

## **HMMS U10 Recreational League** **The “Laws” of Soccer: An Overview**

The sport of soccer refers to its playing guidelines as “laws” (rather than rules). The following is an overview of these laws as they relate to HMMS U10 Recreational League play.

**Number of Players/Positions:** In a regulation game, each team fields eleven players. The HMMS U10 Recreational League fields eight players per team on a reduced size field.

The general playing positions are as follows:

- **Goalkeeper:** The goalkeeper is the only position specifically discussed in the laws of the game since there are stated laws that apply to that position only.

The role goes without saying. The goalkeeper is the only player allowed to touch the ball with his/her hands on the field of play, but **ONLY** when inside the *penalty area*. When outside the penalty area, the goalie’s use of hands is restricted as it is for any other player.

After making a save, the goalie returns the ball into play by throwing or by punting, dropkicking, or passing the ball. Generally this is done from the upper edge of the penalty box (or area). There are **NO** restrictions as to how the goalie moves the ball from the point of save to the point of release, *and* opposing players may take **NO** action to impede the goalie’s effort to return the ball into play, assuming the goalie does not put the ball on the ground. If the goalie elects to put the ball on the ground in the process of returning the ball to play, the ball becomes “live” and may be stolen by the opponent as with any field player.

Goalies are typically the more “acrobatic and fearless” players on the team as they must throw their bodies at the ball, often in front of flailing feet.

- **Defender:** The defender’s primary role is to assist the goalkeeper in preventing goals by the opposing team. Generally they cover their defending half of the field and rarely advance much beyond the halfway (or midfield) line.

Defenders are typically the more “stalwart” players on the team; they are cool under fire and best able to “separate” the ball from the attacker and quickly clear it out of the danger area.

- **Midfielder:** Midfielders are the link on the team – they play both offense and defense, covering the area of the field between the upper edges of the penalty boxes (and often more).

This position typically requires the greatest all around skill and willingness and ability to run, run, run. On defense they are called upon to assist the defenders and look for opportunities to move the ball upfield and counter the attack. On offense, they support the forwards, serve as playmakers, and may also score their share of goals.

- **Forwards:** The forwards provide the offensive thrust for the team. Their area of play typically covers the attacking half of the field – however they may sometimes enter the defending half of the field to assist defensively and begin the attack.

Forwards typically are the quickest players on the team with the ability to control the ball both in the open field and in tight spots as the defense closes in. In most cases, they are the primary goal scorers.

**How Many at Each Position:** This will vary from coach to coach, game to game, and even during the course of a game depending on the intended strategy and the strengths of the players. In-game alignment are sometimes made, although they are rare in younger age groups. When they do occur it is usually when a team moves to a more defensive or offensive mode, based on the circumstances.

**Game Length:** For U10 play – two 25-minute halves.

**Fouls/Infractions:** Fouls/infractions result in a DIRECT KICK, a PENALTY KICK or an INDIRECT KICK (see Restarts for an explanation of these kicks).

The following fouls result in a direct kick:

- **Kicking or hitting (an opponent)**
- **Pushing**
- **Holding**
- **Tripping** (Must be with intent; if a defender first contacts the ball and, in the referee’s judgment, the opponent’s momentum carried him into the defender’s outstretched leg, a foul is NOT called. ALL plays from behind resulting in the tripping of the opponent, regardless of contact with the ball, are treated as a foul.)
- **Illegal Charging/Jumping In** (Body contact when the ball is NOT controlled by the contacted player is a foul. A legal charge involves REASONABLE shoulder to shoulder contact when the ball is under the control of the contacted player and is NOT a foul. Legal charges are rare in this age group since young players lack the required body control.)
- **Hand Ball** (INTENTIONAL contact of the ball with the hand, especially if using the hand to redirect or propel the ball – the hand extends from the shoulder to the fingertips. A hand ball is NOT called in instances where the "ball plays the man."

