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Mount Washington Valley Soccer Club  
Coaches Manual

## **Introduction**

Mount Washington Valley Soccer Club has been providing soccer opportunities for valley soccer players for more than ten years and we look forward to the next ten. We are a registered non-profit institution.

One of our goals this year was to compile a manual for distribution to schools, recreation departments and the many volunteer coaches in the valley who so generously give their time and their effort to ensure positive learning experiences for our children through the game of soccer. Whether you are new to the sport, new to coaching or a seasoned veteran, we hope that you will find this manual useful in many capacities.

## **Our Mission**

The Mount Washington Valley Soccer Club's mission is to support young athletes and to help them grow as players by providing positive, challenging soccer experiences. We promote all soccer opportunities in the valley. We work in conjunction with town recreation and school programs to further local soccer through tournaments and to provide assistance to coaches and elevate the instruction level through coaching clinics.

## **Our Coaching Philosophy**

Mount Washington Valley Soccer Club coaches understand that our primary obligation is to the child, and we will make every effort to consistently create a positive experience for every child. We recognize that each child is unique in character and in ability, and that ability alone does not qualify one for playing time. In competitive travel programs we will hold tryouts and be selective about team placement. Aptitude and attitude will be criteria for team selection. In keeping with our commitment to the children we strive to educate those who work with them, providing training and licensing for our coaches. We will model leadership and sportsmanship, and balance all aspects of player and team development with winning games. We will devote our time and knowledge to age-appropriate training, and in return we will expect a high level of player commitment. Every player who is dedicated and hard working will have earned his or her playing time during games and tournaments. All players will be treated as equally valued team members.

## COACHING ABC'S

### What does a player need from a coach?

- Structure with clearly defined goals and specific instructions
- Progression of drills from simple to complex which organizes the game and makes it easy to understand
- Feedback about performance—immediate, specific and positive
- Fun! The first rule of coaching is to avoid lines. Standing in line and waiting to execute a drill is not fun. The game is the best teacher *and* it's fun, so let them play.

Coaching should always be **positive**. The coach needs to be enthusiastic, supportive and organized. Keep instructions simple, allow kids to play the game and make mistakes, and ensure that practices and games are fun. Avoid excessive talking. One of the most important skills a coach can learn is the ability to explain things simply, clearly and quickly. Use short sentences, positive images, and do not be vague. Begin each session by explaining concisely what the team is going to do and why. Explain rules and restrictions and give a brief demonstration. Get the activity started within two minutes. Reasons to stop an exercise are teachable moments or questions from players. Use the “freeze” tactic. Freeze the action to create a clear picture. Convey information clearly and quickly before reactivating play. Avoid negative coaching as it is destructive to individual players and to teams. Fear and intimidation are counterproductive and will cause significant problems.

Coaches are **role models**. They should be dependable and accountable, and they must always have each child's safety and welfare in mind. Let players know what is and what is not acceptable, and treat them with consistency and fairness. Be generous with praise and always be supportive. Players need to feel that their coach is concerned about them as individuals. Treat the players with respect at all times and expect the same in return. If players respect their coach there is usually a desire to maintain team discipline and order. The coach with knowledge of the game, impeccable sportsmanship and fair and consistent treatment of players will earn the respect of the team. Unfair treatment or favoritism will cause lack of respect and create a negative environment. Performance is hindered when players feel left out, and when one player's performance is hindered it impacts the whole team.

Good coaches maintain a perspective on **winning and losing**, recognizing that development and improvement of individuals and the team are infinitely more important. They don't focus on star players—they focus instead on teamwork. You cannot control the outcome of the game and your team will not always win. Your job is to make sure that the players learn from the wins *and* the losses. Players will make mistakes on the game field, but recognize that this is how they

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will learn best. Do not yell instructions during game play. Make corrections when the play is stopped. A player who is playing should not be listening to the coach.

Watch other coaches in action and observe what does and does not work. Develop a style of coaching that is comfortable for you. You need to command the attention of the team. Eye contact is important. When talking, have the players face you rather than form a circle around you. Enthusiasm is important as it is infectious. If you love what you are doing so will your players. Trust is perhaps the most important. If the players believe that you have their best interests in mind and that you want them to succeed, then they will be motivated to pay attention to you and to work hard. Hard work and skill development make the game fun which is what soccer should be!

