

**GRAHAM SOCCER
ASSOCIATION
COACH AND OFFICIAL HANDBOOK**
---Updated January 2019---



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OVERVIEW

Welcome Graham Soccer Coaches!

We are happy to have your help and your leadership in our association. We know you will make a difference in our season and more importantly in the lives of those you coach and play against! In this handbook you will find information that will help you know more about your role as a coach and soccer specifics in Graham Soccer Association. As I am sure you are aware at this point, we're are moving at a very fast pace right now with growth and expansion on the horizon and a 100% increase in player participation over the past few years. We ask that you be patient in all areas as we all flex and push to make our kids, programs, and association better than it has ever been. If you have any questions about the information in this handbook, or with your team, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Thank you in advance for the contributions you will make this season!

GSA Mission Statement

Promote and facilitate youth soccer in Young County and surrounding areas.

BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS

All background checks go through *GotSoccer.com*. No exceptions. All board members, commissioner employees, coaches, officials, or anyone in the association that could have contact with players must complete risk management every year. June 1st risk management will be available for the upcoming soccer year. No coach, assistant coach, or manager can be added to a team if they have not completed and passed risk management. The cost is \$5 per person. Your password and login info will be emailed to you. Background check instructions can be found in the appendix of this document. If you have any issues or questions please email info@grahamsoccer.net. (see appendix for instructions)

APPEALS AND DISCIPLINE

All members and participants in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of Graham Soccer Association have requested to participate in our programs. Therefore, these participants have agreed to abide by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of **NTSSA**, Graham Soccer Association, as well as those of the United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations of which North Texas State Soccer Association is a member. The **NTSSA** Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws provide that it has jurisdiction over all Member Playing Associations, players, coaches, team managers, administrators, team representatives and referees who choose to affiliate. Any member or participant in youth and adult soccer within the jurisdiction of **NTSSA** found in violation of the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of **NTSSA**, their local member association, as well as those of the United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations of which North Texas State Soccer Association is a member, may be subject to disciplinary action according to the **NTSSA** Appeal and Discipline policy. [NTSSA A&D Handbook](#)

GAME RESCHEDULING

If for any reason a game needs to be rescheduled by the teams, game day lineups will include openings to accommodate same day changes for free. There will be a \$50 fee imposed to reschedule a game to another day. Schedule change request must be made two days in advanced. Any team that does not have enough players at the scheduled start time will receive an automatic forfeit. GSA Board will facilitate and communicate all game changes that are necessary or that have been approved.

RULES OF PLAY OVERVIEW

The intent of this document is to outline the basics of GSA's Rules of Play and should be viewed as a general overview and convey the spirit and intent of the game. Except as otherwise specified herein, Rules of Play of the United States Soccer Federation and its National Associations will apply in all competitions. Clarification requests, commentary, or questions about the Rules of Play can be directed to the Coach's and Official's Committee or the Vice President of the Association. The Rules of Play will be reviewed each year and revised or amended as deemed appropriate by the Coach's and Official's Committee and the Vice President of the Association.

GSA STANDARDS CHART

	U4	U6	U8	U10	U12	U15	
Approx. Field Size (yards)	30x20	30x20	35x25	60x35	95x55	95x55	
# of Players	6V6	5V5	5v5	7V7	9v9	7v7	
Goalkeeper?	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Playing Times	4x5 min.	4x8 min.	4x10 min.	2x20 min.	2x25 min.	2x25 min.	
Half Time	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	5 min.	
Ball Size	3	3	3	4	4	5	
Goal Size (ft)	4x6	4x6	5x10	6.5x18.5	8x24	8x24	
Offsides	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Officials	Coaches	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Substitutions w/ Ref Approval	At Will	Unlimited on dead ball	Unlimited on dead ball	Unlimited on YOUR dead ball	Unlimited on YOUR dead ball	Unlimited on YOUR dead ball	
Player % of Game (min)	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	
MIN # OF GIRLS ON THE FIELD	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	1	
Direct Kicks When Appropriate	No	No	No	Yes, as appropriate	Yes, as appropriate	Yes, as appropriate	
Goal Kick	retreat to mid field	retreat to mid field	retreat to mid field	retreat to mid field	Out of box	Out of box	

Game Start/End: Both teams should be at the field 15 minutes before scheduled game start time. Kick-off will be decided by a coin toss. The team winning the toss will choose which side of the field to defend OR to kick-off. Teams will switch ends at halftime. PLEASE clean field and trash from spectators area before leaving the field.

