



NWISL Special Rules For Referees

1. MINIMUM PLAYERS REQUIRED TO START A GAME

- a. U-8 (6v6) - 4 players
- b. U-10 (7v7) – 4 players
- c. U-12 (9v9) - 6 players
- d. U-14 (11v11) - 7 players
- e. U-19 (11v11)- 7 players
- f. 15 minute “grace” period from scheduled start time of game to allow a team to field the minimum number of players, coaches and/or player cards, game sheet filled out, referee payment of game. If these are not completed within the grace period, the game is abandoned. Follow procedures of game abandonment. Revised 02/09/20
- g. All Age Groups- Teams are not required to play even sided

2. REFEREE SYSTEM

- a. U-8 games shall have one center referee and no A/R’s
- b. U-10, U-12, U-14, & U-19 games shall have one center referee & 2 A/R’s (or club A/R(s) if an A/R(s) is missing) Revised 01/08/18
 - i. **NOTE:** It is required to have A/R’s or club A/R’s for U-14 & U-19 games. Revised 01/08/18
- c. Under no circumstances shall a game be refereed as a 2 man system (having 2 center referee’s and no A/R’s)
 - i. **NOTE:** Please report immediately to the assignor if this is requested by a coach.

3. SLIDE TACKLING

- a. U-8 Penalty: Indirect free kick.
 - i. If contact is made in which the referee deems to be a foul, an **indirect free kick** is awarded, along with a yellow or red card based on referee opinion. Revised 01/28/17
- b. U-10 Penalty: Indirect free kick.
 - i. If contact is made in which the referee deems to be a foul, a **direct free kick** is awarded, along with a yellow or red card based on referee opinion. Revised 01/28/17
- c. U-12, U-14 & U-19 Revised 01-08-18 Slide tackling from behind (the rear 180 degrees outside of the player’s peripheral vision) is not allowed. Penalty: Indirect free kick.
 - i. If contact is made in which the referee deems to be a foul, a **direct free kick** is awarded, along with a yellow or red card based on referee opinion. Revised 01/28/17

4. “CHERRY PICKING” (IN U8 ONLY)

- a. A. Coaches are asked to monitor and teach their own players not to “cherry pick” during the game. Players at this age may not understand that they cannot stand in front of the goal to wait for a ball, so coaches need to make every effort to teach them.
- b. “Cherry Picking” is to be managed by the coaches. The referee shall have no involvement.



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5. PLAYER CARDS

- a. Referee must match the game sheet with the player cards at check in.
 - i. **No cards, No play-** Cards must be present at the beginning of the game (15 minute grace period to get cards)
 - ii. FORFEIT goes to the team without cards.
 - iii. Coaches MAY scrimmage as a practice. Referee may NOT officiate the scrimmage.
 - iv. Only a letter of eligibility from NWISL will be allowed in place of a player card.
 - v. The referee must keep this letter and mail it with the game sheet.
- b. Referee should keep players cards with the game sheet until the end of the game.
- c. All player and coaches cards must be laminated
- d. All player and coaches cards must have their picture on the card
- e. Player cards may not be dual sided. (There may not be a picture of a player on both the back and front of the card.) Revised 11/13/2024
- f. If conditions C, D and E are not present on game day- the player / coach cannot participate in the game. Revised 11/13/2024
 - i. Referee is to keep the card and send in with the game sheet to NWISL- **DO NOT RETURN CARD TO TEAM**
 - ii. Inform Assignor within 24 hours of the game with this issue.
 - iii. There is absolutely no exception to this rule.
- g. Do not forget to return player cards to coaches with game sheet

6. SUBSTITUTIONS

- a. Prior to a throw in for either team.
- b. Prior to a goal kick for either team.
- c. After a goal by either team.
- d. After an injury to either team when the referee stops play.
- e. At half time
- f. Mandatory substitution after a yellow card NWISL SPECIAL RULES FOR REFEREES Revised 02/09/20
- g. Players being subbed in from either team must be identifiable with pinnies upon entering the field. Pinnies must be exchanged from the oncoming player to the player leaving the field to help the referee identify all eligible players on the field. Revised 11/13/24

7. GOAL KICK

- a. U-8: Opponents are required to be in their half of the field prior to the taking of a goal kick. Opponents cannot be in the defenders (goalkeeper's) half of the field at the taking of the goal kick. Revised 01/28/17
 - i. U-8: If a properly taken goal kick is taken while opponents are in the goalkeeper's half of the field or encroach before the ball clears the penalty area, the goal kick is retaken. Revised 01/28/17
- b. U10: A horizontal **line** drawn from sideline to sideline 14-yards in front of each goal, **build-out lines** will encourage possession and playing the ball **out** of the back. When there is a goal kick, the opposing team remains behind the **build-out line** until the ball is put into play.



