

## **Playing Rules and Regulations for Mansfield Playing Alliance**

Member Associations whose teams participate in Mansfield Playing Alliance (MPA) share in the duties and responsibility of effective league management. Each league member agrees to abide by the Playing Rules and Regulation of MPA as well as the Bylaws, Code of Ethics and Policies and Procedures of Mansfield Soccer Association (MSA) to the extent they are not in conflict with the Playing Rules and Regulations of MPA.

MPA shall operate as a league under the Mansfield Soccer Association. As such, MPA shall be governed by the Mansfield Soccer Association's Executive Board, MPA Executive Board and Board of Directors.

### **Rule I Registered Players / Team Formations**

- 1.1 Only registered players properly rostered on that team shall be permitted to play in competition under the auspices of this association. A coach must sign and turn in a copy of their roster at the beginning of the season. By doing so they are acknowledging and accepting the responsibility of coaching that team for that season, and they are also certifying that their players are properly registered to their team. If there are any questions concerning a player's placement on a team that coach must bring it up to the age appropriate commissioner prior to signing and turning in the roster. However, if a coach does not bring the matter to the age appropriate commissioner prior to playing the first game, then the coach by his actions has acknowledge that all of the players listed are properly rostered. A team, which uses unregistered player or improperly rostered player (s), shall automatically forfeit all games in which said player(s) participated. A Coach, Assistant Coach, or Administrator found to have knowingly allowed the use of an unregistered player(s) or a player(s) not properly rostered to their team shall be suspended from all soccer activities for a minimum of one (1) year.
- 1.2 Teams that are formed based on a blind lottery type placement in their home association are eligible to play in MPA. Any team found not to be formed through player pools is not eligible to play in MPA.
- 1.3 Right of Refusal – Mansfield Soccer Association reserves the right to refuse any association and/or any team the right to play. This shall be done by a majority vote of the MSA Board of Directors after notice is given to the association and/or team of the right to be present and speak on their own behalf.

### **Rule II Suspensions**

- 2.1 MPA shall honor any and all orders of suspension of players, coaches, and referees issued by NTSSA or its affiliates. A team, which allows participation by individuals under suspension, shall automatically forfeit all games in which the individuals participated.

### **Rule III Referees and the Referee System**

- 3.1 In compliance with USSF Rules, all referees serving teams playing in MPA, whether at the home association's fields or at outside home association's fields, shall be registered with the USSF and NTSSA in accordance with current rules and regulations of the USSF National Referee Committee and the State Referee Committee.
  - 3.1.1 The use of unregistered referees is approved only in emergency situations: then, the captains or coaches of the two competing teams may decide on someone agreeable to both of them to officiate. In these circumstances, the decisions of that person, serving as an emergency referee are just as binding as if he or she were a registered referee.
- 3.2 The only approved referee system for all MPA and NTSSA competitions shall be the international Three-Referee system (a referee and two assistant referees) employing the FIFA Laws of the Game (as modified herein), officiating techniques and mechanics.
  - 3.2.1 In the event of a shortage of referees the highest-level games in progress shall have priority of available officials. This could result in a lower level game (U6, U8, etc.) not having a registered official requiring coaches to officiate/control the game(s).

### **Rule IV Playing Age**

- 4.1 Except where prohibited by USSF rules, youth players may participate in older divisions, but may not play in younger divisions than their age dictates, except by approval of the NTSSA State Executive Committee. Teams must register in the oldest rostered players age division.

### **Rule V Outside Home Association Fields**

- 5.1 Teams whose Home Association is other than MSA shall notify the Mansfield Director of Fields and Games immediately when their local fields have been closed.
- 5.2 Each team is responsible for providing two computer generated game sheets to the referee prior to the game start time. Notations should be made for missing or late players. Game sheets for games played at all locations shall be emailed to the Mansfield Appeals and Disciplinary Chairman within 48 hours of the game. The A&D Chair shall send those game sheets to the respective associations and also to the webmaster for updating standings.

