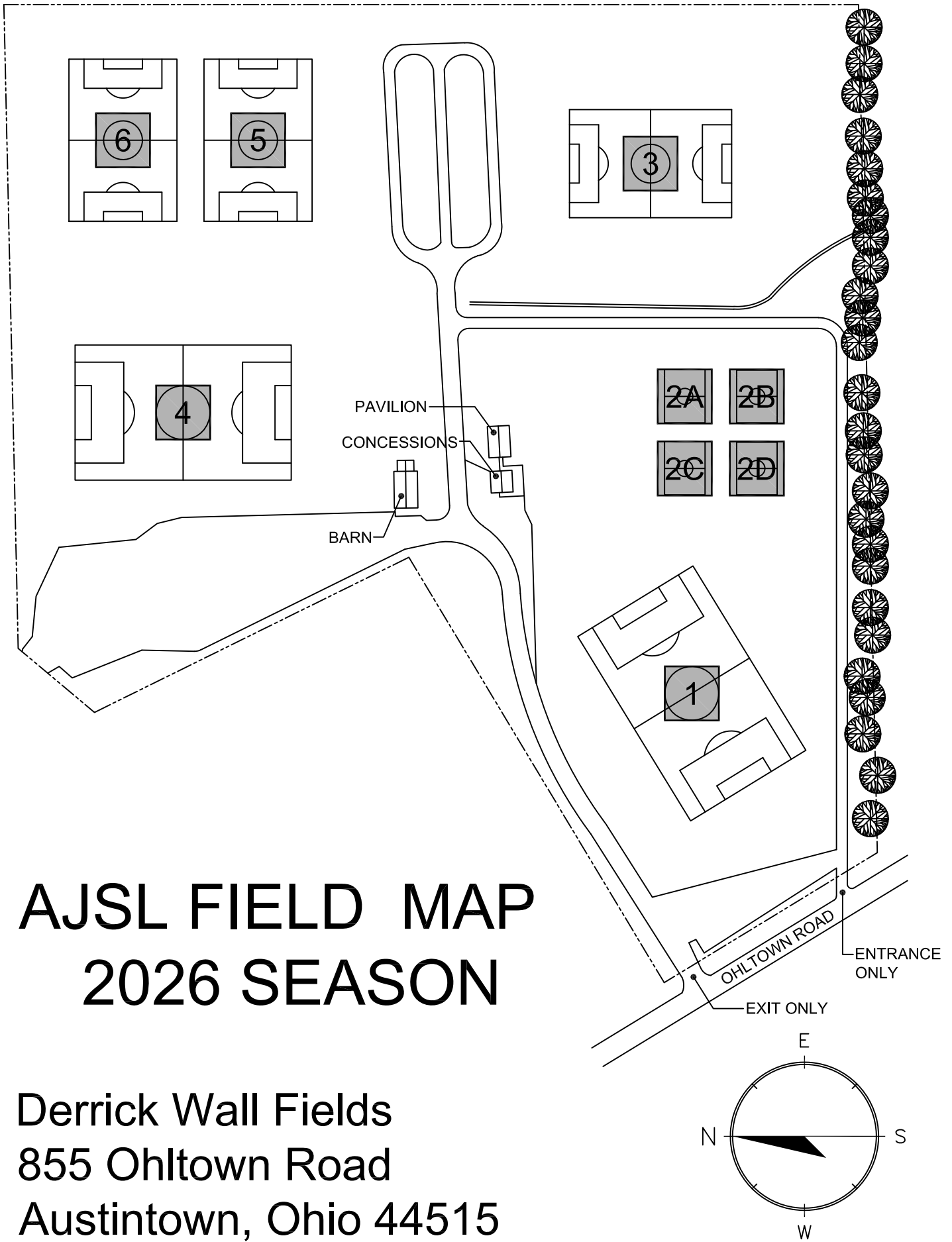


AUSTINTOWN JUNIOR SOCCER LEAGUE

Information Packet for Coaches



2026 SEASON



AJSL FIELD MAP 2026 SEASON

Derrick Wall Fields
855 Ohltown Road
Austintown, Ohio 44515

AJSL 2026 Practice Schedule (April 6 - May 1)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Field 1 Medium (L)	64	63	61		66
		62	65		67
Field 2A-2B Mini	4	3	1	5	2
Field 3 Medium (S)	54	53	55	56	52
	57	51	58	59	
Field 4 Medium (L)	75	84	74	73	83
	71	82	76	72	81
Field 5 Small (S)	26		21	11	13
	25		24	14	12
Field 6 Small (S)	33	31		32	23
	36	35		34	22
<p>All Teams are scheduled to practice at the AJSL fields one day each week. On that scheduled day, each team is entitled to use one half of the playing field or, in the case of the U05 Division, one field. The first team to arrive may choose which side of the field they wish to utilize for that day. Coaches are encouraged to work together to schedule scrimmages or to coordinate with other coaches to accommodate their own schedules.</p>					
<p>Note: Photos are scheduled to occur on April 27 - April 29. The field location for pictures has not yet been determined but will likely impact some practice schedules. Teams displaced as a result of pictures shall have first option to use vacant fields and are asked to coordinate their efforts to accommodate all affected teams.</p>					
<p>Teams may practice on weekdays only and are expected to meet a minimum of once per week but no more than three times per week. Practices must be held at either the AJSL Fields on your scheduled day or at Austintown Township Park on a first-come basis. Practices may continue once games begin but can only be held at Austintown Township Park as use of the AJSL Fields will be restricted to game play.</p>					

Revised 03/21/2026

AJSL 2026 Game Schedule (U05 - U08)

	Date	Time	U05	U06	U07		U08	
			Field 2A/2B	Field 5	Field 5	Field 6	Field 6	
WEEK 1	4-May	6:00		11 vs 12			32 vs 31	
		7:30		13 vs 14			33 vs 36	
	5-May	6:00	01 vs 04		22 vs 21			
		7:30			23 vs 26			
	6-May	6:00	02 vs 03		24 vs 25		34 vs 35	
		7:30			26 vs 21		36 vs 31	
WEEK 2	7-May	6:00	04 vs 05				33 vs 34	
		7:30					32 vs 35	
	8-May	6:00	03 vs 01	13 vs 11				
		7:30		14 vs 12				
	11-May	6:00					36 vs 34	
		7:30					32 vs 33	
WEEK 3	12-May	6:00	05 vs 03		23 vs 24			
		7:30			22 vs 25			
	13-May	6:00	01 vs 02	12 vs 13		25 vs 23		
		7:30		11 vs 14		26 vs 24		
	14-May	6:00					31 vs 35	
		7:30					36 vs 32	
WEEK 4	15-May	6:00	03 vs 04		21 vs 25			
		7:30			22 vs 23			
	18-May	6:00	04 vs 02	12 vs 11				
		7:30		14* vs 13				
	19-May	6:00	05 vs 01		25 vs 26		35 vs 36*	
		7:30			24 vs 21		31 vs 33*	
WEEK 5	20-May	6:00					34 vs 32	
		7:30					35 vs 33	
	21-May	6:00	03 vs 02		24 vs 22*			
		7:30			21 vs 23			
	22-May	6:00						
		7:30						
WEEK 6	25-May	6:00	MEMORIAL DAY - FIELDS CLOSED					
		7:30						
	26-May	6:00	02 vs 05				34* vs 31	
		7:30					36 vs 33	
	27-May	6:00	04 vs 01	11 vs 13		21 vs 22		
		7:30		12 vs 14		26 vs 23		
WEEK 7	28-May	6:00	01 vs 03		26* vs 22			
		7:30			25* vs 24			
	29-May	6:00	05 vs 04				31 vs 32	
		7:30					35 vs 34	
	1-Jun	6:00	03* vs 05				34 vs 33	
		7:30					31* vs 36	
WEEK 8	2-Jun	6:00	02 vs 01*		24 vs 23			
		7:30			21* vs 26			
	3-Jun	6:00	04 vs 03		25 vs 22			
		7:30			24 vs 26			
	4-Jun	6:00		14 vs 11*				
		7:30		13* vs 12				
WEEK 9	5-Jun	6:00	05 vs 02				35 vs 32*	
		7:30					34 vs 36	
	8-Jun	6:00	02* vs 04				33 vs 32	
		7:30					35* vs 31	
	9-Jun	6:00	01 vs 05*		25 vs 21			
		7:30			23* vs 22			
WEEK 10	10-Jun	6:00	02 vs 03	13 vs 14				
		7:30		11 vs 12				
	11-Jun	6:00	01 vs 04*		22 vs 26			
		7:30			21 vs 24*			
	12-Jun	6:00		13 vs 11			31 vs 34	
		7:30		14 vs 12*			32 vs 36	
WEEK 11	15-Jun	6:00					33 vs 35	
		7:30					32 vs 34	
	16-Jun	6:00	03 vs 01	12 vs 13		26 vs 25		
		7:30		11 vs 14		23 vs 21		
	17-Jun	6:00	04 vs 05	12 vs 11			36 vs 35	
		7:30		14 vs 13			33 vs 31	
WEEK 12	18-Jun	6:00	02 vs 05		22 vs 24			
		7:30			23 vs 25			
	19-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
	22-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
WEEK 13	23-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
	24-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
	25-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
27-Jun		TIMES TBD	FALCON CUP TOURNAMENT WEEKEND					
28-Jun								

