

The crest of North Whidbey Soccer Club is a shield-shaped emblem. It features a central white field with a green and purple soccer ball. The shield is bordered by a grey outline. The top part of the shield is green, and the bottom part is white with a green and purple border. The text "NORTH WHIDBEY SOCCER CLUB" is written in black, bold, italicized capital letters across the top half of the shield.

***NORTH WHIDBEY
SOCCER CLUB***

COACHES MANUAL

2021-2022 Board of Directors

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Club Policies

NWSC NO DOGS POLICY:

NWSC has a very strict NO DOGS policy in place for practices and games. While we rent the Ft. Nugent fields for games, we have received approval from the city to enforce this policy.

NO DOGS are permitted on the fields for practice or games. This is done in an effort to protect the fields, players, spectators and other patrons of the park.

NWSC Inclement Weather and Cancellation Policy:

NWSC reserves the right to cancel training sessions and/or games when the temperature drops below freezing (32 degrees), there is a severe weather warning, a tornado warning, a high wind warning, and/or lightning. The directors or head referee will always make a decision we feel is in the best interest of the SAFETY of the players, parents and coaches. Understand these decisions are based on the forecasts which are not always reliable indicators, and we do not make the decision to cancel trainings or games lightly. We will always take into consideration field conditions as well as driving conditions to get to the fields. Our goal is to communicate any cancellations as soon as a decision has been made. Often we will wait to make a decision in the hope that conditions improve that will permit us to train. We appreciate your support and understanding when we are faced with making these difficult decisions.

NWSC Lightning Policy:

If the fields are open and inclement weather approaches, get off the field and seek shelter. **If you see lightning, clear the field. If you hear thunder, clear the field.** Play will be halted for a minimum of 30 minutes. If no lightning is spotted during the 30 minutes and/or thunder is heard, play will resume only with the approval of the head referee or Director. If lightning is seen and/or thunder is heard during the 30 minute period, the waiting clock starts over. No play will resume until a minimum of 30 minutes passes with no thunder and/or no lightning.

Games cancelled by inclement weather may or may not be rescheduled.

NWSC's Facebook is a great way to not only stay in the loop about weather but also receive updates on the latest information. Follow us today to get information fast from NWSC!

NWSC Mission and Coaching Philosophy

NWSC MISSION:

1. To provide youth with an emotionally healthy and physically challenging atmosphere of good sportsmanship and athletic activity through the game of soccer.
2. To provide an activity where children have the opportunity to play regardless of athletic skills or family income.
3. To provide a healthy competitive atmosphere while teaching respect for others, fair play, humbleness in winning, and stature in defeat.
4. To provide a rewarding and enriching experience for all those adult volunteers who make it work.
5. To teach teamwork and cooperation.

NWSC COACHING PHILOSOPHY:

1. Have fun playing soccer

Practices and games should be fun – when the game stops being fun, players tend not to play as well and both coaches and players may get frustrated and eventually leave the game.

2. Focus should be on long-term player development, not winning games

Coaches' ultimate focus should be on long-term player and child development and not short-term goals. Coaches should use age appropriate games and activities during practices. Ideally, all players should play for equal durations during games. At the very least, each player should play at least half the duration of every game. Encourage and let all players play all positions, i.e. don't just play your best player as a forward so that your team can score more goals. This will help with their overall development as soccer players.

3. Emphasize teamwork, respect and fair play

In addition to achieving a sense of accomplishment through mastery of skills, soccer is a great way for young players to learn good values that they can carry in other aspects of their lives:

- Friendship and the value of being part of a team.
- Respecting coaches, teammates, opponents, and the referee.
- Sportsmanship and fair play. Remember that as a coach, you are a role model for these impressionable young players and they take note of your behavior and actions.

Codes of Conduct

Coach Conduct

Coaches will always be fair, firm and consistent.

Coaches will promote a positive attitude and lead by example.

Coaches will follow the rules of the sport, WSYSA, WIYSA and NWSC rules and teach the fundamentals of the game of soccer.

Coaches will not argue with parents or officials, and will always demonstrate good sportsmanship.

Coaches will listen to their players' concerns and try to help them in any way they can.

Coaches will do their best to ensure each athlete is both physically and mentally ready for whatever task is asked of them.

Coaches will strictly adhere to the policies and procedures of the WSYSA and set a proper example with their actions for everyone to follow.

Coaches will stress teamwork and respect for each and every athlete.

Coaches will ensure that ALL players receive equal playing time throughout the game, when possible.

Coaches will not allow anyone who has not filed a Risk Management Application (RMA) with the NWSC Club Registrar to interact with the players at practices or games.

Coaches will allow each athlete the opportunity to compete and excel.