### **Rule VI Discipline**

6.1 MSA post these rules on MSA's website and announce their location at each coach's meeting. Each playing association has the responsibility of distributing these rules to their coaches. The coach then has the responsibility to make these rules known to his/her team, with the further expectation that each player will share this information with his/her parents and spectators. If there are any differences between these rules and North Texas Soccer rules, North Texas Soccer rules apply.

## 6.2 Authority

6.2.1 All soccer members and participants within the jurisdiction of MPA have requested to participate in our program. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and Policies and Procedures of MSA, of MPA, as well as those of the NTSSA.

6.2.2 MPA has made provisions to form an Appeals and Disciplinary Committee and to hold hearings – WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT – on every player, coach, assistant coach, parent, and/or spectator per written report of misconduct by referee or other member of the Association.

## 6.3 Misconduct of Players/Coaches/Assistant Coaches

6.3.1 MPA operates and keeps records on a "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" for all players, coaches, and assistant coaches. Accumulated cautions may result in disciplinary actions including suspensions. Appeals of cards are not allowed except when the referee admits he made an error in the issuance of the card.

6.3.2 A "CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM" in league play will be operated as follows:

1. Yellow Cards. One game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's third league play yellow card. A two game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's fifth league play yellow card. A one game automatic suspension for the game following such individual's sixth league play yellow card.

Note: A player receiving a second yellow card in a single game is suspended for the balance of that game, and those two yellow cards are then added to such individual's previous total of league play yellow cards to determine whether additional game suspensions, if any, are required. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second yellow in a single game will not be added to such individual's league play red card total.

2. Red Cards. A one game automatic suspension for the game following an individual's first league play red card. Automatic suspension, pending a hearing, from all NTSSA-sanctioned activities following such individual's second league play red card. Red cards issued solely as a result of a second yellow card in a single game will not be added to such individual's league play red card total.

Note: In cases where, during a single game, an individual receives a yellow card followed by a “straight red card” (as opposed to a red card issued solely as a result of a second yellow) both cards will be added to such individual’s respective total of league play red and yellow cards and punished accordingly. If an A& D Committee determines that a red card was issued for an infraction that was not an “expulsion” offense in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, such A & D Committee may reduce the red card to a yellow card and assess sanctions accordingly. The Member Association or Playing League may not, however, do away with the card altogether. A full report of this action must be sent to NTSSA.

3. Seventh Card. Any individual obtaining a seventh card in league play shall be immediately suspended pending a hearing with NTSSA A&D Committee (meaning any combination of yellow and red cards totaling seven).

6.3.3 For tournaments refer to the NTSSA rules located on their website.

6.3.4 The CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM prescribed by these rules defines the **minimum** disciplinary punishment to be taken. Nothing herein prevents MPA, the team’s home association, or NTSSA from enacting more severe sanctions.

6.3.5 Any misconduct by a Coach justifying a report by a referee or any other person shall be directed to the State Appeals and Disciplinary Committee as well as to the Member Association and/or Playing League with which the coach is affiliated. The State A&D committee will determine the extent of the punishment, if any, in addition to that taken by the Member Association.

6.3.6 The State A & D Committee will make its decision based entirely upon the written reports before it, including that of the affected coach, should he or she submit a report. The Committee will not hold hearings unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one.

6.3.7 A coach whose conduct is less than exemplary to his or her players, parents, and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the Member Association or Playing League involved and the State A&D Committee.

6.3.8 Game suspensions for Yellow and Red cards (as set forth above) are to be served by the player/coach/assistant coach at the next scheduled game (including league, playoff, championship, cup, and local or state tournament games) that such individual’s team is involved in. A suspension imposed by these rules shall be recognized by all affiliated organizations after proper notification. The lack of a hearing or referee report on the offense shall not affect such individual’s suspension.

6.3.9 All game suspensions must be reported immediately to the State A&D Committee. The Member Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials making the report will forward a copy of any referee’s Misconduct Report(s) which underlie the suspension. The State A&D Committee will determine the extent of punishment, if any, in addition to that prescribed by the Member

Association, Playing League or Tournament Officials, taking into consideration the severity of the misconduct.

