

# **SOUTH COUNTY YOUTH SOCCER CLUB**

## **2023 Recreational Coaches Handbook**



### **South County Youth Soccer Club**

P.O. Box 109, Wakefield, RI 02880

Email: [communication@scysc.org](mailto:communication@scysc.org), [recreational@scysc.org](mailto:recreational@scysc.org)

Phone: 401-782-8200

## Contents

<b>Purpose:</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>About SCYSC:</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>About Coaching:</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Overarching Laws, Rules, Regulations:</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>SCYSC Rules, Regulations, and Coaches Notes by Age Division:</b> .....	<b>5</b>
U5/U6 Divisions: .....	6
U7/U8 Division:.....	7
U10/12 Divisions:.....	8
U14 Division.....	9
<b>Equipment and Fields:</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Player Equipment: .....	10
Coaches Equipment: .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Fields: .....	10
<b>Game Cancellations or Changes:</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Player Eligibility</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>SCYSC Recreation Amendments to the Laws of the Game</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Law 1. The Field of Play.....	12
Law 3. Number of Players .....	12
Law 4. Players' Equipment .....	13
Law 5. Referees.....	14
Law 12. Fouls and Misconduct .....	14

# 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

## Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and direction to South County Youth Soccer Club (SCYSC) Recreation Coaches to enable a successful season for players, parents, and coaches alike!

This handbook also serves as a reference for game conduct, coaching goals and SCYSC specific rules and regulations. This handbook addresses Under 5 through Under 14 Divisions, Tiny Tikes (U3/U4) are handled separately in conjunction with Challenger Sports.

## About SCYSC:

Welcome to South County Youth Soccer Club. We are a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting and developing youth soccer in southern Rhode Island. The South County Jaycees Youth Soccer League began in early spring 1976 with 4 teams and 84 children. By 1982, over 1000 boys and girls were playing soccer in the spring and fall. That year the South County Youth Soccer Club was officially incorporated. In 1991, South County hosted the inaugural Seaside Classic. In 2022, the club celebrated its 45th anniversary and the Seaside Classic celebrated its 29th anniversary!

SCYSC is a member of the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), and more locally, of Soccer Rhode Island (SRI) which governs most of youth soccer in Rhode Island. USYSA, through its parent organization, the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), is also affiliated with FIFA (Federation International de Football Association).

SCYSC is administered by its elected Board of Directors (BOD), which holds regular monthly meetings via video teleconference. The BOD can be contacted via Email: [communication@scysc.org](mailto:communication@scysc.org) or Phone: 401-782-8200. Our recreational soccer program is overseen by Jon Logan, Director of Recreation, who can be contacted via [recreational@scysc.org](mailto:recreational@scysc.org).

SCYSC Recreational league runs a Spring and Fall Session, consisting of at least games 8 per season. Each season consists of one practice during the week, and a Saturday competition. Games are typically on Saturday mornings between 9-12 at Broad Rock Middle School, Tuckertown Park, or Brousseau Park.

### About Coaching:

Note: Further coaching information is available at: <https://www.scysc.org/about-coaching.html>

**Registration:** Coaches must register via GotSport (<https://system.gotsport.com/users/login>). Once registered, Coaches must complete a background check, Heads Up concussion training, and Safe Sport abuse prevention training within GotSport. **Please check your certifications each season to ensure your requirements up to date!**

#### Key Coaching Qualities:

- Be organized, prepared, and on time.
- Be presentable (athletic/coaching wear).
- Be a good role model for your team.
- Be enthusiastic and patient (especially with the younger groups).
- Communicate with your parents.
- Demonstrate and instill in your team our Club values: integrity, morality, physical fitness, emotional strength, athletic skills, confidence, lasting friendships, teamwork, sportsmanship, fair play and respect for all others.
- Have fun. It is fundamental to all that we do.

