

Black Swamp Soccer League
Constitution

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ARTICLE I - Name

The name of the organization shall be the “Black Swamp Soccer League” (BSSL). The league shall be a state-chartered, non-profit and educational organization.

ARTICLE II – Purpose

- A. The purpose of the BSSL is to organize and promote soccer clubs, leagues, and societies; to encourage said clubs, leagues and societies to provide all interested youth within their boundaries, irrespective of sex and skill levels, the opportunity to play soccer; and to encourage good sportsmanship and fair play for all participants their in.
- B. The policies and objectives of the BSSL in achieving its purpose shall be consistent with and serve to promote the policies, objectives and by-laws of the state chartering organization, the Ohio Youth Soccer Association North (OYSAN) and the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA).
- C. The league achieves its purpose by
 - a. Encouraging the development of clubs, organizations and programs, and ensuring that soccer is made available to all youth for recreation of competition.
 - b. Encouraging the development and practice of good sportsmanship
 - c. Developing the principles of fair play
 - d. Building good character
 - e. Promoting the growth of soccer
 - f. Instructing, training and educating players, coaches, referees, managers, administrators and league and club officers to develop and improve their abilities and skills.

ARTICLE III – Affiliation

The BSSL shall be an affiliated organization with the state chartering organization know as the Ohio Youth Soccer Association North (OYSAN) and through such affiliation shall also be affiliated with the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and the Federation International de Football Association (FIFA)

ARTICLE IV – Membership

A. Full Member Club

- 1. Member clubs are authorized their own by-laws and constitution, but are not required by BSSL. The BSSL reserves the right to refuse to accept for membership any organization whose constitution is in conflict with that of the USSF, the USYSA, OYSAN and/or the BSSL.

2. Full Member Club Duties
 - i. Each member club shall retain its own autonomy, but will adhere to the constitution and rules of the BSSL in all matters pertaining to intra-league, inter-league, interstate, regional, national and international competition, or in other competitions sponsored or approved by league and/or its affiliates,
 - ii. Each member club shall register each and every soccer player and coach of each and every soccer team that is sponsored, coached or administered by the member club for purposes of participation within the league. Only affiliated clubs may register players, coaches and teams with the BSSL.
 - iii. Each member club is responsible for ensuring that membership adheres to the constitution, bylaws and rules of the BSSL.
 - iv. Each member club has the responsibility to provide opportunities for every interested youth within its assigned territory to play affiliated soccer within the BSSL program structure, regardless of sex and skill level.

B. Provisional Membership

1. All applications for full membership in this league shall be submitted to the Board of Directors of this league. By simple majority vote, at a duly called board meeting, the applicant may be granted provisional membership with the league for one seasonal year.
2. Provisional membership infers the right of the applicant to participate in league programs during this provisional period. This provisional membership provides both the applicant and full member clubs ample opportunity to determine if full membership is appropriate and desirable. Full membership into the league shall be voted at the end of the provisional period.
3. The BSSL shall reserve the right to postpone action on an application for membership until the board is satisfied that all required materials and fees have been submitted, and the administrative capabilities and philosophy of the applicant is in accordance with those of the league.

C. Admission of Members

1. Applicants for membership to the BSSL may be granted member status as described in the preceding sections of this article. The league's Board of Directors shall be the sole authority in determining whether to grant or withdraw member status to any organizations or club.
2. Acceptance of application for full membership shall require two-thirds (2/3) vote in favor by the current full member clubs of the BSSL. Full membership can be granted by following an applicant's provisional member period. Full membership can be granted at any duly called

meeting of the board of directors where the necessary two-thirds (2/3) full member quorum is present.

D. Term of Membership

The term of membership for all members shall be one (1) seasonal year. Such membership shall automatically renew each seasonal year provided the member remains its good standing in this league. Membership may be terminated by the Board of Directors for cause and by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the current full member clubs of the league at any properly called meeting of the Board of Directors

ARTICLE V – Boundaries

A. League Territory

The territory boundaries of the BSSL shall include all communities eligible to affiliate with the state chartering organization (OYSAN)

B. League Groupings

The Board of Directors shall have the right to establish districts, regions or other groupings of member clubs as it deems necessary, to conduct it's policies or programs. Such groupings shall be duly published as part of the leagues by-laws and operating rules.

