

TRAVEL COACH HANDBOOK 2015



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I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

CONGRATULATIONS and THANK YOU for becoming part of the Southern Chester County Soccer Club (SCCSA) Coaching Staff. You are about to become involved in a very rewarding activity as you interact with children in helping them to develop not only soccer skills, but life skills as well. Unfortunately, along with the joy of coaching come a lot of responsibilities. In order for SCCSA to ensure that the children's soccer experience is a rewarding one, we also need to request your participation and adherence to our processes.

This manual provides guidelines, policies and procedures for SCCSA operations. The Board of Directors may, from time to time, approve exceptions to these policies and procedures. Please use this manual as a reference guide, but be sure to ask for assistance whenever needed. We also appreciate your feedback, so feel free to contact anyone on the Board with any comments or suggestions.

Have a great season,

SCCSA Board of Directors

II. Club Philosophy and Goals

To our players and parents

You and your child are about to begin a new season with the Southern Chester County Soccer Association Travel Team program. For those who have participated in the travel program before, some of what follows may be repetitive; however, you need to carefully read and understand the information in this letter. If you have any questions, please send them by email to travel@scssasoccer.com

SCCSA has provided children with an opportunity to participate in this wonderful sport since 1977. As many of you know the club provides an in-house instructional program as well as a travel program – together there are more than thirteen hundred children participating in the club.

The Travel Program has grown from 8 teams in the early years to over 20 in recent years. This sustained growth has only been accomplished through the extensive and sometimes exhaustive efforts of the many parent volunteers associated with the program. To them we owe our continued thanks for their countless hours on and off the field.

U.S. Club Soccer and United States Youth Soccer Association ("USYSA") are the national governing bodies that our teams play under. Most of our teams play under U.S. Club Soccer rules. A few teams, play under Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association ("EPYSA"), which is USYSA's recognized governing body for our geographic area. Many of the rules and regulations that we must adhere to are established by these two bodies. The two primary leagues that our children participate in, DELCO for the boys and PAGS for the girls, provide additional structure, rules and requirements. These two leagues are highly regarded and offer some of the highest levels of competition in youth soccer in the East. We as a club fully support and agree with both the letter and the intent of these rules and regulations.

SCCSA's Travel Program has several goals and objectives. These are:

- To provide the necessary training and coaching staff so your child can develop their skills and knowledge of the game.
- To teach our children good sportsmanship in both theory and practice.
- To provide interested parents an opportunity to become actively involved in the growth and development of our youth within the context of a structured sports program.
- To provide support for parents interested in developing their coaching skills and capabilities.
- To provide an appropriate level of competition for each child in both their placement on a specific team and that team's selection of an appropriate competitive environment.
- To provide opportunity to be involved with SCCSA's program without discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religious, or national origin.
- To make each child's experience as positive and enjoyable as possible and to continually foster a passion and love for the game. In a word have FUN.

It is sometimes difficult for us as parents and coaches to understand and fully comprehend perhaps the most basic underlying truth about our children – especially when it comes to their development as soccer players. Within the limits of their athletic abilities, they will become the player that they want to be. The time and effort they spend learning the skills required to play the game, developing an understanding of the game and learning to be part of a team effort will be the primary determinant of their success. The coaches and trainers associated with the program, the leagues and tournaments that they participate in, the summer camps and clinics they attend provide the framework and instructional support – but in the end the success they achieve is entirely dependent upon the efforts they put forth.

As with any human endeavor, the more joy we take in an activity the more frequently we want to do that activity. It is therefore imperative that as parents, coaches and administrators we seek to maximize our children's enjoyment. At the same time we must recognize that our children have varied interests, must attend to schoolwork, family and church commitments, and equally important, have time to just be kids. Within the structure of the club we try to meet these needs in many ways from the free clinics we offer to the summer "pick-up" games.

If we are successful in achieving our goals, our children will have fun, take pride in their club and become the soccer player they want to be – for some this could culminate in playing for their middle and high school teams and for others it may lead to playing at the collegiate level and beyond. As coaches we take particular pride in all of our players accomplishments.