All my players will wear shin guards and soccer socks at any game or practice.

Parent Conduct

I understand and will support the efforts of the volunteers, coaches and personnel of North Whidbey Soccer Club.

I understand the use of profanity, drugs, alcohol or tobacco during any NWSC game is prohibited.

I will set the right example for my child by always showing good sportsmanship toward the players, parents, coaches and referees of all teams, both home and away.

I will never argue with a coach or official during practices or games. Any complaint or concern can be directed to NWSC staff who will relay the messages to the coaches.

I understand that any parent who enters the field during a game risks their player, as well as their player's coach, being disqualified from a game. The referees or coaches will motion for the parent to come on the field in need because of an injury.

I understand that any parent who is coaching from the sideline will be asked by the coach or Team Manager to stop. One warning is all that is required. If the coaching does not stop, the parent will be asked to leave the field. No further discussion will occur until the end of the game when the Team Manager, Coach and offending party will discuss what happened.

I understand that parent comments from the sideline should be positive and encouraging only. Remember to always praise your player's effort before you discuss any mistakes. The players know what they have done wrong so try to focus on what was done right. Let the coach discuss corrections. Adolescents are extremely sensitive to perceived criticism.

I understand the importance of sportsmanship and having fun. I will allow my player to play and have fun. This is not World Cup. It is not life or death. If the players forget to have fun, they will not play well.

I will never voice a complaint or concern about coaches, teams, referees, or league officials in front of the players.

I understand that practice and games are important to the team. I need to contact the coach when my player is unable to make a practice or scheduled game.

I understand, accept and will follow the NWSC No Dogs Policy at all practices and games.

Player Conduct

I will obey the coaches and the rules of North Whidbey Soccer Club.

I will attend all practices, games, meetings and all other required team functions on time. I will show respect toward coaches, players and referees at all times.

I will demonstrate good sportsmanship on and off the field of play.

I understand that practice and training are important.

I will not fight, use foul language or argue with coaches or teammates.

I will stay within the established areas of the sidelines during the game.

I understand that I risk being ejected and/or suspended from a game or further league participation if I incur unsportsmanlike penalties.

I will be coachable, ready to learn and have fun.

I will be a team player and always put the team first.

I will always wear shin guards that are completely covered by socks during any NWSC soccer activity.

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Parent – Coach Meeting

The following list includes key points for you to remember when you meet with the players' parents at the beginning of the season, prior to holding your first practice:

- Introduce yourself and your assistant coach if you have one.
- Be prompt and organized in starting.
- 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 player equipment needs – ie: shin guards, ball, water bottles
- Discuss what is expected of parents and solicit their assistance.
- Collect parent contact information (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.
- Discuss and perhaps give the adults a handout on the rules for their conduct at games.
- Provide parents with your contact information and practice schedule.
- Leave plenty of time so parents can ask you any questions or voice any concerns that they may have.
- Be sure to collect a MEDICAL RELEASE FORM from ALL players prior to your first practice – you MUST keep these forms with you at all times.

Maintaining Team Discipline

Team Management Ideas

by Jeff Pill, U.S. Soccer National Staff Coach

Team discipline is crucial to the overall success of any team endeavor. Not only do disciplined teams perform well on the field, but, if teams are able to maintain good discipline both on and off the field, the overall soccer experience is far more positive for all involved; parents, players, coaches and administrators.

In fact, maintaining team discipline is one of the biggest fears or challenges for beginning coaches. Often, coaches are lost or ineffective because they are unable to maintain order and discipline with their team.

Towards the end, I have included several brief suggestions on what I have found to be successful in maintaining good team discipline. Hopefully, you have developed your own "list" of what works for you. If not, let this serve as inspiration to come up with your own system.

1. Plan Ahead

The single most important thing that can help is the coach's organization. Here, if it is obvious to the players that practices are conducted in an orderly manner, with clear goals and objectives, they are more likely to treat both the coach and the training time seriously. If practices flow easily from one activity to the other with minimal "down time", the players are able to stay focused on the task at hand. By making training meaningful and educational, the players will be motivated to pay attention and keep focused.

2. Choose Your Activities Carefully

There is nothing worse than putting players through "boring" drills that are inappropriate to their playing ability either by being too difficult or too easy. Activities should be fun, challenging and replicate the demands of the game itself. In this way, the players sense that their time is not being wasted. Having activities be competitive motivates them to play their best. Keep the players moving and engaged. Make sure that there are plenty of balls at hand so that a good activity is not interrupted by taking unnecessary time out to chase the ball. Even young players will engage themselves in a great game. Remember, your parents will appreciate the fact that their young player comes home and sleeps through the night because they have tired themselves out in healthy, engaging fun activities.