### **Initial Meeting**

Set ground rules with players and parents in a meeting immediately before or after the first practice. Discuss goals and expectations, attendance requirements, and player equipment. Seek out assistant coaches and a team parent. Assistant coaches can be of great value in establishing an optimal small coach to player ratio and in maintaining a consistent pace during training. A team parent can help by creating a phone tree, assigning snack duty and handling some of the logistics of team management. Enlist parents to help line fields, set up and break down goals and nets, pump balls and perform other general maintenance duties.

### **Expectations of the Players**

Just as there are expectations of the coach, there are expectations of the players. Such expectations include positive attitude, good sportsmanship, maximum effort, punctuality, responsibility, and respect--for referees, opponents, coaches and teammates.

One of the most important components of a team is leadership. This is a skill which can be fostered by the coach, as he or she models good leadership. Leaders are positive, bold, decisive and specific. Not every player wants to be a leader, but every player must be given the opportunity to practice leadership. Discuss with players plans and techniques. Let them help organize training sessions. Above all, do not be afraid to let them fail. Valuable lessons are learned through mistakes.

The captain(s) of the team is responsible for more leadership responsibilities than any other member of the team. This player must be trustworthy and respected by the team members. Good captains are enthusiastic, competitive,

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composed and confident, and they take risks. Captains have high standards from themselves and for teammates, and they assist teammates in attaining those high standards.

In addition to good leaders, good teams need good followers. Good followers display discipline, enthusiasm and pride. They are cooperative and eager to learn and to play.

### **Equipment Needs**

Shinguards are mandatory for all players in all age groups at all times. Any player who arrives at practice or a game without shinguards must not be allowed to practice or play unless a pair can be found. A water bottle should be mandatory as well. Cleats are not encouraged at the U-6 level. Higher recreation levels may wear cleats or athletic shoes. Cleats are a necessity for upper level travel team players.

Each player should bring his or her own ball to practice.

Coaching supplies include cones, pinnies, a ball pump, a ball bag with extra practice balls, one or two designated game balls, permanent markers so that the players can write their names on their balls. Each player should bring his or her own ball to practice.

### **Training Sessions**

Training sessions need to be well planned and move quickly from one activity to the next. They should consist of three parts: warm up, main activities, and a concluding activity. Every training session should have one central theme as its focus. Prepare for it in warm-up, practice it with a progression of drills, put it into play in a scrimmage, and review it at the end.

The warm-up involves activities of low intensity, high repetition, and fun. Stretching should be interspersed throughout the warm-up. Stretching becomes progressively important in the older age groups, so incorporating it into the warm-up from the earliest ages and establishing as part of the routine is essential.

Main activities focus on skill development. Drills should progress from the simple to the complex, gradually increasing the physical and mental demands.

The concluding activity should be a scrimmage. The players need to be given the opportunity to play the game, with minimal interference from the coach, hopefully incorporating the skills they have focused on during the session.

Warm down and repeat stretching.

## **Game Organization and Management**

If at all possible have your team bench area on the opposite side of the field from spectators. This minimizes distractions and promotes focus on the coach and on the play.

Be sure to address the contributions of all players at team meetings before, during and after games. Good communication with your team is essential. Set aside ample time for warm-up and warm-down periods before and after games.

Set clear guidelines for acceptable behavior of substitutes. They need to be in your immediate area, focused on the game and ready to be called into play. Do not allow players to badger the coach.

Inform players of your plans in advance when possible. If it becomes necessary to amend the initial plan, try to update the players as soon as possible.

Coaches should never be on the field during games. Remain in your bench area. Do not yell at players from the sidelines. Talk to each player one on one as he or she comes off the field, or when the play is halted.

Not playing is part of the game and provides the opportunity of observation. Helping young players accept this and still remain involved is challenging and very important.

