



Coaches Hand Book

Welcome

Thank you for volunteering to coach this season. Our recreational program would not exist without the commitment of each of you. We hope you enjoy your time coaching with us. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns at any time. You can find a list of all of the members of our board on the [Contact Us](#) page on our website.

Plan for a Successful Season

Risk Management

Each year, every coach must complete the Risk Management registration process with the Delaware Youth Soccer Association. The link to the form changes every year, so please go to: www.dysa.org and then choose Administration > Risk Management from the main menu. The link changes every year, so you will probably not want to bookmark the page. Please follow the instructions carefully and specify all positions you hold with the Delaware Union. This would include head coach, assistant coach, team manager, board member, etc.

Website

Our primary resource for organizing and communicating information is our website (www.delawareunion.com). This is also where you can access your team's site. You need to login to the account under which you volunteered. If your child(ren) are registered under the same account, then you can click on the team name next to their name to get to your team page. Otherwise, you can click on Team Directory and search for your team. We also have our Coaches Corner where we post information, links, and practice session plans. If you go to the website and choose Programs > Recreational (Rec) > Coaches Corner or click on this [link](#).

Dick's Team HQ

This season we are fortunate to have an app that all coaches and parents can use to access their team information quickly and easily on their phones. You can start a new discussion (which will email the entire team) and view your roster right from your phone. This should make it easier to communicate with your team without having to maintain an email distribution list.

Team Rosters

Team rosters will be emailed to the team coaches. Team coaches are selected on a first come first selected basis. We try to fulfill all requests, but sometimes team size constraints prevent



Coaches Hand Book

us from doing so. We typically fulfill requests based on if a player has played with that team or coach before and then new requests for that team/coach if possible.

We also realize that some of the players assigned to your team may have a conflict with the night and/or time you choose for your practice. Moving players around after rosters have been set can be challenging as we typically need to swap players in order to keep team player counts equal. Please contact your age group commissioner with any concerns.

Contacting Your Team for the First Time

Plan on contacting your team as soon as you receive your roster. This is extremely important!! As parents start talking about hearing from their coach, some will be wondering why they haven't been contacted. We communicate an expected timeframe from when parents should hear from coaches and when they don't they begin contacting us and then we start trying to track you down. Information to include in your first email:

Coach Introduction

- If there are two or more coaches selected, contact each other and agree upon the roles each one will have, game day coach (there needs to be one head coach on game day, this eliminates confusion when the referee has questions), communications, etc...
- Define roles of each coach if multiple coaches are assigned
- Establish a clear line of communication, if you need to update your contact information in Blue Sombrero please do so IMMEDIATELY, parents/players should have an email address and telephone number to contact you
- Explain the objectives for the season
- Briefly explain the rules pertaining to the specific division you are coaching in (rules are posted on the Delaware Union website)
- Inform parents/players of practice time and location
- Establish the practice/game day parent rules. For instance, you don't want parents giving direction during practice/game day, this will confuse the player and undermine what you expect out of the player.
- Ask to be notified of any medical conditions that child may have that could have an impact during play, i.e. diabetic, broken bones, glasses (players may not play with normal glasses, they need to be made of shatter proof plastic)
- Ask them to download the Dick's Team HQ app on their phones and login with the same user name and password they use to login to our website. This will give you another form of communication and will also allow parents to see the game schedule and field numbers on their phones.

Team Guidelines/Management



Coaches Hand Book

- Discuss how parents/players MUST respect opponents, coaches, officials and the game itself
- Player and Parent Code of Conduct is location on the Delaware Union web site, ask parents/players to review
- Practice schedule, days and times
- Game schedule (the schedule for U10 and below will be available shortly after you receive your roster, U12 and above are distributed thru the Delaware Youth Soccer Association or DYSA, and these schedules are out of our control on when they are distributed, as soon as we confirm the schedules the club will pass along this information)
- Most teams have a snack/drink schedule – you can post it on your team page or in a Discussion topic. Please make sure you ask for and communicate any food allergies to the entire team. The club also recommends that you keep the snacks and drinks relatively healthy (fruits, crackers, water, fruit drinks, etc.)
- Inherent risks (soccer IS a contact sport, although a relatively safe one injuries do occur, be aware that concussions do occur and to be aware of the warning signs)
- Required equipment: Appropriate jersey/shirt color for game days (Orange is Home, Navy is Away); Cleats are not mandatory but highly recommended for U10 and above; SHIN GUARDS are MANDATORY)
- Ask that players bring a soccer ball
- All players need to bring water to all practices and game

Coaches' Responsibilities

- Arrive at practice on time and remain with each player until every child is picked up (if a parent is not picking up the player make sure they inform you of who will be)
- Organize practices and teach players age appropriate techniques, build each practice session upon the previous one; Contact your Commissioner or Director of Coaching for guidance
- Give precise direction; push up, drop back, look up, carry
- Avoid the following directions; kick it, move, what are you doing?
- Develop each players' self-esteem thru positive feedback
- Every player MUST play at least half of every game. We occasionally have situations where teams have more than 2x the numbers of players allowed on the field in which case every player will not be able to play a full half. Please allow each player to play an equal amount of time in these cases.
- Respect referees, know the rules, and conduct yourself with the appropriate level of SPORTSMANSHIP on the field
- Inform referees of any medical issues with any player, i.e. diabetic, broken bones



Coaches Hand Book

- Continue to seek coaching education
- Attend and participate in PDS and/or Open Practices (U5 through U10 coaches)

Code of Conduct

Coaches, Parents/Spectators, and Players

Being part of the United States Youth Soccer Association and the Delaware Union Soccer Club is a privilege. The actions as a coach will ALWAYS reflect upon the Delaware Union Soccer Club. Because this is a game coached by humans, played by humans and officiated by humans, mistakes will be made, it is how we handle those mistakes will define you as a coach, parent/spectator, or player. Coaches lead by example, and players will follow that example weather it is a positive or negative.