3. Have A Clear Picture In Mind of What Appropriate Behavior Looks Like

If you know what the players will look like when they are playing the game, you will be able to recognize when they are not playing the game correctly, or not behaving appropriately. This will enable you to step in immediately when inappropriate behavior is seen. As soon as you notice it, you must deal with it. Having a clear picture in your mind will allow you to be decisive. Then, you should also have a clear picture in your mind of how you are going to deal with the situation.

Having players do pushups or run laps as punishment is inappropriate, especially for younger players. Removing them from an activity is more effective. Their primary desire is to be involved in their peer group. Therefore, removing them from the activity is an effective way to deal with problems that occur. As one coach said, "Don't be afraid to use the bench!"

4. Involve The Parents

Especially with the younger players, having the parents support and reinforcing your discipline policies are crucial. Your expectations for player behavior should be clearly stated during the preseason parent meeting. Enlist their support. It has been my experience that they will be glad to do so.

5. Remember, You Are The Role Model

It is always good to remember that our actions are speaking so loudly that the players can not hear what we are saying. If we ask for respect, but show that we don't respect others (e.g. the referee) then we are asking for problems. If we expect players to be kind to each other, but we are not kind to ourselves, then expect the worst. Model appropriate behavior and get it in return.

6. Recognize The Difference Between Open Acts of Defiance and Childhood Irresponsibility

"Kids will be kids" is a great phrase that both excuses a lot of inappropriate behavior, on one hand, and reminds us all that kids make mistakes on the other. When players openly defy, and act inappropriately, then swift, appropriate action is called for. However, when players momentarily forget themselves, and do not show any malicious intent, then a gentle reminder is perhaps more appropriate. Just remember, youngsters are often quite skillful at disguising the two types of behavior. We all have to be sharp in recognizing the difference so that we can act appropriately.

7. Finally, Be Sure To Put Yourself In Their Shoes

If we can remember what it is like to be at a fun practice that is both enjoyable as well as educational, we will be better off. Always ask yourself, "What would I like to do if I were at practice and needed to work on my passing?" This will enable you to avoid a lot of possible challenges.

Setting Up Training Sessions

Each training session should have a single theme – ie: passing, shooting, defense, offense

1. Warm-up: without the ball at first to challenge their physical fitness growth; i.e., at this age the fitness focus is on balance, agility, fundamental eye/hand & eye/foot coordination. Psychologically this needs to be FUN physical challenges - NOT - a calisthenics approach, think games or races.
2. Individual Ball Skills- simple challenges first and as their technique improves over time then increase the challenge of doing things with the ball. Activities done with the ball could be done with either the feet or hands.
3. Fun Game- with each player using a ball, run two or three different activities. Length of each activity depends on how much fun the kids are having and their attention span.
4. Finish with small-sided matches - If you have more children in attendance then set up a second match. Throughout the practice, the coach allows the players to experiment and discover the ball skill being taught on their own. The coach should do some demonstration of the skill a few times during the session. Also during the practice call out some of the key coaching points on how to execute the ball skill.

Praise loudly and positively when a player does the skill correctly — Positive Reinforcement!
Encourage them to try to do new things with the ball throughout the soccer season. **It is VERY important for the training session that each player has a ball.**

Design of a Training Session

The training session will go from simple to complex activities.

Warm-up (1st activity)

2nd activity – alone & in pairs

3rd activity – pair's activity on cooperation

4th activity – pair's activity on competition

5th activity – small-sided games

Cool-down

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?
- Are creativity and decision making being used?
- Are the spaces used appropriate?
- Is the coach's feedback appropriate?
- Are there implications for the game?

When you are writing out your lesson plan here are some of the items that should be included:

- Date
- Topic

- Training Objective
- Equipment Needs
- Outline of Activities

- Diagram of each Activity
- Coaching Points

One last note...AVOID the three L's: Laps, Lines and Lectures! There's no more surefire way of boring the kids than the three L's. Kids at these ages are fit. They don't need to run laps. It's a waste of precious time when the kids could be combining fitness with skills. And as we've said before, every child should have a ball, then there's no need to wait in line for their turn. Use activities that have all the children active. And 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.

Age group appropriate training plans and games can be found at the back of the manual listed in the Resources.

Game Day Management

All U6 and U8 games are played at the Fort Nugent Fields in Oak Harbor, WA. U10 and U12 games are played as part of Whidbey Island Soccer League (WISL) and will travel to fields on South Whidbey. Directions to all fields can be found on the Fields and Venue tab on the website.