#### Rec Head Coach Requirements

- Complete all coaching requirements in GotSport
- Select Assistant Coach and ensure their coaching requirements are fulfilled in GotSport. Only coaches who have registered and completed requirements may be on the field with the players.
- Attend any SCYSC Coach meetings (anticipate 1 pre-season meeting).
- Attend one practice per week (day of the week determined by age division). Practices will be led by a professional Challenger soccer coach who will demonstrate age appropriate activities/drills. Coaches will then break away with their players and execute those activities/drills as a team.
- Coach one game per week (Saturdays).
- Ensure all players are wearing shin guards and cleats on the field at all times.
- Identify players who are high performing and communicate with Recreational Director for potential growth opportunities (competitive play).
- Encourage attendance of Club-wide events (e.g. SCYSC night at URI/NE Revs)
- Encourage volunteers for the Club's Annual Seaside Classic Tournament in July. This is an all-hands and very rewarding event!
- All head coaches must be of the age of majority. Additionally, it is the head coach's responsibility to insure that under no circumstances should any person(s) under the age of majority be the only individual(s) present during any team meeting (practice, scrimmage, etc.).

### Overarching Laws, Rules, Regulations:

The laws controlling soccer have been codified into *Laws of the Game* published by FIFA along with a USSF addendum addressing law modifications for youth players in the U.S. In some cases the SCYSC has instituted additional regulations for our own needs. These total sets of Laws, Rules and Regulations are to be viewed as the official governance of the SCYSC Recreation League. Coaches are responsible for knowledge of and compliance with all relevant laws, rules and regulations. SCYSC age division specific rules and are covered in the next section *Rules, Regulations, and Coaches Notes by Age Division*.

#### References:

- 2022-23 FIFA Laws of the Game:  
<https://www.theifab.com/downloads/laws-of-the-game-2022-23?!=en>
- US Youth Soccer Players and Playing Rules Policy as of April 2022:  
<https://www.usyouthsoccer.org/file.aspx?DocumentId=3656>

**Note:** The FIFA Laws of the Game, US Youth Soccer Players and Playing Rules Policy, and SCYSC Recreational regulations are designed to maximize safety, participation, knowledge of the game, and fun. As Recreation Coaches, we request you firmly adhere to these regulations accordingly. If you ever have any questions, please contact Jon Logan, Recreation Director ([recreational@scyssc.org](mailto:recreational@scyssc.org)) or Neil Ferguson, Director of Referees ([neilferguson@verizon.net](mailto:neilferguson@verizon.net)).

### SCYSC Rules, Regulations, and Coaches Notes by Age Division:

To maximize fun and improve player capabilities, SCYSC implements age appropriate rules by age division. High level changes and coach notes are provided in this section accordingly, detailed SCYSC Laws of the Game tailored changes are provided in a following section.

#### **Note: Challenger Sports**

SCYSC has partnered with Challenger Sports to form the foundation for recreational training for Tiny Tikes (U3/4) through U14. Challenger coaches are knowledgeable in soccer and specifically trained to coach younger players. Challenger coaches will lead practices, demonstrate drills for players and coaches, and assist the coaches in the execution of these drills after breaking into individual groups. This affords SCYSC a fantastic foundation for recreational training by providing our players fun skills based games and instruction, and enabling first time parent coaches with the ability to provide meaningful, fun, structured training.

#### **Note: Player Count and Game Length**

Coaches are expected to adhere to prescribed number of players on the field and game length to maximize fun and growth. Deviation can result in players feeling left out or overwhelmed. Please work to ensure players play at least 50% of every game.

# 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

## U5/U6 Divisions:

**Premise of U5/U6 instruction** – One ball/One player practices - - Minimize waiting in line, so as to fully engage this age group, every player should have a ball. Many of the drills/games advised for this age group necessitate each player having a ball. Focus on "ball feeling" The skill to be developed first for the instructional player is the ability to feel comfortable with the ball at their feet. Thus, many of the recommended activities involve dribbling. Each player having a ball maximizes the time with foot on ball.

