



RUSC Micro Soccer Spring 2012 Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering to coach soccer this season. We look forward to making spring 2012 the most fun season of soccer our kids have experienced. We will also continue with some of the programs we put in place in the fall to improve the skill training aspect of the program, and will even expand it this season. Key to this effort, however, is ensuring that the sport remains fun and exciting to the kids. After all, developing skilled players is meaningless if they don't *want* to play.

The spring session will run from April 15 through June 3, with no soccer on May 27, Memorial Day weekend. U6 (Pre-K and K) will play from 12:00 to 1:00, and U8 (1st and 2nd graders) will play from 1:30 to 2:30. All games will be played at Coolidge Middle School at 89 Birch Meadow Dr. The field is behind the school.

Please take some time to contact your assistant coaches and players before the first game. Be sure to review the following with them:

1. The place, date and time for Day 1.
2. The number of the field at which to meet on the first week – please check the schedule.
3. Your team name.
4. That a registration table will be set up for those who need assistance.

Skills Development Program – We will continue to work with MA Youth Soccer (MYS) instructors as we did in the fall, but with an modified and expanded program. The MYS instructors will be supplying practice plans each week that all teams will follow. **Coaches need to arrive 15 minutes before the start of each session** (11:45 for U6, 1:15 for U8) for a 15 minute meeting with the MYS instructors to go over that day's practice plan. This is a perfect time to ask questions, discuss possible variations on the activities, etc. During the hour-long session, the MYS instructors will move around the fields, helping out where it's needed and jumping in where appropriate. They're a fantastic resource to learn from, so I hope everyone will take full advantage of their presence.

U8 Street Soccer – Beginning on April 17, we will be offering an *optional* "street soccer" program for U8 players from 4:00-5:00 at Wood End Elementary School. This program is aimed at U8 players who want more opportunities to play. We will provide equipment (goals, balls, pinnies, cones), help with organizing teams, and adult supervision, but there will be **absolutely no coaching** at these sessions. These sessions are intended as supervised pickup soccer for first and second graders – a place where they can have fun, maybe try out a new move that they saw in a soccer game on TV, and simply get more chances to play. In order to encourage this to be a low pressure environment, we encourage parents to drop their kids off for street soccer or sit away from the playing fields. There's no commitment to attend street soccer from one week to the next.

Here is some basic information to get started and to have an enjoyable season.

PLAYERS EQUIPMENT:

- ALL players **MUST** wear SHIN GUARDS. This is the **ONLY** required piece of equipment for participation.
- SNEAKERS work fine. If you have or wish to purchase cleats, make sure they are **SOCCER** cleats (no metal, no toe cleats).
- CLOTHING – Dress prepared to play and have fun, based on weather conditions. Generally a jersey and shorts are sufficient, but be prepared for occasional chilly weather during the season. The Micro jerseys will be made available the first day of the program. Coaches will have the jerseys for their teams.
- BALL – Bring a size 3 soccer ball (or size 4 if that is what you have). Size 3 is preferable at this age as it's easier for players to control. Be sure to put your player's name on the ball. **NO SIZE 5 BALLS, PLEASE.**
- JEWELRY – No jewelry is allowed, especially ear rings/studs. Medic Alert bracelets should be taped so another player cannot get a finger caught in it.
- WATER – bring your own water bottle – put name on it.



HEALTH & SAFETY Concerns:

- At the first sign of lightning or thunder, immediately leave the field and get to cars. Play cannot resume until 30 minutes after the last occurrence of lightning or thunder.
- Because of the recent concerns about communicable diseases, Larry Hamdi from the Reading Board of Health recommends the following common sense precautions:
 - o Do not share water. Players should have their own water bottle. Avoid bringing gallons and using paper or plastic cups.
 - o Do not share towels.
 - o If a child shows any signs of being ill, please keep them home.
 - o If your child appears to be getting ill while at the field, please remove him/her from the area.
 - o Fist bumps are preferred to handshakes after the game (as per Middlesex Youth Soccer League guidelines).



GUIDELINES FOR U6 (Pre-K/K) PROGRAM
(Coolidge Middle School from Noon to 1:00 PM)

Before and after the session...

1. Coaches should be at the field no later than 11:45 in order to meet with the MYS instructors about the day's activities.
2. REVIEW THE PRACTICE PLAN BEFORE YOU ARRIVE. Practice plans will be sent out by email before each weekend. An organized, well thought out practice that involves all the coaches and players will be more fun for everyone involved.
3. Bring extra water, bug spray, and sunblock.
4. Please try to move off the field quickly, so that the U8 teams have time to set-up.