6.3.10 The State A&D Committee will issue its decision based entirely upon the officials' reports and any other written reports before it, including that of the affected individual, should he or she submit a report. The State A&D Committee will not hold a hearing unless it, of its own volition, chooses to call one because of the nature of the case.

#### 6.4 Misconduct of Spectators

6.4.1 Each team in MPA is responsible for the conduct of its spectators. The referee shall have the authority to caution and/or send off the coach or acting coach from the field for the misconduct of the spectators associated with the team. Therefore, the coach/assistant coach is expected to control his or her spectators, especially on non-enclosed fields. If he/she is unable to do so, then MPA shall take appropriate actions toward the identifiable, unruly spectator, or, if unidentifiable, toward the team itself. MPA shall report spectator misconduct to the State A&D Committee for review and further action if warranted.

6.4.2 Possible actions for misconduct of spectators may include, but shall not be limited to:

1. Eject spectator from game or match.
2. Report spectator to the Mansfield Police Department.
3. Require the team to forfeit any games at which the spectator is present on the touchline.
4. Require the offending team to pay for the presence of police at the game.
5. Revoke and/or refuse registration to the offending team.
6. Cause the spectator to be placed under a municipal peace bond.
7. Suspend the spectator from attending future matches.

#### 6.5 Misconduct and Punishment of Teams

6.5.1 If a player accumulates a total of seven (7) cards (any combination of red or yellow) during a soccer year, they are to be immediately suspended pending a hearing with the NTSSA A&D Committee. If the players, coaches, or assistant coaches of a given team have accumulated a total of seven (7) send-offs (including red cards issued as a result of an individual receiving 2 yellow cards in a single game) in league play or any combination of cards totaling 25, MPA will notify the NTSSA State A&D committee, who will then require the coach and players of said team to appear before it to explain the team's continued misconduct.

6.5.2 MPA and NTSSA will not hesitate to deny teams within their respective jurisdictions, the privilege of further participation in all or selected soccer activities within their respective jurisdictions for repeated and/or serious offenses considered to bring the game into disrepute.

6.5.3 MPA and NTSSA hold the team and coach jointly responsible for the conduct of the players, parents, and spectators.

6.5.4 A coach whose conduct is not considered to be exemplary to his/her players, parents and spectators will be firmly dealt with by the A & D Committees of both MPA and the NTSSA.

## 6.6 Misconduct Toward a Referee

6.6.1 NTSSA has exclusive jurisdiction over assault or abuse of officials, both referees and assistant referees, in any competition by NTSSA or MPA. This jurisdiction includes:

1. All USSF registered referees.
2. Any non-licensed person serving in any emergency capacity as a game official.
3. Any coach, parent, or assistant referee serving as a game official.

6.6.2 If there is an assault/abuse of any game official by any person, including players, coaches, or spectators, a report of the alleged assault and/or abuse will be submitted immediately to the NTSSA.

1. Referee assault is an intentional act of physical violence at or upon a referee (an act intended to bring about a result that will invade the interest of another in a way that is socially unacceptable. Unintended consequences of the act are irrelevant.) Assault includes but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into a referee; head butting; the act of kicking or throwing any object at a referee that could inflict injury; damaging the referee's uniform or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.
2. The player, coach, manager, or official committing the referee assault is automatically suspended as follows:
  - a. For a minor or slight touching of the referee or the referee's uniform or personal property, at least 3 months from the time of the assault;
  - b. Except as provided in clause (c) or (d), for any other assault, at least 6 months from the time of the assault;
  - c. For an assault committed by an adult and the referee is 17 years of age or younger, at least 3 years; or
  - d. For an assault when serious injuries are inflicted, at least 5 years.

6.6.3 Referee abuse shall include, but not be limited to verbally threatening a referee.

1. Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact, which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or a referee's property or equipment. Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee: using foul or abusive language toward a referee; spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property; spitting at (but not on) the referee; or verbally threatening a referee. Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as, "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece", shall be deemed referee abuse.

2. Should the A & D committee determine the action to be referee abuse as explained in (1) above, it shall impose not less than a three (3) game suspension. A formal hearing will not be held unless it is requested.

