

## WYSA Soccer Coaches Guidelines –U10

Westford Youth Soccer ,WYSA, is a community organization created for the purpose of the promotion and enhancement of the game of soccer for the youth of Westford and to foster and promote the qualities of physical fitness, competitive spirit, team play loyalty and good sportsmanship by providing soccer instruction and the opportunity to participate in team competition.

WYSA is a teaching and participation organization run by community members on a volunteer basis. To start each season, we set two goals for coaches to achieve during the season. The first and most important is for the children to have FUN. The second is for the players to learn the game of soccer. We expect that players should develop in several areas, including:

- Individual basic soccer skills
- Team play concepts and cooperation
- Overall sportsmanship, as shown through respect and appreciation for teammates, opponents, referees and coaches

The U10 age group curriculum is designed to further improve players in their technical abilities as they attain more command over their bodies and to instruct players in the basic roles of offensive and defensive play in a 1v1 context. The dedication and example set by you, the coach, is extremely important in achieving our goals. You should structure and run your practice sessions so that each child is involved and “doing” regardless of ability. Develop and follow a realistic practice format and schedule with repetitive drills so your team knows what to expect. The kids will work to the standards you set. Remember, the game is the best teacher. Players will be constantly challenged to solve problems while in the play. Your help to guide them in solving these problems and making them successful on the field will make the season rewarding for both the players and for you.

If practice is where your dedication is most demonstrated, it is during the games that your example means everything. Emphasis should be placed on teaching and having fun, with **NO** emphasis on winning. Players all want to contribute to the success of the team. Please don't sacrifice a player's self worth for a game win. Provide them with the instruction and confidence to make that contribution. It does little to preach the worthy goal of sportsmanship only to blow it all during the game. Sadly, we occasionally experience the ridiculous display of an otherwise reasonable adult loudly berating opposing players or coaches, or worse, his own players. Please don't let this be you this season. Please try to:

- ✓ Be enthusiastic and consistent in your praise
- ✓ Be encouraging and constructive in your criticism
- ✓ Be appreciative of the opponents efforts

### **Coaching Guidelines:**

With the U10 group use much encouragement and praise. Because at this age, more than any other, children have a great eagerness to learn and physically they can. Their circulatory and muscular systems are becoming quite developed and their concentration span has increased greatly.

While they are becoming more competitive, the joy of play is still more important to them than the score of the game. Their focus is still on self and they achieve satisfaction in being successful in their individual play. We hope that you can adjust your attitude to that fact. All coaches want to win. Winning feels better than losing. However, the coach should never let the score become more important to him than it is to his team. For the players, the game comes first, the score is secondary.

At the U10 age level, the coach should instruct the skills and tactics associates with roles on the field. Players in this age group should not be taught specific positional play. Roles that should be taught include:

**Defensive role:** man marking, goal side positioning, defensive pressure on the offensive player, 1v1 defensive containment, denying space to the offensive player

**Offensive role:** triangle positioning, dribbling, passing behind the defender, shielding the ball, passing to the open man

### **Equipment**

Each player shall have a shirt of the same color as the players on the same team. The league provides team shirts. Shin guards are mandatory and must be worn by all players on the field. The size 4 soccer ball will be used in U10 soccer. No jewelry or hats shall be worn. Soft hair restraints may be worn.

Each team plays with six field players and a goal keeper. It is recommended that two forwards, one midfielder two defenders and one goalkeeper or three forwards and two defenders be used. The goalkeeper should have a different color shirt to designate status. The goalkeeper is allowed to use his hands only within the 12 yard box. The goalkeeper may not use his hands on intentional passes from his teammates or if a throw in to the keeper.

### **Format**

The U10 age plays on a 63 yd x 40 yd field containing a 12 yd goalie box, penalty stripe, centerline and center circle marked. The goals will be 6' high and 12' wide. To score the ball must entirely cross the goal line. After a goal, the game will be re-started at the center within the center circle of the field with the defensive players on their side of half field. On a kick off the ball must be played forward.

When the ball goes out of play, either out of the end line or sidelines, the game is re-started by:

**Sideline:** A throw in is awarded. No second throw in will be allowed. An illegal throw in will result in a loss of possession.

**End line:** A corner kick or a goal kick will be awarded depending on which player last touched the ball. On goal kicks, the defending team must retreat to outside of the 12 yard penalty box.

### **Playing Time**

The game is played in 4 twelve minute quarters. Playing time should be equally distributed among the players. All players must play ½ of the game minimum.

### **Substitutions**

Substitutions are allowed at goal kicks, goals and own throw ins. Substitutions are recommended every 6 - 8 minutes. It is recommended that the goal keeper remain for the entire quarter, except for injury. The coach should use different goal keepers each quarter to the extent possible.

### **Goalkeeper**

The goalkeeper may use his hands in the 12 yard penalty area. The keeper may kick or throw the ball to a team mate on his side of half field or a loss of possession results. Designate the goalkeeper with a different jersey. The goal keeper may use only his feet on a back pass or a throw in from a team mate. The goal keeper may use his hands if the ball is played back to him with a head or chest pass.

### **Referees**

The U10 age group plays with referees on the field. The authority of the referee starts upon entering the field. The referees used in this age group are young with generally one year experience. They will be doing their best to call a fair game. As a coach, you are expected to help and teach them. Do not give them a hard time – they are only learning.

### **Fouls**

Referees will call all flagrant fouls. A foul in the penalty box will result in a direct kick from the penalty box..