

# **MANDEVILLE SOCCER CLUB** **MEMBERSHIP GUIDE AND BY-LAWS**

## **I. THE MISSION OF THE CLUB**

The Mandeville Soccer Club was established in 1994 to organize, administer and promote soccer in the greater Mandeville area for youth and adults. Inherent in this mission are the goals of teaching soccer skills and tactics, providing a safe, fun environment to learn and play soccer, and to foster sportsmanship and teamwork among soccer players.

## **II. MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

The Mandeville Soccer Club is a non-profit organization operated exclusively for purposes permitted by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

- The Club is made up largely of volunteers who are unpaid, and an administration hired by the Club for compensation to handle day-to-day organizational, clerical and other activities as directed by the Board of Directors (“Board” hereafter).
- All registered players, their parents/guardians, coaches, officers, directors and certified referees are members of the Club, and if eighteen years of age or older, have the right to cast one vote at the Annual General Meeting or any extraordinary meeting called by the Board. Each parent may cast only one vote regardless of how many children they have in the Club.
- The Club is governed by an elected Board of Directors consisting of the officers of the Club, including: a President, Past President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Girls Commissioner, Boys Commissioner, Premier Commissioner, Boys Youth Commissioner, Girls Youth Commissioner and Rookies Commissioner, each of whom serve a two year term. The President, Secretary/Treasurer, Girls Commissioner, Premier Commissioner, and Boys Youth Commissioner are elected in even numbered years; the Vice President, and all other Commissioners are elected in odd numbered years. Once elected at the AGM, all new terms begin at the next regularly scheduled board meeting following the AGM.
- The Board must abide by the Articles of Incorporation, as amended, and the by-laws of this Club. The Articles may be amended only as provided in the Articles themselves. These by-laws may be amended from time to time by the Board by a majority vote, with or without notice to the membership.
- The by-laws of the Club contained in this brochure were current as of the date of publication, but do not necessarily contain additional by laws or changes to them enacted since the date of publication.
- The Club itself must abide by those rules and regulations established by the Federation Internationale de Football Associations (FIFA), the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), and the Louisiana Soccer Association (LSA), and must comply with all mandatory rules and regulations of those associations. MSC may modify certain rules and regulations for internal play where permitted.
- The day-to-day handling of the Club’s clerical and administrative affairs is vested in a Club Administrator subject to the supervision of the Board.
- The day-to-day handling of the Club’s operational affairs including the development of players and coaches, and the supervision of the Premier coaches is vested in a Director of Coaching and Player Development (“Coaching Director” hereafter).
- Decisions regarding Club organization, policy and discipline of players and coaches are vested in the Board and its standing Disciplinary Committee.

- Major policy changes may be made by the members at the Annual General Meeting as provided by the Articles of Incorporation, in May of each year by submitting proposals in writing to the Club Administrator no less than 14 days prior to the meeting, or by the Board.

### **III. THE PEOPLE**

#### **A. Referees**

Referees are assigned by the Club to attend sanctioned MSC games by the Club's Referee Assignor. Club assigned referees are required to officiate and call games pursuant to the Laws of the Game established by FIFA, as modified and amended. At certain age group levels, the Laws may be modified by MSC. Club referees have all authority and control over the conduct of games provided by the Laws of the Game, as well as certain additional authority granted by the Club. Certification and qualification of Club referees at each age group level is determined by the Assignor. It is also the decision of the Assignor whether or not club linesman may officiate in lieu of certified associate referees at certain age group levels.

Mandeville Soccer Club has adopted a "zero tolerance" policy with respect to dissent of referee calls or abusive behavior directed to referees from the sidelines by spectators and coaches or by the players. Club assigned referees are specifically authorized to hold coaches responsible for abusive behavior and dissent from parents during a game. Referees may sanction the coach of a team whose spectators' behavior has come into conflict with the Club's mission to provide a safe, fun environment to learn and play soccer, including sending off the coach or terminating the game with a forfeiture granted to the opposing side. This sanction may be made against the coach although the coach himself may be personally blameless.

The referees are empowered by the Club to end any game if in their opinion players or coaches are not conducting themselves according to MSC, LSA and/or FIFA rules, due to weather or other dangerous field conditions. Any game that is terminated by a referee shall be stopped by the coaches, assistant coaches and players. Resumption of play by an MSC team under any circumstances after the referee has called a game over is strictly forbidden, regardless where the game is being played. Further "scrimmaging" or play of any kind whatsoever, and however characterized between opposing teams after a game that has been terminated is also forbidden.