Note: Asterisk (*) denotes concession stand duty. Refer to Concession Stand Schedule for more information.

AJSL 2026 Game Schedule (U10 - U18)

	Date	Time	U10	U12	U14		U18	
			Field 3	Field 1	Field 1	Field 4	Field 4	
WEEK 1	4-May	6:00	51 vs 58*					
		7:30	52 vs 57*					
	5-May	6:00	53 vs 56				81* vs 82	
		7:30	54 vs 55				83 vs 84*	
	6-May	6:00				74 vs 75*		
		7:30				76* vs 71		
	7-May	6:00	55 vs 53				83* vs 81	
		7:30	56 vs 52				84 vs 82*	
8-May	6:00	57 vs 51				72* vs 71		
	7:30	58 vs 59				73* vs 76		
WEEK 2	11-May	6:00	52 vs 59	62 vs 65*				
		7:30	53 vs 58	61 vs 66*				
	12-May	6:00		65 vs 61*			82 vs 81	
		7:30		63 vs 64*			84 vs 83	
	13-May	6:00	54* vs 57				82 vs 83	
		7:30	55 vs 56*				81 vs 84	
	14-May	6:00	53* vs 51			73 vs 74		
		7:30		66 vs 67*		72 vs 75		
15-May	6:00		64 vs 62		76 vs 74*			
	7:30		63 vs 66		71* vs 75			
WEEK 3	18-May	6:00		62* vs 67		75 vs 73		
		7:30		64 vs 65		76 vs 72		
	19-May	6:00	56 vs 54			74 vs 71		
		7:30	57 vs 53			72 vs 73		
	20-May	6:00	58 vs 52	66 vs 62			81 vs 83	
		7:30	59 vs 51	67 vs 61			82 vs 84	
	21-May	6:00	54 vs 59	65 vs 63				
		7:30	55* vs 58	61 vs 64				
22-May	6:00							
	7:30							
WEEK 4	25-May	6:00	MEMORIAL DAY - FIELDS CLOSED					
		7:30						
	26-May	6:00	56 vs 57			71 vs 73		
		7:30	51* vs 52			75 vs 76		
	27-May	6:00		64 vs 67			83 vs 82	
		7:30		61 vs 62			84 vs 81	
	28-May	6:00	57 vs 55	66 vs 64		75 vs 71		
		7:30	58 vs 54	63 vs 61		74 vs 72		
29-May	6:00	59* vs 53	67 vs 63					
	7:30	54 vs 52*	65 vs 66					
WEEK 5	1-Jun	6:00		62 vs 63		71 vs 76		
		7:30		67 vs 65		75 vs 72		
	2-Jun	6:00	55 vs 51	66 vs 61		76 vs 73		
		7:30	56 vs 59	65 vs 62		75 vs 74		
	3-Jun	6:00	57 vs 58				81 vs 82	
		7:30	59 vs 55				83 vs 84	
	4-Jun	6:00	51 vs 54			74 vs 73		
		7:30	52 vs 53			71 vs 72		
5-Jun	6:00		67 vs 66			83 vs 81		
	7:30		64 vs 63*			84 vs 82		
WEEK 6	8-Jun	6:00	58 vs 56	62 vs 64				
		7:30	59 vs 57	61 vs 65				
	9-Jun	6:00	51 vs 56				81 vs 84	
		7:30	52 vs 55				82 vs 83	
	10-Jun	6:00	53 vs 54	66 vs 63				
		7:30	58 vs 51	67 vs 62				
	11-Jun	6:00	57 vs 52			73 vs 75		
		7:30	55 vs 54			71 vs 74		
12-Jun	6:00		65 vs 64		74 vs 76			
	7:30		61 vs 67		73 vs 72			
WEEK 7	15-Jun	6:00	56 vs 53	62 vs 66				
		7:30	51 vs 57	63 vs 65				
	16-Jun	6:00	59 vs 58			72 vs 76		
		7:30	53 vs 55			73 vs 71		
	17-Jun	6:00		67 vs 64			82 vs 81	
		7:30		61 vs 63			84 vs 83	
	18-Jun	6:00	52 vs 56			76 vs 75		
		7:30	59 vs 54			72 vs 74		
19-Jun	6:00							
	7:30							
WEEK 8	22-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
	23-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
	24-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
	25-Jun	6:00						
		7:30						
26-Jun	6:00							
	7:30							
27-Jun	TIMES TBD	FALCON CUP TOURNAMENT WEEKEND						
28-Jun								

Note: Asterisk (*) denotes concession stand duty. Refer to Concession Stand Schedule for more information.

AJSL 2026 Concession Stand Schedule (Weeks 1-4)

	DAY	TIME	TEAM	DURATION
WEEK 1	4-May	6:00	57	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	58	7:15 p.m. through closing
	5-May	6:00	84	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	81	7:15 p.m. through closing
	6-May	6:00	76	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	75	7:15 p.m. through closing
	7-May	6:00	82	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	83	7:15 p.m. through closing
WEEK 2	8-May	6:00	73	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	72	7:15 p.m. through closing
	11-May	6:00	66	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	65	7:15 p.m. through closing
	12-May	6:00	64	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	61	7:15 p.m. through closing
	13-May	6:00	56	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	54	7:15 p.m. through closing
WEEK 3	14-May	6:00	67	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	53	7:15 p.m. through closing
	15-May	6:00	71	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	74	7:15 p.m. through closing
	18-May	6:00	14	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	62	7:15 p.m. through closing
	19-May	6:00	33	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	36	7:15 p.m. through closing
WEEK 4	20-May	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
	21-May	6:00	55	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	22	7:15 p.m. through closing
	22-May	6:00	n/a	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	n/a	7:15 p.m. through closing
	25-May	6:00	MEMORIAL DAY - FIELDS CLOSED	
		7:30		
WEEK 4	26-May	6:00	51	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	34	7:15 p.m. through closing
	27-May	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
	28-May	6:00	25	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	26	7:15 p.m. through closing
	29-May	6:00	52	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	59	7:15 p.m. through closing

Teams will be required to work the concession stand one time during the season as scheduled above. Coaches of each team are responsible for assigning five (5) ADULT volunteers to represent the team on their scheduled date and time. Any team not meeting this requirement will be forced to forfeit their next scheduled game. Only adults (age 18 or older) shall count toward the required minimum of five (5) volunteers. It is recommended coaches ask parents of their players to assist with this task as soon as the practice season begins to ensure an adequate number of volunteers. For convenience, times are scheduled on the same night but opposite time of one of the team's regularly scheduled games. EXCEPTION: For the U18 age group only, players may be counted toward the minimum number of volunteers provided that one (1) adult is present to represent the team.

