

Off The Pitch

Volume 5, Issue 1 January 2003

NM State Referee Committee Newsletter

Clinic Time!!!

Grab your buddies and bring them to a clinic — Help them join the ranks of soccer referees:

*Grade 9 Clinic
Corrales—Feb 15*

*Grade 11 Clinic
Albuquerque—Feb 16*

*Grade 8 (Upgrade from 9)
Corrales—Feb 16*

*Grade 12 Clinic
Albuquerque—Feb 18&20*

*Upgrade Clinic
Albuquerque—Feb 21*

*Grade 9 Clinic
Farmington—Mar 1*

*Annual Clinic
Albuquerque—Aug 9&10*



www.nmsra.org

Recertification for 2003



Many of you already know and have recertified for 2003; however, there are still quite a few out there who have not done so. The recertification process started in September 2002 and have been ongoing ever since. If you have not recertified yet, you must contact your DRA and get the proper paperwork and required test(s) completed.

A physical fitness test is required for registration, annual renewal and upgrading for the referee classes shown below. The referee must pass all of the events that are part of the test at the same testing session.

	Age	Referee Class 1 (Grade 7)	Referee Class 1 & 2 (Grade 5 & 6)
Endurance 12 minute run (meters)	Under 38 38-45 Over 45	2200 meters 2000 meters 1800 meters	2400 meters 2200 meters 2000 meters
Speed Test 50 meter dash (run—once)	Under 46 Over 45	9.0 seconds 9.5 seconds	9.0 seconds 9.0 seconds
200 meter dash (run—once)	All Ages	40.0 seconds	40.0 seconds

Recertify or upgrade.....do it now. Questions about the upgrade program? Contact Steve Rospopo (sdroso@sandia.gov).

NM Referees (2002 vs 2003)

Grade:	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	13	15	16	Total
2002	2	0	12	17	44	477	34	72	1	2	8	877
2003	1	1	11	22	34	397	88	159	1	2	12	728

Small Sided Games—2003

www.usyouthsoccer.org

In August 2002, US Youth Soccer's State Associations approved changes to the Policy on Players and Playing Rules that will affect the game for players under age 12. Current US Youth Soccer policies require that Under-10 teams and younger play games with not more than eight players per side. Effective September 1, 2003 this rule will detail age group specific playing numbers.

Rule 303. LENGTH OF GAMES, NUMBER OF PLAYERS, OVERTIME PERIODS, AND BALL SPECIFICATIONS
(effective September 1, 2003)

Section 1. (a) Except as provided by US Youth Soccer or a State Association, the length of games, overtime periods, ball size, ball circumference, ball weight, and number of players for each age group is as follows:

Age Group	Game Length	Overtime Periods	Size	Circumference	Weight	Number of Players
U-12	Two 30' halves	Two 10' halves Golden Goal	4	25-26 inches	11-13 ozs	No more than 11, 8 strongly recommended
U-11	Two 30' halves	Two 10' halves Golden Goal	4	25-26 inches	11-13 ozs	No more than 11, 8 strongly recommended
U-10	Two 25' halves	None	4	25-26 inches	11-13 ozs	No more than 7, 6 strongly recommended
U-8	Four 12' quarters	None	3	23-24 inches	11-12 ozs	No more than 5, 4 strongly recommended
U-6	Four 8' quarters	None	3	23-24 inches	11-12 ozs	No more than 4, 3 strongly recommended

(Under 13- Under 19 are unaffected by rule change)

Frequently Asked Questions.....

Why make the change? It makes the game of soccer a better experience for children. More touches on the ball, more opportunities to make decisions, more actual play. Energetic workouts due to playing both attacking and defensive roles. While learning both offense and defense, a player will become more complete and will understand more readily the roles and importance of teammates.

Whose idea was this? US Youth Soccer has been a proponent of small sided games since the 1980s. Small sided games are endorsed by our national coaching committee, the State Directors of Coaching, US National Team Coaches for Men & Women, including many foreign soccer organizations: England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, France, Korea to name a few!

Why can't they play 11v11 like "real" soccer? The 11v11 format is the adult version of the game. Using an adult size field and goals makes little sense for children under the age of twelve.

