

Soccer

Rule

Book



CLASS ATHLETE™

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INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

The Class Athlete Board of Directors has chosen to implement what are known as “Small-Sided” games. Small-sided games are games played on smaller fields and with fewer players. Games of 5 vs. 5, 6 vs. 6, and 7 vs. 7 are examples of small-sided game numbers.

Here are some of the reasons that we believe that our younger soccer players should play small-sided games:

1. Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become **more skillful** with it! (Individual technical development)
2. Because we want our young soccer players to make **more, less-complicated decisions** during the game! (Tactical development)
3. Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically **efficient** in the field space in which they are playing! (Reduced field size)
4. Because we want our young soccer players to have more individual teaching time with the coach! Fewer players on the field and fewer players on the team will guarantee this! (Need to feel worthy and need to feel important).
5. Because we want our young soccer players to have **more involved playing time** in the game! (More opportunity to solve problems that only the game presents)
6. Because we want our young soccer players to have **more opportunities to play on both sides of the ball!** (More exposure to attacking and defending situations)
7. Because we want our young soccer players to have **more opportunities to score goals and make saves!** (Pure excitement)
8. The “Small-Sided” environment is a **developmentally appropriate environment** for our young soccer players. It’s a **FUN** environment that focuses on the **young soccer player**.

ADVANTAGES OF PLAYING SMALL-SIDED GAMES:

- More time with the coach
- Energetic workouts due to playing both offense and defense
- More efficient use of field space
- Matches can be played simultaneously across a full size field
- Children are physically more efficient in smaller space
- Children are actively involved for a longer period of time
- It takes less time to score a goal or advance to goal
- Greater success rate for the players

GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

This rulebook is to be used by all teams playing soccer in the Class Athlete League. The rules are based upon the soccer laws and rules as outlined by FIFA and USYSA. Any rule adaptations are made to facilitate the needs of the CA program. No rule shall be passed by CA that is inconsistent with the rules adopted by FIFA and USYSA.

- All teams are co-ed.
- There are no try-outs.
- Each child plays a minimum of half the game and is welcome regardless of gender, skills, or ability.
- Officials will explain all rule infractions to players.
- In the spirit of CA, teams are not permitted to run up scores. Rotating player positions, requiring additional passing, and adjusting playing time to accommodate uneven competition is required.
- The referee's decisions are final.
- There are no game protests.

SPECTATORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

While enthusiasm and cheering can be inspiring, and it is natural to get caught up in the emotion of the game, spectators should take care to follow proper sideline etiquette.

Spectators will refrain from any negative comments towards any players, coaches or officials. This rule applies to all languages.

Spectators may not argue, yell at or question the coaches and officials during game play. Any disagreement with coaches, officials' actions or other concern must be brought to a CA official's attention, in civil tones and away from sight and sound distance from the players. Spectators may not disagree with referee's judgment calls.

Spectators should refrain from coaching from the sidelines.

Spectators can sit or stand at least 3 yards beyond the sidelines on the opposite side from the team. Any chair, cooler, tent pole or other item must be clear of the buffer beyond the sidelines.

Spectators should not patrol up and down the sidelines during game play.

Spectators may not be behind or next to the goals. Spectators may not sit or stand behind the goal line.

Spectators may not use any noise making or voice enhancing devices at any games. Including but not exclusively: vuvuzelas, horns, noise-makers, drums, air-horns or bullhorns

Coaches have complete and total responsibility for their team's spectators. Referees will ask coaches to speak to any spectators that are not following these rules. If a coach is unable to

control their team's spectators they will be warned by the referee and/or CA official for the first infraction and may be ejected for continued infractions. Continued infractions will cause the game to be called off and forfeited. CA officials may ask any unruly spectators to leave the facilities if they cannot conform to the rules as they are here and in the CA Code of Conduct.

Any coach or spectator ejected will be deemed to be in violation of the League's Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action and MUST LEAVE the facility immediately.

COACHES

All CA coaches are volunteers. The most important responsibilities of a CA soccer coach are:

- to provide a safe, healthy environment for the practice and play of soccer, and
- to provide mature, adult supervision for young athletes.