Revised 03/21/2026

AJSL 2026 Concession Stand Schedule (Weeks 5-8)

	DAY	TIME	TEAM	DURATION
WEEK 5	1-Jun	6:00	31	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	03	7:15 p.m. through closing
	2-Jun	6:00	21	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	01	7:15 p.m. through closing
	3-Jun	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
	4-Jun	6:00	13	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	11	7:15 p.m. through closing
WEEK 6	5-Jun	6:00	63	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	32	7:15 p.m. through closing
	8-Jun	6:00	35	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	02	7:15 p.m. through closing
	9-Jun	6:00	23	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	05	7:15 p.m. through closing
	10-Jun	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
WEEK 7	11-Jun	6:00	24	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	04	7:15 p.m. through closing
	12-Jun	6:00	12	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
	15-Jun	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
	16-Jun	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
WEEK 8	17-Jun	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
	18-Jun	6:00	TBD	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	TBD	7:15 p.m. through closing
	19-Jun	6:00	No Games Scheduled	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	No Games Scheduled	7:15 p.m. through closing
	22-Jun	6:00	No Games Scheduled	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	No Games Scheduled	7:15 p.m. through closing
WEEK 8	23-Jun	6:00	No Games Scheduled	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	No Games Scheduled	7:15 p.m. through closing
	24-Jun	6:00	No Games Scheduled	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	No Games Scheduled	7:15 p.m. through closing
	25-Jun	6:00	No Games Scheduled	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	No Games Scheduled	7:15 p.m. through closing
	26-Jun	6:00	No Games Scheduled	5:45 p.m. through 7:15 p.m.
		7:30	No Games Scheduled	7:15 p.m. through closing
	27-Jun	Times TBD	Falcon Cup Tournament Weekend	
	28-Jun			

Teams will be required to work the concession stand one time during the season as scheduled above. Coaches of each team are responsible for assigning five (5) ADULT volunteers to represent the team on their scheduled date and time. Any team not meeting this requirement will be forced to forfeit their next scheduled game. Only adults (age 18 or older) shall count toward the required minimum of five (5) volunteers. It is recommended coaches ask parents of their players to assist with this task as soon as the practice season begins to ensure an adequate number of volunteers. For convenience, times are scheduled on the same night but opposite time of one of the team's regularly scheduled games. EXCEPTION: For the U18 age group only, players may be counted toward the minimum number of volunteers provided that one (1) adult is present to represent the team.

AUSTINTOWN JUNIOR SOCCER LEAGUE

2026 League Rules

1. TEAM PARTICIPATION

- 1.1 All registered players that are dressed to play for their assigned team must play at least 1/2 of any scheduled game unless under disciplinary action by the coach. If a child is under disciplinary action by a coach, the coach must seek approval from the AJSL Vice President prior to limiting playing time. This provision does not apply to the AJSL Adult League or the AJSL Travel Teams. Travel Teams shall be governed by rules set forth by the Travel Team Committee.
- 1.2 Persons not registered with the league may not participate in a practice or scheduled game.
- 1.3 All teams must be ready to play at their scheduled times. A ten (10) minute grace period, beyond the scheduled game time, will be given to each team to allow ample time to field a team with the minimum number of required players (Refer to Rule 7.2). If the grace period expires, the team not prepared to play shall forfeit the game. Players must be on the field with proper equipment and be prepared to play in order to count toward the teams' lineups.
- 1.4 No team coach will be allowed to cancel or reschedule any league game under any circumstances. If a team cannot field a legal lineup they will receive a forfeit. If both coaches are unavailable, the head coach must contact the age group coordinator to make arrangements for an alternate, league appointed representative to coach the team. If an unauthorized coach is used or if ample time is not provided to the league to find a replacement, the team without a coach shall forfeit the game.
- 1.5 Referees, field marshals and/or executive board members shall suspend games immediately upon witnessing visible lightning or audible thunder during a game or within one half hour prior to its scheduled start time. A thirty (30) minute waiting period without thunder or lightning must be recognized before games may resume. The second game of the evening may be played at its scheduled start time even if the previous game is cancelled due to bad weather provided that the unfavorable conditions have subsided. A game will be suspended immediately if the field of play is considered unsafe. Any league game cancelled due to bad weather may be rescheduled by the Scheduling Committee. Final decision on any scheduling matters shall be at the discretion of the league Vice-President.
 - A. In the event that games are suspended due to lightning or threat of severe weather, coaches shall be responsible for clearing the fields and directing their players to seek a safe shelter. Players who have access to a vehicle should remain in their vehicle until a decision to resume or cancel games has been made. Players who do not have access to a vehicle will be directed by board members as to where to take shelter.
- 1.6 No coach will be allowed to recruit players for his or her team.

1.7 The maximum number of players on the field for each age group will be as follows:

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--|
| A. | U5 Age Group | Four (4) players (recommended) / No goalkeeper |
| B. | U6 Age Group | Seven (7) players including goalkeeper* |
| C. | U7 Age Group | Six (6) players including goalkeeper* |
| D. | U8 Age Group | Six (6) players including goalkeeper* |
| E. | U9 Age Group | Eight (8) players including goalkeeper* |
| F. | U10 Age Group | Eight (8) including goalkeeper* |
| G. | U12 Age Group | Nine (9) players including goalkeeper* |
| H. | U14 Age Group | Nine (9) players including goalkeeper* |
| I. | U18 Age Group | Seven (7) players including goalkeeper* |
| J. | Adult League | Eleven (11) players including goalkeeper* |

[*Exception: Refer to Rule 7.3 in cases where goal differential exceeds five (5) goals.]

1.8 Although attendance at practice may be considered by the coach when determining playing time, all players must play a minimum of one half (1/2) of each game. However, equal playing time for all players is NOT mandated.

1.9 Players who require medically necessary devices such as inhalers for asthmatic attacks or auto-injectors for treatment of allergic reactions must have such devices with them at all times when participating in league sponsored activities. Coaches should familiarize themselves with their players and be aware of players with conditions that may require special attention.

2. CONDUCT

2.1 Unsporting behavior, fighting, obscene language, obscene gestures, or vandalism by any person or persons before, during, or after any game, practice, or league activity, will not be tolerated. The definition of the above-mentioned infractions will be the sole decision of the AJSL Executive Board and/or the assigned game referee. Game referees have the responsibility to maintain good sportsmanship on the field of play and have been given permission to utilize all actions within their power to ensure a positive experience for all participants, including but not limited to, yellow card, red card, game suspension and game cancellation. Please refer to the "Consequences" chapter for detailed disciplinary procedures.

3. SUBSTITUTIONS

3.1 Substitutions shall be unlimited and may occur at any stoppage with the permission of the referee.

- A.** Substitution opportunities include the following:
- i.** Following a Goal by either team.
 - ii.** Prior to a Goal Kick by either team.
 - iii.** At the completion of a half or quarter.
 - iv.** Prior to a throw-in.
 - v.** Prior to a corner kick.

- B. A team **must** substitute a player following a Caution (Yellow Card).
 - i. The cautioned player is required to be removed from the field.
 - a. The opposing team may also substitute a player.
- C. If play is stopped due to injury AND the coach is called onto the field of play to tend to the injured player, the coach **must** substitute the injured player.
 - i. The injured player is required to be removed from the field.
 - a. The opposing team may also substitute a player
 - ii. Exception: Goalkeepers are not required to leave the field of play if both the coach AND the referee determine that the player is able to continue playing within a reasonable amount of time.
 - iii. A Goalkeeper may change positions with a field player during any recognized substitution opportunity **and only with the permission of the referee.**

3.2 Substitutes must enter the field at the halfway line and may do so only with the permission of the referee. Before entering the field, each substitute must call off the player that he/she is replacing. The referee can refuse the substitution within the last two minutes of either half or if they feel the coach is using the substitutions to delay the game.