1. Ensure that players and parents have the most current game schedule, location and directions to fields.
2. Coaches should check in at the NWSC Information Table prior to warming up for any field changes, schedule updates and additional information.
3. Advise players and parents to arrive on the fields 15-30 minutes prior to game time. Games will start on time. In the case that a team does not enough players to field a team, they have the choice of playing 'man down' or forfeiting the game.
4. Pre-game warm ups are encouraged. Please remain in an unlined and unused area of the fields until your assigned field is cleared. Fields should be shared for warm ups with the opposing team.
5. Establish your sideline at least 5 yards from the sideline. Encourage your parents to sit separately from the team, either further down the field or on the opposite side, to prevent distractions and outside influences. No one may be behind the goal at any time.
6. Snacks are great, but save them for AFTER the game. Mid-game snacks can be distracting and may create unnecessary drama. PLEASE CHECK THE MEDICAL RELEASE FORMS FOR ANY FOOD ALLERGIES and pass that information onto the families.
7. In the event that a referee is not present for your scheduled game, please send someone to the NWSC Information table to alert the volunteers on duty. We will do our best to fixed the situation as quickly as possible.

Sideline Ethics:

Define appropriate sideline behavior. This would be for players, spectators and the staff. Don't allow yourself or spectators to verbally abuse the players or the officials.

REMEMBER: A COACH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS/HER SIDELINE!

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 and learn through the process.
- 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 negatively question or argue with officials.
- 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.
- Know and keep the rules and regulations of the local, state and national organizations.
- Always work within the spirit of the Laws of the Game. Do not “bend the rules” to your advantage.
- Regardless of the outcome of matches, wins and losses and trophy presentations, your actions as coach will always be how people remember you.

Age Group Characteristics

To be an effective coach, not only do you need to have knowledge of the game principles, you need the knowledge of the specific characteristics of the age group you are working with. For this segment we will be concentrating on the methodology of how the players of different age groups think and act.

Non-Directive Coaching

Qualities:

- In the non-directive coaching environment, the coach takes on a magical quality.
- He/she can play games at the children's level and on their terms.
- Coaches take on the roles of the facilitator and number-one cheerleader.
- Emphasis is on having fun, free from pressure of competition.

Keys:

- Camouflage and conceal, disguise soccer techniques in a story.
- Use analogies whenever possible.
- Keep instructions to a minimum.

4-6 Year Olds

Off the field

- Four to six -year -olds are still very random in their thinking.
- There is no logical pattern to their thoughts, and often, their actions.
- They make up their own rules and expect others to know them.
- They are self-centered.
- Sometimes they're unsure of themselves and new surroundings.
- They become easily distracted.

- They become easily frustrated with excessive verbal directions.
- They're imaginative.

On the field:

- They don't see a difference between the player and the ball; it's all one.
- They toe the ball.
- They follow the ball.
- They want the ball for themselves

7-8 Year Olds

- Seven -and eight-year-olds are beginning to develop a bit of logic to their thinking.
- They can do simple problem-solving if guided by questions and backing up of the process.
- They're more willing to try things.
- They become frustrated with long verbal directions.
- They do better with concrete examples, or demonstrations.

- They're imaginative.
- They're concerned about "fairness," which means that everything is equal.
- They begin to be able to approach opponents.
- They are not so frightened by the ball coming at them.
- They still follow the ball, but at times will pull away from the group.

9-10 Year Olds

- Concrete in their thinking.
- Team-oriented.
- Want to be challenged.
- Begin to be able to see things from others' point of view.
- Plays, if presented concretely, can be introduced.
- Fun, recognition and friendships are important.
- They sometimes think they know it all.
- They want to belong.
- Look for organization in sessions.

- Realize that there is a logical structure to groups, so positions, roles and team concept can be introduced.
- Sense of fun and freedom comes from game situations.
- Embarrassed easily if attention is called on them.
- Aware of adult inconsistency.
- Challenging age group.
- Begin to see space and switch attention from the ball to space.

11 – 18 Years Old

- This age group could even be split into two or three.
- They are now logical in their thought patterns; while many are still concrete in their thinking, some can think on a more abstract, "what if" type of thinking.
- They begin to be serious about their sport.
- They look to the coach for recognition of skills and effort as a player.
- Sport is an integral part of their life.
- They place pressure on themselves and on teammates to do their best to perform.

- They feel responsible to the team, which can lead to emotional responses to errors.
- They need help putting winning and losing into healthy perspective.
- They can use cause-and-effect relationships and look at multiple solutions, needed for strategizing.
- They can build on prior experience and knowledge.
- Their psychological needs are often filled through developing their skills and functional game.
- They want to begin to use strategies

Age Group Skill Benchmarks

The following is a brief guide to help you understand some of the basic benchmarks or objectives for focusing your efforts with your team. Please be aware these are developmentally appropriate elements that your players should be able to understand.

