

# CHAPTER 4

## RULES OF THE ARKANSAS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION

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#### **4.0 RULES OF THE ARKANSAS STATE SOCCER ASSOCIATION**

- 4.0.1 These are the General Rules of the Arkansas State Soccer Association (ASSA) and its affiliated local soccer association membership. Where any issue pertinent to these rules is not wholly covered or requires clarification then such issue should be taken up with the chairperson of the Rules Committee or in the absence of that position with the committee chairperson having responsibility over the issue in question.
- 4.0.2 Any information or advice given in this manner shall not be considered as the full ASSA policy or interpretation unless given in writing by the Rules Committee with the consent by the Board of Directors of the ASSA.
- 4.0.3 These Rules shall be considered in conjunction with and a supplementary to the Bylaws and Polices of the United States Youth Soccer and the United States Soccer Federation (“USSF”) (collectively, the “Rules of the Governing Bodies”). In those instances where these Rules directly conflict with the Rules of the Governing Bodies, the Rules of the Governing Bodies shall apply. In all other instances, these Rules shall be read in conjunction with the Rules of the Governing Bodies, if applicable, and supplementary and superior to the Rules of the Governing Bodies if permitted.
- 4.0.4 A plea of ignorance of the bylaws, rules, and operating guidelines of this association, USSF or USYSA, is not sufficient, and violators may expect appropriate action by the board of directors of this association or their designate.
- 4.0.5 This association, USSF or USYSA, shall not assume nor be liable for, the debts nor financial responsibilities, either implied or incurred, of any of its members, member associations, member teams, coaches or managers.

#### **4.1 MEMBERSHIP:**

- 4.1.0 In order to create an association, proposed bylaws, accompanied by a check made payable to the ASSA in the amount of \$75, must be submitted for approval to the state office. In addition to the bylaws a statement showing “just cause” - why the new association is necessary in the area, what part of the community is being served and where the association will play and practice.
- 4.1.1 To qualify for membership an association must have at least 50 players.
- 4.1.2 The new association must commit to hosting a coaching and referee course within the first year.

#### **4.2 REGISTERED PLAYERS & COACHES:**

- 4.2.0 Except as otherwise required by the Rules of the Governing Bodies, only properly registered players and coaches shall be permitted to play in ASSA sanctioned competitions. This includes competition sanctioned by local member associations.
- 4.2.1 Any team which uses any unregistered player(s) shall automatically forfeit all games in which said players have participated and may also be liable to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the ASSA Appeals & Disciplinary Committee (the “A&D Committee”).

- 4.2.2 Any local soccer association which permits any unregistered player, players, coach or coaches to participate in any competition shall be subject to such disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the A&D Committee. All Level 2 and Level 3 ASSA registered players will be provided with a player pass.
- 4.2.3 A player or coach is deemed to be properly registered with ASSA (and as a result with US Youth Soccer) when such participant has submitted his/her properly completed registration form and any dues required by such local soccer association for registration to the registrar for the local soccer association (the “Local Registrar”).
- 4.2.4 The coach and all other non-players listed on the roster must also complete an online volunteer disclosure form at the time of registration.
- 4.2.5 In the event a Local Registrar fails to submit any participants registration and dues required by ASSA to ASSA’s registrar (the “Registrar”) in a timely manner (as determined by the Board of Directors), such participant’s registration shall be void. In such instances, however, the player shall be considered to be a “previously rostered player” for National Championship purposes.
- 4.2.6 A player or coach who does not reside in the state of Arkansas or who is registered with an affiliate of US Youth Soccer shall be deemed to be properly registered when such participant is registered pursuant to his/her state’s or affiliates rules and regulations.
- 4.2.7 If an association has registered all of its players but has not submitted any fees and notification has been sent without results, the board will contact the appropriate league and notify them that it is the board's recommendation that the association not be allowed to participate in league games. Additionally, the association will not be allowed to vote at the AGM, will not be allowed to register for any State Cup tournaments, and no player cards will be issued in the spring.
- 4.2.8 If an association has registered all of its players and paid for only a portion of the fees and proper notification has been sent without results, the association will be declared in bad standing, will not be allowed to vote at the AGM, will not be allowed to register for any State Cup tournaments, and no player cards will be issued in the spring.

