

# East Bay Over Thirty Soccer

Revision 13 – January 9, 2009

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## Coed League Rules

### A. Safety

The primary goal of East Bay Over Thirty Soccer (EBOTS) is to provide a safe and friendly environment for its members. Strict adherence to the following safety rules is required from all league members.

#### A.1. Safety Equipment

Soccer safety equipment should be worn during all practices, scrimmages, and matches. Required equipment includes:

- Shin guards
- Shoes with cleats, molded soles, or appropriate soles for the grass/turf used (metal cleats are not allowed)

Recommended equipment includes:

- Mouth guards
- Sports eyewear using polycarbonate lenses

#### A.2. Member Safety Considerations

Members of the board of directors (board members) are responsible for the safety of all players during practices, scrimmages and matches. Under no circumstances will a game rule take precedence over this objective. All members of the league agree to defer all game-time judgments to board members.

All EBOTS league members are individually responsible for the following:

- Understanding the basic rules of soccer
- Understanding of the rules outlined in this document (*EBOTS Co-Ed League Rules*)
- Using safe practices and fair play on the field (see Section A.3.)
- Avoiding dangerous play (see Section A.4.)
- Respecting the decisions of the board members.

### **A.3. Fair Play**

Observing rules of fair play will help ensure that play is clean, safe and welcoming to all members. The following behaviors are **not considered fair play**. The Board of Directors may review the behavior of members displaying any of the following during practices, scrimmages or matches. The Board of Directors may issue a warning to the member, which could lead ultimately to the ejection of a player from the league (see Sections H and K).

1. Slide-tackling
2. Tackling from behind
3. Challenging the keeper after he or she has legitimately called the ball (keeper always has the right-of-way)
4. Playing the ball while you are on the ground
5. Diving headers, bicycle kicks or jumping full vollies
6. High kicks (above the waist)
7. "Cleats up" challenges
8. Jumping over people's backs for headers – any jumps should be straight up-and-down only

In addition:

9. Display of unsporting behavior
10. Display of aggressive dissent by word or action
11. Persistent infringement of the rules
12. Delay of the restart of play
13. Failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick
14. Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his or her own penalty area)
15. Denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offense punishable by a free kick or a penalty kick.

### **A.4. Dangerous Play**

The following behaviors are unacceptable and may result in the unconditional ejection of a player from the league. The offending player has seven days to provide a written explanation of his or her actions, if requested by the Board of Directors (see Sections H and K).

- Serious foul play
- Violent conduct, which includes fighting or the physical battery of another player.
- Use of verbal threats or offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures
- Spitting at an opponent or any other person
- Any type of harassment, sexual or otherwise
- Sexist remarks or any remark that demeans a player based on gender or other physical characteristics.

## **B. Roles and Responsibilities of Members of the Board of Directors**

Board members will understand the rules of safety and fair play (see Section A.3. and Section A.4.) and have the responsibility to do the following:

### **B.1. Board members have the responsibility to do the following:**

- Understand and enforce the basic rules of soccer.
- Understand and enforce the rules outlined in this document (*EBOTS Co-Ed League Rules*).
- Brief existing members at the start of each season about *EBOTS Co-Ed League Rules* and league expectations.
- Maintain safe practices and fair play on the field (for *example, a player may be ejected for slide tackling – see Section A.3.*).
- Stop any match in which he or she feels safety of players is compromised. If a match is stopped before the end of the game, it will be rescheduled pending review by the Board of Directors.
- Review any incidents of dangerous play (see Section A.4.) and/or circumstances that lead to the stopping of any matches.
- Ask any player(s) exhibiting unfair or dangerous play to leave the field of play for ten minutes (See Sections H & K).
- End the match on time.

### **B.2. Conflict Resolution**

A board member should be contacted immediately to report a members' inappropriate behavior or any personal conflicts between members. Members are encouraged to contact the league Ombudsman designated by the Board of Directors and charged with representing the interests of league members. The league Ombudsman will investigate and address any complaints raised by any league member in strict confidence.