U6 Coaching Objectives

1. Develop a general understanding of the basic rules of the game:
 - Goal-kick
 - Corner-kick
 - Kick-off
 - Throw-in
 - Ball in and out of play — throw-in, "goal" and "no goal, "corner kick, etc.
2. Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive many touches of the ball.
3. Make sure games and activities used at practice are developmentally appropriate.
4. Your practice session should be limited to 40 to 45 minutes in length.
 - Provide activities and games that encourage players to dribble the ball with both feet, and kick the ball with both right and left foot; show how to stop the ball with the feet. Show the correct method of the throw-in.
 - Encourage the players to cooperate through passing (but at this age, don't expect the players to pass), and by helping in defense by going after the ball to regain possession for their team.
5. The coach should understand the idea of a team triangle when attacking and defending; however, don't expect the players to understand this concept. If a 2v2 plus a keeper develops in the first year of playing 3v3, don't worry — it's OK! If you find that the players all run to the ball and a little swarm exists — don't worry, this is natural.

Overriding Consideration: "Let the children play and have fun!"

Note: It is not necessary to teach heading to children at this age.

U-8 Coaching Objectives

1. Further development of the U-6 objectives.
2. Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive lots of touches of the ball. All games and activities used at practice should be developmentally appropriate. Your practice session should be limited to 45 minutes in length.
3. Provide activities and games that continue to encourage players to dribble the ball with both feet, and kick the ball with both right and left foot; show how to receive the ball with the feet. (A majority of your time should be spent in games and activities that encourage the players to become comfortable with the ball at their feet.)

4. Encourage cooperation by the field players — collective attacking and defending. Rotation of all players to play in all roles. Don't expect the players to pass the ball on a regular basis. Towards the end of your season, expect to see the beginning stages of passing to teammates.
5. Basic introduction to the idea of space (one or the other) on the field (encourage using the entire field).
6. Do understand the idea of a team triangle and diamond shape when attacking; however, don't expect the players to understand this concept. If a 3v3 plus a keeper develops in the first year of playing 4v4, don't worry — it's OK! If you find that the players all run to the ball and a little swarm exists — don't worry, this is natural.
7. Add a goalkeeper, but do not expect the goalkeeper (keeper/sweeper) to grasp the concept of moving out on attack and defense right away.
 - Do encourage the goalkeeper (keeper/sweeper) to come off the goal line when play is at the other end of the field to support the attack. The back player can also serve to reduce the amount of space between the goal and an opponent attempting to shoot. This provides a smaller view of the goal for the shooter. Provide activities for the players to practice picking up the ball and catching the ball. Also, show the players how to use their hands to throw the ball back into play. All players should be given an opportunity to play in goal, both in practice and during games.

Overriding Consideration: The game is for all players — activities should be fun and motivating so that everyone (particularly the "nonassertive" player) is encouraged to participate.

Note: It is not necessary to teach heading to children at this age.

U-10 Coaching Objectives

1. Further development of U-8 objectives.
2. Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive lots of touches of the ball. All games and activities used at practice/training should be developmentally appropriate. Your practice session should be limited to 60 minutes in length.
3. Cooperative attacking — all players involved, but with an awareness of cover (by the goalkeeper and at least one covering field player). Develop an understanding of the roles that players have in supporting the attack: player with ball, players providing immediate support of ball, and other players who create length and width. All this needs to be shown in an environment with greater numbers of teammates and opponents on a larger field.
4. Cooperative defending — all players participating, even the most advanced players. Getting "goal side" of opposing players. Develop the basic understanding of defending 1v1, so all players gain an understanding of all the roles when defending; i.e., understanding how to delay and put pressure on the ball. (Players should continue to be exposed to the concepts learned from 3v3 and 4v4.)
5. Continue development of the basic techniques — passing, dribbling, shooting, ball control and goalkeeping. This should be done in a fun/competitive environment and under the pressure of time, space and opponents. (Note: Light heading can be introduced.)

- Continued exposure to all roles without the emphasis on specializing in positions.

Summary

- Introduction/continued emphasis on the concept of supporting the player in possession of the ball
- Continued emphasis on playing 3v3 and 4v4 during practice
- Cooperative attacking (how players are affected by their teammates)
- Cooperative defending (how players are affected by their teammates)
- Continued development of the basic skills

Overriding Consideration: Encourage all players to cooperate whether attacking or defending. Stress the need for development of the individual player versus the development of the team.