Travel Soccer is a competitive game – it's why we keep scores and standings, have playoffs and reward champions. A primary objective of SCCSA, as well as EPYSA and USYSA, is to develop players to the highest level with the athletic ability and commitment to achieve. However, great players do not develop from only practicing twice a week and playing a game on the weekend. They become great players because they develop a passion and love for the game, but not because their parents push them or constantly ride them to work on their skills. We can nurture and support them, but we can't do it for them and applying undue pressure only serves to eventually turn them away from the sport. As the saying goes: "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink."

Each child is unique and develops according to the lessons that they learn within the family, school, church and every activity that they participate in. It is incumbent upon us to provide our children with a proper example; for it is from us that they learn most of their behavior. Unfortunately, there has been a growing problem in the USA within youth sports related to the behavior of players, coaches and parents. The causes for this can be debated at length; the reality is that actions must be taken to end it. Within our sport and our primary competitive leagues, DELCO and PAGS, there has been extensive discussion about these issues and actions have been taken to address them including an improved reporting system for notifying league officials of problems and random observations of behavior at games.

We have developed the following guidelines governing the behavior of players, coaches and parents within SCCSA. These guidelines are consistent with the goals and objectives of the club and <u>MUST</u> be adhered to.

GUIDELINES FOR PLAYERS

- Good sportsmanship and respect is to be shown at all times to parents, coaches, teammates, opponents and referees.
- Players are to follow the rules and training regimens established by their coaches and trainers.
- Players must adhere to all league rules and regulations.
- Racist, foul, taunting or abusive language will not be tolerated and should be reported immediately to the coach.
- Fighting or playing with an obvious intent to injure will be dealt with appropriately by both the league and the club.
- Players are free to ask any question of their coaches; they should not have their parents ask on their behalf.
- Coaches should be made aware of any illnesses or injuries or planned absences from training sessions or games.

GUIDELINES FOR COACHES

- Good sportsmanship and respect is to be shown at all times to parents, teammates, opposing coaches, opponents, spectators and referees.
- Racist, foul or abusive language will not be tolerated and should be reported immediately to the club.
- Player safety comes first and foremost, before the need to win.
- Players are to be given equal and fair treatment at all times. This does not, however, mean equal playing time.
- Training sessions shall be well organized and structured to maximize participation and touches on the ball for all players.
- Players shall be encouraged to develop all aspects of their game and given the opportunity to play multiple positions.
- Questions by players shall be honestly answered in a manner suitable to their abilities to comprehend them.
- Questions by parents about their child are to be answered promptly, forthrightly and in a confidential manner. Questions about another player shall be deferred to that player's parents or guardians.
- All SCCSA, league, EPYSA and USYSA rules and regulations must be adhered to: This
 includes player and team registrations, filing of game reports, attendance at required
 meetings, and following established procedures for dealing with problems.
- Coaching from the sideline should be kept to a minimum. Players must learn to communicate among themselves and "figure out" the game as it is being played.
- Coaches are encouraged to continually improve their knowledge of the game and their coaching skills by participating in advanced coaching licensing programs, clinics and independent study.
- Coaches are responsible for the sideline behavior of their players, parents and other spectators associated with SCCCSA. To this end, coaches may remove any parent or spectator from the field during a game or training session for failure to adhere to these established guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

- Good sportsmanship and respect is to be shown at all times to your child, your child's coaches, teammates and their parents, opposing coaches, opponents and parents, spectators and referees.
- Racist, foul or abusive language will not be tolerated and should be reported immediately to the coach.
- Parents are not to address the referees under any circumstances. That is the role of the speaking captains on the field and the coaches. Parents are also prohibited from addressing the referee away from the game. Questions about calls and game situations shall be directed to the coaches; coaches may, at their discretion, seek clarification from the referee.
- Parents, regardless of any playing or coaching experience, are not to coach the team from the sideline under any circumstances. Involvement as a parent/fan must be limited to positive statements that encourage fair play and sportsmanship without providing specific instructions to players during the play of the game.
- Parents can discuss any problems and questions pertaining to their child with that child's coach. However, players should be encouraged to ask their coaches any questions they have and not filter them through their parents.
- Parents cannot discuss another child with the coach; such questions must be directed to that child's parent or legal guardian.
- Parents and spectators must follow the instructions of the coach and/or referee during a game including leaving the area if their behavior or actions so warrant it.