The consequence of a player being shown a red card or a coach being sent off by a referee during or immediately before/after a game shall be that the coach or player is immediately suspended from further play or coaching during the game in progress, and is suspended from the next sanctioned game in which his team competes. The player or coach must immediately and without further dissent leave the playing field and sidelines to a position out of hearing and sight of the referee for the duration of the game. No further contact with the game referees are permitted by any player shown a red card or coach sent off on the day of the infraction. "Sanctioned" games include all scheduled MSC games, including tournaments, and any game scheduled with a team from any other soccer association, wherever played. Unsanctioned games or scrimmages shall not count toward service of this penalty.

Club assigned referees shall prepare a game report regarding any misconduct by coaches or players receiving a red card. This report shall be filed with the Club Administrator within five days of the game. If extraordinary conduct merits further sanction by the Club, the matter will be referred to the Club's standing Disciplinary Committee, and the spectator, player or coach will be allowed an opportunity to be heard either in person or by written response to any complaint regarding the incident in keeping with the Club's by-laws, after which the Club may impose further sanctions it deems necessary. Players receiving two red cards or coaches twice sent off

during the same (Fall or Spring) season are suspended indefinitely and automatically until reinstated by the Board.

## **B. Coaches**

MSC coaches for Recreational and Division 1 teams are volunteers appointed by the Club. Premier teams are coached by professional independent contractors retained by the Club. All coaches are required to submit to an LSA mandated background check. The coaching staff, both professional and volunteer, is the Club's most vital and valuable resource. The Club relies on the coaching staff to carry out the mission of the Club; to teach soccer skills and tactics, provide a safe, fun environment to learn and play soccer, and to foster sportsmanship and teamwork among soccer players. Coaches beginning at the age group U-7 and older are required to have attended at least one appropriate licensure module as defined by the Louisiana Soccer Association for the age of the players he/she coaches. All coaches are responsible to the Club, their players and parents for:

- compliance with the rules and regulations of the Club as set forth in the by-laws and this membership guide;
- organizing the players and their parents with respect to equipment, practices and games;
- ensuring participation of all players in all games of at least one-half the game where applicable;
- conducting themselves at practices and games in a manner consistent with the principles of good sportsmanship and fair play, avoiding dissent of referee calls and acting as a role model for the youth on the team;
- positive coaching that encourages children to strive to better their play, avoiding negative comments toward the players except for purposes of discipline after misconduct;
- knowing the Laws of the Game, as modified for his/her particular age group;
- taking care of minor injuries at practices and games, and ensuring that players having significant injuries are immediately placed in the hands of their parents or medical personnel for further treatment;
- reporting all significant injuries and accidents to the Club Administration;
- recruiting assistant coaches from among the parents on his/her team;
- recruiting parents to serve as club linesmen, as requested by a referee, during games;
- always keeping the education, safety, security and welfare of youth players of foremost concern while they are under their supervision.

When Recreational teams are first formed, the coach may recruit one assistant coach. Up to three parents total may assist in coaching the team, but the other two assistant coaches must be volunteers from players already drafted on the team. Thereafter, if an assistant coaching vacancy occurs, no further recruiting of assistant coaches by the coach is permitted. Further appointments to assistant coaching positions must be made by the coach from the parents of the team in being at the time. If no assistant coach can be found in this manner, the coach may then request that one be appointed from the Age Group Director for his age group.

Assistant coaches are also expected to promote the mission of the Club, and all rules and regulations applicable to head coaches also apply to them. If a coach is absent at a game, an assistant coach may temporarily assume the duties of the coach and under such circumstances, he is expected to maintain the same standards of conduct and sportsmanship as the coach. An assistant coach is expected to assist the head coach in all activities, and to respect the final decision of the coach regarding the team.

MSC does not permit anyone to coach who has been convicted of a felony or any misdemeanor deemed by the Club to be detrimental to the best interests of the players including, but not limited to, any crime involving physical or sexual abuse of a minor. Any coach arrested or indicted for

any felony shall be automatically and immediately suspended from coaching until and unless he or she presents written proof to the applicable commissioner that he/she has been acquitted of such charges by the appropriate judicial authority.

### **C. Players and Parents**

The players and their families are the persons for whom the Club's mission was established and for whose benefit the Club exists. Players are required to register for each soccer season (Fall or Spring) at times designated by the Club. Players will be assigned to soccer teams according to various factors including their age, sex and playing experience.

Parents are expected to volunteer at some point in the season to assist their teams or the Club in some way, particularly with respect to the Club's Halloween Tournament. The Club cannot function effectively without volunteer assistance, particularly in Club Tournaments which must rely upon significant volunteer help to function. Parents may also assist the Club by agreeing to sponsor their team, or other teams in the Club.

