

## COACHING YOUTH PLAYERS BY TONY GLAVIN

In my twenty-five plus years of coaching and researching youth players through coaching camps and select teams and, Olympic Development Teams I've made many discoveries and have come to many conclusions on the game of Soccer. Some of which may differ in philosophy from other coaches. However, I would like to share my thoughts and discoveries on the youth game with you.

To coach in the youth game, one must first understand the development phases of player development, as well as a little knowledge on child psychology (understanding how children learn). The coach must recognize the abilities of each player, and enhance those abilities while working on the individual parts of their game that need improvement. The coach should always promote unity within the team and emphasis should be on the team, not just one individual, however understanding it takes a group of individuals to make up the team.

Organizational skills are a must. Demonstration ability is necessary. Communication skills a definite. Not all coaches possess these abilities, if one does not; all is not at a loss. A good coach must recognize his/her ability and recruit the proper persons to fill in where he/she is lacking. The coach must remain in control and manage his/her staff well.

Brief explanations of practice and games should be shared with the parents of the players. This will help build trust and confidence in the coach and generally the coach will not be questioned when this is done on a frequent basis.

The main emphasis in the youth game should not be winning, but to have **FUN**. The proper techniques should be taught in a positive manner in a resourceful environment. This will help ensure progress for the player. Progress will happen not after one practice or one game, but over the course of a season and through many years of practice and participation.

Players react in a positive way to compliments from the coach. Try to be as complimentary as possible. Remember you are dealing with children who have not fully developed physically or mentally yet. Help improve their self-confidence by praising them as frequently as possible. Any negative influences within the group should be dealt with immediately and effectively, so they do not affect the individual or the team harmony.

The Coach is a leader. Lead by showing a good example; not just in preaching words. Action speaks louder than words. Always promote fair play and support it. Always display good sporting behavior, before the game, during the game and, after the game. Shake hands with opposing coach, players and, referees after each game no matter what the outcome may have been. Show our youth players to be gracious in winning, by not gloating and, gracious in losing, by not pouting. Accept the game for what it was and move on by looking forward to the experience of the next one.

Remind yourself, you are coaching young players to fulfill their needs and, not living out unfulfilled dreams. Help them improve their game by focusing on the needs of the children, and **not to win because you want to win**. Help the players to win and show them how to, by following our simple guidelines. **Remember you are forming the minds and skills of our future adults.**

***"PLAY THE GAME FOR GAMES SAKE"***

Keep these things in focus while involved with coaching kids.

- TONY GLAVIN

## **Tony Glavin Soccer Club**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

TGSC's mission is to provide a place to play for players of all abilities while helping each player grow, develop and meet their own goals in soccer.

"Play the game for game Sake" is our motto, and Player Development is the main focus of the club, Touches on the ball with emphasis on Technical training with lots of repetition is our training method, along with teaching each player how to integrate individual skill within the team concept.

Ultimately we wish for each player to be able to play and understand the various systems and formations in order to play at higher levels- High School, College, PDL or professional.

## **Tony Glavin Soccer Club**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

To develop as a club, each team must embrace the club policy in teaching from the same curriculum set by the Coaching Director and following the coaching methods set by same.

Age groups with multiple teams should be working together regardless of abilities, and coaches sharing ideas and methods for the betterment of the players.

Coaches must understand and follow the phases of development by teaching at the appropriate level.

Our Goals and Objectives are to produce players with good technical skills and, good tactical awareness by creating a teaching environment where players will learn and advance in the game. The focus should always be on developing the individual players skill set.

#### **Playing Time**

Each player should be given ample time on the field. Reasonable time is at least half the game.

Anything less is not supported by the club. A player can only improve if given the opportunity. Try to give all players on your roster a start.

#### **Style of Play**

We want to see our players building out of the back, showing comfort and composure on the ball, possession with a purpose through midfield, players showing creativity and having the ability to take players on in the attacking third of the field, to create goal scoring opportunities.

### **Technical Skills**

Improve each player with the focus on developing individual skill. Once the foundation is there, more complex functions can be performed by the player using their skill.

### **Realistic Goals**

Help each player reach their goal to play at a higher level, by pushing them appropriately and, age specific to the level of their desires.

### **Coach Motivation**

Coach with a level of excitement and enthusiasm as this will rub off on the younger players. Be positive with players. Keep practice fun, by creating small competitions and games.

### **Dealing with Parents**

Build a friendly rapport with parents by holding a meeting to explain your objectives and club policies. Let them know where their kid is in development. By doing these things conflicts can be avoided.

### **Winning & Losing**

This is something that is taught to children, so it is vital to teach the correct method winning and losing. Sometimes to appreciate the highs of winning we need to experience the lows of losing.

Winning is not just the result of the game, but more important the process during the game and the accomplishments of performing the skills during that game. Losing should not always be a low! When you play any game the outcome produces a winner and a loser. If you focus on the positive things like your next game, or the improvement the team made. The use of the glass is half full method will produce positive results. The focus should never be just on the score, but on how the team plays or the individual tasks performed by each player.

## The Player

The individual player is always at the center of our decision making process. Every decision reflects a desire to facilitate each and every player in reaching their own personal best, in soccer and life. To that end, coaches and parents are charged with the responsibility of teaching players in an individualized way that will get to the core of how that particular player learns and grows.

Coaches in particular must be willing to empower players to make decisions on the field that will allow them to explore the limitations of their abilities, in spite of the possibility this may make winning a specific game more difficult.

The player too has responsibilities. A player must realize that she or he represents themselves, their family, team and club every time they are part of any club function, game, practice or meeting. Players must show respect to each other, as well as, opponents, and coaches. Behavior is expected to not only be appropriate but to convey a sense of common courtesy and friendliness always but particularly on out of town tournaments.

Finally, a player must take personal responsibility for getting better. Without hard work and practicing on their own a player will likely not advance at a favorable rate. *With* dedication to getting better a player can find his or her own game within.

On the next page you will find a player's expectations sheet for players U11 and up. This may be amended for your team if you like.

## Glavin Player Commitment and Expectations

I:

- will play for the good of the game
- will play to have fun
- promise to play my hardest always, no matter what the score or situation
- will maintain a *constant positive attitude* no matter what the score or situation
- will play for my team, my club, myself and my family
- will accept results of a match gracefully
- will encourage my teammates with positive comments
- will report any injuries to my coach immediately
- understand I have much to learn about the game
- will accept help from my coach openly, because I know he wants me to be my best
- will learn and obey the laws of the game
- understand I am part of a team
- will treat my teammates with respect
- will treat myself with respect
- will treat my coaches and his or her decisions with respect
- will treat the game, the referee and my opponent with respect
- understand I must work to improve every day
- understand excellence is a choice *I* make
- understand there is no replacement for hard work
- understand my family wants the best for me
- will help them learn the game
- understand the game is strange and wonderful and sometimes out of my control
- understand I am part of the largest sport to exist in the history of mankind
- understand this connects me in some way to millions of children throughout the world
- understand I must appreciate the gift I have been given
- understand no matter how much I give to the game, it will always give me more
- will make ourselves and our families and our team proud, not because we win but because we will play always with pride, passion, creativity and love

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