

WASA Quick Facts for Coaches

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of WASA is for kids to have fun and to participate... not to emphasize winning. Weaker players don't get better if they don't play. All players must play at least 75% of the game before any player can play the entire game. Taking your best player out for 1 minute, and then putting him or her right back in, violates the spirit of this requirement. Since the purpose of the league is to teach soccer skills, all team members should play the same amount of time no matter what their skill level is.

In U6 and U7, we have established minimums for the number of minutes required for each player to play. In U6 it is 22 minutes. In U7 it is 27 minutes. Coaches are expected to do whatever it takes to ensure that players are on the field for at least that number of minutes.

PRACTICES

To be successful, coaches must be organized. Make sure you have a plan for each practice: what drills to do, how long to do each one, when to take water breaks, when to scrimmage, etc. Age specific samples are available on our website.

Efficient practices should run about 45 minutes to an hour. Older players (U10 and up) may go a little longer, but not longer than 90 minutes. Quickly check the field for debris before practices. If possible, bring a small first aid kit and/or ice pack to practices and games.

Have players do a quick warm up with some stretching before each practice, especially for older kids. Make practices a mix of skills and scrimmages. Keep players moving and avoid having players stand in lines. Supervise the children to minimize fooling around. Make sure players bring water and drink frequently. If you tell parents that practice will be done at a specific time, make sure you are. Don't practice into darkness.

GAMES

Games start promptly! Referees are instructed to start the game with as many players as are available at the scheduled start time. Tell your team to be at the field at least 15 minutes before game time. That means coaches must also be there 15 minutes before game time.

Our goal is for players to have fun, play hard, and play fair. There is to be no foul or abusive language used, uttered, or muttered towards referees, spectators, coaches, teammates or opponents. Make sure all comments are positive and encourage, not discourage. It is expected that, after each game, all players and coaches will line up and exchange high fives.

Soccer is a game that is played for the enjoyment of the players. Since this is a recreational soccer program designed to teach soccer, this means the enjoyment of all the players on both teams. Always be considerate of the other team. Running up the score only deflates the other team. The winning team will not learn anything constructive and the weaker team's players will not want to play the game. If your team is ahead by 3 goals or more, the league expects you to make changes to reduce the likelihood that your team will continue to score. For more information on this see "WASA Position on Running Up Scores" in the *Coaches* section of our website.

REFEREES

The referee's main responsibility is to maintain control of the game, not slow it down with constant whistles. Because the final score is not the objective, there should never be a dispute over a referee's decision. As a coach, never disagree with a referee during play. If you feel the need to ask the ref about a call, do it in a calm and rational manner after the game, and always away from the children. Remember, the referee's word is final.

Two referees will be assigned to your game, but if neither one shows up, please ask a parent or an assistant coach to help referee. Do what you can to get the game played.

RAINOUTS

Games will be played unless the weather is very bad. When all fields are closed due to weather, WASA uses www.cancellations.com to notify everyone. Individual field cancellations are not posted on cancellations.com; we post only when **all fields** are closed.

Coaches are NOT authorized to cancel games. Unless there is a posting on cancellations.com or you hear from a WASA staff member that your specific game is cancelled, **go to the field**. The decision to cancel will be made at the field by the referee. Please instruct parents to bring their children to games even if it's raining. Games in progress will be terminated if there is thunder or lightning.

UNIFORMS and EQUIPMENT

WASA provides team shirts for all players. Coach shirts are also available from your division coordinator. Have the players looking smart, with their shirts tucked in and socks pulled up over their shin guards, not underneath their shin guards. For U8 and above, goalkeepers must wear a shirt that is a different color than either of the teams is wearing.

Players cannot play without shin guards. No jewelry (earrings, watches, necklaces, bracelets etc.) may be worn. **Pierced ear starter plugs are not permitted under any circumstances, not even if they are covered with tape or band-aids.** Hair restraints may not contain metal or plastic. They should be fabric or elastic. Coaches should check their players as they arrive at the field.

Referees are required to keep players out of the game if they are wearing jewelry or if they do not have shin guards.

SNACKS and TRASH

It is traditional to provide the kids with snacks at the end of each game. This usually includes a drink and something healthy to eat. Parents usually take turns bringing the snack. We have found that rotating alphabetically works well.

IMPORTANT: Ask players/parents about food allergies. If any player is has an allergy, to peanuts for example, let parents know that they must avoid that type of snack.

Please emphasize to players and parents that trash must be placed in the trash cans provided at each field. Better yet, have the parent bring a trash bag with the snack. Westerville is a beautiful community with nice recreation facilities. Let's keep it looking great.