

## NKSL – 2002 COACHING HANDBOOK

Coaches: We want to continue to make coaches aware of upcoming events. New information will be placed on the NKSL website as quickly as possible. Upcoming clinics, workshops, and license in our area will be posted. The website address is [www.nksl-soccer.org](http://www.nksl-soccer.org).

We are trying to become more accessible to our coaches. We are also trying to make opportunities available to help you in your coaching progression. We want to make coaches aware of all the options available to player and coaching development, through our recreational and KY Select programs.

Any problems, concerns or questions you might have, please don't hesitate to contact us. Coaches are our most valuable resource. Any suggestions you may have to help better the NKSL in its coach's support will be greatly appreciated.

My email is listed in NKSL website under members.

Good luck in the upcoming seasons,

Kent Jester  
NKSL Coaching Director

The NKSL handbook is a very brief overview for the NKSL Coaches. More extensive material on coaching subjects is available through the NKSL coaching director.

### **Goals for the Season:**

Our goal is to make soccer a fun experience for players, coaches, referees, parents etc. We hope we can help children continue the desire to play soccer. To develop both coaches and players to whatever level of play that they desire. We want to make sure that coaches have the support of the NKSL in coaching assistance. We will strive to make our coaches aware of some in-house group clinics that the NKSL will put on for its coaches and players.

We want to make sure that coaches know how they can take individual players or teams to different playing levels, depending on individual or team desires.

Our goal is to help the coach with their coaching needs. We need your help in these endeavors. Only through your feedback can we accomplish this goal.

### **The Coach:**

The NKSL regards its coaches as its most valuable resource. Each youth soccer coach enjoys the privilege of becoming a surrogate parent to a team of kids who are looking to have fun. Youth soccer in Northern KY is flourishing. The NKSL needs all of its member coaches to be the best they can be as leaders, teachers, role models and friends to the players they coach. This handbook is just a brief overview of coaching to assist the coach. With this handbook we are trying to help the coach, create the environment to help each child reach their full potential as a player and as a child.

**The Basics to be a good coach:**

A good coach is someone who knows winning is wonderful but is not the triumph of sports.

A good coach makes soccer a fun experience.

A good coach makes sure he is prepared for practice and for the game.

A good coach makes sure he is setup and ready to go before the players arrive.

A good coach makes sure that he stays after practice or games to make sure everyone has a safe ride home.

A good coach makes sure everyone gets to play his or her share.

A good coach is someone who knows what to do or not to do, if a player gets hurt.

A good coach has a positive attitude and helps children learn from their mistakes in a positive way.

A good coach genuinely tries to help children develop to their full soccer potential.

A good coach knows he has the responsibility to be the best coach he can be.

A good coach knows the FIFA rules and the local rules of the game.

A good coach knows the league rules for player, coaches, and parent conduct.

A good coach teaches good sportsmanship.

A good coach teaches at his practice, but lets the players play the game. He observes and may give some brief advise. However, he knows it's a player's game.

A coach who works to do the best job he can, tries to be a positive role model and leader is a good coach. The coach who helps children to have fun while learning the game of soccer, is someone a child will remember long after the season has ended and the win-loose record has faded away.

**What is player development:**

As coaches, we need to create a game environment.

- Activities that are fun to participate in.
- Players being exposed to playing every position.
- Activities that maximize the number of touches by each player at practice.
- Activities designed to promote thinking, not just doing drills.

Players at the beginning of practice should not wait for the coach to tell them what to do. Create an environment where the kids play the game. A good example of this would be: Before you set up your practice, just put out a small grid, as kids arrive let them play 1v1. As the next player arrive, they play 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3, and so on. Adjust the grid size as more players show up. Let them play the game of keep away as you are getting ready for your practice. This could be your warm-up to prepare them for the practice.

