

Eleven Reasons Why The OYSAN State League Uses Restrict Substitution.
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First. The rhythm of soccer in America is universally fast and direct, but not controlled. With limited subs, players have to learn how to slow down and change the pace of their game from slow to fast and fast to slow, because it is impossible to run without resting for 80 to 90 minutes. When the game starts to slow down, there is always more constructive soccer played and that will lead to a more savvy soccer population.

Second. Neither players nor coaches really understand soccer "match-ups," because free subs (and usually mass subs) do not allow these important tactical situations to emerge over the course of a game. The substitution rules are the primary obstacle to developing insightful players.

Third. Soccer is supposed to be a players game, but free substitutions allow coaches to constantly pull the strings and that has not proven to be particularly effective in producing "thinking" players. When there are limited substitutions, coaches have to think about their "moves" and live with them until the next break. This helps coaches better understand the game, too.

Fourth. Limiting substitution will force coaches to play their players for "blocks" of time. With 80 to 90-minute games, this will actually improve the kid's enjoyment, while exposing those coaches who do not share playing time equitably.

Fifth. Subbing every few minutes disrupts the flow of the game and does not allow players to develop tactical solutions to their particular small-group situations. As a result, we have lots of runners who hustle, but very few skillful, creative soccer players.

Sixth. Players who aspire to higher levels of play must learn to play by international rules. FIFA-7 is the standard form of the sub rule used in America for top-level competitions and the state league is the top-level competition for teams and players who aspire to move forward.

Seventh. There are always soccer players who are either lazy or cerebral, who need time to play their game without fear of being pulled off the field every few minutes and punished for not running. Oftentimes, these players are simultaneously the most frustrating and most gifted on a team. Some of the best goalscorers in history were not particularly mobile or energetic...until they had an opportunity to find a yard of space and nip in front of a defender to score.

Eighth. The Midwest Regional League has adopted the FIFA-7 substitution rules of the USYS National Championship Series, which includes the OYSAN State Cup. The next logical progression is to implement that model within the OYSAN State League and thereby create a vertically consistent system for all elite levels of competition.

Ninth. Referees and assistant referees must also gain experience with the pace and rhythm of international soccer. By reducing the number of substitution opportunities, the match officials will become more attuned to the nuances of play and less concerned with the mundane management of player changes.

Tenth. There are many coaches who use unlimited substitution to callously disrupt the flow of an opponent's play or who use the stoppages in play to kill the clock towards the end of a game. Limited substitution forces the coach to make changes and live with them. It is not possible to negatively impact the game in ways that border on ethical misconduct.

Eleven. In youth sport, playing time is precious to both players and their parents. Given the evolution of club carding, where age-appropriate players can be moved between teams within a club, there is an opportunity to reduce match roster size and increase playing time.

Any negatives???

One. Players get injured and a team may have to play short. Many times in local competitions, an injured player can, and should be, replaced; that is, until coaches begin to violate the spirit of the exception by reinserting their better players in close games and the loophole is voted out!

Two. The balancing of the line-ups becomes the biggest challenge for the coach. For example, when does the strongest line-up play together? Does the strongest line-up start the game, finish the game, or play in the middle period? What is the best way to rotate the players? Does the system of play change when the personnel changes? When will the substitutions be made in each half? How does the coach balance squad playing time, given the quality of the opposition and the importance of the game?