



Watchung Hills Soccer Association

Coaches Guidelines & Responsibilities

1. Be a positive role model for your players. PLEASE keep in mind that this is *RECREATION* soccer and the main focus of this program is for the kids to meet new friends and have fun while learning and playing the game of soccer. We are trying to instill a sense of sportsmanship in our young players and rely on you to help teach the children this important quality. Please inform the parents of our goals in this area. Both you and the parents should offer positive encouragement to all players. Give all players equal playing time and all players should play at least half of the game.
2. If you have a question for or dispute with the referee, please avoid yelling. The referees are young adults, so please treat them with respect. If you have a comment about or problem with a specific referee or call, contact your Division Coordinator.
3. Email all of your players and inform them of the team's practice and game schedule, as soon as possible or by the deadline given at the coaches meeting. Ask the player/parent to acknowledge receipt of your email and to verify any information they provided. If you do not get a response within a 24 hours period please contact the parents by telephone. If you are unable to contact a player please let your division coordinator know prior to the first game. If a parent has an issue or exception with the team their child has been placed or the practice night, please contact your Division Coordinator. It is also a good practice to distribute a (hard) copy of the schedule to each of your players by the first practice or game.

Please be aware that there may be roster changes after the rosters have been distributed prior to the second game of the season.

If a player is assigned to your team but never shows up to practices and/or games please let your Division Coordinator know and provide any information you may be aware of with regard to that player.

Communicate with parents frequently; seek their assistance at practices and games. Recruit one parent to serve as Team Manager to assist you with distributing information to your players throughout the season or assist in making phone calls or sending emails for game changes, cancelled practices and etc. Ask a parent to manage a signup sheet for parents to alternate bringing a half-time snack (usually fruit) during games. Reminders via email on practice days or a day before games can be helpful. If a parent has an issue, try to resolve it directly with the parent, if you cannot, escalate the issue to your division coordinator.

4. WHSA requires that players be given a chance to play different positions throughout the season. Having players play the same position every game is NOT beneficial in their development as soccer players, even if the player insists on a single position. A child should not play goalkeeper/goalie if the child or parent objects.
5. Call the WHSA Info Line at (908) 647-8342 after 8 AM on Saturdays or after 3:00 PM on weekdays to find out the status of training, team practices or games in the event of inclement weather or field closures. The WHSA Info Line should be checked even if it has not rained that day. The BOE and Town Recreation Commissions can close fields for other reasons than weather or if fields remain unplayable due to earlier weather. You can also check www.WHSA.org for field status, if

not current , call the WHSA Info Line.

6. Confirm the final score with the referee at the end of the game. Both teams must report the score of the game to WHSARecProgram@gmail.com. Points will be awarded as follows: 3 for a win, 1 for a tie and 0 for a loss. Scores not reported will be tallied as a loss for both teams.
7. Trophies will be awarded as follows:

Number of Teams in Division	Trophies Awarded
4	1 st place
6	1 st & 2 nd place
8	1 st , 2 nd & 3 rd place

All other players, who do not receive trophies, will receive a participation award.

8. Please have your players and parents clean up the fields after every game. If you play the last game of the day, please be sure that all trash is picked up before you leave. Use of the school or township facilities by WHSA could be jeopardized due to untidy field conditions. Please don't tarnish our good standing.
9. Do not hesitate to email [or call if you do not get a response] your Division Coordinator if you have any questions or concerns or need assistance in a particular area. Please report disputes/complaints to your Division Coordinator. We are here to help.
10. Observe parking signs at all schools, fields and parks; please do not park in fire zones. You are responsible for any violations.
11. WHSA participates in the S.A.G.E program "**Set A Good Example**". More information on S.A.G.E is available at our website www.WHSA.org. Years from now, our children will remember we volunteered our time, cheered them on and had a lot of fun. They will not remember the score of anyone particular game or the end result of anyone particular season.
12. Coaches are responsible for the actions of their players' parents during and immediately following games. Parents should not be "*coaching*" the players from the sidelines or challenging and/ or harassing the referee or the opposing team. Coaches are responsible for their players while on the field. Please encourage good sportsmanship and following rules.
13. One goal of WHSA is to establish teams with the goal of creating balanced teams. Most of the time, this works; but sometimes it doesn't. In the past, we have had more competitive teams, but there's may be a team or two that might struggle to be competitive. We encourage all coaches to send individual player ratings at the end of the season and to be as objective as possible to field more competitive and balanced teams the following season.
14. Our policy is to keep score differentials within a reasonable amount. WHSA would NOT like to see the score differential exceed 5 goals in any one game. We understand that at times, due to absences, field conditions, etc., a score for anyone particular game could exceed the guideline. WHSA does not want to see a team continuously running up the score or "topping" off at the end of the game. Topping off means if a team is comfortably ahead within the 5 goal limit late in the

game, they should NOT put the best players back into the game for the last few minutes just to add more goals within the limit.

