

## Do You Have A Coaching Philosophy?

Although I am not sure we can all articulate our coaching philosophy, we all have one. We all have our reasons that we coach. Each season, we all have goals for our team. We also have developed a coaching style, as well. These are all components of a coaching philosophy. It is extremely important that you articulate your coaching philosophy to your parents. They need to know where you are coming from and where their son or daughter are going to be led.

My goals for each do not change dramatically from one season to the next, but it did take me several seasons to get them into a somewhat concise format. At the beginning of each season I highlight my goals for the team to the players. They are:

1. I want our team to have fun playing soccer. Part of the enjoyment comes from getting better and sometimes that takes a lot of effort. It may not be easy at times, but they will look back and say that was worth the effort.
2. I want each individual to make the choice to give their best during practices and games as well as to play with pride and determination. ***At this stage it is about process, not the outcome that is important.***
3. I want to prepare our players to become better soccer players and be ready for high school soccer. Our goal is to win each game, but win or lose, our focus will be on player and team development. The outcome of game is influenced by many factors over which we have little control. However, what our players can control is how they play. Under all circumstances, we will win or lose with class and strive to play quality soccer.

I also provide my expectations for both players and parents. Here is my current list.

### We ask players to:

1. Show a positive attitude at practice and games. ***BE ON TIME FOR PRACTICE AND BE 30 MINUTES EARLY FOR GAMES.***
2. Respect teammates at all times. We do not expect all the players to be best friends, but we expect them to play with one another for the benefit of the team.
3. Follow the assignments given by the coach.
4. ***Call or email the coach if they cannot attend a practice or game. If you do not get an email reply back that says Thank you or something similar, assume I did not get it and call.*** Call me promptly if you have any questions, complaints, or problems about anything related to the team.
5. ***Improve their fitness level and skills by playing on their own. The game demands fitness, not the coach.***

### We ask you as parents to:

1. ***Encourage your daughter during games using positive comments and reinforcement.*** Focus on what they accomplish (for example, "Good Pass", "Nice shot", "Way to go"). Please avoid giving instructions to your daughter when they are playing. Instructions distract them and make it difficult for them to make the appropriate choices. I know it can be hard.
2. ***Respect all members of our team as well as the players/coaches/fans on the other team.*** We want to be known for our class.

3. ***Respect the referees and players the other team.*** If you have a problem with what the referees, coaches and players from the other team are doing please bring your concerns to me. Trust me to take appropriate action. ***Communicate with the coaches when required.*** We are here to support one another.

Just some thoughts, it would be great to share other versions of coaching philosophies with the group. Thanks for helping.

### **Game Day Dining (Key points from a past Soccer Journal Article by Dr. Don Kirkendall)**

Many of you may recall this from last season, but I thought it would be useful to share with you again.

Nutrition plays a very important role in sports performance and recovery. When players eat is almost as important as what they eat so that they can have optimum energy levels in practices and games and so that they can recover quickly afterward.

Here are some nutritional guidelines for young athletes

#### **Pre Exercise Nutrition** – 3 hours prior to play.

Good food choices – Whole grain cereal, sandwich, fruit, energy bar, sports drink, water. Rolled oat cereal.

Poor food choices – eggs, whole milk, beans, soda, snack chips. Avoid fat and sugary foods.

#### **During practice and games** – Drink every 15 to 20 minutes

Good choices – sports drinks (with protein), water

Poor choices - fruit juice, any solid food, soda

#### **After practice and games (immediately after exercise)**

Good choices – sports drink (with protein), fruit, energy bar, water,

Sandwiches (bagels or English muffins instead of sliced bread) with jam/jellies and low fat energy bars

Poor choices – Snack chips, fast food, soda. Avoid high fat foods because they slow delivery of nutrients.