

Big Country Soccer Association

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Current as of updates approved March 2018.

With updates as of Annual General Meeting 26th October 2012

With updates as of Executive Meeting 19 Dec 2005.

RULE 1 - MEMBERSHIP

A. General

- A) An Association or Club must register at least one (1) team;
- B) Applications for new membership to this Association shall be made annually on a form to be provided by the Association. The applications must be accompanied by the required membership fee, together with a copy of the applicant's Constitution and a list of current officers;
- C) The jurisdictional areas and geographical boundaries of each member shall be defined by the Board;
- D) Each Member shall notify the Association in writing within seven (7) days of any change of officer or any change of address;
- E) All members will comply with the Rules and Regulations laid down in the By-laws of the Association:
- F) The current members are as follows:

- Acme/Linden
- Bowden
- Beiseker/Irricana
- Carbon
- Carstairs
- Cochrane Minor Soccer
- Cochrane Seniors-Rangers
- Cremona
- Crossfield
- Didsbury
- Drumheller
- Hanna
- Olds
- Sundre
- Three Hills

RULE 2 - MEMBERSHIP FEES

- A) The individual player fees shall be set annually at the General Meeting
- B) The Club fees shall be set annually at the General Meeting

RULE 3 - REGISTRATION OF SEASON PLAYERS

- A) All players and team officials in competitions sanctioned or conducted by the Association or any District Association shall be registered each year on forms supplied by the Association.
- B) No player or official shall be deemed registered unless his/her registration form is in the hands of the District Association's registrar not less than seven (7) days before participation. Telephone or fax notification twenty-four hours in advance is acceptable provided written proof of registration by a member is received by the District Registrar within seven (7) days.
- C) A player shall not register for more than one team in any one year except as listed in paragraph D) or as current ASA rules permit.
- D) A youth player may register with, and play for, both a youth team and more than one senior team, and maintain his/her eligibility to compete in both Youth and Senior Provincials. ASA Competition Rules will apply for a youth's eligibility to play for a senior team at Provincials.
- E) A Youth player may play up an unlimited number of times in a season. For playoffs, however, a team may have a maximum of two (2) players from a younger age group per game, provided these called-up players are not cup-tied.
- F) No Youth player is permitted to play down in age level under any circumstances. Any special circumstances must be approved by the Big Country Executive.
- G) No Senior player shall sign for more than one Senior team in any season, unless properly transferred in accordance with Big Country Rules and A.S.A. Rules,
- H) Proof of age via a birth certificate, passport, or other evidence acceptable to the Executive shall be accepted as proof of age. The burden of proof shall rest with the player of the team.
- I) No youth team shall register more than twenty (20) players or dress more than twenty (20) players, except in circumstances approved by the executive board.
- J) A youth player shall register within the community in which he/she resides. If there is no team in the home community where the player can play, the home association will then assist the transfer of the player to the next closest town.
- K) If a member community recruits and/or registers a player(s) from outside their area to one of their Tier IV teams, other than through the transfer of players from the next nearest town as per paragraph (J), then that team shall be deemed a select team and therefore must register as a "Tier III", a "Tier II" or a "Tier I" team.
- L) Age groups shall be as per A.S.A. regulations for ages U13 and above. U11 and below shall be U11, U9, U7 and U5.

