

2019

WOODBURY SOCCER CLUB
SALVO SOCCER CLUB

RECREATION COACH MANUAL

Coach's Guide to a fun and exciting season |





This manual is designed to provide volunteer recreation soccer coaches new and experienced with information to aid you on the field and during the season.

We hope you enjoy this manual and that it is beneficial to players and the coach.

Contents

Introduction	3
General Information	4
Prevention.....	4
Action Plan	4
Equipment and Surface.....	4
Understand Who.....	4
Well Planned Session	4
Care.....	4
Suggested First Aid Kit Items.....	5
Injury.....	5
Concussions	5
Fields.....	5
Locations.....	5
Parking	6
Parking Lot Etiquette	6
Pets	6
Administrative Items.....	6
Coach’s Consent Form	6
Head Coach Refund Policy	6
Concussion Awareness Training.....	6
Get Started with Your Team	6
First Contact.....	6
Parent and Coach Meeting	7
Pre-season Meeting	7
Communication.....	8
Behavior.....	8



Coaching Behavior	8
Ways to Impact the Score	8
Good Touch/Bad Touch	9
Parent Behavior	9
Players.....	9
Soccer Content.....	10
Why Do Children Play Soccer?	10
General Characteristics of Players	10
Priorities.....	10
Practice Plans	11
Video	
Sample Activities.....	12
Game Days	13
Rule to be Aware Of.....	13
Splitting the Squad (U5-U8 Teams).....	14
Game Schedule	14
Weather Guidelines	14
Cancellations.....	15
Lightning	15
Borderline Weather Conditions	15
Additional Resources	15
Books.....	15
On-line	
Documents.....	



Introduction

Thank you for dedicating your time to be a coach with Woodbury Soccer Club

Woodbury Soccer Club has a long successful history in its soccer program and with your help that tradition will continue to improve. Woodbury Soccer Club would like to thank you for the time you are volunteering to help mold the youth of Woodbury and surrounding communities.

The Director of Youth Development (DOYD) will be providing the program’s curriculum and practice plans. The intent of providing these items is to increase the quality of our program and promote a consistent approach to teaching soccer in Woodbury.

GOLDEN RULES

1. HAVE FUN
2. GET KIDS ON THE MOVE

Woodbury Soccer Club is a non-profit organization whose mission it is to foster the physical, mental and emotional growth and development of youth through the sport of soccer at all ages and levels of competition. WSC strives to provide a safe, structured and fair environment for young players. WSC promotes an

environment for players to have FUN learning the game of soccer while creating opportunities for players to develop a lifelong passion for the game.

The intent of our Recreation soccer program is to provide a safe fun environment for children to play and get exercise. We will not keep standings, we will not keep records, and we will not crown a champion. This doesn’t mean there isn’t competition because every game has a winner and a not so good. Focus must be on the experience of recreation soccer not game outcomes.

Judge the success of the program on three major criteria.

1. Did each child on our team have fun and look forward to going to soccer?
2. Did each child learn something about soccer?
3. Do they families want you to coach their child again?

Thanks for your time, energy, and dedication. If at any time you need additional help with something please contact me.

Look for these blue boxes throughout the manual for quick tips to make us better coaches

Sean McKuras

Grassroots Director

smckuras@salvosoccer.org or (612) 232-6404





Woodbury Soccer Club
General Information
Prevention

Salvo Soccer Club

Action Plan

In case of a scrape, a twist, a break, lightning, or etc. what action will be taken? Try to think of a variety of possibilities to eliminate surprises if an injury or weather situation occurs.

Soccer is fun because players get to run, jump, and dribble in whatever direction they want. Can we reflect this in what we do at practice?

Identify a parent that is going to help you in case an injury occurs and determine whether you or they will have the first aid kit.

Who is going to call 911 if necessary?

Who is going to deal with the players in case of injury?

Equipment and Surface

Players should not be wearing any jewelry including starter stud earrings. NO jewelry should be worn.

Players should always be wearing shin guards covered by socks.