During the practice...

1. For the first 30 minutes, the kids should be brought through the practice plan distributed for that week. Additional resources for activities and coaching ideas are available on the MA Youth Soccer web site (http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/coach's_corner.aspx) or other coaching resources.

During the scrimmage...

1. Scrimmages will begin at 12:30. Scrimmages should not start any earlier than this, as the practice part of the session is where each player gets the most touches on the ball.
2. Each team should field 3 players if possible, or 4 players if necessary. NEVER play more than 4v4.
3. THERE ARE NO GOALIES.
4. Only size 3 balls should be used.
5. Play should be stopped abruptly in the case of injuries. Please encourage the kids to care about their friends and teammates.
6. If you need to stop play for any reason, make sure everyone can hear you!
7. Rotate the kids into the game using full groups of players at a time if possible (as opposed to one-at-a-time), and do your best to give all kids the same amount of playing time.
8. Players should rotate off the field after 3-5 minutes. If you see your team is dominating, please try to mix things up & don't have all strong players on one shift.
9. Do not worry about positioning, but do try to keep the kids spread out for safety.
10. When ball goes out the end line the defensive team does a goal kick or dribbles the ball up. NO CORNER KICKS.
11. Any time the ball goes out of play, the opposing team moves back – to midfield on a goal kick, and at least about 10 adult steps if the ball goes out over the sideline.
12. Sidelines are somewhat fuzzy – try to keep the ball in play. If you have to stop, the team that did not kick the ball out gets the kick or dribble in. NO THROW INS! We need as many touches with feet as possible!!!!
13. After a goal, restart play from midfield. Players should restart play by dribbling, not by kicking the ball up the field.
14. Have a set place for players to sit when not playing during game & make sure they have their water with them (not going to mom & dad for water). Keep the team together. Have a plan with your assistant coaches to keep the kids engaged on the sidelines & have the next group ready to go when the coach says so.

All the time...

1. HAVE FUN!!!



GUIDELINES FOR U8 (1ST/2ND GRADE) PROGRAM
(COOLIDGE Middle School from 1:30-2:30 PM)

Before and after the session...

1. Coaches should be at the field no later than 1:15 in order to meet with the MYS instructors about the day's activities.
2. REVIEW THE PRACTICE PLAN BEFORE YOU ARRIVE. Practice plans will be sent out by email before each weekend. An organized, well thought out practice that involves all the coaches and players will be more fun for everyone involved.
3. Bring extra water, bug spray, and sunblock.

During the practice...

2. For the first 30 minutes, the kids should be brought through the practice plan distributed for that week. Additional resources for activities and coaching ideas are available on the MA Youth Soccer web site (http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/coach's_corner.aspx) or other coaching resources.

During the scrimmage...

1. Scrimmages will begin at 2:00. Scrimmages should not start any earlier than this, as the practice part of the session is where each player gets the most touches on the ball.
2. Each team should field 4 players. NEVER play more than 4v4.
3. THERE ARE NO GOALIES.
4. Only size 3 balls should be used.
5. Play should be stopped abruptly in the case of injuries. Please encourage the kids to care about their friends and teammates.
6. If you need to stop play for any reason, make sure everyone can hear you!
7. Rotate the kids into the game using full groups of players at a time if possible (as opposed to one-at-a-time), and do your best to give all kids the same amount of playing time.
8. Players should rotate off the field after 3-5 minutes. If you see your team is dominating, please try to mix things up & don't have all strong players on one shift.
9. Do not worry about positioning, but do try to keep the kids spread out for safety.
10. When ball goes out the end line the defensive team does a goal kick or dribbles the ball up. NO CORNER KICKS.
11. Any time the ball goes out of play, the opposing team moves back – to midfield on a goal kick, and at least about 10 adult steps if the ball goes out over the sideline.
12. Sidelines are somewhat fuzzy – try to keep the ball in play. If you have to stop, the team that did not kick the ball out gets the kick or dribble in. NO THROW INS! We need as many touches with feet as possible!!!!
13. After a goal, restart play from midfield. Players should restart play by dribbling, not by kicking the ball up the field.
14. Have a set place for players to sit when not playing during game & make sure they have their water with them (not going to mom & dad for water) Keep the team together. Have a plan with your assistant coaches to keep the kids engaged on the sidelines & have the next group ready to go when the coach says so.

All the time...

1. HAVE FUN!!!