



Team Management Handbook

U11 – U18

A guidance document for Team Coaches & Managers

A Team Coach Vision Statement

By providing a safe, positive, nurturing and enjoyable environment, encourage development in all players in order to attain their greatest potential.

In general, emphasize technique more than tactics at all ages. Anyway, tactics are ineffective without proper technique in place, as the execution breaks down. Proper technique is not suddenly learned at 10 or 12... It has to be continually honed via appropriate training and good competition.

Before Your First Training Session

- ✓ Organize!
- ✓ Prepare for meeting the players and parents
- ✓ Do you know which League your team will be playing in?
- ✓ Learn your specific league guidelines.
- ✓ Gather resources, be aware of the Club's Technical Policy Manual & Age Specific Training Plan.
- ✓ Do your homework

Parent – Coach Meeting

The following list includes key points for you to remember when you meet with the player's parents at the beginning of the season:

- ✓ Introduce yourself and your assistant coaches/manager (if already in place)
- ✓ Be prompt and organized in starting.
- ✓ Have refreshments, if possible.
- ✓ State your experience and qualifications, even if you have none, and your reasons for becoming a coach.
- ✓ Explain your philosophy and team objectives.
- ✓ Review your methods of coaching. Describe a typical training session.
- ✓ Discuss what is expected of parents and solicit their assistance.
- ✓ Collect or confirm parent contact information (postal address, phone numbers, E-mail addresses, etc.) and especially emergency contact information.
- ✓ Ask the parents to let you know if there is any particular medical condition about their child you should know. (use Medical Form)
- ✓ Distribute information on the club (i.e. Codes of Conduct & Web site resources etc.)
- ✓ Discuss training/game schedule (if available).
- ✓ Leave plenty of time so parents can ask any questions or voice any concerns they may have.

What should I do at the first practice?

- ✓ Get acquainted. Not only should you learn the player's names but, also have the children exchange names and get to know their new teammates.
- ✓ Set down team rules and expectations, with players and parents.
- ✓ Assess your players' general ability.
- ✓ Spark their interest with some fun.

THE PARENTS

Parents must not lose sight of why youth participate in sport. Studies show that the most popular reason for playing youth sports was “to have fun”. The next most popular reasons for playing sport were to learn new skills, to be with friends and to experience the thrill of competition. Although the children do identify winning as a reason for playing sport it is not one of the most popular reasons. Many parents erroneously believe that winning is the number one reason that children want to play sports and by winning, it must mean that they are developing!

Parents’ who become preoccupied with winning and losing, place an unreasonable amount of pressure on their child and risk turning their child off to youth soccer. An effective sport parent should also understand his or her role and the expectations associated with being a soccer parent. The primary role of the parent in youth soccer is to provide support for their children. At the younger ages, parents need to provide encouragement and help the child understand the lessons that soccer can teach.

Reference the School of Excellence Philosophy posted under the Club tab of the ASA web site.

Sideline Ethics

Define appropriate sideline behavior. This would be for players, parents and the team staff. Don’t allow yourself or spectators to verbally abuse any of the players or the match officials.

REMEMBER: The Team Coach is responsible for his/her parents and their sideline behaviour. A Coach can be sent off and face a suspension, if the behaviour of a parent is deemed inappropriate by the match referee.

Some things to discuss early in the seasonal year are:

- ✓ Encourage parents to cheer for all players, not just the good ones. Know the difference between cheering and “oh my goodness, what are you doing out there?”
- ✓ Discourage coaching by spectators from the sidelines, as this will confuse players.
- ✓ Referees, especially young ones, are doing a difficult job. Let them do it.
- ✓ Criticism of officials usually results in the children learning the wrong lesson from the adults surrounding the field.
- ✓ Be a positive role model and set the standard of good sportsmanship.
- ✓ Do not engage in unsportsmanlike communication with opponents or their spectators.
- ✓ Maintain integrity. Your demeanor on and off the field will say a lot about you for a long time.
- ✓ Always work within the spirit of the Laws of the Game.
- ✓ Regardless of the outcome of matches, wins and losses and trophy presentations, your actions as coach will always be how people remember you.

Coaching Your Own Child

Approximately 1 in 5 parents will become volunteer coaches for their child’s team. Before doing so, you will need to clarify both how your child feels about this decision and how you feel about taking on the hard work involved in being a coach.

