

DSC Dynamos Team Manual – Updated Sep 2008

Team Philosophy

- **Team Philosophy (in this order)**
 - Have fun!
 - Development of skillful, well-rounded soccer players
 - Winning

- **Having fun**
 - Fun is NOT goofing around
 - Fun means being challenged to improve
 - Working hard can be enjoyable – it's not against the rules
 - Fun is being allowed to play freely without excessive interference from others (coaches, parents, referees etc.)
 - Fun is playing without fear of failure – fear kills fun and development

- **Development of Skillful, Well-Rounded Soccer Players**
 - Technique, technique, technique (e.g. ball control [receiving], dribbling, passing, shooting)
 - Practice structure (lots of one on one with ball; small-sided games)
 - Soccer homework (e.g. juggling, moves)
 - Guest trainers – team camp
 - Preparation - Rest/Hydration/Nutrition
 - Playing time (fair – not equal)
 - Rotation through multiple positions including goalkeeper – can't know best position yet
 - Good sportsmanship

- **Winning**
 - Winning is more than just winning games – nice but not the main thing in youth soccer
 - Winning means giving maximum effort – never giving up
 - Give everything. Lose nothing.
 - You can lose on the scoreboard but still be a winner on the field.
 - Winning means working hard to become the best you can be.

We will sometimes lose games because of this philosophy in the short term as we try to develop all players. We will NOT have starters pegged into positions and bench warmers. Buying into this philosophy is a condition of remaining on the team.

What type of player do we want to produce?

- Structured or instinctive?
- Dependent on the coach or independent?
- Obedient to instructions or able to solve problems?
- Focused on the coach or on the game?

We want to produce players that:

- are instinctive
- are creative
- take initiative
- express their individuality
- are able to think independently
- understand options
- solve problems
- own the game

Roles & Responsibilities

➤ **Coach: Sean Kelly (head coach)**

- To dress appropriately
- To communicate clearly
- To be on time for practices and games
- To plan practice sessions and plan for the game
- To treat players fairly (**note: fairly – not equally**)
- To encourage and be positive in correcting faults
- To have an adequate supply of soccer equipment
- To know emergency procedures – telephone numbers, first aid
- To be respectful of other coaches and parents
- To restrain overly-enthusiastic parents
- To be courteous to referees and other officials
- To listen to the parents and players
- To select professional trainers
- To know the rules of the game and teach these to the players
- To improve as a coach (e.g. coaching courses, books, DVDs, etc)
- Selects roster and team; decides on positions; allocates playing time
- To appoint a team manager/treasurer
- To appoint an assistant coach
- To discuss player progress with parents (e.g. evaluations)

➤ **Manager/Treasurer: Linda Cahill**

- To produce team contact list
- To organize a phone tree
- To handle league, tournament and MSYSA registrations
- To order uniforms
- To arrange practice location and times, in conjunction with the coaches
- To communicate with parents
- To communicate with club/league/tournament officials
- To help coordinate cancellation procedures
- To arrange team activities
- To support the coaches
- To influence parents regarding behavior at games
- To handle team bank account and finances

➤ **Parents**

- To make sure players arrive at practices and games on time
- To ensure player is properly equipped with ball, shoes, socks, shin guards, shorts, jersey and water/sports drink
- To stay at practices and games whenever possible to support your player and team
- To help the coaches wherever possible
- To inform coaches and/or manager if player cannot attend practice or a game
- To encourage your child and team but not insult or discourage the opposition
- To be enthusiastic, not critical
- To acknowledge the opposition's good plays
- To be sociable with other parents (including opponents)
- To support, not criticize, the referee and other officials
- To support, not criticize, the coaches
- To be positive and not let winning/losing change your attitude
- To communicate with the head coach on soccer related concerns (e.g. playing time, positions, etc) but NOT ON GAME DAY
- To pay fees in a timely manner

➤ **Player**

- To bring a ball to practice – properly inflated and correct size (U9-U12 size 4; U13+ size 5)
- To get to practices and games on time
- To listen to the coaches – no talking when the coaches are talking
- To respect coaches, parents, team mates, opponents and referees
- To play within the rules of the game
- To focus and try their best (maximum effort)
- To do their soccer homework
- To clean up their trash
- To have fun!