**Roster Size:** 8-10

### **Coaching Goals:**

- Energy!
- One ball/One player practices, many group activities.
- Each child should go home feeling that that they were successful (that they improved, scored a goal, were on the winning team, or just plain old had fun).
- In general, we recommend de-emphasizing winning and losing at this level. Many of the drills/games result in many winners. The fun should be in the playing, not the winning

### **Competitions:**

- **Team Size:** 4 v 4, no goalkeeper
- **Length:** Games should be kept to 4- 10 minute quarters. Each player should play no more than 6 minutes per quarter.
- **Structure:** U5/U6 Divisions play unstructured games
- **Fair Play:** When there is head-to-head competition, the opponent should be someone of about the same ability. The "most experienced" should be (subtly) set up to face someone of equal caliber; the same is true for the "least experienced"
- **On-field Coaching:** Encouraged for maximum player development and encouragement.

### **Referees:**

- Coaches and Assistant coaches will "referee". The referee should help/make suggestions to both teams.
- Coaches should focus on keeping the ball in play, no throw-ins.
- On goal-kicks, opposing players must stand behind the mid field line at the start of play.
- Refereeing should be for the purposes of safety, fun, and encouragement.

# 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

## U7/U8 Division:

**Premise of U7/U8 instruction** – These groups require continued full engagement and different skill levels begin to emerge. Continue one ball/one player practices to develop the “ball feeling” as a primary focus. As a secondary focus, introduce team dynamics principally focused on passing fundamentals. Introduce normal stoppage rules, restarts, and structured matches.

**Roster Size:** 8-10

### **Coaching Goals:**

- Continue one ball/one player practices. Focus on the “ball feeling”. Many of the drills/games advised for this age group necessitate each player having a ball.
- Fully engage these age groups. Minimize waiting in lines.
- When ready, introduce team dynamics, principally passing fundamentals including effective passing, trapping, and movement without the ball.
- Generally de-emphasize winning and losing at this level. Many of the drills/games result in many winners. The fun should be in playing, not the winning

### **Competitions:**

- **Team Size:** 4 v 4, no goalkeeper
- **Length:** Twelve minute quarters
- **Structure:** U8 Division games are structured
- **Fair Play:** When there is head-to-head competition, the opponent should be someone of about the same ability. The "most experienced" should be (subtly) set up to face someone of equal caliber; the same is true for the "least experienced"
- **On-field Coaching:** Allowed for maximum player development.

### **Referees:**

- One club referee may be assigned. If no referee is present, coaches shall referee. Parents cannot referee unless they maintain current GotSports training certifications. Coaches should come to an agreement on referee coverage. It is recommended that one coach ref the 1st half, and the other team's coach referee the second half.
- The referee should help/make suggestions to both teams.
- Refereeing should be for the purposes of instruction, e.g., if a poor throw in is made, the coach/referee should demonstrate proper technique, and allow the player to retry.

### **Division Specific Rules:**

- The defending team must retire a minimum of five yards on any free kick.
- There is no offsides law.
- All free kicks shall be taken as indirect free kicks regardless of the infraction.
- On goal-kicks, opposing players must stand behind the mid field line.
- Regular restarts (e.g. throw-ins, corner kicks) apply.

## 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

### U10 Division:

**Premise of U10 instruction** – In the older divisions, player skills and experience will vary. Continue to develop ball-feeling at an individual level while increasingly promoting team dynamics, including passing, set plays, attack, defend, counter-attack approaches. Encourage individual and team goals, and work to ensure all players feel they have a meaningful role and contributions.

#### **Competitions:**

- **Team Size:** 7, one of whom will be a goal keeper. A min of five players are needed.
- **Length:** Two 25 minute halves; a rest period of 5 minutes shall occur at halftime.
- **Structure:** U10 games are structured
- **On-field Coaching:** Not allowed under normal circumstances. Talk to the Rec Director for prior approval if your player has special needs.

