

METUCHEN TOWN SOCCER CLUB
PO BOX 445
METUCHEN, NJ 08840-0445
(732) 494-9093
www.metuchensoccer.com

2008

MEMO FOR COACHES AND ASSISTANT COACHES

Please read this entire memo. It outlines various important matters.

This is a non-competitive recreational league. We have worked hard to try to make teams as equal as possible, but sometimes a team may just work well together and seem to dominate. If you're coaching one of these teams, try to be sensitive to the situation. We are very much against teams that run up high scores against others. Please remember that we are doing this for all the children in our league. No coach at this level should get pleasure from seeing the discouraged faces of a demoralized losing team.

If you find you are scoring easily and are ahead by several goals, there are some adjustments that can be made. Here are some examples of strategies that you can try: Put your best offensive player in goal. Put other strong offensive players on defense. Tell your players that if they are up by three or more goals they should only attempt to score with their "weak" foot. "Accidentally" take one player off the field and play down one player. After a player scores, take them out and substitute a weaker player. Tell your goal scorers that you want everyone else on the team to score a goal before they try to score again. Tell your players that if they are up by three goals they should string together at least three passes before anyone attempts to score; if ahead by four goals, four passes; five goals, five passes; etc. If you find you have the stronger team week after week, please discuss these strategies with your players during practice. Remind your players that good sportsmanship is an important skill to develop.

All kids play the same amount of Saturday game time regardless of their skill level. We are a recreational league. In our league winning is not determined by a score, winning is when all the kids - on both teams - have fun. If the children are having fun they will stay with the game and learn the skills as they get older. We do not keep standings. Every child gets the same trophy at the end of the season.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

Children should play equal time at each position. During the season all kids should be offered equal opportunity to be the goalie (alternate goalies each quarter). However, children that do not want to be the goalie should not be forced to do so. Children may express a preference to play just offense or just defense. Coaches do not have to honor these requests.

All kids play the same amount of Saturday game time regardless of whether or not they come to practice. Many children cannot come to practice because of the time requirements of the parents. Don't penalize the child for this. If they can practice a different night, help them find a coach they can practice with. Some kids in traveling soccer don't come to our practice because they already play & practice soccer 4 other days a week. This is also understandable.

Remember we keep teams small so that each child has more chances to kick the ball. Fun in soccer is from kicking the ball. While this leaves several kids as substitutes, the only thing more depressing than being a substitute is getting into the game and not having a chance to kick the ball.

Coaches arriving for the first Saturday morning game (and first practice on weekdays) should walk the field to remove any debris. Also check the nets to make sure there are no parts that have come loose and might pose a hazard to the players.

Drop-Outs: If you are advised by a parent that their child will not be playing this year, call the Club phone (494-9093, selection 4) and leave a message or send an email to the Club at registrationinfo@metuchensoccer.com. Children are signing up to play even after the season has started. We can more evenly distribute these children among the teams if we know which teams have lost players. If a child does not show up for the first 2 games, confirm with the parents if they still intend to play.

New Players: Do not accept any new players on your team unless they have been assigned to you by MTSC. We have had situations in the past where parents have not registered, but have gone to coaches indicating that they have. They should not be participating. It is required that they register and sign the liability waiver.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

Extra Team Shirt In Bag: Keep it clean at least through the 5th game of the season. It is for children who sign up after the season has started. Later in season use it to equalize the teams if one team has more players than the other.

Spelling of Names: **Check the spelling of the names on your roster.** Ask the child or parent if the spelling is correct. This is the spelling that will be used on the trophies. If there are any mistakes, call the Club phone 494-9093, selection 4 and leave a message explaining the mistake, or send an email to the Club at registrationinfo@metuchensoccer.com with Player Name Spelling Error as the subject. Coaches not communicating mistakes will be asked to take the trophy to the supplier to be fixed.

Practices: Kindergarten teams and 1st grade teams do not have a separate weeknight practice. Instead they practice for 15-30 minutes before each game. Teams of 2nd grade and older are expected to practice one weeknight each week. (See separate practice schedule for additional information.)

Begin and End Games On Time: Teams should be at the field 10 - 15 minutes before game time, ready to begin play. Game schedule times are for field use. Even if you start late, you must have your team off the field at the end of your scheduled game time. It is the responsibility of the coaches to make sure that the field is open for the next game, even if you must cut your game short.

Rain-Outs: On Saturday mornings when the weather is questionable, the fields are inspected between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. By 8 a.m., a rainout message is posted on the club website www.metuchensoccer.com.

Remember

1. Some fields may be rained-out while other fields are still playable. Rain-out information will specify which fields are rained-out and which fields are playable. Please relay this information accurately. Some families with 2 children are occasionally told that all games are cancelled when in fact one child's game may be cancelled and the other child's games is being played.
2. The Club will call rain-outs only at the beginning of Saturday mornings. If the weather gets worse during the day, coaches need to make their own decision as to whether a game can be played. Remember, the safety of the children is the most important factor. Do not play on muddy fields.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

3. The Club does not check the fields or make phone calls for weekday practices. The decision to cancel or postpone a weekday practice needs to be made and communicated to the players by the coach.
4. We do not make-up rain-outs.

