

CARDINAL SOCCER CLUB



PARENT HANDBOOK
Fall 2006

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MISSION OF THE CARDINAL SOCCER CLUB

To develop athletes into world class soccer players and individuals of character by providing the highest quality training, coaching and soccer education, by leaders with national and international soccer knowledge, extensive playing backgrounds and the highest level of coaching credentials.

VISION OF THE CARDINAL SOCCER CLUB

The Cardinal Soccer Club (competitive program) is a division of the GSE Cincinnati Soccer Club. The Club is known as the best soccer club in greater Cincinnati. It has been recognized as one of the nation's top girls' soccer programs since 1977. Beginning in 2006, we introduced a boys program which will be developed into an equally competitive program. The GSE Soccer Club is known for its ability to create an environment where players of all skill levels can learn and enjoy the game in a neighborhood setting; for its ability to leverage the strength of its neighborhood program to create nationally competitive teams in all age groups. Our Cardinal Club teams excel in their respective leagues and tournament play. Cardinal teams routinely advance far in to the State Cup Tournament, while advancing onto Regional Cup and Final Four play annually. Our success is primarily due to our elite national and international training staff, which provides the best training available, enabling us to attract and retain players and coaches.

Players seek to play for the Cardinals because we provide a place to optimize their abilities and skills, achieve great success on the field and have fun in the process. The Cardinal program encourages academic education and supports educating people of character while developing life long friendships. Cardinal players routinely make Regional ODP teams and are standout performers on their high school teams. Colleges and universities recruit Cardinal Players because of their soccer skills and knowledge, dedication, strong work ethic and strength of character.

Our teams are coached and trained by professional licensed trainers and our coaches are known and respected for their experience, training, and their ability to build team and individual performance. The Cardinal Club encourages continuing education for coaches and trainers through licensing and mentoring programs.

Parents of Cardinal players are one of the Club's strongest assets, supportive of both their teams and the Club in general, involved as volunteers board members, in committees and as general needs require. They are ambassadors of the Club, demonstrating support for their children and their teams and good sportsmanship under all circumstances.

The Club is known as a "good value" for its players, keeping costs low through a combination of expense control, leveraging of resources among teams and fund raising. Ability to pay is never an obstacle for a Cardinal soccer player.

CARDINAL SOCCER CLUB HISTORY

The Cardinal Soccer Club began as the competitive division of GSE, the Girls Southeast Cincinnati Soccer Association. GSE was formed in 1970 and is one of the nation's largest soccer programs for girls. In 1977, the competitive teams of GSE were organized into the Cardinal Soccer Club. The club introduced a boys program in 2006. The success of the Cardinals has helped it grow to its current size of more than 30 teams from age groups U8 to U18. Our U7 Academies introduce boys and girls, and their parents, to the sort of fun, education training experience they can expect when they try out for a Cardinal team.

In addition to developing thousands of skilled, focused, well-disciplined young athletes of character, our club is proud to have achieved the following accomplishments:

NATIONAL CUP RESULTS:

2 National Championships	1999 (U19), 1997 (U20)
3 National Runners Up	1997 (U17), 1996 (U17), 1994 (U17)
4 National 3 rd Place Finishes	1993 (U17), 1989 (open), 1987 (U16, U19)
2 National 4 th Place Finishes	1996 (U19), 1995 (U16)

REGIONAL CUP RESULTS:

19 Regional Championships	2000 (U13), 1999 (U19), 1997 (U17, U20), 1996 (U17, U19), 1995 (U16), 1994 (U17), 1989 (U12), 1988 (Open, U12, U15), 1987 (U16, U19), 1985 (U13), 1984 (U12), 1982 (U14), 1980 (U12), 1979 (U12)
6 Regional Finalists	1999 (U20, U23), 1998 (U19), 1989 (open), 1983 (U19), 1980 (U14)
11 Regional Semi-Finalists	2000 (U19), 1999 (U18), 1999 (U14), 1998 (U15, U19, U20), 1996 (U20), 1995 (U19), 1993 (U14), 1985 (U17), 1982 (U16)

