



**Diocese
of
Pittsburgh
Soccer
League**

**OFFICIAL RULE
BOOK**

SEPTEMBER 2004

Diocese Soccer League

All DSL games will be played with the most current Official High School soccer rules. All DSL rules supercede any High School rules.

Violations will result in penalty as stated in the Official High School Soccer Rule book. The DSL and Pittsburgh Diocese reserve the right to apply further sanctions, as deemed appropriate, against a player, coach, spectator, school or referee who is found violating any Official High School or DSL soccer rules.

ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT:

- Shoes with metal tips, or any type of full metal cleats, will be considered illegal and are prohibited from use in any DSL practice, scrimmage, or game.
- Jewelry, with exception of medical bracelets or medical medals. Medical bracelets and medals must be taped to the body.
- Hair control devices not made of soft material and/or for adornment.
- Ankle bracelets, unless covered by a stocking or other suitable material.

UNIFORMS:

- The home team must have an alternative colored jersey, or pinny, to avoid a conflict with the visiting team's jerseys.
- Team player jerseys must be of the same color. Team player shorts must be of the same color. Team jerseys and shorts do not have to be matching colors.
- All jerseys must be numbered.
- All jerseys must be tucked in at all times.
- Shinguards are required at all times at practices, scrimmages, and games.
- Players may NOT alter shinguards, wear them where protection is not provided to the shin, or wear shinguards that are not the appropriate size.
- Socks must cover the entire shinguard at all times.
- Socks must be of a single dominant color. Team players must wear the same colored socks.
- DSL recommends all male players wear an athletic supporter or protective cup.
- DSL recommends all players wear a mouth guard.
- Goalie helmets are not required, but the DSL highly recommends they be used.

Each coach is responsible for ensuring that each of his/her players is properly equipped and in uniform. The use of illegal equipment is prohibited even if referees and/or coaches of both teams approve it.

A player improperly equipped or dressed shall be instructed to leave the field of play when the ball next ceases to be in play. Play shall not be stopped immediately for an infringement of equipment or uniform except if the referee stops the play immediately where there is an immediate dangerous situation. There shall be no substitute until the next opportunity to substitute. The removed player may re-enter the game, during a dead ball, after reporting to an official who shall be satisfied the player's equipment and/or uniform is in order.

LENGTH OF SEASON AND SCHEDULES:

- Two seasons will be offered: Fall and Spring.
- Each season will be 7 or 8 weeks long, depending on field availability, daylight time for game play, make-up game availability, and Playoff field availability.
- Schools can participate in one or both seasons.
- Teams will be registered on or before the general meeting, the third Thursday in July (Fall Season) and February (Spring Season).
- Start of Fall Season is immediately after Labor Day.
- Start of Spring Season will be determined by DSL coordinators prior to the season.
- Schedules will be distributed at the mandatory coaches meeting, the third Thursday in August (Fall Season) and March (Spring Season), only if school team(s) fees are paid in full.
- Practices may begin three weeks prior to the first scheduled game. Violation of this rule will result in a school not being eligible for the DSL Playoffs.
- The Diocese of Pittsburgh dictates that no DSL game may begin before 12 noon on a Sunday. Any request for exemption of this rule, due to conflicts, must be submitted in writing and signed by the school's pastor, or principal, to the DSL. Reasons for early Sunday games might be: field availability, inclement weather, etc. Games are not to be played early on Sundays to accommodate Travel Players.

The DSL coordinators reserve the right to change the general meeting and the mandatory coaches meetings from the third Thursday of February, March, July and August, if the need arises.

GAME BALLS:

- * Varsity: Size 5 balls only
- * Junior Varsity and Developmental: Size 4 balls only

LENGTH OF GAMES:

- * Junior Varsity and Varsity: Two 30 minute halves
- * Developmental: Two 25 minute halves recommended

A game shall be considered LEGAL at the end of the first half. The score will be considered final at this point if cancelled by the referee.

There is NO OVERTIME in regular season games.

FIELD CONDITIONS:

The Home Team is responsible for determining playability of the field prior to the game.

The referees are responsible for determining playability of the field after the game begins.

The visiting team (also home team if referee makes the decision) must abide by the decision made by the home team/referee or risk a forfeiture of the game. All rulings will be final upon review by the DSL Coordinators.

The occurrence of lightening during a game is just cause to postpone and/or cancel a game. After lightening has left the area, game should not be resumed for at least 30 minutes and is at the discretion of the referee.