Check the field for holes, sharp objects, or other items that may be able to injure a player. In the case of a hole place a cone over the top of it so that a player doesn't step in it and then please help us get it filled by doing one of the following:

Go to the City of Woodbury's website, <http://www.ci.woodbury.mn.us/online/csrs.html>

- Click on the "Request Service" link
- Click on the header labeled "Make Request"
- Click on the link on the left hand side labeled "Parks, Trails, & Open Spaces"
- Click on "Field Conditions"
- Fill out the form and submit

Understand Who

When you are doing activities if you have players who are variety of sizes be careful of the giant matching up against the wee person.

You are not working with world-class athletes you are working with growing and developing children. Take water breaks often; accept that small people get tired quickly and that there is no need for fitness.

Well Planned Session

Make sure you have a proper warm-up and cool down.

Make sure to avoid having the goal posts in play in your space or that adjacent fields are not sharing touchlines. Plan on repeated water breaks to help players recharge throughout a session and maintain hydration.

Care

Refer to Action Plan and who has been identified to help with basic first aid and CPR





Woodbury Soccer Club

Salvo Soccer Club

If you are not comfortable treating a player's injury have their parent deal with it. If it is serious enough don't wait call 911. The first few moments after an injury can be critical for successful care.

Suggested First Aid Kit Items

There is no need for an elaborate first aid kit but a few items will be of use to deal with most injuries

- Team Info Cards with parents' names and phone numbers
- Plastic bags for ice/ice in a small cooler
- Athletic tape and an ace bandage
- Antiseptic pads and gauze
- Towelettes
- Antibiotic crème
- Non-latex gloves and band aids

Can you be the "guide on the side" instead of "the sage on the stage?"

Injury

If an injury occurs that requires medical treatment, is a head injury, or causes a player to miss practice or a game please do the following:

Email wscadmin@woodburysoccer.com. In the subject write "Rec Injury". In the body of the message write your team name, who performed treatment, who was injured, a brief description of the injury, and when the player is expected to return to play

If a player requires medical treatment the player needs a note from a physician to return to play. No play in practicing or a game until a note is received which clears the player to play.

Concussions

MN has passed a law dictating that coaches be very aware of the symptoms and impact of concussions on youth players. Coaches are encouraged to share with their families the effects of concussions and the need take action when coaches believe a concussion has occurred.

Coaches are encouraged to have their families' take the Heads Up training you have been required to do so everyone is on the same page:

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

It is coach's option to have families sign off on this Parent/Athlete Concussion Info Sheet:

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/pdf/Parent_Athlete_Info_Sheet-a.pdf

Fields

Locations and addresses in case of emergency

Middleton Elementary	9105 Lake Road
Bailey Elementary	4125 Woodlane Drive
Valley Crossing/Colby Lake	9900 Park Crossing

City link to field maps - <http://www.ci.woodbury.mn.us/parks-and-trails/athletic-fields-and-field-maps>





Woodbury Soccer Club

Salvo Soccer Club

Parking

Please remind parents to drive into and around the parking lot with extreme caution. Being late is better than having an injured child or worse. The parking lot is a dangerous place for our little people and everyone should take extreme care to make it a safe place.

Parking Lot Etiquette

There is no parking along yellow curbs due to congestion and safety. Arrive early enough to allow plenty of time for parking. Drive slowly and cautiously in the parking lots. Instruct players to hold balls while in the parking lot.

Please have Families Park and walk their children to the field.

Pets

No pets are allowed at any site. Please remind your families that unless a pet is a working animal there should be no pets at the field.

Administrative Items

Coach's Consent Form

Coaching a Recreation team in Woodbury Soccer Club requires each coach to fill out this form and return it to the WAA to insure the safety of our players. The form does **NOT** need to be notarized. The form is at the back of this document. (Document is at the back of this manual)

Head Coach Refund Policy

Each head coach is entitled to the refund of registration fees for one participant per team head coached. Refunds will be distributed at the end of the current season.

Concussion Awareness Training

It is now a MN State Law that if you are going to be a youth sports coach that you need to complete Concussion Awareness Training. Once you have completed the training it is necessary to send a copy of your Heads Up Certificate (electronic copy preferred) to the Director of Coaching at

doc@woodburysoccer.com

To get to the training go to:

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

It has been a successful season if the players all want to come back for the next season

Get Started with Your Team

First Contact

Please call and email your families as soon as possible:

- Give them your name, phone number, email address
- Specific instructions regarding the first practice should include:
 - Date
 - Time
 - Location
 - Your team number



Woodbury Soccer Club

Salvo Soccer Club



Woodbury Soccer Club

Salvo Soccer Club

- What to bring – Water, shin guards, ball
- Remind parents to put their child's' name and telephone numbers on their ball and other equipment.

