

# Code of Ethics

## **PREAMBLE**

Soccer belongs to the players. It provides many physical values, emotional satisfaction and even a spiritual uplifting to those that play. Coaches who choose soccer as their profession and those who coach soccer must understand this and put the welfare of the game and its players above their own personal gain.

Any profession, regardless of how noble it is deemed, is only as good as its members and the conduct they exhibit. Soccer coaches must be asked to maintain the trust and confidence placed in them by their players and by the public. Coaches that are unwilling to comply with the principles of their organization's Code of Ethics, have no place in the profession.

## **PROLOGUE/CREED**

As a member of the Illinois Soccer Coaches Association (ISCA) I am committed to sound educational processes, establishing traditions and promoting values for my soccer community. I am dedicated to advancing the welfare of those who seek my assistance and to the maintenance of high standards of professional conduct and competence. I am accountable for all of my actions and to this Code of Ethics, and my acceptance of this fiduciary responsibility is expressed in all of my personal and professional relationships in that coaching may involve my direction of youth, adolescent or adult teams. I will follow these principles in all environments and abide by them completely when coaching.

This Code of Ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish ethical and approved behavior from those practices that are detrimental. The Code's secondary purpose is to promote soccer by stressing the proper functions expected of coaches in their dealings with players and the public.

There can be no success of the Rules of Ethics without the consent and support of those for whom it was established - the soccer coaches.

## **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES**

I pledge to maintain practices that protect the public and advance my profession; I will:

1. Maintain responsible association with the Illinois Youth Soccer Association, the Illinois State Soccer Association, all its affiliated leagues, its national programs and member organizations.
2. Continue personal and professional growth, remaining current on new developments in the field through continuing education.
3. Use my knowledge and professional association(s) for the benefit of the people I serve.
4. Always strive to be truthful and put colleagues or other professionals in a positive light.
5. Avoid discrimination in all of its forms.

## **COACH/ATHLETE RELATIONSHIPS**

I pledge to maintain relationships with athletes on a professional basis; I will:

1. Conduct all my relationships from a perspective of dignity and sound educational and scientific foundation to:
  - a. Direct comments or criticism relative to the performance, not the athlete.
  - b. Ensure that all activities are suitable for the age, experience and ability of the athletes.
  - c. Educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment, and to do my best to ensure that all facilities and equipment meet safety standards and that they are age appropriate.
  - d. Consider the athlete's future health and well being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue competing or training, and seek professional medical opinions to serve as a basis for my decisions.
  - e. Be aware of academic responsibilities; conduct practices and match schedules in a manner so as not to unduly interfere with academic success. Never encourage, condone, or require any behavior that threatens an athlete's high school, collegiate eligibility or amateur status.
2. Comply with regulations and ethical guidelines for recruiting practices as defined by the Illinois Youth Soccer Association, the Illinois State Soccer Association and all its affiliates.
3. Strive to develop individual and team respect for the ability of opponents.

4. Prioritize being present at all practices and competitions and, when unable to, assure knowledgeable and safe supervision.
5. Work with and strive to develop every member of the team.
6. Show sensitive regard for the moral, social, religious and sexual orientations of others and communities. I will not impose my beliefs on others.
7. Recognize the trust placed in, and the unique power of, the coach and athlete relationship. I will not exploit the dependency of athletes and will avoid dual relationships (e.g., business or close personal relationships) which could impair my professional judgment, compromise the integrity of the process and/or take advantage of the relationship for my own gain.

### ***RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS***

The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of his players.

Winning should be the result of preparation and discipline with considerable emphasis placed on the highest social ideals and character traits.

The Laws of Soccer were written to insure a continuous flow of action. These laws have the safety of the players as their primary goal. Coaches must always play within these rules and never seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to their players.

Coaches have a responsibility not to tolerate these types of behavior from their players regardless of the situation. Winning without boasting and losing without bitterness are lessons players can and should learn from the coach.

Medical problems should not be the responsibility of the coaches. The appropriate person should handle the diagnosis and treatment of injuries with coaches directing their players to seek competent medical attention and to follow physician's orders thoroughly and promptly.

Under no circumstances should a coach authorize the use of drugs. Medications, stimulants or drugs should be used only when authorized and supervised by a physician.

Circumvention of eligibility rules must be avoided.

Demands on players should pertain only to achieving success on the field and never be so extensive as to interfere with their academic progress.

### ***CONFIDENTIALITY***

I will respect the integrity and protect the welfare of all persons with whom I am working and pledge to safeguard information about them that has been learned or obtained during the coaching relationship, including performance reviews, statistics and all personal confidences. Further, I will obtain permission from athletes before sharing videotape recordings or other data of them with anyone except the recognized coaching staff; when current or former athletes are referred to in a publication, while teaching or in a public presentation that is not laudatory, their identity will be thoroughly disguised. The only exception to this will be that I will not use these standards of confidentiality to avoid intervention when it is necessary (e.g., when there is evidence of physical or psychological abuse of minors, or legal issues).

### ***STAFF/MEMBER RELATIONSHIPS***

All relationships with Members and staff will be maintained on a professional and confidential basis, and I will avoid exploiting their trust and dependency.

### ***RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE LEAGUE***

The function of the coach is to contribute to the education of the player through participation in soccer.

This must never be disregarded.

The coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity and dignity of their League are not compromised.

Coaches must not ask for special consideration for their players.

Coaches must not seek special consideration for themselves.

Coaches should discuss problems with their director and/or representative in a friendly manner and then accept and support their decision.

Coaches must support administrative decisions in all policies, rules and regulations regarding soccer.

## **RULES OF THE GAME**

Coaches must be acquainted thoroughly with the rules of soccer.

- They are responsible for seeing that their players understand the intent as well as the application of the rules of the game.
- Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the rules.
- Coaches who circumvent the rules to gain an advantage have no place in soccer.
- Coaches are responsible for their players' action on the field. Roughhouse tactics, illegal substitutions and deliberate faking of injuries are prohibited.
- Coaches must not permit their players to perform with the intent of causing injury to opposing players.
- If coaches permit, encourage or condone performance that is not in the letter or spirit of the laws they become derelict in their responsibilities to their players, and the sport. They must constantly strive to teach good sportsmanship; nothing less is acceptable.

## **OFFICIALS**

Soccer becomes chaos without impartial, competent officials.

- Officials must have the support of coaches.
- Public or private criticism of officials by coaches demeans the game.
- Coaches must refrain from criticizing officials to the players.
- Coaches should strive to attend officials' rules meetings.
- Coaches should also invite officials to discuss rule interpretations with their teams. It is very beneficial for all parties if a referee is invited to officiate scrimmages.

On game day, officials should be treated with respect.

- Coaches must not address the referee before, during or after a game in a demeaning fashion.
- They should demand the same from all members of their team.
- A coach must not incite players or spectators against the referees or the flow of the game. This violation is considered unworthy of any member of the Illinois Soccer Coaches Association.

## **GAME DAY AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, their League, the Illinois Soccer Coaches Association and soccer.

- Rival coaches should meet prior to the game and exchange friendly greetings.
- Soccer coaches have a responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible during a game.
- Coaches are encouraged to exhibit a friendly and kindly attitude towards their players.
- It shall be considered unethical for a coach to have any verbal dissent during the game with an opposing coach or bench.
- Physically contacting an opposing player must be considered behavior detrimental to the game and highly unethical.

## **FIELD & GOAL INSPECTION**

Coaches are required to ensure that all goals are securely anchored prior to the beginning of any practice or game.

In addition to the code of ethics set herein, as a member of the Illinois Soccer Coaches Association, you agree to respect the FIFA code of conduct.

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