LEAGUE FEES:

Junior Varsity and Varsity: \$70.00 per team
Developmental: free

Team fees are due on or before the mandatory general meeting each season:
7:00pm at St. Paul Seminary the third Thursday of July (Fall Season) and
February (Spring Season).

Make checks payable to: The Diocese of Pittsburgh

Failure to pay in full on or before the General Meeting prior to the season will result in the school not fielding teams in the DSL that season.

S.C.O.R.E. games fees change each season and shall be designated on the current registration form.

Fees must be paid on or before the designated date or S.C.O.R.E. game t-shirts will not be ordered for that team.

The DSL coordinators reserve the right to change League Fees as necessary.

PLAYER ROSTERS:

- Junior Varsity and Varsity preliminary rosters must be submitted at the mandatory coaches meeting the third Thursday of August (Fall Season) and March (Spring Season).
- The final roster must be signed by the school principal and submitted to DSL coordinators before the team's first game of the season. A game is not official, and will not be credited to a team, if played before the roster, signed by the principal and/or pastor of the school, is received by the DSL deadline.
- Players can be added to a roster up to and including the fourth game of the season. Players being rostered after that are not eligible for the DSL Playoffs, unless they began school at the team's school after the fourth game or additions are needed to bring the roster up to 11 players. New players will be added by notifying the DSL coordinator by phone followed by a revised roster. Each roster must be signed by the school principal.
- Players must play in a minimum of half the team's games to be eligible for the playoffs. This applies to JV players who play up in Varsity games as well. For example, players who are rostered at the beginning of the season must play in a minimum of 4 games. Players who are added after the 2nd game must play in a minimum of 3 games. Players who are added after the 4th game are NOT eligible for the playoffs. The only exception to this rule is in case of injury to a player at which point the DSL coordinator must be notified by phone of the situation.
- There is no limit to the number of players for regular season rosters.
- Rosters are required for all Junior Varsity and Varsity teams, i.e. first teams, second teams, etc.
- Players from a school may play on a team for another school providing that school does not have a DSL team and the two schools are in geographic proximity to one another. Geographic proximity is at the discretion of the DSL coordinators. Permission must be given by the DSL for mixed school teams.

COACHES ACCREDITATION:

All coaches, assistant coaches and team aids/helpers are required to complete the Diocese Coaches Video Accreditation Program before conducting or participating in league practices, scrimmages and/or games.

All coaches, assistant coaches and team aids/helpers are required to obtain Act 33/34 clearance and Child Abuse Check. Forms are available at the school office through the school principal. These completed forms must be on file in the school office prior to

conducting or participating in league practices, scrimmages and/or games. They must remain on file in the school office as long as the individual is involved with the DSL. All clearances and accreditations shall be valid as long as the coach remains active in coaching in the same school.

GAME CARDS:

- Only the official, DSL two sided game card is acceptable for use. It can found in the DSL Soccer manual or on the DSL website: www.leaguelineup.com/dsl
- One game card must be presented to the referee prior to the start of the game. Failure to do so could result in forfeiture of the game.
- One game card must be presented to the opposing team's coaching staff prior to the start of the game.
- Every player on the field should have a name and number on the game card.
- Please make sure referees complete both sides of the game card before accepting the game card after the game, i.e., referee signatures, final score, winning team, yellow cards and red cards with player name and number, etc.
- The winning team is responsible for collecting both game cards from the referee after the game. If the game is a tie, the home team is responsible for collecting both game cards from the referee after the game.
- Game cards must be received by the DSL coordinator within five days of the played game. No credit will be given the winning team until the original game card is received. Game results can be e-mailed but the original game cards must still be mailed to the DSL coordinator within 5 days of the game being played.
- If you anticipate a problem submitting the game cards in time, please call the DSL coordinator and report the reason for the problem. Leaving a message for the DSL coordinator is not sufficient. Make sure you follow up your message and talk to the DSL coordinator personally.

LEAGUE STANDINGS:

Winners for each section shall be determined by a point system:

Win = 3 points Tie = 1 point Loss = 0 points Forfeit = (-)2 points

SECTIONS:

Determination of Sections:

- At the end of each season, each schools program (Varsity and JV together) will be scored using the following formula.
- Teams will be awarded points based on the following:
 - Win = 3 points
 - Tie = 1 point
 - Loss = 0 points
- If a team has unplayed games, they will be scored as ties.

