



*Brunswick Youth Soccer League*

*2007*

*Handbook*

*“Sports Done Right”*

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Casco Bay Lumber Company	Center	

**<http://www.brunswickme.org/parkrec/bysl.htm>**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Brunswick Youth Soccer League (BYSL). It is the purpose of the BYSL to introduce soccer to the youth of Brunswick. We hope to provide an enjoyable and rewarding experience for your youth and to all those involved.

The goals of the program include:

- To teach the fundamentals of soccer in a supportive and instructional manner to youth grades K through 12.
- To provide a physically demanding, emotionally stimulating, and socially enriching activity for youth and their parents.
- To demonstrate and encourage good sportsmanship, appreciation, and respect for teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and fans.
- It is our philosophy to provide every player the opportunity to participate equally and fairly in all of our games.

The BYSL is a cooperative effort with the Brunswick Parks and Recreation Department.



## **LEAGUE HISTORY**

The BYSL started in 1976 with less than 50 players. Today, we are the largest youth sports program in Brunswick with over 700 youth participating.

The popularity of soccer has grown along with BYSL, as seen by the establishment of very successful Brunswick school teams and several club teams. Virtually every player involved in higher levels of competition has played in the BYSL.

## **BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCCER**

Based on the history of many cultures and nations, some sort of soccer has been played for thousands of years. The name “soccer” was probably coined in England around 1880. The Native Americans were playing a primitive form of soccer when the colonists first arrived in this country.

Soccer took many years to come of age in the United States although there were several geographic regions where soccer was popular. English textile workers in such places as Fall River, MA and Philadelphia, PA started playing soccer in the early 1800’s. The first official soccer game in the U.S. was the historic Princeton vs. Rutgers match in 1869.

Soccer generally has taken a back seat to baseball and football in the U.S., although its popularity is growing rapidly. The worldwide appeal of soccer makes it the most played sport and watched sport in the world. World Cup games have brought as many as 200,000 spectators to one game. The popularity of soccer probably springs from the skills, stamina, team play, sportsmanship, and companionship. It is a great body builder and greatest of all, it’s fun.

## ROLES

The BYSL is operated entirely by volunteers. All league officials, Board members, coaches, assistant coaches, referees, and team parents donate their time and energy in order to create a rewarding experience for the youth of Brunswick. All parents are asked to contribute to and share in the league's success.

### PARENTS' ROLE

BYSL parents have the greatest influence on each child's level of enjoyment. The following Parents' Code of Ethics is provided as a guide.

***I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth soccer by following this code of ethics.***

*I will encourage good sportsmanship at every game and practice. I will remember the game is for children and not for adults.*

*I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.*

*I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.*

*I will provide support for the coaches and officials working with my child.*

*I will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco free sports environment for my child and agree to refrain from their use at all youth soccer events.*

*I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.*

*I will do my very best to make soccer fun for my child.*

Your child, his/her teammates, and opponents should hear only encouragement from the sidelines. The coach should be the only one "coaching" during the game. Encouraging your child and his teammates after the game is very important for young children. Teaching good sportsmanship in victory and defeat is an important skill that can begin at home. Practice and preach commitment and the idea that soccer is a team sport in which one relies on the others.

The league goal is that participants have fun and that everyone participates. If your child is not having fun, please speak to the coach or one of the league officials.

All parents are asked to volunteer when possible, to become familiar with league rules and to join in the fun. Parents are also asked to transport their child to practices and games on time and notify coaches when an absence is anticipated. You should check with the coach about his/her policy for parents leaving children at practices and games. ***It is your responsibility*** to be on time to pick up your child.

### **COACH'S ROLE**

The BYSL coaches often have the most challenging and rewarding jobs. Each coach will:

- Compete fairly.
- Organize one practice per week (Divisions I – IV).
- Provide instruction and encouragement to all players.
- Be a role model for good sportsmanship.
- Answer parent and player questions, or seek answers from league officials.
- Appoint a team administrator who will support the coach with administration.
- Conduct a parent/player meeting at the beginning of the season.
- **Strive to rotate players through all positions on the field during the season.**
- **Strive for equal playing time for all team members.**

The most rewarding experience for a coach is to observe a child's growth, both in soccer skills and relationships with other teammates.

*(See page 14 for addressing problems and suggestions)*

### **SOCCER PLAYER'S ROLE**

The BYSL asks its players to help the league be successful. Each player can do this by:

- Displaying good sportsmanship.
- Being respectful of all players, referees, coaches, and opponents.
- Listening to the coach and participating when called upon to do so.
- Helping and encouraging teammates.
- Allowing teammates to participate.
- Doing one's best at all times.
- Having fun.

