



The Post Season Tournament Coach

A Primer

Introduction

I agreed to coach my first tournament team in 2009, the GU12 'D' team. Obviously this 'D' squad was new to the whole post-season experience, just like myself. The one thing that was pervasive throughout the team however was a desire to play, and the pride to be selected to an 'all-star' team. Beyond that I was not too smart about what it was I was getting myself into. Sure, I had coached some regular season teams, and that was pretty simple stuff, but I soon found out that it was a whole new ballgame in the postseason.

Firstly, no one was there to tell me what tournaments I should be applying for. And the fact that for some desirable tournaments it was already too late to get in, even if they weren't being held for months! The application process itself was a new challenge, and pity the coach that didn't get it right! Signatures, checks, referee assignments, medical forms, player and parent commitment letters, Player ID cards, and on and on. Who knew? I certainly didn't, and though many were telling me if I had any questions to just give them a call, what do you do when you don't even know the questions to ask?

Hopefully this primer will help you as you journey the tournament season adventure. I certainly wish I had this back in the day. Now it seems old-hat, but trust me, this may be your best friend as you embark on this most fascinating and rewarding journey!

Alex

Note: You will see related items in the space to the left. These are meant to explain a concept in depth, or to provide links to areas on the web where you can and should go for either more information or resources. This primer does not replace the guidelines posted online for all tournament teams.

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1 Team Selection

choose (up) sides

to select from a group to be on opposing sides for a debate, fight, or game. (Fixed order.)

"Let's choose up sides and play soccer." "The children chose up sides and began the game."

As you have been selected to coach a post-season team let me be the first to congratulate you! The normal process for selecting your team goes something like this:

You will find yourself invited to a meeting where you, your assistant coach, the Division Director, and most likely an impartial Board Member will go over the submitted players under consideration for participation on your team. During this meeting you will go over the merits of each player, considering their skill level, knowledge of the game, coachability, commitment, desire, and intangibles. These intangibles will include the families' commitment to the program, attendance to both practices and games in the 'Core' season, and the ability of the family to help with volunteerism. Volunteerism primarily means will this family be able to provide a ref to do games at the tournaments, as this is the primary duty of the team outside of the participation in games. You will need a ref team that can donate their time, possibly conflicting with their own players games, in order to fulfill the referee requirements every team will be required to fulfill. This is extremely important! The tournaments will tell you that if you don't fulfill your requirements they will not return your sizable referee deposit, but the region itself prides itself on all its teams supplying a ref team so that the tournaments are able to provide qualified referees for all games. Even if you decide to bite the bullet and choose to forfeit your ref deposit, the region will not appreciate this tactic. So consider who your refs are as a consideration for who makes your team.

However, if your team was formed after a number of teams have already been formed (and I'm guessing that may be most of you reading this now) your team is going to have a bit different experience. If your division has an Extra team, and possibly 2, and a first "All Star" team has been formed, you may call yourself an 'All Star' team but in reality you are actually a 'Tournament' team. But even here it gets confusing. *.....continued*

1 Team Selection

Technically, the term 'All Star' really only pertains to the first team formed (beyond the Extra teams). This designation is invented/required by the Area so that each region can send their 'All Star' team to the Area All Star playoffs, to determine which region will be sending their team on to the Sectional playoffs, and so on. Once the 'All Star' playoffs are concluded, or our region's team gets bounced, that team also becomes simply a 'Tournament' team. The sole purpose of these teams is to play in tournaments staged throughout the area and beyond. Technically there are no 'All Star' teams except for these playoffs. However every player who lands on a Tournament team considers themselves an 'All Star', and whose to deny them that? But the distinction is important. Here's why. Say you were the last team formed. Your players are very spirited, very committed, and very happy to be playing more soccer. Hooray for them, and for you. But, this does not bely the fact that they are not as talented, as knowledgeable, and possibly athletic as the players from the other teams. (There are always exceptions but this mostly holds true). While it is exciting to play in tournaments, it's not so exciting to get crushed in every match you play. This gets old quick, and your players will be disappointed.

Cheer up, there's a tried and true path to happiness here! The normal path for these more 'developmental' teams is to join a Spring League at the start of the season. This generally means approx. 8-10 weeks of one game on the weekends, against teams with mostly comparable skill levels. This, along with your practices will give your players a chance to gel, improve, and build confidence. Once the Spring season ends, there will be the opportunity to participate in 2-4 tournaments where the competition is such that you may have a chance to make some noise. I have coached teams that fall into this category, and trust me the players love it, have lots of fun, and improve greatly. If this is where your team should be, don't fight it, embrace it. It has given me some of the best moments in my coaching career!

1 Team Selection



From the AYSO Region 76 website, team selection policies:
<http://www.ayso76.org/PostSeason/post-selection.cfm>

During this selection process you will argue the merits and qualifications of all these players. Remember that you will not have the final say in the selection of your team. AYSO stresses that the teams are not the 'property' of the coaches, or any individual, actually. Instead the team is selected by the 'committee', and in this the responsibility is shared amongst the people in the room. This is key, as inevitably there will be parents who will be upset that Johnny was not chosen for the 'A' team, or Suzanne landed on a team without her best friend Lulu. You will be very happy that you can deflect these complaints by stating that the process as defined on the Region website states the process used by the selection committee and no one individual makes any definitive calls on player selection.