STATE CUP RESULTS:

53 State Cup Championships since 1979
19 State Cup Finalists since 1980
10 State Cup Semi-Finalists since 1986

CARDINAL SOCCER CLUB STRUCTURE

The Director of Coaching is the professional leader of the Cardinals, responsible for all training, tryout, and tournament activities. He handles day to day communication with parents and players, hires contract trainers and works closely with coaches and the Cardinal Board. In addition, he attends the fall high school games of Cardinal players, and assists players who wish to play in college. He is involved with all aspects of the club, such as attending games, conducting special training sessions prior to important games, and attending various meetings.

There are three Associate Directors of Coaching. The U8 and U9 Associate Director also runs the Cardinal U7 Academy and provides training for GSE Recreational coaches. The other two Associate Directors oversee the U10 – 13 and U14 – 19 age groups.

Professional trainers work with Cardinal teams at every level of every age group. The Premier teams and several A teams also have paid, professional coaches. Other teams are coached by parent coaches, who are appointed by the Cardinal Board.

The Cardinal Board, a volunteer parent group, has both elected and appointed members. Board members, with the help of other parent volunteers, work on the Cardinal Cup tournament, coach development, marketing, fundraising, organizing tryouts, training center maintenance and improvement, and other issues and events that arise in the select soccer arena.

The Cardinal website www.cardinalsoccer.org has a complete list of trainers and board members and their contact information. This is also on the Quick Reference page at the front of this manual.

CARDINAL SOCCER CLUB COACHES

Qualifications and selection process

The Cardinal Soccer Club maintains a high standard for coaches, with the expectation that they will continually develop personal knowledge and coaching skills. Coaches attend license clinics, work with trainers, read, attend lectures and watch tapes. (Information on license clinics can be found on the Ohio South website, www.osysa.com.) In addition, coaches must demonstrate interest and ability in team management and good communication with parents. Coaches keep the experience fun and competitive by interacting with players in a positive and instructive manner.

To become the head coach of a Cardinals team, prospective coaches go through an application process that includes filling out a competitive coach volunteer form and interviewing with the Competitive Board and Director of Coaching. Qualified applicants are then invited to help with try-outs. Once tryouts are completed, the training staff forms rosters and appoints coaches. If more than one applicant has a son or daughter assigned to the same team, the best candidate will earn the coach position. Premier teams from U11 and older are coached by a paid coach/trainer, hired by the Director, rather than a parent coach.

Parent coach v trainer coach (as explained by Jon Pickup, Director of Coaching)

The relationship between player and coach is paramount to the success of the individual and team.

During the very early stages of development (U8-U10), trainers are employed to work with our players/teams during their weekly practice. Training, and the level of training at this very early stage is key to the success of the players' development in the years to come. Game day analysis, key substitutions and man management of the players on game day takes second place to training, therefore exceptional knowledge is not required for the head coach position. Our teams are designated the most qualified parent to coach the team on game days, lead their own practice once a week, and work alongside the Cardinal trainer on a weekly basis. Our trainers will also be present at games from time to time, as will our full time staff.

After our players complete their first year with the club, they are once again divided into teams and are selected Premier level down. Training with the club remains once a week at U9 and is increased to two session per week at U10.

Once our players reach U11, a paid coach and trainer is employed for our Premier teams. This individual has a responsibility to the age group – first and foremost as Head Coach of our Premier team, and secondly as a trainer of our 2nd, 3rd and 4th teams. Training for our Premier team is now increased to 3 training sessions per week, once with our full time staff and twice with their paid coach. All other teams below our Premier continue with a parent coach, and receive two training sessions per week from the Club.

The main reason for switching from a parent coach to a paid coach is the increased time commitment and level of soccer knowledge that is needed at the highest level. However, a parent assistant will be working alongside our paid coaches to help in the development and overall success of the players and team.

With the combination of both parent and trainer coach on the sidelines, I feel we have reached the perfect combination, combining soccer knowledge and a passion for the game, alongside the obvious parenting skills our trainer coaches may not possess in relating to our younger players.