**4.3 UNREGISTERED OR NON-SANCTIONED PLAY:**

- 4.3.0 Except as otherwise required by the Rules of the Governing Bodies, registered players and their teams that participate in non-sanctioned play either with or against unregistered players may have their registrations with ASSA voided. In such cases they may then apply for reinstatement to ASSA by application via A&D Committee. A filing fee of \$5 per player must be paid along with the appropriate registration fee. ASSA insurance is void when participating in non-sanctioned play.
- 4.3.1 Non-sanctioned play shall include but not be limited to:
- a) Any league not sanctioned by ASSA, US Youth Soccer, or USSF
  - b) Any tournament not sanctioned by ASSA, US Youth Soccer, or USSF
  - c) Any game (friendly, scrimmage or small-sided) with a non US Youth Soccer or USSF member or affiliate.

- d) Any US Youth Soccer or USSF sanctioned out-of-state league, game, or tournament for which the traveling team has not acquired the properly completed “*Travel Permit*”.
- e) Any in-state league, tournament or game (friendly, scrimmage or small-sided) against any out of state team(s) for which the host association, league, club or team has not acquired the properly completed “*Application to Host Tournament or Games Form*” or for which the visiting team has not acquired their own “*Travel Permit*” from their home association.
- f) Indoor soccer at any facility not sanctioned by the ASSA, or US Youth Soccer, or USSF.

**4.4 FRIENDLY & SCRMMAGE GAMES:**

4.4.0 A friendly game shall be defined as any game between properly registered teams or players that is not associated with any other game or games either played or to be played and does not lead to any championship, trophy, award or recognition.

4.4.1 A scrimmage game shall be defined as any game arranged between properly registered players or teams organized in a spontaneous manner but is not controlled by a properly certified or sanctioned referee.

**4.5 ASSA SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS:**

4.5.0 In order for an association to host a sanctioned tournament it must complete the tournament host permit and pay the appropriate fees. Associations must follow ASSA rules and guidelines and offer the recommended small-sided game format. ASSA’s insurance is void for any non-sanctioned tournament.

4.5.1 Level 1 teams may only participate in a jamboree format tournament. Host associations may only charge a minimal fee to cover expenses and no awards other than participation are given.

4.5.2 Level 2 teams may participate in any sanctioned recreational tournament. U10 and below recreational teams are not allowed to participate in classic tournaments. U11 and above level 2 teams may participate in a classic tournament if allowed by the host association.

4.5.3 If the tournament is out-of-state a travel permit must be approved by the state office prior to travel. This includes out-of-state friendlies. Travel permits submitted for approval at least seven days in advance are free. A travel permit submitted less than seven days in advance are \$25 and increases to \$50 if not submitted within 48 hours. ASSA insurance is void for any out-of-state travel where a travel permit was not approved. The tournament host permit must accompany the travel permit.

**4.6 OTHER SMALL-SIDED GAMES:**

4.6.0 All regular season small-sided games (modified soccer with less than eleven (11) on a team) played according to the US Youth Soccer Official Laws modified as appropriate to the circumstances by ASSA or the local soccer association.

4.6.1 Any such event that also involves play with or between unregistered players will be considered as being non-sanctioned. ASSA insurance is void when competing in non-sanctioned play.

**4.7 SUSPENSIONS:**

- 4.7.0 ASSA and its members shall honor any and all orders of suspension of teams, players, coaches and referees issued by USSF, US Youth Soccer, ASSA or their affiliated members.
- 4.7.1 A team which has used individuals under suspension shall automatically forfeit all games in which the individuals have participated and also be subject to such disciplinary action as the A&D Committee deems appropriate.
- 4.7.2 Member teams or associations that use coaches or referees under suspension shall be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the A&D Committee, including but not limited to being declared as not in good standing with ASSA.

**4.8 PLAYING AGE:**

- 4.8.0 Except where prohibited by ASSA, USSF or US Youth Soccer rules, players may participate in older age divisions (play up) but may not play in younger age divisions (play down) than their age dictates.
- 4.8.1 Teams that are formed in mixed age divisions must register with ASSA in the age division corresponding to the age of the oldest registered player.
- 4.8.2 Failure to comply with this rule may result in the offending team forfeiting all the games in which the older player (s) participated. Further, the coach, assistant coach and/or team manager of the offending team, the offending player, the offending player's parents and the local soccer association are subject to suspension for a period as deemed appropriate by the A&D Committee and such other disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the A&D Committee.
- 4.8.3 Classic registration: For classic soccer teams playing 8v8 format, only a maximum of three U10 or below players/team or special event roster or 20% of a pool roster will be allowed to play above their age group.