The following infractions result in an indirect kick:

- **Dangerous Play** (Any action ruled by the referee to be creating a danger to any player, INCLUDING the offending player himself and his/her teammates – examples are attempting to play the ball while sitting or laying on the ground and high kicks.)
- **Obstruction** (Blocking or impeding an opponent’s movement to the ball when the offending player is not in control of the ball.)
- **Goalkeeper:**
  - Touches the ball with his hands after releasing it when it has not yet been touched by another player
  - Takes more than six seconds to release ball while controlling it with his hands
  - Touches the ball with his hands when it was deliberately kicked to him by a teammate or thrown to him via a throw-in
- **Offsides:** This probably is the most misunderstood law of soccer. Put simply, an attacking player who DOES NOT have AT LEAST TWO defenders (this may OR may not include the goalie) between him and the goal at the time a teammate plays a ball forward is in an “offsides position.” HOWEVER, the infraction is called IF AND ONLY IF the player in question receives the ball OR if the referee judges that the player’s position allowed his team to gain benefit even if he did not play the ball. A player is not penalized for offsides if he is in his own half of the field at the time of the kick or he receives a ball directly from a throw-in, goal kick, or corner kick.

**Substitutions:** Substitution rules vary according to levels of play. For U10, substitutions are unlimited and may be made at the time of the possessing team’s throw-in or on a goal kick or kick-off by either team. In the event of an injury, a substitution may be made for the injured player ONLY.

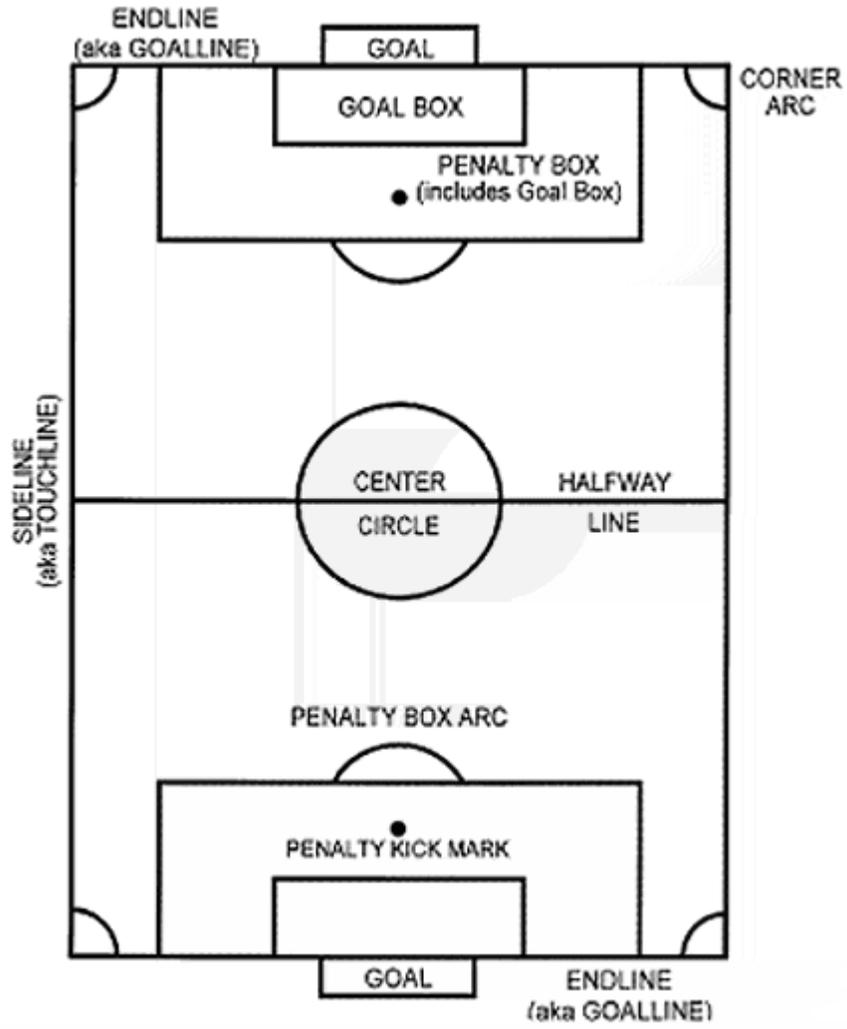
**Restarts:** There are seven methods of putting the ball back in play:

- **Direct Kick:** Awarded for specific fouls, a goal can be scored directly from this kick. Opposing players must be 10 yards from the ball at the time of the kick.
- **Penalty Kick:** For fouls committed by the defending team inside the penalty area that would otherwise result in a direct kick, a penalty kick is awarded. All players, with the exception of the kicker and the goalie, must be outside of the penalty area and the connecting arc at the time of the kick. The goalie must be positioned on the goalline and may not move until the kick is struck (box infringement or early movement by the goalie may result in a rekick).
- **Indirect Kick:** Awarded for specific infractions, a second player (besides the kicker) from EITHER team must TOUCH the ball before a goal can be scored. Opposing players must be 10 yards from the ball at the time of the initial kick.