- The combined point total of both the Varsity and JV will then be added together, this will be known as the “Total Program Points”
- If a program only has 1 team (Varsity or JV), that team’s points will be doubled to determine the “Total Program Points”.
- All 2nd and 3rd teams will be treated as separate programs and have their own “Total Program Points”.
- The “Total Program Points” will then be multiplied by the following factors based on the section the program has competed in that season:
 - Section 1 = 19.000
 - Section 2 = 7.111
 - Section 3 = 2.667
 - Section 4 = 1.000
 - Section 5 = 0.375 (if necessary)
- The result will be the “Final Program Points Total”
- Each program will then be ranked according to their “Final Program Points Total”
- The DSL will then decide the number of sections for the upcoming season based on the total number of teams registered. Every effort will be made to keep the section sizes as equal as possible with 6-9 teams in each section.
- The programs will then be placed in sections according to their ranking.
- If a program only participates in 1 season a year, their “Final Program Points Total” will be used from the most recent season they fielded a team, going back a maximum of 3 seasons.
- If a program has not fielded a team (Varsity or JV) in the past 3 seasons, they would then be considered a new program
- New programs will be placed as follows:
 - Total enrollment of 250 students or more – Section 3
 - Total enrollment of less than 250 students – Section 4 or 5 (lowest section available for that season).
- If a new 2nd or 3rd program is entered from a school, it will be placed 2 sections below the current lowest ranked program from that school. If it is not possible to separate them by 2 sections, then they would play in the section just below the lowest ranked program from the same school.
- A non-eligible Playoff section may be designated for any second and new teams that wish to play without competition for a Playoff spot. There must be enough teams to support this section, however. Second and new teams are NOT obligated to play in this non-eligible Playoff section. Any school with one Varsity and/or Junior Varsity can choose to place their team(s) in this section, but they are NOT eligible for a Playoff spot.
- Determination of placement of players on first and second teams is made by the school’s soccer program. The following criteria are to be used:

Teams will be divided by grade: First Varsity team is 8th graders and second Varsity team is 7th graders. First Junior Varsity team is 6th graders and second Junior Varsity team is 5th graders.

OR

Teams will be divided by skill: First Varsity and/or Junior Varsity teams

are most skilled players. Second Varsity and/or Junior Varsity teams are less skilled players.

Tie Breaker for Section Champ:

Head-to-Head competition between the two teams during the season:

Tie game or each team won a game against one another = co-champs

One game played head-to-head=the winner is champ

Team Ranking in Section During Season or for Playoff Spots:

- Head-to-Head competition during the season. Same as for above “Tie Breaker for Section Champ.”
- Goal differential between two teams that are tied
- Goals against between two teams that are tied
- Goal differential overall for the season
- Goals against overall for the season

Two Divisions In Which Sections Will Be Placed:

Fall Season: Section 1 and 2 will make up one division
 Section 3 and 4 will make up other division

Spring Season: Section 1, 2 and 3 (optional) will make up one division
 Section 3 or 4, and 5 and 6 (optional) will make up other division

*The number of sections will depend on the number of teams registered.

**There will be two Varsity champs and two Junior Varsity Champs each season!
One of each will come from each division.**

Seeding for Playoffs:

FALL SEASON:

Section 1 first place vs Section 2 second place
Section 2 first place vs Section 1 second place

Section 3 first place vs Section 4 second place
Section 4 first place vs Section 3 second place

SPRING SEASON:

TBA as determined by number of teams in each division. DSL will designate a bye to teams as needed.

Seeding for Bye Between Sections:

- total points for the season
- overall goal differential
- overall goals against

COACHES, PARENTS, PLAYERS, REFEREES, SPECTATORS, HELPERS CONDUCT:

NO SMOKING, SWEARING, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, ILLEGAL DRUGS, OR INAPPROPRIATE ATTIRE ON SIDELINES, DURING PRACTICES, SCRIMMAGES AND/OR GAMES.

ANYONE EJECTED FROM A GAME BY REFEREES OR DSL PERSONNEL IS SUBJECT TO A ONE TO FIVE DAY SUSPENSION FROM DSL GAMES. THIS CARRIES OVER TO THE NEXT SEASON.

Each school must designate field monitors for each home game. They will patrol the home team spectators and the away team spectators. These field monitors will be designated as such by a vest or shirt that states their status clearly to the spectators. These field monitors will answer spectator questions and deal with inappropriate spectator conduct and/or language, etc. These field monitors will notify the appropriate coach(es,) as well as the game referees, if a spectator(s) does not comply with their suggestions or demands. A field monitor can recommend to the coach(es) and referees that a spectator be ejected from a game.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:

- Eighth grade and under
- Enrolled member of sponsoring school or geographically close Diocese Catholic School without a DSL team
- Varsity = eighth grade and under;
Junior Varsity = 6th grade and under
Developmental = 4th grade
- Use caution when playing 3rd graders on Developmental teams, 4th graders on Junior Varsity teams and 6th graders on Varsity teams. Make sure the player is skilled and a competitive size for the team he/she moves up to. DSL suggest you get written permission from the player's parents to move players up.
- Players cannot play on High School JV teams

- All players must have personal health insurance
- Players must return the following forms to the school office prior to the start of practices: (All forms found in Diocese Sports Manual in school office)
 - *permission form completed by parent/legal guardian
 - *physical exam, release no greater than one year old, signed by physician
 - *athlete emergency form

RESCHEDULING GAMES:

Notification must be made directly to the DSL coordinator and coach/contact person. Leaving messages on answering machines or with family members may lead to confusion or lost messages.

- If a home team needs to reschedule a game, they must give the opponent three optional dates and times to play another game when they cancel the game. The visiting team **MUST** choose from one of these options, providing it does not conflict with existing schedule or school functions. When agreement for new game time is made, DSL coordinator must be notified within seven days of originally scheduled game. Notification of the referees of the game changes is the responsibility of the home team.
- If mutual decision cannot be obtained by the above procedure, the home team and the visiting team must report this to the DSL Coordinator immediately, who will then decide which action to take, i.e., reschedule the game, forfeit, or, if game is not needed to determine standings it could be deemed unnecessary to reschedule.
- Failure by either team to follow the above guidelines in the prescribed time, or to notify the DSL coordinator within the prescribed time period, will result in both teams losing any right to demand the game be rescheduled and it will be eliminated from the schedule-no exceptions.
- If a visiting team cannot play a game, they must notify the DSL coordinator and the home team at least seven days before the originally scheduled game. The home team should try to reschedule, if possible, but they are not required to. It is in the best interest of both teams to reschedule, not to forfeit.
- The home team must call the visiting team no later than Wednesday preceding their scheduled game of any and all changes to a game for that week and to reconfirm the game. The DSL coordinator must also be notified of changes.
- Changes in game dates and times are not permitted to accommodate team players who play on other community soccer teams, i.e., Travel, Cup, etc.
- Changes in game dates and times are only permitted for conflicts with school or church functions or loss of field time.
- Teams that are unable to supply the DSL coordinator with home game information (dates, times, field, etc.) in time for inclusion on the schedule, are required to notify the DSL coordinator, referee association and all opponents as soon as this information is available.

- Any and all known dates that a team cannot play must be submitted to the DSL coordinator at the pre-season General Meeting the third Thursday of July (Fall Season) and February (Spring Season). These are to be indicated on the *DSL School Information Form*. The DSL will give priority to these dates and try not to schedule team games for those dates and times.
- Changes can also be made to the schedule at the Mandatory Coaches Meeting the third Thursday of August (Fall Season) and March (Spring Season).

REFEREES:

A central scheduling referee association will be used to supply high school referees to all games of schools who reside in the referee association area. All schools outside that referee area must supply their own referees. In that case, the use of FIFA or PIAA referees is permitted, with the permission of the DSL coordinator. Payment to those referees must be the standard rate for their services.

- It is the responsibility of the home team's coach to contact the coordinator of the officials and reconfirm all their home games
- A two person crew will be used per Official High School Rules.
- A game may be played with one referee if that referee is a certified PIAA/FIFA referee.
- Referees have control of the game from the time they enter the field area to the time they exit the field area.
- Yellow and Red cards can be issued at any time during this period to whomever the referees deem appropriate.
- There is to be NO verbal or physical abuse of referees from coaching staff, players, spectators or parents. This will not be tolerated by the DSL or referee association.
- Sanctions will be imposed by the DSL to the offending team(s) for the actions of the coaching staff, players, spectators and/or parents.
- If no referees are present at a game, it is allowable for both teams to agree upon substitutions to be used as referees. There **MUST** be two substitute referees, one from each team. Both teams must agree to the two referees. This constitutes a legal game. If both teams do not agree to using substitutes, the game **MUST** be rescheduled. The DSL coordinator must be called within 24 hours of cancellation of the game.
- The above rule does NOT apply to teams who are outside the referee area. Substitute referees **MUST** be scheduled prior to the game.

PROTESTS:

All protests must be submitted verbally and in writing by the coach to the DSL coordinator-NO EXCEPTIONS!

- The protesting coach must notify the referees and the opposing coach of his/her intentions at the point of discussion of his/her intent.