CARDINAL SOCCER CLUB TRAINING

The Cardinal training staff is the best in the Cincinnati area, with trainers from England, Italy and the USA. The knowledge and cultural differences they bring to games and training sessions are invaluable. In addition, this diverse staff brings with them over 40 years of professional playing experience and the highest coaching credentials possible. Visit the Cardinal website www.cardinalsoccer.org for complete trainer profiles.

Training is carefully tailored to meet the developmental needs of players at every age group:

U8s and U9s do not understand the concept of team play, so most training sessions are geared towards individual skills and ball control. The goal is to develop very technical, individual players with the ability to dribble at opponents with confidence.

U10s and U11s understand the team concept, and with players' added strength and awareness, real soccer begins to happen. Individual skill is still important, but teamwork and small group activities need developing. Different types of passing are introduced, and heading becomes a factor. Leaders begin to emerge on the field.

U12s to U14s have acquired the basic tools of a good soccer player. Individual positions have been narrowed down, and players understand their role on the team. This is a direct result of playing multiple positions in their early developmental seasons. The players have reached a physical and psychological maturity level that allows the game to be taken to the next level, with tactics now requiring 6 to 8 players. Set plays also become a factor. By the time our players head off to play High School soccer, they have become skilled, competitive and free-thinking players with the ability to adapt and problem solve on their own.

U15s and above typically play High School soccer in the fall and Cardinal select soccer in the spring. Competition is intense in training and games, and our players are expected to demonstrate a high level of commitment to soccer. Tactical training becomes even more complex, taking the physical demands of our athletes to a much higher level. Winning becomes important as our players reach the age of 16/17. College coaches and scholarships become a focal point of our players, and winning teams attract attention from college programs.

SPECIFICS – WHAT TAKES PLACE AT CARDINAL TRAINING

Here is what is involved in a typical training session:

Warm up: (15-20 minutes)

A good warm-up is the building block to every good practice, resulting in players mentally and physically ready to play. Warm-ups will always involve the ball, revolving around fun activities, while working on various game concepts. Stretching at an early age, although not really needed, is performed before each practice. The concept of stretching needs to become second nature to our players and will prevent many injuries as they mature. The activities become more complex and intense as players mature.

Skill work: (15-20 minutes)

Depending on the age, this is an area that will be used as a major part of training, and will be prolonged, or as a warm-up to training depending on the age and level of the player. Repetition of the same skill will be repeated over and over again in order for our players to master the skill.

Topic/Concept of the day: (25-40 minutes)

The two previous stages of the training session should have involved some aspect of the Topic of the day. However, some days this may vary and the beginning 10-15 minutes of this time slot would be a basic concept of what the team will eventually get to. Depending on the amount of skill work the team is doing will depend on the time allotted to this area of the training session.

Game (for duration of practice; minimum 15 minutes)

Depending on the age of the team, the topic of the day may have involved normal game play with restrictions. However, the last portion of training should be for the players. All that is required is effort. The game should be open for our players to enjoy themselves in a coach-free environment.

At the start of each season, coaches are handed a curriculum by the Club, and their goal is to teach the players what they need to know. Therefore, as parents you may question from time to time why the things that went wrong on the field are not necessarily the things we work on at training. Remember that this is a progression for your child and that his or her overall development and understanding of the game is what is important.

CARDINAL TRAINING CENTER INFORMATION, WINTER TRAINING AND ACCELERATION TRAINING

The Cardinal Training Center in Amelia is a wholly owned, lighted, 14-acre facility with space for four teams to train at a time. It is located at the corner of Clough Pike and Amelia-Olive Branch Road.

Directions:

From Anderson Township, take Clough Pike all the way to the training center – it is 5.8 miles from the intersection of Clough and 8 Mile Road. (Once you pass the stop sign at Shayler Rd, you must take a left .3 miles further to stay on Clough. There is a small sign indicating that Clough turns left, but you have to watch for it.)