## **Role of the Coach:**

The coach is a facilitator:

1. Set up the condition and environment for learning.
2. Facilitate the learning.
3. Players must be having fun.
4. Give positive feedback to your players.
5. Be enthusiastic.
6. Activities should be geared towards the players achieving success.

As a role model: Demonstrate respect for players, opponents, referees, parents and opposing coaches. Always remember good sportsmanship.

Understand whom you are coaching: Each child matures and develops at their own pace. Treat each child as an individual. Not all children participate for the same reason.

## **Components of the Game:**

- Technique – The skill of the game (dribbling, kicking, passing, ect).

This is most important at the early age groups. It is the introduction of young players to the ball. Players cannot progress in the game if they don't learn the basic skills of the game. Activities should be fun and game-like.

- Psychology- A positive attitude of all aspects of the game.
- Tactics – Players decisions

At the younger age groups, the emphasis is not placed upon teaching tactics do to the lack of technical ability and also their psychological development. Too much decision making by the coach at practice (constant stopping to analyze, describe or dissect), leads to boring practice, with players tuning the coach out. Be brief, an occasional freeze, demo what you want, then let them continue to play.

- Fitness – Appropriately, organized technique enhancing activities and small sided games

will provide players with the necessary physical requirement of the game. IF it doesn't happen in the game, it should not be part of your fitness training. A good example: in a soccer game have you seen players running around a soccer field doing laps without a ball. If it doesn't happen in a game, it shouldn't happen at practice.

## **Children and Sports:**

Fun is pivotal (If it is not fun they won't continue to play)

Skill development is an aspect of fun

Playing a certain position does not create an all around soccer player

Let children discover through their own decision-making and their own mistakes

Players learn about themselves through the game. Do activities that enhance their imagination. Let them play their weekly game and learn through their own self-discovery.

### **Coaching Resources:**

Coaches should be familiar with and comply with the various rules of the governing bodies of youth soccer. The rules are available in printed form.

Many coaching resources are available through the Kentucky Youth Soccer Association. The web site address is [www.kysoccer.org](http://www.kysoccer.org) and select coach from the menu. The website also contains other information such as tournaments, coaching tips, ect.

The United States Soccer Federation (USSF) has a number of topical articles. Their web site address is [www.us-soccer.com](http://www.us-soccer.com)

The United States Youth Soccer Federation (USYSA) has publications available for sale on their site. The address is [www.youthsoccer.org](http://www.youthsoccer.org)

Also your coaching director has many other resources.

Coaches should always seek advice when confronted with issues they may be unsure of both to rules and to player development. Other experienced coaches within the club or the coaching director are a good resource to seek information.

### **Team Organization:**

Coaches are encouraged to establish effective lines of communication with team parents early in the season by holding a parent orientation meeting.

The meeting should help parents:

- Understand the objectives and goals of the program

- Inform parents of the nature and risks of the sport

- Inform parents of your expectations of them and of their children

- Establish clear lines of communication

- Give out handouts as to practice and game schedules. Also team rosters.

More information is available on how to conduct a parent meeting through the coaching director.

### **Coach Equipment:**

The coach should have the following equipment.

- Medical release forms (if required by the club)

- Medical kit

- Pump

- Shin guards (an extra pair)

- Shirts – Goalkeeper shirt (two colors) Also the coach needs to be aware of the league rules for team color conflicts. A plan for alternate shirts is necessary.

- Goalkeeper gloves

- Balls – One good ball for the game if possible. (A few balls at practice for the players who forget)

- Cones – to set up areas for practice

- Practice plan

- Water – players should bring their own

- Snack schedule can be organized for games (oranges are a good half time snack) make sure all peels are cleaned up. Drinks after the game can also be scheduled.

- Copy of modified league rules

- Field directions and game schedule

- Paper and pen – clipboard

**Player Equipment:**

Encourage players to have their own ball, with air  
Shin guards are an absolute requirement. Socks must be over the entire shin guard. Do not let players practice without them.

Soccer shoes – recommended, but not required. Baseball or football type shoes are not legal for soccer.

