

M.Y.S.A. COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

The board of Directors of Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association and the leaders of the affiliated leagues are concerned about the conduct of all coaches and referees during games at all levels, from recreational, to premier, to Olympic Development Program.

We want to ensure that games are fair, positive and enjoyable experiences for all the children and adults involved. A soccer game should be friendly and unifying - a spirited social and athletic occasion for players coaches, referees and spectators.

To clarify the expectations of coaches, conduct, we jointly expect all coaches to conform to this code of conduct.

- Before, during and after the game, be an example of dignity, patience, and positive spirit.
- Before a game, introduce yourself to the opposing coach and to the referee.
- During the game, you are responsible for the sportsmanship of your players. If one of your players is disrespectful, irresponsible or overly aggressive, take the player out of the game for at least long enough for the player to calm down.
- During the game, you are also responsible for the conduct of the parents of your players. It is imperative to explain acceptable player and parent behavior in a preseason meeting. Encourage them to applaud and cheer for good plays by either team. Discourage them from yelling at the players and the referee.
- During the game, you are also responsible for the conduct of the spectators supporting your team.
- During the game, do not address the referee at all. In the event you have a small issue, discuss it with the referee calmly and patiently after the game.
- In the event you have a major complaint, or if you think the referee was unfair, biased, unfit, or incompetent, report your opinion to your league. Your reactions will be taken seriously if they are presented objectively and formally.
- After the game, thank the referee and ask your players to do the same. We stress two points:

Referees, especially young and inexperienced ones, are like your players and yourself, in that they need time to develop. You can play an important role in helping them improve by letting them concentrate on the game. You can help by encouraging them, by accepting their inevitable, occasional mistakes and by offering constructive, post-game, comments. Alternatively, you could discourage and demoralize the referees by criticizing their decisions, by verbally abusing them and inciting - or even accepting - your own player's overly aggressive behavior.

Your example is powerful, for better or for worse. If you insist on fair play, if you

concentrate on your players' enjoyment of the game and their overall, long term development, and you support the referee, your players and their parents will notice. Do not encourage, or allow your players to play outside of the laws. If you're overly concerned about results, and if you criticize the referee harshly, your players and their parents will notice.

Think about what you are doing during a game! Uphold the Spirit of the Game! If you follow the expectations described above, the spirit of the game will be alive and well in Massachusetts and will grow, along with the enjoyment of all.

Coaches who do not follow the expectations described above will be disciplined, or removed.

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