Parent and Coach Meeting

Pre-season Meeting

At the beginning of the season you should have a parent meeting so everyone is on the same page. It would be good to cover the following items at your meeting.

Goals

Explain the Recreation Program goals

- Fun
- Player development
- Kids want to keep playing soccer

Player Information

- Medical information you should be aware of
- Previous playing experience of children
- Family situations that may affect rides to and from soccer

Parent Information

- Emergency phone number
- Obtain work numbers, cell numbers, and email addresses
- Rides – who is taking player to and from practice
- Drop-off Policy
 - Recreation soccer isn't a drop off sport
 - A guardian or parent responsible for each player (not the coach)
 - If a guardian is at the field the must have the phone number of the parent
 - In case of an injury, the responsible party can render first aid while the coach can go back to the rest of practice for the remainder of the team.
- Proper behavior at practices and games
 - Share Youth Soccer Coach Poem by Berticelli (Document is at the back of this manual)

Responsibilities for Players, Parent, & Coaches

Players

- Wear shin guards, bring a ball, and bring water
- Come ready to play

Parents

- Notify coach of absence or tardiness
- Notify coach of ride changes
- Be supportive of coach
- If you are 2nd to last parent to pick-up child stay with coach until last child is picked up

Coach

- Arrive early & end on time
- Plan for practice and games to create a productive soccer environment





Woodbury Soccer Club

Salvo Soccer Club

- Have fun

Parents and Coach

- Provide a safe positive environment for everyone's child to grow up in

Wrap-up

- Hand out a copy of the Small Sided Games brochure and the Youth Soccer Coach Poem

Communication

A successful season depends upon communication between players, parents, coaches and WSC. WSC will communicate with you via email and the WSC website so please check your email and the website regularly.

Club Website
 Director of Youth Development
 Director of Coaching

www.woodburysoccer.com
<mailto:smckuras@woodburysoccer.com>
doc@woodburysoccer.com

Behavior

Coaching Behavior

As coaches we should be striving to set an example and create an optimal environment for success. During games, coaches should cheer and applaud from the sideline opposite the parent sideline. Parents are not permitted on the coach's sideline. Coaches should stay on their half of the field no matter where the action is. No coaching is permitted from the goal line or behind the goalie. Each team may only have one head coach and up to two assistant coaches on the sideline at any time.

Set an example for your parents by applauding and cheering good play for both teams. Cheer and applaud as a reaction to play rather than in anticipation. Let's set the proper example for players too by worrying about only those parts of the game that we can control. If you have problem with another team please inform the DOC or the Recreation Director in writing stating the team and reason.

During the games, please don't run up the scores. Winning is great and we play games for competition but remember in every game ½ the kids win and ½ the kids lose but we do not need to win by a large margin. If you're 3 or 4 goals ahead, please make some changes or put some restrictions on how your players are scoring goals. Be creative and make it tough on your team so they get a challenge no matter who the opponent. For the sake of all players involved, please remember this is recreational soccer!

Ways to Impact the Score

Sometimes it is tough to keep the score at a reasonable margin. Part of your challenge as a coach is not to win by a margin greater than 3 goals. Once your team is ahead of your opponent by 3 goals or you can anticipate an easy game ask your team to score in the following ways:

1. Score on the ground
2. Score on a pass back
3. Score on a first time touch
4. Score on a ball out of the air
5. Score within 4 passes of winning the ball
6. Etc.





Woodbury Soccer Club

Salvo Soccer Club

You have a responsibility as a coach to make sure everyone on the field has a great time not just your team. Keep this in mind when you see the margin of difference start to grow and grow.

Good Touch/Bad Touch

It may be obvious that the kids shouldn't be touched by coaches in ways that could make the kids uncomfortable. However, coaches should be aware that, in order to avoid even the appearance of impropriety, coaches should rarely touch the kids.

When trying to correct a player's form, demonstrate yourself or ask another player to demonstrate the form. When correcting a player's positioning, move yourself to the location and point to the spot if the player doesn't understand verbal instructions.