RULE 4 - TRANSFER OF PLAYERS

- A) A registered player wishing to transfer shall make application on a form supplied by the Association and to be obtained from his/her District Registrar.
- B) A registered player shall not be allowed to transfer his/her services during the year of such registration without the consent of the Club for which he/she is registered. A player being refused his/her transfer by his/her Club shall be allowed to appeal, without fee, to the District Association. No person, Association, League or Club shall limit unreasonably the right of an amateur player to transfer to the teams of his/her choice. A player shall be granted a transfer within seven (7) days of the receipt of his/her appeal by the member unless the appeal is contested. In the event that the appeal is contested, the District Association will deal with the matter within fourteen (14) days and will render its decision immediately thereafter.
- C) Transfers will not be permitted after the ASA register deadline. Permitted transfers will be subject to the current ASA competition rules for each level of competition and within the BCSA rules and regulations.
- D) A registered player shall not be allowed to transfer his/her services to any other Club unless he/she shall first have given his/her Club seven (7) days notice, in writing, of his/her intention to transfer.
- E) A player shall be entitled to the benefits of the transfer as follows:
 - i. Two (2) transfers only during the current season within the jurisdiction of a District Association. However, a player once transferred cannot be transferred back to the Club for which he/she originally registered until a period of thirty (30) days has elapsed.
- F) It is an offence for any Club, through its responsible officers or representatives to induce or attempt to induce a registered player of a team under the jurisdiction of this Association to leave his/her team before the end of the current season. The offence shall be dealt with by the Association or League in Membership concerned, if the Club and the players are under the same jurisdiction and by this Association in all other cases.
- G) A player may play for a team outside the area in which he/she resides if the player has previously played for the same team and the Executive Committee approves it.
- H) The President and the Executive Director with the permission of the president and, in the absence of the President, the Vice President are authorized to sign player transfers or releases.
- I) Big Country Soccer Association will charge \$25 per player transfer request from other Districts

RULE 5 - MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS - YOUTH TO SENIORS

- A) Any senior team desiring to sign a registered player from a youth team during the current season shall remit the sum of twenty-five (\$25) dollars to accompany the registration form. This amount is to be reimbursed to the youth team concerned.
- B) A youth team comprised of legal youth age players may register and play in a senior league in its own district (provided that all players on the team are signed on youth player forms) if a program is not available for that youth age group.
- C) Subject to agreement between youth and senior leagues within a District, a youth player duly registered with a youth team within that District may play, for developmental purposes, an

unlimited number of games within the senior league within that District, without affecting his/her youth status, or eligibility for youth Provincials.

D) Any registered youth players playing for a senior team must be recorded on league game sheets with a notation of juvenile status and the senior team must have a letter of approval from the coach of the youth team.

RULE 6 - DISCIPLINE

A) General

- i. Players, officials and spectators may take part in or attend games only on the condition that they observe the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Association;
- ii. Every Club is responsible for the actions of its players, officials and spectators;
- iii. Every Club and League is required to take all precautions necessary to prevent its players, officials and spectators from threatening or assaulting anyone present at games and especially the referee and linesmen. Clubs and Leagues are expected to provide security for players and officials;
- iv. Districts and Leagues in Membership shall ensure that their disciplinary Rules, Regulations and Procedures are consistent with those of the Association;
- v. Failure to observe timelines established in this Rule shall render any disciplinary action taken after the expiration of the time null and void;
- vi. An accused person has the right to attend any hearing at his/her own expense;
- vii. The report provided by the game official to the Association having jurisdiction shall be regarded as his/her affidavit to a Discipline Hearing Committee. The presence of the game official is not required at any hearing unless the accused so wishes and then only on condition that the accused notify the Association of his/her wishes and pay in advance of such attendance all related expenses incurred by said official. Related expenses are specified annually by the Board of Directors. An Association or League in Membership may require attendance of a game official in accordance with the Rules, Regulations and Procedures of the Association or League in Membership;
- viii. Any misconduct report from another Provincial Association shall be regarded as an affidavit to the Discipline Hearing Committee on the same basis as contained in 6 A) vii) above.
- ix. All disciplinary items must be e-mailed or faxed to all Member Associations within 24 hours of a ruling being made or of the result of an appeal hearing is known.