Once the selection process has concluded, you will be told when you may start contacting your parents and inviting their son/daughter to the team. There will be some players that will turn down the opportunity for a myriad of reasons, so you need to have selected additional players to be in a 'reserve' position should any of your players decline the offer. It is important that you not contact your player invitees until the Region tells you as there are issues of some divisions leaking invites before others, and the possibility that some families may have 2 or more players hoping to hear that they are all invited to a team. It may affect their decision to join up or not, and so it is best to wait until the Region has completed all of the divisions' selection process. Remember that in some divisions there may only be one team formed, whereas in others (U10 for example) there may be up to 5 teams formed, and of course this will take longer to complete.

1 Team Selection



The 'Upside'

The presumption here is that if you are reading this primer you are most likely a Post Season Tournament coach for the first time. This in itself is a great thing for many reasons. For one, the program has identified you as a valuable coach that will help the program provide additional opportunities to the girls and boys who wish to play soccer beyond the 'Core' season. But what you also need to know is that the parents of your players are extremely happy that their child is finally an 'all-star', and look to you as their leader in this journey. Unfortunately this also means that these parents in general have no idea what the experience, and of course the commitment is that they are signing up for. They will need as much guidance as their children will. But that is an opportunity as well as a task. You have the opportunity to establish your own ground rules, and set expectations for the season as well. More on this later in this primer, but don't underestimate this opportunity!

Additionally however, having the last team formed in your division (if indeed this pertains to you) means that though all the relevant participants are initially very happy to have you take on these players that desperately want to keep playing, after a short time their focus will be on their own teams, and you will be pretty much on your own. You will always be able to find someone that can help you navigate the season, but don't expect your team to be a priority to anyone except yourself. Thus choosing the right Team Administrator will help you immensely if that person has previous tournament experience. Additionally, you can request that you have a mentor assigned by the Region that will guide you through the process. These mentors are drawn from experienced Post-Season coaches who have made all the mistakes and have moved well past them. They will be happy to take on a rookie and have a vast store of knowledge that will help you throughout the season. Contact the Tournament Director or the Coach Administrators to access this benefit.

1 Team Selection

The Kickoff Meeting



Once you have your team you will need to organize your first team meeting. Usually you will coordinate this with your Team Administrator (See next chapter). In this meeting you will go over:

- Player and Staff Introductions and Backgrounds
- Coaching Style
- Practice day(s) and times
- Player commitment (including FAMILY commitment!!)
- Season Expectations: season length, possible tournaments, scrimmage opportunities, etc.
- Typical Tournament logistics (travel, hotels, etc; see below)
- Volunteer Responsibilities (Primarily, you need refs!!)
- Contact preferences (what's your REAL best number??)
- Team Bonding (team name, individual player contributions, i.e., team roles, leaders, etc)

There may be other items that you will come up with for this meeting, but if you cover these items you will be well on your way to developing a team dynamic that will carry you on throughout the season. It should be stressed that this is the opportunity for you to establish your own expectations and the 'rules' that will be expected of all families for the season. This is not to be taken lightly. You will inevitably be challenged by irresponsible parents, bringing their players late to practice, not letting you know in a timely fashion whether their kids are available for a tournament, etc. This is the chance for you to set the ground rules for the season. Do it now, and no one will be able to say they just didn't 'know' they were supposed to do this or that. It WILL come up later, and you will be thankful that you set expectations right away so you have ammo when the inevitable slacker parent raises their head to take you on!

From the AYSO Region 76 website, Team Administrator Duties:
<http://www.ayso76.org/Volunteer/team-admin.cfm>

2 The Team Administrator

To website or not to website:

The screenshot shows a Shutterfly team website for 'WISHBONE CATS'. The page has a navigation menu with 'Home', 'Pictures & Videos', 'Roster', 'Calendar', 'Availability', and 'Team Store'. Below the menu are three photos: a team group photo, a close-up of a player, and a coach with a player. The main content area includes a welcome message, a message board, a 'Picture of the week' section, a 'Files' section, and 'Upcoming events'.

Shutterfly provides a great template for a team website that can organize all of the Team Administrator's duties in one easy to find place. It handles a tournament and practice calendar, attendance signup section, maps to tournaments, documents that families can download to get all the information about game times, locations, etc. for each tournament, an email function to easily contact all of your team in one easy place, a section for photos and videos, and much more. It's easy to set up, and if it's made clear to the families that this is where all of the information will be available for all team activity, the families will use it and like it. I suggest that you explore this as an option for your team. It doesn't cost anything and is very useful.

