

RECREATIONAL PLUS (RecPLUS)

BYLAWS

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RecPLUS Philosophy

RecPLUS is an extension of Recreational soccer which will provide above average players the opportunity to play competitive soccer in southern Maryland and continue to develop their skill set above the Recreational level of play. As a developmental program, RecPLUS is NOT considered a "Travel Program".

RecPlus is a more competitive program for players with higher skill levels, or a desire to play at a more competitive level. Players participate in player evaluation sessions between June and July each year. Following evaluations, teams are formed for a period one year, and will play as a team in both the Fall and Spring seasons. Coaches are volunteers who typically have several seasons of coaching experience as well as a MSYSA "E" License or higher. RecPlus players may not concurrently play on Recreational Teams, or on any Travel Teams (or other select teams where players are issued "travel" cards). Games are played in Southern Maryland, either in St. Mary's, Charles, or Calvert Counties, against RecPlus teams from Southern Maryland.

The goal of this cooperative effort is to be able to raise the level of play while keeping travel to a minimum. Other Southern Maryland Clubs/Teams/Leagues may be added or removed from the RecPLUS Program at the discretion of the participating Clubs as defined herein. All teams playing RecPLUS must agree to abide by these bylaws.

Governing Board

- A Governing Board shall oversee the operations of the RecPLUS Program.
- The President of each participating Club shall be considered a member of the Governing Board.
- Each Club may delegate/designate a Club representative who will represent the Club President at Governing Board meetings.
- Each participating Club shall have only one vote on the Governing Board.

Membership

- RecPLUS is a cooperative program offered by participating Clubs. Participating Clubs are solely responsible for the cost of their participation.
- Each participating Club must be affiliated with the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association (MSYSA).
- The President of each participating Club shall be a member of the RecPLUS Governing Board and shall be entitled to one vote on the Board. The President of each participating Club may appoint a RecPLUS Coordinator, who shall act on behalf of their Club in the absence of the Club President.
- Clubs may be added or removed from the RecPLUS Program by a majority vote of all participating Clubs. In the event of a tie vote, the RecPLUS Administrator will cast the tie-breaking vote.

Administration, Fees and Expenses

- With the approval of the Governing Board, St Mary's Soccer will act as the RecPLUS Program Administrator. The Administrator shall convene no less than two Governing Board meetings per year. All proposed changes to the operations of the RecPLUS program shall be presented to the Governing Board no less than 2 weeks in advance of a meeting. Each Club shall have one vote on the Board, and changes shall become effective upon a majority vote of approval from the Board.

- There are no fees to participate in RecPLUS; the Administrator shall not charge fees to any participating Club unless approved by the Governing Board.
- All Club related expenses associated with participation in RecPLUS are to be funded by the participating Club.
- Each participating Club shall be responsible for paying referee fees for their home games.

Teams

- Team formation will be done during the summer of each year. Teams will participate in both the Fall and Spring seasons. Teams new teams cannot be added prior to the Spring season unless approved by the Governing Board.
- Each Club will be responsible for the formation of their participating teams.
- There will be a GIRLS Division and a COED Division. There is no minimum or maximum number of girls required for participation in the COED division.

Age Groups

- Age groups shall be as follows: U08, U10, U12, U14 and U16 (if applicable).
- Changes to the Age groups may only be proposed and considered prior to the formation of teams for the Fall season and must be approved by the Governing Board.
- Age groups will have between 4 and 12 teams.

Coach Selection

- Because the caliber of the RecPlus player is expected to be above average, the RecPlus division teams require coaches who have above average qualifications. Therefore, it is recommended that each selected coach should meet the following minimum requirements:
 - Four (4) seasons coaching in Recreation League.
 - Hold at least an “E” License or equivalent.
- Each coach is expected to:
 - Commit to coach their team for a full year.
 - Attend player evaluations or have an approved assistant attend.
- Each league participating in RecPlus is responsible for selecting qualified coaches for their RecPlus teams.

Player Evaluations

- Prior to each fall season, a minimum of two (2) evaluation sessions will be held.
- Evaluations will determine which players are rostered in the RecPlus division.
- Players will be evaluated initially in their age specific groups. If it is deemed that a player is far superior to the other players he/she is being evaluated with, that player may be moved to a higher age group with parental permission. However, no player will be placed on a team simply for convenience. All players will have to demonstrate appropriate skill to play in this division.
- A supplemental evaluation may be held prior to the spring season to fill roster slots created by departing players. Normally, RecPlus teams remain together for fall and spring seasons. If selected for a RecPlus team for the fall season, a player need not attend an evaluation for the spring season.
- Each League participating in RecPlus is responsible for holding their own evaluations.

Player Placement

- Age group eligibility shall be in accordance with the US Youth Soccer (USYS) Birth Year age group definition.
- Players will be allowed to request to “Play-Up” one age group, provided the players date of birth is within 12 months of the beginning of that age group. Players may only play up one age division. Specifically, a player whose age is in the lower half of a two-year age group may not play-up to the next higher age group. Only players in the top half of a two-year age group may request to lay-up.
- No player may play down an age group. No exceptions.

Carding and Team Rosters

- All RecPLUS players must be carded as Recreational players through participating clubs. Cards must include a photo of the player.
- Player cards and team rosters will be prepared in accordance with established RecPLUS or MSYSA procedure and will be presented to the referee at the beginning of each game.