**4.9 AMATEUR REGISTRATION:**

- 4.9.0 Registration fees and information must be received at the state office before player cards and rosters will be released. A player may register on as many amateur teams as he chooses in one year. A player may transfer at any time by completing the required "*Player Transfer*" form and by completing a new "*Player Registration*" form. Permission to transfer is not required.
- 4.9.1 In the event of a player registered on more than one amateur team being in a game conflict the team that the player first registered with shall take priority, becoming the player's primary team. The primary team may waive their right to field the player if they so wish.
- 4.9.2 Any player registered to a team playing in a USSF-recognized national league or inter-regional league shall become primary on that team irrespective of registrations held on other amateur teams.
- 4.9.3 Adult players/teams must have state approved rosters and player cards (laminated with photo) before their first game and all games thereafter or the referee will not officiate the game.

**4.10 YOUTH REGISTRATION:**

4.10.0 Youth registrations shall be classified as either:

- a) Level 1: Recreational L1, Recreational L1 PDP.
- b) Level 2: Recreational L2, Recreational L2 PDP, or All-Star.
- c) Level 3: Classic.
- d) Scholastic
- e) TOPSoccer

4.10.1 All coaches, assistant coaches, and team managers must be properly registered with the ASSA. ASSA registered coaches, assistant coaches, and team managers will be provided with an ASSA coaches/manager card only after they have completed an online volunteer disclosure form. Background checks will be performed on ALL non-players listed on a roster.

4.10.2 All Level 1 and Level 2 teams registered through ASSA must have state approved rosters before their first game and all games thereafter or the referee will not officiate the game.

**4.10.3 Recreational team (R):** Is a team that has NOT been selected, but instead drafted using ASSA-approved draft procedures as set forth in Rule 4.11. Each season, each local soccer association is required to submit a notarized letter of confirmation that the local soccer association has complied with one of the accepted state procedures for the formation of recreational teams. The president of the local soccer association and the Local Registrar must sign the letter and it must be submitted to ASSA in conjunction with local soccer association's fall and spring registrations. Any local soccer association not complying with these requirements will not be allowed to participate in any ASSA sponsored recreational tournament. For registration purposes, Recreational teams are divided into the following categories:

4.10.31 **Level 1 (L1)** teams are permitted to play in any league and in-house tournament, and travel anywhere in Arkansas for league games and to jamborees (where only a minimal entry fee is charged and trophies are not awarded) Teams are formed by any method an association chooses so as to be consistent with the spirit of recreational soccer and may stay together as long as the team remains classified as level 1.

- a) This level plays for the enjoyment of the game. No player cards are issued by ASSA.

4.10.32 **Level 1 PDP** – Player Development Program: All PDP players U8 and below will be registered with ASSA as a Recreation L1 with the additional designation of PDP, to differentiate from other Recreational L1 players. All PDP players will be on a club pool roster. (Teams are only formed using the existing ASSA Recreational guidelines for creating balanced teams for In house play or play dates and jamborees).

4.10.33 **Level 2 (L2)** teams are permitted to play in any league or tournament. Travel Permits for play in tournaments outside the State of Arkansas are required. Teams are initially formed at random by one of three methods outlined in Rule 4.11 and reformed when the number of players on the field changes, i.e. the U-8, U-10, U-12 and U-13 age groups. Player cards are issued by ASSA.

4.10.34 **Level 2 PDP:** Player Development Program: All PDP players U9 – U10 will be registered with ASSA as a Recreation L2, with the additional designation of PDP, to differentiate from other L2 players. All PDP players will be on a club pool roster. (Teams are only formed using the

existing ASSA Recreational guidelines for creating balanced teams for in-house play or play dates and jamborees).

