

# MVLA Soccer Club

## Field Manual

Edition Sept 10, 2008

### **Section 2: Field Usage/Closure Policy**

There are often between 10-25 games scheduled during a given weekend. Add to that the constant use during the week for practices, and it is safe to say that even if the weather is fair, our fields risk damage from overuse. When the weather is adverse, then these risks are compounded significantly. Games may be rained-out and require rescheduling. Also, many field owners schedule formal periods of rest throughout the year in efforts to preserve field quality and to manage maintenance expenses.

With budget shortfalls affecting all schools and many communities, field owners have very limited landscaping and facility maintenance budgets. As a result, all users must be extra vigilant to monitor fields and help prevent field deterioration and overuse. Many other communities with access to a larger pool of field resources do not use game fields for practices and training. Here in our community, we do not enjoy this luxury. As a result, we practice on game fields and teams **MUST** take personal responsibility for preserving the condition of those fields. Our reputation as a club depends greatly on the condition of our game fields. The **QUALITY** of our game depends on a good pitch.

Clearly, field closures are disruptive for everyone involved, but the following conditions are explicit aspects of our permits from the field owners, including the cities of Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and Cupertino, the Los Altos School District, and the MVLA Union High School District.

While MVLA describes more specific field rules in Section 5 of this Manual and every field owner has their own specific rules and requirements (these can be found in Section 7 under each field), the following seven (7) general Field Use Principles apply everywhere:

#### **MVLA Field Use Principles:**

1. Fields are closed during rainfall.
2. In the event of heavy rainfall (more than a light drizzle), fields may be closed for a minimum of 48 hours after rainfall ceases.
3. Additional closure time may be necessary following extended rains.
4. No play on fields marked with "Field Closed" signs, taped off areas, cones, etc.
5. No play on fields, even if there are no signs posted (such as over a weekend), if any of the above conditions are in place (i.e., during rain, or within 48 hours of a heavy rainfall) or if sensible judgment concludes there exists risk to damage the field.
6. Special care must be taken on tired or tender fields. If there is a worn out, thinning, mushy, or grass-bare area, please **STAY OFF**.
7. When your team is assigned to practice on a field with permanent goals installed, do not use the goals for training, except rarely, and **NEVER for goalie/striker training**. Instead, use flat rebounders or portable goal nets further midfield and move them frequently day to day, week to week to avoid wear on the turf.

MVLA has instituted a notification process through the Coaches Yahoo Email Distribution mechanism to alert to field closures. The Club may institute a rain hotline in the future. Not receiving an email at your personal account is no excuse for violating club rules or notices...all such emails are posted to the Yahoo Group and therefore you are responsible for checking that web site frequently for any missed emails.

A member in the club will be designated annually to hold the responsibility of judging whether or not to close fields for rain on a club-wide basis. For all other field closures, the Field Coordinator will be the responsible person to issue such notices.

For 2006 and until further notice, Jeanine Valadez (j9valadez@earthlink.net) is the Field Closure Representative charged with the decision to close MVLASC fields due to weather.

During the work week, this weather announcement will be made as late as 3pm that day. For the weekends, the announcement will come around 3pm Friday, but may be updated as determined by the Field Closure Representative. In the absence of an affirmative field closure mandate, it is the responsibility of each coach/manager to make the determination whether or not a field should be used. MVL A and the field owners are serious when they state that failure to abide by these policies could result in the loss of your field privileges and loss of our club's permits.

Should a coach decide to cancel a league game on his/her own due to weather, they must notify the Referee Coordinator ASAP.

**Bottom line: Do not play or practice on any field if your use has the potential to cause damage to the field. Teams caught violating the field closure notification will be fined \$200 or more per incident and additional sanctions, up to and including loss of field privileges, may apply for repeat violators.**