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General Principle

Where not stated the normal Laws of Association Football apply with exceptions notably that there is no offside in Small Sided Football. Additionally, unless otherwise specified the Norfolk Women's and Girls league rules will apply.

LAW 1: The Playing Area

The Pitch

Dimensions

The playing area must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

For 7 a side football the following dimensions are recommended:

Length: Minimum 50m
 Maximum 60m

Width; Minimum 30m
 Maximum 40m

Area Markings

The playing area is marked with lines. The two longer boundary lines are called touchlines. The two shorter lines are called goal lines.

All lines are 8cm wide.

The playing area is divided into two halves by the halfway line.

The centre mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of 3m may be marked around it.

A penalty area is defined at each end of the pitch as follows:

A semi-circle of 6 m radius shall be drawn from the centre of each goal line. The extremities of these semi-circles should reach the goal line, regardless of whether or not the goal posts encroach onto the playing area.

Penalty Mark

A penalty mark is drawn an appropriate distance from the goal line at the midpoint between the goal posts and equidistant from them.

The Corner Arc

Where barriers do not surround the playing area a quarter circle with a radius of 25cm from each corner is drawn inside the playing area.

Goals

Goals are recommended to be:

Length: 12ft

Height: 6ft

These are mini-soccer goals.

Goals must be placed on the centre of each goal line.

They consist of two upright posts equidistant from each corner and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar.

Both goal posts and the crossbar have the same width and depth of 8cm. Nets, made of hemp, jute or nylon, are attached to the posts and crossbars behind the goals. The lower part is supported by curved bars or some other adequate support.

Safety

The goals may be portable but they must be anchored securely to the ground during play as per Health and Safety requirements.

Playing Surface

Where natural turf is not used the surface must be smooth and flat and non-abrasive.

The Home team must provide goal nets, corner flags and at least two footballs fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the Competition if not provided. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff for LR20.A in SCOR

LAW 2: The Ball

Qualities and Measurements

The ball is:

- spherical
- made of leather or other suitable material
- size 5

Replacement of a Defective Ball

If the ball bursts or becomes defective during the course of a game:

- the game is stopped the game is restarted by dropping the replacement ball at the place where the first ball became defective

If the ball bursts or becomes defective while not in play:

- the game is restarted according to the Laws

The ball may not be changed during the match without the permission of the referee.

LAW 3: The Number of Players

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than the following number of players and substitutes for each format:

Format	Maximum Squad Size
7 a-side	10

Please note, for the avoidance of doubt, this law takes precedent over the Norfolk Women's and Girls League rules. i.e. you are only permitted 3 substitutes.

Substitution Procedure

The number of substitutions made during a game is unlimited. A player who has been replaced may return to the pitch as a substitute for another player.

Substitutions should take place when there is a break in play.

A substitution is one that is made when the ball is out of play for which the following conditions must be observed:

- The player entering the playing area may not do so until the player leaving the playing area has passed completely over the boundary line

- A substitution is complete when the substitute enters the playing area from which moment she becomes a player and the player she is replacing ceases to be a player

A substitute is subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the referee whether called upon to play or not.

Changing Places with the Goalkeeper

Any of the players or substitutes, may change places with the goalkeeper. The following conditions must be observed:

- The referee must be informed before the change is made
- The change may only be made during a stoppage in play
- The replacement goalkeeper must wear a jersey which distinguishes her from all other players

Infringements/Sanctions

If, while a substitution is being made, a substitute enters the playing area before the player being replaced has completely left:

- play is stopped
- the player being replaced is instructed to leave the playing area
- Play is restarted by an indirect free kick to be taken by the opposing team from the place where the ball was situated when the game was stopped. However, if the ball was inside the penalty area, the indirect free kick is taken on the penalty area line, at the place nearest to the position of the ball when play was stopped

Validity of a Match – Playing Numbers

A match should not be considered valid if the playing strength of either team is permanently reduced by:

- More than three players for 7-a-side.

