



JCSA Coaching Handbook

v1.March.2025

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Jersey City Soccer Association is to provide affordable soccer programs in Jersey City, offering our players an opportunity to have fun learning to play the beautiful game of soccer while learning about good sportsmanship, proper technique, and physical fitness. We teach our players to respect themselves, their opponents, and the game. We measure success in smiles, and our motto is to play hard, fair, and fun. We educate boys and girls of all abilities and skill levels, ages 4 through 16. We run a co-ed recreational soccer league, a separate girl's program, and a travel program for players who have the ability and desire to play more competitively.

Code of Conduct

Sportsmanship is defined as the practice of participating in sports with conduct and attitude that is considered befitting of that participant, especially fair play and courtesy. It encompasses both ethical behavior and acts of integrity.

Players

- Learn the rules of the game.
- Treat teammates, coaches, trainers, managers, referees, and others with RESPECT.
- Be humble, and always show good sportsmanship and the highest levels of integrity.
- Come prepared physically and mentally to training sessions and matches. Take responsibility for belongings and equipment and be punctual for all training sessions, matches, and team meetings.
- Be flexible with the coach's decisions and respect them at all times.
- Respect the judgment of the referees, treating them with respect, even if you disagree with calls; this will only make a positive impression on you and your team.
- Come to each training session and match with the attitude to enjoy it and make the most of every opportunity.
- Be a good teammate. Trust teammates both on and off the field. Support and encourage teammates when they make a mistake and lift them up when they are frustrated or upset.
- No bullying. JCSA prohibits representatives, members and participants from engaging in any unwanted, aggressive behavior designed to intimidate or harm another through



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one's superior physical strength, access to embarrassing information, popularity or influence.

- JCSA prohibits anyone from engaging in any activity designed to cause fear or humiliation, reflect discriminatory bias, offend or degrade through physical or non-physical actions towards anyone.
- Play for the fun of it.
- Control your temper not only against the opposing team and officials, but with yourself and your teammates.
- Do not use foul or inappropriate language at any time.
- Shake hands with the other team and the official after the game.

Parents

The Code of Conduct for Parents is designed to ensure that all players have a positive and safe experience during the season. Parents make a huge contribution to their child's soccer experience, so please be a role model.

- Follow JCSA field protocols whereby only players, trainers, coaches, and referees are allowed inside the fence on the fields at Caven Point, Gateway, and Berry Lane.
- **REFRAIN FROM COACHING YOUR CHILD OR ANY OTHER PLAYERS ON THE TEAM.** Encourage them instead! **The players hate it; it is distracting and confusing** and may directly conflict with the coach's instructions.
- **Don't argue with the Referee.** It is NOT acceptable for players or spectators to criticize or dispute the official UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, even if the official has obviously made a mistake. Remember that children learn best by example.
- Please be a model of good sportsmanship for your child. Be positive, regardless of the score and speak about the opposing players in the same manner you would want their parents talking about your child. Do not engage players from the opposing team.
- Remember, ALL of our coaches are volunteers who sacrifice their time to coach your child. All concerns, input about your child, and coaching comments must be given over the phone or in some other private manner and should never be done during a game or practice or in front of the team. Public confrontations are always bad for the team and are extremely unlikely to produce a positive result for you or your child.
- Never ridicule or shout at your child or other players for making mistakes or losing the game.
- Use no foul or inappropriate language.
- *Take the Pledge* - <https://thesidelineproject.com/take-pledge>



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Coaches and Staff

It is the coach and adult staff's responsibility to look after the social, emotional, and physical well-being of the children first and foremost.

- Remember that children play for fun and enjoyment. **Always place the emotional and physical well being of players ahead of any personal desire to win.** Never ridicule or yell at children for making mistakes or losing a game.
- Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete, remembering the large range of emotions and physical development for the age group.
- Exemplify the highest moral character, behavior, and leadership. Adhere to strong ethical and integrity standards.
- Enforce JCSA field protocols whereby only players, trainers, coaches, and referees are allowed inside the fence on the fields at Caven Point, Gateway, and Berry Lane.
- Attend practices as well as games. Support and look at players' strengths and weaknesses
- Set a good example for players and spectators. Refrain from Arguments in front of your team and parents, gestures indicating an official or opposing coach does not know what they are doing or talking about, and throwing objects in disgust.
- Respect the integrity of the official. By giving respect, you get respect.
- Do not use profanity or other objectionable language.
- Do not body shame or make inappropriate comments about a player's body.
- Be responsible for your players and spectators on the sideline.
- Show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
- Remember that children need adult role models they can respect. Be generous with your praise when it is deserved, and set a good example.
- Remember that a contest is only a game, not a matter of life or death for any player, coach, official, or parent, and that the game is for children, not adults.
- Make sportsmanship your first priority.

