

Sideline Etiquette



The soccer season has kicked off!!! Practices are underway. Teams are bonding. Skills are being learned. Friendships and memories are being created. Beginning next weekend, we'll start our games. We are all excited for our kids to test their knowledge and show their skills.

Games can be fun for players and parents, but we all need to be reminded of appropriate sideline etiquette to ensure that games are a positive experience. There is always the possibility of trouble on the sidelines, whether it's a disagreement with the referee or an obnoxious opposing parent. Soccer can be an intense game, and it's important to remember that what parents say and do can have an adverse effect on their child's experience.

Try to remember these five things, so you and your child will have a more positive soccer season!

- 1. Be encouraging.** Young players make more effort if they are hearing encouraging remarks. While every player will surely make mistakes this season – lots of them, they will learn from those mistakes faster in a low-pressure, supportive environment.
- 2. Let the Coaches coach.** It is very distracting and confusing for players to be coached from both sides of the field. Many times, parents yell instructions that conflict with a coach's direction.
- 3. Support your Coach.** Never complain to other parents about the coach. Before you know it, everyone is complaining. The coach is putting a lot of time and effort into your child. They only have the best of intentions for the team and players. If you have a legitimate concern, talk to the coach, or talk to the NSC Board.
- 4. Respect the other team.** The other team is not the enemy! They are kids and families that have the same goals as you, even if they show it in ways that you wouldn't. If the other team and/or families are behaving badly, be the bigger person – just ignore it.
- 5. Respect the referee.** In the World Cup, FIFA instituted Video Assistant Referees because getting every call correct in real-time is impossible. Every ref will miss calls, and that's ok. It's important to remember that your kids are watching you. They will model your behavior. Yelling or criticizing a referee tells your kids that that it is acceptable behavior.

After the game – On the way home, avoid criticizing your child or any other child's play. Ask your child what the most fun part of the game was, what was something that they learned from the game, or some other question that introduces positive discussion. This will signal what you value as a parent: fun, learning and improvement, which will spur them to look forward to the next playing opportunity.

**The Board of the Nazareth Soccer Club wishes all Players, Coaches and Families
a successful and fun season!**