteers. Challenging the calls or shouting derogatory remarks serves no useful purpose and may lose the team sportsmanship points, and may ultimately disqualify the team for post-season tournament play.
- Ask parents to leave the coaching to you unless otherwise requested. Parents and spectators coaching by sideline confuse and frustrate players. Your role as the coach is to provide training and direction to the players.
- Coaching is limited to 10 yards from the centerline. (This includes coaching by parents and spectators.)
- Parents and coaches must remain at least 1 yard behind the touchline. This is for player and spectator safety and to provide Assistant Referees unobstructed view of the touchline. Let your parents also know that spectators are not allowed at the ends of the field beyond the goal line or behind the goal area.
- Snacks are customary and are typically provided on a rotational basis by parents. The Team Parent will coordinate the schedule.
  - Players should bring their own water bottles for use at half time.
  - Orange slices or similarly healthy snack are recommended for half time.
  - Snacks and drinks typically follow a game. Just about anything goes here (ask your child!).
- Everyone is asked to park properly. Improperly or illegally parked cars are subject to ticketing and/or towing and could cost us field use privileges.
- Soccer games are played in "rain and shine", and unless advised of a game cancellation, they should plan on playing. Tell them of what the process of notifying them will be should a game be

cancelled.

- For Divisions U10 and older – describe the post-season tournament.

## Team Equipment

AYSO provides the following equipment: team uniforms, a goalkeeper jersey, soccer balls and a ball bag. To keep track of your team balls, it is a good idea to label them with your team number. Please return all team equipment (except the player uniforms) to your Division Coordinator at the end of the season. Before returning the balls, it would be a big help if you would please deflate them. (It's a real challenge deflating the more than 600 balls returned by the Region's teams!)

You are required to have a medical kit with you at all practices and games. As coach, you are responsible for any required first aid and for insuring that any injured player gets the medical care attention he or she requires. The following list is offered as a suggested medical kit: Band-Aids, antiseptic wipes, ice packs, neutralizing agent (such as hydrogen peroxide), cotton balls and several ice packs.

You may also want to consider investing in additional equipment and instructional aids. Equipment to consider includes: dry erase board with soccer field imprint, collapsible goals, corner flags, cones, scrimmage pinnies, and an air pump to inflate your soccer balls.

## Volunteer Forms and SafeHaven Attendance

All Head and Assistant Coaches are required to complete a Volunteer Form. You should have done this at the time you signed on as a volunteer. Having a Volunteer Form on file with AYSO National ensures that you are protected by AYSO's liability insurance. If you didn't complete a Volunteer Form, contact your Division Coordinator.

Volunteers who work directly with children are also required by AYSO and the City of San Mateo to attend AYSO's Safe Haven child protection class. This includes you as the Coach, and any of your Assistant Coaches. In San Mateo, the SafeHaven class is valid for a period of two years. No volunteer will be allowed to participate in the program without attendance of the required SafeHaven class.

## Player Drops/Adds

In the event a player drops from your team, notify your Division Coordinator immediately. Every attempt will be made to assign a replacement from the registration waiting list.

Do not under any circumstances recruit and fill an opening without the prior agreement of your Division Coordinator. Players on the wait list, if applicable, have priority placement status. Additionally, to maintain competitive balance within the Division, your Division Coordinator will make every attempt to replace your drop with a player of equal skill.

## Practices

Team practice schedules are at the discretion of the coach. The following table is provided for guidance:

- U6 – 1 hour practices 1 time a week.
- U8, U10 – 1-1½ hour practices 1-2 times a week
- U12 – 1½ hour practices 1-2 times a week
- U14 – 1½ hour practices 2-3 times a week

The determination on practice length, frequency, location and start times, is entirely at the discretion and convenience of you, the coach. Practices are often shortened or eliminated when daylight saving ends at the end of October.

## Medical Release Forms

Signed Medical Release Forms must be present at all practices. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS! Should one of your players be injured and require immediate medical attention, having these forms available will help ensure the timely delivery of medical treatment.

