

Guidelines for Blowouts during Soccer Games

The following statements need to be established as a baseline for soccer blowout discussions:

1. Blowouts happen.
2. Regional Commissioners and Division Coordinators do their best to evenly distribute talent among the teams in their region, but teams can never be perfectly balanced.
3. There is no control over balancing teams from different regions that play on an area schedule, so the potential for blowouts in inter-regional games is inevitable.
4. Winning is important and a great motivator for competitive play, but dominating and blowing out another team is about validation, not development.
5. Games that are drastically unbalanced are not developing the skills of either team.
6. Every player should have the chance to develop their skills.
7. AYSO 3T guidelines for a blowout is a 6 goal differential.

Blowout Guidelines for Coaches:

1. Coaches need to be prepared for a situation where they are blowing out another team by initiating a change of play that can be discreetly communicated to their team during an unbalanced game.
2. Establishing a change of play needs to be done during training sessions and not improvised during an unbalanced game.
3. Coaches should not wait until the goal differential is 6 before initiating a change of play that will balance the score. If a team is up by 3-4 Goals and dominating the game, it is time to implement a change of play.

Blowout Guidelines for Referees:

1. At a 4 goal differential, remind the winning coach about the 6 goal differential rule.
2. If the score reaches at a 6 goal differential, stop the game, clear the field and invite only the head coaches to the middle of the field for a discussion.
3. Explain to the coaches that the game cannot continue unless a change is made. Acceptable alternatives are:
 - a. Splitting up the teams for a jamboree style game.
 - b. Having both coaches agree to continue the unbalanced game.
 - c. Ending the game there.
4. Leave the decision up to the coaches unless they ask your opinion. Jamboree is the best alternative for player development and usually a lot of fun.

Blowout Guidelines for Coach Trainers and Educators:

1. Re-enforce the blowout guidelines for coaches during coach training courses and offer some solutions that coaches can integrate into their practices. “Secret Striker” has been the most effective method of balancing unbalanced games, while keeping both teams engaged.