

Lake Highlands Soccer Association Sportsmanship re Scoring

The following proposal would be added as Section 7.20 of the Rules and Procedures, to read, in its entirety, as follows:

Section 7.20 Sportsmanship re Scoring.

- (a) General Purpose. LHSA strives to have a competitive balance between all teams, since this will (i) provide better competitive challenges to the players, (ii) be more enjoyable to players and spectators, and (iii) discourage loss of interest due to competitive differences. Coaches, by action or non-action, who encourage or permit game scores to become lopsided shall be deemed to be engaging in unsportsmanlike conduct, which shall be actionable by LHSA under the circumstances provided herein.
- (b) Lopsided Scores. For purposes hereof, a lopsided score is generally considered one where the scoring differential is five (5) goals or more. The extent of the disparity in score is also indicative of the extent of unsporting conduct and will be considered in assessing the severity of punishment. LHSA recognizes that there may be actual significant competitive differences between two teams which legitimately give rise to a lopsided result; however, if the coaches and managers at the field take appropriate actions to avoid a lopsided result, then their actions will not be considered unsportsmanlike for purposes of this provision. The scoring of "own goals" to manipulate the final score differential is not acceptable and will be subject to sanctions.
- (c) Recommended Actions. The following list of actions are recommendations only, and there may be numerous other actions which can be taken by the coaches and managers in complying with the spirit of this rule. Each coach should have prepared, at the beginning of the season, a strategy and plan of action in the case of a lopsided game and should have schooled and practiced with his players to effectuate such pre-planned strategy. LHSA's recommended list of actions to avoid a lopsided result include, but are not limited to, the following, which should be used singularly or aggregately as the situation may merit and as the disproportionate scoring progresses: (i) requiring a certain number of passes (e.g. 5-10-15) before a shot on a goal is allowed or a certain number of passes in the defensive half before advancing into offensive half; (ii) not allowing a player to score an additional goal unless all other players on the team have scored; (iii) requiring all players to use their non-dominant foot for shooting; (iv) exchanging player positions on the fields, such as moving forwards to fullback and vice-versa; (v) removing a player from the game who has scored or removing a dominant player from the game; (vi) voluntarily reducing the number of players on the field; (vii) use offsides intentionally to turn over possession; (viii) requiring all players to pass the ball with their non-dominant foot; and (ix) requiring all shots to be taken from distance, such as outside the penalty area or other appropriate distance. However, to preserve the dignity of the other team, it is not appropriate for the coaches to yell out "stop scoring" or take similar derogatory actions. Coaches should use appropriate discretion; advise subs or bring players over discreetly to advise of new tactics/strategies. It is not the responsibility of the referee crew to advise a coach when a lopsided game exists; it is not the responsibility of the referee crew to request coaches to take one or more of the recommended actions or other actions; and it is not the responsibility of the referee crew to take any action to enforce this rule.
- (d) Sanctions. LHSA is serious about this and violations will not be tolerated and will be subject to sanctions. Commissioner should address this with the coach at the first indication of any such unsporting conduct; formal disciplinary action will be handled by the LHSA Appeals and Disciplinary Committee. Sanctions may include: (i) one or more game suspensions, (ii) perform field marshall duties, (iii) attendance at designated seminars and classes, (iv) removal as a rostered official, (v) ban from attending games, (vi) service duties to LHSA, (vii) fines, (viii) move the team to a more appropriate level of play, (ix) break apart the team and assign players to diverse teams, based on their competitive needs, or (x) other appropriate action. Although LHSA expects its teams participating in interleague competition to honor this provision, LHSA cannot enforce this rule against other association teams playing in an interleague competition, unless the playing league rules have a similar provision.