

NASA TOPHAT

Game Day Handbook

U6 & U8 Recreational Program





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ASSESSING SCHEDULES AND ROSTERS

Schedules are typically open one week prior to first scheduled game.

You will receive an email from our administrators when rosters are available. The email address associated with your account is where you will find your roster. Typically, rosters are available two weeks prior to first official practice per the NTH Website.

Only those players that are on your team roster are able to practice and play on with your team. All Roster Changes must go through the registrar's office:
email to lauren.horne@nasa-ga.com

NTH RECREATIONAL PHASE II (U6/U8) PHILOSOPHY

Overview

So, you made it out of Phase I, Little Kickers and made it to U6 or progressing through U8. Here is the philosophy for Under 6 and Under 8 soccer players. For most, the Recreational Program at these ages are essentially the players' first experience with the game of soccer. It is important for the players to be given the opportunity to develop in a fun and purposeful environment.

OBJECTIVES

First Objective: To promote and emphasize the skill of dribbling. We are looking for our players to be comfortable and confident on the ball. The beginning stages of Ball Mastery is paramount to the next progressions. As hard as the task is, we want to discourage aimless kicking of the ball.

When young players are conditioned to just kick the ball forward as far as possible, their skill development is stunted, making it harder for them to reach their true potential. Dribbling is the foundation and preparation for all the other fundamental skills of soccer, such as 1st touch, passing, and shooting. Laying the proper dribbling foundation at the youngest years will enhance the players' ability to improve all soccer skills. No matter what level the players will end up playing, recreational, academy or select.



Second Objective: To promote decision-making by the players on the field and reduce their dependence on adults for problem-solving. Soccer is a player's game, meaning that it is the player who must make the decisions on the field. Therefore, frequent positive reinforcement (praise and encouragement) should be given but limited instruction.

Role as a Parent

It is often hard for you to watch your child lose the ball in front of his/her own goal and for the other team to score. So, the next time your child has the ball in his/her half, you can't help it and shout "kick it!" But every time they kick it, they lose another opportunity to learn to dribble. Therefore, instead of using the words 'kick it' during the games or practices, replace this with **'Soft First Touch'** and **'Keep It Close'**. Every time your child goes to the ball, his/her first touch on the ball should be a soft one, providing the opportunity to dribble.

Dribbling and Passing

There is a strong correlation between the ability to dribble and the ability to pass. Typically, the best dribblers on the team are also the best passers. This is because both skills require the ability to shift body weight quickly from one foot to the other and balance on one foot while propelling the ball with the other. Once a player becomes a good dribbler, he/she automatically starts to look up and survey the field in between touches, increasing the chance of a pass.

PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

- ⦿ Players must wear their uniform, (NTH T-shirt or jersey, shorts, and socks) for each game
- ⦿ Shin guards are mandatory and must be a commercially manufactured product specifically designed for the purpose. Home-made products will not be allowed
- ⦿ Shin guards should be covered with socks
- ⦿ Soccer cleats are recommended for U6 players. (Tennis shoes are allowed)
- ⦿ Soccer cleats are mandatory for U8 players
- ⦿ No baseball, softball, or football cleats are allowed
- ⦿ Players should bring their soccer ball (size 3)
- ⦿ Players should bring a drink
- ⦿ No jewelry should be worn by players
- ⦿ Players may wear a cast on the hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, upper arm, or shoulder if it is covered and padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½-inch thick
- ⦿ For safety, players may not participate with improper equipment



AVOIDING A “BLOWOUT”

In an effort to provide an environment that is both fun and productive for teams to continue to develop, avoiding a “blowout” is key. A “blowout” is a game in which one team is scoring a significantly higher number of goals than the opposition, for example 6-0. This type of score line does not help the development of either team and can hurt the collective psychology of the opposition. A few helpful hints in avoiding this are listed below:

- 1) If your team has a dominant player (player who is scoring all the goals)
 - a) Challenge that player to dribble only with their weaker foot
 - b) Challenge that player to pass the ball to a teammate to see if their teammate can score
 - c) Challenge that player to only shoot with their weaker foot
 - d) Challenge that player to perform at least one move (e.g., a turn move) before dribbling towards the opponent's goal
- 2) If your team has more than one dominant player...
 - a) As well as the options above, attempt to balance your team so you don't have all of the dominant players on the same field at the same time
 - b) Have one of the dominant players in goal and rotate them with other dominant players
 - c) Ask the team to make a certain number of consecutive passes before going to goal
 - d) Ask the team to shoot first time (which forces players have to pass to each other)
 - e) Ask all players on your team to touch the ball before they can go to goal. If opponent's touch the ball then they all must touch it again before going to goal

*** Identify these dominant players to Recreational Director so the club may provide an opportunity for them to play in a more challenging environment the following season ***

with a greater challenge to further their development while allowing the opposition an opportunity to develop also. Remember the emphasis of recreational soccer is Player Development, and not winning!



RESCHEDULING GAMES

Given the impact that the weather can have on game schedules, NTH administration may proactively reschedule rained-out games as a means to ensure that teams end up playing a reasonable number of games over the course of a season.

Please note that games will not be rescheduled for Under 6 to Under 8 teams due to a coach conflict. Games will be played as scheduled and although the club will help, it will be the responsibility of the team to provide an appropriate replacement (i.e. assistant coach or willing parent/guardian).

We do not anticipate coach conflicts, but if they do occur, we hope that each team would be willing to support the players and help with games. At these young ages, there is very limited “coaching” involved during the game. As long as you are familiar with the game format, the game should run smoothly, and the players will have an enjoyable experience.

















U6 Game Format

The following is a brief overview of how games are conducted for the Under-6 program:







START OF PLAY

-  Games are 4v4 so all players can be involved in the action and get touches on the ball
-  HOME team kicks off
-  Players can pass or dribble from kick off
-  Parents/helpers/coaches should remain around the perimeter as much as possible. One Volunteer may be on the field, but not to impede play.

GAME PLAY

-  The game begins and 12 minutes of soccer is played
-  A 60-second water break is taken for both teams
-  Players return to the field and play another 12 minutes of soccer
-  A 5-minute half-time is taken for both teams
-  Players return to the field and play 12 minutes of soccer
-  A 60-second water break is taken for both teams
-  Players return to the field and play another 12 minutes of soccer
-  Game ends. A total of 48 minutes of soccer is played

NEW BALL METHOD

-  "New ball method" means that when a ball goes out of the field of play, players remain on the field and a different ball is **ROLLED** along the ground onto the field from the side where the ball went out of play. Just remember, when the ball stops, the fun stops and players at this age will entertain themselves.
-  A minimum of 2 helpers (coaches or parents) is needed per game (1 from each team)
-  A helper is on one sideline, and the second helper on the opposite sideline
-  Helpers should have a soccer ball in hand and are responsible for keeping the game going
-  If the ball goes out on their side then they **ROLL** a new ball to the team that did not kick it out (preferably toward a player that has not been as involved in the game)
-  Upon a goal, both teams return to the middle. One helper puts a new ball in the middle and the other can get the ball out of the goal



SUBSTITUTIONS

- ⦿ Additional players are substitutes and should be rotated into the game every 3-4 minutes, so all players receive equal playing time, if a player needs to be subbed earlier, that is acceptable.
- ⦿ All players must receive a minimum of 50% playing time
- ⦿ It is recommended to have a parent/helper manage the subs on game day to keep track of who has played.
- ⦿ It is recommended that substitutions occur quickly, and at the same time, to reduce delay in game play