Player Dress Code: Soccer cleats only--no exceptions / Shin-guards with socks over / No jewelry, sun glasses, hats, metal or plastic hair clips/bows / Players must be in matching numbered jerseys and preferably matching shorts and socks. Goal keepers should wear colors that are clearly different from the colors of both teams. If needed for warmth, layers should be worn under team jerseys.

COACH AND OFFICIALS CODE OF CONDUCT

CHAPTER 11 (Taken Directly from NTSSA Bylaws)

CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT

11.1 NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR COACHES

This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical, and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of the sport of soccer. (The term “Coach” shall include, but is not limited to Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s), Manager/Trainer and/or Team Representative.)

ARTICLE I - RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS

1. The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players. Winning should be the result of preparation and discipline with emphasis placed on the highest ideals and character traits.
2. Coaches shall instruct players to play within the written laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
3. Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
4. Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.
5. Demands on players’ time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals and progress. Motivation for excellence should include academics as well as athletics.
6. Coaches must never encourage players to violate **NTSSA** recruitment, eligibility, or guest player rules and policies.
7. Under no circumstances should coaches authorize or encourage the use of medicinal or performance enhancing drugs, or supplements of any kind whether legal or illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter. Medication and supplementation of any kind should be the responsibility of the parents and/or legal guardian. Players should be directed to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician’s instructions regarding treatment and recovery. At no time should a player be put at risk by returning from injury prematurely or by being forced to play while injured.
8. A coach's dealings with players and parents must be upfront, honest, and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to players and parents.

ARTICLE II - RESPONSIBILITY TO NTSSA AND MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

1. Adherence to all **NTSSA** and Member Association rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting, and guest players are mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of every coach to know and understand these rules.
2. Player development and the growth of the player through participation is essential to the growth of the sport. Additionally, the coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport are maintained.
3. Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches should be referred to the appropriate **NTSSA** Commissioner, Member Association, or League Commissioner immediately.
4. A coach's dealings with **NTSSA** and Member Associations (including playing leagues) must be upfront, honest, and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to **NTSSA** and Member Associations (including playing leagues).

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ARTICLE III - RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME

1. Coaches should be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws of the game of soccer. Coaches are also responsible to ensure that their players understand the intent as well as the application of the laws.
2. Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the laws of the game. Those coaches who circumvent the rules to gain advantage have no place in soccer.
3. Coaches are responsible for their players' actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with the intent of causing injury to opposing players.
4. If coaches permit, encourage, or condone performance that is not in the letter or spirit of the laws, they are derelict in their responsibility to players, Member Associations, **NTSSA** and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive constantly to teach good sporting behavior.

ARTICLE IV - RESPONSIBILITY TO OFFICIALS

1. Officials must have the support of coaches, players and spectators. Criticism of officials undermines their purpose in the game. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing officials in the presence of players.
2. Coaches should strive to develop a line of communication with officials, giving each an opportunity to better understand the problems relating to their specific area. This section shall not be taken as an encouragement to debate referee decisions during the match.
3. On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during, and after the game. Officials should be addressed as "Referee" or "Mr./Ms. Referee" and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture between official, coach, or player. Coaches must not incite players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of play.
4. Comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the official.

ARTICLE V - RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING SCOUTING AND RECRUITING

1. It is unethical to scout any team, by any means whatsoever, except in regularly scheduled games.
2. The use of videotape or motion picture equipment to scout an opponent's regularly scheduled games for the purpose of recruiting is unethical.
3. All **NTSSA** rules pertaining to recruiting shall be strictly observed by the coach, manager, or any team representative.
4. It is unethical to recruit player(s) actively playing for another team.
5. It is unethical for a player to be recruited or enticed from the Olympic Development Program (ODP) setting, either by his ODP coach or any other coach, manager, parent or team representative.
6. When discussing the advantages of his organization, the coach has an ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams, and organizations.
7. It is unethical for any coach to make a statement to a prospective athlete which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.
8. Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts rather than hearsay and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of videotape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.