#### **Referees:**

- One club referee may be assigned.
- If no referee is present, coaches shall referee. Parents cannot referee unless they maintain current GotSports training certifications. Coaches should come to an agreement on referee coverage. It is recommended that one coach ref the 1st half, and the other team's coach referee the second half.
- The referee should help/make suggestions to both teams.
- Refereeing should be for the purposes of instruction, e.g., if a poor throw in is made, the coach/referee should demonstrate proper technique, and allow the player to retry once.

#### **Division Specific Rules:**

- There shall be neither penalty-spot markings nor penalty kicks.
- On goalie punts the ball must hit the ground or any other player before crossing the midfield line. (Infraction = indirect free kick for other team at midfield)
- The defending team must retire a minimum of five yards on any free kick.
- There is no offside law.
- All free kicks shall be taken as indirect free kicks regardless of the infraction.
- Regular restarts (e.g. throw-ins, corner kicks) apply.



# 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

## U11-14 Division

Note, for Spring 2023, U11 through U14 Divisions will be combined due to the number of registrants.

**Premise of U11-14 instruction** – Player skills, experience, and athletic ability will vary across the age groups. Continue to develop ball-feeling at an individual level while increasingly promoting team dynamics, including passing, set plays, attack, defend, counter-attack approaches. Place special encouragement on individual and team goals, and work to ensure all players feel they have a meaningful role and contributions.

### **Competitions:**

- **Team Size:** 9 one of whom will be a goal keeper. A min of seven players are needed. Coaches may play 11v11 if both coaches agree.
- **Length:** Two 30 minute halves; a rest period of 5 minutes shall occur at halftime.
- **On-field Coaching:** Not allowed under normal circumstances. Talk to the Rec Director for prior approval if your player has special needs.

### **Referees:**

- One club referee may be assigned.
- If no referee is present, coaches shall referee. Parents cannot referee unless they maintain current GotSports training certifications. Coaches should come to an agreement on referee coverage. It is recommended that one coach ref the 1st half, and the other team's coach referee the second half.
- The referee should help/make suggestions to both teams.
- Refereeing should be for the purposes of instruction, e.g., if a poor throw in is made, the coach/referee should demonstrate proper technique, and allow the player to retry once.

### **Division Specific Rules:**

- There are no special rules or regulations for U14

# 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

## Equipment and Fields:

### Coaches Equipment:

Coaches will be supplied with a first aid kit, and practice equipment will be made available by Challenger coaches as required.

### Player Equipment:

Players are responsible for bringing their own, ball, shin guards, appropriate shoes and clothing, and water for each practice.

Balls Sizes:

- U5 through U8:        Size 3
- U10:                    Size 4
- U11-U14:            Size 5

**IMPORTANT: No player will be allowed to practice or play without shin guards.**

### Fields:

#### **Broad Rock Middle School:**

351 Broad Rock Rd, Wakefield, RI 02879

#### **Tuckertown Park:**

1268 Tuckertown Rd, S. Kingstown, RI 02879



### Game Cancellations or Changes:

Except as noted below, no games shall be postponed, canceled, or rescheduled by coaches. This authority rests with the Director of Recreation who will make arrangements in coordination with the SCYSC Facilities Director, the SCYSC Director of Referees, and other SCYSC board members.

In cases of inclement weather, the Director of Recreation or another board shall decide whether the entire slate of games for a given day shall be canceled. Notification will be provided via all player and parent email addresses registered via GotSport, in all cases, as much advance warning as possible will be given, but no later than 1 hour prior to scheduled practices or games. The Director of Referees shall notify referees of any game cancellations.

Unless notified of game cancellations, coaches and their teams must show up at the field expecting to play. Please see the third and last paragraphs under Law 3 below for the consequences of not showing up for a game.