While some of the rules laid out above may seem obvious, these are the guidelines that we operate under as a club. It is our sincere hope that no SCCSA parent or spectator will ever have to be prohibited from watching his or her child play; however, we will take such action if necessary.

Please review these Guidelines with your spouse and your child.

Wishing all our children success and enjoyment during the coming year,

Southern Chester County Soccer Association

III.SCCSA Training Program

Professional Training Staff

Southern Chester County Soccer Association (SCCSA) is proud to have one of the fastest growing and highly qualified training staffs in the area. Our in-house trainers bring a variety of playing and coaching experiences, and many are still coaching high school teams in the area. All are certified and passionate about the game and active in the club which translates to an exceptional experience for both player and coach. Please check the website for a list of the current club trainers. Feel free to access their Bio under the "Who we are" section under training.

Dragons Development Program

SCCSA offers a comprehensive list of soccer training options for the individual or team and for all levels of ability from new players, to recreation players to competitive travel players. We also have programs that cater to all age groups from our new Little Dragons program to the high school player. All training programs are designed and managed by the Director of Coaching (DOC) and are consistent with the recommendations of US Youth Soccer. Detailed information for each SCCSA program can be found on the website under the "*What we offer*" section under training.

If you have any questions or would like to inquire on any additional training options, please contact the DOC at doc@sccsasoccer.com

SCCSA Player Development Program



IV. SCCSA Club Information

SCCSA Board of Directors

A Complete list of current board members and committee members can be found on the SCCSA website at: http://www.sccsasoccer.org/Default.aspx?tabid=387373

A Complete list of club contacts can be found on the SCCSA website at: http://www.sccsasoccer.org/Default.aspx?tabid=387374

The club website has a wealth of information and we encourage you to take the time to familiarize yourself with the site and all the information available.

Club website: http://www.sccsasoccer.com



V. Calendar of Key Activities

Below is a general outline and actual dates should be confirmed.

Mid-late Spring

Tryouts/Team Selection Process

End of Summer/Fall Schedule

Training 2/week

Pre Fall Tournament

Fall League (PAGS or DELCO) Est. 9 games

Fall tournament

Winter Schedule

Training 1/week

Winter League

State Indoor Cup

Pre Spring tournament

Spring Schedule

Training 2/week

Spring League

State Cup

Spring tournament

Spring tournament

Spring tournament

Est. 6 games

Fire Teams: Est. 6 games

Dragons Teams: Est. 4 games

VI. Team Management

Team Officers – Each team is expected to have 1 Head Coach, at least 1 Assistant coach and 1 team manager and these positions need to be reported to the club. It is important the burden of responsibilities is shared across many volunteers. One (or two) individuals cannot effectively run all aspects of a team. Ineffective team management will only result in frustration between parents, players and coaches and may reflect poorly upon yourself and the club.

- a) Role of Head Coach
 - a. Responsible for player development
 - Set up conditions that are positive and fun
 - Be creative and not predictable
 - Activities that are age and skill appropriate
 - Be positive negativity will disengage the player
 - Be a role model respect the team, opponents, referees, parents, spectators and opposing coaches.
 - b. Responsible for effective training plan and execution
 - Be certified. The club strongly encourages the head coach to maintain a certification from US Soccer or a diploma from NSCAA.
 - Be prepared. Draft the session in advance and set up field prior to start of practice.
 - If you are not available, provide the assistant a lesson plan to execute. Try not to just cancel practice.
 - c. Responsible for league and tournament selection
 - League placement will be done in coordination with the club to ensure proper placement.
 - d. Responsible for team budget decisions
 - Be responsible. Remember this is not your money and parents are expecting responsible spending.
 - Prepare a budget at the beginning of the season and track against the budget all year long.
 - e. Strong interaction with assistant coach and team manager
 - They are there to help you....Use them.
 - f. Support player selection process including tryouts
 - The club will run the process but you will be expected to be part of the evaluation process.
- b) Role of assistant coach (s)
 - a. Assist with practices and player development
 - Get involved and ask questions. The more you know the better it is for the kids.
 - b. Run practices in head coach's absence
 - Don't be nervous, the kids can smell fear. The coach should provide a written, easy to follow session plan.