Penalties for Nonadherence

The Conduct Code enhances their enjoyment of the games. Occasionally, players, spectators, or coaches violate the Code; they most often recognize the problem and correct it immediately. On rare occasions, if anyone persists in conduct that violates the Code, the following rules will apply:



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- The parent or spectator will receive ONE warning from the coach or the coach's designee.
- If the offending conduct persists, the coach will request the parent or spectator to leave the field.
- If the parent or spectator refuses to leave the field, the coach will remove the parent's player from the game.
- If a player is removed from the game under these circumstances, the player may not play in future games without the prior written consent of the JCSA Board, and the parent may be subject to further sanctions at the discretion of the JCSA Board.
- If a coach violates the code, the Conduct Committee will decide on the appropriate response, including but not limited to removal from games.

Final Note

JCSA board members and trustees are active, unpaid volunteers who give their time to run the organization and support the mission. Please feel free to voice your concerns respectfully and appreciatively. JCSA is limited by field space, funds, and volunteers. If you feel strongly about your concern, please consider volunteering or donating to improve the organization.



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Division Rostering, Scheduling and Tryouts

Rostering

A team should only have registered participating players on their respective SportsEngine roster. If you have players who aren't on your roster or don't show up after contacting the parents, you should let your division coordinator and/or our Administrator, Joanna Mikolajczuk, know, and they will assist.

Scheduling and Game Changes

All game and training schedules are published on SportsEngine and mirrored on jerseycitysoccerassociation.com. However, we understand things change, so if you wish to discuss any scheduling or game time issues, reach out to the coordinator for each division:

Munchkins - Erika Gulbay: munchkins@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Short Shots - Erika Gulbay: shortshots@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Juniors - Arman Rousea: juniors@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Championship - Sarah Shanahan: championship@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Premier - Colleen McElhearn: premier@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Genesis - Derek Warner: genesis@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Evolution - Andrew Altman: evolution@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Performance - Eric Hofmann: performance@jerseycitysoccerassociation.com

Rec and Travel Tryout Process

[Effective fall 2025] Players who earn a spot on a travel team can play up a division within a season; however, once they have transitioned to a travel team for a full season, we ask that they resign from their rec team involvement.

Tryout days will be arranged periodically and announced through JCSA to Coach & Parent emails and via website announcements.

Coaches and parents can inquire with the SEFT trainer at any time to gauge whether the player is ready to move up and arrange to join the appropriate travel team training sessions.



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Training and Coaching

SEFT

School of Elite Football Training (SEFT) oversees our Recreational and Travel coaching programs. They work on the players' skills and attitudes and help them develop a love for the game. They also act as a resource for the volunteer coaches.

Volunteer Coaches

Each team is assigned one Coach and one Assistant Coach. The coach's role is to motivate the team, select players for game day, communicate with parents, and develop each player while promoting and adhering to JCSA's mission statement.

We will also engage coaches once or twice a year in fundraising activities. In the past, these have been player/team-focused events designed to raise funds for league improvement and reward the kids. We encourage you to motivate your team, approach your players' parents, and raise as much money as possible. Monies raised go directly back into facilities and coaching improvements.

Coach to Parents and Players Communication

Communication Ideas:

- Create a WhatsApp group, print its QR code, and ask parents to sign up on opening day.
- If SportsEngine works for you, use its group chat feature.
- Some parents prefer texting; feel free to use that, too.
- Send a Monday morning email reminding parents of the training day, location, drop-off, and pickup time. Include attire and sustenance requirements.
- Send a Thursday email reminding parents of the game day location and drop-off/pickup times. Include attire and sustenance requirements.
- While attendance should not be optional, it's common for players to have conflicting events come game day. Create a WhatsApp poll asking who can attend the training/game and include it in the email. It will give you a heads-up for game day so you can plan the team more effectively.
- Send a Sunday Post Game Analysis email.



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Templates you can copy and paste

Team Opening Day Email Template

Subject: Welcome to Championship Team #XX (Color)

Good evening, families!

I'm writing to introduce myself as a coach for your child's JCSA [DIVISION] team for the 2024–25 season. Our other coach, [NAME], is cc'd.

While we will use WhatsApp for primary communication such as reminders, polls and other team motivation, we will share the team roster shortly via SportsEngine. Here is our WhatsApp group link, please sign up.