## **Basics for U-12 and Under**

Keep things simple and fun. Running games, tag, relay races--anything done with the ball--are as much a part of training for the young player as shooting, dribbling and passing. The best choices for training are game-like activities with simple rules played in small groups. Shooting, dribbling, defending and group play should be incorporated into most training sessions to set a foundation for technique and tactics.

It is necessary that coaches have a complete understanding of their team's age group as well as their individual players. Age is the primary determinant of development. Cognitive as well as physical abilities affect the level of play. Tactics and systems implemented too early will often stifle and discourage players because they interfere with the freedom of learning to participate in the game. The game is the best teacher—this cannot be over-emphasized—and games should be small-sided.

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### **U-6**

U-6 players have limited attention spans, limited comprehension of the complexities of the game, and limited physical coordination. They tire easily, but recover rapidly. They can focus on only one thing at a time, and they need praise often.

Training should not last for more than one hour, once or twice a week. Incorporate as many different activities as you can into the hour, and involve the ball as much as possible. Basic movements such as running, skipping, hopping, etc. need to be emphasized. Don't even consider teaching positional play. The only player to hold a position is the goalkeeper if you play with one, and the United States Youth Soccer Association recommends against it.

Understand that twenty seconds after the start of a game every player will be on top of the ball. Team play and passing is an alien concept. These players know that if they pass the ball they may never get it back. In fact, they often will steal the ball from their own teammates!

USYSA recommends games using three players per side, no goalie and a #3 ball. Cleats are not recommended for this age.

### **U-8**

U-8 players are eager to please, but the attention span is still not at a competitive stage. Their rapid growth often affects their coordination and makes them physically awkward. They also overheat quickly and need frequent water breaks.

These players can follow two or three step instructions and are beginning to better understand what it means to play a game. They still tend to bunch around the ball, but they now recognize that they have teammates and will occasionally pass. Training once or twice a week should not last longer than one hour and fifteen minutes, and learning how to control the ball should be the main objective. USYSA recommends games using four players per side, introducing a goalie over the course of the season and using a #3 ball.

### **U-10**

U-10 players are less predictable than any other group. Greater diversity in playing ability and physical maturity become apparent. Their ability to stay on task has increased, and they are beginning to sequence thought and actions.

Gross and small motor development has made significant strides, and recognizable soccer skills are emerging. Players are becoming more serious and developing a true sense of competitiveness. All in all, these players are starting to look like real soccer players, although games are still wildly unpredictable.

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Repetition of technique is very important, but drills must be dynamic to hold their interest and match their new level of physical activity. Explanations must be brief, concise and always mention “why”. U-10 players are starting to recognize basic tactical concepts, and it is now possible to teach positional play effectively. Do not allow players to specialize in any one position. They first need to learn basic principles of the game, and having them play all of the positions is best for their individual development. It is also now appropriate to introduce the offside rule, although it will be quite some time before they use it effectively in games.

Training sessions should be twice a week for one hour and fifteen minutes. The emphasis is still on ball control, but these players need to be placed more often in game-like situations. Put them into competitive environments as much as possible, using small-sided games as the main teaching vehicle. This will not only keep them focused, but it will allow the game itself to teach.

How players are grouped during training takes on added significance because of the wide margin of ability levels. Groups need to be changed often and players mixed with different players. Stretching is becoming more important as are safety and preventive measures.

USYSA recommends small sided games of six per side using a #4 ball.

### **U-12**

Coaching at this age level is a challenge because the difference in skill level between players is very pronounced. Many players view themselves as real soccer players and they know how much fun it is to play the game skillfully. Others are at the point where it is not as much fun as it used to be, and some start to drop out. These players recognize the importance of skill and become discouraged with their lack of it. The coach’s greatest challenge is to keep all of the players engaged, involved, and make them feel important. Skills still need to be the primary focus of training, and players should learn how to use their skills in a variety of contexts.

While team cooperation emerges and players encourage one another, they are also intolerant of incompetence in teammates, referees and coaches. They will point out any inconsistencies. They are moral watchdogs, but also very susceptible to peer pressure and extremely self-critical. Instruction needs to be enabling, ie. show them what *can* be done instead of telling them what *not* to do.