*(See page 14 for addressing problems and suggestions)*

### **REFEREE'S ROLE**

Referees in Divisions I through IV provide on-field rule enforcement and sometimes instruction. Referees are asked to provide consistency between teams and games. They are encouraged to help players increase their understanding of game rules. Referees will emphasize the teaching of rules rather than only the identification of infractions. Referees are individual volunteers committed to fostering a positive experience for the youth soccer players.

*(See page 14 for addressing problems and suggestions)*

### **RAIN POLICY**

Games are played unless a heavy rain has made the fields unplayable. Notification to parents/players of game cancellations will be by a phone call from the team coach or appointed representative. The BYSL President and the Brunswick Parks & Recreation Department consult on Saturdays and decide whether all games are cancelled. All coaches must observe this decision. ***If games are cancelled they will be posted on the Brunswick Parks & Recreation Department Cancellation Hotline at 725-6656.***

- ***IF INCLEMENT WEATHER CAUSES CANCELLATION OF UP TO TWO GAMES DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEASON THOSE GAMES WILL BE MADE UP. THE OFFICIAL MAKE-UP WILL BE SCHEDULED THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY (8 days later) FOUR (4) HOURS LATER THAN THE ORIGINAL START TIME.*** Exception: If coaches want to communicate directly with each other and schedule make-up games during scheduled practice times during the week, that is acceptable to the league **only if the Division coordinator is informed and approves.** Referees will not be provided for games in the middle of the week.
- ***IF INCLEMENT WEATHER CAUSES MORE THAN TWO GAMES TO BE CANCELLED DURING THE SEASON THOSE GAMES WILL NOT BE MADE UP.***
- ***IF THE LAST GAME OF THE SEASON IS CANCELLED IT WILL BE MADE UP THE NEXT DAY (SUNDAY) FOUR (4) HOURS LATER THAN THE ORIGINAL START TIME.***
- ***NIGHT GAMES WILL NOT BE MADE UP.***

#### **SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES**

In the case of a severe weather *warning*, the ranking league official should notify all participants, spectators and staff and be alert for lightning, hail or heavy rains. At the first sign of thunder and/or lightning the area will be cleared immediately. If after 20 minutes there has not been any additional thunder and/or lightning the facility may be reopened and play may be resumed. *It is important to wait the full 20 minutes.* If the thunder and lightning continues the area will remain closed until the storm clears. Again, it is important to wait 20 minutes after hearing the last thunder roll or seeing the last flash of lightning. There may be instances when a storm moves into the area rather rapidly and without much warning. In this case the ranking official may need to take appropriate and immediate action to clear the area.



## **LEAGUE ORGANIZATION**

BYSL is divided into nine divisions based on the grade and gender of the player. The following information applies to all participants of the league.

Registration fee includes a team shirt which players wear for each game and keep at the end of the season. In addition, players should wear shorts, long socks, shin guards and preferably soccer cleats. Shin guards covered entirely with long socks are mandatory during all practices and games. Without essential safety equipment, children will not be allowed to play. In warm weather, shorts that allow easy movement are recommended. For safety reasons, the following are not allowed on the playing field: pants or shorts with metal zippers, jeans or corduroys, hooded sweatshirts, jewelry (including body piercing of any kind), watches, and hard hair ornaments. Eyeglasses should have approved safety straps.

Each player must bring a ball to practice. A size three ball is recommended for 5 and 6 year olds; size four for 7 through 10 year olds; and size five for those over 10 years old. The smaller ball for younger players allows for more agility, making skills easier to learn.

The coach will provide a season schedule, including the time and location of each game and practice.

Each family will be contacted by the "team administrator" to provide nutritious snacks for one or more games during the season.

No new player may be added to any team without the authorization of the Division Coordinator and the League President.



## **DIVISION A- GRADE K CO-ED**

Teams meet on Saturdays for one hour. There is a thirty-minute instructional practice followed by a thirty-minute game. Team snack is after the game.

The basic skills of dribbling, passing and throwing the ball into play are also covered. Coaches from both teams instruct as well as referee on the field during play. The game ball is a size three.

Parents play an important role in this division. Discuss with your coach if you want to help out on the field.

The major objectives of Division A are to become comfortable with the ball, to learn the team concept, and to learn the basic rules.