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- **Throw-ins:** For balls directed over the sideline (also referred to as the “touch line”), a throw-in is awarded the opposing team. A legal throw-in is a two-handed throw made directly over the head, with no excessive spin on the ball. Both feet must stay in contact with the ground during the throw-in. A foul throw results in a throw-in awarded to the opposing team. The throwing player **MAY NOT** touch the ball in-bounds until another player has touched it. In this case, an indirect kick is awarded to the opposing team.
- **Goal Kick:** For balls kicked out of bounds over the goal line (or end line) by the attacking team, the defending team is awarded a goal kick (typically taken by one of the defenders). The ball may be placed anywhere inside the goal box (area) prior to the kick, although most players will place the ball on one of the outside corners of the goal area. The kick must clear the penalty box before it is touched by any player, including the kicker, otherwise the kick will be retaken. Should the player taking the kick touch the ball **OUTSIDE** of the penalty area before another player touches it, an indirect kick is awarded to the attacking team.
- **Corner Kick:** For balls kicked out of bounds over the goal line by the defending team, a corner kick is awarded to the attacking team. The kick is taken from the corner arc on the side of the field where the ball crossed the goal line. The kicker may not touch the ball a second time until any other player touches it. In the event of a violation, an indirect kick will be awarded to the defending team.
- **Kick-off:** Kick-offs are taken from the center circle to begin halves and following goals. All attacking players must remain behind the center line until the time of the kick and the kick must move forward of the halfway line; violations result in a rekick. Should the kicker touch the ball a second time before another player touches it, an indirect kick will be awarded to the opposing team.
- **Drop Ball:** A drop ball is held in the event of a stoppage of play by the referee (most typically for an injury) or when the referee cannot make a clear determination as to who last touched the ball for a ball out of bounds. The drop ball occurs at the spot where the ball was located at the time of the stoppage (**NOT** at the spot of the injury). The ball is dropped between a selected player from each team and **MUST** hit the ground before it is kicked.

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## **HMMS U10 Recreational Program** **General Rules and Guidelines**

### **Let's All Have Fun and Learn a Few Things About the Great Game of Soccer!!!:**

Unlike the U06/U08 programs, wins and losses are acknowledged at this level. It is important to note however that this is the first time your child will be playing the game in full compliance with all standard FIFA Laws. Thus, our primary goal continues to be to teach your child the basics of the game, including laws, basic positioning, teamwork, and fair play/sporting behavior. If you are new to the game (and even if you're not), we hope you'll learn a few things too. But most of all, let's have fun!

**Where Will Your Child Play:** Each player, based on his/her skill and/or preference, may have a field position that he seems best suited to play. Although he **MAY** play that position more often than not, this is a developmental program; therefore, each player will play each of the field positions at one time or another. Only players who indicate an interest in playing goalie will play there.

**Playing Time:** HMMS policy requires that all players play 50% or more. To the degree possible, this will be achieved for each game played. In the event that your child plays somewhat less than 50% of any particular game, he/she will get an additional playing time in a future game.

**Encouraging Your Child and His/Her Teammates:** The more family and friends that come out to cheer on the team, the better. All we ask is that you be a true cheerleader offering **POSITIVE** encouragement. The coaches will actively teach the players through the course of the game – because too much input can create confusion and frustration among the players, we ask that you reserve specific coaching/direction of your child for after the game.

**Please Show Respect, Patience, and Sporting Behavior For and Toward Those Around You:** The HMMS Code of Conduct, which we are all expected to honor, is attached. Remember, you are the role model for your child, his/her teammates, and his/her opponents when it comes to these qualities. Please set a good example!

