

Micro Soccer Rules and Procedures

The Micro Soccer Program in General

The SBSC plays 4v4 Micro Soccer for Division 7 players (primarily 5 and 6 year olds) for several reasons:

- First, and most important, Micro Soccer is a program that is designed to better meet the “developmental” needs of the young soccer player – every child gets many more touches on the ball per game.
- It is a better and easier system for coaches to use in developing player skills.
- Lastly, the coaching base is expanded because more parents become involved in the program by coaching, keeping time, and helping as referees.

Micro Soccer is recommended by the United States Youth Soccer Association.

Micro Soccer is designed to reach as many interested players and families as possible. All fees are kept to a minimum and all players will be provided with shorts, shirt and socks. Each player will need to provide soccer cleats, shin guards and a size 3 soccer balls. The season usually starts after the Saturday after Labor Day (see the section titled Game Schedules, Field Preparation, and Rainy Day Procedure for exact dates for the current season) and ends the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Games:

- Are played only on Saturdays
- Will be scheduled between 8 AM and 5 PM
- Will take place in Solana Beach, Encinitas, and Cardiff, and
- Are seldom canceled due to weather.

We will be using volunteer parent referees to officiate our Micro Soccer games. This is being done for two reasons:

- First, adult referees will provide more appropriate assistance to the young players who are not familiar with soccer rules and procedures,
- Second, the more parents that are involved in the program, the more successful the program will be.

The home team will provide two referees each Saturday. Before the season begins, at least two parents from each team (3 to 4 is better, as each Saturday 2 referees are required) must attend a short referees’ clinic. Of course coaches and assistant coaches are welcome to attend the referee clinic, but they do not count as the 2 attendees because they will be busy with their own duties at the games. Information on the referee clinics will be provided by the Referee Coordinator. The coach should try to identify as far ahead of the first game as possible at least 2, and up to 4, parents willing to serve as referees for home games. This will allow the most opportunity for them to participate in a clinic before the start of the season.

Authority

This program is operated by the Solana Beach Soccer Club, a member of the California Youth Soccer Association – South (CalSouth or CYSA – South). Club and Association rules apply to the Micro Soccer program if not covered in these Rules and Procedures.

General “Rules of Thumb”

- Make fun and technique development your first priorities.
- Too much competition, too soon, can SLOW DOWN a child’s progress in skill development.

Playing Time

All players in the SBSC are entitled to play a minimum of one half of each game for which they suit up. The SBSC understands that failure to practice, sickness or injury might be cause for an individual to play less than one half. Disciplinary action is NOT a valid reason for a coach to restrict playing time to less than half a game, unless the coach informs the player and the parents at least one day in advance.

Conduct

The SBSC considers good conduct by coaches, parents, and children to be an extremely important part of the program. PLEASE BE CERTAIN THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE SBSC (coaches are to distribute to parents). The referee is responsible for calling the game, but the coach is responsible for the behavior of spectators and team members. Neither the referee nor the children should be subjected to negative comments from anyone. Remember that referees have a difficult job at best and provide a valuable service that contributes to a successful soccer season. We want all participants – coaches, referees, and players – treated with respect so they will enjoy their experience and want to return the following year.

- Comments directed at players: Remarks should be limited to positive, team-oriented comments, such as “Go Blue”. Remember the soccer game BELONGS TO THE PLAYERS, not to the coaches and spectators. Spectators must refrain from yelling at individual players.
- Comments directed at Parent Referees and Coaches: Spectators, coaches and players must refrain from making any negative or mean-spirited comments to or about the players, coaches or referees. If there is a perceived problem, and the parent referee is willing, the coach may discuss it in a rational, positive manner at half-time or after the game. Please note that in Divisions 1 to 6 where certified referees are used, ALL comments regarding referees must be directed to the Referee Coordinator AFTER the game. There should be no discussion between the coach or players and the referee during the course of the game.
- Discipline: Unsportsmanlike conduct (such as cursing, spitting, fighting or any other intentional bodily harm) will NOT BE TOLERATED. The referee is authorized and required to delay play until the offending individual(s) leave the field. Failure to leave the field at the referee’s request is cause for the referee to abandon (end) the game. Repeat problems in this area will be the basis for permanent restriction from the SBSC playing fields.
- Spectator Location: All spectators, coaches and players not on the playing field must remain at least 3 feet from the touch-line (sideline). No one shall stand behind the goal line. No dogs are permitted at any time.

The Field of Play

- The field will be approximately 20 yards wide by 30 yards long
- The field will be marked with touch-lines (sidelines), goal lines, a center line, a center circle with a 3-yard radius, and two goal areas/quarterfield lines approximately 7 yards from the goal lines.
- The goals, made of large traffic cones and a crossbar, will be placed on the center of the goal-line.
- There are no penalty areas in 4v4 Micro Soccer
- A dashed Spectator line will be parallel to the touch lines and three (3) feet beyond the field. ALL coaches, substitutes, parents and other spectators will remain behind the spectator line during the game. No one will stand behind the goal lines.