Water bottle – with name on it

Shirts, shorts and socks

**Team Management:**

As the coach, you will have the care, custody and control of someone else's children. In this capacity you have the responsibility to create a safe environment to help prevent accidents and injuries.

You should be aware of legal responsibilities as a coach. Your legal duties include:

- Provide adequate supervision – never leave players unattended
- Sound planning – carefully plan your practices so players progress and learn new skills at a safe pace. Make written practice plans and keep them on record for the duration of the season.
- Warning parents and players of inherent risks. The parent meeting is a good time to do this. Also warn your players of potentially dangerous techniques.
- Provide a safe playing environment – practice areas free of hazards. Equipment is in proper condition. Warn players not to hang on goal post.
- Evaluating players to determine any limited required participation.
- Providing proper first aid – have a first aid kit. Know where to find emergency help and a telephone. Don't attempt to provide aid beyond your qualifications. Have medical release forms with you.
- It is to your advantage to have a second adult at your practices.

**Practice****Planning:**

Planning is the key to having a successful practice. Good practice planning should begin before the season begins and should continue throughout the season as you plan for new practice.

**Practice objectives:**

1. To have fun
2. To learn to become better soccer players. To do this, it is important that you develop teaching goals for the season. Choose a certain topic you want to focus on for each practice. Build your practices around these topics. Be realistic in your objectives.

**Practice Plan:**

Have a written plan for each practice. Practices should follow a progression, warm up, individual activities, group activities and finish with the game. Your plan should include how much time you need for each segment of the practice, the number of players per group, equipment needed for each segment.

**Practice:**

Keep players interested and avoid boredom.

- Minimize the amount of talking you do
- Give players many touches on the ball
- Keep all players involved (long lines are boring)
- Give players many chances to shoot
- Turn drills into games

**Successful Practices:**

1. Be prepared – have a plan for what you will cover for that practice
2. Keep it simple – give a short demonstration, then have the players work
3. Make it fun – be prepared to switch certain drills if they are not working
4. Keep practices geared to the level of the players you coach. Be sure you are training something that you players are capable of doing.
5. Strive for a progressive practice – start simple and add (an example would be to add opposition slowly and to restrict the number of touches or restricting space)

Make sure your practice makes sense. Why are we doing this part of the practice? Does your practice have any relationship to “The Game” itself?

**Practice Guidelines:**

Players need to know how to execute the various techniques (skills) associated with the game. After learning the basic skills, players need instructions on how and when to use those techniques in game situations.

Tips for Teaching fundamentals

- Explain the importance of the technique (keep it short)
- Give 3 or 4 key points to help players perform the techniques
- Demonstrate the technique (If you can not demo the techniques, have one of your better players demo)
- Organize your players into small groups
- Practice the technique (observe)
- Make corrections as necessary – be positive, however you must correct techniques that are done incorrectly. If players cannot do the technique, consider it too difficult for your age group and experience level.
- Practice the technique under match conditions. Increase the difficulty slowly, by adding a defender making their space smaller, or speeding up the pace of the activity.

**Teaching Progression:**

1. Start with the simplest elements of the technique (players learn with no opposition)
2. Gradually add more elements of the skill
3. Gradually add more difficulty
4. Finally perform the skill as it would be performed in the game

As your players perform the game at the end of practice, focus your attention on the techniques you have learned for that practice.

It is important for your players to learn to practice techniques properly, but remember that this may take some time. You may need more time for some techniques than others and more time for some players than others. Remember to be encouraging.

Coaches that are unsure of what skills to teach at a given age level can obtain information from the coaching director or by looking at the Coaches Handbook on the KYSA website.