Our uniforms will be distributed on opening day, [DATE], between 08:00 AM and 01:00 PM at Caven Point. Our first training will be **Monday, September 15th** at 5:00 PM at Caven Point. Our first game will be the following **Saturday, September 20th at 10 AM**, at Caven Point.

I'm looking forward to meeting everyone next week!

Coach [NAME]

WhatsApp/Text Training Reminder Template

Good evening team Cobalt Crusaders. Training on Mondays will be starting at 7:30 pm at Caven Point and end at 9 pm. Don't forget water and shin guards. Please be there a little before 7.30 pm to help with the field setup. Thanks. Coach Jason.

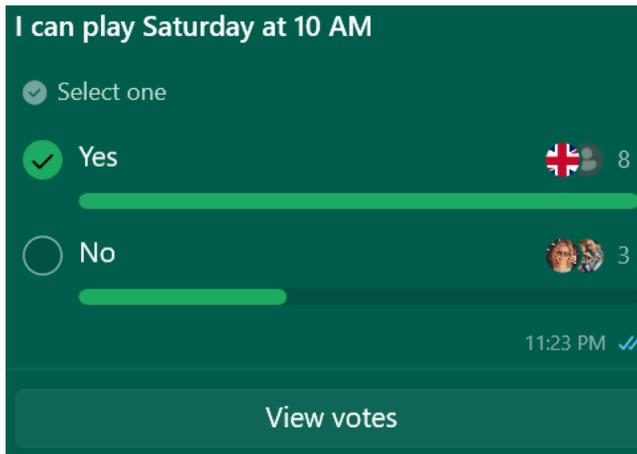
WhatsApp/Text Game Reminder with Attendance Template

Good evening team Cobalt Crusaders. Just a quick reminder that our game is at 10 AM tomorrow at Berry Lane. Don't forget water and shin guards. Please show up at 9.45 am for the team briefing. We are playing the top team, Charcoal, and I truly believe we can get a win. Bring your A-game team! Hot chocolate, coffee, and donuts are available after the game. Best Coach Jason.



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Post Game Analysis Template

Good win Saturday Cobalt Crusaders, and a good training session, too. Some key takeaways from Saturday and training yesterday:

1. Control. Look Up. Make a play. You have the skills. Remember the drills.
2. Be forgiving of your teammates. You won't score a goal every shot, make the perfect pass every time, or defend every ball. It's what you do to recover that counts. Discuss with your teammates how to fill the defensive hole, be in a better position, and what you can do to help. Lose the ball – shake it off and challenge for it again, try to win it back!
3. Have fun. Find the joy in the game, the excitement of sharing with your teammates, and the reward of achieving together.
4. In training, we scrimmaged with purple. You know how they play, their strengths, and their weaknesses. Exploit those in the game.
5. Show up early. If you are late, you start on the bench.

If you focus on the above, you can win again on Saturday. We can do it!