This age group is starting to be able to think tactically. They are developing the ability to sustain complex, coordinated skill sequences. Most are able to think abstractly and are thus able to understand fundamental team concepts. They are openly competitive and a few may foul purposely. They will sometimes encourage each other, but are sometimes intolerant of mistakes. Some decisions will need to be made that might not lead to wins (ie. having players

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play different positions). By now they have preferred positions, but it is essential for their development for them to occasionally play out of their usual spot.

Train for one and a half hours two to three times a week. Training should focus on one or two topics per session. Activities should be game-like in their intensity and pressure. Small sided games are still the preferred method of teaching the game. Stretching and flexibility training are essential.

Introducing U-12 players to 11 sided games is now appropriate, as are single sexed teams. At this level small sided games are still preferred but there are some leagues that play full field. USYSA recommends a size #4 ball.

### **Basics for Juniors**

Juniors are 13 to 19-year-olds. They have the necessary tools to play 11v11 soccer. They are able to think of group actions involving more than two or three players and set up complex plays. They have an understanding of how their individual actions affect the goals of the group as a whole and they have the physical ability to make long passes, make powerful goal shots, reach the crossbar, etc. Training sessions can be more tactical involving more decision-making demands. It is critical to incorporate more stretching into the session. Always begin the warm-up with motion and intersperse periods of stretching. Never start stretching when cold.

Player safety becomes more important as game becomes more physical and aggressive, and game control is essential. These age groups will really challenge authority as they think they are experts on all aspects of the game. They will test the referee, and often retaliate on intentional fouls. They are also easily frustrated with their own mistakes or non-proficiency.

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### Small Sided Soccer

Small sided soccer--games played with a reduced number of players, smaller fields, smaller balls, smaller goals--should be played at all levels up to and often including the U-12 level. US Youth Soccer Association policy requires that teams U-10 and under play games with not more than eight players per side. The USYSA has compiled rules for small sided soccer at every level. Below are the basics for each age group:

Age Group	# of Players	Maximum Field Size	Goal Size h x w	Ball Size	GameTime
U-6	3 v. 3	L=30 yds W=25 yds	4x6	3	4 8-minute quarters
U-8	4 v. 4	L=35 yds W=30 yds	6x12	3	4 12-minute quarters
U-10	6 v. 6	L=60 yds W=45 yds	6x18	4	2 25-minute halves
U-12	8 v. 8	L=80 yds W=55 yds	6x18	4	2 30-minute halves

Small sided soccer, used as a developmental tool, can and will develop skilled players. It better prepares children for soccer physically and mentally by providing more opportunities for contact with the ball, more opportunities to make decisions and more actual play. Most importantly, small sided soccer is fun.

Because of the smaller numbers, the skills and concepts involved in the game are presented in a simpler, less complicated way so that the game is easier to understand. Each player has more access to the ball, and more touches on the ball during the course of the game increases skill. When players become more skillful, the game naturally becomes more fun. The small sided approach has helped thousands of players develop at a faster rate into competent, proficient players.

Small sided soccer also introduces to the young child the idea of holding formations which transfer eventually to the full field. Soccer at the highest level is nothing more than a series of small group games—1 v. 1, 2 v. 1, 3 v. 3—strung together with long passes. The U-6 team shape is a triangle with no goalie. The U-8 team shape is a diamond with a goalie introduced over the course of the season. U-10 6v.6 uses a diamond in the middle, one attacking striker upfield and a goalie in the back. U-12 uses a diamond in middle, 3 forwards in front and a goalie.

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## Rules of the Game

### 1. The Field of Play

- The dimensions of the field may vary based on the space available, the age of the participants and the number of players per side.

### 2. The Ball

- Balls come in sizes 3, 4 and 5, with 5 being the regulation size used by juniors (U-14 and older) and adult players.

### 3. Number of Players

- The maximum number of players on the field per team is eleven including the goalkeeper. Youth leagues modify this to allow small sided soccer.

### 4. Players' Equipment

- Players must wear shorts, a jerseys or shirt tucked into the shorts, shinguards, socks that completely cover the shinguards, and shoes.
- Players may not wear anything that is considered dangerous to themselves or other players such as jewelry.
- The goalkeeper's shirt must be different from that of the players on both teams.