Please note, for the avoidance of doubt, this law takes precedent over the Norfolk Women's and Girls League rules.

LAW 4: The Players' Equipment

Safety

A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to herself or another player, including any kind of jewellery. Jewellery should be removed.

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Basic Equipment

The basic compulsory equipment of a player is:

- Sleeved shirt
Shorts
- Socks
- Shinguards
- Footwear – which is subject and appropriate to local conditions and surface type must be worn.

Shin guards

- are covered entirely by the socks
- are made of a suitable material (rubber, plastic or similar substances) □ provide a reasonable degree of protection

Goalkeepers

- the goalkeeper is permitted to wear long trousers
- each goalkeeper wears colours which easily distinguish her from the other players and the referee with the goalkeepers top not being of a dark colour.

Infringements/Sanctions

For any Infringements of this Law:

- The player at fault is instructed by the referee to leave the playing area to correct her equipment or to obtain any missing item of equipment. The player may not return to the playing area without first reporting to the referee, who then checks that the player's equipment is now correct. The player is only allowed to re-enter the game when the ball is out of play.
- Players can return to play whilst the ball is in play if a second official has checked the equipment. If no second official is present the player must wait for a break in play in order for the referee to check the faulty equipment.

LAW 5: The Referee

The Authority of the Referee

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Each game is controlled by a referee who has full authority to enforce the Laws of the Game in connection with the game to which they have been appointed, from the moment they enter the locality where the playing area is situated until they leave.

Powers and Duties

The Referee:

- Enforces the Laws of the Game
Allows play to continue when the team against which an offence has been committed will benefit from such an advantage and penalises the original offence if the anticipated advantage does not ensue at that time
- Keeps a record of the match and provides the appropriate authorities with a game report which includes information on any disciplinary action taken against players, and/or team officials and any other incidents which occur before, during or after the game
- Acts as timekeeper
- Stops, suspends or terminates the game for any infringement of the Laws or due to any kind of outside interference
- Takes disciplinary action against players guilty of cautionable and sending-off offences
- Takes action against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and may, at their discretion, expel them from the playing area and its immediate surroundings
- Ensures that no unauthorised persons enter the playing area
- Stops the game if, in their opinion, upon injury assessment a player is seriously injured and ensures that he is removed from the playing area
- Ensures any player bleeding from a wound leaves the playing area
- Allows play to continue until there is a stoppage in play if a player is, in their opinion, only slightly injured
- Ensures that any ball used meets the requirements of Law 2

LAW 6: The Duration of the Game

The duration of the game shall be divided into two equal periods of at 35 minutes each period subject to the following:

- Allowance shall be made in either period for time lost through stoppages as decided by the referee.
- The duration of either half shall be extended to enable a penalty kick to be taken.
- At half time the interval shall not exceed five minutes except by consent of the Referee.

Please note for the avoidance of doubt this law takes precedent over the Norfolk Women's and Girls League rule

LAW 7: The Ball In and Out of Play

Ball Out of Play

The ball is out of play when:

- ☐ It has wholly crossed the goal line or touch line, whether on the ground or in the air
- ☐ Play has been stopped by the referee

Ball In Play

The ball is in play at all other times including when:

- It rebounds from a goal post or the crossbar
- It rebounds from the referee when on the playing area

LAW 8: The Method of Scoring

Goal Scored

Except otherwise provided by these Laws, a goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes over the goal line, between the goalposts and under the crossbar, unless it has been thrown, carried or intentionally propelled by the hand or arm by a player of the attacking side, the goalkeeper included.

Winning Team

The team scoring the greater number of goals during a game is the winner. If both teams score an equal number of goals or if no goals are scored, the game is drawn.

LAW 9: Free Kicks

Types of Free Kicks

Free kicks are either direct or indirect.

For both direct and indirect free kicks, the ball must be stationary when the kick is taken and the kicker may not touch the ball a second time until it has touched another player.