When congratulating a player, a high-five, fist bump, pat on the head or shoulders is the guideline. Use good judgment and assume that you're always being watched.

Parent Behavior

It is important that you communicate with parents how to communicate to players (their own and others) on game day. Recreation soccer is for players it isn't a program for adults. The players need to learn where and when to dribble, pass, and shoot from the game. If players are learning without adults telling them what to do all of us have had a successful season.

Parent Do's	Parent Don'ts
Sit 5-10 yards away from edge of field opposite the team and coach	Give players directions like, "kick it", "shoot it" & "dribble it"
Cheer for the good things that both teams do	React loudly to referees decisions
Clap for the good things both teams do	Jeering players for physical play – often their lack of control over their body and the ball create an accidental situation
Smile and enjoy the entertainment	Worry about the result

Please have parents wait on their sideline until you release their children to them.

Players

All players must play at least 50% of each game. Players should not be playing the same position all the time. Players need to be play all over the field. During the course of the season a player should play about the same amount in each spot on the field. Help them become soccer players by giving them experience at different positions.

Stress being good sports when competing. Without another team enjoying the spirit of competition there wouldn't be a game. Value your opponent.

After your games, be sure to line up the kids on the half line to "shake" hands and tell the other team's players and coaches "Good Game." Coaches must participate in this to lead by example.





Please see that your team picks up all trash after your games or practices when leaving the fields.

Soccer Content

Why Do Children Play Soccer?

- For fun
- For friends
- Parents make them
- For fitness
- To be on a team
- To develop new skills

General Characteristics of Players

Below are generally accepted characteristics of children. Recognizing the characteristics of your age group will help you identify proper expectations for the players you coach.

U5/U6 Players	U7/U8 Players	U9/U10 Players	U11/U12 Players	U13+ Players
Short attention span	Longer attention span than U5/U6	Lengthened attention span	Beginning of puberty	Pubescent
Most individually oriented	Will do more group activities pairs is best	Still in motion but not as busy – can listen to very short explanation	Flexibility training begins to be important	Flexibility training begins to be important
Constantly in motion	Developing physical confidence	Gross and small motor skills becoming more refined	Can think in abstract terms	Can think in abstract terms
Little or no concern for team activities	Still constantly in motion	Beginning to think ahead in their play	Seek peers that are most like themselves	Seek peers that are most like themselves
Physical coordination immature	Effort is synonymous with performance	Some are becoming more serious about their play	Popularity influences self-esteem	Popularity influences self-esteem
Eye hand or eye foot coordination primitive	Fragile self concept and body image	Enjoy the uniforms and team association	More TV and less unstructured play	More TV and less unstructured play
Love to run, jump, roll, and climb	Love to run, jump, roll, and climb	Rapid gains in learning performance movement skills at increasingly sophisticated levels	Increased ability to acquire and apply knowledge	Increased ability to acquire and apply knowledge

Ask your child open ended questions about their soccer experience. Did you have fun? What did you learn?

No sense of pace 0 to 100mph and 100 to 0mph	No sense of pace 0 to 100mph and 100 to 0mph	More inclined to want to play rather than being told to play	Beginning of player drop-out	Made a choice to play
--	--	--	------------------------------	-----------------------

Priorities

Below are the priorities in our soccer club for each age group. The idea of these priorities is to keep coaches focused on age appropriate technical, tactical, and physical goals.





U5/U6	U7/U8	U9/U10	U11/U12 Players	U13+ Players
Everything done with one player one ball	Increase comfort with the ball at feet	Stress creativity dribbling the ball	Stress creativity dribbling the ball	Use the ball to do work
Develop comfort with ball at feet	Dribbling should begin to incorporate change of direction and speed	Players need to be willing to take players on with the dribble	Players need to be willing to take players on with the dribble	Defend & Attack as a group
Work on fundamental movement skills like, running, jumping, bending, skipping, etc.	Passing in two's while in motion not static – show different surfaces but focus on inside of foot	Improved passing ability with inside and outside of foot – stress eye contact with teammate who is being passed the ball	Improved passing ability - stress saying teammate's name when passing the ball	Improved passing ability - stress saying teammate's name when passing the ball
Need to explore rolling and bouncing balls	Introduce striking ball with laces players will still use toe	Encourage players to receive the ball with vision of whole field	Encourage players to receive the ball with vision of whole field	Encourage players to receive the ball with vision of whole field
Teach shape not positions – 3v3 shape is a triangle	Teach shape not position – 4v4 shape is a diamond	Continue to teach shape not positions – diamond with support as point of emphasis	Introduce positions – make sure all players play all positions	Introduce positions – make sure all players play all positions