- c. Assist with game management (substitutions, clock management, playing time, etc)
- d. Support player selection process including tryouts
 - The club will run the process but you will be expected to be part of the evaluation process.
- c) Role of team manager
 - a. Primary interface between coaches and parents
 - Maintain a team calendar of events.
 - Responsible for tracking practice and game availability
 - b. Provide parents with regular status updates (i.e. Weekly Schedule)
 - Keep parents informed of the coming schedule.
 - c. Complete tournament applications
 - d. Pay referee fees
 - e. Interface with SCCSA treasurer related to team finances
 - f. Track budget balances throughout the year with a zero balance goal at end of season
 - g. Provide any other support to the coaches or parents



VII. Detailed Coach Guidelines

a) Training Sessions

- A complete training plan (start date, sessions per week, length of each sessions, focus areas, etc.) needs to be reviewed with the Director of Coaching to ensure it is appropriate for the age group and player level.
- Incorporate individual foot skill activities into every warm up. Avoid having the players run laps as a warm up. Using a ball each or between two during the warm up increases the amount of time each player spends with a ball throughout the season, running laps does not.
- The Institute for Athletic Medicine advises that teams should implement dynamic stretching incorporating soccer specific movements within the player's range of motion rather than traditional static stretching prior to activity
- Be organized and be prepared by planning your practices in advance. "Session Planner" sheets can be obtained online or from the DOC. Well planned and well thought out practices tend to be more productive.
- If you are not available for training, don't cancel. Draft a session plan and have the assistant run the session. Training shouldn't go on vacation because the coach is on vacation.
- Avoid any drill/practice that involves players standing in long lines (e.g. waiting to shoot on goal)
- Use "Activities" rather than "drills". Drills involve the repetition of movements/patterns exactly the same way each time which is unrealistic to what happens during a soccer game.
- Avoid long lectures to players about tactics (especially young players). Try to incorporate the tactics you want to get across into your practice so the kids are actively learning.
- Ask yourself these questions: Are the activities fun? Are the activities organized? Are the objectives clear? Is there max participation of all players? Is creativity and decision making being used? Is the space appropriate? Are the objectives related to the demands faced in the game?
- As a general rule No LAPS, No LINES, No LONG LECTURES.
- Attend any training sessions with the professional trainers to pick up new ideas and to build on what has been taught at your next session

b) Games

- While the purpose of the attack is to "penetrate" the opposing team as quickly and often as possible to score goals, it is very important that teams learn how to possess the ball during the attack while they build up to penetrate the opposing team. If you have a couple of fast players it is relatively easy for your team to win games playing a kick and run style of soccer (especially at the younger age groups). This will not teach our kids to develop as soccer players.
- When thinking about competition please look at the big picture. Please do not have a 'Win at all cost' attitude. As coaches we have a responsibility to help the players develop as individuals and as team players. Winning a league or tournament is great but we need

- to look further ahead than that and make sure we are helping the players develop and enjoy soccer so that they stay involved in the game
- Unrostered players (Guest Players) should only be used when the team does not have sufficient players for the field and a few subs. Do not use unrostered players for the primary purpose of winning. Coaches should utilize players from lower teams in the same age group where possible. Guest players should not have preferential playing time (starter or significant time) over rostered players.
- Know the game day procedures as outlined by the league or the tournament.
- Consider having someone track playing time of each player during the game. Although all players will not play equal, each player should have playing time. This information can be useful to the coach when managing the game and may be useful when having discussions with parents who may perceive playing time issues.

c) Parents

- Keep regular communication channels open with your team parents either directly or through your team manager. Frustration amongst parents is contagious. You will not please everyone but you should strive to keep the majority happy.
- Encourage your parents to be 'Team Supporters' on the sidelines not 'Coaches'. Having lots of people shout instructions at the players will confuse them.
- Be open to new ideas and coaching techniques and do not assume that the way you were taught in the past is the only way to teach the game now.