From 275, exit onto Route 32 East. Go 3.2 miles (past the Jeff Wyler car dealership on the right) and exit at the Olive Branch Stonelick Road. Go down the ramp and take a right at the stop sign. Go .7 miles to the end. At the stop sign go left onto old State Route 74 for .1 mile. Take a right onto Amelia Love Branch Road. Stay on this road for 1/6 miles to the next light, Clough Pike. Go left onto Clough, and take the first right into the parking lot.

Winter Indoor Training for U8s to U10s takes place once a week in January and February. The location and schedule is posted on the Cardinal website.

Winter Indoor and Outdoor Training for U11s and up takes place, weather permitting, where field space is available. This information is also posted on the website. Due to important tournaments and spring leagues for high school girls beginning in late fall or early winter, “spring” training actually begins in the fall, after the high school season ends. U11s to 14s do winter training in January and February.

Team Acceleration Training takes place at Tekulve Acceleration Training, located at Fitworks on Beechmont Avenue in Anderson Township. The sessions are designed to improve speed, endurance, strength, balance and coordination. This is an optional program, specifically designed for Cardinal soccer players, that many teams choose to take advantage of. Tekulve also offers individual acceleration training.

TRYOUTS

Frequency

Tryouts take place late spring/early summer for the upcoming fall season. We also hold tryouts at this time for our high school players for the following spring season. In the fall, some age groups have tryouts and some don't, depending on the needs of the age group. Ohio South rules prohibit players from being dropped from teams in the fall, and only three roster changes are permitted. Tryout dates are posted on the website, www.cardinalsoccer.org.

How tryouts work

The Director of Coaching and his staff run tryouts, with Cardinal coaches there to assist. While players are encouraged to compete vigorously and do their best, the atmosphere on the field is positive and encouraging. Once they have registered, players go through a thorough warm up and then perform a series of drills and small-sided games. All trainers and coaches help evaluate each player, but the Director of Coaching and Associate Directors put together the rosters. Rosters are then posted on the Cardinal website, and the player or parents call the coach to accept the spot on the team.

Player movement between teams

The ultimate goal of the club is to develop players to their fullest potential. Each player will be placed in an environment to maximize learning and development. This means that player movement between teams is inevitable, because at different stages of their development, athletes will benefit from different levels of speed and intensity. Regardless of placement, every Cardinal Soccer player is guaranteed top-notch training.

The following is a general guide as to what Premier to 4th teams are all about:

Cardinal Premier teams consist of the best of the best. Soccer is the primary sport for these athletes, and college scholarships are a main focus at U15 and above.

Cardinal 2nd teams are for players that want the same rewards from the game as the premier player. Player development, athleticism and skill level may determine why the player is placed on the 2nd team. A player's goal at this level is to become a premier player.

Cardinal 3rd teams are a great place for players that need to work on developing stronger overall soccer skills. The team tends to be split between players that are working towards becoming 2nd and premier level players and players with stronger skills than 4th team players.

Cardinal 4th teams are for players who simply would like to develop as a player. This is a great step up from the recreational program, offering players the opportunity to train with and compete against players with similar soccer goals.

PLAYING TIME GUIDELINES

The following document, written by our Director of Coaching Jon Pickup, is given to Cardinal coaches and trainers to guide their handling of playing time issues.

Playing time:

Over the last several years the one question that never seems to disappear is the concern from parents and players regarding “playing time.” The preconceived notion that by paying a club fee gives the player and family guaranteed playing time is unrealistic.

What the club can guarantee is the most qualified training staff and player development opportunities within Cincinnati. It is therefore up to the individual, and family, to take advantage of these opportunities and use them to their best interest.

Multi sport athletes are encouraged within the club, especially at the early stages of their development. As our players mature, the demands of soccer become greater, and although we still encourage our athletes to play multiple sports, individual sacrifices and a dedication to the program become a priority to the team and coach. Therefore, it is very important that we understand a player’s priority when a conflict arises with our training night or game. Attendance at team practice and games is essential. We do however, under the right circumstances allow our multi sport athletes to make up their missed training night with another team. This scenario is not the norm, and requires individual guidance from the club in every case.