Referees or Coaches shall stop a game when they first hear thunder and/or see lightning. The safety of players is the overriding consideration in this decision. Therefore, the primary concern is for everyone to immediately leave the field and reach a safe place (not under trees!) -- all considerations about games or practices can be addressed later. Coaches should try to provide a safe shelter for any players/referees who do not have a parent at the field.

In cases of frozen ground/water or standing water that cannot be removed from the field, both head coaches shall vote at the field on whether the game shall be played. If the vote is tied, the referee(s) shall vote to break the tie. In the case there is a tie after eligible votes are made, the game shall be canceled.

Referees are also empowered to stop a game. Please see Law 5 and Law 12 below.

### Player Eligibility

To participate, players must be duly registered with SCYSC through GotSport for the current season. The Director of Recreation will work with the SCYSC Registrar to address player eligibility issues. This includes player information, fees, and medical waivers.

### SCYSC Recreation Amendments to the Laws of the Game

#### Law 1. The Field of Play

Optimum field dimensions (length by width) and goal size for various age groups in the SCYSC house league shall be as follows:

Division	Field Dimensions	Size of Goals
U5 through U8	25 yds. x 20 yds.	4 yds. wide x 3 feet high
U10	50 yds. x 40 yds.	4 yds. wide x 6 feet high
U12	75 yds. x 50 yds.	7 yds. wide x 7 feet high
U14	100 yds. x 65 yds.	8 yds. wide x 8 feet high

Three feet outside of one touchline, a restraining line or arc (preferably) shall be marked off. Spectators shall remain behind this restraining boundary while the game is in progress. This allows the referee or assistant referee a clear view of the field of play and touch line. On the OPPOSITE side of the field, lines shall designate two team boxes of 3 x 10 yards. These shall be placed (3 feet from the touch line) on either side of the midfield line. Coaches and players must remain in their respective team boxes while the game is in progress. Spectators shall not be permitted on the side of the field that is occupied by teams nor behind the goal lines.

#### Law 3. Number of Players

Unless otherwise permitted by the Recreation Director, U5 through U8 shall play 4v4 with a minimum of 3 players per team; U10 shall play 7v7 including one goalie with a minimum of 5 players per team; U11-14 shall play 9v9 including one goalie with a minimum of 7 players per team. U11-14 may play up to 11v11 if both coaches agree.

If a team cannot field the minimum number of players within 10 minutes of the scheduled starting time, the game shall be forfeit.

#### **Game Duration and Playing Time**

ALL players must be allowed to play a minimum length of time in EACH game. Game durations and minimum playing times are:

Division	Game Duration	Min Playing Time
U5/U6	Four 10 min quarters	Equal playing time
U7/U8	Four 10-12 minute quarters	Equal playing time

## 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

U10	Two 25 minute halves	30 minutes minimum 40 minutes maximum
U12	Two 30 minute halves	30 minutes
U14	Two 35 minute halves	35 minutes

Any team found in violation of the playing-time rule for any player(s) who are willing and able to play shall be required to forfeit the game(s) in question. The coaches involved may also be asked to appear before the SCYSC Board or provide an explanation to the Director of Recreation. Referees shall add time (amount at their discretion) for significant delays of the game such as for injured players, difficulty retrieving an out of bounds ball, etc.

### Substitutions

Substitutions shall be unlimited. In U-10 and older divisions, players leaving or entering the field during substitutions must do so at midfield. A substitute may not enter the field of play until the player being replaced has left, and then only with the permission of the referee. In U-10 and older divisions substitutions may be made, with permission of the referee, at the following times:

- a. Prior to a throw-in by the team with ball possession, if the team with ball possession substitutes on a throw-in, the opposing team may also substitute
- b. Prior to a goal kick by either team
- c. After a goal, by either team
- d. At half time
- e. For a player who has just received a caution, the opposing team may also substitute a like number of players
- f. If the game is stopped for an injury, the injured player must be replaced. At that time the opposing team may substitute a player
- g. See also, Law 12 -- Fouls and Misconduct