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8. HEADING THE BALL

- a. U-8, U-10 & U-12 shall not deliberately head the ball. This is considered a dangerous play by the player heading the ball. Play will restart with an indirect free kick for the other team from the spot of the infraction Revised 07/09/16

9. COLLECT YOUR PAY PRIOR TO THE MATCH

- a. U-8 - \$30
- b. U-10 Center Referee - \$35 Revised 11/13/24 Each Assistant Referee - \$20
- c. U-12 Center Referee - \$40 Revised 01/01/22 Each Assistant Referee - \$25
- d. U-14 Center Referee - \$45 Revised 01/08/22 Each Assistant Referee - \$30 Revised 11/13/24
- e. U-19 Center Referee - \$50 Each Assistant Referee - \$35
 - i. If a club Assistant Referee is used, they shall receive the payment Revised 02/15/17
 - ii. Under no circumstances will the Center Referee receive payment for NWISL games greater than the amount designated for Center Referee.

10. GAME SHEETS

- a. REFEREE needs to make sure game sheets are filled out before the start of the game.
 - i. This includes the coach's name, division, game number, and all players.
- b. If you Red card a player/coach you must keep the player card and send it with the game sheet.
 - i. Cards are the Referees only form of Discipline.
 - ii. NWISL can only use the information it receives from referees to be able to hand out the proper disciplinary action.
 - iii. NWISL will always support any judgment call by the referee.
- c. REFEREE must mail game sheets (with final score clearly recorded at bottom), cards kept for red card offenses and letters of eligibility within 48 hours of completion of the game.
 - i. Referees must also notify their Ref Assignor via email of any yellow or red card that was issued before the end of the day that the card was issued.



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11. SIDELINE PROTOCOL

- a. **NOTE:** This is the procedure for poor spectator conduct. These steps do not have to be followed in any order and are a suggestion of how the referee should handle the situation. Referees may use their discretion as to how these steps are followed and may abandon a game at any point. Revised 11/13/24
- i. **1st First Violation**
 1. stoppage of play (but not a stoppage of clock)
 2. Warning from referee to respective Coach and bench.
 3. Warning by the respective coach to the individual(s).
 - ii. **2nd Second Violation** (by same team's sideline)
 1. stoppage of play (but not a stoppage of clock)
 2. Issue yellow card to respective Coach and bench.
 3. Coach must go to the sideline and warn the individual/s that the next violation will result in complete stoppage of play and abandonment of game. Revised 07/09/16
 - iii. **3rd Third Violation** (by same team's sideline)
 1. FINAL STOPPAGE OF PLAY AND ABANDON GAME- RECORD ON GAME SHEET SCORE AND REASON WHY NOTE: IT IS NOT THE JOB OF REFEREE TO HANDLE SPECTATORS..... IT IS THE JOB OF CLUB COACH
- b. **NOTE:** There are to be no noisemakers; this includes, but is not limited to airhorns, cowbells, blow horns or any other type of artificial noisemaker, used on the sidelines of NWISL games by the fans and / coaches. Penalty for violation of this rule are as follows:
- i. **1st First Violation**
 1. stoppage of play (but not a stoppage of clock)
 2. Warning from referee to respective Coach and bench.
 3. Warning by the respective coach to the individual(s).
 - ii. **2nd Second Violation** (by same team's sideline)
 1. stoppage of play (but not a stoppage of clock)
 2. Issue yellow card to respective Coach and bench.
 3. Coach must go to the sideline and warn the individual/s that the next violation will result in complete stoppage of play and abandonment of game. Revised 07/09/16
 - iii. **3rd Third Violation** (by same team's sideline)
 1. stoppage of play (but not a stoppage of clock)
 2. Issue red card to respective Coach and bench.
 3. Clearing of respective sideline and / or abandonment of game. Revised 07/09/24

12. U-8 IS INSTRUCTIONAL FOR THE PLAYERS

- a. It is the responsibility of the Ref to help the kids understand the rules of the game.
- b. After a call is made, try to explain what they did wrong. In the case of a bad throw-in, give them one more chance to throw after telling them what they did wrong. If they do a bad throw-in a second time, the ball changes possession.
- c. There are no penalty kicks awarded in U-8 division
- d. All free kicks are indirect free kicks in U-8 division Revised 02/09/20



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13. SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

- a. In the case of those parks or communities that do not have these systems, it is the responsibility of the referee to call the game. THIS MEANS THAT IF ANY LIGHTNING IS SIGHTED (AT ALL) OR THUNDER IS HEARD the field must be cleared at once!
- b. At parks or communities that have EARLY LIGHTNING PREDICTION AND WARNING SYSTEMS.
 - i. BY LAW WE MUST ABIDE BY THESE SYSTEMS. If the siren goes off, the field must be cleared at once! Until an all clear siren is sounded, the game may not continue.
- c. Occurs before first half time expires (or prior to game start time- when referee arrives at the field) Revised 02/15/19.
 - i. Clear the field immediately
 - ii. Start timer for a 30 minute wait period.
 - iii. If thunder is heard or lightning is sighted during this first wait period- restart 30 minute timer
 - iv. The total time of a weather delay must never exceed 60 minutes.
 - v. If conditions exist whereby the delay would exceed 60 minutes, then the game is abandoned immediately.
 - vi. Make note on the game sheet with current score, game time, and weather conditions
 - vii. Rescheduling of games is a NWISL responsibility, not the referee.
 - viii. Notify Assignor within 24 hours
- d. Occurs after the first half time expires, during half time, or during the second half. Revised 02/02/17
 - i. Clear the field immediately
 - ii. Game is final- record score
 - iii. Make note on the game sheet of weather
 - iv. Notify Assignor within 24 hours
- e. If you are scheduled to referee the next game, wait until its start time to see if weather conditions change and the game can be played. Your assignor is the only one that can advise you that your games are canceled for the rest of the day due to weather conditions.
- f. The league or the home club representative can close a field due to field conditions. If that happens the field is closed for the rest of the day and no games shall be played on the field for the rest of that day.

