

Smiths Station United Soccer Association
Fall 2023 - Spring 2024 Season
U4

- **General Information:**

- *Registration Fee:*
 - \$75.00 per player during registration period.
- *Late Fee:*
 - None
- *What is included in registration fee:*
 - Alabama Soccer Association - State Registration Fee
 - City of Smiths Station – Parks & Recreation Fee
 - SSUSA Club Fees
 - Home and Away jerseys
- *What is not included in registration fee:*
 - Black Socks (Logos and designs are okay)
 - Black Shorts
 - Soccer cleats (Required to participate in practice and matches)
 - Shin Guards (Required to participate in practice and matches)
 - Size 3 Soccer Ball
 - Water Bottle with water or sports drink

Note: To keep our cost of participation affordable to all that want to participate, SSUSA will have several fund-raisers. Fund-raisers will be utilized to cover additional costs required such as referee's, field markings, goals, nets, corner flags, financial assistance programs and general operating fees. Each player/family will be asked to participate in these fund-raising programs.

- **Player Eligibility:**

- Male and Female players born after 01/01/2020
- Male and Female players born before 12/31/2021 may be eligible provided they are potty-trained

- **Goals/Expectations:**

- U4 is an Introduction/Basic Instruction phase
- Instructions on how to:
 - Run
 - Move side to side
 - Dribble the ball
 - Strike the ball

- **Practice:**

- Minimum/Maximum once per week
- 30-45 minutes per session on weekdays as field space allows
 - 6:00 to 8:00 at Smiths Station Sports Complex

- Teams will share field space as needed
- **Matches:**
 - Saturdays
 - 8 to 10 match season (weather permitting)
- **Coaches:**
 - Parent/Volunteer
 - Coach Incentive Program:
 - Head Coach: \$25.00 credit/refund to be issued at the end of the season back to the form of payment used during registration
 - Coaches shirt
 - Head Coach and one (1) Assistant Coach will receive a shirt
 - Background Checks/Risk Management:
 - All coaches and volunteers must have background checks and be approved by Alabama Soccer Association Risk Management Program
 - This includes completing Safe Sport certification on-line training
 - US Soccer coaching grassroots license reimbursement
 - Provide a copy of your certification and receive \$25 reimbursement
- **Draft:**
 - None, players shall be randomly placed on rosters
- **End of Season Tournament:**
 - None
- **Academy/All-Star Teams:**
 - None

Laws of the Game - Modified

- **Law 1 - The Field of Play**
 - *Dimensions:*
 - The field of play must be rectangular
 - The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line
 - Length: 25 yards (75 feet)
 - Width: 15 yards (45 feet)
 - *Field Markings:*
 - Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide.
 - The field of play is divided into two (2) halves by a halfway line
 - The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line
 - *The Goal Area:*
 - None
 - *The Penalty Area:*
 - None
 - *Corner Flags:*
 - None

- *Corner Arc:*
 - None
- *Goals:*
 - Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line.
 - They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar.
 - The recommended distance between the post is six (6) feet and the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is four (4) feet
 - *Note: Goals for this age group may be smaller*
 - **Safety: Goals must be anchored securely to the ground. Portable goals may only be used if they satisfy this requirement**
- **Law 2 - The Ball:**
 - Size three (3).
 - The ball will need to be FIFA Quality
- **Law 3 - The Number of Players:**
 - *Match:*
 - A match is played by two (2) teams, each consisting of no more than four (4) players with no goalkeepers
 - *Substitutions:*
 - At any stoppage of play and unlimited
 - Note: If a player who is suspected to have a head injury shall leave the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made at that moment. Per U.S. Soccer's Concussion Initiative, if a player is suspected to have a head injury the referee is instructed to stop play to allow for treatment/evaluation as needed. If the player leaves the field of play for additional evaluation, a substitution can be made at that moment. The player with the suspected head injury may not return to the match unless a Healthcare Professional (HCP) or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) has cleared the player. Any coach or parent insisting on returning the player to the match without approved clearance will result in the referee ending the match
 - *Playing Time:*
 - Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time. It is the coach's responsibility to enforce this rule
 - ***Note: Coaches will be allowed the discretion on playing time for players that do not regularly attend practice/training sessions***
 - *Rosters:*
 - Minimum number of players on a roster shall be no less than six (6) players.
 - Maximum number of players on a roster shall be no more than eight (8) players.
- **Law 4 - The Players Equipment**
 - Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game

- Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must distinguish teams
- *Note: If needed, teams can be distinguished by scrimmage vests*
- Shin Guards are MANDATORY for both practice/training sessions and matches, and must be covered entirely by socks
- **Safety: A player must not use equipment or wear anything that is dangerous to himself or another player (including any kind of jewelry; except for a medical alert bracelet).**
- **Law 5 - The Referee**
 - None, Referees are not required for this age group
 - Both coaches should officiate/manage the match.
 - The matches are intended to be an opportunity for our young players to experience the fun of playing
 - Minimal rules are needed and should be applied with a generous amount of flexibility
 - Let the players have freedom to play with little interruption
 - All infringements should be briefly explained to the players
- **Law 6 - The Other Match Officials**
 - None
- **Law 7 - The Duration of the Match**
 - The match shall be divided into two (2) halves of not more than ten (10) minutes, based on the energy and motivation of the players
 - There shall be a maximum five (5) minute break between each half
 - Water breaks can be given as needed
- **Law 8 - The Start and Restart of Play**
 - Conform to FIFA laws of the Game, with the exception that the defending team is at least four (4) yards from the ball until it is in play
 - Remember, let them play and do not interfere for technicalities
- **Law 9 - The Ball in and out of Play**
 - Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game
- **Law 10 - The Method of Scoring**
 - Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game
- **Law 11 - Offside**
 - None
- **Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct**
 - Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that deliberate heading is not allowed in U4 matches
 - In all instances explain the infraction to the player
 - All free kicks shall be indirect
 - No cards will be shown in the U4 age group
- **Law 13 - Free Kicks**
 - Conform to FIFA Laws of the Game, with the exception that all free kicks are indirect AND the opponents are to be at least four (4) yards away from the ball until it is kicked

- **Law 14 - The Penalty Kick**
 - None
- **Law 15 - The Throw-In**
 - None, the ball will be placed on the ground and dribbled into play
- **Law 16 - The Goal Kick**
 - None, the ball will be placed on the ground and dribbled into play
- **Law 17 - The Corner Kick**
 - None, the ball will be placed on the ground and dribbled into play.
- **Law 18 - The Technical Area**
 - Coaches, managers and players not in play must remain in the technical area or on bench, with the exception when a coach is utilized as Referee or Match official
 - No more than two (2) coaches/managers are allowed in the technical area during the matches
- **Law 19 - The Substitution Area**
 - Players that are wanting to enter the field of play must first enter the substitution area; Center line
 - When the match official, referee, or assistant referee allows for a substitution, the player being substituted must fully leave the field of play prior to the new player entering the field of play
 - If the match official allows for substitutions, only players in the substitution area can enter the field of play
 - Match officials may allow for substitution in the event of a player injury