Don't make the mistake of forgetting your Forms. Keep one set in your bag and give an extra-signed set to your assistant. That way, you'll always be sure to have at least one set available.

## Inclement Weather

Soccer is generally played rain or shine. AYSO in San Mateo has made certain commitments to the various agencies that provide our practice fields to protect those fields from excessive damage.

During the rainy season, many of these fields become water saturated

and are easily damaged. When this occurs, or when playing conditions in any way endangers the safety of players, practices must be suspended. Extreme caution must be exercised when thunderstorms threaten. While this is an infrequent event in the Bay Area, it does occasionally happen. At the first indication of thunderstorm activity, practices must be suspended and shelter immediately sought.

## Game Day

The coaches' packet contains a copy of your team's game schedule. Ten games are played during the day on Saturday, except in U14 where one or two games are played on Wednesday night under the field lights.

See the *Regional Guidelines, "The Game"* for additional information.

### Pre-game Inspection

Prior to the start of the game, you will be asked by the referee for your completed lineup card and to see of your team's medical release forms. The referee will then inspect the players' uniforms and look for any safety problems. Your assistance in expediting this process will help ensure that game starts on time.

### Uniforms and Dress for Games

See the *Regional Guidelines, "The Uniforms and Equipment"* for information on the uniforms and to view a list of allowed and prohibited items.

- Since your players at some point will forget one or more of these required uniform components, it's a good idea to keep an extra set in your team bag.
- In an emergency, a colored tee-shirt that matches the team's jersey color will usually be accepted by the referee in lieu of the official uniform (for cases of equipment damage or contamination by blood).
- Your goalkeeper must have a keeper's jersey of different color than that of your team uniform, as well as that of your opponent. Therefore, it's a good idea to keep an extra keeper jersey, pinnie or large shirt of a differing color to address any color conflicts that might arise. If needed, a parent is usually wearing a shirt or jacket that can be used as a goalkeeper jersey.

### Medical Release Forms

Signed Medical Release Forms must be present on the field in order for a game to proceed. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS! Should one of your players be injured and require immediate medical attention, having these forms available will help ensure the timely delivery of medical treatment.

Don't run the risk of forfeiting a game. Keep one set in your bag and given an extra-signed set to your assistant. That way, you'll save yourself from the embarrassment of not having the forms at game time.

**The only persons authorized to cancel a game are the referees scheduled for that game or a regional board member.**

### Player Attendance & Participation

Players should be strongly encouraged to attend every game and are entitled to play three-quarters of every full game attended. Players arriving in the first quarter of a scheduled game time are entitled to play at least one-half of the game.

See *Regional Guidelines, "A Word for Players"* for additional information.

### Player Substitution

Approximately halfway through the first and second half of the game, the referee will call for player substitution. Keep track of the game time and have your player substitutions ready prior to the substitution.

The best strategy is to have the substitutes ready at midfield. A well-executed substitution should take no more than 30-45 seconds. Since the referee does not "stop the clock" for substitutions, a speedy substitution gives your players the maximum playing time.

Help the referee team - at the start, the half, and at the end of each quarter, have all players not playing (including those not playing due to injury) stand on the touch line facing away from the field until dismissed by the Assistant Referee.

Keep your team on the field during substitution, preferably where they stopped play.

## Lineup Cards

You are responsible for providing a completed lineup card to the game referee at least 10 minutes prior to game time. It's a good idea to complete your lineup card and substitution plan the night before game day. Please complete your card as indicated below:

**Official Lineup Form**

REGION \_\_\_\_\_ DIV \_\_\_\_\_ TEAM BUIO-05 Team number  
 TEAM NAME BOMBSHELLS Team Name  
 TEAM COLORS BLUE / WHITE Uniform Colors  
 COACH'S NAME JIM SMITH Coach Names  
 ASSISTANT COACH'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

