

AYSO – REGION 13
Guidance for Referees
Game Card Procedures
October 2004

Over the past number of weeks, there has been quite a bit of confusion on the part of coaches and referees surrounding the issue of game cards. Unfortunately, what has added to the confusion this year is the change in the Sportsmanship rating scheme, certain policy clarifications in U10, not to mention the significant increase in new referees and coaches this year and their unfamiliarity with the specifics and nuances of preparing a card. The fact remains however, that the procedures outlining how the cards should be prepared and handled needs to be clarified on all fronts.

Responsibility for Game Cards –

It is each coach's responsibility to have a completed game card prior to the scheduled start time of their match. Along with other team-specific information, coaches should ensure that the proper division/team number, date, time and field are entered in the top section of the card. The game card should list ALL players on the team roster in player-number order even if players are not present or will not be playing in the match (e.g., injury). Under such circumstances, a line should be drawn through all of the quarter boxes on the card with appropriate notation next to the child's name for the reason why that child will not be playing. Once completed, game cards should be given to the appropriate assistant referee in sufficient time so that first quarter substitutions and other player comments can be made before the game begins.

Substitutions –

The assistant referee should be the one who "controls" the recording of the player substitution process and should be the one who indicates such on the game card with an "x" in the quarter box for each player sitting out. In the past, some coaches have facilitated this process when they follow a specific substitution plan and they know who's going to be in/out and complete the substitution record in advance...but not all coaches do this. In any event, assistant referees should not consider this to be a coaching responsibility because no matter what procedure is followed, they (refs) need to know (and verify) who's playing on the field and who's not.

When it comes to playing time on the field, Region 13 policy is that each player should play a minimum of 3 quarters, barring the exception of an injury which would preclude a player from playing. If it comes to the assistant referee's attention that a player is not playing within the 3-quarter regional guidelines for some other reason, then that fact should be brought to the attention of the coach or their assistant. It is NOT within the scope of the assistant referee's duties to insist that such players be allowed playing time. Under such situations, if the coach fails to rectify the situation, then the assistant referee should make the appropriate comment on the back of the game card and adjust the Sportsmanship rating accordingly (if necessary). All game cards are reviewed by the respective division coaching staff, who will then determine whatever follow-up action may be required.

Goalkeeper Provisions (U10 Only) -

In order to give U10 players the maximum opportunity to experience playing time in a variety of positions, Region 13 has adopted the policy of limiting a player's time spent in goal to a maximum of 2 quarters per game. Notation should be made on the face of the game card for each quarter a player is in goal by placing a "G" in the quarter box for that player. If the assistant referee becomes aware that a player may be in goal for more than 2 quarters, then a "friendly" reminder should be mentioned to the coach. Similar to the responsibilities regarding the monitoring of the "3-Quarter Rule" as mentioned above, if a coach fails to rectify the situation, then the assistant referee should make the appropriate comment on the back of the game card and adjust the Sportsmanship rating accordingly (if necessary). Any follow-up action will be addressed by the coaching staff.

Goals Scored –

Referees should indicate with a "tally" mark any goal scored by a player on their game card. Under the *Goals Scored* columns, a tally mark should be placed in the first box if a goal was scored during the first half and in the second box if a goal was scored during the second half. If a player accidentally scores an "own goal" against their own team, the goal should be awarded to the player of the opposing team who last made contact with the ball.

Recording Halftime and Final Score -

As a precursor to recording the score, referees and their assistants should first verify the home and visiting teams at the beginning of the match, and then complete the home/visitor section at the bottom of the game card (home team is listed first and visiting team is listed second in the weekly game schedule). After consultation with the other members of the referee team, assistant referees should take note of the number of goals scored during each half and mark the lower section of the game card accordingly. At the conclusion of the match, the FINAL score should be tallied by adding up the goals scored in each of the two halves.

Sportsmanship Points –

All referees should remember that the objective behind completion of the Sportsmanship section is to identify those situations in which special recognition should be given to teams that demonstrate high levels of fair play and good sportsmanship while also taking note of those situations where improvements could be made and additional follow-up is required. Completion of the sportsmanship evaluation should be a thoughtful post-game exercise carried out by the entire referee team and should not become a hastily prepared after-game task. While it is easy to take critical note of certain behaviors, referees need to re-emphasize their responsibility to give special recognition when deserved and not go on auto-pilot when completing the Sportsmanship section of the game card. In as much as this program is used to identify sportsmanship situations that need to be improved, all referees should remember that it is also used to foster good sportsmanship at all levels and that credit should be given when credit is due.

When performing their sportsmanship evaluation, **the referee team should embrace the “total” game concept** and not necessarily focus on the occurrence of a specific event, or series of events if trivial in nature, unless it is individually or are collectively of such magnitude that particular mention must be made. As with any game situation, there are ebbs and flows in the level of play, and demonstrations of sportsmanship are no different. Referees must keep this in mind when reaching their final conclusions remembering that good examples of sportsmanship may “negate” those which are something less than perfect.

Whenever a playing team is either to be “marked” up or down and awarded something other than a score of “3” in any category, a brief explanation of the referee team’s rationale **MUST** be provided. This description will help provide the coaching and referee staff with a better understanding of how the rating was determined. If no explanation is provided, then the rating will **AUTOMATICALLY** default to an average score of “3”. As such, it is in everyone’s best interests if the appropriate comments are made when required so that any necessary follow-up can be quickly identified and initiated.

Signing the Game Card/Team Credit/Referee Code –

All referees should **PRINT** their name in the space provided along with their team affiliation on the back of the game card. In the case where referees show up and are only able to work a partial game, they are entitled to sign the card as well. Annotation of the proper game code, (“A”, “B” or “C”) as described on the back of the game card, should also be made by each referee who helped officiate the match.

What to do with the Game Cards After Completion –

At the end of each match, completed game cards should either be returned by the referee team to the Admin Tent (if the game is at a Victory Park or an Area H field) or put into the manila envelope affixed to one of the goal nets at the outer lying fields. Coaches responsible for closing outer lying fields are responsible for either getting the game cards to the Admin Tent or making other arrangements to get them to the Regional Statistician.