The Direct Free Kick

- ☐ If a direct free kick is kicked directly into the opponent's goal, a goal is awarded

The Indirect Free Kick

- A goal can be scored only if the ball subsequently touches another player before it enters the goal

Position of Free Kick

- All opponents must be at least 2m from the ball until it is in play
- The ball is in play after it has been touched or played

Infringements/Sanctions

If, when a free kick is taken, an opponent is closer to the ball than the required distance:

- The kick is retaken

If, after the ball is in play, the kicker touches the ball a second time before it has touched another player:

- An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

Signals

Direct Free Kick: the referee keeps one arm horizontal pointing in the direction the kick has to be taken

Indirect Free Kick: the referee indicates an indirect free kick by raising their arm above their head. They maintain their arm in that position until the kick has been taken and the ball has touched another player or goes out of play

LAW 10: Fouls and Misconduct

Fouls and misconduct are penalised as follows:

Direct Free Kick

A direct free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following seven offences in a manner considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or using excessive force:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent, even with the shoulder
- Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent

- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent

A direct free kick is also awarded to the opposing team if a player commits any of the following offences:

- holds an opponent
- spits at an opponent
- Slides in an attempt to play the ball when it is being played or attempted to be played by an opponent (sliding tackle).
- handles the ball deliberately, except for the goalkeeper in their own penalty area

A direct free kick is taken from the place where the infringement occurred.

Penalty Kick

- Access to penalty areas being restricted only to goalkeepers. Entry into the penalty area by a defender results in a direct free kick from the penalty mark; entry into the penalty area by an attacker results in the goalkeeper being given possession of the ball to re-start the game.

Indirect Free Kick

An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team if a goalkeeper commits one of the following offences:

- touches or controls the ball with her hands after it has been deliberately kicked to her by a team-mate
- touches or controls the ball with her hands after she has received it directly from a kick-in taken by a team-mate
- touches or controls the ball with her hands or feet, in the penalty area, for more than four seconds
- After the goalkeeper has distributed the ball, she may only receive a pass if the ball has either touched an opponent or if the ball has been touched by at least two of the goalkeeper's team-mates.

An indirect free kick is also awarded to the opposing team, to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred, if, in the opinion of the referee, a player:

- plays in a dangerous manner
- deliberately impedes the progress of an opponent when the ball is not being played
- prevents the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from her hands
- commits any other offence, not previously mentioned in Law 12, for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player

The indirect free kick is taken from the place where the infringement occurred, unless this was in the penalty area, in which case the indirect free kick is taken from the penalty area line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.

Sending-Off Offences

A player is sent off and shown the red card if she commits any of the following offences:

1. S1 is guilty of serious foul play
2. S2 is guilty of violent conduct
3. S3 spits at an opponent or any other person
4. S4 denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within their own penalty area)
5. S5 denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick
6. S6 uses offensive, insulting or abusive language
7. S7 receives a second blue/yellow card in the same match

If play is stopped for a player to be sent from the playing area without having committed any additional infringement of the Laws, the game is restarted by an indirect free kick, awarded to the opposing team, to be taken at the place where the infringement occurred. However, if the offence is committed in the penalty area, the indirect free kick is taken from the penalty area line at the place nearest to where the infringement occurred.

Decisions

A player who has been sent off in any game may not take any further part in the match.

LAW 11: The Penalty Kick

A penalty kick is awarded against a team which commits any of the offences for which a direct free kick is awarded inside its own penalty area subject to Competition Rules dictating if other players other than the defending goalkeeper may enter the penalty area. A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.

Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken at the end of each half or at the end of each period of extra time.