Parents as spectators are expected to behave themselves during games and with respect to their children's coaches and teammates in a manner consistent with the stated mission of the Club. Negative or belligerent attitudes or comments during or around games cannot be tolerated, even if such comments are directed at their own children since they also have an impact upon other players, their parents and the coaches. Parents must also refrain from dissenting from the rulings of the referees and be aware that their behavior may result in sanctions against the team even though the players and/or coaches are personally blameless. Parental "coaching" of players from the touchline (beyond encouragement or praise) is counterproductive and discouraged by the Club. The consuming of alcohol is prohibited within the confines of the park in which games at home or away are played. Tobacco products should not be used within 20 yards of the touch line.

Parents who are unhappy with the coach or coaching methods being used must express themselves to the Club through proper channels, and will not be permitted to express disparaging remarks to or about volunteer or professional coaches in the presence of other players, parents or spectators. Parents of Recreational or Division 1 players are expected and encouraged to voice their views about coaches to the Club through the Age Group Director, Commissioners, or to the Club Coaching Director. Parents of Premier players should direct their comments to the team manager, the Premier Commissioner or the Coaching Director.

Parents or spectators who disregard Club policy with respect to their own behavior and demeanor may be banned from attending games as directed by the Disciplinary Committee and the Board. The failure to respect and abide by such rulings, when imposed, may then result in the suspension or expulsion of their child from the team for the sake of the other team members, parents and spectators.

Timely registration is the responsibility of the player or his parents. Registration times are advertised in advance, and information concerning registration dates can be obtained by calling the Club Administrator. The Club reserves the right to impose special late registration fees if and when a player is accepted on a team after the applicable deadlines. Parents may receive a full refund if the player's registration is withdrawn before the draft is held for the specific age group for which the player has registered. Withdrawal after the draft but before the first game will be penalized \$20 and there will be no refund after the games begin.

### **D. Recreational Teams:**

All youth and adult players above the age of four years of age are welcome to join the Club and play Recreational soccer, regardless of race, sex, creed, color or ethnic origin, and regardless of the amount of soccer experience or talent. The Club reserves the right to deny entry only if there

are no roster vacancies in the sex/age group, insufficient numbers of volunteers to provide coaches for a team, lack of field availability for practices or games, lack of an organized league for play, or due to late registration.

Players on Recreational teams are expected and required to play no less than half the game unless special arrangements for specific reasons are made in advance between the child, his parents or guardians and the coach. Disciplinary infractions may not be penalized by depriving Recreational players of playing time unless they are egregious or persistent. In such instances, the behavior must be brought to the attention of the parents and permission sought in advance from the Age Group Director or Commissioner to decrease playing time below half the game. Otherwise, other reasonable disciplinary methods must be utilized.

Recreational teams will be formed for a period of one year at the U-5-U-10 age groups. Generally, Recreational teams formed at the U-11 age may remain together as a team so long as there are a sufficient minimum number of players to form a team, and the team is able to provide a coach. Players may request a re-draft only at the Fall registration if they wish to change teams.

Due to the Club's overriding goal of providing team balance within age groups by blind, random draft, attempts to subvert this process will be resisted. Over the years, a pattern of methods used to avoid equalization of teams has become well known and as a result, the Club must invariably deny requests for transfers to other teams notwithstanding belated demands that a player must not practice on certain days or times, the need to car-pool with particular other players, and so forth. Players with unusual practice or play restrictions should mark their registration forms prominently so that they can be considered before they are assigned to a team. Nevertheless, the Club cannot guarantee that even these requests will be honored.

#### **E. U-10 Developmental Teams:**

Depending on demand and appropriate skill level, the Developmental Teams will consist of boys and girls teams that will form for one year only. Each team will train twice a week with one of the club's staff coaches. These professional training sessions will stress skill development and tactical understanding with emphasis on quality and long-term benefits rather than short-term gain. The teams will be comprised of U-10 players and will compete as U-11 Division 1 in "friendlies" and tournaments against U11 Recreational, Division 1 and possibly some Premier teams as the program teams develop. The goals and objectives of this program are to develop players for future competitive play in a low-pressure, fun environment that encourages players to flourish while focusing on skill development. MSC's expectation is that Developmental players will play at least half the game unless their time is reduced for injury, discipline, or player/parental request.

#### **F. Division 1 Teams:**

Division 1 is an intermediate level of soccer intended to serve those players that have a desire to be challenged by a high level of competition and commitment but either do not wish to play Premier or cannot find a spot in a Premier program. Ideally, this level will be coached by an experienced licensed volunteer/parent (USSF "D" or above) with support from the Division 1 Coaching Director and MSC staff coaches depending on availability. These volunteer coaches must be willing to accept the supervision of the Coaching Director and staff will be expected to follow accepted NSCAA and/or USSF state-of-the-art coaching methodology and must be willing to submit to a background check as mandated by LSA. Division 1 teams will be required to travel to play games and tournaments against other Division 1 teams in Louisiana and the Gulf Coast area. Fall registration fees will cover the Fall and Spring seasons in Division 1. Team formation will be consistent with LSA and USYSA guidelines.