No.	PRINT PLAYERS NAME*	Goals Scored	Otrs. Played			
			1	2	3	4
2	<del>MANAR</del>					
3	BILL JONES					
4	CALVIN HOBBS					
6	MARK JONES					
7	BILL RAGO					
9	TONY SMITH					
10	BRIAN CHING	A	S	E	N	T
11	JON CONWAY					
12	MANNY LACOS					
13	IAN RUSSELL					
14	BRIAN MULLAN					
15	JOSH SAUNDERS					
16	DENISS PALMER					
17	TODD DUNCAN					

\*Indicate: GK - goalkeeper; C - Captain; A - Alternate Captain.  
 All players on roster must be listed; indicate reason for absence.

Date 9/18 Time 10:00 Field \_\_\_\_\_ Game Information  
 Halftime Score \_\_\_\_\_ In Favor Of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Final Score \_\_\_\_\_ Winning Team \_\_\_\_\_  
 Referee must sign reverse side. \_\_\_\_\_ Losing Team \_\_\_\_\_

## Game Conduct

As the coach, you are responsible for the conduct of your coaching staff, players and spectators on game day. Your game referee will look to you to address issues with your players or spectators on your sideline. Failure to resolve these issues may result in the ejection of players from the game, spectators may be asked to leave the field or the game may be terminated altogether.

**STRIKING OR ASSAULTING A REFEREE, ASST. REFEREE, OR OTHER AYSO OFFICIAL WILL RESULT IN A ONE-YEAR**

## SUSPENSION AND IS A FELONY UNDER CALIFORNIA STATE LAW.

### Spectators

Every attempt should be made to prevent issues from occurring by setting expectations with your parents early in the season. Issues that subsequently arise should be dealt with in a decisive manner. Should your spectators get out of hand on the field, don't hesitate to request assistance from the game Referee. Should problems with particular parent-spectators persist, contact your Division Coordinator for assistance in dealing with problem parent-spectators.

- In the event of player injury on the field, you and your parents are to remain on the sideline unless the Referee requests that you enter the field.
- You are responsible for the behavior of spectators on your sideline. The referee may ask you to address inappropriate spectator behavior if it is unsporting or is disruptive to the game. The referee may also terminate a game due to inappropriate behavior by spectators.
- The usual half-time refreshments often come with peels, wrappers or containers. We ask your spectators' help in keeping the fields neat and clean by disposing of the peels and all other trash properly. The City and Schools provide use of the fields at a very reasonable cost. Let's support them also by cleaning up after ourselves.

### Players

The referee will deal with players whose conduct is not consistent with the laws. The referee may talk to the player alone or with the coach, or may ask that the coach excuse the player for the duration of the game. In the more serious cases or if the problem persists, the Division Coordinator should be called upon to help evaluate the situation and suggest appropriate actions.

In the U14 division (and in exceptional cases, in the U12 division) the referee will formally Caution or Eject the player (using the Yellow or Red cards if appropriate) as required by the Laws Of The Game. Cautions and Ejections are serious matters, which may result expulsion for the remainder of the season. See the Regional Guidelines, "A Word for Players - Player Suspension / Expulsion" for details.

- Any player bleeding, or with blood on their uniform will be required to leave the field until bleeding has been stopped and cleaned up.

## Coaches

Both on and off the soccer field, you are expected to uphold the philosophies of AYSO and set a positive example for your parents and players.

- Coaching is limited to 10 yards from the centerline. (This includes spectators)
- Referees may not coach while acting as a referee. Referees who are also coaches must cover up their referee uniform when coaching their teams.

## **Referee Enforcement of the Laws**

The AYSO divisions U6 through U14 encompass players from Kindergarten through entering High School. As the players grow and move through the divisions, it is expected that the level of play, coaching, and refereeing will change.

### The youngest players – U6 and U8

At this age, soccer is sometimes called “bunch ball”. The referees in this division are usually Team Parent Referees. Their job is to ensure that the game is played in a manner that is safe, fun, and fair. Their primary responsibilities are to keep the game going, deal with any injuries, break for substitutions, and stop the game when a player starts pushing, kicking, or is otherwise aggressive to another player. These referees need your help – maintain a strong coach-referee-player relationship. At this age, the importance of positive cheers and comments cannot be overstressed.