C. Domicile Rights of a Member

A member organization (club) shall consist of players, coaches, club officers and parents residing in the local school district with league boundaries. Participation of players not in the local school district covered by member BSSL clubs must be approved by the board. If a player wishes to play for another BSSL team, the player must obtain written permission from the directors of both clubs involved and notify the league registrar.

ARTICLE VI – Seasonal Year

The seasonal year for the BSSL will be August 1 of the current year through July 31 of the following year.

ARTICLE VII – Board of Directors and Officers

A. Board of Directors

The responsibility for management and operation of the league shall reside with the Board of Directors. The board shall consist of elected officers, member club representatives, advisors and appointed positions as defined in section B below.

B. Establishment of the Board

1. The voting members of the board of directors of the BSSL shall be composed of four (4) elected officers, one (1) advisor and one (1) club representative per member club. The board shall also contain non-voting appointed positions as defined by the voting members of the board.
2. Voting members of the board of directors consist of:
 - a. President (elected officer)
 - b. Vice President (elected officer)
 - c. Treasurer (elected officer)
 - d. Secretary (elected officer)
 - e. Club Representative (one per member club)
 - f. League Advisor (past president)
3. Non-voting members of the board of directors consist of:
 - a. League Registrar
 - b. League Assignment Administrator (scheduler)

C. Terms of Office

1. The terms of office for all elected officials of the board of directors shall be two (2) years conforming to the August 1 – July 31 seasonal year. Terms shall commence immediately following the election of the respective officer positions.

D. Election of Officers

1. The biennial elections of the president and vice president will be held in odd numbered years. The biennial elections of the secretary and treasurer will be held in even numbered years. Nominations will be taken the first meeting of the year and elections held the second meeting,. Each board member will have one (1) vote. Simple majority of votes cast shall determine the winner of the elections.
2. Any member of the BSSL at any meeting up to and including the annual election may nominate candidates for the board.

E. Removal from BSSL Office

1. Each director shall serve a two (2) year term, unless the director tenders his/her resignation at an earlier time.
2. In the event of a death, resignation, or removal of a director, a replacement will serve until the next annual election.
3. Any director can be removed for due cause by affirmation vote of majority of members present. Vote may be done by email if agreed upon by league directors at a meeting duly called for that purpose.

F. Vacancies

1. Vacancies shall be filled by remaining members of the board through simple majority vote at a properly called meeting of the board of directors. A vacancy or vacancies shall be deemed to exist in the case of death, resignation, removal or disqualification of any member of the board. The member elected to fill the vacancy shall server for the remainder of the term of office.
2. A vacancy of a full member club representative shall be filled by the member club prior to the next duly called meeting of the board of directors. Failure to fill a vacancy of a full member club representative in a timely fashion is grounds for suspending the club's membership status until representation is provided.

G. Liability

Board members and league officials shall not be personally liable for any legal or financial action taken against either the BSSL, the board of directors, or it member clubs as long as they have acted in good faith in what is considered the best interest of the league and are not guilty of negligence or misconduct.

ARTICLE VIII – Duties of the Board of Directors

- A. The board of directors will establish the responsibilities of each of the members and may, at the boards discretion, change or modify the organization of the board. However, all changes will be consistent with the constitution and only affect the assigned duties of certain members of the board excluding the president, secretary and treasure of the league whose duties are established in the constitution.
- B. The board of directors shall be the official ruling body of the BSSL. The board shall be the policy making body of the league.
- C. The board of directors may adopt by-laws, rules and regulations not inconsistent with this constitution; promulgate and enforce such by-laws, rules and regulations.
- D. The board of directors may initiate sanctions against any member organization based on recommendations received from the disciplinary committee. Such sanctions must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) vote for the board of directors at a regular or special meeting.
- E. The board of directors will ensure that the constitution and by-laws of the BSSL are not in conflict with the constitution, by-laws and polices of the state chartering organization. (OYSAN)
- F. The board of directors will represent the membership of the BSSL in all dealings with OYSAN
- G. The board of directors will establish the charge for player registration dues, club and league affiliation fees, etc, to leagues, clubs and players and approve the budget expenditures of the association. League fees will be listed in Attachment 4.

- H. The board of directors will approve and sanction all tournaments to be held within the boundaries of the league before each season.