Hopefully by the time you have held the Kickoff Meeting you found your Team Administrator. But what do you look for in this person? Based on the myriad of responsibilities you are hoping he/she will take on, a parent who is trustworthy, responsible, very organized, and wants to take a larger role in their child's activities. Did I say organized? The team Administrator's duties will hopefully include applying (or at least helping to apply) to all tournaments, tracking down signatures from various officials, wrangling parents and players, requesting attendance notifications from families, organizing the snack schedule, bugging families about paying their fees, and in general rallying the parents so that the tournaments are well attended and coordinated. Then there's the possibility of a Shutterfly website for your team! A great tool that can make life so much easier, but one that will need some time and energy put into it. (see sidebar) After all we as coaches want to coach. We don't want nor need to do all of these other things. And it's a good idea not getting too involved in these issues as you need the families and players on board with what you do best, and not distracted by your pleadings for participation notices. It would be nice if your candidate has performed the job in the past, perhaps for an older sibling who was on a team as well. This will get you off and running much quicker! This person will just in general make your life easier, or if you choose an inappropriate parent, much more difficult. Don't simply pick the first person to raise their hand. It's important enough to risk hurting some feelings. I picked the wrong parent one year and ended up doing the entire job myself. So choose wisely, Grasshopper!

From the AYSO website; Team Administrator duties:
<http://www.ayso76.org/Volunteer/team-admin.cfm>

3 Money, Money, Money

Sticker Shock

So you think \$600 is a lot to ask of the families to proceed through a season of tournaments. Maybe you're thinking if I ask them for half now and maybe half later that will be easier than getting all of it right away. This is a bad idea for a couple reasons. You will need money right away to start applying for tournaments. You may even be waitlisted for some because you did not get the application in on time. The tournaments now have our money, and if you stay on the waitlist they will not give it back until after the tournament is over. This means you may not have enough to apply to the next tournament, or the one after that. The window for applying is months before the tournament is held, and they will then take 3-4 weeks to return your check. You simply have to have cashflow to make this work!

Secondly, if the families are not totally happy about how the season is going for their precious kid, they may not be so quick to pay the rest of the fees. You don't want to become a bill collector! Get the money as quickly and totally as possible, then move on. One bright spot is if you plan on joining a Spring League, that is usually the cost of one tournament, and will take care of 8-10 weeks of your season, a great bargain! So if this is your intended path, you may only need to ask for around \$400-450 from each family. But get it upfront, trust me on this one!

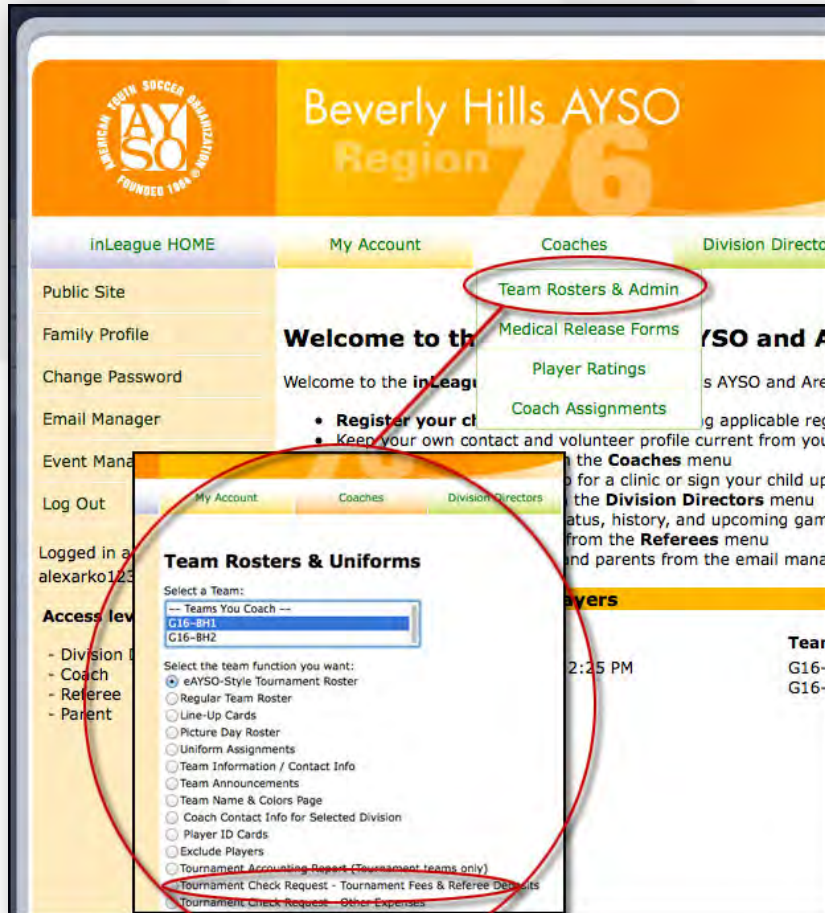
Okay, seems pretty easy so far! But you don't have your team funded yet, and here it where it gets interesting! You will need money to enter tournaments, buy uniforms, and then there's that pesky 'Administration Fee' that the League is charging. Tournaments will run you anywhere from \$350-\$600, and you will need to pay a referee deposit to guarantee you will bring a ref team to the tournament and ref the games assigned to your team. This is generally in the \$200 range. (In some cases you might want to join a Spring League, and that may lessen your overall cash needs. *See sidebar to the left*)

It has worked out in the past that approximately \$600 per player has been a good number. This may seem like a lot, but besides the above mentioned expenses, this will fund approximately 8 tournaments, and that seems to be the sweet spot for a tournament season. You may choose to attend more, in which case you may need to add a second round of funding. If you enter fewer than 8, you may get some money back. The Region does hold your money but will give whatever's left back. It's best to announce this fee, and strongly urge your parents to pay up ASAP. There will be some you will have to follow up on, but the fewer of those the better. DO NOT allow any parent to go more than 4 weeks without paying into the team 'bank', unless you have made a prior arrangement with them. There is financial aid available, and that is taken care of through our Region's Registrar. If you have a family that wants aid, contact the Registrar and she will take it from there.