Coaches have a leadership role. They are a role model and should set an example for each player. For coaches to succeed, and for the kids to realize the best the sport has to offer, coaches must adhere to the Class Athlete Coach's Code of Conduct.

Coaches shall not place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players.

Coaches shall extend respect and courtesy to match and competition officials.

Coaches shall not make demeaning or derogatory comments or gestures directed towards any official, player, opponent or spectator.

Coaches must always demonstrate by actions exceptional sportsmanship. They should be the first to congratulate the work of the referee and guide their team to a post game handshake.

Coaches and the team must stay in its designated team area. A coach or player who goes into the other team's areas can be penalized. The coach is allowed to have 2 representatives/assistant coaches in their team's bench area during the game.

Coaches shall never be on the field of play unless to officiate the game. Exception in the 3-4 and 5-6 age divisions where a coach can assist from inside the playing field.

In the event of an injury, coaches will wait for the referee to instruct them to enter the playing field.

The coaches, through their actions, are responsible for teaching the children how to deal with winning and losing a game. This includes how to deal with bad calls, difficult parents and other coaches. The league will remove a coach from his duties for inappropriate behavior that includes but is not limited to:

- Disagreeing with an official.

- A negative discussion of the game with the other coaches.
- A negative discussion of the game with parents.
- Inappropriately ending a game by not congratulating the other team or inappropriate behavior when congratulating the other team.
- Negative comments or gesture towards a player, opponent, official or spectator.

Concerns regarding players, parents or officiating should be handled via the phone on the following Monday by contacting the CA director. If directing concerns to the on field CA coordinator, the tone and volume of the discussion must be civil. No verbal abuse, loud discussions or disagreements within sight of any players will be tolerated.

No coaching or spectators are allowed on the end lines or behind the goals.

THE FIELD

Teams will occupy the same area of the field sidelines for the entire game and not cross the midfield area into the other team's area.

Spectators will occupy the opposite side from the team benches. At no time can spectators or coaches be behind the goal area, end lines or coach/team area.

The field and goal size will be determined by the logistics and layout of the available facilities.

THE BALL

Age division 3-4 will use a size #3 soccer ball. Age divisions 5-6 and 7-8 will use a size #4 soccer ball all other divisions will use a #5 size soccer ball.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

* Age divisions 3-4 and 5-6 will play with 7 players, and no goalie will be used (7 vs. 7). Good defense is encouraged, but no player should play an equivalent role of goalie, even if hands are not used (i.e. no pure "goal guarding" allowed).

* Age divisions 7-8 will play with 8 players, including a goalie (8 vs. 8).

* Age division 9-11 will play with 9 players including a goalie (9 vs. 9).

Age divisions 12-14 and 15-17 will play a traditional 11 players, (11 vs. 11).

****In the event of roster size changes throughout the age division larger or smaller team sizes may be required and will be determined prior to the start of the season.***

SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions are unlimited but are subject to age group rules for when they can be allowed during the game.

EQUIPMENT

For all practices and games, players must wear shin guards and molded soccer shoes or turf shoes. Soccer socks are recommended and to be worn over the shin guards. Baseball shoes/cleats or metal cleats are not permitted.

The league provided shirts and shorts should be worn for all games. All shirts must be tucked in and not altered (i.e. no names or numbers, cut-off sleeves, etc.). Goalies will wear a different color shirt, soccer bib or pennies from what the other players are wearing.

Players may not wear watches or jewelry or other non-soccer uniform items except for Medic Alert Labels that must be worn inside the jersey and taped to the body.

Hair control devices are allowed if made of soft material and not worn for adornment.

Hair ties must be of soft material.

Eye glasses, unless of athletically approved construction and containing shatter-proof lenses.

Hard casts, even if covered by soft material, are not allowed on the playing or practice fields.

For safety reasons for all players, no exceptions will be permitted to any equipment rules.

The referee or a CA Coordinator will be the final judge as to what is unacceptable. Those decisions are final.

REFEREE

For age divisions 3-4 and 5-6, each team is responsible for providing a referee for the game. Typically both coaches can officiate the game.

Professional referees will be provided for all other divisions.

Referee rulings are final. Coaches, parents and spectators may not question the referee's decisions on field. Any disputes, questions or disagreements must be handled away from the players with the CA coordinator.