The Ball

Ball size is determined by the age/division. Division 7 Micro Soccer uses a size 3 soccer ball, which is relatively small and lighter in weight.

The Players and Substitutes

Each team will have four players on the field at any given time. 3 players are “field” players and should NOT be assigned positions. The fourth player is designated goalkeeper and may use his/her hands to pick up the ball while in the goal area.

Remember, each player is entitled to play at least half of each game and should be given an equal chance to start games. Players should be substituted every 3-5 minutes: 4v4 soccer is very energetic (goalkeepers can stay in the game longer). Every player should have many chances to play at the goalkeeper position during the season.

Substitutes are permitted at the same times as in full-sided (11v11) soccer. Substitutes are allowed in the following situations, and AFTER HAVING RECEIVED PERMISSION FROM THE REFEREE:

By either team:

- On a Goal Kick by either team
- After a goal is scored
- During half-time
- When the referee stops play for an injury

By the team in possession of the ball:

- During a throw-in. NOTE: The SBSC makes the following allowance: If the team in possession elects to substitute, the Parent Referee may allow the other team to substitute. If the team in possession does not substitute, then substitution by the other team is not permitted.

Not permitted by either team:

- On Corner Kicks
- On Free Kicks (Direct, Indirect, Penalty).

Each coach should choose their own system of substituting (platooning – swapping a group of players at the same time, one at a time, etc.).

Starting Play, Length and Format of Games

- Each team of 10 to 12 players will be divided into half and designated Team 1 or Team 2 (for example, Blue 1 and Blue 2). Coaches should divide their teams differently each week so that the same 5 or 6 players are not always playing together.
- The Head Coach will take Team 1 to Field A, and the Assistant Coach will take Team 2 to Field B. Two games will be played simultaneously on adjacent fields.
- The home team will supply a Parent Referee for each field.
- Games will consist of two, 20-minute halves, with a 5-minute half time break. The clock is not stopped during the game.
- The home team will also supply one parent time keeper for each games, who blows a whistle to indicate the start of play, the end of the first half, the start of the second half and the end of the game. This way both games will be played simultaneously.
- Before the start of the game, the referees will gather both teams together on one field to inspect the payers’ equipment (all players are REQUIRED to have shin guards and all

jewelry, barrettes, etc. must be removed – only soft hair ties are permitted). A coin toss will then be used to decide which team takes the kick off. The other team then gets to decide which goal they want to defend. Using the previous example, if the Blue team wins the coin toss and decides to take the kickoff, then Blue takes the kickoff on BOTH fields, and the opposing team chooses the goal they wish to defend on each field.

- Switching fields at half time: After the half-time break, the HOME teams remain on the same field, but switch to defend the opposite goal (an easy way to remember this is that the Home team stays “Home” – they do not switch). The VISTING teams switch fields with each other and defend the other goal. Coaches may switch the teams they are coaching if they want to see the other team playing. Here is an example:

	Field A	Field B
First Half	Blue 1 vs. Visitor 1	Blue 2 vs. Visitor 2
Second Half	Blue 1 vs. Visitor 2 (Blue 1 has switched to defend other goal)	Blue 2 vs. Visitor 1 (Blue 2 has switched to defend other goal).

Soccer Terminology with Notes for Micro Soccer

Ball Out of Play: The ball is out of play when the WHOLE OF THE BALL crosses the whole touch-line (side line) or goal-line outside the goal posts. This means that the ball is not out until the entire ball has left the field by going beyond the outside edge of the touch-line or goal-line. This is very different from basketball, for example when the ball is out once it touches the line, or from tennis where the ball is out if the portion of the ball in contact with the ground is outside the sideline. No special notes for Micro Soccer.

Goals: A goal is scored when the whole of the ball crosses the goal line between the goal-posts (in Micro Soccer, these are the cones) and under the crossbar. Goals can be scored from anywhere on the field. Goals cannot be scored directly from a kick-off, goal-kick, throw-in or free kick (except for a direct free kick), as a second player, from either team, must touch the ball before the goal can be scored on any restart. The corner-kick is an exception – goals may be scored directly from a corner kick. In Micro Soccer, goals are NOT counted if a cone is knocked over by a shot on goal. The game will be restarted by a goal kick.

Restarting the Game: Once the ball has gone out of play, play is restarted as follows:

- Ball over the touch-line (sideline): Restart with a Throw-In by the team that did not last touch the ball. For Micro Soccer, Throw-Ins shall be retaken by the same team if not properly done – the goal is to teach the player the correct form.
- Ball over the goal-line, outside the goal-posts, last touched by the attacking team: Restart with a Goal-Kick by the defending team. In Micro Soccer, this is taken from behind the quarterfield line.
- Ball over the goal-line, outside the goal-posts, last touched by the defending team: Restart with a Corner-Kick by the attacking team.
- After a goal is scored: Restart with a Kick-Off from the Center Line.