### 5. The Referee

- The referee's main concern is the safety of the players.
- The referee enforces all laws of the game, but also has the discretion to let play continue after an infraction has occurred if they think that to do so would be an advantage for the fouled team. This is called the "advantage clause".
- The referee may act on information from assistant referees for incidents that the referee may not have seen or needs assistance in judging. However, the referee makes all of the actual calls.
- The referee may change their decision as long as play has not resumed.
- The referee may verbally warn, caution (yellow card) or eject from the game (red card) any player who is deemed to have committed serious infractions or repeat offences.
- The referee keeps the official game time.
- No one is allowed on the field without the permission of the referee.

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## 6. Assistant Referees

- Two assistant referees (linesmen) help the referee control the game. The referee is the final authority and may or may not choose to act on the advice of the assistants.
- Assistants are equipped with flags to use in signaling the referee.
- Assistants indicate:
  1. when the ball is out of play
  2. which team is entitled to a corner kick, goal kick or throw-in
  3. when a player has committed an offside foul
  4. when misconduct or other incident has occurred out of view of the referee
  5. when a substitution is requested

## 7. Duration of the Game

- The maximum duration of a game is two 45 minute periods. Youth leagues often modify this to better suit the abilities of the players.
- Many youth leagues have their own rules governing minimum playing time for players, but it is recommended that all players play at least three quarters of every game regardless of experience or level.
- The referee may extend time due to injuries or other delays.
- Time will be extended at the end of a period to permit a penalty kick.
- Time is not extended for free kicks, corner kicks, goal kicks or throw-ins.
- Once time has expired play ends. Even if the ball is in flight, if time expires before it crosses the goal line, the goal is disallowed.

## 8. The Start of Play

- The team winning the coin toss has the choice of which end to defend. The other team takes the kick-off.
- The kick-off is taken from the center spot on the halfway line to start the game. A kick-off also restarts the game after a goal has been scored by the team scored upon, and after the first half by the team that did not kick-off at the start.
- The ball must be kicked forward into the opponent's end of the field.
- The game officially begins and the ball is in play when it is kicked and moves forward—not when the referee blows the whistle.
- Every player must be on their half of the field and the defenders must wait at least ten yards from the ball or beyond the center circle until it is in play.
- There is no penalty for failure to follow the above procedures because if done incorrectly the ball is not yet in play. The kick-off is retaken.
- The kicker may not play the ball a second time until hit has been touched by another player. The penalty for this is an indirect free kick taken by the opponent.

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- A goal may be scored directly from a kick-off.
- When the referee stops play for a reason other than a rule being broken, play is restarted with a drop ball. The referee brings together a player from each team, has them face each other, and drops the ball between them. Play begins when the ball hits the ground. If one of the players touches it before it hits the ground, the referee drops the ball again.

9. Ball In and Out of Play

- The ball is out of play when the ball is completely over the touch line or goal line, either on the ground or in the air. If any part of the ball is still on the line, the ball is still in play.
- Players should not make the judgment, but should keep playing until the referee blows the whistle.
- The ball is still in play when it bounces off of a goalpost, crossbar or corner flag and stays on the field.
- The ball is still in play when it bounces off of the referee or assistant referee if they were on the field at the time and if the ball stays on the field.

10. Method of Scoring

- A goal is scored when the ball completely crosses the goal line either on the ground or in the air.
- A ball played by a player into their own goal is a score for the opponent except when taking a free kick, goal kick corner kick or throw-in.

11. Offside

- Offside is one of the most difficult laws to understand and apply, and is often not used with younger age groups.
- Attackers must have at least two defenders between them and the goal line at the moment the ball is played to them by a teammate. One of those defenders may be the goalkeeper.
- Attackers must be in the opponent's half of the field and be seeking to gain an advantage to be judged offside.
- Players cannot be judged offside if they receive the ball directly from a throw-in, corner kick or goal kick, or if they are merely in an offside position.
- If a player is called offside, the opponent restarts play with an indirect free kick.