LSA guidelines state:

- The use of tryouts, invitations, recruiting or any like process to roster players selectively to any team on the basis of talent or ability is permitted.
- Each player has no guarantee of minimum playing time.
- Division 1 teams may participate in unlimited invitational tournaments as a competitive or open team.
- Division 1 teams are eligible to participate in state championship competitions as their clubs representative. Clubs may establish eligibility requirements to represent the Club in Division 1 state competition.

Division 1 will be offered at the U-11 age group and older. The Coaching Directors, Commissioners and Age Group Directors will collectively decide all team formation and roster issues consistent with the by-laws and mission of the Club. Determination of appropriate player placement can be based on tryouts, evaluations and/or historical performance. All Division 1 teams will be expected to participate in at least four tournaments over the Fall and Spring seasons combined, excluding the State Championship.

### **Division 1 Team Formation Rules**

#### U-11 (8v8 teams):

The Coaching Directors, Commissioners and Age Group Directors will collectively determine the appropriate player placement based on tryouts, evaluations and/or historical performance. Interested players must register for Division 1, pay fees in full and attend a tryout or evaluation session to be considered for Division 1. Teams will be formed using the highest rated players available. An attempt to balance talent levels will be made at initial team formation in the Fall season and when considering new players in the Spring season. Players registering for Division 1 that are not placed on a Division 1 roster will be placed on a Recreational team and refunded the difference in player fees.

#### U-12 (8v8 teams):

Teams will remain intact and not be re-formed so long as there are sufficient numbers of returning players and the team is able to provide an acceptable coach. However, new players may be added and rostered players may be removed from returning teams as each new season begins. The Coaching Directors, Commissioner and Age Group Directors will collectively determine the appropriate player placement based on tryouts, evaluations and/or historical performance. An attempt to balance talent levels will be a consideration in all roster movement decisions. To be considered for placement on a U-12 Division 1 roster, returning and new players must register for Division 1 and pay fees in full. New players must attend a tryout or evaluation session to be considered for placement on one of the U-12 Division 1 teams.

#### U-13 (11v11 teams):

With the format change to 11 v 11, all teams will be re-formed based on ability and commitment level. If the qualified player pool is sufficient to form more than one team, then the highest rated players will be placed on the first team and the remaining qualified players will be placed on a second team. Balancing team talent will no longer be a consideration when forming Division 1 teams at U-13 and above. New players may be added and/or rostered players may be removed from returning teams as each new season begins. The Coaching Directors, Commissioner and Age Group Directors will collectively determine the appropriate player placement based on tryouts, evaluations and/or historical performance. To be considered for placement on a U-13 Division 1 roster, **all** players must register for Division 1, pay fees in full and attend a tryout or evaluation session. Players registering for Division 1 that are not placed on one of the Division 1 teams may be placed on a Recreational team and refunded the difference in player fees.

U-14 to U-19 (11 v 11 teams):

Teams will remain intact and not be re-formed so long as there are sufficient numbers of returning players and the team is able to provide an acceptable coach. New players may be added and rostered players may be removed from returning teams as each new season begins. The Coaching Directors, Commissioner and Age Group Directors will collectively determine the appropriate player placement based on tryouts, evaluations and/or historical performance. To be considered for placement on a Division 1 roster, returning and new players must register for Division 1 and pay fees in full. New players must attend a tryout or evaluation session to be considered for placement on one of the Division 1 teams. Returning players may be subject to a tryout session if the Club determines that one is necessary. A tryout schedule will be posted before registration ends.

Roster size:     U11\12 maximum: 16 recommended: 11  
                  U13\14 maximum: 18 recommended: 16  
                  U15\16 maximum: 18 recommended: 17  
                  U17\up maximum: 22 recommended: 22

Division 1 coaches will be chosen by the Commissioner with input from the Director of Coaching and the AGD.

While the state association does not require minimum playing time for Division 1 players, in the interest of player development MSC has the following minimum playing time requirements for the U-11 –U19 D-1 age groups.

- 50% minimum in all non league (friendly) games .
- 30% minimum for all tournament bracket games.
- 0% minimum for all tournament semi-final and finals and all state cup games.

### **G. Premier Teams:**

Premier teams are composed of players invited by the Club to participate on such teams due to exceptional ability and a commitment to play soccer at the highest level. The Coaching Director and the Premier Commissioner shall formulate and manage the means and methods by which the Premier teams shall be formed and maintained. Final decisions regarding the player selection of all Premier teams is vested in the Coaching Director and staff coaches.