The simplicity of these modified pre-soccer games allows children with a wide range of interest and ability to enjoy playing soccer at their own developmental level. These games provide each child with lots of chances to touch the ball. Very young children stay interested and enjoy the game when “ball touch” is high.



### **DIVISION B- GRADE 1 CO-ED**

Teams meet on Saturday for 60 minutes. There is a 30-minute instructional practice followed by a 30-minute game. The game consists of two halves and a short half-time. The season begins with four field players and a goalie on each side. The game ball will be a size three.

Coaches may be on the field during the games to referee and instruct players on positioning, throw-ins, goal kicks, and free kicks. No direct kicks or penalty kicks will be awarded. Offside will not be called.

Parents are encouraged to participate with their children during practice. Parental involvement at this level ensures the success of each child by maintaining their interest in the skills and the game.

As the season progresses and the children demonstrate proficiency in the four-on-four game, additional players may be added, one at a time, to a maximum of six players per team on the field at a time. Both coaches must agree upon added players. There may be more than one goalie per team in the field, but no more than a total of six players per team may be on the field.

The young players of Division B enjoy the simplicity of this modified game and it allows the development of skills appropriate to this age level. It keeps children on various developmental levels interested in the game because it provides a great deal of “ball touch”.

The major objectives of Division B are ball control, team concept, passing, rule comprehension, introduction of positions, and defense.

**DIVISIONS I, II, III, & IV**

**General:**

Divisions I-IV plays on a rectangular field, depending on the availability of space and age.

Spectators should remain at one sideline and give the players room for throw-ins and corner kicks. There shall be no spectators or coaches behind the goal area or on the goal line. Only coaches and medical personnel are allowed on the field after the referee determines they are needed. In Division I, one coach from each team may be on the field to help players with positioning.

It should be the goal of coaches to have every player play an equal amount of time in the games.

Play continues (running time) until a period is finished. Time will be kept by the referee. Teams will switch ends at half-time. There is no overtime.

**Typical on field Formation; Division III - IV**

	LD		LM		LW
			CD		CF
GK			CD	CM	
				RM	
	RD				RW

**Typical on field Formation; Division I – II**

	LD				LW
			LM		
GK			(CD)		CF
				RM	
	RD				RW

- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>GK</b> - Goalkeeper     | <b>LM</b> – Left Midfield  |
| <b>LD</b> – Left Defense   | <b>RM</b> – Right Midfield |
| <b>CD</b> – Center Defense | <b>LW</b> – Left Wing      |
| <b>RD</b> – Right Defense  | <b>CF</b> – Center Forward |
|                            | <b>RW</b> – Right Wing     |

**DIVISION I – GRADES 2 & 3**

In this division, players will continue to develop fundamental skills previously introduced. They will be asked to use these skills in a more formal game situation. The field is scaled down with smaller goals to provide players with more ball touches. There will be ***EIGHT*** players on the field at a time (seven field players plus a goalie). Players will become more familiar with general positions and the skills necessary in different positions. The game ball for this division is a size four.

Division I games consist of four quarters, a half time and a short break between quarters. There is no overtime play. Substitution of players occurs only between quarters, or in cases of injury, medical reason, and exhaustion.

There are no direct kicks or penalty kicks. However, indirect kicks are taken on minor fouls. Offside will not be called unless consciously used to gain advantage as determined by the referee. The referee's decision is final. If there are no referees present, the coaches will act as referees.

In a goal kick situation the defending goalie will be given the ball to clear by throwing, kicking or punting from inside the penalty area. The attacking team must stay outside the penalty area.

A player is given two chances to make a successful throw-in. The referee may instruct the player on the correct procedure after the first throw. A second incorrect throw results in possession of the ball by the opposing team by throw-in.

There will be only one practice session a week, not to exceed 90 minutes. Coaches will set the schedule for a weeknight.

The major objectives for this division are ball control, passing, throw-ins, rule comprehension, defense, learning the positions, corner kicks, and teamwork.

#### **DIVISION II- GRADES 4 & 5**

In Division II the game is the traditional full size field with 9 players per team on the field at a time. All fouls are enforced including Offside and penalty kicks if appropriate. The game ball is a size four. Teamwork is stressed, utilizing all positions and implementing strategy.

In a goal kick situation the defending goalie will be given the ball to clear by throwing, kicking or punting from inside the penalty area. The attacking team must stay outside the penalty area.

