

Side By Side: A Spectator Policy for SYSA City Tournament Games

SYSA's goal is to encourage a positive, collaborative atmosphere for players, coaches, referees, and spectators. To achieve that end, SYSA created the ***Side By Side*** policy for spectators at all SYSA City Tournament games.

The goals of the ***Side By Side*** policy are:

- To improve the overall tournament atmosphere for players
- To make it easier for coaches to communicate with their players
- To promote camaraderie and a shared experience for spectators
- To help defuse the tensions that sometimes run too high among partisan spectators
- To emphasize to all that the games are played ***for the kids***

The ***Side By Side*** concept is simple, and is mandated by many soccer organizations and youth tournaments. All spectators at games must be on one side of the field. Across the field, on the opposite side, will be only the players, coaches, and managers (that is, any player or adult with a team player card or member pass) for each team.

In addition, SYSA encourages adult spectators to consider acting as role models to emphasize the important elements in a youth soccer game: good effort, sportsmanship, fair play, and fun. We ask parents to embrace their shared experience as soccer parents and join together, regardless of which team their child plays for, and applaud the efforts of all players. Compliments and positive comments for players ON BOTH TEAMS send a strong message to players that while winning is good, playing well and fair and with respect for your opponents is what is important.

Guidelines for ***Side By Side*** at City Tournament Games

- The **home team chooses** which side of the field BOTH teams take, and which half of that sideline they want to set up on. The away team locates on the other half of that side.
- All **spectators must remain on the OPPOSITE side** of the field from the teams. Spectators should remain on the opposite side of the field away from the teams from warm-ups through the final whistle.
- **Referees have the right to remove any spectator** whose behavior is disruptive, including failure to follow the sideline policy. Coaches are directed to assist the referees in enforcing this policy.
- **U11 and U12 Coaching and Spectator Areas** – Because U11 and U12 field setup is different than full size 11 vs 11, **the Side By Side policy is different for games played across the width of the field.** Both teams shall be on the same side of the field, on the touchline with the permanent goals. No spectator, players or coaches shall be any closer than fourteen yards from the goal line or corner. No spectators are allowed in the buffer area between the two adjoining fields. [For full U11 and U12 field setup instructions, click here.](#)
- Spectators should abide by the **Code of Conduct** that all parents signed at the beginning of the season:
 1. Always be supportive of your child, their teammates and coaches.
 2. Never badger the opposition or argue with their supporters. Be appreciative of good play from both sides.
 3. Never harass or criticize the referees and assistant referees.
 4. After each match, have a positive attitude and show an appreciation for the importance of your child's effort.

Let's make this a great City Tournament for your players, your team, and your neighbors!