4. GAME DURATION, BALL SIZES AND REGULATIONS

4.1 Length of games:

A.	U5 Age Group	Four (4) 10-minute quarters (recommended)
B.	U6 – U8 Age Groups	Four (4) 10-minute quarters
C.	U9 – U10 Age Groups	Two (2) 25-minute halves
D.	U11 – U18 Age Groups	Two (2) 30-minute halves
E.	Adult League	Two (2) 30-minute halves

4.2 Game balls:

A.	U5 – U8 Age Groups	Size #3 Ball
B.	U9 – U12 Age Groups	Size #4 Ball
C.	U13 – U18 Age Groups	Size #5 Ball
D.	Adult League	Size #5 Ball

4.3 All players, except goalkeepers, must wear the league provided shirt, matching socks and properly fitted black athletic shorts for all games. Determination of compliance shall be at the discretion of the referee. The referee coordinator may be consulted as determined by the Executive Board or Field Marshal. This provision does not apply to the AJSL Adult League or the AJSL Travel Teams.

4.4 Goalkeepers on both teams must wear shirts differing from either team's colors.

4.5 Any playing rules not covered herein shall be governed by IFAB Laws of the Game.

5. PLAYING SAFETY

5.1 All players must use shoes of the sneaker kind, or rubber molded cleats. Hard-soled shoes, metal cleats and toe cleats cannot be worn in practice or in a scheduled game.

A. Casts, braces and any similar medically necessary item may be worn provided that, at the discretion of the referee, they do not pose a safety concern. Eyeglasses / sunglasses may be worn only if they are prescription type.

5.2 The league requires that shin guards be worn and be completely covered by socks.

5.3 No jewelry is to be worn during play.

A. This includes but is not limited to earrings, bracelets, necklaces, watches, etc. Earrings shall not be permitted to be worn under any circumstances, even if covered by tape. Bracelets of any material are prohibited. This includes rubber, string, or any other type of material. Hair accessories may be worn only as necessary provided they are deemed to be safe by the referee. Hair beads and other such adornments shall not be permitted.

5.4 Only players and league assigned referees are allowed on the field during play unless there is an injury, and then, with the referee's permission, coaches may tend to the injured player.

5.5 Slide-tackling is permitted, although not encouraged, provided that, in the opinion of the referee, the tackle is made in a legal manner.

5.6 Coaches and referees are required to complete online concussion training prior to participating in league practices or games. Players and parents shall also be required to review a concussion awareness sheet provided by the league.

5.7 Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3707.511, any athlete exhibiting signs and symptoms of concussion either during practice or during a game MUST be immediately removed. **This athlete MAY NOT return to play nor participate in any AJSL activity on the same day that he or she has been removed (even if a written medical clearance is provided).** In addition, the athlete is not permitted to return to play or participate in any AJSL activity until he or she has been assessed and receives written clearance by a physician or by another licensed health care provider. A Return-to-Play form must be submitted to the coach prior to allowing the athlete to participate in any activity with the athlete's team, whether it is a practice or a game situation.

- A. The individual(s) who identified the signs and symptoms of a concussion (i.e. coach, referee, board member) shall report the incident to the board.
- B. The parent / guardian of the player shall be responsible for securing the required written clearance and shall provide a copy to their coach who must submit a copy to their respective age group coordinator.

5.8 Coaches are expected to enforce the rules of safety during practice sessions as well as games.

- A. This includes Items 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 above. Coaches shall ensure that all players are properly equipped prior to the start of the match. If, during the course of play, the referee discovers an equipment violation, a caution (yellow card) shall be issued to the head coach or assistant in charge in cases where the head coach is not present.
 - a. It is recommended that coaches perform their own pre-game equipment check and ask questions of the referee during check-in if unsure.

5.9 Heading Restrictions

- A. Heading shall not be permitted for players in the U12 Age Group and below. This applies to both practices and games. Deliberate heading shall be considered dangerous play and is punishable by an indirect free kick.
- B. Heading shall be permitted in games at the U14 Age Group but shall be limited in practice to 30 minutes per week or no more than 20 headers per player per week.
- C. This restriction does not apply to the U18 Age Group.

6. GAMES AND PRACTICE

6.1 A maximum of three (3) combined practices AND scheduled games may be held during each week (Monday through Friday), except for special circumstances such as make-up games or any AJSL scheduled special event including the Falcon Cup. All practices must be scheduled at a league approved facility and under no circumstances may coaches schedule practices on weekends at any location.

7. TEAM SPORTSMANSHIP

7.1 It is of primary importance to the AJSL Board to ensure that we encourage and promote good sportsmanship, fair play and proper conduct in all that we do. In the interest of good sportsmanship and fair play, the AJSL expects its coaches to refrain from allowing lopsided scores (e.g. 8-0, 11-1) to develop during the course of our league games. We believe that coaches can manage scores against weaker teams by various techniques such as substitution and player rotation. Board members are always available to provide advice and assistance in this matter.

7.2 Games will be played providing a team has the required minimum number of players noted below. Coaches are encouraged, but not required, to play games with the same number of players on the field as the opposing team. A maximum of one additional player is permitted at the start of the game.

- A. 11v11 format minimum of seven (7) players
- B. 9v9 format minimum of six (6) players
- C. 8v8 format minimum of five (5) players
- D. 7v7 format minimum of five (5) players
- E. 6v6 format minimum of four (4) players

7.3 If at any point during any game the goal differential reaches five (5) goals, the coach of the losing team **MUST** add a player. If additional players are not available, the winning team **MUST** remove one player from the field. If the losing team has available players but chooses not to add a player, the winning team shall not be required to remove a player. If the goal differential increases, additional players shall be added or removed from the field at a rate of one (1) player per goal. At no time may a team remove players to the point that it results in an illegal lineup per Rule 7.2. However, the player limit established by Rule 1.8 may be exceeded. Coaches of the winning team are encouraged to suggest the addition or removal of players at any time to allow for games to remain competitive.

- A. The referee shall have the authority to issue a yellow card and caution a coach for unsporting behavior if they feel the coach is not complying with the intent of Rule 7.3. Examples include failure to discourage continued scoring by the same player(s) or permitting the goalkeeper to score once a five (5) goal lead has been established.

7.4 At the end of any regular season game, if any team has surpassed a 10-goal win, the winning team will be penalized and receive negative 3 (-3) points for their efforts in calculation for Falcon Cup seeding. Furthermore, if at any time a team scores a goal against itself when they are within the player removal situation, the goal will be disqualified and a goal kick will be awarded for the opposing team. If the 10-goal limit is surpassed during the Falcon Cup Tournament, the winning team shall forfeit the game and the losing team shall be credited with the win.

8. REGISTRATION

8.1 Registration fees are not refundable without Executive Board approval.

8.2 All players will be assigned to play within their age group according to their birth date.

- A. At the discretion of the Registrar, players may move up one (1) year in age in order to be rostered with a sibling provided a parent or guardian volunteers as the coach or assistant coach. No player is permitted to move down in age.
- B. The decision of the Executive Board shall be final regarding placement of players into a particular age group.

8.3 Any participant expelled from the league for disciplinary reasons will receive no refund of registration fees. This will pertain to the child or children and sponsorship of the disciplined spectator or coach.

