

Tips for Getting Organized from Joe Soccer

Youth Coach Handbook ...by JoeSoccer.com

#1 ... HAVE FUN!!

- If you are having fun, the players are surely going to have smiles on their faces!

#2 ... BE ORGANIZED!!

- Write down your practice plan before practice starts! (Eliminates down time & practice chaos).
- Organize practice as follows: Warm up, Individual Skill Work, Mini Games and end with a scrimmage!
- Setup for the next drill/mini game during the water breaks!
- Organize team parents and assistant coach(es) to help with administrative tasks, practices & discipline problems!

#3 ... KEEP IT SIMPLE & EXCITING!!

- For youth players "ages 6 - 12", keep the practices and tactics simple and in easy to understand terms!
- When playing mini games and scrimmages at practice, establish names for the teams (ex. Sharks, USA, England, Dinosaurs, etc.) The team name creates unity, competition and brings out the best in your players!
- Use a handful of drills that you & your players enjoy ... no need to spend 15 -20 minutes explaining new drills at each practice!
- Tell the players how long the drill will last or how many goals will win the game. This gives them an objective and keeps them focused on the task at hand!

#4 ... DEVELOP A TEAM TO-DO LIST!!

- Once you decide on the team to-do list, jot them down and reinforce them throughout the season ... during practice, before games & at half time! Some examples...
- When the ball comes to a player, his/her options are passing, dribbling or shooting ... no kicking!
- Quick throw-ins.
- Going to and winning loose balls.
- When the player has the ball in the offensive corner, cross the ball in front of the goal.
- When the player sees his/her teammate has the ball in the offensive corner, position him or herself in front of the goal and wait for the cross.
- Communicate (talk to each other)

#5 ... COACH COMMANDMENTS!!!

- Before the season begins, communicate to the players & parents...
- Acceptable and unacceptable behavior!
- What to expect from you! (The coach)
- Your expectations of the players!
- Your expectations of the parents!
- Consequences of actions!
- This way everyone follows the commandments or face the consequences!!

#6 ... CRITIQUING PLAYERS!!!

- Always start with a positive comment and finish up with the constructive critique!
- Use specific examples ... Johnny, remember when you kicked the ball 30 yards up the field, that was a powerful kick but were you passing the ball to anyone or was that a shot? Remember, our to-do list says "we don't kick to kick ... we kick to pass or kick to shoot"!

#7 ... GAMES!!!

- Do ... Display good sportsmanship! (You're the role model for your players).
- Do ... Reinforce the team to-do list before the game and during half time!
- Do ... As the game is played, point out situations (to the subs) where players are (and are not) working on the team to-do list! (The game provides great visual pictures and the subs are a captive audience).
- Do ... Use specific game scenarios (and names) when coaching and making changes at half time! (Be positive).
- Don't ... Yell and scream from the sidelines (at players or the Ref).
- Don't ... Try to coach every decision the players are making on the field!
- Do ... Let the kids play and have fun!