## **C. General Match Rules**

The following rules are intended as guidelines. If circumstances warrant, board members in consultation with players, may change rules that do not relate to safety.

The rules relating to field size, ball size, and number of players apply exclusively to matches and do not need to be observed during practices or scrimmages. However, members are expected to adhere to safe practices and fair play during all EBOTS events, including practices and scrimmages.

Regular season matches canceled due to bad weather or poor field conditions will be rescheduled, if possible.

In the case of a debilitating injury, board members may opt to stop a match so that it may be rescheduled to be played at a later time.

All men playing must be at least 30 years, and all women playing must be at least 21 years of age.

## **D. The Field of Play**

Matches must be played on a field resembling a full-size soccer field as defined by FIFA. The field should be approximately 100 yards long and 50 yards wide. If possible, the field should have full-sized goals with a net.

Some allowances may be made for field size if players agree. The field may be no less than 75 yards in length, and the width of the field should be approximately half its length. The field must be rectangular in shape. Board members and/or players may alter the number of players for the match in the best interests of safety if the field size is reduced.

## **E. The Ball**

The match ball must be a size five soccer ball, spherical in shape and made of leather or some other appropriate material. The ball must be fully inflated.

## **F. Team Rosters**

### **F.1. Number of Players**

A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than 11 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. Unless the team captains agree, a match may not start if either team consists of fewer than eight players, including five men and three women. Unless the team captains agree, a team must field at least *three* women at any time during the match. Team captains should rely on the players on their roster, unless they are unavailable. If this is the case, team captains may ask other members to substitute.

## **F.2. Roster Adjustments**

The Board of Directors may make adjustments to the rosters at any time for any reason.

## **F.3. Substitutes and Substitutions**

Players of either gender can substitute at any time. A substitution is completed when a substitute enters the field of play. From that moment the substitute becomes a player, and the player he or she has replaced ceases to be in the match.

There is no limit to the number of substitutions during a match.

Substitutes cannot take penalty kicks. Only a player on the field at the time of the foul may take the penalty kick.

The goalkeeper can switch positions with a player on the field at any time a substitute is allowed.

A team **MUST** substitute for a player who is bleeding. Play should be stopped immediately when there is a dangerous situation/injury or for substitution of a player.

## **F.4. Guest Players**

Only EBOTS members can play in matches. Any new or “guest” players must sign a membership application before playing in any EBOTS practice, scrimmage or match. Guest players and players from other teams may be allowed to play for a team that is short of players at the team captains’ discretion.

## **G. Duration of the Match**

Regular-season matches consist of two 40-minute halves. Halftime is five minutes. Teams are not allotted any time-outs, but additional breaks in play are allowed if players agree (under circumstances of extreme heat, for example).

The game clock is continuous and will not stop for a ball going out of play. The match must end on time, even if the match started late.

## **H. Penalties**

Any in-the-box foul results in a direct penalty kick by a member of the fouled team.

As a safety precaution, slide tackling is not allowed and results in an indirect penalty kick. Members who slide-tackle may go under review by the Board of Directors.

A player engaging in unfair, unsafe or dangerous play may be asked to leave the field of play for **ten** minutes (See Section K). The offending team must play with one fewer player until the time

has elapsed. The offending team then may make a substitution in order to meet the requirement of **three** women players on the field.

The Board of Directors may review the circumstances surrounding any unfair, unsafe or dangerous play leading to a penalty and decide if the player(s) will be allowed to return to the league. See Sections A.3, A.4 and K.

## **I. Membership Dues**

In order to participate in matches, scrimmages and practices, members must remain in good standing with the league by keeping their membership current and paying membership dues. If any member is notified by a board member that membership dues have not been paid, that member may not participate in any matches, scrimmages and practices even if they are listed on a roster.

New members must fill out an application before participating in any matches, scrimmages or practices. New members receive a one day grace period, but must pay membership dues the second time they show up to play.

## **J. Other Provisions**

In general, the matches will be played according to the FIFA “Laws of the Game.” If there is a conflict between the present document and FIFA “Laws of the Game,” this document will always take precedence. EBOTS promotes a safe and friendly environment on the soccer field.