12. Fouls and Misconduct

- Fouls can only be called while the ball is in play.
- There are two types of fouls—penal and non-penal.

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- the ten penal fouls committed against an opponent are:
  1. kicking or attempting to kick
  2. tripping or attempting to trip
  3. jumping at
  4. charging
  5. striking or attempting to strike
  6. pushing
  7. spitting at
  8. holding
  9. handling the ball deliberately
  10. contacting the opponent before the ball when tackling
- Penal fouls are punishable by a direct free kick awarded to the opposing team from the point of the infraction.
- If a penal foul is committed by a defender in their own penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded.
- There are five non-penal fouls:
  1. dangerous play (includes high kicking)
  2. fair charging (when the ball is not within playing distance)
  3. obstruction (impeding the progress of an opponent when not playing the ball. However, a player may screen an opponent from the ball if the player is within playing distance of the ball)
  4. charging the goalkeeper
  5. goalkeeper infractions:
    - a. keeping the ball more than six seconds
    - b. touching the ball with the hands when it has been deliberately passed to them by a teammate
    - c. putting the ball down and picking it up again without the ball having gone out of the penalty area and without having been touched by another player
    - d. wasting time
    - e. receiving the ball with the hands directly from a throw-in by a teammate
- When a non-penal foul is committed, the opposing team is awarded an indirect free kick from the point of the infraction.

Misconduct is punishable by the offending player being cautioned or sent off the field.

A player is cautioned by the referee and shown a yellow card for:

1. entering or leaving the field without the referee's permission
2. continually breaking the rules
3. showing dissent by word or action for the decisions of the referee

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4. displaying unsporting behavior
5. failing to respect the required distance at a restart of play
6. delaying the restart of play

A cautioned player remains in the game unless it is their second cautionable offense in the same game, in which case they are sent off the field and may not return.

A player is sent off the field and shown a red card for:

1. violent conduct
  2. serious foul play
  3. using offensive, insulting or abusive language
  4. a second cautionable offense in the same game
- A player who receives a red card may not return to the game and their team must play with one less player for the remainder of that game.
  - If the referee stopped the game to administer the caution or send off a player, the game is restarted with an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
  - If the card was given while the ball was out of play, the game is restarted with the throw-in or other intended restart.

### 13. Free kick

- There are two types of free kicks—direct and indirect.
- On a direct free kick a goal may be scored by kicking the ball directly into the opponent's goal.
- On an indirect free kick a goal can only be scored if the ball is touched by another player on either team after it is kicked and before it goes into the goal. If the ball goes directly into the goal the result is a goal kick by the defending team.
- The referee signals an indirect by raising one arm.
- Defenders must be at least 10 yards from the ball and outside the penalty area before the kick is taken. The kicking team may wave this right and take the kick quickly.
- No whistle is needed for the free kick to be taken, unless the kicking team asks for the defenders to be moved 10 yards from the ball.
- The ball must be stationary before the kick is taken; otherwise, the kick is retaken.
- The ball is not in play, and may not be played again by any player until it completely leaves the penalty area; otherwise the kick is retaken.
- The ball may not be played a second time by the kicker unless it is first played by another player from either team; otherwise an indirect is awarded to the opposing team.

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- Defenders who intentionally interfere with or otherwise try to delay the kick will be cautioned.

14. Penalty Kick

- If a player commits a penal foul in their own penalty area, a penalty kick is awarded to the opposing team. The kick is taken in the penalty area twelve yards from the center of the goal line.
- All players except the kicker and the goalkeeper must be outside of the penalty area and at least 10 yards from the ball until the kick is taken.
- The goalkeeper must have both feet on the goal line and may do nothing to distract or intimidate the kicker.
- The kick must go forward and is taken only after the referee signals with the whistle.

15. Throw-in

- A throw-in is taken to restart play by the opposing team from the point the ball left the field.
- The thrower must be facing the field and have part of each foot on the ground on or behind the touch-line when the ball is released.
- The thrower must use two hands and start the throw from behind the head and deliver the ball over the top of the head.
- The ball is in play when it is released and crosses entirely over the line into the field.
- It is possible for the ball to cross into play and then go back out of play without it ever having touched the ground.
- If a player makes an improper throw-in, the opposing team gets to take a throw-in from the same spot.
- After the ball is in play the thrower may not touch it again until after it touches another player on either team. The penalty for this is an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- An indirect free kick will be awarded if the goalkeeper handles the ball after receiving it from a throw-in from a teammate.