8.4 Registering to coach does not guarantee a coaching position. The board will make every effort to utilize all interested coaches but, in cases where interest exceeds the need for coaches, the board will make final decisions regarding coaches. Coaches will be evaluated on factors including, but not limited to, favorable background check, coaching experience, past participation with the league, prior misconduct or disciplinary action (including yellow and red cards), etc. It is the sole decision of the AJSL Board whether an individual may coach. The decision of the Executive Board is final.

8.5 The Executive Board has the right to deny any registration (player or coach) based on past misconduct. The decision of the Executive Board is final.

8.6 Each team will be assigned a sponsor and a minimum of two coaches when available. Coaches, assistant coaches and sponsors may request to be paired with one another prior to the blind draw. However, the requested pairings of no more than two of the three positions involving players will be permitted. Pairings of a head coach and assistant coach, a head coach and sponsor or assistant coach and sponsor will be considered. Only in cases where a child is not involved will requested pairings of more than two of the positions be permitted.

A. Example: A head coach and an assistant coach, both with children wish to coach together. They would also like to choose their sponsor. If the sponsor has a child who will play on the team, the request will be denied. However, if the sponsor is not associated with another child, the request will be considered.

B. In some cases, when additional coaches are available, they may be assigned to teams. Regardless of the number of registered coaches, no more than three (3) coaches shall be permitted in the team area during games.

9. SPONSORS AND FUNDRAISING

9.1 Coaches shall not solicit gratuities from sponsors. Any violations will result in loss of total season points and the indefinite suspension of the coach.

9.2 Any requested AJSL affiliation must be approved by the Executive Board.

9.3 Rules pertaining to fund raisers must be strictly adhered to. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action by the Executive Board.

10. AGE OF COACHES

10.1 All coaches must be a minimum of eighteen (18) years of age prior to January 1 of current soccer season in which they intend to coach.

11. REFEREES

11.1 Assignment of referees is at the sole discretion of the Referee Coordinator.

11.2 All referees must be USSF licensed and are only permitted to officiate after obtaining permission from the referee coordinator.

11.3 Center referees have the responsibility to maintain good sportsmanship on the field of play and have been given permission to utilize all actions within their power to ensure a positive experience for all participants, including but not limited to, yellow card, red card, game suspension and game cancellation. Please refer to the "Consequences" chapter for detailed disciplinary procedures.

- 11.4 All referees will refrain from confrontational exchanges with coaches and game spectators.
- 11.5 Referees will be paid an amount determined by the Board prior to the beginning of each season.
- 11.6 If a scheduled referee does not show up at a game, the Referee Coordinator or Field Marshall must find another licensed official to serve as a replacement. If none are available, the game may proceed with the help of club linesmen as required.

12. SPECTATORS

- 12.1 The Austintown Junior Soccer League has initiated a “Zero Tolerance” policy regarding spectator conduct. Violators will be dealt with according to the “Consequences” chapter of this document.
- 12.2 Spectators are not permitted to speak directly or indirectly to any person (referee or player) during the time of play. Any confrontational or disrespectful actions directed toward any person on the field of play at any time will be handled according to the “Consequences” chapter of this document.
- 12.3 Spectators must be in assigned areas at least five (5) feet from the touch line on the side of the field opposite the players and are at no time permitted to enter the field of play unless granted permission in the case of injury.
- 12.4 No spectators are allowed behind the goal line.
- 12.5 All spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Failure to do so will result in ejection from league property by the Austintown Police Department. Continued disruptive behavior, as determined by the Executive Board, will result in permanent expulsion from league property via a restraining order to be filed with the Austintown Police Department.
- 12.6 Consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted on AJSL property during scheduled league games or practices.
- 12.7 Smoking and vaping shall be confined to designated areas away from the playing area.
- 12.8 Pets of any kind are not permitted on AJSL property. Coaches are asked to help ensure that players, parents and all spectators who come to support their team are aware of this rule. Please help to enforce this rule by making those associated with your team aware of the rule.

13. BOARD MEMBERS

- 13.1 Coaching and officiating shall take precedence over Board Member duties during game time.

14. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

- 14.1** All complaints shall be handled in compliance with the provisions provided within the AJSL Bylaws.

15. COACHES CONDUCT / CODE OF ETHICS

- 15.1** Soccer is the players' game. The paramount concern of coaches is the holistic development, welfare, enjoyment and safety of their players.
- 15.2** Coaches bear responsibility for teaching their players to strive for success while playing fairly, observing the Laws of the Game and the highest levels of sportsmanship.
- 15.3** Coaches shall treat officials with respect and dignity, and shall teach their players to do the same.
- 15.4** Our opponents are worthy of being treated with respect. Coaches will model such respect for opponents and expect their players to do likewise.
- 15.5** In both victory and defeat, the behavior of a coach shall model grace, dignity and composure.
- 15.6** Coaches shall adhere to the highest standards and the regulations of the institutions they represent: clubs, schools, sponsoring organizations and sports governing bodies.
- 15.7** Coaches have a responsibility to promote the interests of soccer, including treating media with courtesy, honesty and respect.
- 15.8** Coaches shall model inclusive behavior, actively supporting cultural diversity while opposing all types of discrimination, including, but not limited to, racism and sexism, at all levels of soccer.
- 15.9** Coaches are responsible for taking an active role in education about, and prevention and treatment of, drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse, both in their own lives and in the lives of their players.
- 15.10** Coaches shall refrain from all manner of personal abuse and harassment of others, whether verbal, physical, emotional or sexual, and shall oppose such abuse and harassment at all levels of soccer.
- 15.11** Coaches shall respect the declared affiliations of all players, and shall adhere to all guidelines and regulations on recruiting established by the governing bodies having oversight of their teams and leagues.
- 15.12** Coaches shall seek to honor those who uphold the highest standards and principles of soccer and shall use appropriate protocol to oppose and eliminate all behavior that brings disrepute to

the sport - violence, abuse, dishonesty, disrespect and violations of the Laws of the Game and rules governing competition.

15.13 Consequences

- A. 1st offense: A minimum One (1) game suspension, up to termination
- B. 2nd offense: Minimum Two (2) game suspension, a meeting with Executive Board, up to termination
- C. 3rd offense: Termination and Removal from coaching indefinitely

16. COACHING RESPONSIBILITY

16.1 The coaches are an example to their players. It is the responsibility of the individual coach to practice and display good sportsmanship and leadership to his or her players. Coaches must remember that the primary goal is to teach, practice and excel in the fundamentals of soccer. Promoting community interest in soccer and providing physical fitness and wholesome activity form all participants is the aim of the AJSL.

16.2 It is the ultimate responsibility of the coach to inform parents and players of the league rules as well as to assist in controlling confrontational or volatile situations. The main emphasis should be placed on sportsmanship and respect towards referees, opposing teams, and spectators.

16.3 The coaches are responsible for having five (5) adults in the concession stand at their scheduled day(s) and time(s). Any team not having five (5) adults in the concession stand at their scheduled day(s) and time(s) will be penalized and receive negative 3 (-3) points in calculation for Falcon Cup seeding. This shall be applied to the game scheduled on the same date as the concession stand assignment, regardless of the outcome of the game. Only adults over the age of 18 will count towards the five (5) adult minimum. Children are not permitted in the concession stand. It is recommended that the coaches ask parents on their team to perform this service to promote volunteer activity within the league. **EXCEPTION:** For the U18 age group only, players will be counted toward the minimum number of concession stand volunteers provided that one (1) adult is present to represent the team.

16.4 Coaches shall be responsible for maintaining their technical area during the course of each game. If unmarked, the technical area shall begin at a minimum of three feet from the touch line and shall not interfere with the designated substitution area near the halfway line.