Equipment: All participants are required to wear shin guards to games and practices. Coaches should check for compliance. Soccer shoes are recommended, but not required. Participants should bring a soccer ball to practices. **Please do not ask your players to wear matching socks and shorts. This is not Club policy and detracts from the non-competitive recreational philosophy of the Club. Parents should not be asked to incur additional expense to participate in our Club. Thank you for your cooperation.**

Field Bags: The field bags contain:

- 1 first aid kit
- 4 ice packs
- 2 red and 2 yellow mesh pinnies; for help in lending players between teams. (If these are used, please remember to put them back in the bag.)
- 6 cones and approx. 20 discs; the cones are for marking the corners and midpoint of the field and the discs are for marking the sidelines and endlines of field if the sidelines and endlines are not painted.

Kindergarten and 1st grade: the bags are kept in the shed at Edgar Field.

2nd grade and 3rd, 4th, 5th grade: the bags are kept in the grey plastic field box next to the baseball diamond

6th, 7th, 8th grade: the bags are kept in the closet next to the bathroom near the baseball field

Goals:

Kindergarten and 1st grade goals (Edgar): Coaches for the first game of the day will move the goals into place. Coaches from the last game will remove the goals from the field and store them properly. Ask the parents to help you. The kindergarten goals are kept in a locked box at Edgar Field. Coaches are given the key to the lock on the box. The coaches and parents from the last game of the day should return the kindergarten goals to the box and lock the box. The first grade goals are stored along the fence near the box.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

2nd grade goals (Myrtle): The games are played on the baseball infield portion of the field (Northwest corner). The goals need to be moved over the sidelines and onto the field before the first game and must be moved off the field past the sidelines after the last game. Please carry them off the field. Do not drag them. Dragging the goals across the turf will damage the turf and the goals. The joints of the goals will break if too much pressure is applied to a corner.

3rd, 4th, 5th grade goals (Myrtle): The 3-4-5 mixed division games are played across the field on the South side (right and center field). The 3-4-5 girls' division games are played in the Northeast corner of the field (left field). The goals need to be moved over the sidelines and onto the field before the first game and must be moved off the field past the sidelines after the last game. Please utilize the wheels, which make them easier to move. Do not drag them. Dragging the goals across the turf will damage the turf and the goals. The joints of the goals will break if too much pressure is applied to a corner.

6th, 7th, 8th grade goals (Hampton): These goals may be moved by the coaches as needed.

Bathrooms:

K & 1st Grade (Edgar): There are porta-potties in the parking lot.

2nd Grade, 3rd, 4th, 5th Grades (Myrtle) and 6th, 7th, 8th Grades (Hampton): The key will be kept in the field box. If you have the last game of the day at Myrtle or Hampton please make sure the bathrooms are locked before you leave.

Schedule of Game Times: See separate memo.

Length of Games: See separate memo.

Players on the Field: The teams are kept small to maximize the chances of a player being able to kick the ball. If one team is short players, the coaches will agree to either share players or to play a lesser number per side. Teams should be equal in numbers on the field.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

Kindergarten: (2 games simultaneously) 4 on 4 or 5 on 5 (no goalie)

1st grade and 2nd grade: 6 on 6 (This includes the goalie.)

3rd grade through 5th grades: 6 on 6 or 7 on 7 (This includes the goalie.)

6th grade through 8th grades: 11 on 11, or small sided at coaches' discretion.

Coaches on the Field:

Teams 2nd grade and older: Coaches and assistant coaches should coach from the sidelines, not the endlines. (An assistant coach may help coach the goalie from behind the goal line, but the team should be coached from the sidelines). Coaches and assistant coaches should **not** be on the field during the game, except if no referee shows up, in which case one coach or assistant coach may be referee, alternating the responsibility with the other team.

Teams Kindergarten & 1st grade: Only **one** coach from each team should be on the field during the game. (This may be an assistant coach instead of a coach) These coaches should serve as both referee and coach. **The other coaches and assistant coaches should remain off the field.** One assistant coach may stand next to their goal (off the field) helping the goalie and other defensive members of the team. The other assistant coach may stand on the side of the field, helping to coach and also help keep track of substitutions.

Parents on the Field: Parents (other than coaches) are not allowed on the field during the game.

Referees: (Teams 2nd grade and older only) Do not criticize the referees. A questionable or erroneous call by a referee is not an excuse for abusive behavior by a coach or assistant coach. If you want to discuss something with the referee do it between periods. Any problems with referees should be emailed to the Club at registrationinfo@metuchensoccer.com. Be specific as to the problem and the game it occurred in, including team numbers. If a referee does not show up for your game, one coach or assistant coach may be referee, alternating the responsibility with the other team.