U-12 & Up Coaching Objectives

- Introduction to 11-a-side play.
- Make sure each player has a ball for each practice, which should allow all players to receive many touches of the ball. All games and activities used at practice/training should be developmentally appropriate. Your practice session should be limited to 65-75 minutes in length.
- Reinforce basic understanding of the offside rule. (Coaches should avoid teaching offside trap.)
- Continued concentration on the important development at this age of:
 - Emphasis on individual possession
 - Emphasis on individual defending
 - Introduction of basic combination play (wall pass and take-overs)
 - High concentration on basic skills in cooperative play (passing, control, shooting and heading)
 - Individuals start to emerge and will begin to focus on role of goalkeeper (develop foundation of basic techniques), however do not specialize yet – these players should still play as a field player in addition to playing in goal
- Continued development of the techniques (basic skills), with greater pressure in a challenging, motivating environment, involving transition.
- Continued emphasis on the principles of play and the roles of players when attacking and defending introduced at U-10 and U-11. Players will need to understand their particular roles on the team in supporting the attack and regaining possession of the ball when defending. The players will need guidance in the performance of these roles because of the greater number of players on the field and the increased size of the field. The players should have a basic understanding of how to interchange roles during the course of play.
- Continued use of 4v4 during training to focus on individual technical development and simple tactical decisions. This environment will challenge the players both from an attacking and defending standpoint, but also includes the aspect of transition.

Summary

- Introduction to 11v11
- Stress importance of individual possession and defending
- Further development of basic skills
- Awareness of being part of a team (cooperation)
- Encouragement of “two-way play”

HIGH-PRIORITY ITEMS

1. The importance of possession: DO NOT GIVE THE BALL AWAY!
2. Development of individual skill. All practices to challenge the player in competition.
3. Understanding of combination play:
 - Support • Wall pass • Takeovers
4. Individual and small-group defense. One session in every three to be devoted to 1v1s, 2v2s, 3v3s. Within the practices, the players to develop an understanding of:
 - Delay • Depth • Tracking back • Balance

LOWER-PRIORITY ITEMS

1. Functional play
2. Team play
3. Set plays
4. All activities should be challenging, motivating and involve TRANSITION!
5. Training sessions should be limited to 75 to 85 minutes.

Overriding Consideration: Stress the need for development of the individual player versus the success of the team. Avoid overloading this age player with too many tournaments (no more than two tournaments over the course of the summer months).

RULES OF PLAY WITHIN WHIDBEY ISLAND YOUTH SOCCER LEAGUE (WIYSA)

Basic FIFA laws of the game apply with the following modifications to conform to the Washington State Youth Soccer Association and appropriate age brackets. As always, good judgment, sportsmanship and fair play should govern the decisions and actions of all of the coaches, referees and spectators. Referee abuse (verbal or physical) will NOT be tolerated. Report all instances of abuse to the referee assignor and/or to the league director or club president.

1. Player's Equipment (all age brackets)

- a) ALL PLAYERS SHALL WEAR SHINGUARDS. Socks must be worn up and over the shin guards.
- b) Standard approved soccer shoes or gym shoes shall be worn by all players. A player may not play in their bare feet.
- c) A player shall not wear anything that may be dangerous to other players or to themselves. This includes any type of jewelry. (Of note: taping or placing a bandage over ear rings does not provide a sufficient enough safety margin. Do not permit players to wear ear rings at any time.)
- d) All or any member(s) of a team may wear extra protective clothing against the cold including gloves without dangerous, protruding or hard objects, provided that:
 - i) The proper team uniform is worn outermost; and
 - ii) Any hat should be without peak, bill or dangling or protruding object of any kind; however, the goalkeeper may wear a soft-billed hat; and
 - iii) Referee discretion may be used to determine if an item of protective clothing is considered to go beyond the purpose of providing a means of retaining body heat.

2) Substitutions - (all age brackets) Each team has an unlimited number of substitutions and they may be made, with consent of the referee, at any stoppage in play.

3) U-8

- a) 4 players on the field plus the goalkeeper. All games shall be played with an equal number of players. 4 field players are the minimum required.
- b) Two 20 minute halves (5 minute half-time)
- c) Size 3 ball
- d) The offside rule does not apply. However the spirit of the rule shall apply. Positioning a player in front of the opponent's goal irrespective of the location of the ball on the field is not permitted. The referee shall award an indirect free kick to the other team and instruct the player and coaches on the intent of this rule.
- e) No player may make physical contact with the goalkeeper or attempt to play the ball once the goalkeeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree whatsoever. Note that control of the ball includes if the goalkeeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands.
- f) For safety, there are NO direct kicks at goal awarded (hence no penalty kicks awarded).
- g) Slide tackling is NOT allowed.
- h) Several re-throws will be allowed for the players to learn proper throw-in technique.