4.10.35 Guidelines for the U10 and below Player Development Program (PDP) - (Academy Concept)

- a) Academy Concept should be “strongly encouraged” by ASSA, because it work, but should not be mandated. Player development programs are a function of member Clubs/Associations, who have the desire, commitment, and resources to manage and support a quality developmental program. This Program shall be available to any member Association that meets these guidelines.
- b) All PDP players U9 – U10 will be registered with ASSA as a Recreation L2, with the additional designation of PDP, to differentiate PDP from other Rec. L2 players. All PDP players U8 and below will be registered with ASSA as a Recreation L1 with the additional designation of PDP, to differentiate PDP from other Recreational L1 players. This group will pay the normal fees for special rosters and special fees billed to Recreation L1 players/teams.
- c) PDP registration maybe an additional program offered if open to all players within the age group (PDP, L1 & L2 can be offered in the same age group.)
- d) All PDP players will be on a club pool roster. (Teams are only formed using the existing ASSA Recreational guidelines for creating balanced teams for In house play or play dates and jamborees).
- e) PDP players train and play in-house or in other developmental settings/leagues when available, in accordance with the club’s philosophy.
- f) Clubs may host play events or tournaments to compete against other club’s academies or player development programs.
- g) PDP teams may play only in PDP divisions of recreational tournaments.
- h) PDP formed teams may participate in out-of-state events / tournaments with a special event roster & travel permit.
- i) Every PDP player must play 50% or more in every game (since individual skill development through the game is the goal there is no excuse to sit players out of any game).
- j) Play or process is emphasized over team building and winning.
- k) No dual player registration allowed. Players must sign up for either recreational L1, L2, or PDP. NO player is turned away from any player development program.
- l) The programs must be distinct and pure. No PDP player can participate on a recreational L1 or L2 team, and vice versa.
- m) Possible exemption recreation L1 and L2 teams that have an interest in the academy concept may participate in a PDP event, play date or tournament.
- n) A player can move from PDP to recreational L1 or L2, or vice-versa, once within the seasonal year, August 1 – July 31.

**4.10.4 All-Star Team:** Is registered as a L2 team and is comprised entirely of secondarily-registered players formed for the purpose of all-star or classic tournament play only. **All players must be primarily registered on another Recreational team (either L1 or L2).** An All-Star team must clearly state on all applications to a tournament that it is an All-Star team. No All-Star teams shall be permitted to play in ASSA's American Cup. Travel Permits for play in tournaments outside the State of Arkansas are required.

**4.10.5 Classic Team (L3):** Although usually selected by application, invitation, or try-out procedures, is any team except a Recreational team or an All-Star team. The classic L3 age divisions are U11 – U19. Travel Permits for play in tournaments outside the State of Arkansas are required.

4.10.51 All L3 rosters in the U11 – U12 age group will be registered as pool rosters.

4.10.52 A L3 U11 team can have a maximum of three (3) U10 or under players on its team or special event roster. No more than 20 percent of the players on a pool roster will be allowed to play above their age group.

**4.10.6 Scholastic team (S):** Is a school-based team formed for the purpose of playing other school-based teams. This registration category will not impact players' ability to participate with any other ASSA team. Registration is limited to the spring season.

**4.10.7 TOPSoccer (T):** Is a program for players with special needs. The association must first submit written notification that it is forming a TOPSoccer program and receive appropriate training. All players will be registered on a pool roster.

**4.11 APPROVED METHOD OF DRAFTING FOR RECREATIONAL PLAY:**

4.11.0 The following rule have been adopted for Level 2 recreational play in ASSA and selection of players for recreational teams pursuant to this method is required for participation in the American Cup. These rules have been adopted to assure fairness and to promote more balanced divisions for all teams.

4.11.1 **Random Assignment:** No regard is given to geography (neighborhood or school) Rostering is done after all registrations are received. The association officials divide the players by random draw. The draw can be done by pulling names out of a hat, using a computer or any other method that is random. Children of the coach (if applicable) are added to the team that the coach is assigned to.

4.11.2 **Evaluation of Ability:** Association officials or coaches evaluate each player at the end of the year. The following year, teams are formed randomly by distributing the players based upon the evaluation of their ability. Association officials divide players randomly and equally based on their abilities in order to balance teams. Children of the coach (if applicable) are added to the team that the coach is assigned to.

*Note: New players or players who did not receive an evaluation the previous year are assigned to teams based on one of the other random team formation methods.*

4.11.3 **Skill Determination:** At the beginning of the year, association officials or coaches hold a skills event where all registered players are asked to exhibit certain abilities. Players are then categorized into level A, B or C. After the skills determination is made, coach's involvement ends. An unbiased individual or committee should then divide up all the A's equally onto however many teams there are, then the B's, then the C's. If there are new players that have not had the skills test, then they are randomly assigned to the teams.

4.11.4 Regardless of the method used to form the teams, once a player has been randomly assigned to a team, the players on that team can remain intact until the next age group where the

number of players on the field changes. Therefore, players entering the U-7, U-9, U-11 and U-13 age groups are assigned to teams that are re-formed by one of the approved methods outlined above. Players have the option of a) returning to the same team, or b) choosing to be returned to the unassigned player pool. These are the only 2 options available.

4.11.5 Coaches are not given a similar option—s/he takes the team they are assigned by their association. However, they will coach their own child, assuming that this is the reason why they volunteered to coach in the first place.