- A. No more than three registered coaches shall be permitted on the team side of the field and only players and coaches of the scheduled teams shall be permitted in the technical areas.
- B. Coaches, substitute players and equipment (i.e., balls, water bottles, etc.) must remain within the technical area during play. This helps to ensure the safety of the referees, players and coaches and avoids interfering with the view of the referees during play.

i. Exceptions:

- i. Coaches in the U5 Age Group shall moderate games from within the field of play.
- ii. Coaches in the U6 Age Group must observe the technical areas as described above. However, one registered coach may assist with coaching from behind the goal line at the end of the field their team is defending.

17. COACHES CONDUCT WITH REFEREES

17.1 Coaches must communicate with the referee in a professional, non-confrontational manner. Calls made by the referee are not reversible and are not challengeable. If a coach conducts himself/herself in an unsporting manner the referee may warn the coach and request that he/she correct the situation. If the coach in question continues his/her unsporting behavior, referees have been given permission to issue a yellow or red card or suspend or cancel the game. Please refer to the "Consequences" chapter for detailed disciplinary procedures. A report will be made to the league vice-president for possible additional disciplinary action. The league vice-president is in charge of all coaches and rules violations.

18. COACHING DISCIPLINE

18.1 If any rules violations occur, said coach will be penalized as outlined in the "Consequences" chapter of this document. The infraction will be discussed at the next scheduled Executive Board meeting in closed session and the coach will be informed if any other sanctions will be imposed. The coach and/or his representative will be given an opportunity to represent himself/herself at this meeting. Any Executive Board action will be final.

19. COACHES TOBACCO USE POLICY

19.1 Coaches shall not use tobacco or vaping products during practices and/or games.

20. CONSEQUENCES

20.1 The Austintown Junior Soccer League has adopted the following "Zero Tolerance" policies and procedures. Furthermore, referees have been given permission to utilize all actions within their power to ensure a positive experience for all participants, including but not limited to issuing yellow or red cards, game suspension and game cancellation. Referees may issue cards to players AND coaches as required to maintain control during a game.

20.2 Coaches shall be held responsible for their actions as well as the conduct of their players and spectators. Any persons who engage in unbecoming conduct before, during or after any game will warrant disciplinary action by the Executive Board. NOTE: The referee may suspend game play if in the opinion of the referee the conduct of coaches, players or spectators warrants such suspension. Coaches may be issued a card if they are unable to properly control their spectators.

20.3 The following consequences are in effect for the misconduct of players and coaches:

- A. Yellow Cards - Players: If a player receives a yellow card from a referee, it serves as nothing more than a caution and warrants no further sanctions unless determined otherwise by the Executive Board.
- B. Yellow Cards - Coaches: AJSL rules permit referees to issue cards to coaches as well as players. As role models to the players, coaches shall be held to a higher behavioral standard. If a coach receives a yellow card from a referee, the coach will be contacted by the Board to discuss their actions. Disciplinary measures may be imposed as determined by the Executive Board.
- C. Red Cards – Coaches and Players: If a player or coach receives a red card from a referee and is consequently sent off (disqualified) from a game, he or she will be suspended from further play as follows:
 - ii. First red card: Suspension from the team’s next scheduled game.
 - iii. Second red card: Suspension from the team’s next two (2) games.
 - iv. Third red card: Suspension for the remainder of that season.
 - v. Note: Such suspensions are the league recommended minimums. Additional length of suspension or additional sanctions may be imposed by the Executive Board based on the particular incident. The ruling of the Executive Board is final. Unless otherwise determined by the Executive Board, suspended players may attend games and sit with their team but may not be in uniform. Suspended coaches shall not attend games for which they are suspended.
- D. Spectators: It is the responsibility of the coaches to control the spectators for their respective teams. If, in the opinion of the referee, a spectator or spectators are interfering with the game through word or action, the referee may suspend play and request that the coach address the issue. If the coach does not assist, a yellow or red card may be issued to the coach. In extreme situations where neither the referee nor the coach can satisfactorily handle the situation, play shall be suspended while the matter is brought to the attention of a Field Marshall or Board Member.

21. FALCON CUP TOURNAMENT RULES

21.1 Participation: All AJSL teams will participate in the annual Falcon Cup Tournament.

- A. All U5 and U6 teams will play a festival format with a predetermined number of games. No championship game shall be played nor will a division champion be declared based on any other criteria.
- B. All U7–U18 teams will compete in a single elimination format.

21.2 Scheduling and Bracketing:

- A. U5 – U6 schedules will be randomly generated.
- B. U7-U18 teams will be seeded based on regular season league standings. Points will be awarded as follows for determination of seeding for the Falcon Cup Tournament:
 - i. Win = 3 points
 - ii. Tie = 1 point
 - iii. Loss = 0 points
 - iv. Penalty Points = (-3)
- C. In the event teams are tied on the basis of points earned during league play, the team's standings shall be determined in accordance with the following sequential criteria:
 - a. Penalty points from rule violations. A team with penalty points automatically loses the tie.
 - b. Winner of head-to-head competition. However, this criterion shall not be used when more than two teams are tied in points.
 - c. Winner of most games played.
 - d. Goal differential (Goals scored - Goals allowed with maximum 3 per game)
 - e. Kicks from the penalty mark.
- D. If more than two teams are tied, the sequence shall be followed until one or more teams are eliminated. Once one or more teams have been eliminated, the remaining teams still tied shall then restart the sequence above until the tie is broken.
- E. The number of seeds may vary per age group but all teams will be seeded for the tournament. Based on the number of teams, higher seeded teams may receive a first-round bye and automatically advance to the next round of the tournament.

21.3 Rules of Competition

- A. Unless noted otherwise, all Austintown Junior Soccer League Playing Rules apply during the tournament including Team Participation, Conduct, Substitutions, Game Duration, Ball Sizes and Regulations, Playing Safety and Consequences.

21.4 Tie Breakers

- A. Ties shall stand for games in the U5-U6 age groups. No tie breaker will be conducted.
- B. If, at the end of regulation play, a game in the U7-U18 age groups results in a tie, teams will play two (2) complete five (5) minute time periods. All players are required to participate in at least one of the two periods.
- C. If the score remains tied, kicks from the penalty mark shall be conducted as follows:
 - i. Five (5) players from each team will be chosen by their coaches to take part in the shootout. Only players who were on the field of play at the conclusion of the game may participate. The goalkeeper may be substituted prior to the shootout but only with a player who was on the field at the conclusion of the game. Goal keepers may be used to take a penalty kick.

- ii. Teams will alternate taking kicks during the shootout.
- iii. If there is still no winner, a sudden death shoot-out will commence to determine the winner. Each team will select one person each round to take the kick until there is a winner. You must use different players during this round. No player can take a second kick until all players on the team have taken a kick. This includes players who were not on the field at the completion of the game.

21.5 Field Status / Playability

- A. Referees, field marshals and/or executive board members may suspend games when a field or fields are considered unsafe or unplayable or due to inclement weather.
- B. For matches suspended during the first half of play:
 - i. If time permits, resume and play to completion of the first half and consider the game complete.
 - ii. If the first half cannot be completed, and a team is leading by two or more goals, consider the game complete.
 - iii. If the first half cannot be completed within the scheduled time, play two (2) complete five (5) minute periods to determine a result. If the score remains tied, kicks from the penalty mark shall be conducted.
- C. For matches suspended after completion of the first half of play:
 - i. Consider the game complete and record the score at the time of the interruption. If the game is tied, proceed with the standard tie breaker provisions.
- D. If a match is stopped before full time, all players and coaches must remain at the site until a resolution has been determined.
 - i. The AJSL board reserves the right to make any schedule adjustments necessary including shortening games or rescheduling games over the course of the following week, including weekday evenings. Decisions by the board shall be final.

22. U5 GUIDELINES

- 22.1** OBJECTIVE: The purpose of the U5 age group is to allow our future soccer players the opportunity to begin playing the game at a young age without concern for the pressures of competitive play. Our goal is to offer a relaxed atmosphere in which the young players can focus on having fun while learning the game of soccer. This is strictly an introduction to the game where scores are not tallied, standings are not kept and there are no winners or losers. All coaches are expected to adopt this philosophy to ensure that the players enjoy themselves and look forward to returning year after year.

