

CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT

NTSSA CODE OF ETHICS FOR COACHES

This code of ethics has been developed to clarify and distinguish approved and accepted professional, ethical and moral behavior from that which is detrimental to the development of the sport of soccer.

ARTICLE I RESPONSIBILITIES TO PLAYERS

1. The coach must never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of players. Winning should be the result of preparation and discipline with emphasis placed on the highest ideals and character traits.
2. Coaches shall instruct players to play within the written laws of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times.
3. Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to players.
4. Coaches should not tolerate inappropriate behavior from players regardless of the situation.
5. Demands on players' time should never be so extensive as to interfere with academic goals and progress. Motivation for excellence should include academics as well as athletics.
6. Coaches must never encourage players to violate NTSSA recruitment, eligibility or guest player rules and policies.
7. Under no circumstances should coaches authorize or encourage the use of medicinal or performance enhancing drugs. Players should be directed to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician's instructions regarding treatment and recovery. At no time should a player be put at risk by returning from injury prematurely or by being forced to play while injured.

ARTICLE II RESPONSIBILITY TO NTSSA AND MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

1. Adherence to all NTSSA and Member Association rules and policies, especially those regarding eligibility, team formation, recruiting and guest players are mandatory and should never be violated. It is the responsibility of every coach to know and understand these rules.
2. Player development and the growth of the player through participation is essential to the growth of the sport. Additionally, the coach must behave in such a manner that the principles, integrity and dignity of the sport are maintained.
3. Any problems that cannot be resolved between coaches should be referred to the appropriate NTSSA Commissioner, Member Association or League Commissioner immediately.

ARTICLE III RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LAWS OF THE GAME

1. Coaches should be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws of the game of soccer. Coaches are also responsible to ensure that their players understand the intent as well as the application of the laws.
2. Coaches must adhere to the letter and spirit of the laws of the game. Those coaches who circumvent the rules to gain advantage have no place in soccer.
3. Coaches are responsible for their players' actions on the field and must not permit them to perform with the intent of causing injury to opposing players.
4. If coaches permit, encourage or condone performance which is not in the letter or spirit of the laws, they are derelict in their responsibility to players, Member Associations, NTSSA and the sport worldwide. The coach must strive constantly to teach good sporting behavior.

ARTICLE IV RESPONSIBILITY TO OFFICIALS

1. Officials must have the support of coaches, players and spectators. Criticism of officials undermines their purpose in the game. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing officials in the presence of players.
2. Coaches should strive to develop a line of communication with officials, giving each an opportunity to better understand the problems relating to their specific area. This section shall not be taken as an encouragement to debate referee decisions during the match.
3. On game day, officials should be treated with respect before, during and after the game. Officials should be addressed as "Referee" or "Mr. /Mrs. Referee" and not by name. Professional respect should be mutual and there should be no demeaning dialogue or gesture between official, coach or player. Coaches must not incite players or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of play.
4. Comments regarding an official should be made in writing to the appropriate organization assigning the official.

ARTICLE V RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING SCOUTING AND RECRUITING

1. It is unethical to scout any team, by any means whatsoever, except in regularly scheduled games.
2. The use of video tape or motion picture equipment to scout an opponent's regularly scheduled games for the purpose of recruiting is unethical.
3. All NTSSA rules pertaining to recruiting shall be strictly observed by the coach, manager or any team representative.
4. It is unethical to recruit player(s) actively playing for another team.
5. It is unethical for a player to be recruited or enticed from the Olympic Development Program (ODP) setting, either by his ODP coach or any other coach, manager parent or team representative.
6. When discussing the advantages of his/her organization, the coach has an ethical obligation to be forthright and refrain from making derogatory remarks regarding other coaches, teams and organizations.
7. It is unethical for any coach to make a statement to a prospective athlete which cannot be fulfilled; illegal to promise any kind of compensation or inducement for play; and immoral to deliver same.
8. Allegations of illegal or unethical recruiting are very serious and should be based on concrete facts rather than hear-say and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of video tape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.

ARTICLE VI RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Coaches have a responsibility to promote the game of soccer to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, coaches, players, parents or the media should be positive and constructive, never prejudicial or inflammatory.
2. When asked to give a recommendation concerning team, camp, coach or organization, it is in the best interest of all concerned if no less than three referrals are given in order to provide a professional unbiased source of information.
3. Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public while representing their team, Member Association and NTSSA.
4. Publicly predicting a win is folly and serves no useful place in a coach's public image.
5. Comments stressing injuries, team, personnel conflicts, or disciplinary problems as an excuse for a loss or unsuccessful endeavor are detrimental and should be avoided.
6. It is unethical for a coach to solicit alumni, parents, booster club or managers to pressure organizations, Member Associations or NTSSA to alter established rules. The coach must not attempt to influence these organizations in political or financial dealings outside the framework of their own rules and bylaws.
7. The media should be allowed access to the players for comment. Players should be instructed in how to conduct themselves during an interview.

ARTICLE VII GAME DAY AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. A coach's behavior must be such as to bring credit to himself, his organization and the sport of soccer. This is never more evident than on the day of the contest.
2. Rival coaches should meet prior to the game and exchange friendly or professional greetings. While the concept of rivalry is wholly embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.
3. During play, coaches have a responsibility to be as inconspicuous as possible. Coaches shall exhibit a respectful attitude towards players. The coach must confine him/herself to the coaching area. The attitude of the coach towards officials, spectators, opposing players and coaches should be controlled and undemonstrative.
4. It shall be unethical for a coach to have any verbal altercation with an opposing coach or bench during the game. Hostile physical contact with a player is considered highly unethical.
5. The Coaches foremost post game responsibility is his/her team.
6. Coaches should use their influence on unfriendly spectators that demonstrate intimidating behavior towards officials and opposing teams.