

U8 Intramural Notes for Referees

U8 Intramural is a competitive league where the scores count and official standing are kept, so the referee's job is very important!

BEFORE THE GAME

1. Quickly walk around the field. Look for any standing water or holes in the ground – basically anything that could disrupt the game. Check for sandbags on the goals. If there are no sandbags, then the game cannot be played.
2. Ask the coaches to show you their WTPR ID Badge. Anyone on the sideline **MUST** have a badge.
3. Ask each team's players to line up and check each team's players to make sure they each have shin guards, socks that cover their shin guards, plastic cleats (no metal cleats are allowed, but sneakers are OK), and no jewelry
4. Tell coaches and players that they are to play to your whistle.
5. Tell coaches and players that all injured must go down and take a knee. If the injury is behind the play, then the referee will allow play to continue until there is a change of possession or stoppage (whichever happens first).
6. Once each team is checked in, ask each coach for a single captain from each team to take the coin toss
 - a. Choose one of the captains to call heads or tails before you flip the coin
 - b. The team that wins the coin toss will select if they want the ball first or second
 - c. The team that loses the coin toss can pick which direction their team will be attacking
7. Instruct the coaches that all substitutions must be made at midfield and the new players can only enter the playing field when you say it is OK. The players cannot just run on and off as they feel like.
8. Get a game ball from one of the coaches – make sure it is a SIZE 4 ball and that it is firmly inflated – and place it in the center of the field. **The game must start on time!** You cannot delay the start of the game for any reason.

START OF THE GAME

1. U8 plays in a **7v7** format, which means there are six field players plus one goalie per team. Make sure the correct number of players are on the field before starting the game. Teams can play with only 5 or 6 players if their attendance is low. This happens from time to time.
2. U8 plays four separate quarters, and each quarter lasts **12 minutes**. Make sure you have a timer ready to go. You do not stop the timer for any reason (even an injury). There is a 3-minute break between quarters, and a 5-minute halftime break.
3. Once the teams take the field, ask each goalkeeper if they are ready to go.
4. Blow your whistle and start your timer – **the game is on!**

DURING THE GAME

1. Blow your whistle loud for any stoppage. And make sure you look back at midfield at each stoppage to see if either coach wants to make any substitutions.
2. Substitutions – you can allow for unlimited substitutions at any stoppage (out of bounds, corner kick, goal scored, or penalty).
3. Out of bounds – the entire ball has to go over the line in order to be out of bounds. If the ball just touches the line, then play continues. When a ball goes out of bounds, blow your whistle and point in the direction of the throw in.
4. Throw Ins – you want to make sure that the players keep both feet down and throw the ball using two hands from behind their head. This is going to be a challenge for the U8 players and there will be a lot of bad throw-ins. Players are permitted to take one repeat throw if they make a mistake. And the coach is allowed to instruct their player how to make a proper throw-in if they want to do so. **Let play continue even if the repeated throw-in is a good throw or not.**
5. Offsides – **we do not enforce offsides at U8 Intramural**. Make sure the coaches are aware of this.

Penalties/Fouls – The referee should use a “let them play” approach to U8 and should only blow their whistle on obvious or blatant fouls such as aggressive pushing, tripping, holding, or handling (commonly referred to as “hand balls”). Speaking of which, handling only occurs when the player **deliberately** uses their hand or arm to play the ball. If a ball unintentionally or accidentally hits a player’s hand or arm, then it is technically not a “hand ball”, even though everyone will be yelling that it is. It is your call, not theirs.

6. Penalty kicks – if a foul is committed by the defending team within their penalty box, then a penalty shot will be awarded. Follow the following procedure for a penalty shot:
 - a. The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line and face the kicker. The goalkeeper can move once the ball is kicked.
 - b. The ball is placed on the penalty marker and the ball must not move until it is kicked.
 - c. All players except the kicker must be outside the penalty box until the ball is kicked.
 - d. The kicker cannot kick the ball until the referee blows their whistle to signal it is OK to go.
 - e. The ball must travel forward when kicked and the kicker cannot kick the ball again until it has been touched by another player.
7. At the end of the quarter, blow your whistle hard three times in a row. Teams will have a 3 minute break before starting the next quarter.

HALFTIME

1. After two quarters are played, a 5-minute halftime is held. Halftime lasts only 5 minutes.
2. When halftime is over, teams **MUST** switch attacking directions. No exceptions. The coaches and benches do not change sides, just the direction of their attack.

CONCLUSION OF THE GAME

1. Once the final timer expires, blow your whistle hard three times in a row, and the game is over.
2. **Confirm the final score with the coaches, and text the final score to the assignor.**
3. Each team will line up and exchange high fives and say “good game”.
4. The referee will stand at the midfield line about ten feet into the field of play during the end of game high fives.
5. No end of game penalty shoot-out will occur; no overtime will be played.

OTHER THINGS TO BE AWARE OF

1. **Make sure you blow your whistle loud at all times.**
2. U8 Intramural uses a “build out” line. This line is intended to prevent the attacking team from cherry-picking near the goalkeeper. When a goalkeeper has possession of the ball, the opposing team **MUST** retreat back behind the build out line and they may not cross that line until the goalkeeper releases the ball. The referee **must** yell “keeper has the ball, back up behind the build out line!” Once the goalkeeper releases the ball, the opposing team may come back over the build out line again. The goalie can release the ball even if the opposing team hasn’t cleared out yet. That’s up to the goalie.
3. There is no punting allowed. If a goalkeeper punts the ball, then an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense.
4. There are no head balls allowed. If a player plays the ball with their head, then an indirect free kick is awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the offense.
5. If a player gets injured, then you do not tend to the player. Instead, call the coach onto the field to tend to the injured player. Remember, if the injury happens behind the play, then the referee will allow play to continue until there is a change of possession or stoppage (whichever happens first).
6. No one is allowed to be on the field except the players (not even the coaches).
7. No one is allowed to stand behind either goal (not even the coaches).
8. If anyone gives you a hard time or a situation that has gotten out of hand, **call the assignor immediately!**