

New Coaches Orientation  
September 10, 2009

**I. Things you should do prior to the start of the season.**

- A. Contact all your players
  - 1. Via email with a welcome letter
  - 2. Via telephone try to speak with a parent first then player
  - 3. Slow mail with a letter.
- B. Letter Should Contain
  - 1. Practice times and field location
    - a. Times should include start and end
    - b. Be aware of shortening hours in the fall
    - c. Never leave a child alone at the field make sure everyone has been picked up or appoint an adult to stay.
  - 2. Game schedule if you have it or one will be forthcoming
  - 3. Players should bring to practices and games
    - a. Shin guards - MANDATORY
    - b. Cleats
    - c. Appropriate size soccer ball, U-9 U12 size 4, U13+ size 5
    - d. Water or a drink
    - e. Warm clothing for cooler weather.
    - f. Athletic bag to keep things in and not lose anything
  - 4. Your goals and what you expect...
    - a. What you hope to teach the players
    - b. Expectations from Parents and players
      - a. Courtesy to Coaches
      - b. Attendance
      - c. Respect of one another, opponents and referees.
      - d. Express view on conflicts
- C. Plan to obtain all email addresses
  - 1. This is the best way to communicate
  - 2. also [www.Needhamsoccer.com](http://www.Needhamsoccer.com) has update field status
  - 3. Try to get in the habit of sending weekly updates.
- D. Prepare your coaches bag.
  - 1. Game balls
  - 2. cones
  - 3. discs
  - 4. Pinnies
  - 5. Rosters if you're travel coach
  - 6. Coaches Card if you travel.
- E. Learn the Rules of the Game
  - 1. FIFA (Federation International Football Assoc.)
    - a. <http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/lawsofthegame.html>
  - 2. Soccer Help
    - a. [http://www.soccerhelp.com/Soccer\\_Rules.shtml](http://www.soccerhelp.com/Soccer_Rules.shtml)
- F. Check out web sites for drills and training sessions
  - 1. Needham Soccer Club Coaches Links Page  
<http://www.needhamsoccer.com/Coaches/CoachInformation/tabid/7956/Default.aspx>
  - 2. Soccer Specific
    - a. <http://www.soccerspecific.com/ss/>

**II. What to do while in the season?**

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- A. Stay in touch with the parents weekly with updates
  - 1. Practice reminders
  - 2. Game reminders
  - 3. Time changes to practices
- B. Don't go it alone try and enlist some help from other parents.
  - 1. This will help if you can not make a game or practice.
- C. Prepare your practices in advance
  - 1. Decide what you want to emphasize for your practice plan
    - a. Dribbling/Offense
    - b. Passing/Possession
    - c. Tackling/defense
    - d. Shooting/ Set plays
    - e. Touches/Ball Control
    - f. Tactics/formations/Strategy of Team
    - g. Other
  - 2. Each practice should have the following
    - a. A warm-up
    - b. Juggling
    - c. Drills that relate to your practice plan
    - d. Small sided games
    - e. Scrimmage
    - f. Warm-down
  - 3. Tips For Good Practices:
    - a. Kids love playing games & keeping score.
    - b. Players should stay active & participate. If you can avoid lines.
    - c. Maximize "touches" on the ball. At least 100 touches per practice for each player.
    - d. Teach proper technique, emphasize games that practice technique or simulate play or game situations.
    - e. Run games by keeping time (e.g., so they last 1, 3, or 5 minutes) or by keeping score (e.g., first to 3, 12, etc.).
    - f. Praise hustle, improvement and a good attitude. Measure each player's performance by his or her personal improvement and effort, and not by comparing them to someone else. Try to motivate in a positive way that builds self-esteem.
    - g. A good game must be easy & quick to set up and should be simple to explain and manage.
    - h. If it's not fun, it's not a good game.
    - i. Adopt this philosophy: Keep it simple, keep them active, and keep it fun & at least 100 touches per player per practice".
- D. Keep in mind that you will be asked to fill out player evaluations
  - 1. Make mental notes or right then down.
  - 2. Always helping to improve player(s)
  - 3. Directions will be sent to you by the club.
- E. Encourage Professional Trainings if offered to your Team.
- F. Encourage watching professional, college and high school games
  - 1. Professional (TV or go to a game)
    - a. New England Revolution (Channel 38 or Gillette)
    - b. MLS ( ESPN and Fox Soccer Channel)
    - c. English Premier League (Fox Soccer Channel)