Many parents mean well when they volunteer to coach, but don't fully realize how much time and effort it takes to do this successfully. Some parents have found that coaching helps get and keep their children involved in soccer. Others find coaching their own children a recipe for disaster because the child resents the switch from nurturing parent to neutral or demanding coach who can't play favorites. Even though coaching can be immensely fulfilling, it can also be a challenge, especially if you are dealing with your own child. Before rushing into coaching your child's team, take a moment to clarify your motives. Ask yourself the following questions when considering if you will make the commitment:

- Am I coaching to help make my child a star or ensure my child gets extra playing time?
- Can I treat my own child the same as the other members of the team and have the same expectations for him/her?
- Can I be objective in team assignments and not favor my child?
- Are you willing to accept your child no matter where he/she is in terms of both skill ability and motivation level and not push him/her at all times to be the best one on the team?
- Can I modulate my emotions, especially during highly competitive situations?

Make sure that your child feels both comfortable and enthusiastic about having you as a coach and he/she is willing to share your attention and praise with teammates and is able to accept your directions and criticism. Coaching your child allows you to get to know his/her peers and gives you something to share and talk about with him/her but, it can also become a source of tension...

- *Keep a watchful eye on how your child is handling your new role, as he/she may become overly concerned about gaining your approval or feel even more devastated by your disapproval.*
- *You will have to continually work to keep your roles as parent and coach separate. Remember to be a parent first and coach second.*
- *When your child experiences frustration after a game, he/she will want you to console him/her as his/her parent, not offer advice as the coach.*
- *Resist the temptation to talk with your child about other team members' performances. Once you leave the field, leave the game behind as well.*
- *Don't let soccer become the central focus of your conversations or of the quality time you spend together.*
- *Part of successfully coaching your child means recognizing when it's time to have someone else take over the role, either because your child has progressed beyond your own skill level or because coaching has caused both of you frustration.*
- *Not only does this mean avoiding favoritism, but it also requires not being tougher on your child than the other players.*

PREVENTION AND CARE OF INJURIES

Your primary role is to provide a safe and healthy environment for the children. You can do this by following this simple checklist for basic safety. Be sure to devote part of your team's first training and practice to basic rules. Here are the most important:

- ✓ Do not allow kids to play soccer while wearing jewelry or watches.
- ✓ Shin guards are mandatory equipment. Players must wear shin guards under their socks.
- ✓ Goals must be anchored to prevent them being blown or pulled over.

- ✓ Absolutely no swinging or climbing on goals. Never allow kids to move a portable goal.
- ✓ Keep warm-up areas clear of gear and other items players might trip over.
- ✓ Keep benches at least five yards away from sidelines.
- ✓ Insist that kids bring filled water bottles to every game and practice.
- ✓ Check fields before you play. Look for broken glass, storm drains, raised sprinkler heads, holes, protruding bolts, hooks or nails on goal posts or crossbars - anything that can cause injury. In following the above, you have taken precaution to ensure a safe environment. However, there's no avoiding injury when it comes to playing sports. Again, be safe and prepared in the event of an injury to a player.
- ✓ Have a properly stocked first aid kit, including ice. Ask your physician, ambulance squad, or emergency medical facility to suggest a list of supplies for your medical kit
- ✓ Take first aid courses, or better yet, advanced first aid.
- ✓ Prevent many injuries/sprains by teaching, and allowing time for warm-ups and cool downs.
- ✓ Don't take chances; kids who are injured should be removed from the field. Injuries should never be "worked out" or "run off."
- ✓ Teach team parents the basics of R.I.C.E. for minor injuries:
 - o **Rest:** Stop all activity that would further aggravate the injury.
 - o **Ice:** Use ice continuously for the first 15 minutes then 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off for the first 24 hours.
 - o **Compression:** To prevent swelling wrap the injury with an elastic bandage.
 - o **Elevation:** If possible raise the injured body part above heart level.

R.I.C.E. should be employed for 24 to 48 hours depending on the severity of the injury. More information on this is provided by way of the Player Safety & First Aid guidance contained in the Technical Policy Manual.

- ✓ Discourage parents from seeking a player's early return from an injury.

How To Run A Training Session

A training session should focus on one theme!

The training session should go from simple to complex activities.

Whenever you put together a lesson plan for a training session ask yourself these questions:

- Are the activities fun?
- Are they organized?
- Are the players involved in the activities?
- Is creativity and decision making being used?
- Are the spaces used appropriate?
- Is the coach's feedback appropriate?
- Are there implications for the game?

Avoid the three L's: Laps, Lines and Lectures!

There's no more sure-fire way of boring the kids than the three L's.

It's a waste of precious time running-laps, when the players could be combining fitness with skills. Every child should have a ball (or a minimum of one ball for every two players) then there's no need to wait in line for their turn.

Use practices and activities that include all of the players. Keep your comments and instructions brief. A lecture is the last thing a child wants when soccer time is supposed to be a fun time. A well-organized training session will leave no idle time for their minds to wander.

GAME PREPARATION

Be sure to connect with your opposing team coach/manager several days prior to every match. It doesn't matter if you are the HOME or AWAY team!

