Markham Soccer Club

Indoor Playing Rules
Youth House League

Effective Date: October 2026

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OVERVIEW

1.0 PHILOSOPHY

The Markham Soccer Club (MSC) recreational / house league programs are intended to provide an opportunity for players and coaches to enjoy developing, playing and coaching in a well-balanced, fun environment which promotes sportsmanship and development over competition and winning.

MSC makes all attempts to balance all recreational youth teams to provide fair and equal competition to the greatest degree possible. It must be recognized that this cannot provide a guarantee of totally balanced teams as many factors come into play. The mix and skill of players, coaches, and the commitment put forth by all individuals influence the results.

MSC uses an approach to balancing teams, which has proven to be successful over many seasons. Once teams are established and the season starts – the third playing week – there will be no more balancing as players need time to gel and bond.

An important aspect of playing sports teaches children how to both win and lose.

1.1 AGE GROUP

The age groups set out for the indoor season are at the discretion of the Club with the objective of accommodating the maximum number of players within the age group. Enrollment in the indoor season has historically offered the following age groups:

MIXED	BOYS	GIRLS
Timbits U4-U5	Timbits U7	U8
	U10	U11
	U13	U14
	U16	U19
	U19	

The Club feels that by offering these age groups, we are in line with the outdoor Inter-Club age groups, which our players may be participating in.

1.2 REGISTRATION, ATTENDANCE AND SPECIAL REQUESTS

Every member of MSC must be registered for their program through our current registration portal, Otto Sport: Markham Soccer Registration Portal. Parents/Guardians must add themselves first and then add the child as a player. If you require any further assistance, please reach out to the via email: info@markhamsoccer.org or Gordon: gordon@markhamsoccer.org

Attendance is strongly recommended, as the whole team benefits when all players show up. Be advised that parents/guardians are required to bring their children and **MUST** stay for the duration of the program.

The Club does offer special 1-to-1 player requests. If you have a sibling that falls under the same division / year of birth, these will not count as special player requests but will be automatically approved as part of our siblings' rule if they are the same gender, except for the Micro U4-U5 program.

1.3 MOVING PLAYERS TO AN OLDER AGE GROUP

Players are placed in a house league division based on their year of birth being within the age range for a specific division. Under the following circumstances, a house league player may be allowed to move to a higher division:

a). No more room in their current division but room available in the older age group;
b). Player can effectively play at an older age group – based on an evaluation done by the House League Convenor and or Supervisors;

A player playing up is at the complete and full discretion of MSC and is intended to address the club's requirement to have an adequate number of players on each team per division. *Only at the special request to the Operations Manager is a player allowed to play in a lower age group.*

1.4 EQUIPMENT

All players must wear regulation soccer shoes: cleats, rubber nubbed or running shoes;

Shin guards (pads) are MANDATORY for all players in games and training sessions. Referees will not allow players to play if are not wearing them. NO EXCEPTIONS;

The goalkeeper must wear a shirt that is a distinctly different colour from the players on either team;

Hard casts are not permitted while playing soccer; soft casts that are wrapped in a protective foam or cloth are permitted;

Coaches and referees are instructed to follow FIFA Law 4 (The Player's Equipment) and interpretations of it by the Ontario Soccer (OS) and the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA). These cover such items as jewellery, headgear and other equipment.

NO JEWELLERY IS PERMITTED TO BE WORN.

1.5 BALL SIZE

U4-U5 – Size 3
U7-U10 – Size 4
U11+ - Size 5

1.6 COACHES

Teams will take up positions on the opposite side of the field from spectators, wherever possible. Both teams will be on the same side of the field. No coach, player or spectator will be behind the goals inside the facility.

Teams are coached by MSC staff coaches from Micro U4-U5 to the U16 age group. Volunteer parent coaches are used for the U19 age groups;

During a game, all coaches are to restrict their movements to an area along each touch line and their respective side of the centre line and are not permitted to cross over the centre line onto the opponents' half of the field. .

There will be no coaching or giving of instructions behind either goal line or the opposite touch line.

All players, coaches and spectators must stay back 2 meters from the touch line.

NOTE: These rules apply to the divisions U10 and above.

1.7 GAMESHEETS

The Markham Soccer Club office provides the game sheets to the referees for each game. Only the players names who are on the game sheet are eligible to play. If a player is not on the game sheet, they will be removed. Supervisors and coaches are to enforce this rule at the field of play.