B) Jurisdiction

- i. Any person or organization reported for misconduct shall be dealt with by the Association or League in Membership or their delegate except as otherwise stipulated herein:
- ii. All cases of misconduct involving alleged physical and/or verbal assault or threatening behaviour towards a game official by any person shall be dealt with by a Discipline Hearing Committee of the A.S.A.;

C) Misconduct

- i. In addition to matters referred to in any other By-Law, Rule or Regulation of the Association, it shall be misconduct if any person or organization is proved at a hearing to the satisfaction of a Discipline Hearing Committee of the Association to have done, or permitted or assisted in doing or permitting any of the following:
 - a. Violated the Laws of the Game or the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of the Association or an Association or League in Membership;
 - b. Bet on any game other than on registered lotteries or pools.
 - c. Offered or attempted to offer, directly or indirectly, any consideration whatsoever to any Association, Club or League or to any player or official of any Association, Club or League or to any game officials with a view to influencing the result of any game or accepting any such consideration:
 - d. Committed any act or made any statement either verbally or in writing, or been responsible for conduct, continuing misconduct or any other matter which, in the opinion of the Association, is considered to be ungentlemanly, insulting or improper behaviour or likely to bring the game into disrepute.

D) Hearing

Each Discipline Hearing held within the jurisdiction of the Association and its Members shall be conducted in accordance with the following:

- i. A Discipline Hearing Committee shall have no fewer than three (3) members, one (1) of whom shall act as Chairman;
- ii. One (1) of the Committee shall act as recording secretary or a non-voting recording secretary (not one of the Committee) shall be appointed to be present for the whole Hearing;
- iii. An accused may be accompanied by legal counsel only with the permission of the Association or the Association or League in Membership with jurisdiction over the discipline;
- iv. The accused or his/her accredited representative shall be present or the Hearing shall not proceed;
- v. Failure to appear at a Discipline Hearing when due notice has been given shall result in suspension of the accused until he/she requests, in writing, and attends another Hearing;
- vi. A request for a Hearing under v) above shall be accompanied by a non- refundable fee set by the Association or its member, in the form of a certified cheque or money order;
- vii. Postponement of the Hearing may be granted by the Committee on terms published in advance of the Hearing;

viii. Timelines and Notices:

- a. Any person or organization accused of misconduct shall be given at least ten (10) working days' notice of any scheduled Hearing into the allegation. A copy of such notice shall also be sent to the organization if the person is one of their registered players or is their official representative;
- b. Notwithstanding a. above, Associations and Leagues in Membership or their Members may publish, in advance, the dates of regularly scheduled Hearings and the giving of notice in a. above is thereupon waived;
- c. Any person or organization shall be given at least seven (7) working days' notice of any scheduled Hearing if their presence is required by the Discipline Hearing Committee)
- d. Requests for postponement of a Hearing scheduled by The Association must be received by The Association at least five (5) working days prior to the date of the Hearing, accompanied by the approved fee in the form of a certified cheque or money order, which shall be refunded if the request is denied;
- e. In cases where an accused stands suspended pending a Hearing or for any adjourned Hearing, the date for the Hearing shall be set within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the misconduct report (or previous Hearing), for a date no later than ten (10) working days after the receipt of the misconduct report (or previous Hearing);
- f. The result of any Hearing shall be sent to the accused no later than five (5) working days after the Hearing;
- ix. By mutual consent, in writing, of the accused and the Discipline Hearing Committee, any terms in d) above may be waived;

x. Procedure

With all required persons present, the Hearing shall proceed as follows:

- a. The Chairman shall read the report and state the charge;
- b. The person(s) writing the report(s), if present, shall be given the opportunity to amplify or qualify the report(s);
- c. The accused shall be allowed to ask relevant questions of the author of the report, if he/she is present, or make submissions on the report and testify on his/her own behalf;
- d. The accused and the person(s) writing the report(s) shall have the opportunity to call witnesses to the incident;
- e. The Chairman and any Discipline Hearing Committee member may question the accused or any witnesses;
- f. The person(s) writing the report and the accused shall be allowed to make final summations before withdrawing;
- g. The Discipline Hearing Committee shall consider the report and any further evidence provided and shall either decide on the case or adjourn the hearing in accordance with viii) e) above;

- While a Yellow Card will not carry over from one season to the next, any suspension will. These yellow card records may be used in succeeding seasons if it appears that a player is a perennial discipline problem.

b. Ejections (Red Cards)

A.S.A. and A.S.A. Member Action:

- First offence for a situation other than player-on-player or misconduct shall result in a one (1) game suspension.
- First offence for a player-on-player offence shall result in a two (2) game suspension.
- First offence for a misconduct offence shall result in a two (2) game suspension.
 - Second Occurrence for any of the above shall result in an automatic suspension until the matter is dealt with by a Hearing called under Section D) Hearings
- **Repeated Ejections:**
 - It is strongly recommended that anyone found guilty of any third (3rd) red card (ejection) offence in one (1) calendar year be suspended for a minimum of one (1) calendar year, in addition to any sentence imposed at the Hearing.

ii. COACHES

- a. Any coach sent off as a result of actions that occur before, during or after a match, but still at the game venue, will be subject to the following Discipline- Action Specific
- First Occurrence shall result in a minimum of a two (2) game suspension
 - Second Occurrence in the same season shall result in an automatic suspension until dealt with by a Hearing called under Section D) Hearings.
 - Next Occurrence in any other season within a period of five (5) years shall mean an automatic suspension until dealt with by a Hearing called under Section D) Hearings.
- b. Any coach found using illegal players shall be dealt with as follows:
- First Occurrence shall result in a minimum of a two (2) game suspension
 - Second Occurrence in the same season shall result in an automatic suspension until dealt with by a Hearing called under Section D) Hearings.
 - Next Occurrence in any other season within a period of five (5) years shall mean an automatic suspension until dealt with by a Hearing called under Section D) Hearings.
- c. Any coach found using non-player(s) shall be dealt with as follows:
- Automatic suspension until hearing called under BCSA Rules and Regulations Section D Hearings.

An **illegal player** is generally described as:

- Another same-age player from another team of the same level/Tier
- Over age without BCSA approval in advance
- A player called up in excess of the 2-player playoff game call up rule in BCSA
- A call-up player that increases the team roster

A **non-player** is generally described as a person not registered with ASA (not considered a player by ASA) for soccer in the current season. Further, such a non-player shall not participate in any organized soccer (sanctioned league play, playoffs, tournaments, or any other BCSA soccer-related activity) in the District.

d. Any coach deemed to have acted in a 'Conduct unbecoming a coach' shall be suspended until a hearing is held and his local association will be advised of the allegations prior to the hearing.

Conduct unbecoming a coach may include, but is not limited to:

- i. Verbal and/or physical abuse of players, game officials, general public;
- ii. Unequal playing time for specific players (Every player in attendance for Tier IV regular season games must be allowed to participate in those games.);
- iii. Use of illegal or non-player(s);
- iv. Entering teams into tournaments at division levels much below team ability;
- v. Submitting any game report to media where game scores are reported without regard to the "Mercy Rule (maximum score difference of 5 goals can be reported/published).

G) Jurisdiction

- i. Associations in Membership or any District Association affiliated thereto shall have the power to deal with violations of the laws of the game, the rules, regulations and bylaws of this Association or misconduct by any of their Clubs or Associations, or by any of their players, officials or members. In all cases, the party complained against shall have the right to appeal and to offer a full answer or defence to any charges against him/her when the case is heard;
- ii. All Hearings concerning offences listed other than those involving physical contact with game officials or attempted physical contact with game officials, shall be dealt with by the District Association or Regional or Inter-District League in whose jurisdiction the alleged offence took place;
- iii. All Hearings involving allegations of physical contact with game officials or attempted physical contact with game officials shall be dealt with by the Provincial Association;
- iv. A Discipline Committee may, at its discretion, take action against any Club whose players, officials, or spectators have been found guilty of misconduct and/or violence towards anyone present at a game and especially towards game officials.

Rule 7- Protests

- A) Protests on games shall be made according to the rules of the competition in which the game was played.

Rule 8- Appeals

- A) Any club/team/individual participating in affiliated soccer has a right to appeal decisions affecting their status.