Guidelines on Practices/Games

➤ Practices

- We practice in the rain!
- Be at the practice unless you have an extremely good reason (inform coach/manager)
- Arrive at the field 5 mins before practice so that we are ready to start on time
- Bring a properly inflated size 4 ball
- Shin guards are **mandatory**
- No jewelry
- Bring sufficient water or sports drink (Gatorade)
- Dropping off
 - pick up on time
 - everyone can't do it, need at least 3 adults (including coaches) to stay (safety issue)
- Give coach and players space to work
 - Observe from a distance (too close if players can hear you)
 - Keep siblings and pets under control away from practice area
 - No coaching/instructions of any kind

➤ Games

- Preparation: rest, nutrition, hydration
- We may play in the rain!
- Be at the game unless you have an extremely good reason (inform coach/manager)
- Arrive at the field 30 mins before game time so that we can start warming up
- Bring a properly inflated size 4 ball
- Shin guards are **mandatory**
- No jewelry
- Bring both uniforms and socks (red and white) – **only official uniform items are acceptable**
- Bring sufficient water or sports drink (Gatorade)
- Dropping off
 - pick up on time
 - everyone can't do it, need at least 4 parents to stay (safety issue)
- Let players play
 - Stand back from the sidelines
 - No coaching/instructions (“pass”, “shoot”, “kick it”, “boot it”, “send it”)
 - Shout encouragement (“good pass”, “great shot”, “well done”, “nice try”)
 - Keep siblings and pets under control and off the field
- Do not argue with the opposing team (coaches/parents/players)
- Say NOTHING to the referee or assistant referees
- Game issues (playing time, playing positions) not to be discussed on game day

➤ Tournaments

- We may play in the rain!
- Rest, nutrition, hydration even more important
- Have snacks, drinks and all uniforms IN SOCCER BAGS!

Policy on Playing Time and Positions

Playing Time

Playing time will be allocated using the same criteria used for evaluating players for tryouts (see later in this document). Ability and impact in games is an important factor – but is only one of the factors used. For example, if a player shows lack of effort, is tired or is injured, he will be substituted out of the game.

Positions

In general, there are 4 “lines” in a soccer team:

- goalkeeper
- backs
- midfielders
- forwards/strikers

It is our policy to make sure that each player gains experience in each of the 4 lines. Therefore players will be exposed to multiple positions and lines over the course of a season (not necessarily in the same game). The coach will attempt to achieve this while at the same time considering whether a particular player is likely to enjoy some success in that position/line in any particular game.

Goalkeeper is a specialist position that also requires a positive attitude and extra athleticism. The coach may decide not to play certain players in the goalkeeper position.

Player Evaluations & Tryouts

Why have tryouts?

Players who leave (through their own choice or by that of the head coach) need to be replaced.

DSC Dynamos is a “select” (or “travel”) team. Select teams exist to give those players who are talented and committed every chance possible to develop to the best of their abilities. Select teams provide a means to have the talented, committed players play with and against each other. Players on select teams learn from coaches and trainers who are committed to developing themselves as well as the players they come into contact with.

Recreational or Classic teams exist to cater to players with a lesser degree of talent and/or commitment. Recreational teams also are a great vehicle for players and parents who want to stay together because they enjoy the social aspect of the sport more.

Why should a player leave the team?

If the head coach feels that a player’s development is best served elsewhere, then a decision will be made to not offer that player a roster spot for 2008/9. This does not mean that players will simply be replaced by better players who show up to tryouts. If a player is falling badly behind the main group, that’s a sign that the player is on the wrong team.

The player and/or parent may feel that the team is not a good fit (e.g. philosophy, commitment, coaching, playing time, playing position etc) and may decide to move elsewhere (either to another soccer team or another sport).

How will players be evaluated?

Existing players will be evaluated using the following criteria (for playing time as well as tryouts):

- Attendance and punctuality
- Attitude, behavior and sportsmanship
- Maximum focus and effort
- “Coachability” (listening to the coaches; responding to the coaching)
- Encouraging team mates
- Homework (e.g. juggling, foot skills, moves)
- Overall soccer technique, insight and impact
- Parental behavior - Do the parents support the coaches and team philosophy? Do they cause problems at games? Do they criticize the coaches and/or players? Do they coach from the sidelines?

Existing Dynamos have a big advantage over potential recruits. New players can only be evaluated on the basis of their soccer skills.