#### 6.7 Appeals & Disciplinary Committee for MPA

- 6.7.1 If an incident occurs between two individuals or teams from the same association and occurs on that association's fields, any disciplinary action shall be conducted by the team's home association according to their playing rules, bylaws, and policies.
- 6.7.2 If an incident occurs between two individuals or teams in different associations, the A&D Committee shall consist of a representative from every association playing in MPA that chooses to send said representative. There shall be an equal number of representatives from each association present at the hearing. The chairman of the A&D panel shall be Mansfield Soccer Association's A&D Chair who shall only vote in the event of a tie vote from the voting members. Any appeal from a decision made at this level shall go to the Mansfield Soccer Association's Board of Directors. Further appeal shall go to North Texas State Soccer Association.
- 6.7.3 If an incident occurs between two individuals or teams in the same associations but occurs on a different association's fields, the A&D Committee shall consist of a representative from every association playing in MPA that chooses to send said representative. There shall be an equal number of representatives from each association present at the hearing. The chairman of the A&D panel shall be Mansfield Soccer Association's A&D Chair who shall only vote in the event of a tie vote from the voting members. Any appeal from a decision made at this level shall go to the Mansfield Soccer Association's Board of Directors. Further appeal shall go to North Texas State Soccer Association.
- 6.7.4 If an incident occurs between two individuals or teams in different associations, or occurs between two individuals or teams in the same association but occurs on a different association's fields, the A&D Chair (or the association's representative) from each member association, after a unanimous vote may offer a one game suspension to a coach, assistant coach, player, spectator, or other individual when the infraction of a by-law, rule, regulation, policy, or procedure is deemed to be minor in nature. This suspension is a waiver of the right to have a formal appeal and discipline hearing and the decision to accept the suspension or to have an appeals and discipline hearing lies solely with the coach, assistant coach, player, spectator, or other individual allegedly committing the offense.

### **Rule VII      Game Protests**

- 7.1 There are only two acceptable causes for the protesting of a game after it has been played. They are:
  - 7.1.1 A team plays a player who is not registered with the home association of the team, who does not appear on that team's roster, or who is under suspension; or

- 7.1.2 There has been an obvious error made in the application of the Laws of the Game that directly affects the outcome of the match, and the referee acknowledges it.
- 7.2 No protests will be entertained if they are based on judgment decisions made by the referee during play. A game cannot be protested because one coach, or both coaches, for that matter think the referee was incompetent. This is a matter to be handled through the local referees' group or the State Referee Committee.
- 7.3 Any protest relating to the grounds, goal posts, crossbars, or other appurtenances of the match will not be heard unless an objection had been lodged with the match referee before the commencement of the match.
- 7.4 Any protests must be filed in writing with the Mansfield Soccer Association's A&D Chairman or President of the Mansfield Soccer Association by the coach within forty-eight (48) hours of the alleged occurrence. The written protest shall be accompanied by a cashier's check, certified check, or cash in the amount of fifty dollars (\$50.00). The A & D Chairman shall then be responsible for convening a meeting of the A & D Committee within seven (7) days from the date the written protest was received, to consider the protest. If the protesting team prevails, the fifty dollars (\$50.00) shall be refunded. If the protest is disallowed, the fifty dollars (\$50.00) shall be forfeited to Mansfield Soccer Association

**Rule VIII Rules of Competition**

8.1 MPA follows the Mansfield Soccer Association Rules of Competition which adheres strictly to the FIFA Laws of the Game. However, in accordance with the recommendations of the USYSA (United States Youth Soccer Association) and the NTSSA (North Texas State Soccer Association), MPA has adopted the following modifications to the FIFA Laws of the Game for youth competition:

- 1. Size of the fields For various age groups – Law I
- 2. Size of the ball For various age groups – Law II
- 3. Number of Players Varies from Law III  
(and substitutions)
- 4. Assistant Referee Allowing for Assistant Referee – Law IV
- 5. Duration of Game For various age groups – Law VII
- 6. Charging Goalkeeper Law XII

8.2 Law I – The Field of Play

Realizing that we must generally accept and play upon fields furnished by the various municipal parks departments, the following are recommended field and goal sizes:

<b>Age Groups</b>	<b>Field Width</b>	<b>Field Length</b>	<b>Goal Size</b>
U13 – U19	Rec. 70 yds.	Rec. 120 yds.	8 ft x 24 ft.
U11 – U12	Rec. 50 yds.	Rec. 75 yds.	7 ft. x 18 ft.



