



Red and Yellow Card Accumulation

The GSSL desires to start tracking yellow card accumulation to help us better control players who receive numerous yellow cards while playing in GSSL scheduled games. Below are proposed new versions of Rule 17 and Rule 18 in our GSSL Rules document. We aren't ready to implement this quite yet since we have not established a tracking mechanism, but it's important that we have this rule in place when we announce to our referee and players that yellow cards are no longer without consequences.

In Rule 17, we are proposing to issue penalties for red and yellow card accumulation both over an individual season and over a rolling 365 day period. The table immediately below is a summary of our proposal, with the details included in the rewrite of the two rules. The limits shown are the number of cards allowed before an accumulation penalty is assessed; that is, the accumulation penalty will be assessed when the card count exceeds the limits shown. Note that with a seasonal red card limit of 0, every red card will result in a suspension and possibly a fine.

Card Type	Who	Seasonal Limit	Seasonal Penalty	365 Day Limit	365 Day Penalty	Lifetime Limit
Red	Player	0	See Rule 17	2	2 weeks	5
	Team	Winter - 2 Spring - 3 Summer - 2 Fall - 3	1 game forfeit	5	Exec Director review, possible forfeit remaining season and/or future registration hold	
Yellow	Player	Winter - 1 Spring - 2 Summer - 1 Fall - 2	1 game	4	1 game	-
	Team	Winter - 8 Spring - 12 Summer - 8 Fall - 12	1 game forfeit	20	Exec Director review, possible forfeit remaining season and/or future registration hold	

The GSSL staff developed the penalties included in the revised rules, so they believe what is proposed is fair, but we are always willing to listen to other opinions.

In Rule 18 we are proposing a streamlined appeal process that does not include any members of the board. It attempts to incorporate the steps our staff takes when reviewing a red card:

1. Review the referee's game report.
2. Contact the referee if the game report is not clear.
3. Email a standard form to the player and his or the manager describing the suspension and any fine as described in Rule 17.



4. If the suspension is for more than one week an appeal may be made.
 5. If the player appeals the suspension or fine, we contact both managers asking for their help in gathering more information about the incident. We will contact the referee to ask for more clarification if a player's or team manager's version of the incident varies from the referee's game report.
 6. We review the player's red card history (we have a file for every player who has been issued a red card back to the 1970's) and search through email for other complaints about the player, then discuss as a group and make a final decision.
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Rule 17-PENALTIES FOR MISCONDUCT

- 17.1 The GSSL reserves the right to refuse the opportunity for participation in its matches to any person or team who shows by behavior a lack of consideration for their opponents, the officials, or the spirit of the game.
- 17.2 Accumulated player misconduct: The GSSL has established two categories for player game misconduct (red and yellow card) accumulation.

Seasonal accumulation counts the number of game misconduct penalties accumulated by a player in a single GSSL season.

Yearly accumulation counts the number of game misconduct penalties accumulated by a player in the prior 365 day period.

Each category will have its own accumulation limit that results in game suspensions when a player exceeds the limit.

- 17.3 Suspensions for seasonal yellow card accumulation:

Winter and Summer seasons have a seasonal yellow card accumulation limit of 1. A player receiving 2 yellow cards in the season will be suspended for 1 game.

Spring and Fall seasons have a seasonal yellow card accumulation limit of 2. A player receiving 3 yellow cards in the season will be suspended for 1



game.

A player's seasonal yellow card accumulation count includes yellow cards received in all GSSL games the player participates in during that season except a player who receives two yellow cards in one game resulting in a red card will not have those yellow cards included in the player's seasonal yellow card accumulation count since the player must serve a red card suspension.

If a player is competing in multiple divisions, the one game suspension will be served in the same division in which the most recent yellow card was received.

If the player is a guest player in a division he or she does not regularly play, the suspension will be served in the same division in which the most recent previous yellow card was received.

Every player's seasonal yellow card accumulation count will reset to 0 at the beginning of each new GSSL season.

17.4 Suspensions for yearly yellow card accumulation:

The yearly yellow card accumulation limit is 4. A player receiving 5 yellow cards in the past 365 days will be suspended for 1 game. A player receiving a yellow card that results in the player exceeding both his or her yearly and seasonal yellow card accumulation limits must serve both a 1 game seasonal suspension followed by a 1 game yearly suspension.

A player's yearly accumulation count includes yellow cards received in all GSSL games the player participates in during the previous 365 days except a player who receives two yellow cards in one game resulting in a red card will not have those yellow cards included in the player's yearly accumulation count since the player must serve a red card suspension.

If a player is competing in multiple divisions, the 1 game suspension will be served in the same division in which the most recent yellow card was received.

If the player is a guest player in a division he or she does not regularly play, the suspension will be served in the same division in which the most recent previous yellow card was received.

A player's Yearly Accumulation count will reset to 0 when the player has



gone 365 consecutive days without a yellow card.

17.5 Suspensions for seasonal red cards accumulation:

The seasonal red card accumulation limit is 0. A player will receive a suspension for every red card received in every GSSL season.

The GSSL will retain the player's Player Identification Card during the suspension, and the player may not participate in any GSSL sanctioned games. If a player has received a fine, the suspension will continue until the fine is paid. If the suspension is not completed in one playing season it shall continue into the next season.

Ejection (red card) for persistent infraction of the law (the second yellow card) shall result in a one seasonal week suspension.