The parents contribute their fee online via the website, just as they did when signing up their child for the Core Program. It's simple and straightforward, and takes only minutes. Your Division Director will help if anyone cannot figure out the process. Get this item past you as quickly as possible, and enlist your Team Administrator to help track down the tardy families!

continued...

3 Money, Money, Money



Coaches' Team Administration page from the AYSO 76 website

Now that you have some money in the team bank, how does it work? The Region will deduct the Administration fee early on in the process. Around the middle of the season they will inform you that they are deducting the cost of the uniforms from your account. The rest of the money is to be used to enter tournaments, and a Spring League if that is your choice. Once you have chosen a tournament to apply to (more on that topic later) you will fill out your paperwork and submit that to the appropriate officials for signatures. You then will request a check via your online Team Administration control panels found on the AYSO76.org website. To access this you must sign in as a 'Registered User', then go to the 'Coaches' pulldown and access your team's various administrative options. One will be 'Tournament Check Request', and there you will fill out the specifics to get a check cut for that tournament. Checks generally take 7-10 days to cut, so make sure you request them early. You will have to pick up the checks from the Controller's home, or wherever they have decided works best for them that particular season. After you have your signed application forms back, you package the whole bundle up and send with the check to the tournament. I will go into the Application process in more depth below, but that's the short version.

You do not handle any money directly. AYSO is very specific about this. Families must pay their fees online. You will have some parents that just can't figure the process out. In other cases the parents will be divorced, and they will both contribute a portion to their players dues. This is completely acceptable. You can also use the money in your bank to purchase miscellaneous tournament related things, like a pizza lunch when you simply can't make a restaurant in between games. Keep your receipts, and then submit them to the controller for reimbursement. But remember, you can only have so many pizza lunches before you are asking your parents for more money to complete the season!

4 It's Just Practice!

"We're sitting here, and I'm supposed to be the franchise player, and we're talking about practice."

"I mean listen, we're sitting here talking about practice, not a game, not a game, not a game, but we're talking about practice."

"I know it's important, I honestly do, but we're talking about practice."

"We're talking about practice man."

"We're talking about practice."

"We're talking about practice."

"We're not talking about the game."

"We're talking about practice."

"When you come to the arena, and you see me play, you've seen me play right, you've seen me give everything I've got, but we're talking about practice right now."

"Hey I hear you, it's funny to me too, hey it's strange to me too, but we're talking about practice man, we're not even talking about the game, when it actually matters, we're talking about practice."

Alan Iverson, 5/7/1992



Practice? Practice?

Yes, it's just practice, but don't underestimate the impact the wrong practice day has on your team's development! Say you randomly choose a Wednesday evening. You get a good field and away you go! But when you get there, all ready to enlighten 15 young, impressionable players on the wonders of the 4-3-3, you find only 8 players show up! How can you teach the 4-3-3 when half of your team will have no idea what you are talking about come game time? Or say you want to show the proper way to run the offside trap, but half your defense is out with Hebrew School, and you find out that because one player has no clue what they should be doing, your offside trap becomes a swinging gate to the goal for the other team! Get on the same page with your families and pick a day that will work for all, or at least most. The difference between having 8 players and 12-15 at practice may mean a successful season or one where nothing you do seems to help make any progress. Not all families will be good with any one day. But find a day that most can make, then work on those families that say they can't. It's good to stress the honor of being selected to a team, and the importance of attending all practices at the Kickoff meeting. Let the parents know you expect their child to be committed, and in turn the whole family be committed as well. In a worst case scenario you may have to bring out the 'those that practice, play' card.

Get with the parents at the Kickoff meeting and pick a day. It will be obvious which day will be favored by most families, and also obvious that no one day will work for all. This may help you overcome the one or two families that complain that they weren't considered when the day was picked. They simply just didn't get the day they wanted.

5

Tournaments

How to find them, how to pick them

AYSO National Tournament Calendar

http://www.ayso.org/events/tournament_info/tournament_calendar.aspx

The screenshot shows the AYSO website's tournament calendar. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: Home, Why Join AYSO?, Parents, Coaches & Referees, Region Boards, Areas & Sections, Programs, Events. Below this is a sidebar with links: Tournament Tips, News, Calendar, Hosting A Tournament, Resources, Coach Certification Requirements, National Games. The main content area is titled 'Tournament Calendar' and lists tournaments by month. For November 2013, it lists the 'Huntington Beach Thanksgiving Turkey Tournament' and the 'Panther Shootout'. The Huntington Beach tournament details include location (Huntington Beach, CA), dates (November 29-30, 2013), and fee (\$450 U-10, \$500 U-12/U-14; No referee deposit). The Panther Shootout details include location (Newbury Park, CA), dates (November 29-30, 2013), and age groups (U-10, U-12, and U-14 boys and girls).