Practice Plans

All practice plans are designed to be inclusive not exclusive. Inclusive practices means players should always be a part of the action. Players should not be waiting in lines to participate or be eliminated from a game due to non-performance. Players who get eliminated from an activity clearly need more repetitions not time to sit out. For players out who can't perform a task/skill instead find creative ways to get them back into the activity quickly.

Practice plans are posted on our website. The idea is for you to be able to go to the website and print off the practice plans as you plan to use them. Click, print, and go play.

To get to the practice plans go to:

www.woodburysoccer.com

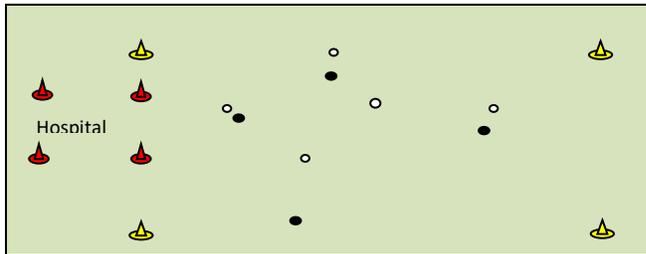
- Click on the horizontal “Coaching” link on the front a page
- Once on the coaching page click on the link for “Recreation Coaches”
- Once on the Recreation Coach page there are links on the left hand side of the page
- Click on your age group’s link



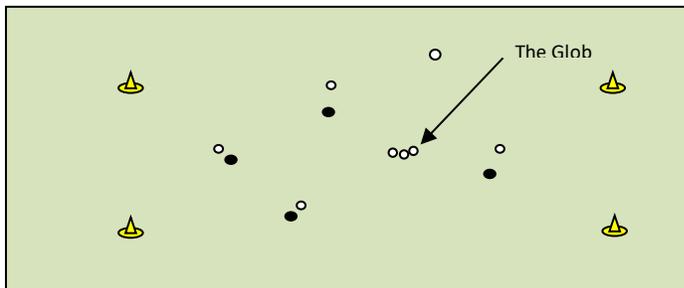


Sample Activities

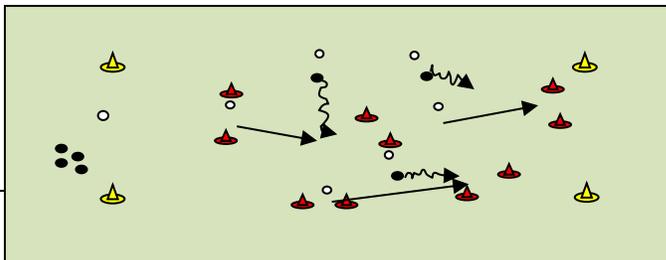
Activity	Description	Coaching Points
Hospital Tag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pick a few players to be “wookies” all the other players run around the space trying not to get tagged -When a player gets tagged by the wookie they have to put a band aid on their body using their hands -Once they get tagged a third time have the players go to the hospital and perform an activity with the ball -Eventually add ball to players running around 	<p><i>Maze, Body awareness</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Change speed and direction -Body control & agility -Keep ball close while dribbling



The Glob	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Name two players as the “glob” other players are trying to avoid getting tagged by the glob -Add ball and have players dribble around avoiding glob -As glob touches other players they add to the glob by holding the players hands -If glob breaks then have a couple of globs on field until two players are left; they can be the new glob 	<p><i>Maze, Body awareness</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vision up and around -Keep balance -Stop start acceleration
-----------------	--	---

