

RUSC Micro Soccer

Coaching Information and Guidelines

Firstly we really want to thank you for volunteering to coach in the RUSC Micro program. Without volunteers like **YOU**, this program simply would not exist. In order to make this successful for you and the participants we want to lay out more details for your engagement as a coach. You do not need any soccer experience as the program will be laid out for you on a week by week basis. You just need to come prepared each Sunday.

Above all we expect this to be FUN for all participants as well as rewarding for you, the coaches.

(Please note: a similar note will be sent to all parents in the next week or so on the program details)

Important Dates

Program Start Date: Sunday 13th April

Program End Date: Sunday 15th June.

There is **NO** soccer on Sunday 20th April (Easter) or Sunday 25th May (Memorial Day)

MYS Coaching Clinic: Tuesday 1st April (7pm to 9pm) at Woodend School Gym. Come prepared to play (ball, water).

The Program

The RUSC Micro Programs runs every Sunday afternoon at Coolidge Middle School. For Spring 2014 we will have a U6 session at 12pm, U8 Session I at 1:45pm and U8 Session II at 3:15pm. At the U8 level the participant will play in one pre-defined session.

Coaching Guidelines

To make the program successful and to give all participants a similar experience we have put together the following.

“As a RUSC coaching volunteer I will do my best to”:

- 1) Instill a fun, exciting and educational atmosphere for the kids
- 2) Attend the coaching clinic on April 1st (7pm to 9pm) at Woodend Gym
- 3) Review the MYS activity sheet in advance of your arrival at the field each Sunday
- 4) Arrive 15 minutes early

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- 5) Commit to using the MYS activities. This gives ALL participants equal exposure to the game of soccer with proven activities at the appropriate level. The skills are designed to be fun, educational and engaging. These are not drills, they are activities.
- 6) (We know some of you will have a soccer background and might want to run your own plans or activities. We are going to strongly discourage this but instead ask you to use your skills to implement the MYS activities)
- 7) Introduce yourselves to your team parents at the start of the season either via email and/or at the first session (April 13th)
- 8) Be aware of any important health concerns within your team (allergies, for example)
- 9) Have frequent water breaks

Coaches and Teams

These will be sent out in advance of the first Sunday session.

Head Coaches

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. The table will be at the end of the parking lot

Mass Youth Soccer (MYS) / Skills Development Program

We contract with Mass Youth Soccer (MYS) to work with RUSC, with you and with the participants. MYS will run the “Coaching Clinic”. MYS will have two coaches in attendance each week to walk you through the activities (that you will have already read in advance), answer questions and move around the fields during the event to lend advice. It is not uncommon for one of these coaches to jump and participate with the kids. Please use your best judgment to determine the pacing of these activities, but they are essentially set up to run 6-8 minutes each with breaks in between. Perhaps most important to remember is that the kids feed off of our enthusiasm. Don't be afraid to really get into it!

Program Format

Each session runs for 1 hour but you, the coaches, are expected to arrive 15 mins early to participate in the MYS activity review. Additional benefit – you get a prime parking space at Coolidge (those of you who have been before know how huge this is!).

During the session the first 30 mins are spent on MYS activities. These have been created by MYS and are designed specifically for that age group. The final 30 mins are on scrimmage: 3 vs 3 for U6, 4 vs 4 for U8.

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.

U6 (K and Pre-K)

The format for the U6 session will be the same as in previous sessions. Teams are **mixed** with the first 30mins on skills and the second 30mins with scrimmage (friendly game) of 3 vs 3. We will do our best to keep the teams small but the number of registrants dictates this. Coaches will arrive 15mins before the start (11:45am) for 15 minute session with MYS. They will cover the skill activities for that session in a fun and interactive way. The session will start promptly at 12pm and finish at 1pm.

Equipment Requirements and Restrictions

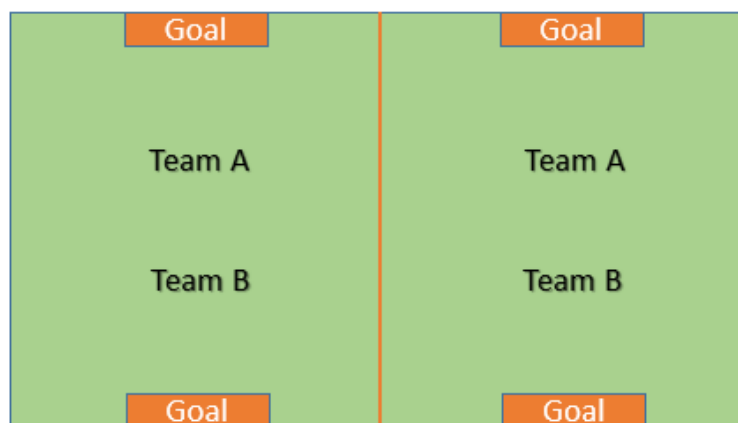
- 1) **SHIN GUARDS** are **mandatory**, which **MUST** be covered by socks. This is the **ONLY** required piece of equipment for participation. **For liability and insurance reasons, players without shin guards will not be allowed to participate. Coaches MUST enforce this. No shin guards, no participation, no exceptions.**
- 2) **SNEAKERS** work fine. If you have or wish to purchase cleats, make sure they are SOCCER cleats (no metal, no toe cleats)
- 3) **CLOTHING** – Dress prepared to play and have fun, based on weather conditions. Generally a jersey and shorts are sufficient early in the season.
- 4) **MICRO SHIRTS** will be in coaches' equipment bags to be distributed at the beginning of the first session
- 5) **BALL** – Bring a size 3 soccer ball. 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.**
- 6) **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.
- 7) **WATER** – bring your own water bottle – put name on it.

