

## **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. (The term "Coach" shall include, but is not limited to Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s), Manager/Trainer and/or Team Representative.)

### **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, or supplements of any kind whether legal or illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter. Medication and supplementation of any kind should be the responsibility of the parents and/or legal guardian. 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.
8. A coach's dealings with players and parents must be upfront, honest, and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to players and parents.

### **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.
4. A coach's dealings with **NTSSA** and Member Associations (including playing leagues) must be upfront, honest, and forthright. Coaches must always be honest and refrain from misrepresentations to **NTSSA** and Member Associations (including playing leagues).

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### **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 that 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./Ms. 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 videotape 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 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 hearsay and innuendo. While documentation of recruiting violations is essential, the use of videotape and other electronic equipment is discouraged.

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## **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 coach's 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.
7. Coaches must act in a professional manner at all times when in the presence of players, whether at games, practices, or in any other setting. A coach demonstrating behavior that could be considered by a reasonable person to be irrational, inappropriate, or unbecoming an adult will not be tolerated. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Lewd gestures or remarks
  - Overly critical remarks
  - Ranting and raving
  - Snide or demeaning remarks
  - Threatening behavior or remarks
  - Physical confrontations
  - Temper outbursts

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All Member Associations are directed to form their own ethics committee and to hold hearings--WITH THE PARTIES HAVING THE RIGHT TO BE PRESENT--on alleged violations of the Code of Ethics when properly submitted.