TSSAA Girls Soccer / Soccer Sports Calendar and Bylaws

Frequently Asked Questions

2024-2025

Ejection Penalties

1. **Is a student required to sit out two contests for receiving a second caution in a game?**

   No. The penalty for receiving a red card due to a second caution is a one game suspension. The TSSAA Bylaws state the following related to game suspensions due to red cards:
   Soccer *– There is a 2 Game Suspension for serious foul play except for the following offenses which shall result in a 1 Game Suspension:*
   a. *A player anywhere on the field (other than a goalkeeper within his/her own penalty area) who deliberately handles a ball to prevent it from going into the goal.*
   b. *A foul by a player against an opponent who is moving toward his/her offensive goal with an obvious opportunity to score.*
   c. *A player who is disqualified from the contest for receiving his/her second yellow card.*

2. **A coach is ejected for receiving his second yellow card. Does he/she have to sit out the next two games?**

   Yes. Coaches who are ejected from a contest are required to sit out the next two contests regardless of whether or not the coach was issued a straight red card or if they were ejected for receiving their second yellow card. In addition to this penalty, the school is fined $500.

Independent Play During the School Season

3. **Can a student participate in a club practice or recreational league practice during the school season?**

   Yes, provided that the school allows them to do so. Some schools do not allow participation in certain practices during the school season due to conflicts with the school schedule, fear of overuse injuries, or a variety of other reasons. Students permitted to participate in outside practices during the school season can participate in all activities at the practice including scrimmage situations as long as there is only one team involved in the practice.

   Example #1: The U15 Galaxy is having a club practice with 9 v 9 scrimmage periods.

   Ruling: This is permissible since all participants are a part of the U15 Galaxy. This is considered practice and not an independent game.

Example #2: The U15 Galaxy invites the U14 Galaxy to their practice which will include scrimmage situations involving players from both teams.

Ruling: Since players from two teams are involved, this would be considered an independent game. All participants lose their varsity eligibility for the remainder of the year.

4. **Can a student participate in a college ID camp during the high school season?**

   This is usually permissible, but the answer depends on the format of the camp. If the college has invited a group of players or opened up the camp to individuals who are willing to pay a certain fee, we would not consider the activities that go on at the ID camp as an independent game. If a college were to invite a number of club teams to come together to play each other so that they can be evaluated by college coaches, the contests would be considered independent games and would render the students that participated in them ineligible.

5. **Can a student still play for their club team or recreational team during the school season if they do not play on the varsity team?**

   Yes. When a player participates in an independent game during the school season it makes the player ineligible at the varsity level for the remainder of the season. It does not impact the player's eligibility for junior varsity competition.

6. **Are there any exceptions that allow students to participate in an independent game during the school season?**

   Three exceptions to the Independent Game Participation Rule have been approved by the TSSAA Board of Control for Girls' Soccer:

   1. Girls' soccer student athletes may participate in Olympic Development Program competitions which have been recognized with the National Federation of State High School Associations.
   2. Girls' soccer student athletes may participate in U.S. Youth Soccer Conference competitions.
   3. Girls' soccer student athletes may participate in the U.S. Youth Soccer Elite Clubs National League (ECNL) competitions.

   Only one exception has been approved by the TSSAA Board of Control for the boys:

   1. Student athletes may participate in Olympic Development Program competitions which have been recognized with the National Federation of State High School Associations.

7. **Can I leave a player off my roster on the TSSAA Portal in order to play in a club or recreational soccer tournament during the school season?**

   This is permissible provided that the player does not plan on participating in a high school contest prior to participating in the club soccer tournament. If a player has already been added to the roster on the TSSAA Portal, but has not yet participated in a high school contest, that player can be removed from the roster on the Portal by having the school's administration make the request to TSSAA. The player can be added back to the roster on the TSSAA Portal at the conclusion of the club or recreational tournament. Once the player has played in a high school contest this option is no longer available.

8. **Can a student sign a contract to train with a professional academy?**

   A portion of the TSSAA Amateur Rule states the following: *A student who has never used and is not using his/her knowledge of athletics or his/her athletic skill for pay in the sports which this association governs and who has always contested under his/her own name is an amateur.*

   Only students who are considered amateurs are eligible to participate, however, signing a "professional" contract in and of itself does not render a student ineligible as long as they are not being compensated for playing. Students are able to receive payments for travel expenses and other costs incurred for participation in the academy but nothing more. Acceptance of other items of commercial value such as clothing, apparel, and other equipment from someone other than the school is not considered a violation of the amateur rule.

Coaching Restrictions/Sports Calendar

9. **Schools are able to provide individual instruction to no more than six students per day. Does this mean that an assistant coach can coach a club or recreational team in the offseason if there are six or fewer players from the coach's school on that team?**

   No. Coaches and employees of a school are subject to the guidelines of the TSSAA Sports Calendar when working with students from his/her school. The pre-season practice rule in the TSSAA Constitution and Bylaws specifically states that individual instruction can be given to no more than six players per day, but does not give permission for school personnel to give instruction in a team setting to their students when team practice or competition is not permitted by the TSSAA Sports Calendar. Since the club and recreational seasons are typically taking place during the school year when team practice and competition are not permitted, coaches are not able to coach club or recreational teams with students from his/her school on the team unless the activities are taking place during the school season or during the summer. Coaches who are working with their students in the club or recreational setting in the summer would have to step away from their responsibilities during the two-week TSSAA Summer Dead Period.

10. **Does participation in a jamboree count as one of the four preseason scrimmages that are permitted by the TSSAA Sports Calendar?**

    No…..as long as the event actually meets the criteria of a jamboree as described in the TSSAA Bylaws. In order for an event to be considered a jamboree, no team or participant can play more than the equivalent of half of a game or contest during the duration of the event. Therefore, in soccer the maximum time that a team or individual can play would be 40 minutes.

    Example: A team is invited to participate in the Lyon County Jamboree. Each team will participate in 4 "games" with each game lasting 20 minutes.

    Ruling: Participation in this event would not meet the criteria of a jamboree since each team will participate in 80 minutes of competition. Since a jamboree requires that no team or participant shall play more than the equivalent of half of a game or contest, the event would have to be considered a scrimmage date. A scrimmage date counts as two preseason scrimmages regardless of how many contests are played in a single day as a part of the event.

11. **Is there a limit to the number of players from one school that can participate on the same independent team in the preseason or offseason?**

    No. There are no restrictions on the number of players from one school playing on an independent team in the offseason. There are restrictions for other team sports such as basketball, baseball and softball, but these do not apply for soccer.

Uniform Requirements

12. **Can our away jerseys for our varsity games have solid sleeves that are our school colors?**

    No. Away jerseys must be solid white. Colors cannot appear on the jersey except for the school logo, manufacturer logo, school name, team name, or player name. **NFHS Rule 4.1.1a** states the following: *The visiting team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks, and the home team shall wear dark jerseys and socks (dark is defined as any color which contrasts with white).*

13. **Do the shorts of the visiting team have to be solid white?**

    No. Only the jerseys and socks of the visiting team are required to be solid white. Shorts of teammates shall be of similar color, design and pattern but are not required to be white.

14. **Can our home jerseys have white trim?**

    Yes. A minimal amount of white trim is permissible, but is subject to being deemed illegal if there is a substantial amount of white on the jersey.