

U11 – U19 FIELD MARSHALL PROGRAM

Background:

- Referee retention issues seem to have been an increasing issue over the past few years in Saskatoon. This referee shortage is caused by many reasons, but the most worrisome is the abuse from team officials and spectators towards the youth referees, especially during the outdoor season. The abuse can come in many forms but, it is the verbal abuse, which is personal, provocative, and public regarding the referee's on-field performance that causes the youngest referees to quit. It is a possibility they will make a mistake every game, but we must encourage them to learn and improve rather than to insult/degrade their refereeing.
- This unacceptable behavior towards our youth and new officials must be addressed as a **priority** particularly if soccer is to have an adequate supply of referees.
- A similar program was started by Calgary Youth Soccer in Outdoor 2008 and within one season they saw improvements in the retention of youth referees.

Specifics:

- The Field Marshall Program is intended to assign one individual from each team to speak up on behalf of the referee among their fellow parents/spectators. The program started in Outdoor 2015 and includes U11 to U19 levels of play.
- All teams participating in the U11, U13, U15, and U19 SYSI league play are encouraged to designate an individual at each game (home and away) to act as a Field Marshall.
- The individual acting as the Field Marshall (FM) does not need to be named on the team's game sheet. **Teams will not be fined if they do not list their FM on the game sheet (U11, U13, U15, and U19).**

Responsibilities of Field Marshall:

- Position yourself in the middle of your team's half of the spectators' seating area.
- Monitor the behavior of your team's parents.
- The Field Marshall is encouraged to remind parents to refrain from vocalizing their complaints during the game.
- Quickly diffuse potential problems before they arise by speaking with the individual(s) involved.
- Deal with, and act on, inappropriate comments, gestures and/or general unsporting behavior directed at referees, players or any other individual by your teams' spectators but please avoid getting into a confrontation. If someone is still hostile after being asked to calm down, please gather as much information but do not put yourself in a dangerous position. **The Field Marshall will not interfere with the coach but can gather information should he/she deems it necessary.**
- The FM's are **not** expected to put themselves in a situation which may compromise their safety and instead are asked to contact SYSI at admin@saskatoonyouthsoccer.ca and fill a [Game Misconduct/Incident report](#) form located on SYSI website. When dealing with this type of issue, the Game Misconduct Report of the FM will be used to make a decision as a third choice (main two being the game sheet and Game Misconduct Report and/or Incident Report filled by the referee). If only the FM will submit a Game Misconduct/Incident Report, that form will be filed for future reoccurrences.

Zone Discipline:

- Based on any official report, SYSI will forward the zones the appropriate documents and each zone will investigate the incident and act accordingly. If the issue has not been dealt with on a satisfactory manner by the zone, SYSI's Discipline Committee will decide on a resolution.
- The number of games suspensions should follow the same format as the Ejections paragraph in the SYSI Rules and Regulations (more specific to the Abusive Language/Indecent Gesture paragraph).

Referee Evaluation Form: Parents or coaches are encouraged to provide positive or constructive feedback by submitting this form.

Guideline for scheduling:

- Scheduling the FM is at the discretion of the team manager/coach and could be one of the following options (but not limited to):
 - a) 1 game per parent/game in alphabetical order (but not necessarily) at the first team meeting;
 - b) 2 or 3 parents that want to share the duties decided at the team meeting;
 - c) Or one parent assigned on the spot right before the game.
- SYSI recommends that the assigning of the FM be done in advance in collaboration with the parents and if a parent will not be able to make it to the assigned game, they can always find a replacement.