



Soccer Coaches Newsletter

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Coaching Directors Area: Well ... your season has now started and everyone should have several games under their belt. I hope that everything is going well and if not please let me know if there is anything I can do.

Couple of items....

- Everyone should have received a contract in the mail. I will need a sign copy sent back to me so that I can have a copy for the club made. I will then send the signed copy back to you.
- Check will be going out this week. The club treasurer ran out of checks and need to wait for the order to come in. She did not want to send checks to half the coaches.
- I will need to know if you plan on coaching next year, what age group and level you want to coach. Tryouts are scheduled for July 17-18. Teams interested in State will need to hold tryouts even earlier. More information will come at later date. Just mail me and let me know if you are interested in coaching.
- Expense reports will need to be turned in by October. I just let you know to begin collecting data.

As my high school season winds down, I will be trying to make it out to games and practices. Please let me know when and where you are practicing so that I can stop by.

Have fun and smile...parents love it!

Bob

Coaching Corner: Is coach doing a good job? By Sam Snow

Proper player development leads to good match performance, which often leads to wins.

But there are shortcuts to winning, particularly with players younger than high-school age. Just get the biggest, fastest kids around -- then outrun and outmuscle the opposition.

Play run-n-gun and high-pressure defense against young players who are still learning the game and that amount of pressure can win games. Mind you, it doesn't help those kids learn how to play soccer in any sophisticated manner.

It is certainly the stance of US Youth Soccer to focus more on match performance than outcome; yet this is not to say that players should not strive to win. There's nothing wrong with winning!

But remember, the outcome of the game is not necessarily a measure of whether the coach is doing a good job developing players. Players and coaches should diligently work to improve their performance. This is the drive for excellence as opposed to superficial success.

All right, fine you say. So how do we measure success?

How do parents know if the team coach is doing a good job of teaching soccer to the players? How does the novice coach know if the kids are growing within the game?

These are the goals in measuring success for youth soccer:

SHORT TERM

FUN ... do the players smile and laugh? Do the players look forward to playing? The first question from the player's family should be, "Did you have fun today?"

Fair Play ... does a player demonstrate by words and actions a sense of sportsmanship?

Rules of the Game ... do the players know and follow the rules of soccer?

Health and Fitness ... are the players physically fit enough to meet the fitness demands of the game? Are they developing good nutrition and hydration habits befitting an athlete?

Friendships ... are the players creating new friends within the team and with players from other teams?

Skills ... are the players demonstrating a growing number of ball skills and are they gradually becoming more proficient in those skills?

LONG TERM

Commitment ... how do the players answer when asked at the end of a game, "Did you try your best?"

Roles in the Team ... more important than learning a position, are the players learning about positioning? Knowing where the center forward spot is on the field is important, yet learning how to move tactically within the game is far more important. Do all of the players get exposed to playing all of the positions?

Leadership ... are players being given the opportunity to take on leader roles and responsibilities? Are the coaches and team managers teaching leadership?

Tactics ... are the players experimenting with new tactics in matches? The coaches must teach new tactics to the players in training sessions and then allow them to try out the tactics in a match, regardless of how that might affect the outcome!

Retention ... do the players come back year after year? Retention is recognized as also a short-term measure of success in youth soccer and developing well adjusted citizens is another long-term measure of success in youth sports.

We know that it takes many years to develop into a quality soccer player. Indeed, that continued development can be seen even in young professional players.

Soccer is a long-term development/late specialization sport.

Research by Dr. Istvan Balyi and others provides us this model:

LATE SPECIALIZATION MODEL

1. Fundamental Stage - ages 6-9
2. Learning to Train - ages 8-12
3. Training to Train - ages 11-16
4. Training to Compete - ages 15-18
5. Training to Win - ages 17 and older
6. Retirement/Retainment - ages: post playing career

Striving to improve individual, group and team performance is more important at the youth level than the score line. Simultaneously, players should play to win.

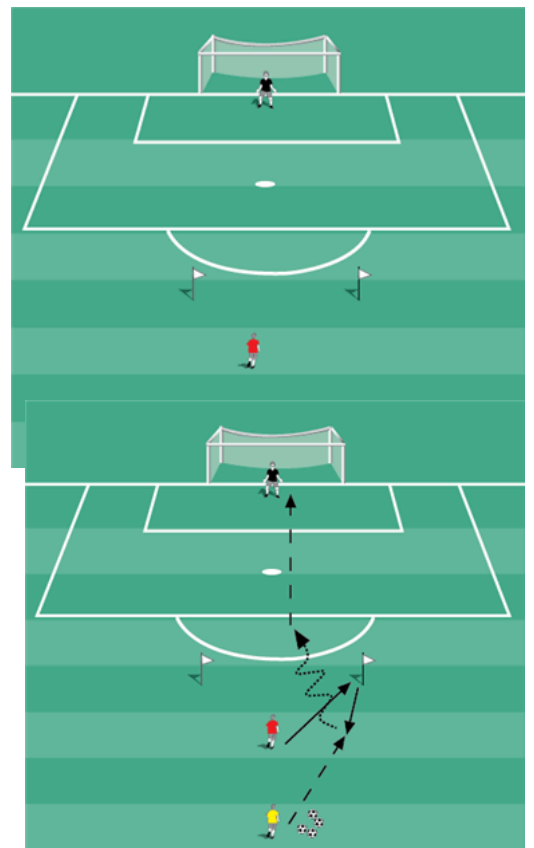
Coaches should teach and develop the players as they learn how to win. Parents should support the players and coaches. Intrinsic success is by its nature more difficult to measure than extrinsic success.

A trophy is more tangible to an adult than the exhilaration a child feels while playing soccer. The final measure of success for parents and coaches of the children's soccer experience will require a good deal of patience from the adults. That measurement is the free choice of the child to stay in the game!

Featured Activity: Today's featured activity works on turning in a confined space.

There are two cones approximately 10 yards apart at the top of the D and a server 20 yards back. A forward is between the cones and the server. The server has a pile of balls.

The worker sprints toward one cone (checks away) then back to the middle and must receive the ball, turn and shoot inside the 18.



The worker then checks back to the server, checks away toward the other cone and does the same. This is done a total of 10 times (5 to each cone) and the worker goes as quickly as possible without sacrificing technique.

GoalKeeper Activity: Today's newsletter shows an activity that works on the decision on diving or keeping your feet on a breakaway.

Start with a server around 25 yards out from the goal with a few balls. There is a keeper in goal and an attacker just behind the server.

The server plays the ball into the 18 and the attacker takes off after the ball.

The keeper must charge out to the ball but rather than diving recklessly, must make a few quick decision.

- | Can they beat the attacker to the ball?
- | If they can beat the attacker to the ball, do they need to dive or can they keep their feet and still get to it first?
- | If they need to dive to get to the ball first, which side should they dive out on?
- | If they can't beat the attacker to the ball, where do they need to set to prepare for the shot?

As the keeper charges out and makes the decision, the attacker tries to get to the ball.

The game is live at that point and the attacker tries to score and the keeper tries to either win the ball or protect the goal. This activity is done at full speed but there is no hurry between balls. This means that when the server plays the ball, the attacker and keeper go at full speed but once the ball is saved or it goes out of play, there isn't a rush for the next ball to be played.