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ARTICLE VI - RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Coaches have a responsibility to promote the game of soccer to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, coaches, players, parents, or the media should be positive and constructive, never prejudicial or inflammatory.
2. When asked to give a recommendation concerning team, camp, coach or organization, it is in the best interest of all concerned if no less than three referrals are given in order to provide a professional unbiased source of information.
3. Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public while representing their team, Member Association, and **NTSSA**.
4. Publicly predicting a win is folly and serves no useful place in a coach's public image.
5. Comments stressing injuries, team, personnel conflicts, or disciplinary problems as an excuse for a loss or unsuccessful endeavor are detrimental and should be avoided.
6. It is unethical for a coach to solicit alumni, parents, booster club or managers to pressure organizations, Member Associations or **NTSSA** to alter established rules. The coach must not attempt to influence these organizations in political or financial dealings outside the framework of their own rules and bylaws.
7. The media should be allowed access to the players for comment. Players should be instructed in how to conduct themselves during an interview.

ARTICLE VII - GAME DAY AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. A coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, his organization, and the sport of soccer. This is never more evident than on the day of the contest.
2. Rival coaches should meet prior to the game and exchange friendly or professional greetings. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.
3. During play, coaches have a responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible. Coaches shall exhibit a respectful attitude towards players. The coach must confine him/herself to the coaching area. The attitude of the coach towards officials, spectators, opposing players and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.
4. It shall be unethical for a coach to have any verbal altercation with an opposing coach or bench during the game. Hostile physical contact with a player is considered highly unethical.
5. The coach's foremost post-game responsibility is his/her team.
6. Coaches should use their influence on unfriendly spectators that demonstrate intimidating behavior towards officials and opposing teams.
7. Coaches must act in a professional manner at all times when in the presence of players, whether at games, practices, or in any other setting. A coach demonstrating behavior that could be considered by a reasonable person to be irrational, inappropriate, or unbecoming an adult will not be tolerated. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Lewd gestures or remarks
 - Overly critical remarks
 - Ranting and raving
 - Snide or demeaning remarks
 - Threatening behavior or remarks
 - Physical confrontations
 - Temper outbursts

NTSSA REFEREE CODE OF CONDUCT

1. I will maintain the utmost respect for the game of soccer.
2. I pledge that I will faithfully enforce the Laws of the Game and any special Rule of the Competition of the League(s) I am officiating for without prejudice or favoritism to any player, team, or coach.
3. I recognize that it is my professional duty to constantly keep abreast of any changes in the Laws or Rules of Play and to keep myself physically fit and my training refreshed.
4. I will constantly strive to improve my own refereeing techniques and always accept sincere, constructive criticism from fellow referees or official assessors without malice.
5. I pledge that I will make myself available, whenever possible, for game assignments for which I am qualified.
6. If I am a State or National USSF referee, I acknowledge that my first responsibility is to State or USSF assigned games and that I will make myself available for these assignments regardless of conflicts with local playing associations or with leagues that I may be active in as a player or as a coach.
7. I do hereby acknowledge my fellow referees' total authority over any matches over which they are duly assigned to officiate, and I pledge that I will never interfere with the carrying out of their prescribed duties, before, during, or after a match.
8. I understand that any criticism of fellow referees should be limited to constructive criticism in quiet, private referee-to-referee discussions, and then never within hearing distance of players, coaches, or spectators.
9. As a registered USSF/NTSSA referee, I will always strive to conduct myself in the highest professional manner possible, including refraining from indulging in arguments or name-calling with coaches and/or spectators.
10. I also acknowledge that if I am also a coach, player, or spectator, that my conduct towards, and my respect for, my fellow referee doing my game is more closely noticed by all concerned. I will, therefore, strive to set a very high standard of personal conduct under these circumstances to serve as an example to all.
11. I understand that I should wear only the approved USSF referee uniform with the current badge of the highest grade I am qualified for, and that my uniform be clean, neat, and in a good state of repair. I also understand that if I am a coach, I am not to wear my uniform while coaching my team.
12. I further understand that I should not partake of any type of alcoholic beverage before any game assignment, and that I should never smoke, eat, or drink while actually officiating.
13. I hereby pledge that I will always faithfully carry out my duties and obligations as a USSF referee registered with the North Texas State Soccer Association; and that I do hereby acknowledge and accept the jurisdiction of the local NTSSA- affiliated playing association I may be refereeing for, the NTSSA, and USSF, and their respective Referee Committees, where applicable, over my actions, conduct, and performance as a registered USSF referee.
14. I furthermore understand that I may be disciplined, to include being placed on probation, suspended, or refused referee registration, for significant or repetitive breaches of this Code of Conduct or any of its articles or provisions.