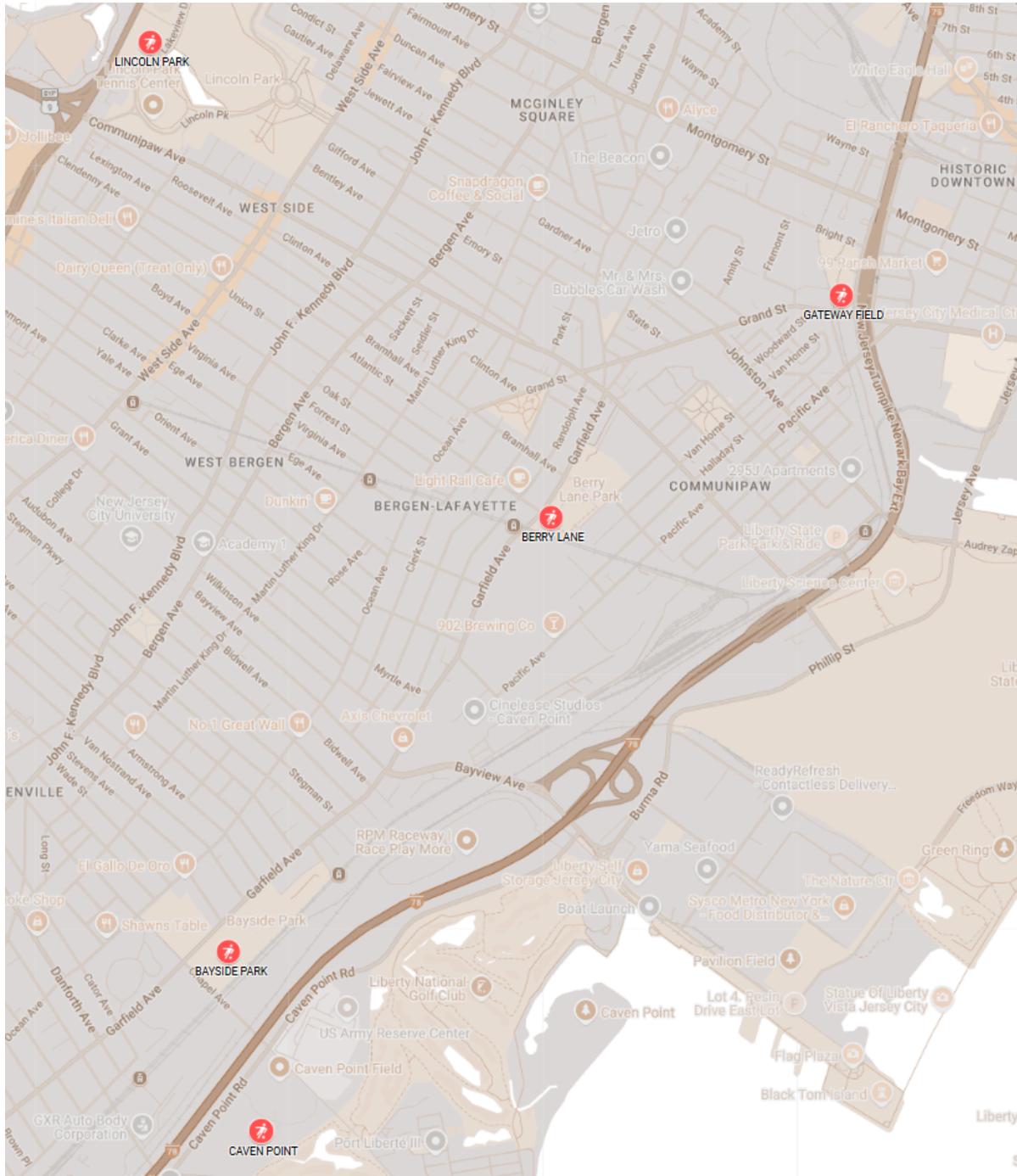
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Where We Play - Field Locations

Live Map

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1GciB6Ekyn-8oVJei1NWYKZ155zNNDWM&usp=sharing>





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Divisional Rules of Play, and Field Setup

JCSA adheres to the [IFAB rules](#) of play governing documents and clarifies/modifies those rules to fit our needs. Each division has unique requirements due to the age of the players and our unique playing field environments.

We have created these bulleted lists on the following pages to allow each division to focus on its uniqueness so that coaches, referees, players, and parents can focus on the most important rules. Feel free to print or share your division's pages with parents as appropriate.

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MUNCHKINS

GAME RULES

(NO referees are used in Munchkins games)

4 v. 4 (No goalkeeper); min: 4 players needed to play
14 minute halves, 5 minute break. (water breaks if the heat index is over 80f)
Size 3 ball
No build-out line
No headers
No off-sides
No goalkeepers
No goal kicks
No throw-ins (players kick the ball in)
6' x 4' Goals

EXPANDED RULES

- Shin guards required
- No overtime
- A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line
- Kick-Off: All players must be in their own half of the field.. Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play.
- Half time: Teams change sides, and the opposite team kicks off
- Substitutions: Unlimited and can occur at any stoppage at the referee's discretion.



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Caven Point Munchkins Field Setup:





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SHORT SHOTS and GENESIS

GAME RULES

(share with the Referee at the beginning of the game)

5 v. 5 (No goalkeeper); min: 5 players needed to play
24 minute halves, 5 minute break. (water breaks if the heat index is over 80f)
Size 4 ball
No build-out line
No headers
No off-sides
No goal kicks
If the throw-in is done incorrectly, the player is allowed second attempt before the ball is given to the opposing team.
4ft x 6ft Goal Size
Mercy Rule: If the goal differential in a game becomes five or greater, the team with the higher score must remove a player for each goal above the five-goal differential. (Example: Team A is winning 6–1. Team A must remove a player. If team B scores, resulting in a 6–2 score, team A may put a player back on.