ARTICLE IX – Duties of Elected Officers

- A. The president shall appoint the registrar and assignment administrators positions to be confirmed by all voting members. Appointed members of the board will serve until the end of the seasonal year in which they are appointed. They may be re-appointed.
- B. The president shall appoint all committees as needed.
- C. The president or representative shall represent the league at all OYSAN meetings.
- D. The president and treasurer shall preside at all board meetings, general meetings and the annual election.
- E. The president shall oversee league activities and all committee chairpersons will be responsible to the president for performance of their duties.
- F. The president and treasurer shall approve all invoices against the league.
- G. The president shall be responsible for the preparation of an annual report of league activities to be presented at the annual elections meeting.
- H. In the absence of the president, in the event the position of president becomes vacant, the vice president shall assume the duties of president.
- I. The vice president shall be responsible for liaison with member clubs and organizations of the membership.
- J. The vice president shall be responsible, along with the Disciplinary Committee, for administering any disciplinary sanctions imposed on membership of the BSSL.
- K. The secretary shall record the minutes of all board meetings and the annual election, attend to all league correspondence and keep all non-financial records of the league.
- L. The treasurer shall receive and safely keep all monies, including membership and registration fees, and shall have charge of all money of the league.

ARTICLE X – Duties of Member Club Representatives

- A. Club representatives shall be responsible for and ensure that their respective clubs properly carry out the policies, procedures, by-laws and rules of the BSSL, OYSAN, USYSA and USSF

- B. Club Representatives will attend periodic league meetings and represent the interests of their respective clubs to the league.

ARTICLE XI – Meetings

- A. The board of directors shall meet a minimum of four (4) times during the seasonal year, at a time and place set by the president. A majority of the board members constitutes a quorum. A majority of votes shall decide all questions and motions except as outlined in other sections and articles of the constitution. Each board member designated as a voting member will have one vote.
- B. The president of the league must call at least one (1) general meeting of the entire board membership during the year. If there is only one meeting, it shall be the annual election meeting.
- C. Committees shall meet as often as necessary to conduct business efficiently. A majority of committee members shall constitute a quorum. A majority of votes decides all questions brought before a committee. Committee chairpersons are responsible for recommendations. The board will accept or reject all committee recommendations by majority vote.
- D. Meetings of the board and/or committees shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order. The order of business shall be:
 - a. Call to order
 - b. Reading of minutes of previous meeting
 - c. Financial report
 - d. Reading of communications
 - e. Committee reports
 - f. Unfinished business
 - g. New business
 - h. Program (optional)
 - i. Adjournment

The order of business can be suspended or altered by a majority vote of attending members.

ARTICLE XII - Standing Committees

- A. The following committees shall be recognized as standing committees of the BSSL:
 - a. Rules Committee
 - b. Appeals Committee
 - c. Disciplinary Committee
- B. Except as otherwise provided within this constitution, the duties , responsibilities and procedures of the standing committees shall be assigned by the board of directors as part of the by-laws and operating rules.
 - a. The Rules Committee shall be composed of the league secretary and two (2) other members of the board of directors as appointed by the President and confirmed by the voting

members of the board of directors. The Rules Committee will meet at least biannually to review the constitution and the by-laws and rules.

- b. The Appeals Committee shall consist of the President and four (4) other members of the board of directors as appointed by the President and confirmed by the voting members of the board of directors.
 - c. The Disciplinary Committee shall be composed of the Vice President and three (3) other members of the board of directors as appointed by the Vice President. The committee members shall be appointed as needed to consider matters of discipline and/or sanction for any member of the league. Committee members shall be appointed such that there is not any appearance of conflict of interest in the matters under consideration.
- C. An independent audit committee composed of two outside league members, not of the board of directors, may be appointed by the president to audit/evaluate/check the financial records maintained by the treasurer at the end of each seasonal year. This committee shall report its works at the first meeting held at the beginning of the next seasonal year.

ARTICLE XIII – Appeals

- A. The Appeals Committee of the BSSL shall be responsible for hearing all appeals of sanctions or discipline against members of the league pertaining to the league’s by-laws and rules of operation.

An official hearing of appeal must be called within fourteen (14) days of receipt of an appeal filing.

The official record shall be limited to all of the material submitted by the parties filing an appeal and any additional information requested by the Appeals Committee in order to form a reasonable and informed opinion on the matter under appeal.

The line of authority for the hearing of appeals beyond the BSSL appeals committee shall be:

1. OYSAN Appeals Committee
2. USYSA Regional Appeals Committee
3. USYSA National Appeals Committee
4. As provided for in the USSF Rule 2104

- B. Appeal Filing Procedure

- a. The appeal must be in writing and describe in detail the grounds for the appeal.