At U9 our players are selected Premier and down, creating more competitive teams within the CUSL league and on a level with the other local soccer clubs. The 8v8 game will now see our top 2 or 3 players on the team playing the majority of the game, with the other players rotating in and out of the game as the coach sees necessary. As our players mature and enter the 11v11 game, time spent on the field will increase, as will the number of players playing the majority of the game. However, all players will see the field, and playing time should not be an issue.

During the early stages of a player’s development (U8-U10), time on the field is essential. Therefore, the demands and expectations of the players and family are far less than that of an older player. In order to create the right attitude and environment to maximize learning, certain guidelines and rules need to be in place.

It is no longer good enough to just show up when you want, give a mediocre effort and expect to play at the weekend. We, as coaches and trainers need to demand more from our players and parents. Missing practice or giving a poor effort should all affect the amount of playing time a player receives.

Therefore, I ask that each coach follow this simple rule regarding playing time:

Missed practice (U8-10):

At this age I believe effort, a willingness to learn, (not necessarily improve,) should provide a player with the same opportunities as any to play at the weekend. If a player misses a practice then the only rule should be that they do not start the

game. Rewarding the players that show up for practice is still vital to creating the right learning environment.

Player development at this age is our only goal. Therefore, player rotation/positions within the field are essential to the overall knowledge and understanding of the game. However, constant substitutions and player rotation within the game helps nobody. Players need to have time on the field and learn not only from their success, but from their own mistakes.

Other factors that need to be taken into consideration are squad size, fitness of the players, role-playing and the impact an individual has within the game. Some players will always play more than others. However, during this early learning phase, playing time, the success of the individual and keeping the interest of the players and parents is vital.

Missed practice (U11-18):

“For every missed practice a player will be guaranteed to miss 1/3 of a game.” Education and religion will be the only exceptions to the rule. Conflicts with other sports, and I highly recommend our players to participate in all sports, must follow the same rules.

Obviously situations will arise throughout the season regarding players missing practice for reasons other than those stated above. Therefore, I ask that you use your own discretion, but at the same time take into consideration the rest of the playing squad. Your decision however **must not** be influenced by the importance of the up coming game.

Participation at practice is vital to the success of your team and to the club.

Inevitably all players attend practices, put forth 100% effort, and leave knowing they stand the very best chance of starting the game at the weekend. As a coach, your training environment has now been created. Players arrive early to warm up, they become focused, and their attitude towards practice is exceptional.

All that remains is your decision as to who starts the game. Given the above scenario it all comes down to the level of skill an individual possesses. However, this is not an ideal world; players will not always give 100% therefore making your decisions much easier.

Other factors that need to be taken into consideration are squad size, fitness of the players, role-playing and the impact an individual has within the game. As teams reach maturity the more relevant this becomes!

Conclusion

Analyzing the information above is quite simple. The burden now becomes the players. More responsibility has been placed on the individual. This creates a more controlled working environment from which a player knows they can be rewarded for their efforts. Players will start to demand that their own team mates show up for practice and give 100%, because inevitably, a player's lack of attendance or effort affects the team's performance. Team chemistry begins to blossom.

SOCCER LEAGUE STRUCTURE

Ohio South Youth Soccer Association

OSYSA is a non-profit organization that governs and promotes recreational and competitive youth soccer programs. It is affiliated with US Youth Soccer and US Soccer. Visit the Ohio South website, www.osysa.com, for information on leagues and tournaments, camps and clinics, the State Cup and Olympic Development Programs, and more.

Cincinnati United Soccer League

CUSL is the main competitive soccer league in the greater Cincinnati area, with the Cardinals and other top clubs as members. Teams are organized into brackets based on their win-loss record season by season. The top teams compete in the Premier Division; the next tier is Competitive 1 (C-1); followed by Competitive 2 (C-2), and so forth. For detailed information, visit the CUSL website, www.cuslsoccer.org.