REFEREE RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the referee's responsibility to be in control at all times. The children are there to have fun and learn the game of soccer. For all infractions the referee will explain what was done incorrectly, without coaching.

The most common problem is excessive physical contact between two players, e.g. pushing and shoving. The referees must first tell the violators that this is not acceptable. If a problem continues, then the offending player must sit out while the player's own coach discusses the needed adjustments. It is the referee's responsibility to be in control of the game and flow of play. Coaches have authority only over their own players.

The referee can stop the game at any time to give aid to an injured player. While an injured player is being attended, all players in the field will drop to a knee in their spots until the player is back up and escorted to the sidelines or continues playing. All parents and spectators should applaud as a sign of encouragement for the injured player. The referee and coach will call over the injured player's parent or guardian to assist if necessary. Parents should not enter the field until called over.

CANCELLATION & BAD WEATHER

Teams are expected to attend all scheduled games regardless of conflicts and number of players. It is better to show with less than a full complement of players than to not show at all. Conflicts must be reported to the CA director not less than one full week prior to play.

Games will be terminated at the CA director's discretion if bad weather approaches after games have started. Any visible or audible sign of lightning or thunder will result in cancellation of play.

Seminole County parks have an early lightning detection and warning system. If the park siren sounds, all CA activity must cease until the systems all clear siren sounds. Practices can be cancelled by the team's coach if the siren is activated. Class Athlete officials onsite will determine if games are cancelled or delayed when the siren is activated.

GENERAL SOCCER RULES

Ball In and Out of Play: The ball is out of play when it completely goes over the end line or side line either in the air or on the ground and the referee signals by a whistle to stop play. FIFA Law 9.

Method of scoring: A goal is scored when the whole ball has passed over the outside edge of the goal line, between the goal post and under the cross-bar. FIFA Law 10.

Teams cannot score on a throw-in. FIFA Law 15.

Running Up Scores: Coaches are required to keep their team from purposely running up the score if they have a 5 goal lead. Coaches are expected to be creative while encouraging fair play. Coaches should encourage their team to pass more often when they have a substantial lead

Offside: If a player is in an offside position when the ball is touched or played by a teammate, he/she may not become actively involved in the play. A player is in an offside position if he/she is closer to the opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second-to-last defender (which is usually the last outfield player), but only if the player is on his opponent's half of the pitch. FIFA Law 11.

Drop Ball: A drop ball will be used to restart the game when it cannot be determined who last touched the ball before the ball last went out of bounds or when play has stopped by the official for other than an infraction (such as an injury). FIFA Law 8.

Fouls and Misconduct: When a player commits a foul a direct or indirect free kick shall be taken from that point where the offense occurred. FIFA Law 12.

The following offenses are considered fouls:

- A player kicks or attempts to kick an opponent.
- A player trips or attempts to trip an opponent.
- A player jumps at an opponent.
- A player charges an opponent.
- A player strikes or attempts to strike an opponent.
- A player pushes an opponent.
- A player tackles an opponent to gain possession of the ball, making contact with the opponent before touching the ball.
- A player holds an opponent.
- A player handles the ball deliberately. It is not handling of the ball when the player is trying to protect him/her self or has incidental contact with the ball.
- A player plays in a dangerous manner.
- A player impedes the progress of an opponent.
- A player commits any other offense, not previously mentioned for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player.

Penalty Kicks: A penalty kick is awarded against a team that commits one of the ten offences for which a direct free kick is awarded, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play. FIFA Law 14.

Throw-In: A throw in occurs in order to restart play after an out-of-bounds. The team that did not last touch the ball prior to it going out-of-bounds throws the ball into play. An improperly performed throw-in can be retaken once. FIFA Law 15

The following rules apply:

- The thrower must face the field of play.
- Part of each foot must be on the side line or outside the line.
- Both feet must be on the ground when the ball is released. A player can “drag” a foot.
- The thrower must use both hands and throw the ball from behind and over the head.
- The ball is in play upon crossing the entire side line.
- The thrower cannot play the ball until it touches another player.
- A goal can not be scored by a throw in.

Goal Kick: A Goal Kick is taken when the whole of the ball passes over the goal-line excluding that point between the goal post, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by the attacking team.