Position of the Ball and the Players

The ball:

- Is placed on the penalty mark

The player taking the penalty kick:

- Is properly identified

The defending goalkeeper:

- Remains on their goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts, until the ball has been kicked

The players other than the kicker are located:

- Inside the pitch
- Outside the penalty area
- Behind or to the side of the penalty mark
- At least 2m from the ball

Procedure

- The player taking the penalty kicks the ball forward
- She may not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player • The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward

When a penalty kick is taken during the normal course of play, or time has been extended at halftime or full time to allow a penalty kick to be taken or retaken, a goal is awarded if, before passing the goalposts and under the crossbar:

- The ball touches either or both of the goalposts, and/or the crossbar and/or the goalkeeper
- Infringements/Sanctions**

If any of the following situations occur:

A player of the defending team infringes this Law:

- The kick is retaken, only if a goal is not scored

A team-mate of the player taking the kick infringes this Law of the Game:

- The kick is retaken if a goal is scored

The player taking the kick infringes this Law of the Game after the ball is in play:

- An indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, the kick to be taken from the place where the infringement occurred, unless this was in the penalty area, in which case the indirect free kick is taken from the penalty area line at the place nearest to where the infringement occurred.

LAW 12: The Goal Clearance

A goal clearance is a method of restarting play.

A goal may not be scored directly from a goal clearance.

The goal clearance is awarded when:

- the whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the attacking team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 9.

Procedure

- opponents remain outside the penalty area
- the goalkeeper does not play the ball a second time until it has touched another player
- the ball is in play when the ball is thrown or kicked from any point within the penalty area by the goalkeeper of the defending team
- Goalkeepers can only distribute the ball through an underarm throw or as a kick FROM THE GROUND. If the ball is kicked from the ground, then it is immediately in play.
- During a goal kick players are required to be 2 yards from the Goal Keeper.

Infringements/Sanctions

If the ball is not thrown or kicked directly beyond the penalty area:

- the goal clearance is retaken

If the ball is drop kicked directly from the goalkeepers' hands:

- an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the penalty area line from the place nearest to where the infringement occurred.

If, after the ball is in play, the goalkeeper touches the ball, before it has touched another player:

- an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team from the penalty area line from the place nearest to where the infringement occurred

If, after the ball is in play, the goalkeeper picks the ball up after it has been deliberately kicked to her by a team mate:

- an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team, to be from the penalty area line from the place nearest to where the infringement occurred

LAW 13: The Corner Kick

A corner kick is a method of restarting play.

A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team.

A corner kick is awarded when:

The whole of the ball, having last touched a player of the defending team, passes over the goal line, either on the ground or in the air, and a goal is not scored in accordance with Law 9.

Procedure

- The ball is placed inside the corner arc at the nearest corner
- Opponents remain at least 2m from the ball until it is in play
- The ball is kicked by a player of the attacking team
- The ball is in play when it is kicked or touched
- The kicker does not play the ball a second time until it has been played by or touched another player

Infringements/Sanctions

An indirect free kick is taken by the opposing team if:

- The player taking the corner kick plays the ball a second time before it has been played by or touched another player. The indirect free kick is taken from the place where the infringement occurred

For any other infringement:

- The corner kick is retaken

LAW 14 : The Throw-In

A throw-in is awarded to the opponents of the player who last touched the ball when the whole of the ball passes over the touchline, on the ground or in the air.

A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw-in:

- if the ball enters the opponents' goal – a goal kick is awarded
- if the ball enters the thrower's goal – a corner kick is awarded

1. Procedure

At the moment of delivering the ball, the thrower must:

- stand facing the field of play
- have part of each foot on the touchline or on the ground outside the touchline
- throw the ball with both hands from behind and over the head from the point where it left the field of play

All opponents must stand at least 2 m (2 yds) from the point on the touchline where the throw-in is to be taken.

The ball is in play when it enters the field of play. If the ball touches the ground before entering, the throw-in is retaken by the same team from the same position. If the throw-in is not taken correctly, it is retaken by the opposing team.

If a player, while correctly taking a throw-in, deliberately throws the ball at an opponent in order to play the ball again but not in a careless or a reckless manner or using excessive force, the referee allows play to continue.

The thrower must not touch the ball again until it has touched another player.