Coach's Equipment

What to Have in Your Equipment Bag

- Extra soccer balls, make sure you have the correct size for your division
- Air pump
- First Aid Kit; should have a couple of cold packs, Band-Aids, gauze pads and tape (we have extras in the shed if needed)
- Goalkeepers' jersey; keepers need to wear a contrasting color than every other player/referee on the field (we provide these for U8 and U10 divisions); We do not provide goalie gloves. If a player feels as though they need goalie gloves it is up to them to purchase and keep track of them.
- Players' jersey; have the players wear their designated color (Home = Orange, Away = Navy) but bring their other color as a backup
- Shin guards, an inexpensive spare set will save a player who forgets; players may NOT play without shin guards.
- Cones or pylons; practice schedules do get mixed up, when a goal is not available, cones or pylons make a difficult situation easier.
- Pinnies; used primarily for practice
- Water; having an extra water bottle is always a good idea
- Clipboard or Notepad



Coaches Hand Book

Player's Equipment & Safety

What Every Player Needs to Have Before Walking On to the Field

- Encourage all your players to bring their own ball to practice, but they shouldn't need to bring it to games. Promote practicing outside of the scheduled practice, give incentives for improvement
- Shin Guards; MUST be under socks and worn at every practice and game
- Water Bottle; for the younger players make sure their names are on their bottle
- Soccer Shoes; cleats are recommended but are not required, sneakers are fine, but absolutely NO baseball or football type of shoes with rectangular or square cleats are allowed, no metal studs and no toe stud
- Uniform; practice uniform is anything comfortable that will provide some level of protection, if a hood is worn it MUST be tucked under a shirt
- CONCUSSIONS: It is very important that you know the signs of a concussion and are comfortable making the decision to hold a player out of a game/practice. The CDC offers their Heads Up training course for coaches, parents, and players. At this time, we highly recommend you watch the video and complete the training certification, but in 2017, this will be required. Please go to <https://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/Training/index.html> to complete the training.

Game Day Guidelines and Preparation

Game Preparation

Three Days Before the Game Day; you should reach out to the opposing coach to introduce yourself and to verify game time and location, along with team colors and any important information that needs to be passed down, i.e. parking issues, field location changes, etc

The Day Before the Game Day; the day before game day you should have a roster of who will be at the game and who will not. Establish a game roster to include your initial line up and who will be substituting for what position and at what times. Setup your substitutions to occur at specific intervals, intervals can be different for offensive and defensive players. Select two captains for the coin toss and to convey any problems to the referee.

Game Day

Field Preparation; depending upon the time of your game you may be responsible for setting up or tearing down field to include moving goals, corner flags



Coaches Hand Book

Rules; it is the responsibility of the coach to know the rules or “laws” of the club you are playing and to prepare your players to play within those rules.

Warming up the Team; keeping it simple is best, simple touching, dribbling, passing, and shooting with the emphasis on maximizing the proper touch is important. In the beginning of the season the coach should lead the warm up as the season progresses begin selecting players to lead the warm up

Referee; if the referee doesn’t introduce himself to you introduce yourself to him/her. Verify some of the general rules, including game duration, when is a substitution allowed and inform the referee if any of your players have medical concerns i.e. diabetes, broken bones, etc

Coaching from the Technical Area

As coaches we must manage game day coaching from coaching during a practice session. The saying “let them play” is a very important saying. As coaches we our players to develop and grow, they must be able to make mistakes and have the chance to repair is mistake without the immediate commands coming from the touchline.

Coaches should give specific directions to their players, take notes during the game and address issues at half time and after the game, but keep the instructions to a minimum. Encouragement works better than a coach talking about the problems that occurred.

Convey changes or specific actions to substitutes. Have your substitutes ready at the mid-field line, this not only prepares the player to enter the field of play but also indicates to the referee that you want a substitution

Parents and spectators should be informed no to instruct the players during the game, few parents see the overall picture that as a coach you are trying to accomplish and most time will not only confuse the player but will also undo all the training that you have been doing.

Parents and spectators should also be informed not to communicate their dissatisfaction towards the referee and under no circumstances are they to confront the referee during or after the game.

During the game, parents should adhere to the following instructions:

- Do NOT yell at the referee
- Do NOT yell at the opposing coach
- Do NOT yell at the opposing players
- Let the coaches coach and do not instruct players, cheers are heard by all so please cheer for all the players

Halftime



Coaches Hand Book

- ALL players should grab their water bottles and meet somewhere where the players are out of ear-shot of parents and the other team
- Give positive remarks concerning the team's performance, do not call out specific players about a poor performance
- Only make a few statements, too much talking and the players will start to lose their focus
- Ask the players if they have any questions about the game
- Before the start of the second half have you team huddle together and perform a cheer

After the Game

- Immediately after the game have your team line up and shake hands with the opponents
- Shake the hands of the opposing coach
- Shake the hands of the referees
- Players should also shake the hands of the officials
- Do not criticize the opposing team or the officials
- Clean up the area, check for forgotten equipment
- Verify your players know of the next practice session and remind them to keep practicing whenever they get a chance