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### References:

FIFA 2006, “Laws of the Game.” [www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/federation/lotg2006\\_e\\_1581.pdf](http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/federation/lotg2006_e_1581.pdf) “

## **K. Disciplinary Guidelines**

Soccer is a contact sport and inevitably, there will be some enthusiastic and sometimes poorly timed tackles. This is part and parcel of the game and is unavoidable. What can be controlled and will be monitored is any residual animosity being displayed or subsequent retaliation being sought on and/or off the field.

Although play in EBOTS generally follows the FIFA rules of the sport, Yellow or Red cards are not issued. In recognition of this, the EBOTS Board has constructed the following disciplinary guidelines to identify and categorize undesired on and/or off-field behavior, which in conjunction with Sections A.3. Fair Play and A.4. Dangerous Play, are designed to ensure the continued safety and enjoyment for EBOTS members.

Disciplinary action will be sanctioned by board members during game times and will be recognized and complied with at all times. Regardless of who initiates an altercation, all participating parties will be subject to possible discipline. Continued membership in EBOTS is contingent upon awareness of and adherence to both the League Rules and Disciplinary Guidelines.

### **K.1. Disciplinary Actions**

Offenses will be dealt with by one (or possibly a combination) of the following disciplinary actions:

- a) Caution
- b) Sit Out
- c) Sent Off

A CAUTION will be an official warning regarding play and/or behavior. If a player continues with said play and/or behavior, further disciplinary action may be taken and that player will be asked to formally respond to the Board to explain their behavior.

Any member who is asked to SIT OUT a period of the game has, in effect received the equivalent of FIFA's "Yellow Card." They will be asked to formally respond to the Board to explain their behavior and possible further disciplinary procedures may be taken at the discretion of the Board.

Any member who has been SENT OFF has, in effect, received the equivalent of FIFA's "Red Card" and will receive an automatic one match ban. They will be asked to formally respond to the Board to explain their behavior and possible further disciplinary procedures may be taken at the discretion of the Board.

The EBOTS Board reserves the right to consider further additional disciplinary action for repeated un-sportsmanlike behavior during the course of the membership year.

## **K.2. Common Infractions**

An overview of the more common infractions is highlighted below together with the appropriate disciplinary action.

- Un-Sportsmanlike Behavior – (such as rudeness to another member, kicking the ball away, etc.) – offending player will be “CAUTIONED” by a Board member to cease and desist or will be forced to sit out a period of the game.
- Subsequent On-Field Complaining – offending player will be “CAUTIONED” by a Board member to cease and desist or will be forced to sit out a period of the game.
- Continued On-Field Complaining – offending player will be asked to “SIT OUT<sup>1</sup>” a period of the game, at the discretion of the Board member<sup>2</sup>.
- Retaliatory Tackles or Persistent Complaining – offending player will be “SENT OFF<sup>3</sup>” for the remainder of the game, analogous to a “Red Card” in the professional game.
- Threatening On-Field Behavior (Verbal and/or Physical) – offending player will be immediately “SENT OFF” and will be subject to EBOTS’ disciplinary procedures. Examples of this would be the raising of fists, chasing a player around the field with intent or verbal taunts, racial or sexist comments, etc.
- Brawls – Both players will be immediately “SENT OFF”, will receive an automatic one match ban and will invoke EBOTS’ disciplinary procedures.
- Physical Assault by One Player– Offending player will be immediately “SENT OFF”, will receive an automatic two match ban and will invoke EBOTS’ disciplinary procedures. Note this includes such behavior as spitting.

In addition, EBOTS will not tolerate any form of harassment or offensive behavior that causes another member to feel threatened or disturbed. EBOTS takes all complaints seriously and will invoke disciplinary procedures when necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> SIT OUT is analogous to a “Yellow Card” in the professional game.

<sup>2</sup> This could range from a minimum of 10 minutes to the remainder of the game.

<sup>3</sup> A “SENT OFF” is analogous to a “Red Card” in the professional game.