### Law 4. Players' Equipment

Players are required to wear shin guards in all games and practices. Players must wear the uniform consisting of team jersey and socks, shin guards and appropriate shorts and footwear. Nothing may be worn over the uniform. Players shall not be allowed to participate in a game or practice while wearing anything which is dangerous to themselves or another player -- such as a dangerous footwear (including baseball and football cleats), any type of hard cast, including finger casts (even when wrapped in soft material) or jewelry including rings, watches, necklaces, barrettes, earrings, silly bands etc. Medical alert bracelets are an exception to this

## 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

rule. Soft medical bracelets are preferred and it is required that any loose chains on the bracelet be covered with tape.

Socks must be worn over shin guards. Jerseys must be tucked into shorts. Except as indicated below for cold weather, anything worn under the shorts must end above the knee. Sweatshirts are allowed under team jerseys. If hooded sweats are worn, the hood must be worn inside the team jersey and any drawstrings must be kept inside the jersey. Referees will be instructed to allow sweat pants and tights, etc. only if and when the weather gets very cold in the latter part of the season.

Goalkeepers must wear a jersey color easily distinguished from the colors of either team.

Coaches are expected to assist referees in enforcing these regulations.

### **Law 5. Referees**

The assignment of referees for each game in the U-10 and older divisions shall be the responsibility of the Director of Referees. In the event that a referee is not assigned or, for some reason, should fail to appear for the game, the two head coaches shall mutually agree on a willing official from available personnel. This official's decisions and call of play shall be binding on both teams to the same extent as an officially assigned referee's decisions and calls.

Referees have the authority at the field to temporarily halt or to completely stop games due to dangerous field conditions and/or weather. Referees shall stop a game when they first hear thunder and/or see lightning. The safety of players is the overriding consideration in this decision. Therefore, the primary concern is for everyone to immediately leave the field and reach a safe place (not under trees!) -- all considerations about the game can be addressed later. Coaches should try to provide a safe shelter for any players/referees who do not have a parent at the field.

Games stopped by a referee before the end of allotted time for reasons other than inclement weather (problems of control, etc.) shall be reviewed by the SCYSC BOD before a decision is made concerning the outcome or possible rescheduling of the game.

Games stopped by referees or canceled by any member of the SCYSC BOD shall be rescheduled only by the Director of Recreation in consultation with the Director of Referees and coaches.

### **Law 12. Fouls and Misconduct**

## 2023 SCYSC Recreational Coaches Handbook

---

Using offensive, insulting or abusive language; fighting; striking or attempting to strike; or other intentional, serious fouls are sufficient reason for the referee to eject a player or coach from a game. A player so ejected may not be replaced for the duration of the game (the team must play short) and shall not be allowed to play in the next league game. The ejected player or coach must leave the field area. Ejected players and coaches are subject to review by the SCYSC BOD as well as the Recreation committee.

Any coach or spectator engaging in or encouraging unsporting conduct may be immediately ejected from the area by the referee.

The referee shall not allow the game to continue until any person ejected from the area has actually left the area and remains away from the area for the duration of the game.

The referee shall promptly report orally and then in writing to the Director of Referees any cautions or ejections. The Director shall promptly bring the matter to the Recreation Committee and the SCYSC BOD for consideration. These groups shall determine whether any additional action is appropriate.

A coach receiving 2 cautions during a season must meet with the BOD to discuss the situation.

A coach is responsible for controlling his fans and parents and, if he is unwilling or unable to control their unsportsmanlike behavior, the coach may receive a caution and/or be ejected by the referee.

While we are most appreciative for our volunteer coaches, coaching is considered a privilege and not a right. Any alleged misconduct or misbehavior by a coach can result in a hearing before a hearing committee appointed by the Recreation Operations Committee Director.