Okay, so where do I find these tournaments, and which ones are best for my team?

Finding them is easy. The National AYSO website has a calendar of all sanctioned tournaments scheduled. Any AYSO region that wishes to hold a tournament must register it through the National organization. This way they can monitor and standardize certain aspects so that all tournaments behave. This is good news for you. Once you figure out where to find the calendar of events, and go through the process of applying to and being accepted to any given tournament, applying to the rest will be very similar. Using the link to the left on this page, you will find the tournaments organized by date. You can plan out your entire season based on the notion that you will be scheduling 7-8 tournaments over 16-20 weeks. One every other week is quite a few, and will burn through your bank with a 4-6 weeks left in the season. There are many ways to fill in the gaps, with scrimmages against other teams in the Area, beach soccer, etc. And BTW, not all tournaments are equal! You should rely on the coaches and directors in your region that have gone through a tournament season for advice on which tournaments are the 'right' ones for your team. Factors involved will be: level of competition, is this a location that can be driven to both days as opposed to being a 'hotel' tournament, will I be caught in a competition with teams from my own region for admittance? Some popular tournaments will only accept a certain number of teams from one region. If this is your first team, you will most likely get squeezed out of a tournament for this very reason. Get with an experienced coach or Board member and ask them to help you plan out your season. You may want to just map out the first few months, but just remember, some tournaments fill up fast! If you are not on top of it you may miss out! *continued...*

5 Tournaments

How to find them, how to pick them



So which tournaments should I look at?

There are some tournaments that the league will encourage you to go to, and in some instances require you to attend. This last category includes our region's 'Sportsmanship Cup'. This tournament is usually scheduled in mid-December, after the core season is done. Your team will already be entered, and you will have to provide volunteers to help make the tournament happen. This is a requirement, and the region will not make exceptions. Make sure your parents are aware of this, and that they will be doing their share. If not, there will be ramifications.

Other tournaments of note are, in no particular order; Santa Clarita Showdown, Camarillo Strawberry Cup, Corona Pony Express, Thousand Oaks Pot of Gold, San Diego's Top Gun, and the big one, Riverside Locomotion. There are others as well, and you may indeed choose others for your team based on competition level, but these tend to be the ones that are most sought out. You need to look at these tournaments on the AYSO National website. It will give a summary of the details, such as dates, cost, etc., with a link to the tournament website. Take a look at one that comes up in January to familiarize yourself with how they present the information. I will go into the actual process of applying to a tournament later in this document, but this will give you an idea of what you will be looking at once you do start applying.

You will want to go to one tournament at least that will require you to stay overnight in a hotel. This experience is something the players all enjoy greatly, and one that all kids should experience once in their life. They will always remember it, and it's worth the cost of a hotel room. The usual tournament where this happens is Riverside. You should circle this tournament and make every effort to attend if possible.

continued...

5 Tournaments

Timing

“Sorry, you’re too late to apply for that one!”



The first time I heard this my jaw dropped! This was for a tournament I applied for that was 3 months away! Such is the challenge you face when you are traveling this journey for the first time! I applied for Riverside Locomotion after I was told you HAVE to go to this one! Unfortunately, they only take a maximum of 3 teams from any one region in each division, and as I was the rookie (coaching the ‘D’ team) I was out of luck here. This one every team wants to go to, and as such they apply immediately once the window opens. Now other tournaments may let you apply up to 3-4 weeks prior, others fill up quickly (see tournament suggestions on previous page) and if you are not on top of it you will be out of luck. This is why it is important to plan out your season at the earliest point you can, getting suggestions and advice from an experienced Post-season coach. And watch that calendar for the application window!

Some tournaments the region will take over the task of submitting applications. This is because we have a relationship with the tournament and it guarantees us a certain number of slots for each division. However, most of these tournaments only allow 3 teams per division per region. If you are not in the top 3 in pecking order you will most likely be out of luck for these tournaments.

This is also why you need to get with your parents and find out if there are any ‘Black Hole’ weekends where you just can’t get a full squad together. You will want to space your tournaments out so that you don’t have tournaments on consecutive weekends, although in some cases this might be inevitable, especially later in the season. Knowing which tournaments fill up quickly, and when you need to apply to have a chance of being accepted, takes a lot of diligence. Working with your Team Administrator to identify and track these tournaments will give you a fighting chance of getting into them.

5 Tournaments

COMMITMENT

Here's the time where we get to the heart of the team. Player and Family commitment may be the toughest aspect of the season ahead that you will face. The thing you have going for you is that you probably have been given a 'C' or 'D' team, and as such you couldn't be luckier! Yes, I said it. Having a lower rated team, perhaps even an afterthought team, you have players that would probably not have a chance at a higher level team, but have hoped for and dreamed about being on an 'All Star' team, and are now on your team. This means that your players are totally psyched to be selected, and your families are forever grateful that their child is getting the dream they have hoped for. It doesn't matter that this could very well be the last team assembled in the division. These kids will give you everything you ask for, and ask you what else they can do!