Kick-Off: Begins the game at each half and restarts play after a goal is scored. The ball is placed at the center spot on the center-line. It must go forward into the opponent’s half of the field and is in play after TRAVELING ITS OWN CIRCUMFERANCE. The player kicking off must not touch the ball again until it is touched or played by another player. Opponents must be a least 5 yards away and in their own half of the field. Typically, Players 1 and 2 are on the center-line. Player 3 will be behind them forming a triangle. Player 1 passed the ball forward to Player

2, who then passes the ball BACKWARDS to Player 3. Player 3 then has control of the ball with several options to pass or dribble.

Goal Kick: Taken by any player on the defending team including the goalkeeper to restart the game when the ball goes out of play past the goal-line and outside the goal-posts and was last touched by an attacking player. It is taken from anywhere within the Goalie Box. In Micro Soccer, it is taken anywhere on the quarterfield-line. All opposing players must be at least 5 yards from the ball, and outside of the quarterfield area.

Corner Kick: Taken by any player on the attacking team to restart the game when the ball goes out of play past the goal-line and outside of the goal-posts and was last touched by a defending player. The kick is taken in the corner area where the goal-line and the touch-line (sideline) meet) on the side of the field where the ball went out of play. Opponents must be at least 5 yards from the ball when the kick is taken. A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick.

Drop Ball: A ball is dropped by the referee to restart the game after play was stopped for “any other cause” (e.g. injury, baby loose on field, etc.). For Micro Soccer, the ball is dropped where it was last in play or at the nearest point outside the quarterfield area if it was in the quarterfield area when play was stopped. The ball must touch the ground before it can be touched by any player. Re-drop if it is touched before it touches the ground.

Free Kicks:

- Indirect Free Kick: The ball must be touched by a second player, from either team, before a goal can be scored.
- Direct Free Kick: The ball does NOT need to touch a second player before a goal can be scored.

Taking a Kick-Off, Goal-Kick, Corner-Kick or Free Kick:

- When a team is to take a kick-off, goal-kick, corner-kick or free-kick, any player on the field may take the kick.
- The ball must be stopped (cannot be rolling) for the kick to be taken.
- In Micro Soccer, the same team should retake the kick if the ball is rolling – again, the objective is to teach the correct procedure.
- All opponents must be at least 5 yards from the ball. Re-take the kick if an opponent is less than 5 yards from the ball when the kick is taken.
- The player taking the kick may NOT touch the ball a second time until the ball has been touched by any other player. Award a free-kick to the opposing team if player taking the kick touches the ball a second time before another player has touched it. For Micro Soccer, be sure to explain to all players on the field what happened,
- As a rule, it is a good idea for the referee to explain the above rules before a kick is taken and explain what went wrong when kicks have to be retaken or the ball is given to the opposing team due to an error.
- The ball MUST be touched by a second player before a goal can be scored on any restart, except for the Corner-Kick or a Direct Free-Kick (In Micro Soccer, Direct Free-Kicks – where a goal can be scored without the ball touching another player) are not awarded, only Indirect Free-Kicks where a second player must touch the ball prior to a goal being scored.

Fouls

A player who INTENTIONALLY commits any of the following nine different fouls shall be penalized by the award of an Indirect Free Kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the offense occurred, unless the foul occurred within the Penalty Box (for Micro Soccer

between the goal-line and the quarterfield-line), in which case an Direct Free Kick is taken from the penalty spot. In Micro Soccer an INDIRECT Free Kick is taken from the spot on the quarterfield-line nearest the point of the foul). A foul is committed when a player:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent,
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent,
- Jumps at an opponent (i.e. both feet leave the ground and jumps feet first or one foot first at an opponent),
- Charges an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner,
- Charges an opponent from behind unless the latter is obstructing,
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent, or spits at an opponent,
- Holds and opponent,
- Pushes an opponent,
- Handles the ball (i.e. carries, strikes or propels the ball with his/her hand or arm. The key judgment for this rule is whether the contact was "hand to ball" (infraction) or "ball to hand" (no infraction).

Important Note on the Advantage Rule: The referee may decide NOT to stop play if, in his/her opinion, the guilty team would gain an advantage by doing so. Example: a Blue player attempts to trip a Visitor player. Immediately after the foul, the Visitor player is still up, in control of the ball, and heading for the goal. Whistling the penalty now would stop play and take away the Visitor player's advantage. The referee's judgment is NOT to call the foul and to let the Visitor player continue to his/her advantage.

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