4.11.6 Rosters to be reviewed for conformity to approved team formation rules. Clarification required from the local association if discrepancies arise during the review process. Any team found to have recruited players is immediately moved to a Level 3 status. The local association is put on probation for one calendar year, and the matter is referred to the ASSA Appeals and Discipline committee for review and potential further punishment.

***See Chapter 10 for further explanation of team formation rules***

#### **4.12 MAXIMUM ROSTER SIZE:**

4.12.0 For recreational teams, the maximum number of players that can be rostered to any team is the amount that would allow each player to play at least 50 percent of the game; ie. 3v3 maximum number of players would be six. For full-sided games (11v11) the maximum number of players that should be rostered to any team is eighteen (18). In cases of hardship, upon request of a local registrar, the registrar may permit a team to roster more than eighteen (18) players.

4.12.1 No players may be rostered on a team as secondary player if that team has a roster in excess of the maximum roster size and no player on a roster of maximum size may be rostered as a secondary player with any other team.

4.12.2 Classic teams are not permitted to roster more than eighteen (18) players except in the age groups of U17 – U19, which are permitted to roster twenty-two (22). This rule does not apply to club pass rosters.

4.12.3 Rostering more than the maximum amount of players can only be allowed following agreement by the State Registrar and the local soccer association that hardship circumstances prevail. The State Registrar will check the availability of roster space on other teams in the player's age group within the local soccer association. Players will not be allowed to roster on teams with maximum roster size if space exists on other teams in the same local soccer association. Secondary player registration will not be approved if the team has reached its roster limit.

#### **4.13 SECONDARY REGISTRATIONS:**

4.13.0 The initial youth registration of a player will be considered his/her primary team. If a player is initially registered to more than one team at the start of a season the player must state his/her primary team at that time, becoming secondary on all others. Once this designation between the primary team and secondary team is made, it shall be deemed as final unless the team is willing to utilize a transfer under Rule 4.15.1. at the time the player swaps his/her primary and secondary registration. The player is bound to his primary team for the entire seasonal year (August – July) and these games shall take preference over all others. A player may play for

his/her secondary team only with the consent of his/her primary team coach. (For State Cup restrictions concerning secondary registration please refer to Chapter 8)

4.13.1 A player moving between secondary and primary teams shall be considered a player transfer and one of that team's limited number of incoming player transfers permitted in the seasonal year.

4.13.2 Once a youth player has registered on any team during a seasonal year, such player shall be deemed to be a previously rostered player for any National Championships competitions. As a result, any secondary registration is counted as a transfer to the AR State Championship bound team on which the player registers second. This rule does not apply to a level 1 or 2 player changing from secondary to primary on a level 3 team.

#### **4.14 CLUB PASSES:**

4.14.0 Each competitive club (Level 3) can pick a pool of players. These players will all be put on one large roster. Each player in the pool will have the same team player passes. The teams can be divided differently for each event. The coach / manager will be responsible for sending a list of the players into the state office two weeks prior to an event. The state office will review and approve the roster for the event and send it back to the team as the official roster for the weekend.

4.14.1 This exception to the rule limiting roster size does not apply to teams participating in the Premier League or intending to enter the AR State Championships. Teams participating in the Premier League must abide by league rules. Teams participating in the AR State Championship must abide by US Youth Soccer National Championship rules. *Specifically, if a team elects to have more than 18 players on its roster at any time during the seasonal year (except for U17 – U19, which allows 22), the team will not qualify for participation in the AR State Championship.*

4.14.2 Teams formed utilizing the pool roster will **NOT** qualify for the US Youth Soccer National Championships or the Region III Premier League.

#### **4.15 PLAYER MOVEMENT, TRANSFER OR RELEASE:**

4.15.0 A youth player may move between local associations, clubs, and teams with the agreement of all parties concerned. A *Player Transfer Form* must be properly completed and appropriately signed before being submitted to the Registrar for final approval.

4.15.1 All teams are limited to:

One (1) incoming player transfer in a seasonal year at age U-8 and younger.

Two (2) incoming player transfers are allowed in a seasonal year at age U-10.

Three (3) incoming player transfers are allowed in a seasonal year at age U-11 – U13.

Five (5) incoming player transfers are allowed in a seasonal year at U14 and above.

#### **4.16 TEAM ABANDONMENT:**

4.16.0 If a recreational team abandons prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> of the given seasonal year the player(s) from the abandoned team may register with another team.

4.16.1 If the player(s) register with a team within the same association, it is considered a “*move*” not a “*transfer*”.