Confirm all match details; Venue, KO time, team colours etc...

Your teams' schedule will be posted on the respective League web site (see below) and confirmation of your Home Games will be posted on the home page of the ASA web site. In addition, you will receive a weekly e-mail from our Field Coordinator – Marissa.

Please make sure that you look at your emails and the website prior to leaving for the field for your HOME game, for as the weather gets wet... there will be times that fields will be closed... and hence, games will be cancelled. Sometimes it will be left to the referee at the field to make the call, especially if the city has NOT closed the fields for the weekend. Other times, if we've had snow overnight or flooding, ASA may make the call on their own and close the fields.

If, as coach YOU cancel a HOME game for any reason, please ensure you contact our Field/Referee Coordinator – Marissa, so that the match referee can be notified.

GAME DAY

Pre-Game

- Tell parents that the kids should eat at least two hours before kick-off whenever possible.
- Be at the game site 45-60 minutes prior to kickoff.
- Check **goal nets & corner flags** are in place, secure and safe.
- Have two completed Game Roster Forms & all the Player & Coach ID cards for every game (U12-U18).
- Warm-up should commence at least 30-45mins prior to KO time.
- Very short talk from the coach.
- Organize who will be on the field first and how you intend to play.

Game

- Sit back, relax and enjoy watching the kids play.
- Make sure all of the kids' play.
- During the game is a good time to speak with the parents to explain to them what is happening in the game and for what you want them to cheer.
- If you need to direct players, do so with a calm tone to your voice...do not shout at the players.
- Look for team shape, organization on the field. ***Coach players away from the ball, rather than the player with the ball...let him/her make decisions!***
- Watch for what the players do well in the game and praise it...
- During breaks make sure the players get water and take care of any injuries.

Post-Game

- Tend to any injuries.
- Ensure all of the kids drink plenty of water.
- Thank the players and send them home. Have a group cheer.
- Remove goal nets & corner flags if appropriate and return to storage area.
- Email parents with updates.
- Submit the game score via the ASA web site / scorekeeper.

LEAGUE WEB SITES

It is vital that team coaches & managers take the time to find the web site of the respective League that their team will be playing in and ensure that you are aware of the specific 'Guidelines' for your League.

All the respective leagues & divisions that our club teams participate within, can be found through accessing the *Fraser Valley Youth Soccer Association* web site... <http://www.fvysa.ca/leagues/>

Score Reporting

After each game, both the home & away coaches are required to submit the scores of every game to their respective 'score-keeper'. All coaches of ASA are required to submit scores of all games (Home & Away) via the links on the club web site;

<http://abbotsfordsoccer.com/coaches-corner/score-reporting/>

Player ID cards

All players U12-U18 are required to present an ID card at EVERY game. The match referee will check all cards prior to KO at each game.

Team Staff ID Cards

All Head Coaches, Asst. Coaches & Team Managers (U12-U18 teams) are required to present an ID card at EVERY game. The referee will check all team staff ID cards prior to KO at each game.

Game Day Roster Forms (U12-U18)

All teams in the U12-U18 age divisions need to produce two roster forms per game. These forms should be signed by the Team Head Coach and handed to the match referee. Team Head Coaches should receive a copy of the opponents Team List, which should be signed by the opposing coach & match referee. Each League will have its own usable Game Day Roster Form, which can be downloaded from the respective League web site.

Call-Up Players

At times, a team may require the assistance of another player due to injuries, holiday, sickness etc... A team may use a 'Game permit' for a player from a lower level of play or younger age. i.e. a Div1 team can call-up a Div2 player of the same age or younger. No lateral movement at any age is permitted. (e.g. Div1 player to another Div1 team within the same age group). Permitting down an age group or level is not allowed.

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate....

The position of Team Coach & Team Manager holds a significant responsibility with respect to being able to communicate effectively on many fronts. As one of the main conduits between the club and its members, the Coach and Manager of every team should form a strong communication link with Club Staff. This relationship is VITAL to ensure that current news & developments can be quickly passed 'down the line' and that any issues/problems, at the team level, can be quickly addressed and appropriate guidance offered.

Club Contacts

Team Coaches and Managers should establish contact & maintain a regular line of communication throughout the season...

NAME	POSITION	E-MAIL	TEL #
DAN VILLAGE	General Manager	gm@abbotsfordsoccer.com	604-557-6632
IAN KNIGHT	Technical Director	td@abbotsfordsoccer.com	604-807-7448
DIANE TURNER	Office Manager	info@abbotsfordsoccer.com	604-859-3033
MARISSA BYRNE	Field/Ref Coordinator	byrnemmx5@mac.com	604-309-8446