EXPANDED RULES

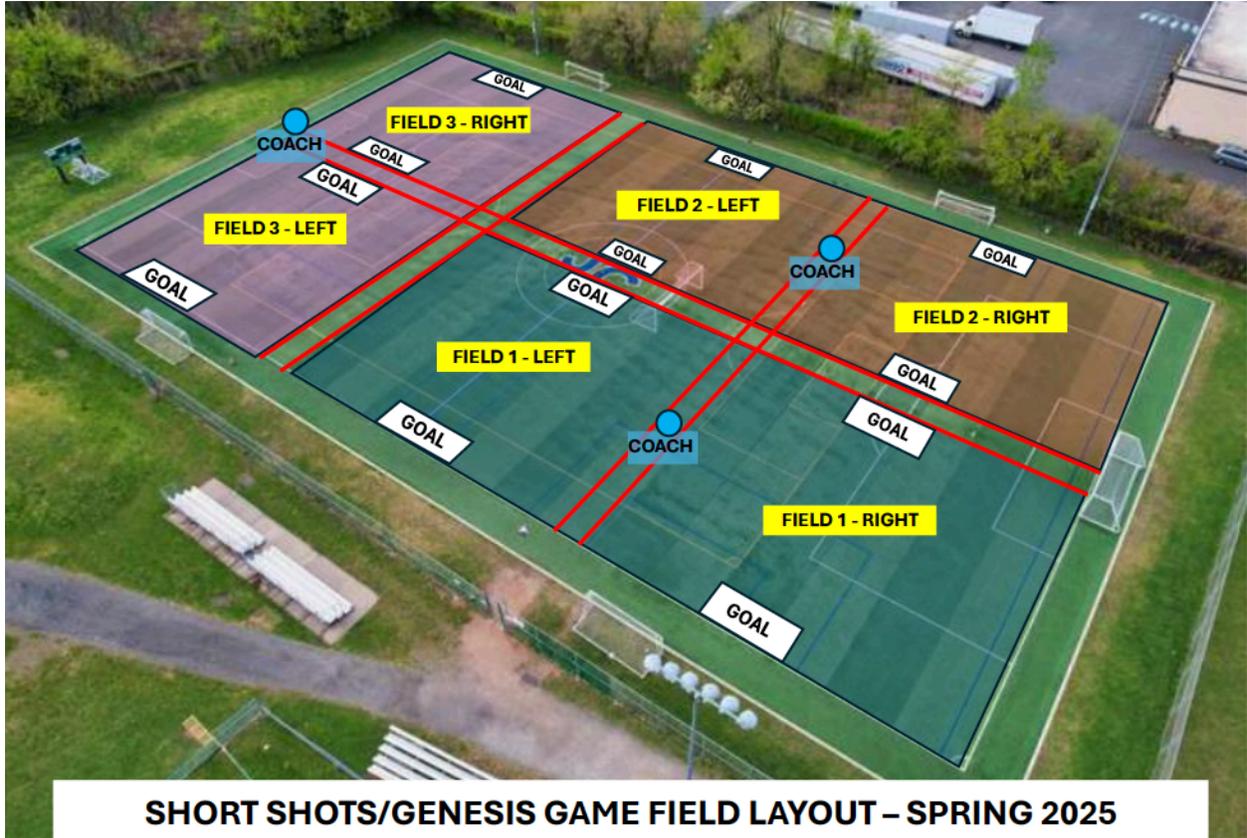
- All referee decisions are final
- Shin guards required
- No overtime
- A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line
- Kick-Off: All players must be in their own half of the field. Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play
- Half time: Teams change sides, and the opposite team kicks off
- Substitutions: Unlimited and can occur at any stoppage at the referee's discretion.



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Caven Point Short Shots and Genesis Field Setup:





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JUNIORS

GAME RULES

(share with the Referee at the beginning of the game)

8 v. 8 ; min: 6 players needed to play
25 minute halves, 5 minute break. (water breaks if the heat index is over 80f)
Size 4 ball
No build-out Line
No headers
Off-sides called
Throw-ins: If not done correctly on the first try, the ball is awarded to the opposing team for a throw-in.
4ft x 6ft Goal Size
Mercy Rule: If the goal differential in a game becomes five or greater, the team with the higher score must remove a player for each goal above the five-goal differential. (Example: Team A is winning 6–1. Team A must remove a player. If team B scores, resulting in a 6–2 score, team A may put a player back on.