Buckeye Premier Youth Soccer League

Cardinal Premier teams typically compete in this league at U15 and above. Top teams from the Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus areas compete in the Buckeye Premier League, and college coaches recruit from this league. Visit www.buckeyepremier.com for further information.

TOURNAMENTS

In addition to league games, all Cardinal teams play in sanctioned tournaments during the season. Some tournaments are local, and some require travel. On average, each team will compete in two or three tournaments per season. The younger age groups and 3rd and 4th teams have a far less committed tournament schedule. Our Director of Coaching recommends the best tournaments for our teams to attend.

Our U11 and up Premier and A teams typically compete in the State Cup Tournament, which is held during the spring season over a number of weeks. State Cup winners from the Ohio South region go on to compete for the regional championship, and regional winners compete for the national title.

Our club hosts the adidas Cardinal Cup tournament, played on the outstanding fields at Clear Creek Park in Newtown. This is a pre-season fall tournament, offering U9 to U14 Premier through C level teams an opportunity to raise fitness and fine-tune team play before league games begin. Visit www.cardinalsoccer.org for more information.

You can learn more about other sanctioned tournaments and State Cup on the Ohio South website, www.osysa.com. In addition, there are links to other states' websites and tournament information.

UNIFORMS

Cardinal teams are recognizable by their red and white uniforms, which proudly display the Cardinal logo and two gold stars, signifying our two national championships. Adidas is the official supplier of the Cardinal Soccer Club, which allows us to purchase world-class uniforms at a discounted price. Soccer Village, on Beechmont Avenue in Anderson Township, handles all uniform fittings and ordering. A basic uniform package includes two jerseys (one red and one white), red shorts (white shorts are optional but most teams buy them), and two pairs of socks. The Club typically keeps the same uniform for four to six seasons, at which time Adidas has usually changed their stock. For specifics about uniform prices, contact Brandon at Soccer Village (brandonrapp@soccervillage.com) or contact a Cardinal Board member.

In addition to the Cardinal uniforms, teams and individual players may opt to buy warm-ups and team bags or backpacks, also supplied by Adidas at a discounted price. Many teams benefit from the generosity of corporate sponsors, who contribute to the cost of these items or purchase them outright. It is up to the coach or a parent on the team to secure such sponsorships. Some teams hold fundraisers specifically to offset the cost of these extra items.

SPIRIT WEAR

Soccer Village also stocks an assortment of Cardinal t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, hats and other spirit wear for our players and fans.

PARENT VOLUNTEERING

Team Opportunities

Every coach needs the help of many parents to manage the team successfully and free up his or her time to focus on coaching the players. Key volunteer positions include assistant coach, team manager, and treasurer. Coaches also need parents to help with uniform ordering, tournament logistics, and taking responsibility for nets. Parents also help with party and special-event planning, maintaining the team tent or banner, and coordinating fundraising. Many Cardinal teams have websites, with a parent volunteer maintaining the site. Different coaches have different needs and expectations from parent volunteers, but the bottom line is ... when your son or daughter joins a Cardinal team, you become part of the team as well!

Club Opportunities

The Cardinal Soccer Club welcomes parents, relies on parents, and enthusiastically encourages MORE parents to get involved with the running of the club. With the help of parent volunteers, the Cardinal board operates the following committees: Training, Coach Development, Financial Operations, Fundraising, Club Administration, Marketing, and Facilities and Equipment. In addition, our Cardinal Cup tournament relies on a great deal of parental involvement to make it the successful event it has grown into. For more information about volunteer opportunities, contact your coach or any of the board members, who are listed on the Quick Reference page at the front of this manual.

Bingo

To help reduce the cost of Cardinal soccer, GSE operates Bingo on Monday nights at American Legion Post 72 on Old State Rte 74 in Mt. Carmel. Teams are required to supply volunteers to help staff bingo, and in return, the volunteers earn credits that can be applied to their team fees. Teams are normally assigned one bingo rotation (two consecutive Monday nights) each year. Parents who wish to offset fees to a greater degree can sign up to work bingo on a regular basis. For more information, contact Sue Nelson, snelson@fuse.net.