Games consist of four quarters, a half-time and breaks between quarters. Substitutions occur only between quarters and for injury. There will be no overtime periods in the event of a tie.

There will be only one practice session a week, not to exceed 90 minutes. Coaches will set the schedule for a weeknight.

The objectives of Division II are teamwork, passing, defense, game strategy, and to refine rule comprehension.

#### **DIVISIONS III GRADES 6-8 AND IV GRADES 9-12**

In Divisions III and IV the game is the traditional full size field with 11 players per team on the field at a time. All fouls are enforced including offside and penalty kicks if appropriate. The game ball is a size five. Teamwork is stressed, utilizing all positions and implementing strategies. Individuals are expected to be self motivated, physically fit and prepared to assume a higher level of play. They will learn more about team play and strategy of the game, to include set plays and different formations.

Games consist of two halves. Teams will switch sides of the field prior to beginning the second half. No overtime period will be played in the event of a tie.

There are an unlimited number of substitutions allowed, however they may occur only at the following times in Division III & IV: kick offs, goal kicks, throw-ins and at half-time. The referee must be notified of the intent to substitute and the substitute must be placed at the midfield sideline prior to the referee allowing them to come in. Substitutes will only enter the field of play with the referee's permission.

There will be only one practice session a week, not to exceed 90 minutes. Coaches will set the schedule for a weeknight.

The objectives of Divisions III & IV are to execute plays, formations, refine skills, refine rules comprehension, and team play. Division IV objectives are at an advanced level.

#### **PLAYER POLICY FOR DIVISION III AND IV**

If a team has less than 11 players show for a game, a coach may augment their team in the following ways:

**First:** Players may be borrowed from the opposing team.

**Then:** BYSL players from current teams in the same division (ONLY as a last resort).

**Always:** Give first preference to your own team players.

**Never:** Play a youth that is not registered with BYSL.

## **GENERAL SOCCER TERMS**

The following are brief descriptions of applicable soccer rules. The referee will be the final authority as to whether a rule has been violated or not. The different divisions of the BYSL soccer program call for modification of these rules. See each division for an appropriate application. For more information, BYSL, the Recreation Department and the local library have videotapes and books that will describe soccer in greater detail.

**GOAL**- A goal is scored when the entire ball legally crosses the end line between the goal posts and under the cross bar. Referee's judgment is final.

**GOAL KICK- (DIV 3 & 4 only)**. When the attacking team kicks the ball over the end line of the defending team; the defending team is awarded a goal kick. The kick is taken anywhere inside the six yard box. The ball must leave the penalty area before anyone from either team may touch it. Attacking players shall remain outside the penalty area. Division A & B no goal kicks. Division 1 & 2: In a goal kick situation the defending goalie will be given the ball to clear by throwing, kicking or punting from inside the penalty area. The attacking team must stay outside the penalty area.

**CORNER KICK**- When the defending team kicks the ball over the end line, the attacking team is awarded a corner kick. The kick is taken within the corner arc at the nearest corner from which it left play. The defensive team must be at least ten yards from the kick.

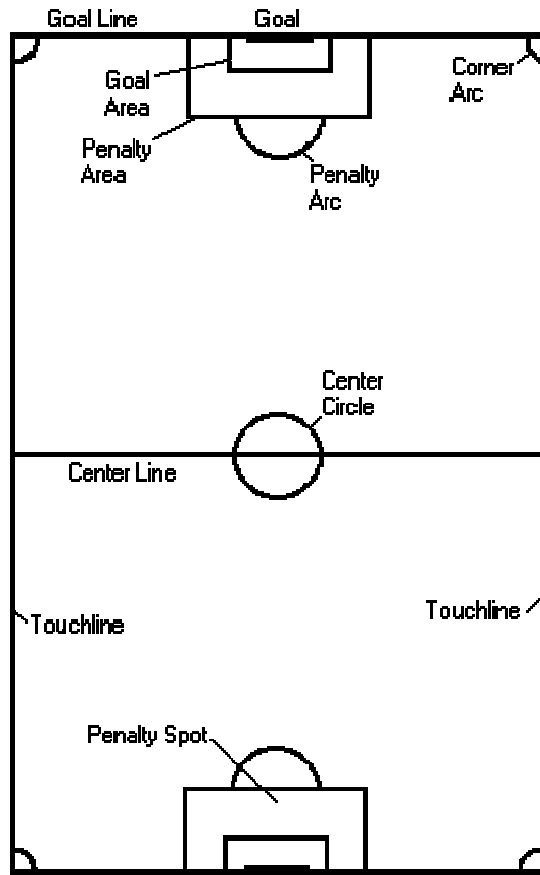
**DIRECT KICK**- When one player causes a major foul against an opposing player a direct free kick is awarded. A major foul is: kicking, tripping, pushing, striking, holding, handling the ball, charging, or tackling illegally from behind. A goal may be scored directly for the kick. The ball is placed at the point where the infraction occurred and the defensive team must be at least ten yards from the kick.