d) General

- Report any changes in Team Management or Roster to the VP of Travel along with the reason for the change.
- Consider conducting periodic player evaluations to gauge development. Consider having the player self evaluate and discuss the results.
- Take on the responsibility seriously. 'Score the easy points' arrive for practice early, arrive looking like a soccer coach, plan your session in advance, be enthusiastic, be prepared to learn new skills as you go, help the players have a great soccer experience and enjoy the experience yourself
- MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL MAKE THE SEASON ENJOYABLE FOR YOUR PLAYERS

Players Play - Coaches Coach - Parents Parent

VIII. The Principals of Coaching

Developmentally Appropriate

One of the most important aspects of structuring your training session is making sure that the activities are 'Developmentally Appropriate' for the age group you are coaching. If an activity is too difficult the child will show signs of frustration. If an activity is too easy the child will show signs of boredom, so it is important that as a coach you understand children's varying developmental levels and how their development affects the way they play soccer.

Clear, Concise and Correct Information

It is vital to give correct information to young players and at the same time not to bore them with long lectures as too much information will overwhelm them.

Simple to Complex

Plan your training sessions to start simply then progress gradually allowing for ongoing modifications and new challenges.

Safe and Appropriate Training Area

Check the field for glass, large stones, and large holes. Make sure goals are secured and that the training area is appropriately sized.

Decision Making

We have to encourage opportunities for players to make decisions so that effective learning can take place.

Implications for the game

The training activities must in some way reflect the demands a player faces in the game.

IX. Basic Age Group Guidelines

AGE	TECHNIQUE	TACTICS	FITNESS
U9/U10	Fun Activities encouraging repetition	Introduction to Basic Tactics	
	Dribbling using all surfaces. Turns, moves attacking		*Basic agility and
	open space	*Players play all positions	coordination
	Shooting focusing on proper technique for striking a	*Understand shape – Width, Depth	*All fitness activities
	dead ball and progressing to strike a moving ball	and Length	with a ball
	<i>Heading</i> introduction to build confidence	*1v1 attacking and defending	
		*Role of the first defender (Pressure)	
	Passing using inside, outside and laces	and being goal side	
	Receiving ground balls and self serving air balls	*Suggested game formation: 3-2 and 2-3	
	Developing technique under pressure and		
U11/U12	increasing speed	Basic Principals of Play	
011/012	Dribbling using change of speed and direction to	Busic Principuls of Puly	
	beat opponents. Shielding to keep the ball and		
	encouraging risk in the correct areas.	*Play a variety of positions	*Fitness with a ball
	Shooting from different angles, on the turn and on	Thay a variety of positions	Timess with a sun
	the volley	*Promote an attacking style of soccer	*Flexibility and Agility
	Heading with a partner and jumping to attack the	Tromote un avanciang soyre or soccer	1 rememby and rightly
	ball	*Keeping possession while attacking.	*Speed and Endurance
		*Support play – Combination play	T T T T T T T T T T T T T T T T T T T
	Passing now to include short, long and crosses	(take over, over laps, wall passes)	
		*Role of the first (Pressure) and	
	Receiving to include both ground and air balls.	second (Cover) defenders	
		*Suggested game formation: 2-3-2 and	
	Tackling introduction	3-3-1	
U13/U14	<u>Build<mark>ing on T</mark>echnical Skills</u>	Quick decision making	
	Dribbling to take risks in the correct areas. Keeping		
	possession	*Keeping possession while attacking.	*Fitness with a ball
	Shooting from all areas while on the run. Finishing	*Support Play, Combination play,	
	from crosses, volleys	Penetration, Runs into the box	*Flexibility and Agility
	Heading to include attacking (heading at goal) and		***
	defending (clearing)	*Introduction of simple set plays	*Speed and Endurance
	Passing to include driven, bending, chipped, short,	*Role of the first (Pressure), second	
	long and crossing Receiving out of the air and turning. Concentrating	(Cover) and third (Balance) defenders.	
	on the quality of the first touch	*Delaying the opposition and being	
	on the quality of the first touch	compact *Suggested Game formation: 4-4-2	R)
	Tackling now to include slide tackles	and 3-5-2	
U15/U16	Mastering Technical Skills	Increased Tactical Awareness	
213,010	Dribbling, passing, receiving, shooting under	mirrages ruction rivatelless	
	pressure and at speed focusing on accuracy and		*Fitness with and
	mastering each technical skill	*Possession with a purpose	without the ball
		*Penetration	*Flexibility and Agility
		*Crossing and finishing/attacking the	
	Technical Skills now covered in the warm up	box	*Speed and Endurance
	-	*Combination Play	*Nutrition
		*Set Plays	*Injury Prevention
		*Pressure, Cover Balance	*Injury Care
		*Delaying opponents, Team	
		Compactness, Communication	
		*Suggested Game formation: 4-4-2	
		and 3-5-2	