Throw-ins, Substitutions & Penalty Kicks, Goal Kicks: See separate memo regarding rules of play.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

Coaching Certification: All coaches & assistant coaches must be certified. All Coaches and Assistant Coaches must attend the **Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y.** clinic program, even those certified by other organizations. This program was designed to comply with New Jersey's "Little League Law," which extends partial civil immunity to coaches who have attended such a program. This course only needs to be taken once. If you have previously taken the **Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y.** clinic, you do not need to take it again.

Photo Night: Give photo envelopes to parents so that they may take it home and review choices before photo night. Encourage all players to come. Inform parents that all people in the team photo get a team photo for free, even if they do not buy anything. Also, team photos are used for sponsor plaques. They look nicer if as many team members as possible are in the photo. Advise parents to come to photo night at least 15 minutes before your scheduled time. All teams should be ready to enter at the assigned time. (See separate schedule for date, location and your assigned time.) (See separate instructions provided by the photo company with the photo envelopes.)

Litter: Please ask your team parent to bring a small plastic bag to each game for litter. Ask them to please pick up litter from the field after the game. Have the other parents help too.

Half-time or post-game refreshments: These are optional. *Food is not permitted on Myrtle Field and any food must be eaten off the field. In addition, do not bring any drinks other than water onto Myrtle Field. This means no Gatorade or similar drinks, and no coffee.* Thank you for your cooperation.

If your team decides to have refreshments, please choose healthy snacks such as grapes or orange slices, and please make sure you clean up afterward.

Water: Players should be reminded to bring their own water bottles. For younger teams, the coach should decide if you want the team parent to make a schedule for one parent each week to bring a gallon bottle of water and cups as back-up.

Year-end party: Consider a year-end party for team. Have team parent collect from parents and make arrangements. Please try to patronize our sponsor organizations when scheduling your team party.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

Lights for Weeknight Practices:

LIGHTS FOR CHARLES FIELD

The light switches for Charles Field are located in the small building located straight ahead as you enter the parking lot between Myrtle and Charles Fields from East Walnut Street. It is the same building that has the bathrooms. The door to the light switches is the door that faces Charles Field. The key will be kept in the field box on Myrtle Field. When you enter the room there is a light switch for the light in this room just to the left of the door. Along the left wall, in the left corner are two electrical switch boxes that operate the lights for Charles Field. They are about the size of a loaf of bread. Each box has a big red button that says "START" and a big black button that says "STOP". Each box controls about 1/2 the lights. Press both START buttons to turn the lights on. The lights go on slowly so be patient. Press both STOP buttons to turn the lights off.

IMPORTANT RULES FOR CHARLES FIELD LIGHTS

1. Once you turn the lights off, they must stay off for 10 minutes before they can be turned back on. So before turning the lights off, make sure you intend for them to stay off.
2. If you turn the lights on, when you are ready to leave, if another team is still practicing, you must ask the coach of that team if he or she will take responsibility for turning the lights off. If they will not, they must leave when you leave. If they say yes, obtain and keep a record of the name of that coach. If the lights are left on all night, you will be blamed for it unless you can identify who else was responsible for turning them off. A fine may be imposed by the Borough of Metuchen if the lights are left on all night.
3. Remember to return the key to the field box on Myrtle after your practice. Do not take it home with you by mistake. If the lights on Myrtle Field are off, you will need to point your car lights onto the field to get to the field box.

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COACHES' MEMO (continued)

LIGHTS FOR MYRTLE FIELD

The light switches for Myrtle Field are located in the large gray electrical cabinet located on the right as you enter the Myrtle Field parking lot from the driveway off of Orchard Street. (Not the driveway between Myrtle and Charles Fields.) (If you were playing baseball at the field, it is behind the fence in right field corner.) The key for the lock on the electrical cabinet is kept in the field box. Inside the electrical cabinet there is a circuit breaker switch to turn on each bank of lights. The lights go on slowly, so be patient. **Only turn on the lights marked soccer!!!**

IMPORTANT RULES FOR MYRTLE FIELD LIGHTS

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2. If you turn the lights on, when you are ready to leave, if another team is still practicing, you may ask the coach of that team if she or he will take responsibility for turning the lights off. If they will not, they must leave when you leave. If they say yes, obtain and keep a record of the name of that coach. If the lights are left on all night, you will be blamed for it unless you can identify who else was responsible for turning them off. A fine may be imposed by the Borough of Metuchen if the lights are left on all night.
3. Before you turn off the lights at Myrtle, make sure everyone is off the field and in their cars. There are no lights in the Orchard Street parking lot and it gets very dark very quickly after the field lights go out.
4. Remember to return the key to the field box after your practice. Do not take it home with you by mistake. You will need to point your car lights onto the field to get to the box once the field lights are off.