14. UNIFORMS

- a. Players on the same team may have the same number on their jerseys. Revised 02/02/17
- b. Sweats may be worn, but uniform jerseys must be worn on the outside.
- c. This is a Recreational league so some FIFA rules for attire may not apply.
- d. Players may participate if wearing a hard cast or hard splint if properly padded and with medical permission and referee approval.



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15. **KICKOFF** Revised 02/09/20

- a. Prior to the game, choice of ends shall be decided by the toss of a coin; with the visiting team calling heads or tails
- b. The team winning the toss will choose whether to kick-off or decide which goal to attack during the first half.
- c. Depending on the winner's choice, the other team shall take the kick off or decide which goal to attack in the first half
- d. The team that decided which goal to attached in the first half shall take the kick-off to start the second half

16. **BALL TOUCHES REFEREE OR ASSISTANT REFEREE** Revised 02/09/20

- a. The ball is OUT-OF-PLAY if it touches the referee or assistant referee without completely leaving the field of play
- b. Play is restarted with a drop ball at the spot where it hit the referee or assistant referee as follows:
 - i. In the penalty area the ball is dropped to the goalkeeper.
 - ii. Outside the penalty area the ball is dropped to the player that last touched the ball.

17. **DROPPED BALL** Revised 02/09/20

- a. On any occasion where it is necessary for the Referee to temporarily stop a game, while the ball is in play, for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in these Laws play is restarted with a dropped ball at the location where the ball was when play was stopped.
- b. If the ball is in the penalty area or last touched in the penalty area the ball is dropped to the goalkeeper.
- c. In all other cases the ball is dropped to a player of the team that last touched the ball.
- d. The ball is dropped to one player; all other players of both teams must remain at least 4 yards from the ball until it is played.
- e. The drop ball is in play when it hits the ground. NWISL SPECIAL RULES FOR REFEREES

Revised 02/09/20

18. **HANDLING** revised 02/09/20

- a. The following "handling" situations, even if accidental, will result in a direct free kick to the opponents:
 - i. the ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand or arm; or
 - ii. a player gains control or possession of the ball after it has touched their hand or arm and then scores, or creates a goal-scoring opportunity; or
 - iii. the ball touches a player's hand or arm which has been extended into an unnatural position; or
 - iv. the ball touches a player's hand or arm when it is above their shoulders



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19. **DEFENSIVE WALL** Revised 02/09/20

- a. On a Free Kick for U12, U14, U19 games, all attackers must be 1 yard from the defensive wall prior to the ball being put into play (kicked)
 - i. If encroachment occurs, an IDFK is awarded to the defending team

20. **PENALTY KICK (GOALKEEPER)** Revised 02/09/20

- a. The goalkeeper is not required to have both feet on the goal line when the penalty kick is taken.
- b. The keeper must have at least part of one foot touching the Goal Line (or, if jumping, in line with the Goal Line) at the time the ball is kicked, and is permitted to move the body or arms – but not in an unsporting attempt to distract the kicker.

21. **BALL IN PLAY RULE (GOAL KICK, FREE KICK BY DEFENSE INSIDE PENALTY AREA)** Revised 02/09/20

- a. On all free kicks the ball shall be stationary and is **IN PLAY** when it is kicked and clearly moves.
- b. Goal kick, free kick by defense inside the penalty area:
 - i. The kick shall be retaken if a player from the other team is inside the penalty area when the ball is kicked.
 - ii. In U8's, the kick shall be retaken if a player from the other team is not on their own side of the field when the ball is kicked.

22. **GAME ABANDON PROCEDURES** Revised 02-09-2020

- a. If a game is abandoned, the game sheet shall be marked as abandoned along with the reason. If a game is abandoned due to a grace period rule being enforced, the referee does not have the authority to extend the grace period beyond 15 minutes.
- b. The referee can only extend the grace period if directed to do so (in person or on the phone) by the league president, the league vice-president, or the referee assignor.
- c. Any grace period abandonment shall be recorded as a 1 - 0 score, with the forfeit going to the team which caused the abandonment. Revised 11/13/24
- d. Any sideline / misconduct abandonment shall be recorded as a forfeit for the team that caused the abandonment; regardless of the actual score. The score will be entered as 1 - 0. Revised 11/13/24