



South Simcoe United FC

Coaching Development Plan



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Date: March 1st, 2013

Version: 1.1



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1. Introduction

South Simcoe United has decided to embark on a radical change of direction in how we do things and these changes are outlined in our Player Development Plan. The key to implementing our plan is to have our coaches buy in to what we are trying to achieve. We are committed to our plan and to assisting our coaches in implementing this plan.

Coaches are the lifeblood of our club and indeed youth soccer throughout the world. They teach, inspire, motivate and encourage our children in the game they love. They give away untold hours of their personal time for the betterment of others. Usually this job goes unrewarded in terms of the praise from the participants as well as financial remuneration. Yet year after year our club has the same coaches wanting to coach again for another year and new coaches eager to throw their hat into the coaching ring. They simply love what they do and embrace the joy they receive through coaching.

There is no possible way that our Club can ever thank our coaches for the unselfish work they do for our players, however, we can assist in showing them how to be better at what they do.

This document intends to outline South Simcoe's Coaching Development Program. This program will provide a framework that will assist in supporting our coaches from the U4 recreational coach all the way up to our U18 competitive coach. If our coaches are the lifeblood of our club then we need to do whatever is necessary to help them succeed because we know their success will ensure our player's success.

If we want to create great coaches we first need to define what makes a coach great. In the past the standards of great coaching concentrated on a coach's wins and losses. However, some of the worst coaching goes on with the coaches with the best record. Invariably these are the coaches that play their best players the whole game and bench their weaker players. They micro-manage a game and tell each player where to go and what to do when they get there.

The standard that South Simcoe United will use is simply how many players a coach can get to sign up the next year. Whether a player is a boy or girl, U4 or U17, new to the game or a long time player, recreational or competitive great coaches get all their players to want to keep playing the game.



Therefore each and every coach in our club will begin every year armed with one goal in mind, to get each and every player on their team to want to play soccer in our club the following year.

Our club plans on monitoring each of our coaches' individual retention rates. We need to know for ourselves who our best coaches are and who are struggling to keep players in the game. In addition we need to assist our coaches in retaining our members in our club.

It is our strong belief that the implementation of our Long Term Player Development Plan will go a long way to boosting our overall retention rate. However, the individual coach holds the key to our true success. Our club is committed to doing whatever is possible to assist our coaches in being the best they can be.

2. Coaching Keys to Retaining Players

Here are some keys to retaining players:

- 2.1. Show up on a consistent basis. If you do this you are ahead of a lot of coaches.
- 2.2. **Arrive on time; the rule of thumb says that the coach should be one of the first ones** at a practice or a game.
- 2.3. Arrive prepared; good coaches always have a practice plan prepared and the proper equipment needed to execute this plan.
- 2.4. Treat everyone with respect and dignity.
- 2.5. Engage the players in activities that keep them moving and thinking. Children love to keep busy and having them stand in a line waiting their turn is a recipe for disaster.
- 2.6. Have fun, make jokes and invent silly names for the games. The more fun that a coach has then the more fun the players will have.
- 2.7. Rotate all of the players in and out of the lineup as equally as possible and make sure they each have a chance to play all positions.
- 2.8. Keep comments to a minimum. One or two points for younger children are all they can really grasp.
- 2.9. Coaching instruction should be made prior to the game, at half time and at the end of the game. During the game let the children be children, they will do just fine on their own.



- 2.10. Avoid at all cost directional coaching. Telling a child where to go, who to pass to and when to shoot is a recipe for disaster and will guarantee that a child will never be a creative soccer player.
- 2.11. Keep all comments positive and upbeat. Children know when they have made a mistake and the last thing they need to hear is an adult reinforcing that fact right afterwards.
- 2.12. Communicate well with the parents. Inform them of your coaching methods and ask that they support you in your efforts.
- 2.13. Let the parents know that you need them onside in keeping a positive attitude with the team. This extends to the car ride home where many parents dissect the game and point out all of the mistakes. A buy in from the parents will go a long way to creating a happy soccer player.
- 2.14. Forget about winning the game and concentrate on having fun and developing your soccer players. Children pick up on the coaches' mood and they always notice a tense mood.
- 2.15. Complete OSA's Respect in Soccer and Making Ethical Decisions online courses.

To support the above points South Simcoe United has designed a comprehensive Long Term Player Development Plan. Each one of our coaches will receive a copy and will be asked to sign a form stating that they will conform to the plan. The key to our Player Plan is to have complete support by the coaches in our Club.

3. Coaching Philosophy

South Simcoe United wants each of our coaches to develop a coaching philosophy. This coaching philosophy will be submitted to the club prior to the commencement of the season.

This coaching philosophy will be devised with the aim to help them be a better coach. This will help to improve the coach/player relationship and improve the overall satisfaction of both coach and player.

A simple coaching philosophy will focus on three things:



- 3.1. Knowing yourself and what are your strengths and weaknesses. What can be done to exploit your strengths and shore up your weaknesses that will make you a better coach.
- 3.2. Describing what obstacles that you will be facing throughout the season and what plans you have to help overcome these obstacles.
- 3.3. How to understand your players and their needs and wants. Fostering a great relationship with all of your players will go a long way to making the season great.

