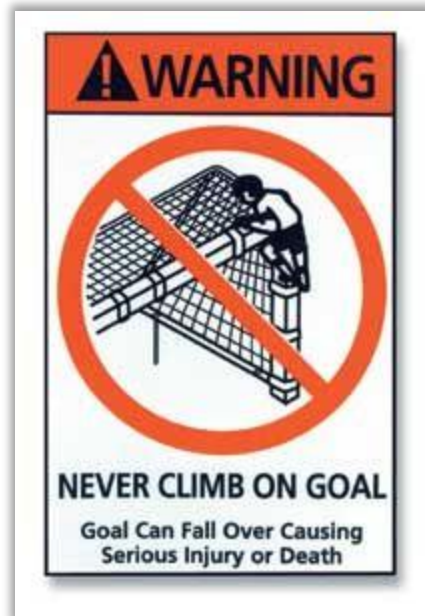




Soccer Goal Safety

A Risk Management Report

Excerpts taken from the article prepared by Lori Windolf, CPCU, Executive VP, Bolinger, Inc. The article in its entirety can be found in the Risk Management Resource section of the MSYSA website at www.michiganyouthsoccer.org.



Introduction

Since the early 1990's, youth soccer associations have been given repeated warnings about the dangers of portable soccer goals by such watchdog groups as the US Consumer Product Safety Commission, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, and the Soccer Industry Council of America. Each of these groups has urged youth soccer organizations to establish guidelines and controls for using, anchoring, storing and moving soccer goals.

Despite the response of youth soccer organizations, incidents involving players and spectators have not diminished. Soccer organizations must do all they can to communicate these guidelines to those who are on the soccer fields. Coaches and players must be told of the potential for catastrophic injury posed by soccer goals. The coaches, in particular, need to be aware of and strictly enforce safety procedures for handling or storing portable goals.

Injuries: Causes

Injuries relating to soccer goals fall into the following categories. Most of the categories related strictly to portable goals. Some, however, apply to both portable and stationary goals.

- Goals falling onto people who are moving the goal from one location to another
- People falling from goals while climbing or hanging from goals or nets
- Goals falling over on people who are pulling down on or climbing on crossbars
- Injuries or fatalities occurring as a result of running into goals posts
- Goals falling over as a result of high winds or wind gusts
- Cuts/abrasions resulting from sharp edges or jagged metal or wood pieces protruding from goals posts

Safety Guidelines

- ✓ NEVER allow anyone to play on or climb on the net or goal framework.
- ✓ Soccer goals should be moved ONLY by adults who are authorized and trained to do so.
- ✓ Instruct players (and spectators, where feasible) that they must NOT play on, climb on, or move or attempt to move soccer goals
- ✓ Check for structural integrity and proper connecting hardware before every use. This should be the responsibility of the coaches or officials when doing a pregame safety check of the field conditions.

Communication

Written safety standards and studies on soccer injuries are good educational tools. But they are meaningless if not communicated to the right people. The message must get out to the people on the fields who come in contact with the goals: players (and their families watching the games), coaches, officials and team volunteers.

Saline FC Coaches and Referees

Know the guidelines for soccer goal safety and make it your business to make sure that all of your players and families and spectators never climb on or play on a soccer goal or net or attempt to move a soccer goal without training and authorization. Caution your player parents to especially watch siblings at practices and games to make sure they do not play on or climb on or attempt to move any soccer goal – EVER! Any adult who sees any child ever playing on or climbing on a soccer goal should not hesitate to tell the child that climbing on or playing on soccer goals is NOT ALLOWED.