4) U-10

- a) 7 players on the field including the goalkeeper.
- b) Two 25 minute halves (5 minute half-time)
- c) Size 4 ball
- d) Build out lines: a. Goal-kick: The opposition can enter the build area as soon as the ball leaves the penalty box, b. GK in possession with their hands. The opposition can enter the build out area as soon as the goalkeeper puts the ball into play. Example: If the goalkeeper makes a save and is in possession with their hands the opposition drops behind the build out line and if the goalkeeper places the ball on the ground the ball is in play.
- e) GK No punting
- f) The offside rule does apply between the build out line and the goal line. There is no offside offence in between the build out lines.
- g) No player may make physical contact with the goalkeeper or attempt to play the ball once the goalkeeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree whatsoever. Note that control of the ball includes if the goalkeeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands.
- h) Direct kicks shall be awarded for appropriate offenses.
- i) Slide tackling is NOT allowed.

5) U-12 & U-14 & U-15

- a) 6 – 11 players on the field including the goalkeeper
- b) Two equal halves (5 minute half-time) U-12 = 30 min, U-14 = 35 min, U-15 = 40 min
- c) Size 4 ball U-12; size 5 ball U-14 & U-15
- d) The offside rule does apply.
- e) No player may make physical contact with the goalkeeper within the GOAL AREA or attempt to play the ball once the goalkeeper has control of the ball in any manner and to any degree what so ever. Note that control of the ball includes if the goalkeeper holds the ball on the ground with one or both hands.
- f) Direct kicks shall be awarded for appropriate offenses, including penalty kicks.
- g) Slide tackling is not allowed. This is a recreational league and player safety is your primary concern so watch how aggressively the players attack the ball – at all times but especially when they use this tactic.

The Rules of Play

A coin is tossed; the team that wins the toss then decides which goal it will attack in the first half or period of the match. The other team takes kick-off to start the match. The teams will alternate the kick-off prior to the start of the second half or new period. Teams will only switch ends at half time of a game.

1. Start of Play

The ball will be placed at the center of the field by the referee and the game will start with one player taking a kick into the opponent's half of the field, after a given signal by the referee. At the time of the kickoff, every player will be in his/her half of the field. Every player of the opposing team, to that of the kicker, shall be:

U-11, U-10, U-9	10 yards from the center mark
U-8 and below	6 yards from the center mark.

The ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward. The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player. For any infraction of these laws for U-9 and below, the referee will explain the proper procedure and the kickoff shall be retaken. Kick-offs for U-10 and above shall be played per FIFA rules. At U-7 and below, a goal shall not be scored directly from a kickoff without the ball being touched by at least one other player on either team. At U-8 and above the limitation shall be per FIFA rules.

2. Restart of Play

After a goal has been scored, the game shall be restarted in like manner by a player of the team that gave up the goal. To start the second half, the game will be restarted with the kickoff by a player of the opposite team to that of the player who started the game. In the case of a temporary suspension due to an injury or any unusual situation, if one team is clearly in possession of the ball, the game shall be restarted by an indirect free kick by the team in possession of the ball at the point where the ball was when play was suspended. Should there not be clear possession at the time play is suspended due to an injury or any unusual situation, there will be a drop ball at the spot where the ball was declared dead. The ball shall be deemed "in play" when the ball has touched the ground.

3. Ball In and Out of Play

The ball is out of play when it has wholly crossed the goal line or whole touchline, whether it is on the ground or in the air. The ball is out of play when the referee has stopped the game.

4. Method of Scoring

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball has crossed the whole of the goal line on the ground or in the air. In the case the goal marker (cone) is knocked over or moved as a result of a direct hit by the ball as it crosses the goal line, the goal will not be allowed. In this case, the ball shall be put into play by either a goal kick or a corner kick, depending on who touched the ball last. The ball striking the inside of the goal marker and deflecting into the goal shall constitute a good goal. As in all judgment calls, the referee's decision will be final.

5. Offside Rule

The offside rule will not apply to any team U-8 and below — however, the intent of the rule will be followed. Positioning a player in front of the opponent's goal irrespective of the location of the ball on the field is contrary to the aims of the program. The referee shall take appropriate action to prevent this kind of play (an indirect kick to the offended team and instructional statements to the violating players and coach. The referees will call the rules and the proper penalties will be assessed.

6. Fouls and Misconduct

Free kicks shall be classified under two headings:

- “Direct”: from which a goal can be scored by a direct kick against the offending side, and
- “Indirect”: from which a goal cannot be scored unless the ball has been played or touched by a player other than the kicker before passing through the goal.

NO DIRECT KICKS SHALL BE AWARDED AT U-9 AND BELOW. ONLY INDIRECT KICKS WILL BE USED. Penalty Kicks will be granted only at U-10 and above. They will be taken at 8 yards (U10) and 10 yards from the goal for all other ages.