The parents are so glad that their kids are getting their dream, they might do whatever you ask them. This is what I call the 'I didn't expect this what can I possibly do for you' Syndrome. The parents are so grateful, and the kids are so happy to be selected, that you could literally have a free ride to do what you want and have near total buy-in from your families. Do not underestimate this, but don't take it for granted! As you progress up to the 'B', 'or even the 'A' team, you will find this wonderful atmosphere diminishes amongst higher expectations and personal priorities. Enjoy the moment, but understand that you have a unique opportunity to set the rules for the team and know that with few exceptions you will have complete support from your parents. Don't waste this opportunity! Set the guidelines and expectations early, and take control of your team now! You may never have this opportunity again!

1. THOU SHALT NOT BE LATE
TO PRACTICE!

2. THOU SHALT NOT FORGET
TO BRING SNACK

3. THOU SHALT NOT FORGET
THY BALL

4. THOU WATER BOTTLE SHALL
BE FULL AND TASTY!

5. THOU SHALT NOT FORGET
TO TELL COACH WHEN
THOU ART NOT COMING TO
PRACTICE

6. THOU SHALT NOT MOAN
ABOUT PLAYING TIME

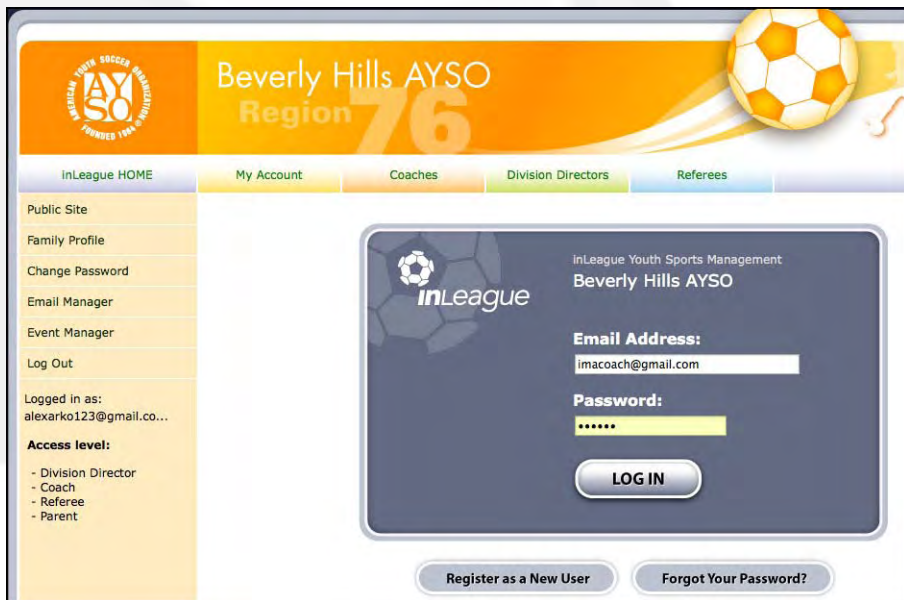
7. THOU SHALT PLAY KEEPER
WHEN COACH SAYS SO