- **Coaches** – Some coaches have experience around the game, some do not. What we all have is enthusiasm, willingness, and the ability to devote our time with the hope of making this the best experience possible for the players. This applies to opposing coaches as well.

**HMMS U08 Recreational Program**  
**General Rules and Guidelines**  
*(cont'd)*

- **Players** – Please remember that the players (teammates and opponents) are between the ages of 8-10. Some have a few years playing experience while others have none. What is common at this age is that player skills and body control are still developing. This means both good and bad things will happen on the field, purposely and by accident. In the event of any difficulties on the field (eg. injury/confrontation between players, etc.), **PLEASE** allow the coaches and referees first opportunity to address the situation. Parents/guardians should enter the field **ONLY** when requested to do so by a coach or referee.
  
- **Referees** – Referees at this level are trained and licensed by FIFA. However, it is important to note that many are teens who are just getting started on what hopefully will be a long refereeing career. Your sporting behavior and encouragement is essential. More importantly, this is a continuing opportunity for young players to understand the role of the referee as an "authority figure" in competitive sports – your proper example helps them learn this concept. This **ESPECIALLY** includes refraining from "open criticism" of a referee.
  
- **Fans** – Again, positive enthusiasm is what we are after. This applies to those around you who are parents, relatives, and friends of players, coaches, and referees. Your critical or rude comment about others when directed to or heard them or their "significant others" will not be appreciated.

**SPORTING BEHAVIOR BY EVERYBODY PARTICIPATING IN OR ATTENDING HMMS PRACTICES AND GAMES IS SOMETHING THAT THE CLUB TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY.** Please understand that the head coach is accountable for the behavior of all persons associated with your team and will discuss any inappropriate action with any offenders and take action as necessary. Similarly, the head coach is the designated sole liaison to the opponents' coaches, players, and fans, as well as to the referees. If you have any issues or concerns, please let the head coach know, and the proper course of action will be taken.

## HMMS CODE OF CONDUCT

The goal of the HMMS Youth Soccer Association ("HMMS") is to maximize the opportunity for each registered player to enjoy the game of soccer, learn and display sportsmanship, and develop individual and team skills. In pursuit of that goal, the principles set forth below reflect our Code of Conduct and shall apply to coaches, players, referees, parents, guardians, volunteers, trainers, and any other participants in HMMS activities.

- All participants in HMMS shall abide by this Code of Conduct.
- Failure to abide by the Code of Conduct may result in, among other sanctions, suspension or expulsion from participation in or attendance at any HMMS activities.
- All participants are prohibited from using profanity when participating in or attending any HMMS activities.
- Referee abuse or intimidation of any kind, verbal or physical, will not be tolerated.
- No participant shall engage in the use of abusive language, physical contact with the intent to harm or injure, physical abuse, harassment, or intimidation of any kind against any other participant, including players, referees, coaches, assistant coaches, and any other spectator or team supporter.<sup>1</sup>
- Head coaches shall be responsible for the behavior of their assistant coaches, players, trainers, parents, guardians, and team supporters.
- All coaches, assistant coaches, referees, and other official representatives of HMMS must maintain reasonable composure at all times and demonstrate and teach good sportsmanship at all times.
- All coaches, assistant coaches, referees, and other official representatives of HMMS shall abide by and implement practices and policies as approved and communicated by the HMMS Board.
- If any referee, player, coach, parent, guardian, or other participant in an HMMS activity perceives that this Code of Conduct has been violated, they have the right to, and should, report the perceived violation to any member or representative of the HMMS Board for investigation.
- The HMMS Code of Conduct is not limited to the principles enumerated above; any conduct that undermines the goal and purpose of HMMS may be deemed a violation of this Code of Conduct.

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<sup>1</sup> In PA, the Criminal Code at 18 Pa.C.S.2701 defines a simple assault as "attempting to cause, or intentionally or knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury to another" or an "attempt by physical menace to put another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury." 18 Pa.C.S. 2712 provides for "Assault on a Sports Official." Sports officials are defined as "a person at a sports event who enforces the rules of the event, such as an umpire or referee, or a person who supervises the participants, such as a coach." The penalty for violating this law is a 1st degree misdemeanor, which carries a maximum jail term of 5 years or a maximum fine of \$10,000 or both.