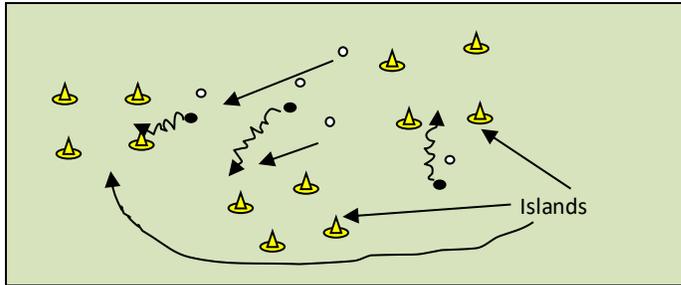


Open & Closed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Make 3 teams of even numbers -1 team is the gate guards the other 2 teams are trying to score with every player on a ball -Players are trying to dribble through gate to score -Have a few more gates than guards and guards can change which gate they are trying to guard 	<p><i>Target, Decision Making</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increases vision and anticipation -Encourages acceleration with the ball
--------------------------	---	--

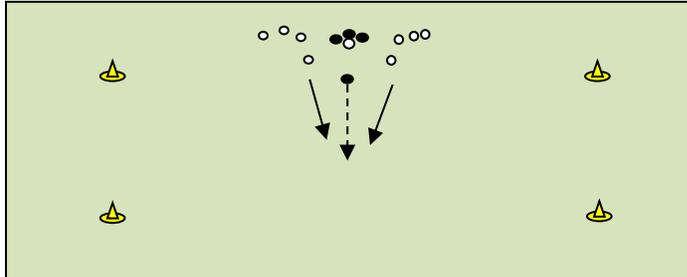




Minnows and Walleye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Minnows run/dribble between islands for safety -if tagged change from minnow to walleye -You can add bibs as rocks of safety 	<i>Target, Decision-Making, Maze</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Be safe -Make a plan
----------------------------	---	---



See ya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Place all the balls in a pile -Have players line up in two teams -Call out a number and that number of players runs out to play -if a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds then yell "See ya", those players get off the field quickly, and then call out another number to get the next game going -When you run out of balls in the pile it is time to collect them 	<i>Maze, Target, Decision Making</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Very game like -Keep game moving quickly
---------------	---	---



Give players what to do avoid telling them what not to do. "Catch them being good"

Game Days

Specific game schedules will be emailed to coaches a week into the start of the season.

Rule to be Aware Of

Law XVI says that for goal kicks, "the defending team shall back up to the halfway line." This rule really makes the game more interesting because it opens play more quickly.





Law XVII says that for corner kicks, “remain in the box or at the half line until the first touch of the ball is played.” The intent of this rule is to encourage teams to play the ball short and get it moving.

Laws of the Game (the rules) will be posted on the Coaches page of our website two weeks prior to games beginning.

Splitting the Squad (U5-U8 Teams)

Dividing a team between two fields can be done in a few different ways. The two leading ways are to divide them randomly while the other is to have more aggressive kids on one field and less aggressive kids on the other. Discuss with your opposing coach at the beginning of the game what might be the best way to split up your teams so that games are competitive and fun.

Here's one example of a way to split kids "randomly" between two fields. Have the kids line-up numerically by their jersey number, typically this would result in them being ordered smallest to largest. The smallest number would go to field 1, the next smallest number to field 2, repeat. When substitutions are necessary, the player that arrived latest sits out first. The next player to sit out is the jersey number numerically larger; start over with the smallest jersey number after the largest number. Using the jersey numbers sequentially makes it easier on the coach.

Effort can be controlled and should be praised. Outcomes can't be controlled!

Game Schedule

Game schedules will be posted at:

<http://woodburysoccer.com/>

Teams play once per week. Remember to tell your teams to arrive at least 5-10 minutes before game time. Games will start on time.

Weather Guidelines

Decisions to practice or play games are ultimately the responsibility of the head coach. When possible, the WSC will try to provide timely guidance. Also, the City may close the fields in poor weather conditions to protect the fields.

The goal of the weather guidelines is to maximize safety and also balance playing time with the comfort of players, coaches and parents. They are guidelines and not rules in order to allow coaches freedom to make good decisions.

Heat index between 90 and 105 degrees should have modified play with extra water breaks and shorter practice or games.





Rather than list all the conditions for which play should be canceled, the table below lists the borderline conditions. In conditions worse than those listed, play should usually be shortened or canceled.