### The middle years – U10

In the Under 10 league, players have just started discovering their speed and soccer awareness. The referees in this division are often new and are also just developing their soccer awareness, and will be enforcing all of the Laws Of The Game to the best of their ability.

This is a difficult time for a new referee, and it is important that the coach lead by example and not argue with the calls that are being made.

Most fouls are judgment calls (was there excessive force, was he tripped by his opponent or did he trip himself), and the referee is often struggling to apply the laws fairly without interfering with the game. If you have any questions, please wait until after the game to ask him or call the Referee Administrator for your division.

The coach should be aware that in this division, Offside is called starting

with the first game. Additionally, slide tackles have been banned and the referee has been instructed to penalize even the best executed slide tackle. See the Regional Guidelines, “Basic Fouls in Soccer – Minor Fouls”

### The older players – U12 and U14

In these divisions, the referees are usually well trained and have several years of refereeing experience. As a coach, it is tempting to argue or criticize with the refereeing. Please be aware that the referee has a much better view of the play than you do, and what often appears to be inappropriate play from the half-way line appears perfectly legal when seen even with the play.

As a coach, it is important for you to recognize that all the laws of the game will be applied starting with the first game. You can make this a positive learning experience for yourself by avoiding arguing calls with the referee during the game. Instead, discuss the calls made by the referee after the game as a post-game discussion. Remember, a strong coach-referee-spectator relationship must be maintained to ensure games are safe, fair, and fun for the kids!

Game protests are strongly discouraged and will not receive enthusiastic consideration. Information on filing a game protest is found in the Regional Guidelines, “The Game – Game Protests”.

## **End of the Game**

At the final whistle, have your team quickly assemble to do a team cheer and line up at center field to shake hands with the opposing team. Exit the field as quickly as possible so that the teams for the next game may take the field for their pre-game warm-up.

## **Game Cancellations**

Soccer games, as with practices, are typically played rain or shine. Again, however, because of concern over damage to the fields we use and the safety of players when playing conditions become dangerous, games are subject to cancellation or termination.

To obtain updated information on game cancellations, call 341-4112.

**The only persons authorized to cancel a game are the referees scheduled for that game or a regional board member.**

## Team Standings

Team standings in will be based on the following games:

U14, U12	All regular season games
U10	Standings are based on the last 3 regularly scheduled games
U8, U6	No standings are kept

See *Regional Guidelines, "The Game – Standings"* for a description of game points and team standings. Division standings are calculated weekly and posted to the Region's web site at [www.aysosm.org](http://www.aysosm.org).

## Sportsmanship Program

The purpose of the Sportsmanship program is to build character through soccer. The principles of safety, fair play, and enjoyment are the key points of the program. The key idea is RESPECT...respect for the participants, officials, coaches, spectators and for the game.

San Mateo AYSO uses a sportsmanship program designed to promote positive sportsmanship in the U10, U12 and U14 Divisions through the consistent, objective awarding of sportsmanship points by referees during regular season and tournament play.

For additional information, see the *Regional Guidelines, "Sportsmanship Program"*.

Of special note are the deductions for violation of  $\frac{3}{4}$  play and for excessive point spread.

### Controlling Point Spread

Excessive game point spreads are strongly discouraged and run counter to the spirit of the AYSO philosophy. A game score differential of six or more points is considered excessive. The Division Coordinator will review excessive game point spreads and take appropriate action, including the reduction of one or all sportsmanship points for a given game.

To prevent excessive point spreads, it is strongly encouraged that coaches take action immediately upon exceeding a spread of 3-points. Ideas to prevent an excessive point spread include:

- Pulling back the strongest players into the defensive positions. This can easily be done at any time – don't wait for an official

substitution to move players into differing positions on the field.