- b. Parties filing an appeal shall have access to all pertinent that information regarding their appeal. Affiliated organizations shall not deny access to any information that could apply to the appeal.
- c. An appeal to the BSSL Appeals Committee shall include five (5) copies of the appeal and supporting documentation. This material must be delivered to the President of the league.
- d. An appeal must be made within five (5) days of receiving notification of sanction or discipline by the league.
- e. The appeal fee, payable to the BSSL, in the form of money order, cashiers check or certified check shall accompany each appeal. The appeal fee is set forth in the league's schedule of fees and dues.
- f. The BSSL Appeals Committee shall have the right to decline a hearing if:
 - i. The appeal does not pertain to decisions of the league
 - ii. The appeal is filed by a party other than the original party to the sanction or discipline.
 - iii. The proper procedures have not been followed in appealing to the BSSL.
 - iv. The information necessary to make a fair and just decision on the appeal has not been furnished.
- g. If a decision is not reached within thirty (30) days of the formal appeals hearing, the party filing the appeal may submit the appeal to the next higher authority without determination
- h. Decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be binding at all levels unless the decisions are overturned by a higher authority. Failure to abide by decisions of the committee shall be grounds for additional disciplinary action by the Discipline Committee of the BSSL.
- i. All decisions at all levels of the appeal process shall stand and be of full force and effect until changed by higher authority.

C. Penalties

- a. No affiliated organization, club, team, commission, official, referee, player or person; nor and organization seeking affiliation, may invoke the aid of courts of any political subdivision (federal, state, local, etc.) without first exhausting all available remedies within the appropriate soccer organizations set forth in section A of this article.
- b. For violations of this article, the offending party shall be subjected to the sanctions of suspension and fines and shall be liable to the BSSL for all expenses incurred by the BSSL and its officers in defending each court action, including, but not limited to the following:
 - i. Court costs
 - ii. Attorneys fees

- iii. Reasonable compensation for time spent by BSSL officers and employees in responding to and defending against all allegations in the action including responses to discovery and court costs
- iv. Travel expenses
- v. Expenses for holding special meetings necessitated by the court action.

ARTICLE XIV – Amendments

- A. The board of directors may propose amendments to the constitution. Such proposals require a majority vote of the board present. Such recommended amendments to the constitution will be voted on by the members at the next general meeting.
- B. The constitution may be amended by the vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the board provided written notice has been given to the electorate of such proposed changes at least four (4) weeks prior to the meetings.
- C. Petitions for amendments may be submitted to the board of directors by any member of the BSSL. The proposed amendment(s) must be submitted to the board at least sixty (60) days prior to the general meeting.

ARTICLE XV – Dissolution

A three-fourths (3/4) vote of member clubs and board of directors is required to dissolve and end this league. In that event, the assets of this league will be distributed as required by the state articles of incorporation of OYSAN.

ARTICLE XVI – Ratification

This constitution shall go into effect immediately upon ratification of two-thirds (2/3) of the currently affiliated member organizations.

Amendments to Black Swamp Soccer League Constitution

Article II, Para C. (a) Change “in all levels of” to “for recreation”

08 Nov 07

Article IV, Para A (1) Change ” All full member clubs will be required to have on file a copy of their current constitution with the BSSL” to “Member clubs are authorized their own by-laws and constitution, but are not required by BSSL”

08 Nov 07

Article IV, Para C Eliminate para 2

08 Nov 07

Article VII, Para D (1) Change “The elections shall be held the last meeting of the spring season” to “Nominations will be taken the first meeting of the year and elections held the second meeting,”

08 Nov 07

Article VII, Para E (3) Change “vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members” to “majority of members present. Vote may be done by email if agreed upon by league directors”

08 Nov 07

Article IX, Para C Change “the president” to “the president or representative”

08 Nov 07

Article XII, Para B (a) Add “The Rules Committee will meet at least biannually to review the constitution and the by-laws and rules”

08 Nov 07

Article XIV Para A Change “require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the entire board” to “majority of the board present”

08 Nov 07

Article VII Para B 3 b Added “scheduler”

27 July 09

Article VII Para E Added “BSSL”

27 July 09

Article XII Para B a,b,and c Removed “Members of committee are listed in XXX”

27 July 09