8. THOU SHALT NOT TALK
WHEN COACH IS TALKING

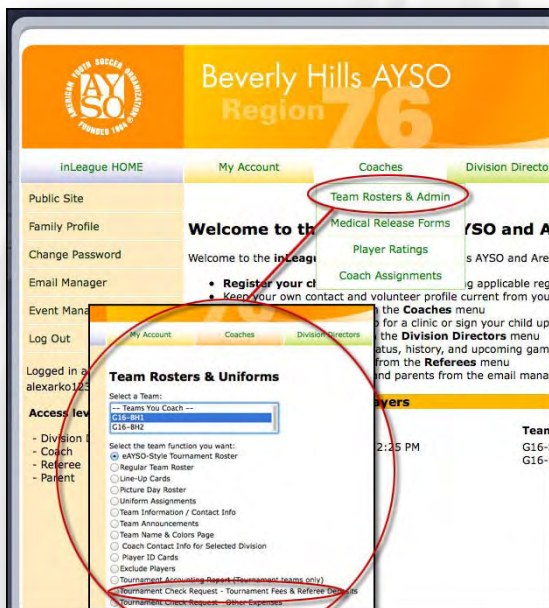
9. THOU SHALT NOT CURSE
AND THROW THINGS AT
THOU REFEREE

10. THOU SHALT NOT TAKE
THE NAME OF THY COACH
IN VAIN

6 Region 76 Website / eAYSO



<https://www.ayso76.net/inleague/>



Team Administration

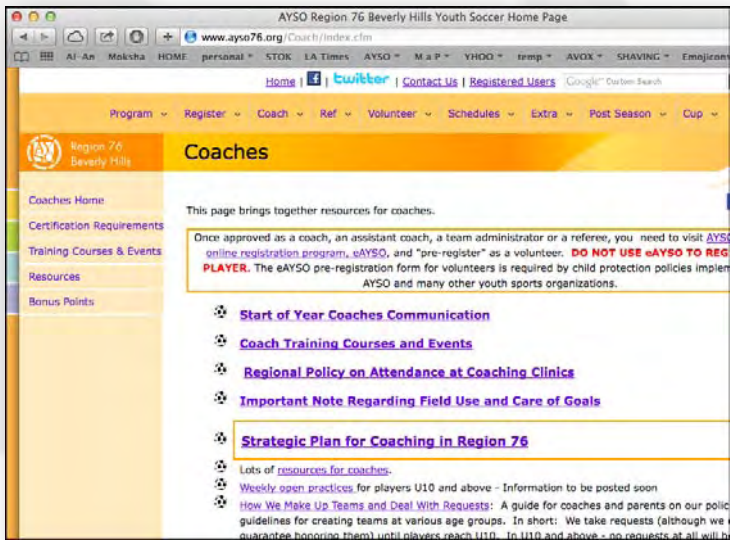
So one would have to assume that if you have been selected as a Post-Season coach, that you have also already coached at least one season in the Core program. This being the case you should be somewhat familiar with the Region's website. You have administered your team through this website, used the contacts that are found here to communicate with your families, printed out lineup cards for the games, etc. You will find that the process is similar with your post-season team, but there are more things you will need to be aware of, and more areas to keep track of. For instance you will have access to and control of your team's bank. You will be printing out your Team Rosters, Med forms, and player ID cards. You will need to input your team name and uniform assignments. And you will be making check requests for tournaments applications, and possibly other expenses. This is all accessed through the Team Administration area (see left) of the site. Your Team Administrator will also have access to all of these areas, as will your assistant coach. It is probably best that you go over how you want to handle each of these tasks. Too many cooks.....

In addition to the administration of your team, the website contains many useful tools to help you navigate the season. Among these:

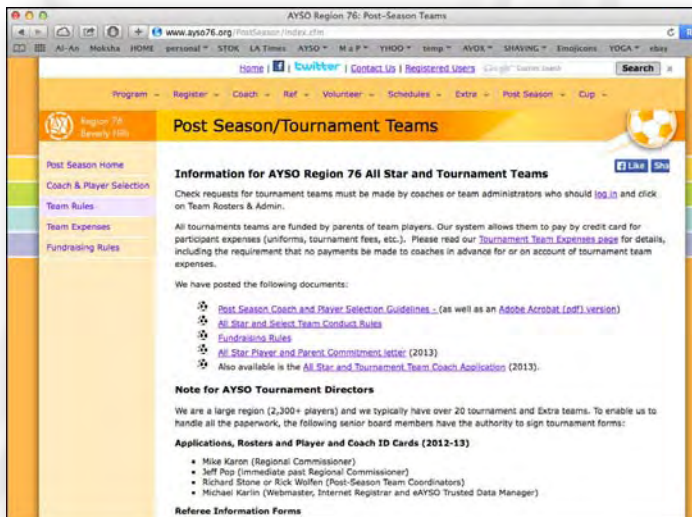
- A Board directory that will help you decide who you should ask for help
- Post-Season Home Page:
- Coach and Player Selection Guidelines
- All Star and Extra Team Conduct Rules
- Fundraising Rules
- Player and Parent Commitment Letter (need these)
- Team Fundraising Procedures

continued...

6 Region 76 Website / eAYSO



Coach Homepage: <http://www.ayso76.org/Coach/index.cfm>



Postseason Homepage: <http://www.ayso76.org/PostSeason/index.cfm>

Additional Features

After exploring the Team Administration features of the site, you should check out other areas as well. From the Home Page you can access the 'Coach' pulldown menu. Go to the 'Coach' home page and you will find many articles pertaining to being a coach in Region 76. There are many resources, including practice sessions, drills, guides for most of the divisions, as well as links to other sites with great resources. If you are looking for a couple of drills for your practice that starts in an hour, check here and you will find plenty of relevant information for every age group. Eventually you will find your own resources online that you like and trust, but here is a good way to get started. The coach who thinks he or she can't learn anything new or has all the drills and plans he needs is a poor coach. Just as his players need to explore new drills and methods, tactics and such, a coach needs to keep upgrading his own education to keep ahead of his players.

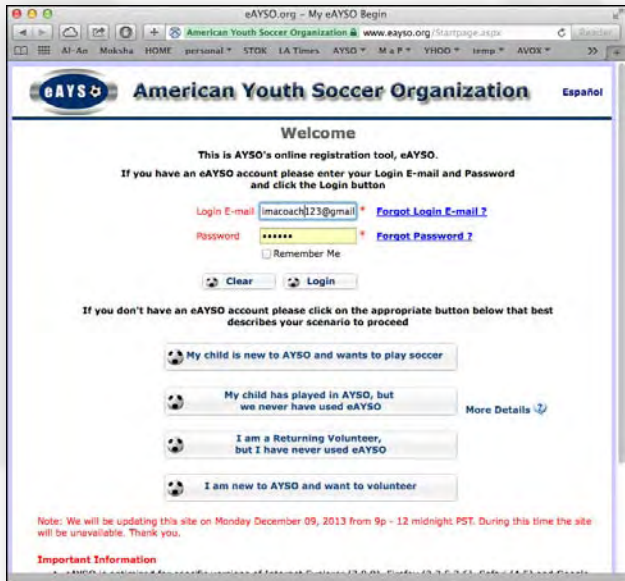
The referee section of the site is a good one to be familiar with. It will help you when your ref teams ask you what, how, when, etc. Like it or not, it's a rare team who has a competent referee who will volunteer to wrangle the other refs on the team for tournaments. This is usually left to the coach, and he/she better understand how the process works. More on that later.

eAYSO

When applying for a tournament you will need information found here. This site is where all the records are kept for AYSO as a national organization. Any volunteer can find their official record here. This would include when you took the Safe Haven course (required of ALL volunteers),

continued...

