



Concussion Initiatives and Heading for Marion County Youth Soccer Association

The Marion County Youth Soccer Association (MCYSA) is providing the following implementation guidelines for U.S. Soccer's Recognize to Recover Player Safety Campaign, specifically as it relates to concussion initiatives and heading for MCYSA youth players.

The U.S. Soccer Federation (USSF) is recommending, and West Virginia Soccer Association Board of Directors has voted to require all member clubs and leagues to adopt, the new rules as it relates to heading, as follows:

- Players in U11 programs and younger shall not engage in heading, either in practices or in games.
- Limited heading in practice for players in U12 and U13 programs. More specifically, these players shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes of heading training per week, with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week.
- Referees should enforce these restrictions by age group according to the specified rules. Referees will not be assessing the age of individual players on the field; they will enforce the rules for the age group.
- MCYSA Travel Clubs as well as teams travelling out of county need to be aware of the rules that will apply when traveling. Confirm how this rule will be applied with the tournament or match prior to the event.
- In adherence to these new requirements, referees have been instructed by USSF of the following rule addition:
 - When a player deliberately heads the ball in a game, an indirect free kick (IFK) should be awarded to the opposing team from the spot of the offense. If the deliberate header occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred.
 - *Deliberate heading to prevent a goal does NOT meet the criteria of a send-off offense under Law 12, as it does not deny "an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal." Do not show a player a red card for this infraction, even if her or his deliberate heading prevents a goal.*