

LEVITTOWN SOCCER CLUB

SNOOPY DIVISION

TO: SNOOPY COACHES

SUBJECT: STATEMENT OF THE GOALS OF THE SNOOPY PROGRAM

I would like to take this time to restate the goals of our Snoopy Program in Levittown soccer and how our Snoopy coaches should be conducting themselves on a week to week basis. The basic premise of the Snoopy division is to promote a safe and fun atmosphere for 3, 4, and 5 year old children to come each week to learn about the game of soccer and to learn how to get along with other children their age in a team oriented environment. We need to be particularly sensitive to the needs of this age group of children. The most important thing to stress is that Snoopy soccer is completely non-competitive. There are no scores kept. Coaches should not be tracking or keeping scores of any kind. Players should not be made aware of the score or try to be encouraged to "win" any of the scrimmages that they play. As a coach you should be working on effective skills building in the half-hour of practice before the scrimmage is played. This should continue on into the scrimmage. We should be encouraging players to come on to the field and make their best attempt. The skill and maturity levels of these children will vary greatly from player to player and from team to team. As a coach you should focus on what skills to work on for each individual player on the team. You should be supportive and provide encouragement to all of the children, not just the ones who are able to score goals or follow instructions. Both you and your team's parents need to constantly reinforce how well they are all doing and encourage them to try and learn as much as they can. A goal for a particular child might be just to get them to come out on the field for a few minutes per week and try some of the drills, providing a good deal of praise for their effort when they do.

DRILLS

The drills that are run should not contain a lot of structure or be beyond the developmental level of this age group. Having the children dribble the ball, stopping and starting, reversing direction, and keeping the ball within a contained area are all effective drills at this age. Learning to kick the ball squarely in a particular direction or towards the goal, getting used to being around other players who will compete with them to take the ball away are additional examples. Becoming familiar with the various parts on the soccer field and what the different lines are can be a good training exercise.

Drills should be kept very short, about 2 to 3 minutes each, with a good number of breaks in between. The attention span of children this age is very short, so if you try to go any longer or run drills that are too complex, you will find that you will lose their attention and the drills will break down.

If you would like a drill book to help you plan out your practice sessions please let me know and one can be made available.

The practice time is for a full 30-minute period. You should try and plan two to three drills per week in advance that you want to run. It is a good idea to have the children go through a warm-up session first.

You might want to keep a chart on each child to log his/her progress on items that you think they should be able to improve upon.

SCRIMAGES

The scrimmages should be for the last 30 minutes of the session only. They should start and end on time. The scrimmage is made up of 6 6-minute periods with a five-minute half time. Players should be rotated in and out, so that all players get a comparable amount of playing time.

There are no corner kicks, goal kicks or throw-ins taken (Puppy Dog - Fall only). The referee's will restart the game in the appropriate manner if the ball goes over the touch (side) lines and/or the goal line (Puppy Dog - Fall only). This is usually by rolling the ball into a neutral area of the field to restart play (if over the touchlines) and by allowing the goalie to throw the ball back into play (if over the goal lines). The only time a referee will stop a game is for any rough play such as pushing or hitting or for a handball. You should be playing 4 vs. 4, with no goalie on the field at a time. That is the maximum allowed.

Every attempt should be made to keep from showing up or embarrassing any members of either of the teams. Players who celebrate wildly or taunt other players after scoring a goal should be encouraged not to do so. If you have a very skilled player who is scoring a number of goals and running up the score, you should make some attempt to balance the field by putting that player on the field only at the time when your opposing team has their best players on the field. You might also place this player in the game as a goalie for a period of time, to limit the number of scoring chances.

Only the coaches are allowed on the field during the scrimmages. Parents are allowed to help on the field during the practice sessions. Parents should praise their children for their play but should not be overly exuberant in their support. You should remind them to be aware of the feelings of the children on the opposing team.

At the end of the scrimmage, each team's players and coaches should line up in the center of the field and shake hands. Thanks for all of your hard work and efforts.