All coaches for Premier teams will have a minimum “D” or “National” License, or such a combination of a lesser license and playing/coaching experience that is sufficient in the judgment of the Coaching Director to waive the licensure requirement and permit coaching of a Premier team. All Premier Coaches not on staff shall be professional independent contractors, paid by the Club, and directly supervised by the Coaching Director. All Premier Coaches must be familiar with and implement state of the art and advanced coaching methodology consistent with the Club’s philosophy as required by the Coaching Director. The assignment of coaches to Premier Teams is vested in the Coaching Director.

There shall be a maximum of one Premier team per age group and gender for U-13 and above and two teams for each age group and gender for U-11 and U-12. All direct costs incurred by the Premier program plus a proportionate share of the entire Club’s general and administrative costs including staff personnel will be charged through Premier fees such that the Premier teams are self-sustaining.

Premier teams will be formed each year after the conclusion of the Spring season for the Recreational and/or Division 1 teams by try-outs/evaluations at the times and in the manner

provided by the USSF and LSA. There are no guaranteed positions or vested rights to remain on any Premier team after the completion of the Spring season. All Premier players are subject to qualification through competitive try-outs at the discretion of the team coach and the Coaching Director.

Player transfers may occur at any time and are done so at the sole discretion of the Director of Coaching. Premier coaches' primary role in the process should be to inform the Coaching Director of the team's situation and assist in the evaluation (try out) process with the Coaching Director. As always, the Coaching Director will have the final decision on what player(s) are selected and transferred from among those eligible to do so. Premier team managers should not be involved in the process except to facilitate the arrangement of try-outs and other logistical matters under the supervision of the team coach and the coaching director. Their communications should be directed to the coach of their team and/or the coaching director. They should not be used as surrogates of the coach or anyone else to solicit players from within or outside the Club in a manner inconsistent with the Club policy.

Player contracts can only be offered by the Coaching Director after the approval of the Premier Commissioner. Open solicitation of players from other area soccer clubs by coaches or managers may have undesirable consequences on MSC relationships with these organizations and must not be done without prior consultation with the Coaching Director upon approval of the Premier Commissioner. Final paperwork regarding the transfer of players to Premier teams during the season should be completed by the team manager with the assistance of the Club Administrator. While the state association does not require minimum playing time for premier players, in the interest of player development MSC has the following minimum playing time requirements for the U11 – U14 premier age groups:

- 50% minimum in all non-league games
- 30% minimum for all tournament bracket games
- 0% minimum for all league games, tournament semi-final and finals and all state cup games.

Due to some unique costs involved with Premier players and teams, primarily involving the remuneration of professional coaches, dues required for such players are significantly higher than those players who chose to participate in recreational soccer. It is Club policy to waive such fees and dues for players who are eligible for premier play, and whose parents or guardians demonstrate a need for financial assistance to enable their child to play. Requests for fee waivers should be made to the Club Administrator together with a W-2 form for the previous tax year and/or whatever information the parent or guardian of the player would like the Club to consider with respect to need. This request and all such information will be held in confidence by the Club. The decision to grant a waiver shall be vested with the Club Treasurer, and Premier Commissioner.

The fees assessed by the club will be determined each year by the Premier Commissioner and Treasurer and presented to the Board of Directors for approval. The Club will permit Premier team fees and dues to be paid in one of the three following payment plans.

- A down-payment in the amount that is one half of the total amount due will be collected for spring fees (January through May). Monthly payments of 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the total amount due are payable the first of each month from August through December of the soccer year. (U11 – U18)
- Double monthly fee payments which are 1/5<sup>th</sup> the total due are payable the first of each month August through December of the soccer year. (U11 – U17 only)
- A total payment for the full amount for the soccer year August through May.(U11 – U18) New player additions during any given season will be assessed fees in accordance with the duration of their Premier season,

Collection of fees is the responsibility of the Premier team managers and the Club Administrator. Players who are delinquent one month shall be suspended from further play until their account is brought current. The security deposit cannot be used to evade the requirement to pay each month in advance. It is the responsibility of the team manager and the Premier Commissioner to prevent further participation by players delinquent in their dues. Coaches who violate the ban on play will be disciplined by the Club. Teams with more than 25% of their players delinquent in fees may be suspended from further play until all accounts are brought current including the security deposit. Any requests for refunds after the Premier season has begun will be granted only under the following conditions:

- The player receives a season ending injury which results in the removal of the player from the LSA roster.
- The player moves a distance greater than 50 miles from Mandeville.

Players may be removed from the roster by not fulfilling their Premier responsibilities including but not limited to the following.