The ball shall be put back into play by placing it anywhere on the end line, one the side of the field where the ball went over the end line. The player kicking the ball cannot re-kick the ball until another player touches it (re-kick for violation). All opposing players must be a minimum of four yards from the ball.

If the ball is not kicked directly out of the penalty area from a goal kick the kick is retaken. FIFA Law 16.

Corner Kick: A corner kick will be awarded when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, excluding that portion between the goal-posts, either in the air or on the ground, having last been played by one of the defending team’s players. A corner kick is a direct free kick. FIFA Law 17.

The following rules apply:

- The whole of the ball shall be placed in the quarter circle nearest the corner where the ball went out of bounds.
- The corner marker must not be moved or removed.
- A goal may be scored from a corner kick.
- All opposing players must be four yards from the ball.
- When the ball is kicked and travels its circumference then another player must touch the ball before the kicker can re-touch the ball.

Slide Tackles: *Are not permitted in CA soccer in any age division.* Players should be encouraged to stay on their feet as much as possible. Repeated slide tackles by the same team will result in a red card for the coach of that team.

Yellow Card Procedure: A yellow caution card will be issued in the event of a serious violation of soccer or league rules. A player receiving a yellow card will be removed from the game for at least 3 minutes. A replacement is allowed. In the event of a yellow card, a direct free kick will be awarded to the other team at the spot of the infraction.

Red Card Procedure: A red card will be issued in the event of a dire violation of soccer or league rules, including repeating offenses previously subject to a yellow card. A player receiving a red card will be removed from the game for the balance of the day. A replacement will *not* be allowed. In the event of a red card, a direct free kick will be awarded to the other team at the spot of the infraction.

Any player, coach or spectator receiving a Red Card will be deemed in violation of the League's Code of Conduct and will be subject to disciplinary action. Coaches or spectators receiving a red card MUST LEAVE the facility immediately.

Players receiving a Red Card must sit out the following game. Coaches and parents are encouraged to discuss with the athlete how to avoid the situation, in the future, that caused the Red Card.

END OF GAME PROCEDURE

All players and coaches must shake hands at the conclusion of every game. Failure to demonstrate sportsmanship will result in disciplinary action.

SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY

3-4 Age Group

- **Game Duration:** Two 15 minute halves.
- **Ball Size:** #3
- **Goalies:** No goalies
- **Offsides:** No
- **Throw in:** No
- **Substitutions:** Unlimited, any time and on the fly permitted

5-6 Age Group

- **Game Duration:** Two 18 minute halves.
- **Ball Size:** #4
- **Goalies:** No goalies
- **Offsides:** No
- **Throw in:** Yes
- **Substitutions:** Unlimited, any time and on the fly permitted

7-8 Age Group

- **Game Duration:** Two 20 minute halves.
- **Ball Size:** #4
- **Goalies:** Yes
- **Offsides:** No
- **Throw in:** Yes
- **Substitutions:** Unlimited, with referee's OK during any stoppage of play except before free kicks or corner kicks.

9-11 Age Group

- **Game Duration:** Two 25 minute halves.
- **Ball Size:** #5
- **Goalies:** Yes
- **Offsides:** Yes
- **Throw in:** Yes
- **Substitutions:**
 - Unlimited
 - With referee's OK
 - Own team's throw-in
 - Any team's goal kick
 - Any team's goal scored
 - Half-time

12-14 Age Group

- **Game Duration:** Two 30 minute halves.
- **Ball Size:** #5
- **Goalies:** Yes
- **Offsides:** Yes
- **Throw in:** Yes
- **Substitutions:**
 - Unlimited
 - With referee's OK
 - Own team's throw-in
 - Any team's goal kick
 - Any team's goal scored
 - Half-time

POST SEASON RULES (All playoff qualifying age divisions)

- No overtime.
- Tie games will be decided by a penalty shoot out round.
- The goalie in goal at the end of regulation will be the penalty shoot out goalie. No substitution after the end of regulation.
- For 7-8 and 9-11, a round of 3 PK. If a tie persists, individual 1 v 1 PK until the tie is broken. Players may only kick once while the tie persists. The goalie can participate as a kicker.
- For 12-14 rules are identical except the first PK round is 5.
- If the tie continues the players may start again rotating in the same order, 1 v 1 until the tie is broken and a winner declared.
- While a tie continues, a player can not shoot a second time until all players have rotated through.
- The referee is the final judge on the PK mark.

