

Under 8 Age Group

New Rules for Fall 2011

U8 Games and Practices

4 V 4, No goalkeeping, No Throw INS, and NO Direct Kicks

Please note that the following change is being made for the upcoming Fall (2011) soccer season. In keeping with the trend and recommendations of both the US Youth Soccer Organization as well as the Georgia Youth Soccer Association, Griffin Youth Soccer Association has decided to adopt this small-sided 4V4 format (w/ no goalkeeper) at the U8 level.

The small-sided environment is a developmentally appropriate environment for young soccer players. It's a FUN environment that focuses on the player. This is the opinion of the US Soccer National Staff Coaches, Every US Youth Soccer State Director of Coaching, as well as the US Youth Soccer Director of Coaching! **If you should have any questions, comments or concerns regarding the format change feel free to e-mail Joel Pasch, the Director of Coaching, at joel.pasch@griffinsoccer.org**

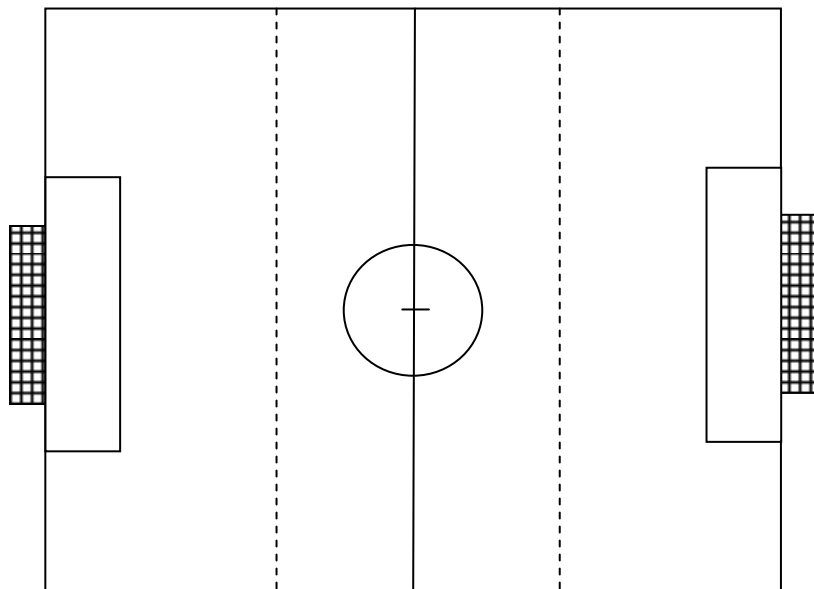
Reasons for Small-Sided Play

- Because we want our young soccer players to touch the soccer ball more often and become more skillful with it! (Individual technical development through more opportunities to possess the soccer ball)
- Because we want our young soccer players to make more quality decisions during the game! (Tactical development because less players on the field equals less complicated decision making)
- Because we want our young soccer players to be more physically efficient in the field space in which they are playing! (High intensity play with the ball versus long runs after the ball)
- Because we want our young soccer players to have more involved playing time in the game! (More opportunities to solve problems that only the game presents)
- Because we want our young soccer players to have more opportunities to play on both sides of the ball! (More exposure to both attacking and defending situations)
- Because we want our young players to have more opportunities to score goals! (The pure excitement and satisfaction one gets from scoring a goal)

Rules and Recommendations

- Games are comprised of four 12 minute quarters.
- Substitutions take place at the quarter break. Allow players remaining in the game to get a drink of water, especially if it's hot. This break should take 1-3 minutes.
- Substitutions cannot be made except at the three sub periods (1st quarter, half time and 3rd quarter) unless a player is hurt or ill or simply demands to come out of the game.
- The ball size used is a no. 3
- There are no direct free kicks in U8. All kicks are indirect. Back all players away from the Indirect Free Kick by 6 yards.
- All players must play ½ of the game. No player can play a full game until all players have played ¾ of the game.
- No players may shoot the ball into the goal until the player and ball have gone over the marked shot line.
- There are no goal keepers in U8
- New Ball Method as described in the KINS Manual (See page 2)

Field Layout:



THE FIELD OF PLAY

- Outer Dimensions (L X W, Yards)
36 x 25
- Shot Lines 12 yds out from goal line
- Center Circle 6 yd radius
- Goal Area (L X W, Yards)
12 X 3

NEW BALL METHOD

The idea behind the 'new ball method' is to keep the flow of the game constant and increase the number of ball touches by all the players. The 'new ball method' eliminates restarts such as throw-ins and corner kicks and keeps the ball in play continuously. Restarts might be important to the game results at the highest level of play, but they have no relevance or developmental benefits at the U-6 or U-8 level. Since the objective of the KINS Program is to teach players to dribble, every aspect of the traditional game that reduces the opportunity to dribble is removed.

The basic principle of this method is that, when a ball goes out of bounds, the coach throws a new ball into play. Experiments with this method, conducted at Richmond Hill SA in 2001/02, found that the players caught on to the method very quickly and loved it. The parents and coaches at Richmond Hill embraced the concept as soon as they witnessed it firsthand. The experiments also proved that, on average, players' ball touches increased two and threefold.

This was determined by counting the number of touches per player under the traditional rules and comparing to the number of touches under the 'new ball method'. Tracking the amount of actual playing time revealed that the ball was in play for only 45% of the time under the traditional rules, and almost 100% of the time under the 'new ball method'.

To implement the 'new ball method', use either one coach, or two coaches, to throw the balls. If using two coaches, each coach should be in charge of half a field. The coach(s) should hold a number of balls, ready to be thrown, one at a time.

- When a ball goes out of bounds, the coach yells "new ball!" and throws a new one in.

The players will learn quickly to react to the new ball.

- Always throw the ball into the unoccupied space. Players will learn to move towards the ball. Do not throw the ball too high in the air since the players are not yet skilled enough to control a bouncing ball.

- Coaches can also use this method to get the non-assertive players involved, by throwing the ball towards them. This will help bring them out of their shell. If the players are really shy, simply place the ball at their feet.

- If one team is dominating the game, the advantage can be shifted to the other team by throwing the ball accordingly.

- This method can also be used to break up a 'beehive'. If all the players are bunched up around the ball, shout "new ball" and throw one into the open space.

- Remember to always praise the players for every attempt. Keep them excited and motivated.

This method will speed up the game; will produce more goals and more excitement. For more information or assistance in implementing it, please contact the State Director of Coaching.