- 1) Excessive unexcused absence from practice and games.
- 2) Non-payment of Premier dues in a timely manner.
- 3) Any behavior not in keeping with LSA and MSC rules and regulations.

Players removed from Premier rosters must complete their financial responsibilities to the club before being allowed to transfer to any other team within or outside the Mandeville Soccer Club.

The team name "Lakers" is reserved exclusively for the use of the Premier teams. The uniforms must display the MSC Club logo. Further, on all official documents, rosters, player passes, medical consent forms, tournament applications, newspaper or media releases, etc., the team must be designated as the MSC Lakers or Mandeville Soccer Club Lakers. Paraphernalia such as team bags, tee shirts, banners and the like may not display any logo other than the Club logo, MSC Lakers or designated Mandeville Soccer club sponsor logos.

## IV. THE GAME

### A. Equipment

The Club provides to all recreational players at no additional cost a uniform consisting of a shirt, shorts and socks. Alternate uniforms necessary for tournament play are the responsibility of the individual teams desiring to compete in such tournaments, and at their cost.

All Div. 1 teams at the U-11 age and above will wear a uniform designated by the Club with blue, white and black colors consisting of a regular and an alternate uniform. Variations of design or colors among such teams will not be allowed by the Club. Premier teams will likewise be provided with a single style of uniform using only the Club's colors as described above, and consisting of a regular and an alternate uniform.

***All unauthorized or unapproved apparel worn by players or coaches are prohibited and any team wearing such apparel will be subject to disciplinary action.***

Players must also wear adequate shin-guards which must be purchased at the player's expense. Suitable footwear is also the player's responsibility, and generally consists of soccer cleats. Metal cleats, baseball cleats or other cleats which have a toe spike at the point of the shoe are forbidden. Regular sneakers or footwear other than soccer cleats are inadvisable due to the fact that they do

not provide the firm footing required for soccer play, but can be used subject to the approval of the referee. Players must also have a ball for practice. Ball sizes are as follows:

- Rookies through U-8: Size 3 soccer ball
- U-9 through U-12: Size 4 soccer ball
- U-13+ Size 5 soccer ball

Players are also expected to bring water or other suitable refreshment to practice and games. Parents of younger children should ensure this occurs, particularly during warm weather, as dehydration can occur rapidly to youth players.

### **B. Minimum Players**

- Rookies: may play with three players
- U-8 age group: may play with three players
- U-10 age group: may play with four players
- U-11+ and above: may play with seven players

### **C. Maximum Players**

- U-5/6: maximum on field is four players
- U-7: maximum on the field is 4 players
- U-8: maximum on the field is five players
- U-9/10: maximum on the field is six players
- U-11/12: maximum on the field is eight players
- U-13 and up: maximum on the field is eleven players

In the event that a team cannot field the minimum number of players within fifteen minutes of the scheduled start of the game, that team must forfeit the game. If score is needed to be kept, the game will be scored [3-0] in favor of the team prepared to play. If a game is underway and injury causes one team to have less than the minimum, the game will be rescheduled; if by penalties, the team shall forfeit the game.

### **D. Recommended Roster Size**

In order to achieve maximal playing time and coaching, the Club has guidelines to limit the number of players on teams *when possible* as follows:

- Rookies: eight players
- U-7: seven players
- U-8: eight players
- U-9 & 10: eight players
- U-11 & 12: eleven players
- U-13 & 14: sixteen players
- U16 & 19: eighteen players

However, it is also Club policy to avoid turning away players who submit timely application and at times the roster sizes described above must be increased to accommodate an unusually large draft of players.

### **E. Guest playing under LSA policy 305 with teams outside of MSC:**

MSC encourages players to experience playing a higher level of soccer by guest playing on other teams. MSC will allow a player to guest play under the following conditions:

- 1) The request to guest play is made by an official representative of the requesting team (head coach, premier team manager, Assistant Director of Coaching or the Director of Coaching).
- 2) The request is first made to the head coach or the DOC of the team rostering the player in question.
- 3) The guest player's team does not have a previously scheduled game on the day the player is requested to guest play.
- 4) The LSA "Guest Player Release Form" is properly filled out and signed in accordance with all LSA rules and regulations.

**F. Guest playing with MSC teams:**

- 1) The request to guest play is made by an official representative of the requesting team (head coach, premier team manager, Assistant Director of Coaching or the Director of Coaching).
- 2) The request is first made to the DOC or the head coach of the team rostering the player in question.
- 3) The LSA "Guest Player Release Form" is properly filled out and signed in accordance with all LSA rules and regulations if required by tournament or club rules.

**G. Playing up:**

**Grade Appropriate Players:**

Any player who is grade appropriate will not be considered as a play-up. Parents must make the request for their child at the time of registration by filling out the play up request form.

