



Western Bergen Soccer League

Fun with Friends

Established September 2020

Bylaws and Gameplay Rules

Bylaws Last Revision Date: September 1, 2021

Gameplay Rules (Appendix 1) Last Revision Date: September 1, 2021

Article 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be Western Bergen Soccer League, hereinafter referred to as WBSL.

Article 2: Purpose

The purpose of WBSL shall be to promote (a) soccer as a sport, (b) team comradery, and (c) a fun and safe environment for member towns. The league focus shall be primarily on recreation. The organization is not focused on generating revenue but accepts monies and donations with the express purpose of advancing recreational soccer for member towns or improving league infrastructure.

Article 3: Divisions

Pioneer Division (Grades 3&4)

Champions Division (Grades 5&6)

Premier Division (Grades 7&8)

Article 4: Member Towns & Organizations

Founding Member Towns 2020	Organization Name	Team Colors
Allendale	Allendale Recreation Commission	Various uniform flights
Mahwah	Township of Mahwah Youth Sports Boosters	Carolina Blue/White
Upper Saddle River	Upper Saddle River Soccer Association	Red and White Stripes

New Member Towns 2021	Organization Name	Team Colors
Ramsey		

Article 5: Governing Body & Roles

Section 1: The Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as BoD, shall be composed of persons from member towns. Each town will have a minimum of one person on the BoD (Representative) but no more than two (where a town also has an Officer).

Section 2: Roles are split between Officers and Representatives.

- A. Co-President (Officer)
- B. Town Delegate (Representative)

Section 3: Officer roles shall be elected every three years. Representatives are added on a yearly basis based upon league membership.

Section 4: Each summer, the league shall host an annual meeting of the BoD to collect information on new or returning Town Delegates and to vote on any open Officer

positions. Majority vote determines the election. A quorum of officers, defined as 100%, is needed to conduct business at the annual meeting.

Section 5: Duties of each Role shall be as follows:

- A. **Co-President** shall act in the best interest of the league, and not simply for a single member town. Co-Presidents may share subfunctions that include but are not limited to: scheduling, field coordination, referee coordination, finance/treasury, registration, rule management, disciplinary actions, and/or webmaster for the broader league needs. Under rare circumstances, officers (after unanimous agreement) may request a member town replace a Town Delegate that is found to be deficient in his/her role.
- B. **Town Delegates** shall represent the interests of their member town but will act in good faith. The delegate will funnel any questions or concerns for their town to the BoD and will act as an intermediary. The representative shall ensure the member town's schedule is alignment with field/referee availability, ensure coach contact lists are provided, ensure rosters are accurate, and will communicate rules/disciplinary concerns to/from the member town. The town delegate will act in good faith to diffuse any coaching concerns and will ensure member town coaches act honorably.

Section 6: Votes may only be cast by BoD members in good standing and that have served at least one full season (new Town Delegates do not have a vote). Absentee votes may be cast and collected if provided within 2 days of the annual meeting.

Section 7: Each BoD member gets 1 vote. The weight of each vote differs depending on role. A Town Delegate's vote is worth 1 point; an Officer's vote is worth 1 point PLUS a modifier.

Section 8: The vote modifier for officers is 0.1 for each season served as an officer, up to a maximum of 0.5. An officer from a founding member town gains an additional 0.05 towards their modifier, making their potential maximum 0.55.

Article 6: Changes to Gameplay Rules or League By-Laws

Section 1: Member towns may propose gameplay rule changes/additions through their Town Delegate at any BoD meeting.

Section 2: Officers may propose both gameplay rule AND By-Law changes/additions at any BoD meetings.

Section 3: Changes and/or additions require a vote. Off-season changes/additions require a simple majority. In-season changes/additions require a super majority (70% of Town Delegate votes) or unanimous Officer agreement.

Section 4: No member shall vote more than once.