U9 - U10	Rec. 40 yds.	Rec. 50 yds.	7 ft. x 18 ft.
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### 8.3 Law II – The Ball

Ball sizes for various age groups will be as follows:

<i>Age Groups</i>	<i>Ball Size</i>
U13 – U19	Size #5
U9 – U12	Size #4

### 8.4 Law III – Number of Players

1. MPA may not offer leagues in each age group each season. MPA recognizes the Modified Player Development Program for Under 10, and Under 12. Age divisions will adhere to the small sided rules as follows:
  - a. Under 9 & Under 10 - fields 7 players, must have a minimum of 5 players present to start the game. One player must be a designated goalkeeper. Full FIFA laws apply.
  - b. Under 11 & Under 12 –fields 9 players to start, must have a minimum of 7 players present to start the game. One player must be a designated goalkeeper. Full FIFA laws apply.
  - c. Under 13 – Under 19 –fields 11 players, must have a minimum of 7 players present to start the game. One player must be a designated goalkeeper. Full FIFA laws apply.

### 8.5 Law IV – Players’ Equipment

1. Each player shall have a number on the back of his/her jersey not less than four (4) inches in height.
2. All players are required to wear shin guards in games. Shin guards must be completely covered by socks.
3. No jewelry is allowed, especially pierced earrings.
4. No metal or hard plastic material is to be worn. This includes barrettes, beads, and clips.

### 8.6 Law VII – Duration of the Game

AGE GROUP	LENGTH OF PERIODS	HALF-TIME BREAK	QUARTER BREAKS
U-19	Two 45 minute halves	10 min.	n/a
U-16	Two 40 minute halves	10 min.	n/a
U-14	Two 35 minute halves	10 min.	n/a
U-12	Two 30 minute halves	10 min.	n/a
U-10	Two 25 minute halves	10 min.	n/a

- 8.7 Law VIII – The Start of Play - Conform to FIFA
- 8.8 Law IX – Ball In and Out of Play - Conform to FIFA
- 8.9 Law X – Method of Scoring – Conform to FIFA
- 8.10 Law XI – Offside - Conform to FIFA for Under 9 and above play.
- 8.11 Law XII – Fouls and Misconduct
  - 1. Charging the goalkeeper in possession of the ball is NOT ALLOWED in any youth play. Possession is defined as “one or two hands on the ball, holding it, bouncing it, tossing it up in the air and then catching it, or patting it along the ground”.
  - 2. It is not an intentional “hand-ball” offense for any player to attempt to protect the vital areas of his/her body (chest, groin, face) by placing hands or arms across them to protect them from being struck at close range by the ball. The match referee shall be the sole judge of whether the hands or arms were used deliberately to propel the ball.
  - 3. Coaches, assistant coaches, and players are subject to the same disciplinary rules and procedures. Coaches and assistant coaches may be warned or dismissed from the game for infractions.
- 8.12 Law XIII – Free Kick
  - 1. U9 and U10 - opponents must be 8 yards away before kick is taken.
  - 2. U11 and above – conform to FIFA.
- 8.13 Law XIV – Penalty Kick - Under 9 and above, conform to FIFA.
- 8.14 Law XV – Throw-In – Under 9 and above, conform to FIFA.
- 8.15 Law XVI – Goal Kick – U9 and above, conform to FIFA.
- 8.16 Law XVII – Corner Kick – Conform to FIFA

**Rule IX            Game Day Procedures**

- 1. For games at the Mansfield Sports Complex - Check the Mansfield website to determine if games are being played or call the MSA Message Line (817-592-6393) to get field closure information on game day.  
For games at the BISA soccer fields – Check the website for field availability

2. Soccer Games may be played even though it is raining.

### Uniforms and Equipment

1. The home team is responsible to wear alternate-colored jerseys if a color conflict occurs. If the home team does not have an alternate colored jersey, pennies should be worn.
2. All players are required to have the proper equipment to participate. The referee will perform a check to determine the eligibility of players based on equipment.
3. The home team is responsible for the game ball. The ball must be an appropriate size for the age group. U9 – U12 teams use a size 4 ball. U13 and up teams use a size 5 ball.

