



Sherwood Youth Soccer Club

July Recreational Newsletter

Mark Your Calendar:

7/30 – Tursi Uniform Sale
8/15 – Team Practices Start
9/10 – Soccer Jamboree

Week of Aug. 1st

G3, G4, G5 GIRLS Placement

Week of Aug. 8th

G3, G4, G5 BOYS Placement



Director of Soccer Programs Notes

I am thrilled to see that our soccer season is just around the corner. I was able to take some time with our coaches recently to discuss the vision and direction that I want to take the program. I wanted to update anyone who wasn't able to make the meeting, and that includes our parents. US Soccer is really making a push to change how we coach and develop players. I support most of those changes, although I also recognize that implementing things takes time and some coaches are going to disagree or resist those changes. That is all perfectly normal.

One fundamental change I am trying to make with the Sherwood program is that I want coaches to follow a development model. Basically, our Kinder thru 2nd grade players should be taught the technical side of the game, which I call the development stage. This means teaching and reinforcing how to properly dribble, pass and shoot. As I have noted in prior newsletters, these players are challenged to focus on more than one thing on the field. They aren't ready for learning wall passes or spacing or compactness on defense. Those are tactical aspects of the game and should be taught at the next age level. We actually want the littlest ones to be in their natural environment, which is an individual game. I realize this seems really backwards, but when you focus on skills thru games and activities, allowing them to simply play, they grow to enjoy the game. As parents (and coaches), we need to sit back at games and just cheer them on. No need to tell Johnny to pass or play the ball to open space. It is okay to just let them have fun. I promise, Johnny will catch on eventually to the passing, teamwork and space when he goes to the next stage. The next stage covers 3rd thru 5th and this is another important time for development. Coaches are now reinforcing the technical skills while introducing the tactical part of the game, such as offside and passing ahead of a player. Kids now have the mental and physical characteristics to handle more components of the game and grasp the tactical side. I call this stage the learning stage. Finally, we have the playing stage, which is from 6th to 8th grade. At these ages they are putting together everything that they have learned so far. Coaches are spending time coaching and directing at this age, whereas, we look to them as teachers from Kinder thru 5th.

Now, why do I even bring this up? I am writing about this because there are many ways to lead our club coaches. One of those is to focus on winning. Take the best player and tell everyone else to feed him or her the ball. Center your coaching on the top few players and make them the best they can be. Parents want to win, so the coach looks like a pro if they win game after game. Another approach is to develop all of the players. Will you lose games? Yes, absolutely! Is that okay? Yes, kids learn important life skills when they lose. In the end, will most of the players on the team enjoy the season and feel like a part of a team and then want to return? I hope so. This is the philosophy I am trying to instill in our coaches, but the parents also have to be on board. If coaches follow my lead and develop players, but lose some games, parents then think the coach is terrible because they are losing. At that point it all falls apart. I am not paying the coaches, so I have zero influence outside of a general vision. My motto is "develop players in a fun environment". Very simple. I want to see players learn the game and become better, while also having fun doing so. You can have fun practices that also teach important skills.

Another aspect of the changes that we want to see happen has to do with the games themselves. I am asking coaches to spend their time working with and developing kids in practices and allowing them to play in games. The problem with this is that I ask coaches to just give general direction and scope at a game and not "joystick" the game and what happens is the parents kick in double-time to coach the game. This will be very difficult to implement because I know as a coach it is hard not to tell Johnny to guard Bobby and be goal side of him. I also know that parents are going to struggle with staying quiet on the sidelines and only provide encouragement. The thing is that until Johnny is burned by Bobby for not marking goal side, he is going to struggle to figure it out. We generally learn best from making mistakes. I had an instructor in a soccer class give me a great way to view it. Do we allow parents to view a classroom and see what is happening? Yes. Do we allow a parent to walk up to Johnny during the test and give him all of the answers? No. The same should apply for soccer. Parents are welcome to watch the games, but they shouldn't be directing their son or daughter. Not only is that the coaches job, but it is also not helping your child. It is not allowing them to make mistakes and learn from them. We need to let them play!

I realize that this is all great in theory, but will be hard to implement. It will take time to see results from the efforts put in place by coaches and parents to improve the game. In the end, it is about the kids and finding ways to engage them in the sport and have fun too!