Article 7: BoD Active Membership & History

Active Officers

Officer Role	Name	Member Town	Year(s)
Co-President	Brett Coplin	Mahwah	2020, 2021
Co-President	Frank DePierro	Upper Saddle River	2020, 2021
Co-President	Jeff Malo	Allendale	2020, 2021

Active Town Delegates

Name	Member Town
Jed Bowen	Upper Saddle River
Tony Monks	Mahwah
Gregory Jachts	Ramsey
Mike Minicucci	Allendale

Historical Membership

Role	Name	Member Town	Year(s)
NA			

Article 8: Gameplay Rules

See Appendix 1: Western Bergen Soccer League Gameplay Rules

Article 9: Special Guidelines

See Appendix 2: COVID Guidelines

Appendix 1: Western Bergen Soccer League Gameplay Rules

Last Revised November 21, 2020

Section 1: Divisions and Specific Rules

1. Pioneer Division (Grades 3&4) foundation as follows:

- a. 7v7 (including goalie)
- b. Small-sided fields and goals
- c. 13 minute quarters
- d. Size 4 ball
- e. Penalty shots are taken 8 yards from goal
- f. A build-out line will be used during goal-kicks, goalie possession, and offsides. If a field does not have a build-out line, cones will be used as a substitute. Please see Appendix 2, Build Out Rule Addendum for further details
- g. With the implementation of the build-out line, no punting or drop kicks by goalies will be allowed
- h. Build-out line infractions will result in a do-over for the first instance for games through Columbus Day weekend. Beyond that weekend no do-overs will be allowed
- i. Intentional heading and slide tackling are not allowed and result in a free kick. If a defender intentionally heads the ball, and in doing so prevents a clear goal scoring opportunity (ie goal line header save), a PK will be awarded otherwise a corner kick is awarded. Similarly, intentional slide tackles inside the penalty area that prevent a clear breakaway goal scoring opportunity will result in a PK, otherwise a corner kick is awarded.
- j. Players shall be allowed a second throw-in (or do-over) if the first throw is a foul throw for games through Columbus Day weekend, Beyond that weekend foul throws will be enforced in the first instance. In the event the second throw is a foul throw, the ball is turned over to the opponent.

2. Champions Division (Grades 5&6) foundation as follows:

- a. 9v9 (including goalie)
- b. Small-sided fields and goals
- c. 16 minute quarters
- d. Size 4 ball
- e. Penalty shots are taken 10 yards from goal
- f. Intentional heading and slide tackling are not allowed and result in a free kick. If a defender intentionally heads the ball, and in doing so prevents a clear goal scoring opportunity (ie goal line header save), a PK will be awarded otherwise a corner kick is awarded. Similarly, intentional slide tackles inside the penalty area that prevent a clear

breakaway goal scoring opportunity will result in a PK, otherwise a corner kick is awarded.

3. Premier Division (Grades 7&8) foundation as follows:
 - a. 11v11 (including goalie)
 - b. 18 minute quarters
 - c. Size 5 ball
 - d. Penalty shots are taken 10 yards from goal

Section 2: Rules for All Divisions

1. Coaches may not unilaterally cancel or reschedule games. Games may only be cancelled or (re)scheduled by agreement from the Town Delegates representing both sides. Cancellations will only occur due to bad weather and/or unsafe field conditions. No show by a team results in a 4-0 forfeit, but this should be avoided at all costs. The game may be replayed for “fun” if forfeited or rescheduled well in advance of game day.
2. Coaches should attempt to communicate with each other before game time, preferably at least 24 hours prior, to confirm game details.
3. All players should play a minimum of half the game, even during the playoffs.
4. If substitutes are available, within the spirit of fair-play, no player shall play every minute of the game without at least playing goalie, even during the playoffs.
5. A player may not score more than 5 goals. If a player scores more than 5 goals, the BoD may determine the game a forfeit and the coach may be disciplined.
6. It is suggested a player may not play goalie more than one half.
7. Girls may play on a boys’ team.
8. If both teams have the same color shirts, the home team will switch to a different color shirt – pinnies are acceptable.
9. The goalie will wear a contrasting, different color shirt.
10. The goalie must be protected. Attempts to kick the ball or push the goalie once controllable contact is established shall be considered dangerous play, the play whistled dead, and an indirect kick will be awarded to the goalie’s team taken from the top of the penalty box.
11. Goalies may throw or kick the ball with the exception of the Pioneer Division where no punting or drop kicks are allowed
12. The home team is responsible for assigning and paying the referees. It is suggested a referee crew for Pioneer Division be composed of a minimum of 1 ref and Champions/Pioneer Division be composed a minimum of 2 refs. It is highly recommended that at least one

Pioneer Division referee be a “senior” (post-High School) certified referee. If referees do not show up, coaches may agree on a logical path forward with either parents or coaches refereeing.