**INDIRECT KICK**- When one player causes a minor foul against an opposing player an indirect free kick is awarded. A minor foul is: dangerous play (as determined by the referee), obstructing when the *ball* is not within playing distance, charging when the ball is not in playing distance, charging the goalie when the ball is not within playing distance, delay of game (to include defensive players passing back to the goalie). The ball is kicked from the point of the infraction. A goal may not be scored directly from the kick.

**THROW-INS**- When the ball is kicked out of bounds on the sidelines the opposing team is awarded a throw-in. The throw-in is taken from the point where the ball went out of bounds. The thrower must have both feet on the ground out of bounds. The throw must be made from over the head with both hands in one motion.

**OFFSIDE**- When an attacking player passes to a teammate who does not have at least two defenders between himself and the goal (one of which may be the goalkeeper), an Offside foul is called. The opposite team is awarded an indirect kick at the point where the offside player was when the ball was passed.

**PENALTY KICK**- When a foul which would normally result in a direct free kick occurs in the penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded. Only the kicker and the goalkeeper are allowed in the penalty area until the ball is kicked.



## **PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS**

In any organization the size of BYSL, there are bound to be some problems and some cause for complaint. Initial problems should be discussed and hopefully resolved between the involved parties (coaches, players, parents). Contact your coach once the game and post game activities are concluded and discuss your concern. If the problem still remains unresolved the Division Coordinator should be notified and he or she will attempt to provide a solution.

If this is still unsatisfactory to the involved parties, they may submit a written grievance stating the specific problem to the President of BYSL. The President may schedule a meeting with representatives of the BYSL Board and the involved parties to consider the grievance and resolve the problem.

Problems or complaints about the referees shall not be discussed with the referees for any reason at any time. This rule is in place to prevent any conflict between referees and coaches, spectators or parents. There are no exceptions to this rule. The expectation is as a BYSL coach, player, parent or spectator you will comply with this rule and respect that the referee is the authority on the field. BYSL is a recreational league and if dangerous play causes safety concerns the game may be stopped either by the referee or the joint consultation of the coaches and referee. No game is worth jeopardizing a child's safety. In addition, anytime you have a concern (safety or otherwise) you should communicate with your Division Coordinator. If an explanation is required, the coach will notify the Division Coordinator of the name and nature of the complaint. The Division Coordinator will contact the Referee Coordinator who will in turn investigate and report back to the coach. Remember that the referees are also volunteers.

Please contact us if you have suggestions, inquiries, or interest in the program.

If you are unable to get in contact with BYSL, contact:

Brunswick Parks and Recreation Department  
30 Federal Street  
725-6656

**Monday – Friday, 8am to 4:30pm**

*If a child lives with criticism,  
he learns to condemn.*

*If a child lives with hostility,  
he learns to fight.*

*If a child lives with pity,  
he will feel sorry for himself.*

*If a child lives with jealousy,  
he learns to hate.*

*If a child lives with encouragement,  
he learns to be confident.*

*If a child lives with praise,  
he learns to be appreciative.*

*If a child lives with acceptance,  
he learns to love.*

*If a child lives with recognition,  
he learns to have a goal.*

*If a child lives with honesty,  
he learns what truth is.*

*If a child lives with friendliness,  
he learns that the world is a nice place in which to  
live.*

*Whatever our children live with, that will be our  
contribution to their total experience.*

*Anonymous*

**BILL OF RIGHTS  
FOR YOUNG ATHLETES**

---

**Right to participate in sports**

**Right to participate at a level commensurate  
with each child's maturity and ability**

**Right to have qualified adult leadership**

**Right of children to share in the leadership  
and  
Decision making of their sport participation**

**Right of children to participate in safe and  
healthy environments**

**Right to proper preparation for  
participation in sports**

**Right of an equal opportunity to strive for  
success**

**Right to be treated with dignity**

**Right to have fun in sports**

**ATHLETES FIRST \* WINNING SECOND**