

Coaching Philosophy

- You will always be proud of them as long as they give **100% effort** (regardless of the outcome on the scoreboard).
- You want each one of them to **constantly strive to learn and improve**. This involved them comparing their own performance to their own performance (i.e. Are they better than they were 2 weeks ago?)
- Mistakes are an inevitable part of the game. If they are giving 100% and trying new things (as they strive to improve), mistakes are bound to occur, and your best players are those who find ways to quickly **bounce back from mistakes**.
- Teams that focus on giving their full effort, constantly learning and improving, and bouncing back from mistakes, **actually win more** than teams who consistently focus on the scoreboard.

Remember.....

- Effort – Always give 100%
- Learning – Improve constantly as you gain more knowledge
- Mistakes are OK – Mistakes are how we learn

At the start of the season, let your players know you want to coach a team that will have respect for the ROOTS of the game:

Rules – We refuse to bend/break the rules to win

Opponents – We value and recognize that a worthy opponent brings out our best and we take a “fierce and friendly” attitude into competition.

Officials – We respect Officials even when we might disagree with them

Teammates – We never do anything to embarrass our team (on or off the field)

Self – We live up to our standards of playing football, even when others don’t

Lead by example.....when your players and their parents see you keep your temper in check, for example, when an official misses a call, they are more likely to check their own tempers

It is important in stressful situations in a game for a Coach to have – and practice – a self-control routine. For example:

- Take a deep breath
- Remind yourself of the discipline required NOT to react
- Engage in self-talk (“I need to be a role model. I can rise above this!”)
- Turn away from the action
- Count to 10 (or 50 if you have to!)
- Quickly refocus on the next play

Seize Teachable Moments

Capitalize on the many instances during your practices and games – or in media coverage of college and professional sports – when lessons can be highlighted. These can be either positive or negative moments, such as someone losing graciously (positive), or an athlete taunting an opponent (negative). Engage your players in a discussion about whether the behavior in question is positive or negative.

Drill During Practice

Just as we develop drills for improving physical skills, we must create situations in practice where players learn how to handle negative situations. For example, during a practice game, make a bad call on purpose and see how your players react.

If they react in a way that is consistent with good sportsmanship and positive, praise them. If they don't, use that moment to discuss how you want them to respond in a game situation (not letting the questionable call throw them out of their rhythm). You might also consider having your players officiate during practice games to appreciate the difficulty of being an Official.

Positive Charting

Coaches tend to think that they add value only by telling players what they are doing incorrectly and then correcting them. But it is equally important to point out when players are doing things correctly and to reinforce them, so players will continue to do them.

"Positive Charting" is a technique for recording positive efforts and plays made during practices or games. Your positive chart can simply list all of your players with space to note two or three of their specific positive acts.

Dealing With Officials

Before the game, take 5 minutes and go over and introduce yourself to the Officials. This is a good time to ask them if you have any questions on the rules, etc.. Also, write their names down on your sheet so if you want to talk to them during the game you can easily call them by their name (not just 'Hey, Official').

Do you think there is an effective way to approach an Official after a bad call? You may be able to ask Officials, "Can you let me know what you saw on that last play?" By staying calm, keeping your voice low and giving the Official plenty of space and asking a question about what they saw (rather than outright questioning the accuracy of their call), you'll have the best chance of having a constructive interaction with the Official.