**Game Guidelines****Game Preparation:**

- Prepare the line up and substitution schedule during the course of a season players should have a chance to play different positions, start and finish games.
- Check you extra equipment, your medical release forms (if request)
- Have your team arrive in plenty of time for warm up and to prepare for the game (20 to 30 minutes is usually proper)
- Check your club rules to determine who is responsible to supply the game ball, for shirt change if conflicting colors.
- Look over the field of play to make sure it is safe

**Team Warm Up:**

Start with simple passing, dribbling drills that maximize touches. Have an assistant work with goalkeeper. If you do stretch, make sure you have properly warmed up your players before stretching. Stretching is usually not necessary for very young players. Progress to shooting after they are warmed up. Talk to your players briefly to discuss your line up.

**Rules:**

Know your local club rules and the modifications to the FIFA laws. It is your responsibility as the coach to know what is expected of you, your players, the officials, and the spectators. Know the rules and consider carefully the spirit that underlines them.

**Referee:**

Meet with the referee. Ask any questions you may have.

## **Soccer Etiquette**

Coaches need to know that pacing up and down the touchlines is not a good idea. Shouting instructions constantly, play by play, does nothing for your players except frustrate them. The play of a soccer game moves at such a pace that the instructions you have just shouted, by the time it has been processed by the player is already over. Coaches should let the players play the game, quietly take notes what may help you at halftime or may help you formulate areas that players need to work on at the next practice. Don't yell and scream at the referee. Remember in most cases the referee team is learning also. Mistakes will be made even by the best non-experienced referees.

After the game – line up the team, shake hands with the other team and coaches. Thank the referees.

Remember: As a coach you are responsible for the behavior of your spectators (parent and others). Spectators must be educated as to the proper place to sit or stand. Spectators should remain between the two 18-yard lines (marking the penalty area) and two yards behind the touchline, to give a clear path for the assistant referees. No one should be directly behind the goal area. This can be brought up at your original parent meeting.

### **Thing to Avoid:**

1. Don't continually shout instructions
2. Don't send an assistant to instruct from the opposite touchline
3. Don't send a coach or parent to coach behind the goal line

### **Good Ideas:**

1. Limit your sideline coaching – prepare players to think for themselves
2. Take notes on skills your team is having problem with and work on them during practice
3. Watch how the opposition plays, and point out to the substitutes anything that can be to your teams advantage
4. Remind your substitutes who they are going in for

### **Substituting:**

Keep track of playing time and substitute players in and out so every player plays a comparable amount of time. Know you are allowed to substitute. KYSA requires that each player play at least 50% of a game on recreational soccer. Know the club rules. To help keep substitutes interested in the game, ask them to observe what is going on, especially when they will play the next time they go in.

**Referee Relation:**

Set an example by treating all referees with respect. Go easy on the referee they have a hard job and can be a novice learning how to do that job. Remember that some day your child may be referee, how would you want them treated.

Make sure your players and parents also treat the referees with respect. Don't let your players criticize officials. Coaches need to be careful not to over react to some of the invariable bumping and accidental contact that occurs in a soccer game. Contrast to some misconceptions, soccer is a contact sport. Legal contact is clearly defined in the rules of the game.

If a referee's conduct of the game, in your opinion, is endangering your players safety, then find the clubs field director, if you can and ask them to observe play. Any discussions with the referee should occur between quarters or halftime.

Any major problems that occur from a game should be noted to your club director. Problems should also be noted to the NKSL head referee and NKSL coaching director. Remember, we want to help develop our referees. Contact the head referee if you think a referee needs some help. The coordinator should welcome the input. If a referee does a good job, be sure to let them know, and thank them after the game.

**Conclusion**

Then NKSL Handbook is a brief overview for our coaches. It was designed to give basic help to our coaches and to set some guidelines of what is expected of them. We want to continually improve our program and make the NKSL program the best it can be. It is strongly recommended for the coach to seek help in any area they are unsure of. Also, to continue with coaching courses and license programs. Don't hesitate to use the resources of the NKSL for coaching help. Your coaching director and head referee welcome your comments or suggestions for improvement. They are also available for any needs you may have.

Have an enjoyable coaching experience.

Good Luck