- 4.16.2 If the player(s) choose to register on a team from another association it is considered a “transfer” and Rule 4.15.1 applies. (Please see Chapter 8: State Cup Rules for additional information)
- 4.16.3 A player is permitted to move between two teams only with the agreement of all parties concerned. A properly completed “*Player Transfer*” form must be submitted to ASSA. Once ASSA has completed the changes to the roster and issued a new player pass (if required) and roster, the player will be allowed to play for the new team.
- 4.16.4 The team may not release, voluntarily or involuntarily, any player from its roster unless a written request, stating the reason why this action has been requested, has been made to and approved by ASSA using the ‘*Player Transfer*’ form.
- 4.16.5 Players may be involuntarily released only for the reasons stated in the US Youth Soccer Player Policy.
- 4.16.6 When a player requests a move or a release against the wishes of his team coach the player must show adequate reason why any movement or release would be in the best interests of the player.
- 4.16.7 If a coach or team representative is approached by a properly registered player of another team, that player's parent/guardian or other agent to request moving to their team, registering secondary or guest playing with their team, the coach or team representative of the team being approached must inform the player's properly registered team coach of the approach. The coach must obtain permission to speak with the player or the player's parent/guardian or agent before any further dialogue can take place.
- 4.16.8 Should permission be refused, the player, parent/guardian or agent shall become free to talk with the other coach or the coach's representative once a written record (letter) seeking permission to talk (instigated by the player or player's parent/guardian) has been delivered (with proof of delivery) to the players coach. A file record must be kept for evidence in the case of any appeal or complaint. A player movement will only be allowed once a “*Player Transfer*” form has been completed by all the parties concerned and following a period of seven (7) days from the date of the initial request to talk as indicated on the proof of delivery.
- 4.16.9 In the event the players coach (following the period of seven (7) days) refuses to agree to the movement, secondary registration or guest play, appeal should be made to the local soccer association having jurisdiction. A copy of the appeal letter should be sent to the A&D Committee. It is in the interest of all parties concerned that an early decision is reached. The local soccer association must rule within seven (7) days of receiving the appeal, or they may immediately defer the decision to the A&D Committee for a ruling within ten (10) days. A formal in-person hearing is not required.
- 4.16.10 Following the outcome of any local soccer association decision, appeal may be made by either party to the ASSA Appeals & Disciplinary Committee.

4.16.11 Following the outcome of any A&D Committee decision further appeal may be made by either party to the Board of Directors.

4.16.12 Following the outcome of the initial decision the player concerned will be allowed to play for the team with which he is then properly registered while any further appeal is heard.

**4.17 RECRUITING:**

4.17.0 A properly registered player U-13 and below, not on teams regional-bound, a local soccer association can hold tryouts for the following season at the end of the President's Cup. For players U-14 and above, a local soccer association can hold tryouts for the following season at the conclusion of the US Youth Soccer regional tournament.

4.17.1 For recreational play recruiting is not permitted at any time. Players can only be rostered to recreational teams by following local association draft procedures.

**4.18 PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL RECRUITING:**

4.18.0 If a coach is found guilty either directly or indirectly (by use of a third party or with knowledge that a third party contact is to be made) of illegal recruiting the following punishment shall be imposed.

4.18.1 For a first offense the coach shall serve a 30 day ban from coaching on game days and at team practices. The recruited player if having joined the new team must also serve a 30 day ban. No part of the period of 30 days can occur outside of regularly scheduled league or association play. Further, if the violation took place less than 60 days from the date of the respective State Cup for which the team is entered, then the player will not be allowed to participate. Other tournament play is not affected.

4.18.2 For a second offense the coach must serve a 60-day ban as described in 1. The coach is also prevented from coaching at the next ASSA State Cup following completion of the ban. Any ban that is served over the period of the next ASSA State Cup is to run concurrently.

4.18.3 For a third offense the coached will be banned from coaching for three (3) years from the date of the offense.

4.18.4 In the event a team (through representations of identified persons but not the coach) is found guilty of illegal recruiting the following punishment shall be imposed.

4.18.5 For a first offense the recruited player and the team shall be banned for a 30-day period from playing in all regularly scheduled league or local association play. Further, if the recruiting violation took place less than 60 days prior to the ASSA State Cup for which the team was entered, the player will not be allowed to participate.

4.18.6 For a second offense the team must serve a 60 day ban as described in 1. The recruited player and the team may not participate in the next scheduled ASSA State Cup. Any ban served over the period of the ASSA State Cup is to run concurrently. Other tournament play is not affected.

4.18.7 For a third offense the team will be banned for three (3) years from all competition and from registering with the ASSA. Individual players, however, may register with other ASSA teams. No

more than six (6) players from the offending team's final roster may make up any other ASSA team roster during the period of the ban.