Regular Season Draft/Selection Process (if utilized)

- There will be 1 Head Coach and 1 Assistant Coach per team
- Coaches Player (1 player) and Assistant Coaches Player (1 player) are taken out of the pool and takes that teams last and next to last picks. Paired players count as one pick in current round and next pick in following round. i.e. assistant has paired players A and B. Head Coach's player takes last pick and assistant's is next to last pick (player A) Player B defaults to become team's 1st round pick.
- Paired Players take two consecutive picks when chosen.
- **Coed** teams will draft girls pool until complete followed by boys pool until complete
- Divisions below U8 will not be drafted
- Random drawing will determine coach/team selection order. (i.e. draw cards) Any team that is not represented by a coach at the time of the draft will be assigned a GSA representative to make player selections on the team's behalf. The draft order will then flow as follows:

1ST ROUND

1 2 3 4 5 6

2ND ROUND

6 5 4 3 2 1

3RD ROUND

1 2 3 4 5 6

4th ROUND

6 5 4 3 2 1

ETC ETC

THERE WILL BE NO TRADES WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION AND GSA BOARD APPROVAL

- Requests are not guaranteed.
- Team Color Selection and Name Selection will be chose in reverse order of the above draft process. (Ex. Coach #5 will choose, then #4, followed by #3, etc.)
- Practice location reservation is on a first come first serve basis.
- Soccer Fields maybe off limits for practice due to weather or construction. Practice at the soccer field is ONLY permissible on designated practice areas. NO Exemptions. Do not practice on the game fields.

FOLLOWING THE DRAFT COACHES HAVE 72HRS TO CONTACT YOUR PLAYERS

To prevent delays and draft schedule issues only coaches and GSA representatives should be present during the drafting of players. NO PLAYERS SHOULD BE IN THE DRAFT ROOM

Post Season Tournament Team Process

Coaches wishing to form a select team should use the forms and process outlined on the following two pages. The GSA board is ready to support your tournament play and help with the administrative requirements. It is important that you complete this in advance so that tournament deadlines are not missed.



GRAHAM SOCCER ASSOCIATION

This document should be completed by the coach requesting to lead a select team and delivered to the GSA board for approval.

Club or Select Team Coach Request Form and Guidelines

Coaches Agreement to Accept and Abide by Rules of the Program

Players, coaches and chaperones participating in the GSA Club or Select Program are exercising a privilege afforded them by GSA and the sponsoring Coach. All involved must exhibit the maturity to be successful in this commitment. Thus, the following guidelines and rules shall apply in all activities.

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Coaches are expected to conduct themselves when traveling and at all times in a manner which is in keeping with representing GSA and will not bring discredit upon the Association. Respect of others and their property, adherence to the rules and guidelines as specified here or by the Association and observance of State and Federal laws are required for participation in this program.