- B) The first avenue of appeal must follow the appeal process within the organization to which that club/team/individual belongs.
- C) The next avenue of appeal is to the governing body of the District, in as much as the District is the member of the A.S.A.
- D) The final avenue of appeal is to the A.S.A. Standing Committee on Discipline and Appeals who shall decide whether leave to appeal shall be granted.
- E) Appeals of decisions made by a member shall be submitted, in writing to the Association, along with a cheque or money order for one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) payable to the Big Country Soccer Association or ASA, as appropriate, which is the Appeal Fee.
- F) The letter of appeal and accompanying appeal fee must be post-marked no more than five (5) days from the receipt, in writing, of the decision being appealed.
- G) Suspensions will remain in effect until the decision of the Big Country Soccer Association or ASA, as appropriate, Appeal Hearing is released.
- H) The decision of the Big Country Soccer Association or ASA, as appropriate, Standing Committee on Discipline and Appeals shall be final and binding except when the decision was made in the first instance, in which case any Appeal must go to the Big Country Soccer Association or ASA, as appropriate, within five (5) days. If the grounds for Appeal are found valid then a Big Country Soccer Association or ASA, as appropriate, Appeal Committee of three (3) people will hold an Appeal Hearing expeditiously.

Rule 9- Referees

- A) No person shall officiate as a referee in any competitions under the jurisdiction of the Association excepting mini-soccer, unless he is on the Official List of Referees.
- B) If, for unforeseen circumstances, a referee is unable to act, Districts, Leagues or Teams shall have the right to agree on some other person to officiate.
- C) No ASA-registered referee may officiate in any unsanctioned game, competition or tournament, whether in or out of Alberta. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action being applied to the individual concerned.
- D) No ASA-registered referee may accept an appointment in any capacity in a game that involves a member of his/her immediate family as a member of one of the teams involved.
- E) No ASA-registered referee may officiate in any capacity in a game of a division in which he/she is also a player on any team in that same division, unless dispensation has been obtained, in writing, from the ASA office.

RULE 10- EXPENSE ALLOWANCE GUIDE

- A) Committee Chairmen and Committee Members shall be entitled to a refund of all expenses incurred as members of a Committee when those expenses have been incurred directly as a result of Committee work, in accordance with the current Association expense reimbursement policy.
- B) Receipts must be provided to support all claims.

RULE 11 – INTERPRETATIONS

A) Any reference to these Rules and Regulations in the singular shall also be acknowledged to apply to the plural. All questions regarding males shall apply equally to females.

RULE 12 - BIG COUNTRY DISTRICT LEAGUECOMPETITION/PLAYING RULES

A) Laws of the Game - Both CSA and ASA laws will apply with the following exceptions:

i. Length of Game

Age Group	Length of Half in Minutes
U5/U7	20
U9	25
U11	30
U13	40
U15	45
U17	45
U19	45

Coaches may agree to shorten or change the duration of the game prior to the game and must inform the referee before the start of the match.

ii. Size of Balls

Age Group	Ball Size
U5/U7	3
U9	4
U11	4
U13	5
U15	5
U17	5
U19	5

iii. Age Limits

Age Group

U5	Under 5 on January 1 st of the competition year
U7	Under 7 on January 1 st of the competition year
U9	Under 9 on January 1 st of the competition year
U11	Under 11 on January 1 st of the competition year
U13	Under 13 on January 1 st of the competition year
U15	Under 15 on January 1 st of the competition year
U17	Under 17 on January 1 st of the competition year
U19	Under 19 on January 1 st of the competition year

iv. Preparation/Notification of Games

- a. The home coach will contact the away coach at least 24 hours in advance of the game to verify location and kick-off time. The home coach will notify the away coach as soon as possible of any change due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

v. Game Results

- a. The winning coach or, in the event of a tie, the home coach is responsible for reporting the score to the appropriate person within 48 hours of the completion of the game.

vi. Game Sheets

- a. Game sheets are to be filled in prior to the start of the game and handed to the referee. The opposing coaches shall use the game sheets provided by the league. Coaches are to ensure the game sheets are filled in properly.
- b. A copy of the game sheet for every game played in a local community shall be given to and retained by the local association president in case they are needed by the district.

