



MUSC Travel League **Guidance to Travel Coaches and Managers**

The purpose of the Travel Program of the Montclair United Soccer Club (MUSC) is to develop soccer skills and team concepts in as many youth players as our resources will allow. It is not the promotion of certain individual players or of teams that will succeed at ever-higher levels of competition. While competitive play is part of the learning process, the winning of games is really only just the focus of play. It should not be allowed to become the measure of success.

It is the job of the coaching staff to work with MUSC to make this objective come true.

To promote greater sensitivity to this objective, MUSC asks that all adults involved in administering the Travel Program - coaches, assistant coaches and managers - acknowledge and accept the guidance set forth below

- **Playing Time**
- **Game Plan & Practice Plans**
- **Instructions to Players**
- **Positions**
- **Player Evaluations**
- **Coaches and Managers must exhibit behavior that sets a good example for parents and players**

Enforcement of Guidelines:

1. Compliance with this objective and the guidance set forth below will be significant criteria in judging the suitability of a coach.
2. The Club will not permit any person - professional or parent - who fails to accept this guidance to hold a position with the Club.

MUSC requires coaches to accept responsibility for the development of all the players selected for a team, not just those who may show a greater amount of soccer skills or athleticism at a particular time. Guided by this basic principle, MUSC adds the following specific guidance:

Playing Time:

1. For league games, all players in attendance must play at least **one half of each game**.
2. Although a player may have limited playing time in a particular game, MUSC requires that coaches adjust playing time over the course of the season as follows:
 - a. For Divisions 5 and 6 (U-8 to U-10), so that every player will play approximately an equal amount of time, excluding games a player has missed.
 - b. For Division 4 and up (U-11 and older), so that every player will play at least 60% of the total minutes that the player is present.
 - c. For all Divisions, coaches may reduce playing time for disciplinary or other acceptable reasons, such as unannounced absences from practices or games.
3. While certain children may play entire games on occasion, this should be the exception, not the rule. In no case should the same children play substantially the whole game of every game. Everyone should be substituted for at some point.

4. Non-league games
 - a. In scrimmages and non-league games all children must play at least one half of each game. *(The playing time in these games does not count towards the minimum playing time in league games and shorted playing time from league games cannot be made up in these games.)*
 - b. In tournaments and playoff games, every player in attendance must play at least one half of each game

Game Plan & Practice Plans:

1. Coaches must prepare a plan before each game, which identifies the position(s) that each player is to play, and substitutions to be made, during the course of the game.
 - a. Coaches should rotate the starting lineup so that all players have an opportunity to start; no player is to be identified as a substitute.
2. Coaches must have a lesson plan prepared prior to each practice session.
 - a. Practices should be limited to two times per week, and should be targeted to last 1 hour for Division 5 and 6 teams, and 1½ hours for Divisions 3 and 4 teams.
 - b. Any additional practices in a week should be clearly identified as optional.

Instructions to Players:

1. Instructions to players during practices and games should come only from the team's coach(es).
2. In instances where more than one coach is present during a game, only one coach should give instructions to players on the field.

Positions:

1. For Division 5 & 6 teams
 - a. MUSC encourages coaches to put players in several positions, including goalie, in order to explore their level of confidence at playing in differing circumstances.
2. For Division 4 and older teams
 - a. MUSC encourages coaches to continue position rotation of players at different positions but recognizes that such rotation will decrease.
 - b. MUSC encourages the development of full time goalies.

Player Evaluations:

1. At the end of the fall season, coaches must prepare a written evaluation of each player.
2. It is the responsibility of the team manager to make sure that the coach (parent or professional) prepares the evaluation for each child and to deliver the evaluation to his or her parents, with copies of all evaluations to the VP of Travel.
3. The Coach may submit an updated evaluation to the parents and the VP of Travel in the spring in cases where the player exhibits significant improvement or deterioration.

Coaches and Managers must exhibit behavior that sets a good example for parents and players:

1. MUSC coaches must exhibit sportsmanlike conduct both on and off the field.
2. Regardless of the outcome of a game, coaches should recognize the efforts of players.
3. MUSC may consider disciplinary action against any coach who fails to set a good example.
4. At the beginning of the fall season every travel team family will receive a copy of this *Guidance to Coaches*. If anyone needed to report a problem, contact the VP of Travel through email (address via the MUSC website) or regular mail.
5. The MUSC VP of Travel will review all reported violations. The burden of proof will be on the coach to show he/she has followed this Guidance. (*MUSC strongly encourages each coach to track the playing time and positions played by each child.*)
6. Coaches who do not follow these guidelines may be removed at the discretion of the VP of Travel and /or the Travel Committee

All parent coaches and managers are volunteers and the club appreciates all of your efforts. It should be noted that just as the teams are officially disbanded at the end of each spring season, all volunteer positions are also re-evaluated each year. As such, please no one should assume that the position of coach or manager is automatically renewed. Many factors, including parent feedback, the opportunity for someone else to be involved, the benefit of a professional coach to the team, as well as others, will be considered in naming a team's coaches and/or manager. The Travel Committee will do its best to keep volunteers informed of any issues and concerns brought to its attention or of any planned changes.

Sincerely,

The Travel Committee
Montclair United Soccer Club

Acknowledged and accepted:

Team Name: _____

Coach: _____

Assist Coaches: _____

Manager: _____