- Time allowed for protests:
 - On player eligibility – until end of season
 - On game itself – within 24 hours of game’s end
 - Mailed or e-mailed to DSL coordinator within 2 days of game’s end
- No protests for:
 - judgement calls by the referees
 - legality of game refereed by substitute referees with prior approval by both team’s coaches

RULE CHANGES DURING GAME PLAY(changed over past 5 years):

Excessive celebration:

- Players, coaches and/or bench can be disqualified for excessive celebration. A Yellow or red card can be issued. The ejected player(s) can be substituted for in the case of issued Yellow cards.
- “Excessive celebration” refers to anything that delays the game or demeans the opposing team.

Penalty Kicks:

- The opposing goalkeeper shall stand on the goal line, between the goal posts, until the ball is kicked. Lateral movement is allowed, but the goalkeeper is not permitted to come off the line by stepping or lunging until the ball is kicked.
- The only allowable substitution on a penalty kick is for an injured, cautioned, or disqualified player(s). This player(s) may be replaced for the penalty kick.

Corner Kicks:

- The ball shall be taken from the ground within the quarter circle, including on the lines, nearest where the ball left the field of play. The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves. Failure to kick the ball as specified shall result in a re-kick.

Kickoff:

- The ball shall be kicked while stationary on the ground in the center of the field of play. The ball is in play as soon as it is moved forward.
- A goal may be scored from a kickoff.

Scoring:

A goal may be scored during play directly from:

- kickoff

- direct free kick
- goal kick
- penalty kick
- corner kick
- drop ball
- goalkeeper's throw, punt or drop-kick

A goal may not be scored during play directly from a/an:

- indirect free kick
- throw-in
- free kick into team's own goal

Throw-ins:

- A throw-in must enter the field of play, or the ball is awarded to the opponent.

Substitutions:

You may substitute players when:

- It is your throw-in
- It is the throw in of the opposing team and the opposing team is substituting as well, as long as you notify the referee prior to the substitution
- A goal is scored
- It is half time
- Either team has a goal kick
- Your team has a corner kick
- The opposing team has a corner kick and the opposing team is substituting as well, as long as you notify the referee prior to the substitution
- Your player is injured, you may substitute for the injured player (you are not required to)
- The opposing team has an injured player, you may substitute one player

Goalkeeper Plays:

- Shall not touch the ball with his/her hands after receiving the ball directly from a throw-in by a teammate.
- Shall not touch a ball with his/her hands after receiving the ball from a deliberate pass by a teammate.

Slide Tackling:

- Permitted at the Varsity level only when contact with the ball is made.
- No slide tackling from behind is permitted!

- A direct kick is awarded to the opposing team if slide tackling is made at the Junior Varsity level, or at the Varsity level when made from behind without direct contact with the ball.
- Yellow and Red cards will be given at the discretion of the referees.
- A player may challenge a player from behind, on Varsity or Junior Varsity, provided the contact is not violent or dangerous and the ball is within playing distance.
- A player not attempting to play the ball, but remaining between the ball and an opponent, may be legally challenged from behind provided the challenge is not violent or dangerous and the ball is within playing distance.

Ejections from Game-Red Cards:

- If for any reason a player or coach is ejected from a game, by receiving one Red Card or two Yellow Cards, the same coach and/or player will lose his/her eligibility to finish the game.
- That player and/or coach cannot participate in the next game, or remainder of the season, depending on the gravity of the offense.
- If a player receives a Yellow or Red Card, they must leave the field at stoppage of play.
- The player receiving a Yellow Card may return to the game at the next legal substitution. Another player may be substituted for that player until that time.
- A player receiving a Red Card cannot return to the game and his/her team must finish the game with one less player per Red Card.
- All Red Card violations carry over into Playoffs and into the next season.
- Foul and abusive language and behavior is cause for immediate ejection.
- All Red Card violations are to be called to the DSL coordinator within 24 hours of the game completion. Failure to do so will result in sanctions by the DSL.

Injuries:

- See section under “Substitutions.”
- Coaches or medical personnel are permitted on the field to attend to an injured player, with the permission of the referee.
- No instruction or coaching is permitted, by either team, during game stoppage for an injury.

Stop Play After an Advantage:

The referee may stop play after an “advantage” or “play-on” call, when the advantage does not materialize, and penalize the original foul. The play is restarted by either a direct kick or indirect kick by the offended team at the spot of the original foul.

CRIME CODE OF PA:

Offense Defined: A person who violates section 2701 (relating to simple assault), where the victim is a sports official who was assaulted during a sports event or was assaulted as a result of his or her official acts as a sports official, is GUILTY OF ASSAULT ON A SPORTS OFFICIAL and is a misdemeanor in the First Degree. It is punishable by up to five years imprisonment and \$5000.00 fine.