- Limiting goal scoring to only those players who've not yet scored in the game or season
- Request shots only with the left foot
- Requiring that the ball be passed a given number of times before a shot on goal is allowed. Again, be creative.

At the 5-point differential, shut down your offense. Prohibit shots on goal. Use this as an opportunity to practice ball handling and passing drills by requiring that players move the ball back and forth between the penalty areas. While this is tough for some of the younger kids to understand, it's part of the sportsmanship that we are trying to instill in our players.

## End of season

### Participant Feedback Survey

In support of San Mateo AYSO's continuous improvement initiative, we will again be conducting a feedback survey of participants and coaches to assess satisfaction with the program and identify opportunities for improvement.

Surveys will be distributed on the field during a game near the end of the season. Please encourage your parents to participate and help us improve the program.

### Player Ratings

Prior to the end of the regular season, you will need to rate your players' skill level. Your skill assessment should be performed using the criteria provided and applied in conjunction with the skill level you've observed on the playing field by all players within the Division. Player ratings will be used to facilitate the competitive balancing process in forming next year's teams. Player Rating Forms and instructions will be distributed toward the end of the season.

## Post-Season Tournament Play

A post season tournament will be held for the top qualifying teams in the U10-U14 Divisions following the end of the regular season. See the *Regional Guidelines, "The Game – Tournament Qualification"* for details on tournament size and qualification criteria.

## Recognizing Players and Parents

Recognizing the participation and accomplishments of your players is an important facet of your role as a coach and serves as a motivational tool for encouraging participation, skill development, teamwork and respect for good sportsmanship. Don't forget to also recognize those parents whose contributions play such a vital role in the management of your team.

### Trophies

Participation trophies are provided by the league for presentation to all Division U6, U8, and U10 players.

Trophies are awarded to the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams in Divisions U12 and U14 based on their regular season standings.

Trophies are also awarded to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams in the post-season tournaments for Divisions U10, U12 and U14.

### End of Season Party

Most teams hold an end-of-season celebration party. These are usually coordinated by the team parent. The party is often held in a pizza parlor, at the home of a parent, a park, or at an indoor soccer arena. At these parties:

- The coach is recognized and thanked by parents and players.
- The coach recognizes the team and the player's individual accomplishments.
- For the younger divisions, participation trophies are awarded to all players.
- Team parent and Assistant Referee(s) are recognized by the coach and/or parents.

## Notable Player Awards

Each year, coaches select one player on their team who exhibits the most improvement during the regular season. The player's distinguishing characteristics must include good sportsmanship and team play. The nomination must be submitted in writing.

### Mark Conway Memorial Award

Awarded to one girl each year, this memorial is in memory of Mark

Conway, an active participant in AYSO, who died in 1975 from injuries received in an automobile accident. His mother, Tillie Conway, was an AYSO coach and today, remains an AYSO referee.

### Justin Brown Memorial Award

Awarded to one boy each year, this memorial award is in memory of Justin Brown, an active participant in AYSO, who died in a tragic accident in San Mateo in 1986.

## Volunteering for the next season

AYSO is an all-volunteer organization. Without the willingness of volunteers, like you, to dedicate time and leadership, we wouldn't be able to offer the children of San Mateo the quality soccer experience which AYSO provides.

Every year, we have an early volunteer registration period. Benefits include guaranteed placement of your children and registration by mail (no standing in lines!). We will be enlisting volunteers for all Coaching, Referee and Board positions well in advance of the season and hope that we can count on you to coach again next year, and possibly even consider participating on the Board.

## Injury & Accident Reporting

If a player is injured at practice or a game, the coach and referee (if available) should be immediately notified. Appropriate medical attention should be sought immediately.

Injuries must be reported as soon as possible to the Regional Safety Director. You will be provided with and asked to complete the necessary reporting forms. Information that you will be asked to provide includes the following:

- Accident date and time
- Description of the incident
- List of who was involved
- List of witnesses
- Description of the injuries
- Description of actions taken