### Rescheduled Games Policy and Procedure

Prior to the establishment of the league schedule for a season, all coaches must notify, in writing, the MPA scheduler of dates that may conflict with the game schedule (including Tournament dates). No more than three (3) dates will be accepted. An effort to honor these requests will be made by the game scheduler but there is no guarantee that the requests will be met. Any other request after the league schedules have been established may be honored upon written request to the MPA scheduler and approval from the Referee Assignor and/or Director of Fields and Games and/or the home association scheduler. An absent star player(s) or conflict with another sport association is not sufficient reason to cause a game to be rescheduled.

*As per North Texas Soccer Association rule 3.10.3 (9) For the purpose of this rule, all players participating in a Soccer Academy who are also registered with a NTSSA Member youth association recreational team shall, in the event of a conflict, consider the NTSSA recreational team to be their primary team and the Soccer Academy as a secondary commitment.*

### Policy on Rescheduling of Games Due to Conflicts

1. If a coach/team requests a game to be rescheduled and the opposing coach/team agrees with the reschedule and the MPA scheduler is notified at least 7 days before the original game, then the rescheduling request will be honored provided that the association hosting the game can accommodate the reschedule. The coaches will attempt to designate a convenient day and time for the reschedule working with the Director of Referees and the Director of Fields and Games.
2. If a coach/team request a game to be rescheduled and the opposing coach/team denies the request and the reason for the request is due to school function and/or UIL function –
  - a. If the school or UIL function will cause the team to forfeit due to not enough players to field the minimum number of players, then the rescheduling request will be honored if at least 7 days notice is given to the MPA scheduler. The coaches will attempt to designate a convenient day and time for the reschedule working with the MPA Scheduler who will work with the home association where the game is being played.

- b. If the school or UIL function will not cause a forfeit then the rescheduling request will not be honored.  
(The school or UIL function must cause the team to forfeit, not just to play without substitutes or without being able to field the optimal number of players. The missing players must all be involved in the school and/or UIL functions).
- 3. If a coach/team request a game to be rescheduled and the opposing coach/team denies the request and the reason for the request is not due to a school and/or UIL function, then the request will be denied.
- 4. If a rescheduling request is honored and the coaches cannot agree on a day and time for the make-up game, the MPA scheduler will offer three days/times to each coach requesting each coach to pick two of them. Whichever day/time both coaches chose will be the rescheduled game day/time.

**Rule X            Miscellaneous Rules for MPA**

- 1. If teams sit on opposite sides of the field, the home team shall occupy the North or West side of the field and the away team shall occupy the South or East side of the field.
- 2. All teams will play all other teams in their group the same number of times for standing. This means that some age groups will have more or less games than other age groups. Some games may be considered “exhibition” and will not count in standings.
- 3. Standings shall be computed as follows:
  - a. Total Points per Team: Each game shall be calculated as: Win – Three (3) points, Loss – Zero (0) points, Tie – One (1) points
  - b. In the event of a tie, apply the following:
    - i. First - head to head game results.
    - ii. Second - goal differential for the entire season (3 max for a win, -3 max for a loss).
    - iii. Third - fewest goals allowed for the season.
    - iv. Fourth - most number of shutouts.
    - v. Fifth - flip on a coin.
- 4. MPA reserves the right to distribute different awards for first and second place than what is distributed to MSA playing leagues. MPA reserves the right to not distribute awards for this playing league.

Referee Pay / Coaches' Technical Area / Spectator Restraining Line - Please see the Mansfield Soccer Association's Game Day Procedures (Policies and Procedures) for games played in Mansfield.