



# **BAYS – RESPECT**

## **Lopsided Game Management**

Use these strategies to help manage your players  
in games where there is a clear competitive imbalance

BAYS Lopsided Score Committee  
Fall 2024

# Respect and Sportsmanship are Key!



The philosophy of BAYS is to provide an atmosphere of good sportsmanship and to encourage everyone to compete, learn, and enjoy the game of soccer.

- In youth sports, Respect and Sportsmanship alone should be enough of a reason to try to take steps to prevent excessive scoring if the outcome of the game is not in question.
- Plus, it is no **FUN** for either side, and **FUN** is why kids want to play sports!

## The Buck Stops with the Coaches

Coaches - YOU are the adult and are responsible for managing your players and the scoring

- 40 million kids in the US will play a youth sport this season and 70% will QUIT that sport by the time they are 13 years old!
- The #1 reason kids quit a sport is that they say the sport is "**NOT FUN**"
- Let's keep the **FUN** in BAYS games!

# Target Limit: Goal Difference < 6!



**BAYS expects COACHES to manage games to limit goal differentials to +5**

- BAYS does **NOT** have competitive incentives for large goal differentials
  - The BAYS playoffs Goal Differential is not a meaningful decision criteria
  - Excessive scoring **HURTS** team standings

**Points awarded go **DOWN** as Goal Differential goes **UP** to discourage running up the score**

## BAYS Team Standings Points Awarded for Wins

- Win if goal differential is +6 or less: **3 points**
- Win if goal differential is +7: **2 points**
- Win if goal differential is +8: **1 point**
- Win if goal differential is +9: **0 point**
- Win if goal differential is +10 or greater: **-1 point**

**Club Presidents will receive BAYS Excessive Score notices when margin of victory is > +5**

# Key Steps BEFORE the Game



## Establish Your Team Expectations with Players and Parents

- Pre-plan with your coaching staff how you will manage a lopsided game situation
- Create a code word or signal so that your players know when to change tactics if necessary
- Practice the plan so your players know what is expected of them
- Communicate with your families at the beginning of the season/game that you may be switching up the game plan so they can support from the sideline
- Review your section standings to anticipate if your upcoming opponents may be struggling so that you can proactively plan during practice



# Start EARLY in Games

**Implement your control strategy as soon as it is clear your team is much stronger than your opponent**

- 3+ goals is the time to start altering your game plan, NOT when the score is already 5-0
- Use your signal or code word with the team instead of screaming out instructions
- Talk to players on the sidelines who can share the message when subbed in
- **If a player ignores your instructions, sub that player off the field and review the plan - Remember you are the adult!**
- Communicate with the opposing coach as needed
- **As the ADULT on the field, you are responsible for actively taking steps to control your players to PREVENT excessive scoring**

# Modify Tactics - Formations



## Reset the Team

- **Reassign player positions**
  - Give your less skilled players more time at forward
  - Change your formation to have fewer forward players
  - Use your more defensive-minded players on attack
  - Place your more creative finishers in back
  - Put your best goal scorer at Keeper
- **Play with one fewer player on the field or even two fewer players if necessary**
  - Do not have a player walk off the field during play
  - Send in fewer players at next substitution opportunity and inform the sideline/center referee of your plan
  - FIFA/BAYS rules do not allow for the other team to add players

# Modify Tactics - Shooting



## The goal is for players to STOP Scoring, not STOP Shooting

- Eliminate ALL shots from dominant foot
- Allow only shots with weaker foot or direct volleys from thigh or chest
- Focus on headers where allowed (ONLY in Grade 7/8 and HS)
- Shoot from longer distance (at least outside the penalty area)
- Intentionally shoot WIDE
- Pick a player(s) who normally have difficulty scoring and direct that this/these player(s) are only allowed to be the next to score
  - Target player can be rotated

# Modify Tactics – Possession



## Require More Passing

- Switch to all **non**-dominant foot passing to work on developing skills with weaker foot
- Require 4 or more consecutive passes to be made before any shot that is taken
  - Remember not to make the counting obvious
- If the opponent touches the ball, team needs to reset the pass count and start again
- All players have to touch the ball (including the keeper) before anyone can shoot
- Goalkeepers should roll out balls to an outside defender instead of punting



# Modify Tactics – Mix Up the Teams



## Change Up Teams to Focus on the **FUN**

- In games where the teams are clearly not evenly matched (GD already +5 at the HALF) coaches may elect to shift the game to a mixed team “scrimmage”
- Consult with your assistants and your opposing coaches and decide to stop the “official” game at half
- Reassign players from both teams to create new, more balanced teams using pinnies
- Referees are instructed to referee the “scrimmage” through full time
- Referees will record the official game as incomplete and submit the game report using the score of the game at half for the game score
- BAYS Division Director must then review game report and will record game as official using the score reported at the half
  - Game will count in team standings

# Keep It in Perspective



## Coaches on the losing side of lopsided games:

- Do your best to remain upbeat, kids feed off of your energy
- Continue to encourage your players to experiment with passing / attacking the ball
- Compliment your players for playing well even though the team is losing the game
  - Kids will usually not remember the exact score line, but they will remember a compliment on something special that they did well
- Learn from the game to focus in your next practice on developing specific skills to help avoid future issues
- Report poor sportsmanship to BAYS using your **Game Feedback** form

# Respect and Sportsmanship are Key!



Remember this is **YOUTH** Soccer, and you are the **ADULT**

- Coaches have the ability to build the development of young soccer players and even more importantly, young people
- Running up the score is not acceptable
- As the coach, you must remain in control of your players
- Be prepared to discuss the scoring avoidance strategies you used with your Division Director or Club Official when they ask how the lopsided score happened
  - Club Presidents are notified of all games with GD+5
- If it happens, immediately start planning how to change it up sooner next time