Guest Players

- Any guest player must have a completed guest player/player loan form
 - Specific form to be used is TBD
 - Any team with a guest player must notify their opponent’s head coach prior to the start of the game.
- Guest players are allowed in the following circumstances
 - Recreational players guest playing on a Recreation Plus team
 - RecPLUS players guest playing “up” an age group on another Recreation Plus team, provided the players date of birth is within 12 months of the beginning of that age group.
 - A Recreation Plus “Girls” player guest playing with a Recreation Plus “Coed” team
- Guest players are not allowed in the following circumstances:
 - Travel players may not guest play on Recreation Plus team at any time.
 - Recreation Plus players may not guest play within the same age group
 - No player may play more than one game per day, either as a regular roster player, or as a guest player. This does not apply to scrimmages or tournament play.

Participation of Travel (or select) or Recreational Players

- No player who is carded as a Travel Player or rostered on a Travel Team (or other select teams where players are carded) may play on a Recreational or RecPLUS team during the same season without a waiver from the Governing Board.
- Carded Travel players may not “Guest” play with any RecPLUS team. No exceptions.
- No player on a RecPlus team of any club participating in the RecPlus Program may play concurrently on any Recreational Team, regardless of whether the recreational team participates in RecPLUS or not.
- If a RecPlus player is selected to play on a Travel team after the start of the RecPlus/Travel season, that player may request to continue playing on their RecPlus team through the end of the current season. A waiver may be requested only if one or both teams would lack a sufficient number of players.
- A waiver is granted only for the remainder of the current season only (Fall or Spring).
- A waiver cannot be granted to the same player two consecutive seasons.

- A RecPlus team will be granted a maximum of two (2) waivers per season.
- A waiver is obtained by notifying and receiving a written response approving the waiver from the Governing Board.
- Any player found to be in violation of this rule may be suspended from RecPlus play for the remainder of the current season.
- Teams found to have played an ineligible player may forfeit any points earned towards standings, and at the discretion of the Governing Board, may be suspended from future participation in RecPLUS.
- This rule does not prohibit RecPlus players from training with travel teams or participating as an un-carded guest player in travel team tournaments.

Season

- Each RecPlus team will be composed prior to the fall season and stay intact through the end of the following spring season. Any exceptions will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- The RecPlus division will publish its schedule at least a week prior to the start of the season. The first week's schedule may be published in advance of the remainder of the season schedule.
- The Championships of the RecPlus division will be decided by an end-of-season tournament.

Weather on Game Day

- Once a game starts, it is up to the referee, or SMS Board Members present at the field, to suspend games in dangerous weather conditions. In the event lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the game must be suspended immediately.
- If the first half is not complete and play is unable to continue, the game will be replayed.
- If the first half is complete, the result will stand at the point where play is halted, including a stoppage in the second half where play is unable to continue.

Game Format

- All games shall be played using the guidelines of the US Youth Soccer Laws of the Game.
 - <https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/referees/rules-of-the-game/>
- Game formats for the four (4) age groups are as follows:
 - U08: Two (2) 25-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The U08 division will play 5v5 (4 field players plus a GK) unless one team has five (5) or fewer players, in which case the coach may request that the format be adjusted to 4v4. This request may be granted by the opposing coach but is not required. Ball size #3; No Offside; Heading is NOT allowed.
 - U10: Two (2) 25-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The U10 division will play 7v7 unless one team has seven (7) or fewer players, in which case the coach may request the format be adjusted to 6v6. This request may be granted by the opposing coach but is not required. Ball size #4; Build Out Line WILL be used; Heading is NOT allowed.
 - U12: Two (2) 30-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The U12 division will play 9v9 unless one team has nine (9) or fewer players, in which case the coach may request the format be adjusted to 8v8. This request may be granted by the opposing coach but is not required. Ball size #4; Heading IS NOT allowed.
 - U14 and U16: Two (2) 35-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime. The U14 division will play 11v11 unless one team has eleven (11) or fewer players, in which case the coach may request the format be adjusted to 10v10. This request may be granted by the opposing coach but is not required. Ball size #5. **Slide tackling is allowed.**

- Unlimited substitutions are permitted at any stoppage of play.
- If a game begins with fewer players than prescribed due to missing players who later arrive, the game will resume full sided play when both teams have the required number of players. With the consent of the Referee, the game may resume with the full-sided format either immediately, at the next substitution opportunity, or after halftime.

Standings

- No scores or standing shall be kept for U08 and U10 age groups.
- Scores and standings shall be recorded for U12, U14 and U16 age groups.
- The coach of the winning Team is responsible for reporting final scores to the RecPlus Division Manager not later than Monday following the game, or within forty-eight (48) hours of the completion of a game if the game is not played on a Friday or Saturday. This reporting can be done via phone or email. At the beginning of the season, the Division Manager will provide contact information to the RecPlus coaches from all leagues.
- It is the responsibility of the Division Manager to post scores and standings to the SMS RecPlus webpage on a weekly basis.
- At the end of the season, playoff brackets will be made based on the final standings in the regular season. A point system will be used as follows:
 - Win by five (5) or fewer goals = three (3) points
 - Win by six (6) or more goals = two (2) points
 - Tie = one (1) point
 - Loss = zero (0) points
 - Forfeits will be scored 5-0 in favor of the non-forfeiting team.
- Because the number of teams may vary in each division from year to year and it may not be possible to ensure an equitable arrangement of game assignments, the Division Manager may elect to declare that some of the games do not count towards the season standings. Such a declaration will be made to the coaches when the schedule is published.

Division Rankings Tie-Breakers

1. Head to Head Result (does not apply if more than 2 are tied; do not revert back to this rule, continue tie break with rule 3)
2. Most Wins
3. Fewest goals allowed
4. Goal Differential (max of three per game)
5. Most Shutouts
6. Fewest Red Cards

Playoffs

- A round robin, double elimination, or some other tournament format selected at the discretion of the Division Manager may be held at the end of the Spring season.
- Playoff games that end in a tie will be decided by Kicks from the Penalty Mark as provided for in the Laws of the Game.