Ejection (red card) for foul and abusive language shall result in a one seasonal week suspension.

Any player who deliberately strikes, kicks, elbows, head butts, or otherwise uses excessive force against an opponent or teammate, away from a legitimate challenge for the ball, will receive a minimum suspension of three seasonal weeks. The Executive Director may lengthen the suspension if the act causes injury or is judged especially egregious. Unintentional collisions or reckless challenges that lack obvious intent fall under the standard "reckless play" provisions and carry lesser penalties.

Any player who intentionally makes, or clearly attempts to make, violent physical contact with a referee or assistant referee (punching, kicking, charging, pushing, spitting, etc.) will be suspended for a minimum of one calendar year. The Executive Director will determine the final suspension length after reviewing all reports.

Any player who intentionally commits or threatens physical assault against another player, including serious post match incidents or off ball confrontations, or who escalates verbal abuse into deliberate violent conduct, will receive a minimum suspension of one calendar year. The Executive Director may lengthen the ban if weapons, repeated blows, or injuries are involved. Verbal disagreements or accidental contact that do not involve a clear, deliberate act of violence are handled as lesser misconduct.



Intentionally spitting towards a player or referee, whether or not the spit makes contact, will receive a minimum suspension of one year. The GSSL Executive Director shall decide the length of suspension and the amount of the fine.

Ejection (red card) for intentionally stopping a goal or a clear goal scoring opportunity by means of one of the nine major fouls shall have no additional penalty other than expulsion from the match.

Ejection (red card) for slide tackling in divisions where slide tackling is not permitted shall have no additional penalty other than expulsion from the match, except in the case where the Officiator determines the play to be serious foul play or the victim of the slide tackle is unable to continue playing in the match. In the case of serious foul play or where the victim of the slide tackle is unable to continue playing in the match, the GSSL Executive Director shall decide whether any additional penalty is imposed.

Ejection (red card) for reckless play from behind in divisions where reckless play from behind is not permitted shall have no additional penalty other than expulsion from the match, except in the case where the Officiator determines the play to be serious foul play or the victim of the reckless play is unable to continue playing in the match. In the case of serious foul play or where the victim of the reckless play is unable to continue playing in the match, the GSSL Executive Director shall decide whether any additional penalty is imposed.

17.6 Suspensions for yearly red card accumulation:

The yearly red card accumulation limit is 2. A player receiving 3 red cards in the past 365 days will be suspended for 2 weeks. The yearly accumulation suspension and fine must be served after completing the seasonal accumulation suspension and the payment of any seasonal fine described in Rule 17.5.

A player's yearly red card accumulation count includes red cards received in all GSSL games the player participates in during the previous 365 days. The yearly red card accumulation count includes red cards received for persistent infraction (2 yellow cards in one game).

A player's yearly red card accumulation count will reset to 0 when the player has gone 365 consecutive days without a red card.



17.7 Persistent misconduct: Players or teams who show a pattern of persistent misconduct over time may be suspended from play in the GSSL for a time period to be determined by the Executive Director. Players or teams who are found to display persistent misconduct will be notified that their behavior must be corrected, including the penalty that will be imposed if the behavior persists.

More than 5 yellow cards received by a player, including all games played in the GSSL in his or her lifetime is considered persistent misconduct.

17.8 Team misconduct accumulation: Any team whose rostered players receive 3 red cards in a Winter/Summer season or 4 red cards in a Fall/Spring season (or 6 in a rolling 365 days) will forfeit its next scheduled league match. Reaching 6 red cards in a season triggers an automatic review by the Executive Director, who may (i) force the team to forfeit the remaining season, and/or (ii) decline its registration for the next season. Team-level sanctions do not erase the individual suspensions already applied under 17.5 / 17.6.

17.9 Definition of a Team: For the purpose of applying team level sanctions, a "Team" is defined as a registered entity competing in a specific GSSL age division (e.g., Open, O-30, O-40, etc.) during a single season. A Team is identified by a combination of the following factors:

- The official team name registered with the league for that season, and
- The listed captain or manager of record for that team, and
- A core group of players regularly rostered with that team, as determined by GSSL records.

A team may not avoid sanctions through superficial changes such as altering its name or changing its captain during the season.

Rule 18-APPEALS

18.1 The GSSL will deliver a notice to each suspended player and the player's manager detailing the length of suspension and any fine associated with the suspension.



- 18.2 Suspensions of more than 1 week may be appealed to the Executive Director following the process described in this rule.
- 18.3 Appeals on all matters must be made in writing and addressed to the Executive Director. The appeal must state the reason for the appeal and be submitted within 7 days of the incident on which the appeal is based. The appeal may include statements from other players who witnessed the incident.
- 18.4 The GSSL will contact the team managers of the teams involved in the incident for help in providing additional information about the incident. The GSSL will contact the referee for clarification if a player's or manager's version of the incident varies from the referee's game report.
- 18.5 The GSSL will review any previous complaints about the player's behavior and any previous suspensions given to the player.
- 18.6 The decision of the Executive Director will be rendered within 30 days of the date of the appeal, and be provided in writing to the player and his or her team manager. The players and team manager of the opposing team will not be notified of the final decision.
- 18.7 For suspensions of 10 weeks or more, the player must attend a restorative-justice meeting (in person or video) with the Executive Director and at least one staff member before reinstatement.