- 22.2** The playing field shall be approximately 20 Yards wide x 25 yards long. The field shall be divided by a halfway line with a center circle of approximately 5 yards in diameter. A small portable goal will be placed at the center of each goal line.
- 22.3** Each team shall play two (2) simultaneous games of 3v3 soccer on adjacent fields. Substitute players shall remain on the sideline between the two fields and may be rotated into play as needed on either of the two fields. Coaches may agree to place higher skilled players on one field and less skilled players on another with intermediate players moving back and forth from field to field.
- 22.4** Referees will not be assigned to games in this age group. Instead, the coaches shall maintain the flow of the game from on the field. The coaches shall be responsible for starting and stopping play and offering assistance, encouragement and “hands on” assistance to players on both teams.
- 22.5** Each game shall be divided into four (4) quarters of ten (10) minutes in length. Teams shall rest for three (3) minutes at the end of each quarter and for five (5) minutes at half. The game length may be altered due to weather conditions or player availability. For example, coaches may agree to shorten the games to six (6) minutes in length and increase the length or number of breaks on extremely hot and humid days.
- 22.6** Play will begin with a kickoff from the halfway line at the beginning of each quarter and after each goal scored. Teams shall alternate kickoffs at the beginning of each quarter of play. Following a goal, the team that was scored upon shall begin play with a kickoff. Prior to the kickoff, players shall position themselves on their own half of the field. Players on the kicking team may position themselves anywhere within their own half while players of the defending team must remain outside of the center circle until the ball is put into play. Upon the coach’s signal, the ball must be propelled forward by the attacking team to begin play.
- 22.7** A running clock will be recognized. This means that time will not stop once the quarter begins. Any time lost due to injury or for any other reason will be considered lost time and will not be added to the game clock.
- 22.8** Coaches shall stop play immediately to tend to injured players. However, the clock shall not stop during injury time.
- 22.9** Substitutions may be made by either team at any time during the game. It is preferred that substitutions occur at a stoppage in play whenever possible.
- 22.10** The position of goalkeeper is not recognized at this level of play. Therefore, no player shall be permitted to deliberately handle the ball when it is in the field of play. Players will learn to defend their goal but should be instructed not to stand in front of the goal unless they are defending an opposing player.

22.11 When the ball leaves the field of play, the coach shall retrieve the ball and restart by tossing the ball back into the playing field. This is an opportunity for the coach to provide an advantage for a team or for a specific player who may not be as involved in the game as others. It is recommended that the coach always have an extra ball in hand to allow play to resume quickly while the other ball is retrieved. Spectators should be instructed to help maintain the flow of the game by quickly returning the ball to the coach whenever it leaves the field of play.

22.12 Only deliberate handballs and fouls of a persistent, deliberate or dangerous nature shall be recognized. Try to deal with offenders through verbal warning without interrupting play whenever possible. If necessary, acknowledge a foul and award an indirect free kick to the opposing team.

22.13 It is the responsibility of the coaches to ensure that all players have a great time while playing the game of soccer. Please stress this philosophy to the parents as well so that everyone understands what you are trying to achieve. We want to make this a positive learning experience for all involved.

23. U6-U10 MODIFICATIONS

23.1 Introduced as part of the US Soccer Player Development Initiative and was adopted by the AJSL in 2021. The concept promotes playing the ball out of the back in a less pressured setting.

23.2 Buildout lines will be placed equidistant between the halfway line and the penalty area and shall implemented as follows:

A. The opposing team must move outside the Build-Out Area:

- i. On all goal kicks.
- ii. On any defensive free kick (DFK or IFK) taken from anywhere within the Build-Out Area.
- iii. Whenever the goalkeepers gain possession of the ball with their hands during play.

B. The opposing team's players must remain outside the Build-Out Area until the ball is put back into play on all restarts taken within the Build-Out Area by the defending team. The ball is in play:

- i. On goal kicks when the ball is kicked and clearly moves.
- ii. On all free kicks (DFK or IFK) taken from anywhere within the Build-Out Area when the ball is kicked and clearly moves.
- iii. On goalkeeper possession when
 - a. The ball is placed on the ground and kicked; or
 - b. The goalkeeper releases the ball by rolling it into play; or
 - c. The goalkeeper releases the ball by throwing it into play

C. Offside

- i. Applies only to U9/U10 age in which case attacking players are in an offside position only when they are in their opponent's Build-Out Area.
- ii. The area of the field between the two Offside Lines is an offside free zone, i.e. no offside offense can occur between the two Offside Lines.
- iii. Offside shall not apply to ages U8 and below.

23.3 Additional restrictions:

- A. Goalkeepers are not allowed to punt or drop-kick the ball. An Indirect Free Kick (IFK) is awarded to the opposing team at the spot of this infraction.
- B. At any time, the defending team may put the ball back into play before their opponents have moved outside the Build-Out Area, but by doing so they accept the positioning of their opponents and the consequences of how play resumes.
- C. Opponents who enter the Build-out Area before the ball is put back into play are guilty of encroachment.
 - i. Play should be stopped and restarted with an Indirect Free Kick (IFK) at the spot of the encroachment.
- D. In the spirit of the game, the rules regarding the buildout line are intended to allow the team in possession more time to make good decisions and to successfully put the ball into play. They are not intended to allow the attacking team the opportunity to take advantage of technicalities resulting from interpretations. The referee's decision on all matters surrounding the buildout line shall be final and coaches or players who dispute these decisions may be cautioned for dissent.

Summary of IFAB (FIFA) Laws of the Game

The complete "IFAB Laws of the Game" can be found online at <https://www.ussoccer.com/referee-program/laws-of-the-game>.

1. The Field of Play

- a. *Field sizes vary by age group. Refer to AJSL Field Map*

2. The Ball

- a. *Ball sizes vary by age group. Refer to AJSL Rule 4.2.*

3. The Players

- a. *Number of Players varies per age group. Refer to AJSL Rule 1.7.*
- b. *Substitution Procedure. Refer to AJSL Rule 1.7.*

4. The Players' Equipment

- a. Safety
 - i. *Refer to AJSL Rule 5.*
- b. Compulsory Equipment
 - i. A shirt with sleeves
 - ii. Shorts
 - iii. Socks
 - iv. Shin guards - *Must be worn under and be completely covered by the socks.*
 - v. Footwear

5. The Referee

- a. The Authority of the Referee
 - i. Each match is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the match to which he has been appointed
- b. Decisions of the Referee
 - i. The decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play, including whether or not a goal is scored and the result of the match, are final. The referee may only change a decision on realizing that it is incorrect or, at his discretion, on the advice of an assistant referee or the fourth official, provided that he has not restarted play or terminated the match.
- c. *Refer to AJSL Rule 11 for additional information.*

6. The Other Match Officials

- a. Duties
 - i. Two assistant referees may be appointed whose duties, subject to the decision of the referee, are to indicate:
 1. When the ball leaves the field of play and subsequent possession.
 2. When a substitution is requested.
 3. When a player may be penalized for being in an offside position or any other offense or when misconduct occurs.
 - ii. *The Assistant Referees are assigned to assist the Referee. Ultimately, the decisions of the Referee are final.*
- b. *Refer to AJSL Rule 11 for additional information.*

7. The Duration of the Match

- a. *Match duration varies by age group. Refer to AJSL Rule 4.1.*
- b. *Coaches are expected to have their players ready and properly equipped prior to the scheduled match time.*

8. The Start and Restart of Play

- a. Kick-off
 - i. Prior to the game, choice of ends shall be decided by the toss of a coin.
 - 1. The team winning the toss will choose whether to kick-off or decide which goal to attack during the first period.
 - 2. Depending on the winner's choice, the other team shall take the kick-off or decide which goal to attack in the first period.
 - 3. The team that decided which goal to attack in the first period shall take the kick-off to start the second period.
- b. Dropped ball
 - i. On any occasion where it is necessary for the Referee to temporarily stop a game, while the ball was in play, for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in these Laws play is restarted with a dropped ball at the location where the ball was when play was stopped.
 - 1. The ball is dropped for the defending team goalkeeper in the Penalty Area if, when play was stopped:
 - a. The ball was in the Penalty Area
 - b. The last touch of the ball was in the Penalty Area
 - 2. Outside the penalty area – the ball is dropped for a player of the team that has or would have gained possession if this is clear to the referee; otherwise, it is dropped for a player of the team that last touched it. The ball is dropped at its position when play was stopped
 - 3. All other players (of both teams) must remain at least 4 yards from the ball until it is in play.

