



Guidelines

I thank you as the Director of Coaching, but also as a parent with children in the club. Without people willing to give of their time and emotion, we would not be able to maintain a club and the wonderful experience of youth soccer would not be able to thrive in Platteville. As we develop our young players at PPSC, our strongest mission is the development of young people and their inner character. We desire to increase their joy in soccer and in sports in general. We try to build confidence and emotional strength, individual accomplishments, and team cooperation. We strive to mentor the players by being examples of integrity, discipline, perseverance, and compassion. We teach a strong respect for our teammates, coaches, referees, opponents, and the game of soccer itself. Our next mission is the development of skills and understanding necessary to become well-grounded soccer players. We believe we are not just coaching soccer, we are coaching life. We attempt to do this in ways that do not interfere or contradict the parenting that is taking place at home, so we stick to the principals that are widely accepted by most of humanity and soccer is an excellent platform for this.

I desire that our coaching staff is diverse - each with our own style and technique, but I also need us to be part of the same club. We do not just serve a team - we serve a team that is part of a club. Let's do our best to adhere to these guidelines and to the PPSC Coaching Philosophy (included below).

1. **Assistant coaching** - assistant coaches must be approved by the PPSC Director of Coaching (Jim Neumann). Coaches cannot simply bring someone on board to start helping them. If you are alone and in need of an assistant coach, please let me know and we will try to find someone to help you. If you have someone in mind, we can work to approve that individual.
2. **Cancellations** - as the season gets longer, teams are prone to try and cancel games. We don't want to be the club to cancel. We do everything reasonable to play the game. Here are some reasons for which we should not cancel:
 - Not enough players - as long as we have the minimum number required for our age group - we should play or reschedule. We should also do what we can to achieve the right player count by using the club pass and working with other coaches in the club.
 - Coach can't make the game - that is why we have assistant coaches. If necessary find a sub. If you have to - reschedule the game, but don't cancel it.
 - Bad weather - unless the weather includes lightning, hail, or tornadoes, the game should continue. If the field has been closed try to find another field, if that doesn't work - reschedule.
 - If an opposing coach wants to cancel, please inform them that you will enter the game as a 1-0 loss for the canceling team.



3. **Recreational Guidelines:** Recreational Club soccer is for player development - not winning games. Each uninjured player must be allowed to play at least half of each game: even tournament games. We do not play to win. We play to develop players. It is a requirement of Recreational Club soccer that we follow this half game rule. There have been many games where I played "weaker" players at critical points in the game. This is what is expected and it is up to coaches to find ways to accomplish player development and still win some games.
4. **Language and communication** - our conversation with those around us within the context of PPSC coaching must be uplifting and absent of profanity. We should also enforce this language policy on the players as well. Be very hesitant to speak to a referee during a game, if you have a genuine concern express it after the game or at half time - away from your team. If the issue is not resolved file a game report after the game. If you do speak to a referee show respect – do not yell at the ref. The same applies to the opposing coach - even if that coach is not following our speaking policy - please use the utmost respect in your conversation. Later in the day, nothing is as important as it seemed during the game. Keep in mind that in soccer, it is a send-off offense to use offensive language or gestures. This should shape our conversation off the field as well. And there is no reason to practice one way and act a different way at a game. So at all times when representing the club - stick to this language policy and insist that your players do as well. Note: I have one overriding exception to the speaking to the ref rule: when the players' safety is in jeopardy - then all soccer rules cease to apply. Still deal with the situation in a respectful way - even if it means pulling your team politely off the field.
5. **Awards** - Any Team or Club trophies that are awarded at tournaments should be turned over to the club in order to display. These awards do not belong to the coach.
6. **Environment** - Our primary goal is to develop people - not players. Be an example of great character to your players. If this does not come naturally to you - try harder! Develop a player's joy for the game first and their technical / tactical skill second. Make sure your training and games are positive environments for all players. Do not allow bullying or negative comments from your players.
7. **Shin Guards** - Do not allow a player to train without Shin Protection. If you play with your players in training, make sure you are wearing shin protection. We lead by example.
8. **Respect** - Be an example of respect and sportsmanship: teach, and insist on, respect for the team, the club, the opponent, the referee, and the game of soccer.



The impact you have this season may change the lives of your players. Don't think of this task as simply showing up to show some kids how to kick a ball! Take the task seriously and realize that what you do and what you say and how you say it may have a profound effect on your players. You may be developing the next Landon Donavon or Mia Hamm. You may be keeping a kid in sports that would have left. You may be showing someone discipline who would have gone down a difficult life path. Treat this experience with respect for the lives of the players that the parents have entrusted to you.

And Thanks again for doing what you do!

