

Overview

We thought it would be a good idea to articulate for everyone involved in our Micro soccer program our philosophy and rationale behind why we do things the way we do.

At this stage in their development as players, children are very centered on the ball and on their own little world. This “me-ism” means that they are simply not equipped to deal with concepts like passing, and utilizing teammates. For this reason, our times together will mainly focus on fun games with lots of activity that center on one child doing things with his or her ball.

We believe that when a child comes to the field, what’s uppermost in their heart is the desire to have fun. Approximately 75% of children quit soccer at age twelve, and the reason is simple; it’s no longer fun. The reason it’s no longer fun varies from child to child; perhaps s/he has had to deal with a parent/pusher who’s always demanding and never praising; perhaps the child has become fed up with practices that are boring, not game-like or fun, or coaches who yell and scream but never praise. We don’t want your child leaving soccer at age twelve, and for this reason we endeavor to make his or her time with us memorable, in a context in which learning is taking place in a fun and safe environment.

Practices/Games

There will normally be two teaching portions of 15-20 minutes in length, one led by me and the other led by one of my instructors, and the final 20 minutes will be the kids simply playing 3v3 or 4v4.

We utilize 4 by 6 foot goals but do not play with goalkeepers because the game demands that all players be good with the ball at their feet. It used to be that a keeper could pick up a ball passed to them by a teammate, but since that rule changed, it is vital that keepers be very good with the ball at their feet. We think they have plenty of time to develop keeper skills when they get older.

We play 3v3 (mainly) and 4v4 at times so that more children are in contact with the ball.

We play on a small field about 20 yards long with no sidelines in order to maximize contact with the ball. A bigger field with more players at this age does not mean more players play, it means more players stand and watch while the more active players play.

We will sometimes utilize a second ball so that if the “hive” is running off onto another playing area, the instructor will simply call “new ball,” and drop that new ball into play. This also allows us to get balls to those players who are perhaps a little more reluctant to get involved.

Good sportsmanship is expected from everyone at all times. As parents the best thing you can do is encourage your child. In youth sports kids tend to be over coached, and at a

typical game they are listening to too many voices, whether that of their coach, dad, mom, grandparent etc . . . and at this age they cannot process all of it, so it's actually detrimental to their enjoyment and their development, however well-intentioned the feedback may be! For this reason, simply cheer your child on and enjoy watching them play.

We want games to be fun and also competitive, so if we have a game in which a team is being whipped, we will make small adjustments in an attempt to make it competitive for both teams. Running up the score does not benefit the “whipper” because they are not being adequately tested, and it does not help the “whipped” because they are having no success. For this reason we may have the instructor join the weaker team to help them out or simply switch two of the kids.

Game Rules:

Games are 3v3 and occasionally 4v4 without keepers, so no hand balls

No offside

No sideline

No whistles

When a goal is scored play resumes with either a new ball or the instructor getting a ball out of the net and sending it back into play. By not having kickoffs after every goal, more time is spent playing.