This is a small exercise that we would like each coach to undertake. Our club feels that by forcing a coach to look at themselves, their environment and their relationship with their players will help them to create the environment for success and happiness for everyone involved.

4. Managers Manage and Coaches Coach

Our club wants to make each of our coaches successful. We want them to return year after year. One of the recommendations that the club will be making to our coaches is that it will be imperative that each coach has a manager that will support them throughout the season.

There is no doubt that many of our coaches are overwhelmed by pulling double duty. They are responsible for all of the on field activities of both practices and games and in addition perform the functions of a manager. Filling out game sheets, arranging for picture day, informing parents of a cancelled game are all functions that should be performed by the manager.

Managers are a vital key to a successful team and their role should not be minimized or included in a coaches' job description. The Club also strongly urges that the manager come from outside of the coaches' home. Husband and wife teams are a great idea, however, often by midseason they feel overwhelmed as everything is coming through their house.

Our Club will be laying out a step by step guide for managers. It will be detailed on what the roles and responsibilities of a manager are and the keys to being a great manager. Our manager's guide will have a guiding philosophy that a coach is responsible for the on field product and a manager is responsible for all off field business. As such coaches coach and managers manage.



5. Organizational Chart



6. Coaching Licenses

South Simcoe United recognizes that one of the keys to a successful club is the degree of expertise among its coaching ranks. The more coaches with higher licenses the better off we are as a club. We understand that small clubs like ourselves have limitations and budget constraints that larger clubs do not experience. However, it is our desire to provide our members with a quality soccer experience by improving the knowledge of our coaches. These are the steps and goals that the club has set forth to improve our coaches' expertise:

- 6.1. In 2013 and each year afterwards have all of our team head coaches achieve the minimum standards of OSA courses for the age group that they coach.
- 6.2. In 2013 and beyond encourage our competitive coaches to obtain a minimum of a Pre B or higher.



- 6.3. By 2014 have in place a full time Keeper Coach with his/her Ontario Goalkeeping license.
- 6.4. Have our technical staff design in house clinics to further the education of all of our coaches.
- 6.5. By 2014 provide for our coaches full seasonal practice plans that adhere to our Long Term Player Development model.
- 6.6. Create a new coaching resource library in our Club office so that coaches can share videos, books and information to help them succeed.
- 6.7. Have our technical staff provide player clinics throughout the year that our coaches can attend and expand their knowledge of the profession.

7. Women Coaches

Girls make up over half of our Club and we are very proud of this fact. However, females are vastly underrepresented in our coaching ranks. Currently we have 14 competitive teams and only one team has a head coach who is a female. Out of our 8 competitive female teams not one is coached by a female. This imbalance is clearly evident in our recreational teams as well. SSU is determined to right this wrong.

To fix this problem one must try and understand the reason the problem exists in the first place. Some of the possible reasons may include:

- 7.1. Inherent bias, men have done most of the coaching in the past so both men and women subconsciously believe that this is the way it should always be.
- 7.2. Clear scheduling conflicts. Women today still have to shoulder most of the burden of running the household and finding time in their busy schedules to coach may be impossible.
- 7.3. Lack of confidence in their abilities as a coach. Men often do not suffer from this problem which of course has led to most of the problems that soccer finds itself in today.
- 7.4. Lack of knowledge about coaching or the game itself. This is related to the points made above.
- 7.5. No one has ever asked them to coach.



- 7.6. The intensity of winning and losing, of yelling at refs and benching players is not something most women find appealing.
- 7.7. Lack of a support system and mentorship.

South Simcoe is determined to fix the inequity inherent in this gender imbalance by implementing the following steps:

- 7.8. Appoint a women's head coach. The role of this person is simply to identify as many potential female coaching candidates as possible and to help our current female coaches advance their licenses. In addition they could act as a mentor and help to provide support.
- 7.9. Ask females to coach. See point 7.5 from above.
- 7.10. Recognize that our LTPD program deemphasize a lot of the issues that women traditionally have in a competitive environment.
- 7.11. Identify young females in the upper ranks of our club who could begin as assistant coaches on younger teams. This will expose our future female head coaches to the fun and joy of coaching without the responsibilities of being a head coach.
- 7.12. Let our female coaches know the importance of being a role model to young girls in our club.
- 7.13. Mandate that by 2014 each of our female teams from U9 and up should have at least one female on the bench on all teams.

8. Injury Protocol

Injuries are a fact of life and injuries in soccer are inevitable. Our coaches need to know what to do in case of injury and what protocol to follow. South Simcoe United has completed a comprehensive injury protocol that all of our coaches will receive.

In addition SSU will be instituting a mandatory course on concussions that each of our coaches can take online. This course is free to take and is put out by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia.



9. Conclusion

SSU recognizes the importance of our coaches. We are determined to educate, support and assist our coaches to be the best that they can be and to help each child reach their maximum potential. We want our coaches to have fun, feel fulfilled and come back year after year.

Each of our coaches will have one goal for the year. That goal is to get every player, male or female, young or old, recreational or competitive to sign up next year. If each coach in our club has this one goal and we all work together to achieve it then the Club and the game itself is bound to grow and prosper.