BASIC RULES

- ⦿ **Goal:** Both teams return to the middle. One helper puts a new ball in the middle and the other can get the ball out of the goal
- ⦿ **Handball:** Players are not allowed to use their hands to touch/control the ball. If this is occurring frequently then quickly stop the game and inform everyone that they must use their feet and not their hands and then quickly get the game going again
- ⦿ **Pushing:** At these ages players are bound to bump into each other but pushing is not allowed and should be addressed if this is occurring by reminding players during practice activities and Saturday games that pushing is not allowed
- ⦿ If a player is consistently pushing during the game, then sub them out. Gently remind them, that they cannot put hands on other players to get the ball. If the player does not understand, then inform them that they were pushing and show them the action that is not allowed. Hopefully, this will help the player to become aware that they are not meant to be doing this. When they return to play keep an eye on their behavior to see if it has improved. If so, make sure to praise them.















U8 GAME FORMAT

The following is a brief overview of how games are conducted for the Under-8 program:





START OF PLAY

-  Games are 4v4 (**NO GOALKEEPERS**)
-  HOME team kicks off
-  Players pass to their teammate from kick off to begin play
-  Players should rotate positions and not spend too long in goal
-  Coaches should remain on opposite sidelines and are responsible for refereeing the game. The ball is played in per FIFA rules. Throw-in, Goal Kick, Corner Kick.
-  Parents/Spectators will remain off of the playing field. Allowing the players to have a chance to play

GAME PLAY

-  The game begins and will play 4-12 minute Quarters
-  A 60-Second Break in between quarter 1 / 2 and 3 / 4
-  A 5-Minute Half-time between quarter 2 and 3.
-  Game ends. A total of 48 minutes of soccer is played

SUBSTITUTIONS

-  Additional players are substitutes and should be rotated into the game every 6 minutes (halfway through each quarter). If a player needs to be subbed sooner, that is acceptable, as long as they earn 50% of the total game time.
-  All players must receive a minimum of 50% playing time
-  It is recommended to have a parent/helper manage the subs on game day to keep track of who has played.
-  It is recommended that substitutions occur quickly, and at the same time, to reduce delay in game play



BASIC RULES

- ⦿ **Goal Kick:** If team A kicks the ball out of bounds for a goal kick then team A must retreat to the halfway line. Team B player places the ball on the ground inside the field of play (coach/referee guess about 2 or 3 steps for the “goalkick”) and passes to a teammate as quickly as possible. As soon as the ball is in the field of play and either has been touched by team B on their half of the field or has crossed the halfway line, Team A can attempt to get the ball
- ⦿ **Corner Kick:** If Team A kicks the ball out on the end line where their own goal is then it is a corner. A player from Team B places the ball down in the corner and his/her teammates should be positioned close to the goal so the corner taker can pass the ball into the middle to them. Players should not retreat to the halfway line
- ⦿ **Goal:** When a goal is scored, teams return to the half way line. A coach puts a new ball in the middle and the game is restarted
- ⦿ **Pushing** - At these ages players are bound to bump into each other but pushing is not allowed and should be addressed. An intentional push results in a foul to the player/team that was pushed. If frequent pushing occurs by a certain player then this player should be substituted, and the behavior addressed.
- ⦿ **Foul:** Any intentional handballs, pushing, tripping, kicking etc... results in an indirect free kick from the spot where the foul occurred. The game is stopped, and ball is given to the opposing team.
- ⦿ **Indirect Free Kick:** is awarded to the opposing team when a player commits a foul. Defending team must remain 6 yards away from the ball before it is kicked. A goal may not be scored directly from an indirect free kick, rather it must be touched by a second player (either team) before a goal can be scored. If the ball goes in goal directly from an indirect free kick, a goal kick is awarded to the defending team.





U5 to U8 Refereeing

In reference to the refereeing of the game by coaches....

Coaches should...

1. Communicate at the beginning of game to decide whether...
 - a. both coaches are calling fouls in their half of the field only
 - b. both coaches are calling fouls regardless of where on field
 - c. whether one coach is taking the lead and calling everything
2. Inform spectators
3. Err on the side of caution and always ensure the safety of players

In reference to fouls...