II. PROGRAM RULES:

1. Applicant must serve as a GSA regular season coach during the spring or fall season of the year requested.
2. All players must register as a GSA Member prior to participation and all players must participate in a GSA spring or fall season in the same fiscal year of the select/club team competition.
3. Select/Club team competitions should never be scheduled to conflict with GSA games or activities
4. Players will only be permitted to participate in one select/club team at a time. Selection is on a first come basis with the coach/administrator and evidenced by a signed participant agreement. No player is permitted to make mid season team changes without a coach and GSA board approval.
5. All exceptions should be reviewed and approved in writing by the GSA Board
6. No fundraising should be done specifically for a select team without GSA Board approval.
7. Disputes, disagreements or questions should be reported/directed to the GSA board or directors. GSA policy will apply to all aspects of this program including the Appeals and Discipline process.

Specifications of Request

Age Group: U6 U8 U10 U12 U14 U16 U19 (circle one) Gender: M F Coed

Season: (circle all and write in year) FALL _____ Spring _____

All coaching agreements expire on June 1st of each year. Renewal request must be submitted annually

Coach / Team Plans for practice and competition: _____

I, the undersigned, have read, understand and agree to abide by the above guidelines and rules. I also understand that the above does not replace GSA Policy and Rules but applies in addition.

Please Print Name

Phone Number

Coach's Signature

____/____/____
Date

GSA Board Decision (this section to be reviewed and completed by GSA Board only) DATE ____/____/____

(APPROVED) – _____
Three GSA Board Members to sign here

(DENIED) – All denials must include an in person explanation with the coach and GSA Board



GRAHAM SOCCER ASSOCIATION

This document should be completed by the coach & participant. It will serve as the record of enrollment in select play.

Club or Select Team Participant Agreement

Participants Agreement to Accept and Abide by Rules of the Program

Players, coaches and chaperones participating in the GSA Club or Select Program are exercising a privilege afforded them by GSA and the sponsoring Coach. These players must participate in one GSA regular season annually and exhibit the maturity to be successful in this commitment. Thus, the following guidelines and rules shall apply in all activities.

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Participants are expected to conduct themselves when traveling and at all times in a manner which is in keeping with representing GSA and will not bring discredit upon the Association. Respect for property of others, adherence to the rules and guidelines as specified here or by the Coach/Administrator and observance of State and Federal laws are required for participation in this program.

II. DISCIPLINE RULES:

1. Substance use and/or possession thereof [drugs, alcohol, or, in the case of minors, tobacco] is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.
2. Persistent irresponsible and disrespectful behavior is cause for dismissal from the program.
3. Destruction of property or violation of State and Federal laws is cause for dismissal from the program.
4. Failure to comply with any and all tournament or team rules (curfew, attendance, dress code, schedules, etc.) may be cause for disciplinary action. Persistent failure will be cause for dismissal from the program for the remainder of the current season of this program and could affect a player's future participation.
5. Disputes, disagreements or questions should be reported/directed to the GSA board or directors.

NOTE: If dismissal from the program or an event occurs while traveling, the participant may be sent home immediately at the participant's cost by whatever means is most convenient for the Program Administrators. No reimbursement of program fees will be made to the dismissed participant or the participant's family.

Duration of agreement: Beginning ___/___/___ and ending on ___/___/___ (not to exceed 1 year)

Team Name/Description _____

We, the undersigned, have read, understand and agree to abide by the above guidelines and rules. We also agree to accept actions taken for failure to abide by these guidelines and rules.

Print Participant's Name

Participant Signature

___/___/___
Date

Print Parent's or Legal Guardian's Name

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

___/___/___
Date

Print Coach Name

Coach's Signature

___/___/___
Date

--- Team coach and player should retain this document through the season. A copy of the final roster must be submitted to the GSA Board through the select team's gotsoccer account---

APPENDIX

COACHING RESOURCES

Graham Soccer Association

www.grahamsoccer.net

US Youth Soccer

http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaches/coaches_document_center/

North Texas State Soccer Association

<http://www.ntxsoccer.org/coaching/fieldactivities.aspx>

The Pitch <http://ntexas.bestsoccerever.com/>

<http://www.ntxsoccer.org/coachingforms.aspx>

Challenger Sports

www.thechallengerway.com

GotSoccer

www.gotsoccer.com

Background Check Instructions

<http://www.leaguelineup.com/handouts.asp?url=grahamsoccerassociation&sid=554264809>