Kroger Rewards Program

Our newest ongoing all-Club fundraiser is a partnership with Kroger. When parents sign up for this program, the Club provides them with a gift card that can be loaded with cash, check or credit card, then used to make any and all purchases at Kroger, including gasoline. Three percent of all purchases are credited towards the player's fees, and the Club earns one percent. Gift cards can be re-loaded as often as necessary, and one family can use as many gift cards as they wish – for example if they have family in town, those family members can use a Kroger gift card and their 3 percent will also go to the player's fees. This fundraiser is an easy, convenient way to reduce your fees, help the Club, and all you have to do is shop at Kroger! There are further details about the Kroger rewards program on the Cardinal website, or you can contact Sue Nelson, snelson@fuse.net.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Cardinals are proud of our tradition of offering a top-notch program at a more reasonable cost than many other clubs. Parents of our youngest players, entering the world of select soccer from neighborhood programs, are often surprised by the increased cost, and their first question is, "Why is it so much more expensive?" The primary reason is the professional training we provide. In addition, competitive soccer is simply more involved than recreational soccer, with a certain amount of travel, better uniforms, and extras such as tournaments, round-robin scrimmages, camps and winter training. The end result, of course, is that our players experience a level of skill and competition that the most successful recreational programs cannot offer. Costs per season vary widely depending on your child's age group and level of play. The coach or treasurer of your team will provide detailed financial information at the beginning of the season, with a payment schedule noted.

Your team's budget will include most (or all) of the following items:

- Training, Club, park district and league fees
- Practice field rental (not every team)
- Tournament fees
- Referee fees
- Player cards (not every season)
- Uniform fees (not every season!)
- Team camp (fall season only)
- Winter training (spring season only)
- Miscellaneous (to cover team parties, first aid items, etc.)

There are additional coach expenses if your child is on a team with a paid coach (U11 or older Premier teams and some A teams.)

DEALING WITH CONFLICT

From time to time, for many different reasons, conflicts will arise within a team. Almost always, the first thing to do when a difficult situation comes up is talk to the coach directly. It is best to call, email, or approach the coach away from a game situation. Parents are encouraged to ask direct questions and be willing to work through the solutions that are agreed to by both parent and coach. If you cannot come to a resolution with the coach, the next step is to contact your age group coordinator, who is available to mediate. (For a list of age group coordinators, refer to the Quick Reference page at the front of this manual.) If you have a concern about training, you should contact your daughter's trainer.

Our Club encourages its coaches to develop a successful and open line of communication between coach, parents and players. Clear, honest and timely interchanges help to build working relationships and an understanding of expectations for successful team and player development. Here are some guidelines and principles to ensure positive communication on the team:

An open communication policy should be established by the head coach. Expectations and guidelines should be provided for both formal (e.g. player evaluations and team meetings) and informal communications (e.g. how he/she prefers to be contacted -- phone, email, etc.)

Communication must be a "two way street" in order to be successful. Coaches and parents must be willing to openly discuss sensitive issues such as player discipline, development and movement.

Parents must receive information from the coach about his/her child in the spirit in which it is given.

The Club requests that parents receive feedback about their player's performance with an open mind and take an interest in working with the coach for the betterment of the player. Parents reacting negatively to honest communication could make future communication more difficult for all parties.

Parents and coaches should be positive in all interactions with the players. Positive motivation and reinforcement brings out the best in everyone, and coaches and parents must remember that soccer should be a positive learning experience. No player goes into a game expecting or attempting to fail! Enthusiastic, positive coaches and parents can significantly boost a team's performance.

US WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM'S POSITION STATEMENT

'Playing to Develop' versus 'Playing to Win'

'Learning versus Winning'

Issue

In youth soccer circles today, an over emphasis is being placed on winning. It stems from social pressure in America where we are expected to be the best in everything. We glorify winning and first place finishers. The emphasis in sports on 'winning' is out of balance. Witness the increase in violence at youth athletic events. In sport, we are obsessed with the 'outcome' rather than the 'process.' As long as we win, we are happy. We evaluate coaches only on their win-loss record. What about enjoyment of the process, the journey, the experience and its ultimate influence on us as people, coaches and athletes? What about evaluating coaches on the improvement, growth and development of their players? After all, we can't control the outcome, but we can control the process.