Other sports don't alter their game—why does soccer? It's not a good comparison with football or baseball- neither has the element of transition that soccer does. Look at basketball- how many kids play basketball 5 on 5? Most basketball is played 1v1, 2v1 or 2v2 in a driveway! Kids don't wait until they have nine friends to have a game! Playing on a small field is a more efficient use of space, it takes less time to advance for a shot on goal, and children are more actively involved for a longer period of time.

Small Sided Games—2003 (Continued)



I didn't grow up playing this way! True! Whether you grew up in the USA or another country, soccer was traditionally played 11v11 for all age groups. This isn't true any longer—small sided game formats are in use all over the world—not just in the US.

How will they learn to play 11v11? Progressing from 3v3, 4v4, 6v6, to 8v8 BEFORE 11v11 is a sound educational method. The problem is that young players were forced into 11v11 before their bodies were physically developed to play the adult version of the game. Any notion that players will be less prepared to play 11v11 is not justified.

Does competitive or travel have to play by this new rule? The decision to play small sided games is based on "age appropriate" philosophy- the level of play is not a factor. All players of that age group should play the same format.

This will never work! Sure it will! A number of State Associations have been playing 3v3 at under 6 & 4v4 at Under-8 successfully for more than a dozen years! Adopting 8v8 for under 11s and under 12s is the fastest growing trend in youth soccer.

Where do I find rules? The US Youth Soccer website usyouthsoccer.org has playing rules posted in the Coaches, Referees and Download Center pages. A free brochure, "Official Handbook: Introductory Rules for Small Sided Games U6 & U8" is available from your State Association.

Will I need more coaches? No, if you currently play 8v8 for under 8s you probably have eleven or twelve players rostered per team. To play 4v4 without changing your roster sizes simply use the "dual field" method described below.

Will I need more referees? Small sided games rarely need more than one referee to cover the field. Under 6s playing 3v3 rarely have need for the referee to solve a dispute more serious than who's "kick in" it is! If you have a shortage of certified referees consider using coaches or parents as "officials"—someone to monitor the game. Training materials specific to small sided games are available for free from US Youth Soccer or your State Association.

Will I need more fields? Rather than build new fields "convert" your existing ones. For U-12 8v8 they can play across the width of an existing full size field. 3v3 and 4v4 fields can be laid out in grassy spaces that were previously unsuitable for soccer.

Will I need more goals? YES! But they should not be permanent or expensive. A number of manufacturers offer lightweight portable goals or you can make your own. Remember player safety is a priority- don't let children hang or play on the goals.

We'll have to break up our current team rosters! No, Simply adopt the "dual field" method explained below!

How many players on a roster? If playing 3v3 no more than six, if 4v4 no more than seven. Since participation is a priority, every player should play at least 50% of each game. If playing "dual field" you could have as many as nine or ten on a 3v3 roster and in 4v4 as many as ten or eleven on a roster.

(More information is available on the US Youth Soccer website usyouthsoccer.org or contact your State Association or US Youth Soccer 800-4SOCCER.)

IDEAS ... COMMENTS ... SUGGESTIONS

Do you have ideas, comments and/or suggestions for future newsletter topics? Or even an article????? Send it to the Off The Pitch editor (e-mail NMSoccerRef@aol.com):

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Mailing label

Calendar of Events

February 15-16	Dominico Marquez Memorial Tournament (U5-U16), Albuquerque
February 15-17	Second Annual Riner Steinhoff Soccer Classic (U10-U14), Alamogordo
February 15-17	Albuquerque 5v5 Spring Warmup, Lovelace NMSTC Assignor: Jack Houston
February 22-23	Classic FC Cup Tournament (U9-U19), Lovelace NMSTC Assignors: Gary Bauerschmidt & Paul Quan
April 5-6	Hobbs Invitational (U10-U14), MLK Soccerplex, Hobbs
April 11-13	Amarillo Classic Tournament (U7-U19), Amarillo, TX
April 12-13	LC United Border Cup (U10-U19), Las Cruces
April 26-May 18	Snickers New Mexico Open State Cup, Locations TBD

*** More events and details on the NMSRA website ***