Academy Program Head Coach

Our academy program is players in Kindergarten thru 2nd grade. I am thrilled to announce that Rick Woidyla will be leading our academy program this year. Rick is a highly experienced coach and eager to work with our coaches to help develop our youngest players. Rick will be running some joint team practices, helping individual coaches with practices if they want and also leading some coach clinics. Thank you Rick for helping us this year.

Placement Practices

Placement practices start next week. Girls are Aug. 1-4 and boys are Aug. 8-11. Check in is 5:45 pm. 3rd and 5th grades at Edy and 4th grades at Laurel. All players need to be wearing cleats and shin guards and bring a size 4 ball and plenty of water. No forms needed. Those will be collected by the coach at the first practice. Players who miss practices will be placed on a team by our registrar.



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Heading the Ball & Concussion Awareness



On November 9th, 2015, a joint statement was released from several major soccer associations (including US Soccer) regarding a resolution that was reached in litigation related to concussions. Part of that statement provided specific initiatives to be implemented related to player safety. One initiative has to do with heading the ball and the elimination of heading for all players ages 10 and under and limiting heading during practices for players between the ages of 11 and 13.

As Director of Soccer Programs, I want to express my opinion on this matter and then outline how the club will be proceeding with these new initiatives. First, I have two different stances on this matter. At the competitive level, I completely agree with the guidelines being established by US Soccer and OYSA (Oregon Youth Soccer Association). Players who are 10 years old or younger should not take chances with heading the ball. The risk is greater than the reward at this age when heading the ball. The 11 thru 13 year old players should be taught proper heading, but in a very limited fashion. The older players should be informed of the risks and play as they see fit.

That is my stance for COMPETITIVE soccer. For REC soccer, I wholeheartedly believe there should be no heading with the exception of high school where they are old enough to be informed and decide on their own. My difference in stance between competitive and rec simply comes down to coaching and objectives of the two very different programs. Most, if not all, coaches at the competitive level have some kind of playing background or licensing. They should be able to teach proper heading and gradually introduce the skill appropriately. That is not the case for rec soccer. Coaches are volunteers. Some can certainly teach heading, but many are not equipped with that knowledge. Do we really want our young players to either not learn the skill at all or even worse, be taught inappropriately how to head the ball and then look for opportunities to put that into play in practices or games? Improper heading is the real danger (along with incidental contact involving the head). In addition, rec is about having fun and honestly, no players are going to the MLS straight from rec. If they want to become professional players they will need some kind of competitive play experience and at that point they will learn to head the ball. One of my primary responsibilities and that of the club is the safety of our players and I believe (many will disagree) eliminating heading is best.

So, what will happen going forward? We are part of a league for all games that we play in the fall. That league, THJSL (Tualatin Hills Junior Soccer League) recently voted to eliminate all heading for teams 6th grade and younger. We will support their rule change and also implement no heading for our academy play which is not part of the league. When a player on a team in 6th grade or younger heads the ball then the opposing team will take possession of the ball at the point of the foul. For teams 7th grade and older, heading will be allowed. To make sure we are teaching safe heading for these older ages we will have both written instructions and a video for coaches to watch, which will be found on the coaches website. We are going to really encourage coaches to take the time to learn proper heading and slowly introduce that to players for 7th grade and older. No heading will be taught for 6th grade and younger.

If US Soccer is concerned about concussions and limiting their occurrence for our youth then we need to take this matter seriously. I have no desire to be the one who decides to play this loosely and ends up being approached 20 years from now by someone who has a serious brain injury and wants to know why I did nothing about it. We all want the game to be as pure as possible, but not at the expense of serious long term injury in recreational play.

Social Media



Be sure to follow us on Facebook this season. We will be posting updates throughout the fall. Please be sure to send us pictures to post with our Sherwood soccer players.



GO USA!
2016 Olympics

Fun Soccer Facts

More than 80% of the world's soccer balls are produced in Pakistan.

Red Cards - During a soccer match played in Paraguay between Sportivo Ameliano and General Caballero, a total of 20 red cards were shown.

13 Pounds - Weight of World Cup trophy