X. Equipment

a) Coach

- Players' MEDICAL RELEASE FORMS! You must have these with you at all practices and games; verify that the emergency information is correct.
- MEDICAL KITS A simple kit for games and practices is a good idea for every coach. A kit should include, but not limited to:
 - Cold Packs, band aids, vaseline, sterile pads, adhesive tape, elastic wraps, antibiotic ointment, bee sting relief ointment
- PUMP and inflating needle: Sometimes the game ball is over inflated or too soft and may need adjusting. The same goes for the balls players bring to practice.
- SHIN GUARDS: a spare pair of old ones will cover for a forgetful player!
- GOALKEEPER'S GLOVES: An inexpensive pair is a useful addition to your game bag.
- BALLS: If possible, have a good quality ball available for the games. This can be used as a game ball if none is provided. The leather or synthetic leather stitched soccer balls are best; avoid the hard plastic-skinned balls, which are unpleasant to kick or head. Each player should have his/her own ball and bring it to practice. However, bring any spares you may have to practice because someone is likely to forget one.
- CONES or PYLONS (at least a dozen): Use these to set up small areas for practice activities, or to mark boundaries for a game field. Cones of a different color or size will make a distinctive goal.
- BIBS/ PENNIES/VESTS: These are used to divide up teams for activities and games.
- CLIPBOARD or NOTEPAD: Some coaches prefer these for practice plans, medical release forms, substitution schedules, etc.
- WATER: A coach should have water available during practice and at the game. Have the players bring their own water bottles (but keep an extra bottle in your bag or cooler for the occasional forgetful player).

b) Player

- BALL: Encourage each player to have his or her own ball and to use it often, not just during team practice. Players will not derive maximum benefit from practice unless they each have their own ball for warm-ups and individual exercises. The ball should be properly inflated. Soccer balls come in a variety of sizes, each designated by a number:
 - o Size #3 smallest standard size, for the youngest players (e.g. U-6 to U-8).
 - o Size #4 intermediate size, appropriate for U-9 through U-12.
 - o Size #5 largest standard size, for U-13 to adult.
- SHIN GUARDS: Shin guards are an absolute requirement for games and practices (the pullon "legging" type with foam padding that protects the front of the leg from ankle to shin is an excellent shin guard). Shin guards with plastic inserts offer additional protection, especially for the older player.
- SOCCER SHOES/BOOTS: Soccer shoes/boots are recommended, but not required by most clubs. Baseball or football type shoes with square or rectangular cleats are not allowed for soccer. Soccer cleats for most recreational play must be rubber or molded plastic (no metal cleats), and no less than 3/8 inch in diameter.

- WATER BOTTLE (with player's name on it): Fresh water should be available to your players at each practice and game. It is easier for the coach if each player provides his or her own water bottle.
- GAME UNIFORM (Game Day) Both primary and Alternate Jersey's, club approved game shorts, and club approved soccer socks.



XI. Coaches Acknowledgement

(Please Print)

I,	_ , have read the SCCSA Travel Coach Handbook and
agree to comply with the rules a	nd regulations contained within to the best of my ability.
Coaches Signature	Date

Coaches Acknowledgement to be provided to the VP of Travel



Thank You