There are ways to control the score of a game by setting certain parameters. Do not wait until the score is 5 to 0 before you set these parameters into action. A good example of when to use them is if the score is 3-0 in the first quarter/half and you can see the other team is struggling. If you start when the score is 5-0, there is still a good possibility that your team will score 1 or 2 more goals before the end of the game. Therefore, WHSA recommends the following:

- i. Move stronger players to defense; place your leading scorer in goal
- ii. Pass the ball a minimum of 4 times before shooting
- iii. Play with one less player on the field

Please practice this with your team during one of the team's weekly practices and give the play a name so that everyone understands what to do when you call the play. So a coach could say or shout out to all his players during a game, 'Blue Team we are going to run play "Tango"'. The players would know that play Tango means pass 4 times or that there is no more shooting until the other team scores or that Players X & Y move to defense, but the other team would not. Teach your players to carry out this play without saying what they are actually doing.

These strategies are best practiced first and then discussed and implemented during a quarter-break or half time. Please ***DO NOT*** yell out specific instructions to your team to stop scoring during the course of play. This is both embarrassing to your team AND the other team's players and parents.

If WHSA sees a team continuously running up the score, we will take action. We will consider deducting points for a win (i.e., 1 point for a win instead of 3) or may take alternative actions in the future at our discretion.

15. **Professional Training:** Please encourage your players to attend the professional training clinics; if applicable to your division. The clinics are designed to improve a player's skills, tactics and knowledge of the game. Coaches are also expected to attend and are welcome to adopt the training techniques for their practices.
16. Any questions or topics not covered with the information provided on this sheet should be directed to your Division Coordinator.
17. Finally, thank you for volunteering your time and have a great season!

WEBSITE: www.WHSA.org*
WHSA Info Line: (908) 647-8342

**New website is now available.*

On Next Page:

Sample Coach Email to Team

Sample Coach Email to Team – Modify for your Division/Season

PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THIS EMAIL TO VERIFY YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.

Parents,

Your son/daughter is on Team #X for the WHSA Spring/Fall 201x Xth/Xth Grade BOYS/GIRLS Soccer Season. Please be aware that WHSA reserves the right to make roster changes as necessary, up until the second game, after the roster has been distributed.

Here is the first of many emails with the information you need for the start of the season. Please read even if your child has been playing for years. Email will be the main communication vehicle so if you do not regularly read your emails please let me know. Also, if there are other email addresses [nanny, grandparent, dad, work, etc] you would like me to add to the team's distribution list please let me know.

I am your head coach and my name is Coach's Name.

Please let me know if we have parents interested in being assistant coaches who did not sign up to be a coach.

Our practices are being scheduled and will be on Day of the Week nights at XXXX School from X:XX to X:XXPM. There *will or will NOT* be practice this week. Practices for our team will begin next week. If there are any conflicts please let me know ASAP.

Games start on Saturday Month Date; our first game will be at XX:XXAM Noon at XXXXX field. Please arrive at least 20 minutes before start time.

The full season game schedule will be out later this week or next.

There will be NO games [Holiday] weekend.

In addition, there will USA Training at 9:00AM at ALT school on Saturday mornings before games starting the week of April. This training is included in the cost of your registration. There is NO USA Training this weekend.

If you need to check on weather cancellations please contact the WHSA Soccer Info Line **908-647-8342 ***

I will be setting up a schedule for game snacks and half time oranges and will send it out once I have the game schedule.

Please wear shine guards to practice and bring water. Shin guards must be covered by socks unless they are shin socks or part of a sleeve. Cleats are optional but recommended. Cleats must be soccer cleats and not baseball/football cleats.

Attached is our full team roster. Please limit your use of the information provided for WHSA purposes only.

If you need to reach me, my home phone is XXX-XXX-XXXX [my spouse's name is XXXX] or my cell phone is XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Any questions please feel free to contact me.

I am looking forward to a fun season!!

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*** NOTE: Games are played in the rain, as long as there is no lightning or thunder. Please do not assume that because it is raining games are canceled. Your team may have to forfeit if they do not have the minimum number of players to start the game. Weather cancellations for practice, when fields are open, are at the discretion of your coach.**