CLASS ATHLETE (CA)

Code of Conduct

The CA is meant to provide a positive environment for children to enter athletics without the pressure of having to be No. 1 or “The Best”. CA emphasizes teamwork and sportsmanship above winning. With that, we ask that all players, parents/guardians, and coaches please read the following information. By signing the CA player application and waiver you agree to all the provisions of this code of conduct.

I understand that should my behavior violate this code of conduct, I will accept any disciplinary action, up to and including permanent ejection, as determined by league officials. I also understand that failure to abide by these rules will result in forfeiture of all monies paid for my registration.

Players

1. I will treat my teammates, opponents, coaches, parents, and all others involved in CA with respect at all times
2. I will give my full attention to my coach and do my best to follow instructions.
3. I will always give my best effort in both practice and during games.
4. I will encourage and help my teammates and others who may not be as skilled at sports as I am.
5. Under no circumstance will I engage in name calling, taunting, or make derogatory or profane remarks to any coaches, officials, teammates or opposing players.
6. I will always congratulate my opponents effort at the end of every game regardless of the score.
7. I WILL HAVE FUN!

Parent(S)/Guardian(S)

1. I will support my child unconditionally regardless of how well he/she performs.
2. I realize that who wins or loses is of little consequence. I will not place pressure on my child to win or engage in conduct that is adverse to the instructions of the coaches and staff of CA.
3. I will support the coach in his/her efforts to teach skills, teamwork, and good sportsmanship to the players. This includes ensuring that my child attends all scheduled practices and games as possible.
4. I will not seek special treatment nor ask for special privileges for my child.
5. I will applaud the efforts of all of the players in the games. I will never criticize another player.
6. I will not embarrass my child or myself by criticizing or yelling at officials, coaches, players, other spectators, or league directors. All forms of hostility toward an official, coach, child, opposing team parent, or league director are unacceptable and have no place in this league.

7. I will be responsible for compliance of this code of conduct for any additional family members, friends or spectators that I invite to the games.
8. I will help the team whenever possible by providing my services as requested by the coach or team parent.
9. I will remember that this is my child's sport and not my second childhood.
10. I WILL HAVE FUN!

CLASS ATHLETE (CA)

Coaches' Code of Conduct

1. I understand that as a coach or official, I must be a positive role model for the players and parents, and that I will exert a tremendous influence, either good or bad, in the education of the players. I will strive to instill in every child a sense of self-esteem, responsibility, confidence, dignity, and self discipline, through an emphasis on fair play, teamwork, leadership, scholarship, respect, and the rules of CA sports.
2. I will never place the value of winning, or my own personal satisfactions, above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character, fair play and sportsmanship.
3. As a coach or official, I will devote time, thought, planning, and study to the rules of the game. I will prepare a practice and game plan realizing that this will best enable me to teach team sports. I will make every effort to attend all league provided training and meetings.
4. I agree that CA sports are intended to be enjoyable experiences for everyone involved and as a coach or official, I will set a fun tone for both practices and games. I will also strive to create an environment that eliminates a child's fear of failure and promote the challenges of learning new skills. I will ensure that each child has the opportunity to play a roughly equivalent portion of each game.
5. As a coach, I am totally responsible for my team's players, staff, and spectators. I am also responsible for instructing everyone on the league's expectations for game field behavior. All forms of hostility toward an official, coach, child, opposing team parent, or league director are unacceptable and have no place in this league.
6. I will take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, and under no circumstances will partake or allow these activities to occur during practices or games.
7. As an example to the children, before and after the game, I will establish a good sportsmanship tone by exchanging friendly greetings. I will teach the children that teammates, opponents and officials are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity, and if my team should lose, then their focus is on improving on the team's performance and not on what the other team, coach, or official did.
8. Officials will have the total respect and support of the coach. I will not indulge in conduct that will incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or touching of the officials is unethical and will result in disciplinary action.
9. I WILL HAVE FUN!

I understand that should my behavior violate this code of conduct, I will accept any disciplinary action as determined by league officials.