- 4.18.8 In the event specified individuals, other than the coach or the team, are found guilty of illegal recruiting, with or without the knowledge of the coach, the following punishment shall be imposed.
- 4.18.9 For a first offense the recruited player shall be banned from being rostered to the team or local association to which the player was being recruited for the remainder of the current seasonal year, and at the option of the A&D Committee the following seasonal year. Further, the offending individuals shall be prohibited from attending any games of the team to which the player was being recruited for a 30 day period or 4 games, whichever is greater.
- 4.18.10 For a second offense of the same or different individuals from the same team, the punishments imposed by section (b) may be imposed and the team shall serve a 60 day ban as described in 4.12.2. In addition, the team may not participate in the appropriate next scheduled ASSA State Cup. Any ban served over the period of the ASSA State Cup is to run concurrently.
- 4.18.11 For a third offense of the same or different individuals from the same team, the team will be banned for three (3) years from all competition and from registering with the ASSA. Individual players, however, may register with other ASSA teams. No more than six (6) players from the offending team's final roster may make up any other ASSA team roster during the period of the ban.
- 4.18.12 A first offense shall be determined as any offense that does not occur inside of a three (3) year period from the date of any previous offense. Second and third offenses are those which take place within a three (3) year period of any previous offense.
- 4.18.13 DISCIPLINE: ALL LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS, CLUBS AND TEAMS ARE DIRECTED TO MAKE KNOWN THIS RULE TO EVERY PLAYER, COACH, ADMINISTRATOR AND REFEREE. IN TURN IT IS EXPECTED THAT PLAYERS AND COACHES MAKE KNOWN THIS RULE TO THE PARENTS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS THAT ATTEND GAMES.

**4.19 RULES INTERPRETATION AND APPEALS & DISCIPLINE:**

- 4.19.0 All members and participants in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of the ASSA have requested to participate in our programs. By doing so, these participants have agreed to abide by the Bylaws and Rules of the ASSA and of their local association as well as those of the US Youth Soccer and USSF and its respective divisions.
- 4.19.1 All member associations and leagues are encouraged to form their own Appeals & Disciplinary (A&D) committees and to hold hearings concerning official referee reports of serious misconduct by youth teams their players, coaches, assistant coaches other volunteers and spectators. These committees may assess and issue any punishment due. Where such a committee does not exist the A&D committee will have jurisdiction.
- 4.19.2 When any player, coach, manager, club official or game official assaults or abuses a referee, the original jurisdiction to adjudicate the matter shall rest with the ASSA A&D committee.

- 4.19.3 Any local association or league ruling may be appealed to the A&D Committee using the appropriate appeals procedures.
- 4.19.4 The rules governing the A&D committee, its jurisdiction, procedures, and post decision relief shall be set forth in separate rules and approved by the Board of Directors.
- 4.19.5 While these Rules contemplate specific fines, penalties and sanctions for violations of these rules, the A&D committee may alter the applicable fine, penalty or sanction when it determines that it is in the best interest of the game to do so.
- 4.19.6 Any local association, coach or player may request in writing an interpretation of these rules by the rules committee, or in its absence, the A&D committee. The rules committee shall respond in writing to such request and may designate such interpretation as binding or non-binding, and then forward such recommendation to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may approve, disapprove and remand to the rules committee for reconsideration, or disapprove and issue its own interpretation. Any binding interpretation must be followed by the A&D committee until revised by the Board of Directors.
- 4.19.7 Non-binding interpretations are not binding on the A&D Committee. In most instances, very factual request, concerning specific instances, shall be issued binding interpretations while general request for guidance shall be issued non-binding interpretations. Each local association may request one (1) Rules interpretation per season year for no charge and thereafter shall be charged \$25.00 per request.

**4.20 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS:**

- 4.20.0 Coaches that do not achieve the required coaching certification level will not be allowed to coach at any of the ASSA State Cups and this may in turn prevent their team from participating.
- 4.20.1 LEVEL REQUIRED:  
Level 2 recreational team coaches            E License  
Level 3 classic or all-star team coaches    D License  
Coaches of level 1 teams entering the American Jamboree are highly encouraged to obtain an “E” license or attend an age appropriate coaching clinic.
- 4.20.2 Exemptions to this rule will only be considered for coaches who can provide proof of some type of equivalency from a coaching organization such as another national State Association, a NSCAA diploma or FIFA recognized international certification. The approval of an exemption is at the discretion of the ASSA Director of Coaching.