Field Layout – U6

Each field area split into two. Each team will take one side during activities



During the 3 vs 3 scrimmage



U8 (1st and 2nd Grade)

The format for the U8 session will change starting in the spring. Teams will be **split by gender** as boys and girls will participate in separate groups. U8 teams will play on larger playing areas than the U6 group. There will be two sessions for Under 8, 1:45pm and 3:15pm, in order to support a larger playing area. The participant will play in **one** of these sessions.

We have not yet decided the best way to split the two sessions (have the child/team play in the same session every week or rotate over the program duration). I know parents with children in the U6 session would like to have their U8 child in the first session. If we run one session for boys and the other for girls then it would be unfair, every week, for those in the second session. Right now we are favoring the idea of a rotation (first 4 weeks in one session, second 4 weeks in another or just a rotation each week).

We will do our best to keep the teams small but the number of registrants dictates this. Coaches will arrive 15mins before the start (1:30pm or 3:00pm) for 15 minute session with MYS. They will cover the skill activities for that session in a fun and interactive way. The session will start promptly with first 30mins on skills and the second 30mins with scrimmage (friendly game) of 4 vs

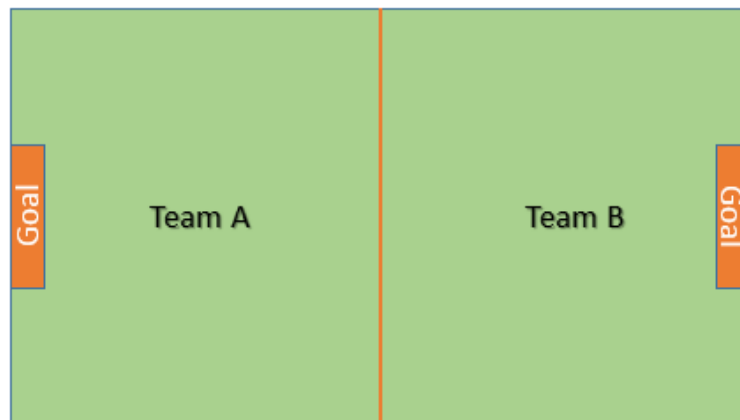
4. We want to introduce a rotation every 5mins so every child will get **equal** playing time. The coach(s) will create the roster rotation. We plan to have someone at the field sound an air horn every 5 minutes which will be the indicator for the next rotation.

Equipment Requirements and Restrictions

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- 2) **SNEAKERS** work fine. If you have or wish to purchase cleats, make sure they are SOCCER cleats (no metal, no toe cleats)
- 3) **CLOTHING** - Dress prepared to play and have fun, based on weather conditions. Generally a jersey and shorts are sufficient early in the season.
- 4) **MICRO SHIRTS** will be in coaches' equipment bags to be distributed at the beginning of the first session
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- 6) **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.
- 7) **WATER** - Bring your own water bottle and put name on it.

Field Layout – U8

Activities and 4 vs 4 scrimmage



Scrimmage/Game Rules

- 1) 3 vs 3 (U6), 4 vs 4 (U8)
- 2) U6: Each pair of teams will play two scrimmages at the same time on the split field.
- 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 the 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. Sitting between the fields will allow kids to play on either field.

Reading “Encore”

Several high school players are interested in giving back to various RUSC programs by way of volunteering their time. We are working with a group whom we hope to have in attendance each week at the Micro Program. They will be available to assist you (the coaches) during your activity and scrimmages, interact with the kids and generally get involved where they can. We hope they become role models as well as generating excitement for the participants.

Details are still being worked out.

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.
- Dogs (except for service animals) are **not** allowed at the field at any time.
- Because of concerns about communicable diseases, Larry Hamdi from the Reading Board of Health recommends the following common sense precautions:
- Do not share water. Players should have their own water bottle. Avoid bringing gallons and using paper or plastic cups.
- Do not share towels.

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- If a child shows any signs of being ill, please keep them home.
- If your child appears to be getting ill while at the field, please remove him/her from the area.
- Fist bumps are preferred to handshakes after the game (as per Middlesex Youth Soccer League guidelines).

Inclement Weather

Soccer is played in all weather, including rain. However if the field is too wet, dangerous or severe weather has been forecast (including thunder storms) then the RUSC Micro Coordinators may cancel the session. We will send out notifications on this by 9:30am on Sunday. Please check your email.

Thank you all for your involvement and volunteering to coach.

Questions: microsoccer@rusc.org