EXPANDED RULES

- All referee decisions are final
- Shin guards required
- No overtime
- A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line
- Kick-Off: All players must be on their own half of the field. Opponents must be outside of the circle. Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play
- Half time: Teams change sides, and the opposite team kicks off
- Substitutions: Unlimited and can occur at any stoppage at the referee's discretion.
- Goalkeeper: The goalkeeper may catch with their hands any ball that comes into their penalty box and is last touched by the opponent. A goalkeeper may not use hands inside their penalty box if the pass is deliberate from a teammate.
- Indirect Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a technical (no contact) foul against an opponent: Dangerous play, i.e., kicking the ball held by the goalkeeper, kicking high, Intentionally obstructing the opponent or the goalkeeper, Charging the goalkeeper, Slide tackling, Headers
- Direct Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a penal (contact) foul against an opponent, handling the ball (including goalkeeper outside the penalty area).
- Penalties: Awarded when the above offenses are committed inside the penalty area.



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- Cards: Yellow or red cards are administered for fouls committed carelessly or recklessly.
- Goal Kicks: Attackers must retreat behind the box before taking goal kicks. The ball must leave the goal area to be in play, or the kick is retaken.



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CHAMPIONSHIP

GAME RULES

(share with the Referee at the beginning of the game)

9 v. 9 (8 and a goalkeeper); min: 7 players needed to play
25-30 minute halves (pending field availability and schedule), 5 minute break. (water breaks if the heat index is over 80f)
Size 4 ball
No build-out line
No headers
Off-sides called
Throw-ins: If not done correctly on the first try, the ball is awarded to the opposing team for a throw-in.
Mercy Rule: If the goal differential in a game becomes five or greater, the team with the higher score must remove a player for each goal above the five-goal differential. (Example: Team A is winning 6–1. Team A must remove a player. If team B scores, resulting in a 6–2 score, team A may put a player back on.

EXPANDED RULES

- All referee decisions are final
- Shin guards required
- No overtime
- A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line
- Kick-Off: All players must be in their own half of the field. Opponents must be outside of the circle. Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play
- Half time: Teams change sides, and the opposite team kicks off
- Substitutions: Unlimited and can occur at any stoppage at the referee's discretion.
- Goalkeeper: The goalkeeper may catch with their hands any ball that comes into their penalty box and is last touched by the opponent. A goalkeeper may not use hands inside their penalty box if the pass is deliberate from a teammate.
- Indirect Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a technical (no contact) foul against an opponent: Dangerous play, i.e., kicking the ball held by the goalkeeper, kicking high, Intentionally obstructing the opponent or the goalkeeper, Charging the goalkeeper, Slide tackling, Headers
- Direct Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a penal (contact) foul against an opponent, handling the ball (including goalkeeper outside the penalty area).



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- Penalties: Awarded when the above (Direct Kick) offenses are committed inside the penalty area.
- Cards: Yellow or red cards are administered for fouls committed carelessly or recklessly.
- Goal Kicks: Attackers must retreat behind the box before taking goal kicks. The ball must leave the goal area to be in play, or the kick is retaken.



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PREMIER

GAME RULES

(share with the Referee at the beginning of the game)

11 v. 11 (10 and a goalkeeper); min: 7 players needed to play
35 minute halves, 5-10 minute break. (water breaks if the heat index is over 80f)
Size 5 ball
No build-out line
Headers are allowed
Off-sides called
Throw-ins: If not done correctly on the first try, the ball is awarded to the opposing team for a throw-in.
Mercy Rule: If the goal differential in a game becomes five or greater, the team with the higher score must remove a player for each goal above the five-goal differential. (Example: Team A is winning 6–1. Team A must remove a player. If team B scores, resulting in a 6–2 score, team A may put a player back on.

EXPANDED RULES

- All referee decisions are final
- Shin guards required
- No overtime
- A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line
- Kick-Off: All players must be in their own half of the field. Opponents must be outside of the circle. Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play
- Half time: Teams change sides, and the opposite team kicks off
- Substitutions: Unlimited and can occur at any stoppage at the referee's discretion.
- Goalkeeper: The goalkeeper may catch with their hands any ball that comes into their penalty box and is last touched by the opponent. A goalkeeper may not use hands inside their penalty box if the pass is deliberate from a teammate.
- Indirect Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a technical (no contact) foul against an opponent: Dangerous play, i.e., kicking the ball held by the goalkeeper, kicking high, Intentionally obstructing the opponent or the goalkeeper, Charging the goalkeeper, Slide tackling, Headers
- Direct Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a penal (contact) foul against an opponent, handling the ball (including goalkeeper outside the penalty area).
- Penalties: Awarded when the above offenses are committed inside the penalty area.
- Cards: Yellow or red cards are administered for fouls committed carelessly or recklessly.



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- Goal Kicks: Attackers must retreat behind the box before taking goal kicks. The ball must leave the goal area to be in play, or the kick is retaken.