13. The home team will provide game balls.
14. A maximum of 4 volunteers are allowed per team. Coaches must not roam far from the team bench and are not allowed behind the end lines.
15. There is no overtime for regular season games. Games that end in a tie are left as a tie.
16. Players must wear shin guards, covered by socks, as well as rubber soccer or multi-purpose cleats (baseball and football cleats are not permitted). All team members shall have matching shirts, wear no jewelry or hard objects such as hard casts. If sweatshirts (no hoods) or pants are worn, they shall be worn beneath the uniform.
17. No player may play with a bleeding wound and may not return into the game until the referee is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped.
18. Referee reports, including scores, should be sent to Town Delegates after each game.
19. Substitutions
 - a. Substitutions must be up and ready at the halfway line. Substitutions should exit the field on the touchline on the players side of the field on their team’s half of the field.
 - b. Both teams can substitute during a throw-in, corner kick or goal kick.
 - c. No substitutions during a free kick resulting from a foul.
20. Scoring
 - a. Immediately following a goal which puts one team ahead by 5 goals, the team with the lead shall remove 1 player from the field and continue to play short 1 player. Upon a lead of 6 goals, they shall remove a second player. A 7-goal advantage, remove a third player and continue the game down 3 players. If the goal advantage should be reduced, the rule should be used in reverse to add players, 1 player per one goal such that at a 4-goal advantage, the number of players is even once again.
 - b. No team should have a lead of more than 7 goals. For games that end with more than a 7-goal differential, the coach of the winning team may be suspended for a minimum of 1 game.
 - c. A team that is winning by a wide margin shall discreetly and quietly refrain from scoring.
 - d. Regardless of final score, if a game ends with a difference of more than 5 goals, the official box score will be a maximum of 5 goal difference - for example a final score of 7-0 will be registered as 5-0 and 7-1 will be registered as 6-1.

- e. If the final score has a difference of 7 or more goals, the losing team will gain a goal on the final adjusted score for every goal over 6 goals.

Section 3: Players and Team Rosters

1. If a team has only two substitutes or less, the coaches may agree to play the game with smaller sided teams. For Pioneer Division teams may not play with less than 6 on the field (including goalie), Champions Division teams may not play with less than 7 on the field (including goalie), and for Premier Division teams may not play with less than 8 on the field (including goalie).
2. Teams are permitted to have players play up from the grade below.
3. Players may play across teams within a division only if the team would not otherwise have enough players to field a team. Any game day roster addition, including players playing across, should not impact the overall skill level of the team drastically. Coaches may have a need to add substitutes to their team from time to time but must not do so in an attempt to “win”. Rather the rationale must be to make the game more enjoyable for the team who would otherwise have minimal substitutes or deficient numbers.
4. The opposing coach must be told that a team is borrowing players before the game starts. This is not allowed in the playoffs, unless unanimously agreed upon by BoD Officers.
5. Borrowed players should not play more than any player on a team’s normal roster, barring injury.
6. Players playing across should be of a similar skill level as the rostered player who they are replacing.
7. Town Delegates should either oversee player drafts or review the final rosters to ensure an even distribution by grade and skill level.
8. Team roster differential should be limited to 1 in terms of grade level and highly skilled players. Highly skilled players are not necessarily limited to players participating in club soccer programs
9. If rosters within a town are observed to be unbalanced from common game results the Town Delegate representative should consider steps to rebalance the teams.

Section 4: Playoff Rules

1. Playoff standing tie breakers include the following, by priority: points per game, head to head, goals against, goals for, coin flip.
2. There are no re-do throw-ins for Pioneer Division during the playoffs.
3. A game tied at the end of regulation goes into two 5-minute sudden death (golden goal) overtimes.