16. Goal Kick

- A goal kick is taken by the defending team after the ball goes completely out of play over the goal line, last touched by a member of the attacking team.
- The ball must be stationary and may be placed anywhere inside the goal area.
- All opposing players must be outside the penalty area, although the kicker may waive that right and take the kick anyway.

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- The ball is not again in play until it has completely left the penalty area. If any player touches the ball while still in the penalty area the kick is retaken.
- The kicker may not play the ball a second time until it has left the penalty area and is touched by another player on either team.
- A goal may be scored directly from a goal kick.

17. Corner Kick

- A corner kick is taken by an attacking player after the ball goes completely over the goal line, last touched by a member of the defending team.
- The ball must be stationary and inside the nearest corner arc when the kick is taken.
- The corner flag may not be moved by the players.
- The defenders must be at least 10 yards from the ball before the kick is taken, but the kicker may waive that right and take the kick anyway.
- A goal may be scored directly from a corner kick, but only against the opposing team.

### **Parents' Code of Ethics**

Please remember that the coaches and referees are volunteers giving a significant amount of time and effort so that your child can develop, play and have fun. Treat them with respect, even when you might disagree. Your vote of confidence in them is a vote of confidence in your child.

Attending the games means a lot to your child. Please be encouraging to him/her and the other teammates. Applaud good effort, but let the coach do the coaching. Sideline coaching and yelling instructions only confuses the players and disrupts the game. It is terribly distressing to the players and counterproductive to the play.

Don't forget that a soccer game is just that—a game. Keep a reign on your emotions regardless of the outcome.

## **New Hampshire Soccer Association Coach's Code of Ethics**

### **Code of Ethics**

- The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of his/her players.
- A coach must hold him/herself to the highest standards of behavior. He/she must remember that they serve as one of the most influential role models for their players. Any violation of the player's trust, either in word or in action, on or off the field, cannot be tolerated.
- The laws of soccer were written to ensure the continuous flow of action. These laws have the safety of the players as their primary goal. Coaches must always play within these rules and never seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate, unsportsmanlike behavior to their players.
- Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the rules.
- Coaches who circumvent the rules to gain an advantage have no place in soccer.
- Circumvention of eligibility rules must be avoided. Coaches who use ineligible players will be dealt with quickly and severely.
- Coaches are responsible for their player's actions on the field. Rough house tactics, illegal substitutions, deliberate faking of injuries is prohibited.
- The coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity, and dignity of the sport are not compromised.
- Officials must have the support of coaches, players, and organizations. Public or private criticism of officials demeans the game. Coaches must also refrain from criticizing officials to their players. Criticism of officials and dissent towards officials during the course of the game is strictly prohibited.
- Coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to him/herself, his/her organization, and soccer in general.
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- Coaches have the responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible during the game.
- It shall be considered unethical for a coach to have any verbal dissent during the game with the opposing coach, bench, or players. Physically contacting an opposing coach or player in an aggressive manner must be considered highly unethical.
- Coaches will not belittle their players by yelling at them in a negative manner during the course of the game. Such action detracts from the game and negatively impacts the performance of the players and the team.
- Coaches must remember that they are involved in coaching for the players. They should always have the player's best interest in mind. They should seek to provide an environment where players not only develop as players of the game, but as people. They should never place their own concerns of advancement above those of their players.

### **Violations**

- Alleged violations of the code of ethics may be brought to the attention of the president or any member of the executive board of the NHSA. Alleged violations will be forwarded to the NHSA disciplinary board for review and further action, if any.

### **References**

[www.usyouthsoccer.org](http://www.usyouthsoccer.org)  
United States Youth Soccer Association web site

NHSA Coach's Manual

[www.soccercoachingtips.com](http://www.soccercoachingtips.com)

[www.soccervideos.com](http://www.soccervideos.com)