



Central Penn Youth Soccer League

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To All CPYSL Referees & Coaches:

Goal differential/Playing down to encourage spirit of the game.

Background

CPYSL at their June 2018 Board Meeting introduced a policy of teams removing a player when the goal differential exceeds five (5) goals effective for the Fall '18 season and beyond. This policy is in effect for all teams in U12 and younger age groups in divisions 2 & below. Coaches are to remove a player at the scoring of the next goal. If the goal differential yields back to five (5) or less goals the player can be added until such time the differential returns.

Findings

CPYSL has reminded clubs about this policy at numerous CPYSL board meetings and with emailed correspondence during the last few years and yet here we are 6 years later having to send another reminder to something that should be common practice for all teams when the outcome has been decidedly determined early in a match. This policy should not only be a League practice, but part of the Clubs directives who make up our League to maintain a Sportsmanship atmosphere. As much as we would hate to have an opponent run up a score on us, there are many coaches who have not embraced the spirit of the game to make the event fun for all participants and needlessly run up the score against lesser opposition. As CPYSL does not use goal differential (only win/loss records) to determine winners, CPYSL sees no need to demean opponents by winning a game in this manner. It was hoped that implementing this policy would just gain traction on its own, that the coaches in our League would be professional enough to create the air of "Fair Play" and not to demean opponents not make it unduly hard for a referee to officiate a game as it becomes lopsided & chippy.

Note: To have to ask a youth referee to also manage this when coaches are in control of their teams that can surely observe when they are easily defeating their opponent and can sub out players nonchalantly to challenge their team better and even the skill level seems to make the task that much harder for a referee, therefore it is up to coaches to enforce and practice.

Addendum: As this policy was voted into rule by a majority of our members; CPYSL expects all their member clubs to urge your coaches to be professional and ethical in participating in the league. There are many ways to keep from 'running up' a score against a weaker opponent, so for it to get to this level in a match lasting less than an hour doesn't seem to be necessary to need implementing.

Tips to try to keep scores from getting lopsided even if the skill level is:

- Play your bench longer and your starters for shorter amounts;
- Tell players to take #x passes before you can take a shot;

- Tell players they must pass back or switch fields #x times before you can take a shot;
- Designate one of your non-scorers to be the only player allowed to shoot, have everyone else feed him/her the ball;
- Tell players no more shots taken only play keep-away unless/until opposing team scores;
- Playing with one or two less players;
- Switch the offense and defense;
- Only weak footed shots from outside the penalty area;
- Corners taken short and only used to set up for clear head ball shot;

These are just suggestions, and all may not work in your particular situation (e.g. if your players are young and don't understand switching fields or passing back yet). Let's work together to make soccer an enjoyable learning experience for all, it is getting tougher and tougher for clubs to keep players returning to the game we enjoy, why add to that concern by intentionally chasing player away.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James A. Connors III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small "III" at the end.

James Connors
President CPYSL