vii. Equipment

- a. All players regardless of age must wear shin guards
- b. All players shall wear a shirt of their respective team. Those playing on a full size field shall also wear shorts.
- c. Players wearing casts are not allowed to play, according to ASA and FIFA rules.
- d. Goalkeepers shall wear a sweater or a shirt that is distinctly different from other players on the field.
- e. The ball for the game will be supplied by the home team but this can be changed at the referee's discretion.
- f. Footwear may be either running shoes or recognized soccer shoes and must conform to Law IV of the Laws of the Game.
- g. The wearing of a knee brace is permitted provided there is sufficient protective covering and is completely at the referee's discretion.

viii. Substitutions

Substitutions are permitted as follows:

- a. At any time for injuries, for the injured player only
- b. Preceding a goal kick
- c. After a goal has been scored
- d. At half time
- e. On throw ins
- f. For a cautioned player at the time of receiving a caution
- g. To a maximum of 4 at any one stoppage in play
- h. All substitutions are at the referee's discretion.

ix. Cancellation or Postponement of Games

- a. In either event the home team will remain the home team for the rescheduled game and will supply the field and the referee.
- b. No games will be scheduled on a Statutory Holiday.
- c. The only reason for the cancellation of a game is inclement weather.
- d. When unforeseen circumstances dictate the postponement of a game, mutual cooperation between coaches is required.
- e. All cancelled/postponed games are to be rescheduled as soon as possible. If this is not possible the teams involved may play their last game against each other to count as double points if both coaches agree. If there is no resolution to a dispute on this issue it must be referred to the Executive.

x. Referees

- a. All A.S.A. sanctioned games must be officiated by a referee who is on the A.S.A. list of officials, except for mini-soccer. If no referee is scheduled for a scheduled game, then an appropriate substitute may be used. This is limited to once per season per association.

xi. Playoffs, Provincial Declarations and Team Representation at Provincials

- a. District League playoffs will be played amongst the top four teams from each division, with Semi-final and Final games being played on same day of District Finals

East and West division, first round of playoffs:

First round:(higher rank gets home field)

- First place in East vs. Fourth place in East
- First place in West vs. Fourth place in West
- Second place in East vs. Third place in East

- Second place in West vs. Third place in West

District Finals (Semi-Final and Final Games)

- Higher placed team from round one from the East plays lower ranked team from the West, Winner moves on to final game
- Higher placed team from round one from the West plays lower ranked team from the East, Winner moves on to final *game*
- In the event that there is one division league then the first place team receives a bye into the district final.

First round:

Second plays Fifth and Third plays Fourth with the higher ranked teams being the home teams. Winners then play in Semi-Final

District Finals (Semi-Final and Final Games):

Winners of first round play semi-Final, winner of semi-final will play league winner from the regular season in Final game

- The officials for the District final will be provided and paid for by the District. The District will also provide the medals.

- Prior to the ASA PROVINCIAL DECLARATION DEADLINE OF EACH YEAR the District shall decide upon the categories into which the District will enter Provincial Championships. Then ONLY THE DISTRICT will declare the entries to the A.S.A.
- Where a District league exists then the Provincial representative will be the winner of the District finals or in the event that team cannot go, then the second place team may go.
- Where a District league does not exist and there is more than one team applying to go then the District will schedule playoff games between/amongst the teams and, provided that all A.S.A. requirements are met, then the winner will go.
- Where only one team in a specific age group, they will be deemed an exhibition team and must complete 6 sanctioned games in order to represent the District for Provincial's in their category.
- Any member association wishing to host any Provincial Championship must declare their intentions before the ASA HOSTING DECLARATIONS DEADLINE. The Association will be responsible for the additional declaration fee.
- ANY TEAM REPRESENTING THE DISTRICT AT PROVINCIALS WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR BEHAVIOR. IF ANY ACTION IS TAKEN AGAINST THE DISTRICT THEN THAT ASSOCIATION WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY FINES LEVIED AGAINST THE DISTRICT THAT RESULTED FROM THEIR ACTIONS.

xii. Mini or Seven a Side Soccer (U7/U9)

- Each league will set the playing rules at the start of each season.