Playing up is generally not recommended by MSC, LSA, or USYSA even when the child is grade appropriate. Parents must give strong consideration to their child's abilities when making this request.

**For players who are not Grade Appropriate:**

Any player wishing to play up one age group may do so under the following conditions:

**Recreational and U10 Developmental** – players may request to play up when not grade appropriate. Approval will require a written recommendation from the DOC and approval from the board of directors. The board will grant approval only to those very rare cases where a player is extraordinarily advanced and physically dominant in his/her age group. Written confirmation must be given by the DOC and board of directors before a player can be rostered.

**Premier and Division 1** - players may request to play up when not grade appropriate. Players must try out for both the age group in which they desire to play up to and their appropriate age group. Since teams are formed on a tryout basis, the MSC coaching staff will have an opportunity to evaluate and determine a player's ability to play up. Approval will be given by the commissioner and the DOC before the player is rostered. Approval is based on playing ability, and there are very few cases where approval will be granted.

**H. Touchlines**

Unless impracticable, or unless the referee directs otherwise, parents and spectators shall view the game from the opposite side of the field from the players and coaches. Players, coaches and spectators shall keep themselves, chairs, equipment and other objects minimum of [three] feet away from the touchline to avoid injury to players and allow associate referees (linesmen) a clear view of the line. They must also immediately abide by any requests of the associate or senior referees to move farther back away from the touchline.

### **I. Substitutions**

Recreational soccer permits free substitution of players throughout the game, except for the final two minutes of each half of the game. Players must be substituted in the following manner:

- on any stoppage of play with the permission of the referee;
- only after requesting substitution of the associate (linesman) or senior (center) referee prior to the time permitted for substitutions;
- only from the halfway line;
- players enter the field only after the substituted player has reached the touchline, or when waved on by the senior referee.

Players may also be substituted after a goal by either team after notifying the referee of any substitutions. Injured players who must leave the field may be substituted by the team suffering the injury only, after notice to the referee.

For rookies to U-8 teams, the players are substituted at the “quarter mark”, unless due to injury or the request of a player.

### **J. Referees**

The Club assigns associate and senior referees to all games for U-11+ as availability permits. Occasionally, it is necessary to request the assistance of “club” linesmen for these games. Unless a club linesman is a certified referee, he cannot call any fouls or penalties, and his role is simply to assist the referee to determine out-of-bounds balls.

A single, center referee is assigned to games for U-10 level games; with club linesmen expected at most games. No referees are assigned to U-8 or rookie games, and coaches are expected to handle referee duties at this age level. For rookie games, both coaches should participate together during the game as referees. For U-7 and U-8 age groups, the coaches should arrange to alternate refereeing duties during the game so that only one coach is on the field at a time.

### **K. Goalkeepers**

To encourage younger players to try goalkeeping, it is Club policy to discourage physical contact with goalies in the U-10 age group and below. The Club modifies the Laws of the Game at this level so that “fingertip” control of the ball is sufficient to cause opposing players to make no attempt to kick the ball or otherwise come into contact with the goalkeeper. Balls kicked into the goal which are physically in the possession of a goalie in this age group or below, however slightly, are disallowed. For U-11+ age groups, physical possession and control of the ball are required, and physical contact with the goalkeeper as and to the extent permitted by the Laws of the Game is permitted by Club policy. However, referees are encouraged by the Club to liberally call fouls for the protection of goalkeepers from injury or deliberate physical contact which in the judgment of the referee is calculated to provoke or intimidate them.

### **L. Special Rules for Girls**

It is the policy of MSC that during the game, girls shall not be called for handling the ball if it strikes their arms while protecting their chest from a kicked ball. However, purposeful deflection

or other movement of the arms that are deemed intended to gain an advantage, in the sole and exclusive judgment of the referee, does constitute handling of the ball and should be penalized accordingly.

### **M. Rescheduling Games**

All games which have to be rescheduled should be done through the MSC Club Administrator. Games may not be able to be rescheduled in every case due to lack of availability of fields, referees, or other constraints. For this reason, teams do not have a vested right to reschedule a game. However, every effort should be made to play all scheduled Club games if possible for the benefit of both teams involved.

### **N. Duration of Play**

Club games will be scheduled with the following time parameters for play during the regular season:

- Rookies: four 8 minute quarters
- U-8: four 12 minute quarters
- U-10: two 25 minute halves
- U-12 two 30 minute halves
- U-14 two 35 minute halves
- U-16 two 40 minute halves
- U-19+ two 45 minute halves

### **O. Weather**

As safety of players, coaches and spectators is of paramount importance to the Club, practices or games will be suspended or cancelled due to inclement weather. Coaches and referees are required to suspend games or practices where lightening is present. When field conditions are too wet or muddy to permit safe play, especially in older age groups, the Club may cancel games as well. Games canceled due to inclement weather or dangerous field conditions are not grounds for any refund of any fees or dues from the Club.