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2. Colleges
  - a. Boston College (ACC is one of the strongest conferences in the country)
  - b. Northeastern (two Needham players)
  - c. Babson College
3. High School
  - a. Something to aspire to
- G. If the club is running tryouts during the season
  1. Notify players & parents
- H. If you need answers or help...don't be shy everyone needs help
  1. Contact your Division Director
  2. Coaching/Program Director
  3. Or Gender Coordinator
  4. Board Members are always helpful

**III. Things to keep in mind to have a successful season**

- A. Practice and Game Attendance
  1. You really can't punish a child for not coming to practice or games because it's usually the parents fault.
    - a. You can remind them soccer is a team sport
    - b. May jeopardize starting vs not starting
- B. Team Cheers
  1. Players like a cheer which they can do before or after the game or at halftime.
    - a. My team says "Jogo Bonito" at the start of the game. It means "The Beautiful Game" and reminds them what I want them to play.
    - b. Other may rhyme...
- C. Playing Time
  1. Be fair try to give everybody equal playing time, especially at the young ages.
- D. Goalkeepers
  1. Everyone should rotate to be goalie at early ages.
  2. Also ask who wants to play goal don't always tell the same person.
- E. Injuries
  1. If a player is injured, play will continue until the whistle is blown.
    - a. You can also encourage your team to kick it out of bounds.
      - a. Good soccer sportsmanship will have the other team give you the ball back after the injury.
      - b. Applaud and say "Well done"
    - b. The referee will stop the game if a child appears to be seriously hurt or if there is blood.
    - c. Do not have players kneel but have them stay away from the injury. Always applaud when injured player gets up.
- F. Encourage Learning & Tolerate Mistakes.
  1. If your team is learning & trying new things, they will make a lot of mistakes.
  2. Encourage them to try new things & encourage the effort even if it doesn't work. Examples: "Great try. Keep it up." or "Good idea; try it again."

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- G. Rewarding or Punishing Performance.
  - 1. Never punish or scold a child for lack of ability. All you can expect them to do is their best
  - 2. Measure each player's performance by their personal improvement & effort, and not by comparing them to someone else.
  - 3. Try to motivate in a positive way that builds self-esteem.
- H. Things You Should And Things You Should Not Do:
  - 1. Positive encouragement and instruction of your players
  - 2. Negative criticism, hostility, abuse or anger are things you do not do.
  - 3. Cheering when the other team makes a mistake is bad.
  - 4. Cheering when the other team makes a great play is good.
  - 5. Never criticize the referee or talk to the ref during the game. It is a tough job.
  - 6. There should be no yelling or conversation between a coach and the other team during the game.
  - 7. Deal with disruptive players. Nip it in the bud, correct them and get their parents involved if needed
  - 8. Deal with disruptive parents. Again, nip it in the bud, correct them and tell them that behavior is not acceptable.
- I. At the End of the Game.
  - 1. Players & coaches usually line up facing each other on the halfway line, walk past each other & touch hands & say "good game".
  - 2. Coaches are usually last in line & shake hands.
  - 3. Player should then lead the line over towards the referee & assistant referees & thank them whether you win or lose.

**IV. End of Season**

- A. Encourage a wrap up party (pizza) or a parents vs players game.
- B. Send an email thanking the parents for their support.
- C. Think about next season

**V. Lastly but the most important piece of advice Be A Good Role Model.**

- A. To a large degree, your players & parents will follow your lead.**
- B. Don't forget after the players you're the next person being watched...**