Recommendations

Admit that we're obsessed with winning. When Suzie comes home after her game, the first thing we ask is did she win and the second thing is did she score a goal? Reframe the way we look at sport. Suzie, "how was the game today? Did you have fun? Did your team play well? How did you play? Did you do some of the new things the coach asked you to try? Are you hungry?"

In youth soccer, the priority for coaches and players should be on individual player development and learning. Set age and ability specific technical, tactical, psychological, and physical goals to aid in optimizing player development. This will provide coaches a framework and structure to follow. These goals also provide an alternative for coaches and parents to measure achievement and development of their players. For under 14 and younger, the primary objective of game participation and training is to provide the players with learning opportunities. Teams should "strive to win," but this should not be the focus of any training sessions, half-time talks or player motivations.

At the age of 14 and above, careful consideration needs to be placed on balancing instances where in addition to developing as individuals and a team, finding ways to 'win' also becomes part of the overall objective. One of the biggest obstacles in women's athletics is that young girls are socialized not to be competitive. **By all means, 'teach players to compete, to compete hard, to compete to win, but don't have winning be the only measure of success.'** Choose which tournaments and games are to be played to 'learn,' and which are to be played to 'win.' It is not in the best interest of the players' development to have a schedule where the sole purpose for participation is 'winning.' Individual and team improvement and peak performance should be the measure of achievement, rather than winning or losing.

It should be noted that while the US Women's National Team steps on the field prepared to win every game and every tournament, there are only two

tournaments (every four years) that we play with the sole purpose of ‘winning,’ the Olympics and the Women’s World Cup.

At 16 years of age and below, players should be encouraged to play different positions on the field. This will allow for a greater understanding of the game.

Coaches should attempt to have players play for an extended period of time. The players are thus asked to solve their own problems on the field instead of having the coach make substitutions in order to solve the problem for them. Unlike most American sports, “soccer is a players game,” not a coaches game. Substitutions allow for all players to play and will speed development for a greater number of players. The coach should decide before the game or tournament what the philosophy will be regarding substitutions – then stick to it.

The system and style that the coach selects should be based on matching the skill and abilities of the players and not to achieve a ‘win.’ Exposing players to various systems and styles of play offers a tremendous opportunity to learn.

Care must be taken at the younger levels (U16) to select players based on their soccer abilities and not on their strength or size. It is tempting to use the bigger, earlier maturing players to help you win games this year. If our aim as coaches is to develop players and teams to advance to the next level, we must be mindful of a smaller players ‘potential’ to be a better player in a year or two.

Lastly, player, parent, and administrator education is vital. Through communication and explanation of long term goals and rewards a coach must bring all parties to a consensus in support of this developmental philosophy. In order for these ideas to work properly, the coach must demonstrate his/her ability to develop players and teams. ‘Winning’ is not a measurement of coaching success. The technical and tactical ability of the player, player and team improvement during the course of a season, player and team satisfaction, and player matriculation are the best yardsticks for success.

Rationale

With sound technical, tactical, physical and psychological skills encouraged through a ‘process’ oriented philosophy, players will develop the necessary tools to maximize their potential. A thoughtful plan based on the level and needs of the players significantly increases the rate of retention, improvement, and enjoyment.

“There are many people, particularly in sports who think that success and excellence are the same thing and they are not the same thing. Excellence is something that is lasting and dependable and largely within a person’s control. In contrast, success is perishable and is often outside our control.... If you strive for excellence, you will probably be successful eventually ... people who put excellence in first place have the patience to end up with success An additional burden for the victim of the success mentality is that he/she is threatened by the success of others and resents real excellence. In contrast, the person fascinated by quality is excited when he/she sees it in others.”

Joe Paterno – Penn State Football Coach – 1990