1. Coaches should (briefly) explain to all players (and spectators) what the foul was called for
2. If opposing coach did not call something that you (coach) felt was a foul then call it and explain to all the reason for the call (fields are small enough, everyone can hear the justification). Do your best not to interrupt the flow of the game.
3. **If both teams are making fouls (whether they are being called or not) then...**
 - a. do not let the game get out of hand
 - b. coaches should communicate and all remaining fouls should be called for the remainder of the period...this should give the game (players and spectators) a chance to calm down
4. **If fouls are being made by one team...**
 - a. coach should discuss with opposing coach the types of fouls/behavior to work with all players. Make sure both coaches are on the same page
 - b. coaches should discuss ways to help provide a safer environment
5. **If certain players are getting "rough" with each other...**
 - a. Work together as a coaching unit, not us vs. them to help remedy a situation that is correctable. Remember, these athletes are young and needs your guidance.
 - b. Communicate, Communicate, Communicate with each other as coaches during the course of the game.
6. **If a particular player is making continuous similar fouls (rough plays) then...**
 - a. **First foul:** inform player (and all players/spectators) why the foul occurred and help the player understand why the behavior is not allowed. **Leave player in the game.**
 - b. **Second foul:** inform player (and all players/spectators) why the foul occurred and explain this behavior is not allowed. **Leave player in the game.**
 - c. **Third foul:** inform player (and all players/spectators) why the foul occurred and explain why this behavior is not allowed. **Sub player** and player sits out for at least 2-4 minutes. Inform parents the reason also so they can help resolve.
 - d. If player understands and is ready to play, then allow back into play...if behavior continues then remove from game and follow the steps again.



NASA TOPHAT SOCCER

LAWS OF THE GAME

The Rules of Play used will be the "FIFA Laws of the Game", as modified by the US YOUTH SOCCER Official Administrative Rulebook and those modifications contained herein (if not listed below, FIFA Laws of the game apply).

All age divisions: No one (Spectators or Participants) shall be behind the goal line (end line) at each of the corner flags.

All Spectators: will sit opposite of coaches/players on the touch lines (sidelines).

Listed below are the "Laws of the Game" that apply to the age-appropriate age division.

Coaches:

1. U4-U8, one coach may be on the field with their team, but not to impede play.
2. U10 and above, may walk from corner flag to midline, but not cross either.
3. If coaches are giving instruction to an official in a negative manner, the official has the right to enforce the "seatbelt" rule. No walking the sidelines and must be seated on the bench, only getting up to tend an injury.
4. Any coach who is awarded the "seatbelt" rule, has earned the entire coaching team to adhere to the "seatbelt" rule **(NO EXCEPTIONS)**.
5. No more than 3 team personnel on the team side, per team. (coaches, trainer, team manager).

ALL Present Players: Play a minimum of 50% of each game. With exception to illness or injury.

AGE GROUP	GAME LENGTH	SIZE OF BALL	# OF PLAYERS ON FIELD	# OF PLAYERS TO START GAME	PLAYING TIME (EACH GAME)	SUBSTITUTIONS
U4/U5	30-min	3	3v3	2	50%	Unlimited
U6	4 - 12 min. Quarters	3	4v4	2	50%	Unlimited
U7/U8	4 - 12 min. Quarters	3	4v4	3	50%	Unlimited Per Consent of Ref
U9/U10	2 - 25 min. halves	4	7v7	5	50%	Unlimited Per Consent of Ref
U11/U12	2 - 30 min. halves	4	9v9	6	50%	Unlimited Per Consent of Ref
U14	2 - 35 min. halves	5	11v11	7	50%	Unlimited Per Consent of Ref
U16	2 - 40 min. halves	5	11v11	7	50%	Unlimited Per Consent of Ref
U19	2 - 45 min. halves	5	11v11	7	50%	Unlimited Per Consent of Ref

1. Substitutions (for U6 - U12).
 - a. for any small-sided less than 11 v 11 games, subs should be permitted at any stoppage with the permission of the referee.
2. Substitutions, consent of referee at following times (for U13 -U19).
 - a. Prior to throw-in your favor.
 - b. Prior to goal-kick by either team.
 - c. After a goal, by either team.
 - d. After an injury and the Referee has stopped play. Not just for the injured player.
 - e. At Half-Time.
 - f. After a Caution (yellow card) or Send Off (red card) by either team.