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EVOLUTION

GAME RULES

(share with the Referee at the beginning of the game)

8 v. 8 (7 and a goalkeeper); min: 6 players needed to play.
25 minute halves, 5 minute break. (water breaks if the heat index is over 80f)
Prioritize the build-out line (players can't cross until an opponent other than the goalie touches the ball or ball crosses the line)
Size 4 ball
No Headers
No Off-sides
Throw-ins: If not done correctly on the first try, a warning is issued, and a second attempt may be made. If the second attempt is in violation, the ball is awarded to the opposing team for a throw-in.
Mercy Rule: If the goal differential in a game becomes five or greater, the team with the higher score must remove a player for each goal above the five-goal differential. (Example: Team A is winning 6–1. Team A must remove a player. If team B scores, resulting in a 6–2 score, team A may put a player back on.

EXPANDED RULES

- All referee decisions are final
- Shin guards required
- No overtime
- A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line
- Kick-Off: All players must be on their own half of the field. Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play
- Half time: Teams change sides, and the opposite team kicks off
- Substitutions: Unlimited and can occur at any stoppage at the referee's discretion.
- Goalkeeper: The goalkeeper may catch with their hands any ball that comes into their penalty box and is last touched by the opponent. A goalkeeper may not use hands inside their penalty box if the pass is deliberate from a teammate. Attacking players must retreat behind the build-out line when the goalkeeper picks up the ball.
- Indirect Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a technical (no contact) foul against an opponent: Dangerous play, i.e., kicking the ball held by the goalkeeper, kicking high, Intentionally obstructing the opponent or the goalkeeper, Charging the goalkeeper, Slide tackling, Header



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- Direct Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a penal (contact) foul against an opponent, handling the ball (including goalkeeper outside the penalty area).
- Penalties: Awarded when the above offenses are committed inside the penalty area.
- Cards: Yellow or red cards are administered for fouls committed carelessly or recklessly.
- Goal Kicks: Attackers must retreat behind the “build-out line” before taking goal kicks. The ball must leave the goal area to be in play or the kick is retaken.

The build-out line will be enforced as follows:

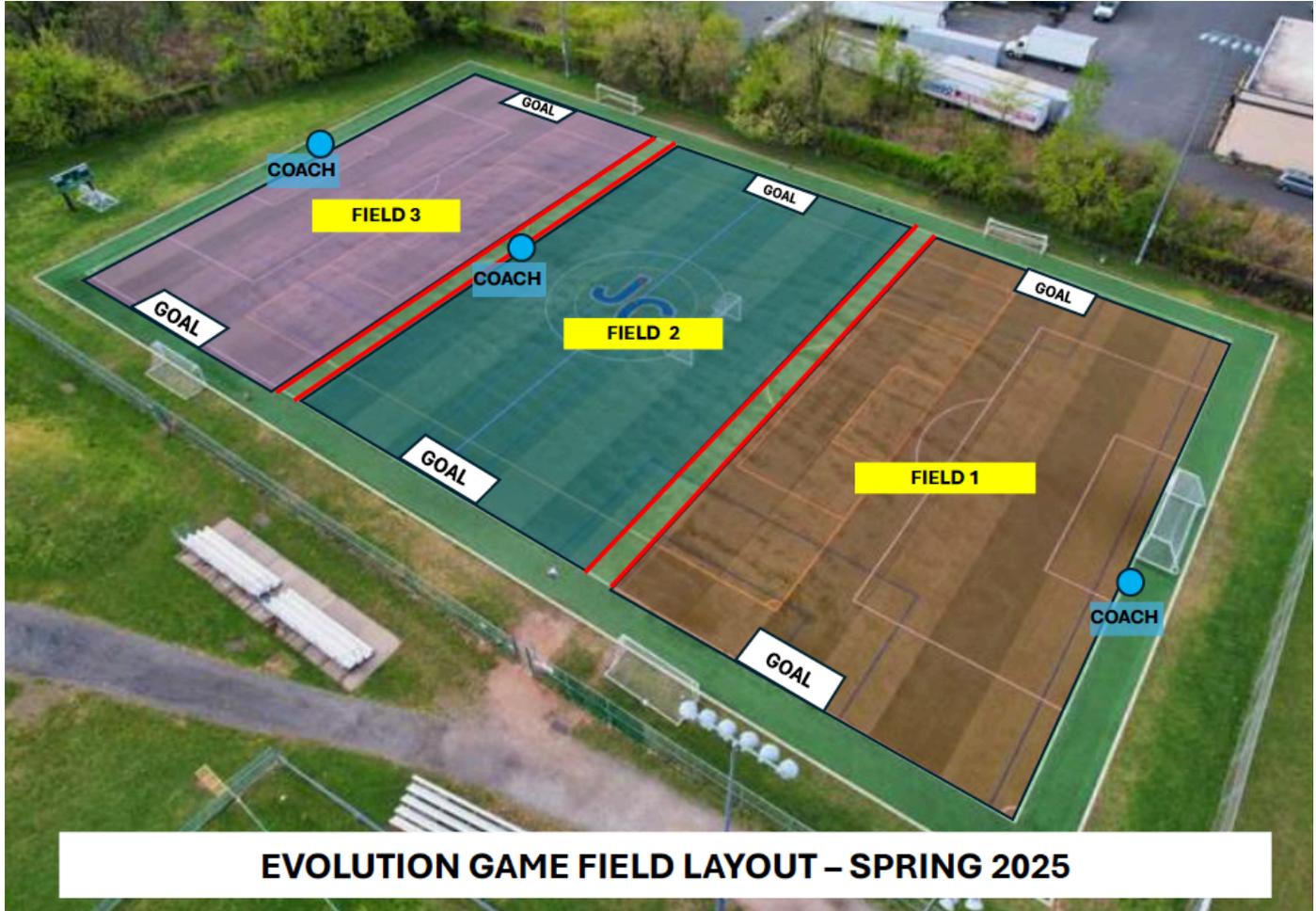
- When the goalkeeper has the ball in his/her hands during play, the opposing team must move behind the build-out line until the ball is released from the goalkeeper's possession and at least one other defender touches it.
- Once the opposing team is behind the build-out line, the goalkeeper can release the ball by passing (NOT dribbling), throwing, or rolling it to a teammate who is on his/her side of the build-out line or beyond it.
- The goalkeeper may roll (not bounce) the ball and then pass it to a teammate on their side of the build-out line.
- PUNTS and DROP KICKS are not allowed from the keeper.
- After the ball is released from the goalkeeper's possession and is touched by at least one other defender, the opposing team may cross the build-out line, and play resumes as usual.
- The goalkeeper does not have to wait for the opposing players to move behind the build-out line.
- The play from the goalkeeper or the goal kick can be played to a teammate beyond the build-out line.
- On goal kicks, at least one other defender must kick and field the ball before the opposing team can cross the build-out line to attack it.



