

# GGFSC Parent/Player Survival Guide

Welcome to the Greater Grand Forks Soccer Club. We are very excited to be kicking off our 2013 summer season and are so glad you will be joining us. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or first-time member, we hope the following information will provide some guidance to a successful and fun season. While some of the tidbit information below may seem 'common sense', even the most well organized or 'seasoned' travel family could benefit.

## Parents:

### Travel/ Out of town tournaments:

- Do you have hotel name, address and phone number with you? Room confirmation number?
- Do you have a printed map of the area you will be traveling to in addition to your GPS? Printed instructions to/from hotel to/from soccer complex? Last summer, a printed map of the area showing an alternate route saved a family approx. 2-3 hours of wait time during a traffic jam WHEN the GPS failed!
- Extra set of car keys?
- Cell phone chargers? Both for the wall and car?

### Games:

- Did you check your players gear even though they said they had everything? Triple check with your player to ensure there are 2 shin guards and 2 cleats. It will save you a panic trip to a local sporting goods store.
- Does your player have BOTH light and dark jerseys? A player will not be able to play without shin guards, cleats and correct jersey.
- Did you bring the right back pack that has the soccer gear in for the player who is leaving town, not the sibling back pack or camping back pack? Back packs all start looking the same when a family is rushing to get out of town.
- Label the inside of your player's back pack with name and phone number so it can be returned WHEN left behind after a game.
- Trust the coaches hired and assigned to your player's team. They are coaching for a reason.
- Do not coach from the sidelines or make comments to game officials as we are there to watch the game.
- After each game, players will regroup with their coach for a game wrap up. Players will be dismissed by their coach when they can leave the field and connect with their families and friends who came to watch.
- Parents should not hover around pre-game or post-game meetings as it becomes a distraction to the player and coaches.

### What to bring:

- Lawn chairs? It is customary that team parents align one half of the field together showing support for their players. Make sure lawn chairs are on opposite sides of the players/coaches or you could be asked to move by the main referee.
- Umbrella? If you use a hand held or set up a ground umbrella to block the sun, please make sure it is not blocking view from other spectators along the field line.
- Blankets.
- Rain gear (soccer is rarely cancelled during rain except if lightening. The game will either be delayed or called)
- Extra coats.
- Sunscreen/bug spray/chap stick.
- Advil/Tylenol/ice pack.

- Sunglasses/hat.
- Nutritious post-game snacks for your player.
- Thermos or thermal cups – the coffee isn't always ready at the field for the early games
- Robe/pajamas – (you never know who you will meet in the hallways/lower levels of the hotel during a tornado warning)
- Parent/coaches/player cards with cell phone numbers.
- Athletic tape for wrapping ankles, etc.
- Coaches do have first aid kits and instant ice packs, however, feel free to pack more if needed.
- Place a garbage bag inside your players back pack to store gear in during rain OR use it as a player rain coat when game is still in play.
- Wadded up newspaper tucked inside rain soaked soccer cleats will dry them out much fast overnight than just air dry.
- Small gas can? Jumper cables? You never know when you are going to 'run out of gas' or need a boost due to a drained battery while waiting for rain to clear up.

### **Carpooling/Caravan:**

- In the past some teams have found they like to meet at a neutral location in town before a weeknight game to car pool.
- Take turns as it saves on gas money.
- If you are unable to make it to your player's game, send them with another family for the evening game or weekend tournament. ALL team members are critical to the success of the season. You will be surprised how many families adopt other players during busy times!

## **Players:** It will be important for you to prepare your mind and body appropriately for competitive play.

### **Practices:**

- Arrive early and make sure all gear is with you. Be ready to start practice on time.
- Attending practice is just as important as playing the game. You have made a commitment to summer soccer teammates.
- Filled water jug?

### **Games:**

- Arrive early to the game and make sure ALL gear is with you. Your coach will most likely set a time he/she would like you to arrive for pre-game warm up.
- Do you have 2 shin guards, 2 soccer cleats one R and one L, and BOTH light and dark jerseys?
- Arrive to the game IN uniform as there are not guaranteed places to change upon arrival.
- Coaches do not supply water. Have at least a ½ gallon of water at all times.
- ATTITUDE = ALTITUDE!
- It's not the number of goals you scored but how many touches on the ball!
- BELIEVE in each other!

### **Uniforms:**

- Are uniforms are laundered and clean before each game?
- Before leaving the house, double check for ALL equipment (BOTH colored shirts, shin pads, socks, BOTH shoes, etc.)

- Do you have an extra pair of socks for weekend tournaments
- Are your shoe laces double/triple knotted so they stay tied during the game?
- A pony tail holder for long hair?
- Is it cold out? Do you need an Under Armour lining/leggings?
- Gloves?
- Rain gear?
- Flip flops/sandals to change into immediately after a game as walking around the complex with soccer cleats can be damaged from concrete.

### **Sleep:**

- Good sleep is essential if you seek to optimize player and team performance. Proper sleep is essential for both physical performance and mental performance, as well as the physical recovery required between games. You can't bankroll sleep and you can't catch up in one day. Be consistent and take care of yourself.
- Always get a good night's sleep before game day. It is very important to prepare your body for what will be a high energy game.
- For out of town tournaments, individual coaches will most likely have a 'curfew' put in place so please follow those guidelines because your teammates are relying on you to have your best foot forward the next day.
- If time allows on tournament weekends, try to take it easy between games. Rest, watch TV back in the hotel, play cards, take a 20 -30 minute nap but don't sleep more than 20-30 min. Save your energy for the next game and swim after all games are played for the day.

### **Nutrition:**

- Eat a healthy breakfast every day as this is the most important meal of the day. You cannot perform anywhere near your full capability if you do not fuel your body properly.
- When you practice or play a game, you break down muscles. To repair your muscles and make them stronger, you need to eat well and get plenty of rest.
- Try to eat every four hours or so as a general rule, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and a healthy PM snack before bed
- If you have a morning game, try to have breakfast eaten a couple hours prior to game time to allow your body time to digest and fuel up. You also need to wake yourself up and get going in the morning, so make sure you are ready and plan accordingly.
- Eat 3-4 hours before a game. Food needs time to digest. Choose healthy, easily digestible foods such as pasta, breads, cereals, fruit, vegetables, lean meats, milk, yogurt etc.). Stay away from high fat foods like French fries, hamburgers, and all other deep-fried options.
- Have a light snack prior to the game (granola bar, banana, crackers, etc.).
- You need to hydrate your body. Always bring a water jug with you. For HOT summer days, do you have ice?
- As soon as a game or practice is over, you need to hydrate. Water works wonders during games. You don't need energy drinks and shouldn't use them. Focus on food for fuel. Let the game be your energy.
- Chocolate milk is also a good post game/post practice recovery drink.
- Eating a good solid high protein meal immediately following a game or practice will replace the energy you have used up. Don't wait to eat, try to do this right away.
- When you have two or more games in a day, you will want to have a snack within ½ hour of the end of the game to start the recovery process (granola bars, chocolate milk, peanut butter sandwich, etc.) and then eat a good meal as soon as you can.
- Make good food choices. Try to eat pasta the night before a game. During tournaments, proteins will help your body recover from the previous game to recharge for the next game.
- High sugar, fried, and greasy foods will only weigh you down and do not supply good body fuel. Do not overeat.