A sent off player cannot be substituted, and that team will play with one player down.





AGE GROUP	GOALKEEPERS	SLIDE TACKLING	HEADING THE BALL	REFEREE(S)	OFFSIDE LAW	FREE KICKS
U4/U5	NO	NO	NO	Coaches	NO	Indirect
U6	NO	NO	NO	Coaches	NO	Indirect
U7/U8	NOT IN LEAGUE PLAY	NO	NO	Coaches	NO	Indirect
U9/U10	YES, NO ROYAL OR WHITE SHIRT	YES	NO	YES	YES	Direct/Indirect
U11/U12	YES, NO ROYAL OR WHITE SHIRT	YES	YES	YES	YES	Direct/Indirect
U14	YES, WEAR DIFFERENT COLOR THAN BOTH TEAMS PLAYING	YES	YES	YES	YES	Direct/Indirect
U16	YES, WEAR DIFFERENT COLOR THAN BOTH TEAMS PLAYING	YES	YES	YES	YES	Direct/Indirect
U19	YES, WEAR DIFFERENT COLOR THAN BOTH TEAMS PLAYING	YES	YES	YES	YES	Direct/Indirect

- **Headers:** All 12U & 14U players shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes of heading training per week, with no more than 20 headers per player, per week. **NO HEADERS AT U11, Heading is allowed at the U12 Division.**
- **Headers:** Deliberate or accidental headers will not be allowed (referee discretion on “deliberate”). An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team. If in goal area, ball will be placed to the nearest line outside of that area.

In the U10 Division (7v7):

1. The goalkeeper must be given at least as much time in each game as a field player as he/she plays at Goalkeeper (a player cannot play goalkeeper an entire game at this level).

Build-Out Lines (For U8, Kicks from the “goal” area) for U10, see below:

1. The build-out line promotes learning how to play out of the back in a less pressured setting.
2. When the goalkeeper has the ball in his or her hand hands during play from the opponent, the opposing team must move behind the build-out line until the ball is put into play.
3. Once the opposing team is behind the build-out line, the goalkeeper can pass, throw or roll the ball to a teammate.
- Punts and drop kicks are not allowed for U10 and younger age divisions.**
4. After the ball is put into play by the goalkeeper, the opposing team can cross the build-out line and play resumes as normal.
5. The opposing team must also move behind the build-out line prior to a goal kick and may only cross the build-out line once the ball has left the penalty area.
6. If a goalkeeper punts or drop kicks the ball, an indirect free kick should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the punt or drop kick occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the nearest point to where the offense occurred.
7. The build-out line will also be used to denote where offside offenses can be called.
8. Players cannot be penalized for an offside offense between the halfway line and the buildout line.
9. Players can be penalized for an offside offense between the build-out line and the goal line.

Build-Out Line Application:

1. Ideally, the goalkeeper will wait to put the ball into play once all opponents are past the buildout line.
2. However, the goalkeeper can put the ball into play sooner but he or she does so accept the positioning of the opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.
3. To support the intent of the development rule, coaches and referees should be mindful of any intentional delays being caused by opponents not retreating in a timely manner or encroaching over the build-out line prior to the ball being put into play.
4. Coaches are responsible for addressing these types of issues with their players.
5. Referees can manage the situation with misconduct if deemed appropriate.
6. Referees should be flexible when enforcing the 6-second rule and counting the time of possession should only begin when all opponents have moved behind the build-out line.