It is the responsibility of the referee to input the scores into Otto Sport and drop the game sheets off at the office.

1.8 EQUAL PLAY RULES

1. Equal play in a game: Each player must play an equal amount of time in a game to the greatest degree possible, unless a player gets injured or has become ill.

2. Equal play across a season: Every player should be given an equal amount of playing time across an entire season to the greatest degree possible.

It is the responsibility of the coach to monitor playing time and to ensure that the rules are followed. No player should be sitting out more or less than any other player;

The Supervisor will monitor equal play and act if a coach appears to be in violation;

The goalkeeper is subject to the same equal play requirements as all other players;

The coach may change the goalkeeper at any substitution at the referee's discretion, with the proviso that it is done quickly and does not extend the time needed to make a substitution;

Equal play is on the basis that players are ready to play, sitting on the bench at any point during the game. If players arrive late, leave early or sit off extra time due to injury or illness the coach is not obligated to provide them “catch up” field time at the expense of others on the bench ready to play. Any shortage of playing time caused by these reasons will not be considered a violation of Equal Play Rule #1.

If in the opinion of the coach or Supervisor, a player is getting too physically or verbally aggressive during game play, they have the authority to pull the player off the field at the next stoppage of play. The player must be quickly replaced if there is a substitute available. The “one-up” rule does not apply to this situation. Only once the player has had sufficient time to cool down, will they be allowed to return to the field of play, and during a legal substitution time.

1.9 INJURIES

Any player who is openly bleeding from an injury must leave the field of play and will not return until the bleeding has stopped and the injury is dressed;

If there is a head injury, the referee MUST stop the play immediately and tend to the injured player and subsequently complete a Special Incident Report (SIR) and submit to the Operations Manager within 24 hours of the occurrence;

Substitutions may be made at any time, with the permission of the referee, for injury or illness. If a player must leave the field due to injury or illness, the referee must be notified, so the player can be replaced. The player may return to the field of play as long as they are able to;

2.0 SHORT HANDED TEAMS (the “One-up Rule”)

In the event a team does not have the capacity to field a full team, the following points apply to that game:

5 A-SIDE GAME
If a team cannot field five (5) players due to absenteeism, illness or injury, the opposing team may only play one (1) more player than the short-handed team to a maximum of five (5) players. Thus, a team with only four (4) players may play against a team of five (5).

7 A-SIDE GAME
If a team cannot field seven (7) players due to absenteeism, illness or injury, the opposing team may only play one (1) more player than the short-handed team to a maximum of seven (7) players. Thus, a team with only five (5) players may play against a team of six (6) and a team with only 6 (6) players may play against a team of seven (7).

2.1 FORFEITURE

All teams shall be allowed a 10-minute grace period after the scheduled kick-off time before they are considered to have failed to show.

If a 5-aside team fails to field at least four (4) players or a 7-aside team fails to field at least five (5) players for a game within the grace period, then that team shall forfeit the game to the opposition. The game shall be played immediately when each team has at least the minimum number of players present.

If, after the commencement of a game, the number of players on either team falls below the minimum number of players required, then the game must be stopped and the team that does not have the minimum number of players shall forfeit the game to the opposition.

A forfeited game will be recorded in the MSC Otto Sport system as a 3-0 win for the team that is able to field players.

NOTE: For the indoor season, standings are not kept. In the event thar the referee does not show up for the game, the supervisors or coaches will have to referee the game and it is the responsibility of the supervisor to submit the game sheet to the soccer club office and notify the office admin team, so that they can investigate the circumstance.

2.2 GAME DURATIONS

The referee is the sole timekeeper of the match and all game durations are 50 minutes in length 2 x 25-minute halves.

2.3 GAME CANCELLATIONS

Games in the indoor facility do not normally get cancelled but there are instances that the facility itself may be getting worked on which will interrupt the games for that given day. As a result, the soccer club admin staff will do their best to communicate the cancelled sessions if cancellations do arise.

The Club will make every effort, IF POSSIBLE, to reschedule the cancelled sessions, at a later date.

APPENDICES

ONTARIO SOCCER INDOOR RULES

To view the Ontario Soccer Indoor Rules, go to the following website:

Ontario_Soccer_Indoor_Soccer_Rules_Final.pdf