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Caven Point Evolution Field Setup:





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PERFORMANCE

GAME RULES

(share with the Referee at the beginning of the game)

11 v. 11 (10 and a goalkeeper); min: 6 players needed to play
25 minute halves, 5 minute break. (water breaks if the heat index is over 80f)
Size 5 ball
No build-out line
Headers are allowed
Off-sides called
Throw-ins: If not done correctly on the first try, the ball is awarded to the opposing team for a throw-in.
16ft portable goals
Mercy Rule: If the goal differential in a game becomes five or greater, the team with the higher score must remove a player for each goal above the five-goal differential. (Example: Team A is winning 6–1. Team A must remove a player. If team B scores, resulting in a 6–2 score, team A may put a player back on.

EXPANDED RULES

- All referee decisions are final
- Shin guards required
- No overtime
- A goal is scored when the whole ball completely crosses the goal line
- Kick-Off: All players must be in their own half of the field. Opponents must be outside of the circle. Players may not touch the ball twice at the start of play
- Half time: Teams change sides, and the opposite team kicks off
- Substitutions: Unlimited and can occur at any stoppage at the referee's discretion.
- Goalkeeper: The goalkeeper may catch with their hands any ball that comes into their penalty box and is last touched by the opponent. A goalkeeper may not use hands inside their penalty box if the pass is deliberate from a teammate.
- Indirect Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a technical (no contact) foul against an opponent: Dangerous play, i.e., kicking the ball held by the goalkeeper, kicking high, Intentionally obstructing the opponent or the goalkeeper, Charging the goalkeeper, Slide tackling, Headers
- Direct Kicks: Awarded when a player commits a penal (contact) foul against an opponent, handling the ball (including goalkeeper outside the penalty area).
- Penalties: Awarded when the above offenses are committed inside the penalty area.



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- Cards: Yellow or red cards are administered for fouls committed carelessly or recklessly.
- Goal Kicks: Attackers must retreat behind the box before taking goal kicks. The ball must leave the goal area to be in play, or the kick is retaken.



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FULL RULES

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vRqXE3wINZHxpgddYHxh5mcV3tF5I91bcuoOt8I5b48C05UyKMj8MZb1x9Em70pAQ/pub>