**4.21 RISK MANAGEMENT:**

- 4.21.0 Any soccer goal owned or used by any association affiliated with ASSA must be anchored or secured to the ground in an approved manner so it will not tip over. The safety of the goal will be judged by the referee before each match.
- 4.21.1 Associations will only allow coaches, assistant coaches, and team managers who are registered and have submitted a volunteer disclosure form to be responsible for the team during games and practices. Non-registered adults are not allowed to coach at any time.

4.21.2 Associations shall abide by the US Youth Soccer “Kidsafe program”.

**4.22 REFEREES:**

4.22.0 In compliance with the USSF rules, all referees serving the ASSA and its affiliated member associations shall be registered with the USSF in accordance with current rules and regulations of the USSF National Referee Committee. Referees will complete an online volunteer disclosure form prior to being re-certified.

4.22.1 When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward any participant or spectator of a game, the State Referee committee will hear such allegations and assess any punishments due. The State Referee committee must rule within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint or grievance. A report of its findings must be delivered to the A&D committee within seven (7) days of the hearing.

4.22.2 When any referee is alleged to have committed misconduct toward any other referee the State Referee committee will hear such allegations and assess any punishment due. A report of its findings must be delivered to the A&D committee within seven (7) days of the hearing. This rule applies to referees regardless of the accused referee's activities at the time of the incident (player, coach, spectator, administrator, referee, instructor, assessor or other position).

**4.23 GAME PROTESTS:**

4.23.0 Unless otherwise provided by league or tournament rule, there are only four acceptable causes for the protesting of any game after it has been played.

- 1) A team used an unregistered, ineligible or suspended player;
- 2) The playing or outcome of any game(s) or its effect on an overall competition (such as standings) was not properly administered under the terms of the Rules of the Competition governing the game or games in question;
- 3) A team allowed a suspended coach or other suspended person in the team bench area;
- 4) A suspended referee or other suspended official or person (such as in the case of a club linesman or referee assistant or an emergency referee) acted as referee, linesman or referee assistant or as a fourth official.

4.23.1 Protest should always be made to the local association or league having jurisdiction over the game(s) in question in accordance with that association or leagues rules of competition. Poor or inadequate refereeing should be brought to the attention of the District Referee Administrator, State Referee Administrator, or State Youth Referee Administrator and the local club or association. NO PROTEST CAN EVER BE HEARD CONCERNING REFEREE DECISIONS COVERED BY THE LAWS OF THE GAME.

**4.24 CODE OF CONDUCT:**

4.24.0 Any person (player, parent, coach, referee, board member, volunteer, or any other individual) acting on behalf of or associated with the Arkansas State Soccer Association (ASSA) is expected to conduct themselves appropriately and abide by this Code of Conduct. All ASSA members have a responsibility to act and speak appropriately when representing our association. At all ASSA sponsored activities, in and out of the state of Arkansas, the following code of conduct is in effect:

4.24.1 ASSA members will refrain from participating in or encouraging any of the following:

1. Assault
  2. Harassment
  3. Racial or Religious Violence
  4. Sexual Violence or Harassment
  5. Taunting or Showboating
  6. Vandalism
  7. Drug, alcohol, and/or tobacco use
  8. Gambling
  9. Inappropriate language and/or actions
  10. Providing false information
  11. Harassment of other club officials, referees, coaches and/or players
- 4.24.2 ASSA members will be an example of good sportsmanship to all players, coaches and parents, and address all players in a positive, encouraging manner.
- 4.24.3 ASSA members will respect and support all coaches, players and officials through words and actions.
- 4.24.4 ASSA members will view opponents as necessary friends that provide players the opportunity to participate.
- 4.24.5 ASSA members will abide by all established policies and decisions of the ASSA board of directors.
- 4.24.6 Steps that will be taken if a violation has occurred:
- 4.24.61 **First offense** – a meeting must take place with all involved persons and the ASSA Appeals and Discipline Committee. Punishment will be determined after this meeting has occurred.
- 4.24.62 **Second offense** – the person in violation will be suspended from any ASSA involvement for a period of time to be determined by the ASSA Appeals and Discipline Committee. Any future return to ASSA involvement is not guaranteed but may be granted, depending on the nature and severity of the infraction. Involvement will then be granted on a probationary basis. Any violation during that probation period will result in permanent suspension from the ASSA.
- 4.24.7 If an offense is severe in nature (extreme, violent and/or dangerous) the ASSA reserves the right to move directly to the consequences of the second offense, after which a meeting may take place.