9. The Ball in and Out of Play

- a. Ball Out of Play
 - i. The ball is out of play when:
 - 1. it has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line whether on the ground or in the air
 - 2. play has been stopped by the referee
 - 3. It touches the Referee or Assistant Referee without completely leaving the field of play and:
 - a. A team starts a promising attack or
 - b. The ball goes directly into the goal or
 - c. The team in possession of the ball changes

In all of these cases, play is restarted with a dropped ball

10. Determining the Outcome of a Match

- a. Goal Scored
 - i. A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, provided that no infringement of the Laws of the Game has been committed previously by the team scoring the goal.
 - ii. A goal shall not be awarded if the goalkeeper throws the ball directly into the opponent's goal. Play is to be restarted with a goal kick.

11. Offside

- a. Offside Position
 - i. It is not an offense in itself to be in an offside position.
 - 1. A player is in an offside position if:

- a. he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second to last opponent
- b. A player is not in an offside position if:
 - i. he is in his own half of the field of play
 - 1. *or, for U9/U10 age groups, is in the "offside free zone" between the offside lines (build-out lines). Refer to AISL Rule 23.2.C.*
 - ii. he is level with the second to last opponent
 - iii. he is level with the last two opponents.
- b. Offense
 - i. A player in an offside position is only penalized if, at the moment the ball touches or is played by one of his team, he is, in the opinion of the referee, involved in active play by:
 - 1. interfering with play
 - 2. interfering with an opponent
 - 3. gaining an advantage by being in that position
 - ii. Offside IFK always taken where offence occurs (even in own half)
- c. No Offense
 - i. There is no offside offense if a player receives the ball directly from:
 - 1. a goal kick
 - 2. a throw-in
 - 3. a corner kick

12. Fouls and Misconduct

- a. Direct Free Kick
 - i. A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following seven offenses in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:
 - 1. kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
 - 2. trips or attempts to trip an opponent
 - 3. jumps at an opponent
 - 4. charges an opponent
 - 5. strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
 - 6. pushes an opponent
 - 7. tackles an opponent
 - ii. A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following three offenses:
 - 1. holds an opponent
 - 2. spits at an opponent
 - 3. handles the ball deliberately (except for the goalkeeper within his own penalty area).
 - a. The following "handball" situations, even if accidental, will also result in a free kick to the opponents:
 - i. the ball goes into the goal after touching an attacking player's hand or arm; or
 - ii. a player gains control or possession of the ball after it has touched their hand or arm and then scores, or creates a goal-scoring opportunity; or
 - iii. the ball touches a player's hand or arm which has been extended into an unnatural position; or
 - iv. the ball touches a player's hand or arm when it is above their shoulders

- b. Penalty Kick
 - i. A penalty kick is awarded if any of the above ten offenses is committed by a player inside his own penalty area, irrespective of the position of the ball, provided it is in play.
- c. Indirect Free Kick
 - i. An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper, inside his own penalty area, commits any of the following four offenses:
 - 1. touches the ball again with his hands after he has released it from his possession and before it has touched another player
 - 2. touches the ball with his hands after it has been deliberately kicked to him by a team-mate
 - 3. touches the ball with his hands after he has received it directly from a throw-in taken by a team-mate.
 - ii. An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:
 - 1. plays in a dangerous manner
 - 2. impedes the progress of an opponent
 - 3. prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
 - 4. commits any other offense, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or send off a player
 - iii. Disciplinary Sanctions
 - 1. The yellow card is used to communicate that a player, substitute or substituted player has been cautioned.
 - 2. The red card is used to communicate that a player, substitute or substituted player has been sent off.
 - iv. Cautionable Offenses
 - 1. A player is cautioned and shown the yellow card if he commits any of the following seven offenses:
 - a. unsporting behavior
 - b. dissent by word or action
 - c. persistent infringement of the Laws of the Game
 - d. delaying the restart of play
 - e. failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
 - f. entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission
 - g. deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission.
 - 2. A substitute or substituted player is cautioned if he commits any of the following three offenses:
 - a. unsporting behavior
 - b. dissent by word or action
 - c. delaying the restart of play.
 - v. Sending-Off Offenses
 - 1. A player, substitute or substituted player is sent off if he commits any of the following seven offenses:
 - a. serious foul play
 - b. violent conduct
 - c. spitting at an opponent or any other person
 - d. denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area)

- e. denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
 - f. offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
 - g. receiving a second caution in the same match
- d. Corner Kick
- i. A corner kick is awarded if a goalkeeper, inside their penalty area, controls the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) for more than eight seconds before releasing it. A goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s) when:
 - 1. the ball is between their hands/arms or between their hand(s)/arm(s) and any surface (e.g. ground, own body)
 - 2. holding the ball in their outstretched open hand(s)
 - 3. bouncing it on the ground or throwing it in the air
 - ii. The referee will decide when the goalkeeper has control of the ball and the eight seconds begin and will visually count down the last five seconds with a raised hand.
 - iii. A goalkeeper cannot be challenged by an opponent when in control of the ball with their hand(s)/arm(s).

13. Free Kicks

- a. Types of Free Kicks
 - i. Free kicks are either direct or indirect

14. The Penalty Kick

- a. A penalty kick is awarded against a team which commits one of the ten offenses for which a direct free kick is awarded, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play.
- b. The goalkeeper:
 - i. Must have at least part of one foot touching the Goal Line (or, if jumping, in line with the Goal Line) at the time the ball is kicked, and
 - ii. Is permitted to move the body or arms – but not in an unsporting attempt to distract the kicker.

15. The Throw-in

- a. A throw-in is a method of restarting play.
- b. Procedure: At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower:
 - i. faces the field of play
 - ii. has part of each foot either on the touch line or on the ground outside the touch line
 - iii. holds the ball with both hands
 - iv. delivers the ball from behind and over his head
 - v. delivers the ball from the point where it left the field of play

16. The Goal Kick

- a. A goal kick is a method of restarting play.
 - i. A goal kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the attacking team, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 10.
- b. The ball shall be stationary and is in play when it is kicked and clearly moves.
 - i. The goal kick is to be retaken if an opponent, who is in the Penalty Area when the goal kick is taken or enters the Penalty Area before the ball is in play, touches or challenges for the ball before it has touched another player.
 - ii. If a player taking a goal kick touches the ball after it has been kicked, but before it is touched by another player, an indirect free kick (IFK) shall be awarded to the opposing team. The IFK will be taken from the place where the second touch occurred.

- iii. Players of the opposing team shall remain outside the Penalty Area, until the ball has been kicked and clearly moves.
 - 1. EXCEPTION: In the U6 – U10 divisions, all opposing players must remain outside the Build-Out Area, until the ball has been kicked and clearly moves. *See AISL Rule 23.2.A.*

17. The Corner Kick

- a. A corner kick is a method of restarting play.
 - i. A corner kick is awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, having last touched a player of the defending team, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 10.