A DIRECT KICK shall be awarded for the following nine (9) intentionally committed offenses:

- Kicking an opponent
- Tripping an opponent
- Jumping at an opponent
- Charging an opponent in a violent or dangerous manner
- Charging an opponent from behind
- Striking an opponent
- Holding an opponent
- Pushing an opponent
- Handling the ball, with the exception of the goalie, in the designated area

An INDIRECT KICK shall be awarded for the following offenses:

- Dangerous play, (high kicking)
- Charging fairly (shoulder to shoulder) when the ball is not within the playing distance of the players involved
- Impeding the progress of an opponent
- Lying on the ball and not allowing others to play it
- Obstructing the goalkeeper (there will be no intentional physical contact with the goalkeeper in the penalty area)
- Preventing the goalkeeper from releasing the ball from his hands
- Unsporting behavior

SLIDE TACKLING WILL NOT BE ALLOWED! If a slide tackle occurs it shall be considered dangerous play. The referee will stop play and instruct the player of his infraction and then award the opposing team an indirect free kick at the spot of the foul.

Consistent with the educational intent of the Small-Sided Program, the referee should inform the offending player of the infraction that was committed. For all free kicks, the required distance for a defending player will equal that of the age-appropriate center circle (diameter).

7. Throw-ins

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole touch line, either on the ground or in the air, it shall be put back into play by a throw-in. The throw shall be taken by a player from the opposing team, from the point where the ball crossed the line. The thrower must face the field of play and must keep both feet on the ground while releasing the ball. He/she shall use both hands on both sides of the ball to deliver the ball from behind and over his/her head. For U-9 and below, in the event of any infraction of these laws, the throw-in shall be retaken. Instruction shall be given by the referee. U-10 and above shall abide by FIFA rules. Goals shall not be scored directly from a throw-in.

8. Goal Kicks

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line, excluding the portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the players on the attacking team, it shall be kicked directly into play by a goal kick.

- A goal kick may be taken from any point inside the goal area.
- Any defending player, including the goalkeeper, may take the goal kick.
- The kicker shall not play the ball a second time until it has been touched or played by another player.
- At U-7 and below, a goal shall not be scored directly from a goal kick.
- The ball is in play when it crosses outside the penalty area.

9. Corner Kicks

When the whole of the ball passes over the whole of the goal line excluding that portion between the goal posts and under the crossbar (either in the air or on the ground), having last been played by one of the defending team, a player of the attacking team shall have a corner kick. The ball shall be placed within a three-foot arc from the corner flag or cone and shall be kicked into play from that position by an attacking player. A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick. Players from the opposing team shall not approach within the distance of the center circle measurement of the ball until it is in play. If the player who takes the kick plays the ball a second time before it has been touched by another player, the referee shall explain to the kicker the proper procedure of a corner kick. Then the referee shall award an indirect kick to the opposite team from a spot where the infringement occurred. For any other infringement, the kick shall be retaken.

10. Miscellaneous Rules

Unless otherwise modified by these rules, the standard laws of the game will govern. Good judgment, sportsmanship and fair play should govern the decisions and actions of all coaches, referees and spectators.

Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • "Pressure in head" • Nausea or vomiting • Neck pain • Balance problems or dizziness • Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Feeling sluggish or slowed down • Feeling foggy or groggy • Drowsiness • Change in sleep patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amnesia • "Don't feel right" • Fatigue or low energy • Sadness • Nervousness or anxiety • Irritability • More emotional • Confusion • Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays) • Repeating the same question/comment
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Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears dazed • Vacant facial expression • Confused about assignment • Forgets plays • Is unsure of game, score, or opponent • Moves clumsily or displays non-coordination • Answers questions slowly • Slurred speech • Shows behavior or personality changes • Can't recall events prior to hit • Can't recall events after hit • Seizures or convulsions • Any change in typical behavior or personality • Loses consciousness
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What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athlete will often under

report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion:

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The new "Zackery Lystedt Law" in Washington now requires the consistent and uniform implementation of long and well-established return to play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years:

"a youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time"

and

"may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider." You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember, it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

Coaching Resources

Age Appropriate Training Session - Here you will find 8 weeks' worth of pre-planned training sessions for age groups U6, U8, U10 and U12. Each week includes four different activities and is specifically designed to provide

training based on the needs of that age-group. Additionally, each activity is in print and video format – coaches can see the training exercises in action with the videos and then print the diagrams out to bring to the field.

http://www.washingtonyouthsoccer.org/coaches/coaching_tools/age_appropriate_training_sessions/