**Soccer Study Guide**

**INTRODUCTION**

Soccer is a fast-moving, action-packed sport. It is one of the most popular sports in the world today. Soccer was the forerunner of modern football. Soccer was the only football-type game in the United States until American-style football became popular in the 1870’s.

Today, soccer is included in the physical education programs of many schools. In addition, many elementary and high school students play it in organized after-school programs.

Soccer demands physically fit players since the game includes running as much as three or four miles per match. The player’s arms, legs, heart and lungs all get a good workout during the average soccer game.

**HISTORY**

Many different cultures have played a sport similar to the modern game of soccer but no one can really say with any certainty when or where soccer began but it is known that the earlier variations of what later became soccer were played almost 3000 years ago.

In 400 B.C., the Chinese played a version of soccer using a leather ball stuffed with hair. The Romans also played a version of soccer called “harpastan.” Soccer was played in various forms in England for about 400 years before it was finally accepted as a “respectable” game.

On May 21, 1904, the Federation Internationale de Football Association (F.I.F.A.) was founded for the purpose of formulating rules and regulations to govern the game of soccer. The F.I.F.A. today is responsible for all international games, as well as the World Cup Tournament, which is held every four years.

**HOW SOCCER IS PLAYED**

Points are made in soccer by kicking, heading or deflecting (using any part of the body other than arms and hands) the ball into the goal. Players are not allowed to touch or carry the ball with their hands. The goalie is the only player who can use his or her hands in the penalty area. Professional soccer games are comprised of two 45-minute halves with a break period in between. Youth and High School games are comprised of two equal halves ranging from 25-40 minutes per half.

A soccer field is approximately 100 to 120 yards long and 55 to 75 yards wide. The goal net is 8 feet high and 24 feet wide.

**POSITIONS**

A soccer team consists of eleven persons, all of whom work together to accomplish the team’s goals. Each of the eleven persons has a distinct job to do, and each of these jobs must be coordinated with the other ten player’s task.

**Attackers-** players who are more offensive minded.

**Midfielders**- players who must control the middle of the field. Must support offensive and defensive players.

**Defenders**- players who are more defensive minded. First priority is to defend the defensive 3rd of the field.

\*\*\* even though these players have different priorities, it is the job of all players to play defense when your team doesn't have the ball, and offense when your team does have the ball!!!

**Goal Keeper-** the last line of defense. The only player who is allowed to use his/her hands on the playing field (only in the penalty box)  
 **BASIC SKILLS**

**Trapping / Ball Control** - player attempts to control the ball by stopping it or changing its direction using their feet, thigh, or chest.

**Dribbling**- touching the ball with inside and outside of the foot with the purpose of maintaining possession and/or advancing the ball.

**Heading**- a skill used to strike the ball using the upper half of the forehead.

**Passing**- using various parts of the body to move the ball to a teammate

**Tackling**-taking the ball away from your opponent  
  
**Restarts**

**Throw-ins**- taken by the other team when the ball is kicked over the touch line or side line

**Goal kicks**- awarded to the defensive team when the ball is kicked over the goal line by the offensive team

**Corner Kicks**- awarded to the offensive team when the defense kicks the ball over their own goal line

**Kickoff –** is used to start each half and after a goal is scored.

**PENALTIES**

**Direct kick**- a free kick that can go directly into the net. It is awarded for serious infractions (tripping, holding, hand ball, pushing, etc.)

**Indirect kick**- a free kick that must be touched by another player before the ball goes into the net. Awarded for less serious infractions (off sides, dangerous play, etc)

**Penalty Kick** – a penalty kick is awarded when a serious infraction is committed inside the penalty area.

**Offsides –** occurs when you have less than two opposing players between you and the goal you’re attacking. Offsides may only occur on the offensive half of the field. You CAN’T be offsides on your half of the field.

**Field Layout**