4. *If a game is tied after overtimes, there will be a 5-player shootout. Shooters and goaltenders in the shootout must be the players on the field at the end of overtime. If still tied after 5 rounds, the rounds become sudden death and any players on the roster (including goalies) will take attempts.*

Section 5: Cards and Conduct

1. All yellow and red cards must be reported to the Board by the home team Co-President or Representative
2. A first red player or coach red card will result in a one game suspension. A second red card in a season may result in up to a season long or lifetime ban at the discretion of the Board upon a review of the cumulative fact pattern
3. A 3rd player yellow card in a season may result in a one game suspension following review by the Board
4. The players and coaches will set up on one side of the field while the spectators are limited to the opposite sideline. Spectators (and coaches/bench players) that are too close the sideline will be asked to move back a minimum of 2 yards. The home team is responsible for crowd control but the referee has the prerogative to stop the clock and request that spectators and/or coaches move back from sidelines or be removed for misconduct.
5. Verbal (or physical) abuse of Referees will not be tolerated. Coaches and players should not argue calls with the referees. Coaches should keep discussions with the referees for halftime or end of game in a more private setting. No coach is allowed to walk onto the field (in an attempt to 'talk' to the referee) during the game. The referee shall issue a yellow card if she/he is approached by a coach walking onto the field during play. A second infraction will result in a red card, which requires ejection from the game. A coach using profanity will also receive a red card and automatic ejection. In addition, any player using profanity or other ugly displays shall be immediately red carded, requiring ejection. Substitution for this player is allowed.
6. Any physical altercations between coaches, players, and/or referees will result in lifetime ban for the aggressor and requires Coop discussion to determine further impact.

Appendix 2: Build-Out Line Addendum (Pioneer Division Only)

GOAL KICK: When a team is awarded a goal kick, the defending team must retreat past the build out line in a timely fashion. Once the ball is put into play (i.e., is kicked and clearly moves), the defending team may pressure the ball before the offensive player crosses the build-out line. The attacking team may choose to restart play before the defending team retreats to the build out line subject to any consequences of such action

GOALKEEPER POSSESSION WITH HANDS: The same process that occurs with goal kicks (defending team retreats past the build out line) must also occur when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in their hands. Once this occurs, the goalkeeper may distribute the ball by roll, throw, or kick. The defending team may pressure the ball once it is released from the keeper's hands back into play, The goalkeeper may choose to distribute the ball before the defending team retreats to the build out line; when this occurs, the defending team may pressure immediately.

Subject to the existence of a single permitted "do-over" during all or a portion of a season, an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded under a scenario where a goalkeeper has allowed the defending team to clear the build-out line and the defending team has not allowed a second offensive player to touch the ball. Similarly in the case of a goalie punt or drop kick, an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded to the defensive team from the spot of the infraction subject to the rules for placement of the ball for Indirect Free Kicks awarded within the Penalty Area.

Appendix 3: COVID Guidelines

Last Revised August 2021

- WBSL will follow New Jersey Youth Sport Guidance with respect to Covid protocol
- All players, coaches, and spectators who feel sick or are experiencing signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or that have come in contact with infected persons must not attend
- Any player subject to quarantine orders may not attend practices or games
- Players will be permitted to wear PPE on the field, if physically able to do so, based on any directive of a medical provider. If a player chooses to wear PPE, they may do so as long as it does not compromise the safety of themselves and other players.
- Team huddles, handshakes, knuckles, high fives, group celebrations, etc. should be eliminated. Sportsmanship remains an important part of youth soccer. The handshake line should be replaced with a group tip-of-the-cap, salute, or other acknowledgement of the opposing team and officials.
- No sharing of equipment unless specifically necessary.
- Players must follow social distancing when not on the field or while waiting their turn to play.
- Player bags should be spaced accordingly along the sideline to prevent direct contact.
- Players and coaches should bring their own water bottles, have their names clearly marked, and not share with anyone else. No team or sideline coolers are permitted.
- Food, unless medically necessary, should not be allowed in team areas and the field. This includes sunflower seeds, gum, orange slices, donuts, etc.

- All players and coaches are to refrain from spitting at all times.
- Game officials are encouraged to keep a safe distance from players as much as possible.
- Positive COVID cases must be communicated to the Cooperative.