Cancellations

We do play in the rain. If games or practices are cancelled by the club or by the city this information will be posted on the front page of our website, on our Facebook page, and a note will be emailed to all participants as soon as possible. The city will determine if the fields need to be closed for usage by 3pm. If a cancellation has to occur after that time WSC will try to post the cancellation by 5pm.

Lightning

Lightning means go home!!

All Games and Practices will be cancelled if there is lightning close to the fields. If thunder is heard less than 30 seconds after lightning strikes it will be determined it is unsafe to continue play. Make sure your parents understand that they shouldn't linger or move under the buildings—they should go to their cars and go home.

Borderline Weather Conditions

Temperature	Wind	Other	Notes
Any	Any	Lightning within 5 miles	Thunder within 30 seconds of visible lightning
<45°	<5 mph		
<50°	<10mph		
<70°	<10mph	Light rain	
>105°			

Additional Resources

Books

Bigelow, B., Moroney, T., & Hall, L. (2001). *Just Let the Kids Play*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications.

DiCicco, T., Hacker, C., & Salzberg, C. (2002). *Catch Them Being Good*. New York: Penguin Group.

Fleck, T., & Quinn, R. (2002). *The Baffled Parent's Guide to Great Soccer Drills*. Chicago: Ragged Mountain Press.

Quinn, R. (1990). *The Peak Performance*. Cincinnati: QSM Consultants.





The Youth Soccer Coach

By Mike Berticelli

You donate your time for the good of our youth,
But you scream and you yell and are often uncouth.

The ref is just twelve and still learning the game,
But you call him a jerk and say he's not sane.

The parents are screaming and follow your lead,
As you sprint up the sideline at uncontrollable speed.

You jump as you yell, "Pass, pass the ball!"
You turn red as you bellow, "Ref, make the damn call!"

"You're the left back now, get in your position,
If you don't we might lose and ruin our tradition!"

Positions are needed so we look like a team,
'Cause they're miniature pros, or so it does seem.

The fullback is bored; he picks at his nose,
While the others run wild and kick with their toes.

You scream for a goal, no matter how it goes in,
The skill doesn't matter, just as long as we win!

The parents go crazy as the ball nears the goal,
Their advice and instructions will soon take their toll.

You see, Junior feels pressure, he's not having much fun,
We tell him to pass, when to shoot and to run.

He cam here to play and to use his own mind,
'Cause soccer's the most creative game that you'll find.

Imagination is needed on the part of each child,
Solving problems on the field is what makes them go wild.

A week of long practice, while just standing in line,
Waiting to shoot, using one ball at a time.

This just doesn't cut it, and for some it's too late,
Make your practices fun, don't be the coach that they hate.

They come to "play" soccer, not to "work" at the game,
Their excitement is something we don't want to tame.

Maradona has moves that are beyond comprehension,
No coach taught those moves while threatening detention!

He learned from his friends and tried copying others,
While playing in games, without coaches and mothers.

Soccer is different, not like baseball at all,
We don't need positions, just give them the ball.

They first must learn skill; it's the meat of the game,
If they can't dribble or shoot, then who should we blame?

Skill must be learned through repeated trials,
If motivation is present you will see them run miles.

Fun games are the answer to encourage repetition,
They laugh and they scream and enjoy competition.

Without the skill to dribble past an opponent at will,
Your players may win, but their growth will stand still.

I dream of the day when the parents just cheer,
And losing the game doesn't bring out a tear.

When practice is fun, not dull and so boring,
And playing the game means more than just scoring.

I know you mean well and you donate your time,
But bury your ego and try something sublime.

Call all the parents and ask for their aid,
You're teaching their kids and not getting paid.

Your goal's to develop a youngster with skill,
Not a team that must win or some fancy new drill!

You see, players are not judged by their wins and their losses,
Instead they are judged by their shots, heads and crosses.

Scholarships are given to players with great names,
Not those on youth teams who never lost games.

A pro player gets paid 'cause his skills are real fine,
Not because his team never lost when he was just nine.

It's time to bring soccer to new heights in this nation
The future's in players, not a coaching citation.

Let's start to say, "dribble" and stop yelling, "pass!"
You'll then see our players go to the head of the class.

I hope you're concerned, but not really offended,
It's the need for more skill that I have defended.

You're giving your all, from the good of the heart,
Why not make sure the kids get the right start?