MSC must abide by decisions to close fields made by Pelican Park or other property owners where games are played. In the case of Pelican Park, players and parents are advised that the Park has established a “hotline” at 626-1444 to call prior to a game or practice when rain has occurred to see if a particular field has been closed.

### **P. Game Conduct:**

Players and coaches are expected always to abide by the Club’s principals of good sportsmanship and fair play. However, players and coaches are specifically prohibited from:

- being behind either goal line during the game;
- being closer than eighteen yards from the corner of the field;
- entering the field unless a player has been injured and only when summoned on the field by the referee;
- consuming alcohol or tobacco at or during a game or at practices;
- making derogatory gestures or statements to referees or opposing players and/or spectators, including particularly dissenting from the referees’ rulings during the game.

The Club reserves the right to ban parents or spectators from sanctioned games who have exhibited persistent or intolerable behavior incompatible with the mission of the Club or the

safety and welfare of the players, referees and coaches. The Club may suspend a player from a team whose parents or spectators fail to abide by Club rulings in this respect.

#### **Q. Disciplinary Committee:**

Incidents or misconduct involving members of the Club that may involve a violation of the Articles, By-Laws or Rules of the Club as expressed in this Membership Guide will be referred to a standing committee appointed by the Board and known as the Disciplinary Committee. This Committee shall have jurisdiction over all Club members, players, coaches, teams and sanctioned games in which MSC teams participate, wherever they may be played.

The Disciplinary Committee shall be composed of the following individuals:

1. The Club President or, in his absence, the Vice President;
2. The Commissioner of the Division in which the member is active;
3. The Director of Coaching;
4. Two member coaches nominated by the President and approved by the Board who are willing to serve for a term of one year.

The Committee shall conduct such investigations of incidents or misconduct referred to it by any Board member, the Coaching Director or the Referee Assignor as necessary in its judgment to establish the true facts of the situation to its satisfaction, and may then impose such sanctions or conditions as it deems necessary to preserve order within the Club and promote the Club's mission.

The Committee shall promulgate its own rules and procedures with respect to the investigation and/or disposition of incidents falling within its jurisdiction, but shall always permit any member accused of misconduct and liable to sanction by the Club an opportunity to be heard and prior notice of the essence of the complaint made against him. A response to the complaint may be in person or in writing at the option of the accused member.

An accused member may refer the Committee to witnesses, but does not have the right to require the Committee to hear such witnesses at any hearing afforded to him under this section. An appeal from the decision of the Committee may be made to the Board within ten days of receipt of written notice of the Committee's disposition of the complaint, but only after payment of a non-refundable fee of \$50.00 to the Club. The decision of the Committee or, if appealed, the Executive Board shall be final and nothing in this section shall be deemed to have afforded any member any right or cause of action at law to dispute or enjoin the decision of the Club toward that member.

#### **R. Abandonment of Game:**

Games which are abandoned during the first half of the game due to weather, field conditions or other circumstances beyond the control of the players, coaches or referee which render further play unsafe shall be replayed in their entirety, without regard to the score or any fouls which may have been pending at the time of the game, as if the game had never been played. If play is abandoned at any time after three minutes of play in the second half of the game, it shall be treated as a complete game and the score at the time the game was called will be the deemed the final score of the game.

Games which are abandoned by the unilateral action of a coach removing the team's players from the field, or by players leaving the field for any reason without the permission of the referee, shall be deemed a forfeit. The team that abandoned the game shall be deemed by the Club to have lost the game by a score of 3-0, regardless what the actual score was at the time the game was abandoned. The outcome of the game is final except where a protest is allowed by the rules of the Club, and in such circumstances, the outcome of the game will be decided by the Board.

#### **S. Protests:**

Coaches may protest the outcome of a game believed to have been unduly influenced by misconduct only under the following conditions:

- a non-refundable fee of \$100.00 must be paid to the Club;
- no games played by teams younger than U-11 can be protested;;
- no inter-association “friendly” games may be protested.
- judgment calls on fouls by the referee during a game may not be the subject of a protest

Coaches wishing to protest a game must submit a written complaint to the Club Administrator within 48 hours of the end of the game, at which point the Executive Board will investigate and evaluate the complaint as it sees fit. The decision of the Board regarding the protest is absolutely final and binding upon all teams and the referees.

*This Membership Guide and By-Laws brochure summarizes current policies and by-laws as of March, 2010.*