6 Region 76 Website / eAYSO



eAYSO startpage: <https://www.eayso.org/Startpage.aspx>



eAYSO homepage: https://www.eayso.org/my_eayso_homepage.aspx

eAYSO cont.

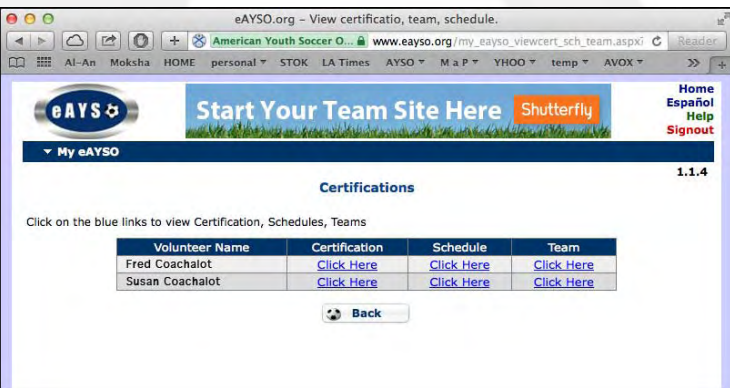
...all of the courses you have taken, both referee and coaching, and teams that have been assigned to you. To sign in you will generally use the same Username and Password as you do for Region 76's site. Once in, click on 'view certification'. Here you will have tabs for the different categories that you have certification for. It will tell you when you took the course, whether it be for a referee or coach, even Safe Haven. Write this information down and store it for later. You will also need some of this information for your referee team, so you will need to be very explicit about what information you need and how to access it on this site. Remember every volunteer will need to reapply as a returning adult volunteer, EVERY season! I will lay it out here for you to copy and paste into an email:

Referees, I am going to need some information from each of you for our tournament applications. Specifically, I will need your AYSO ID#, certification level, the date you took the Safe Haven course, cellphone #, and address. To get the date you took Safe Haven and your ID#, go to:

- <https://www.eayso.org>
- Login using your Region 76 website Username and Password
- If you have not yet, click on 'Apply as a returning adult volunteer', and follow the instructions. If this option is not selectable, this means you have already done this
- Click on 'view certification'
- If necessary, click on your name under 'certification'
- Here you will see your AYSO ID# in the upper right, write it down
- Click on the 'Referee' tab to view certification.

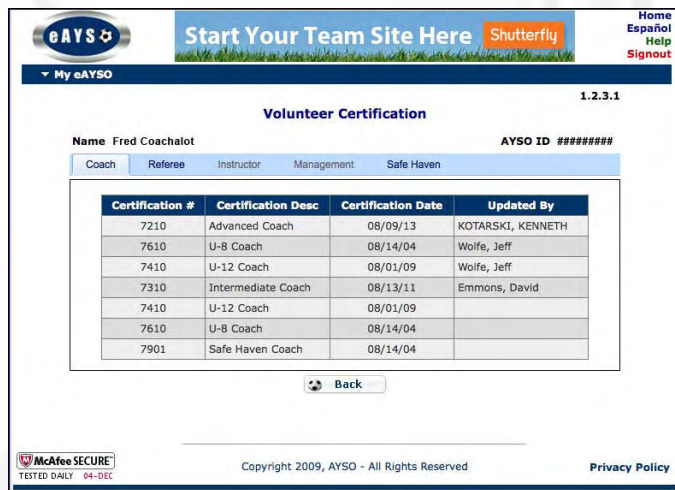
continued...

6 Region 76 Website / eAYSO



Select name...

https://www.eayso.org/my_eayso_viewcert_sch_team.aspx?strvalue=C



View Certification:

https://www.eayso.org/my_eayso_volunteercertification.aspx

eAYSO cont.

- Note the highest certification and write it down
- Click on the 'Safe Haven' tab
- Note the date you took the course, write it down

Now email me all the information from above:

1- AYSO ID#

2- Highest Referee Certification

3- Date you took the Safe Haven course

4- Cellphone # and address

You will want to keep this information handy. You will NOT want to ask your refs to find this information a second time. I will talk about Information Management in the next chapter. For now, just keep all this information handy.

7

The Application Process

Overview



Okay, you've picked a tournament. Actually one may have picked you. If you did not choose to go to a Thanksgiving 'Turkey' tournament, most likely your first tournament will be the **Beverly Hills Sportsmanship Cup**. Applying for this tournament is like no other. In a sense you are already entered. You simply have to go through the task of applying online. It's quick and easy. There are however some unique aspects about this tournament. The theme is about 'Sportsmanship' (how odd, you might say) and in actuality the games don't count toward medals. The games are played more as 'friendlies', and the only awards given out are for the team that displays the qualities of respect, caring, hospitality, and of course sportsmanship! Frequently teams will give away little gift bags to their opponents, as well as to the referees. This is the tournament to ref, because treating the refs well will help your cause. And guess who gets to grade your team? The refs! So have fun and remember, the refs never get a call wrong in this tournament!

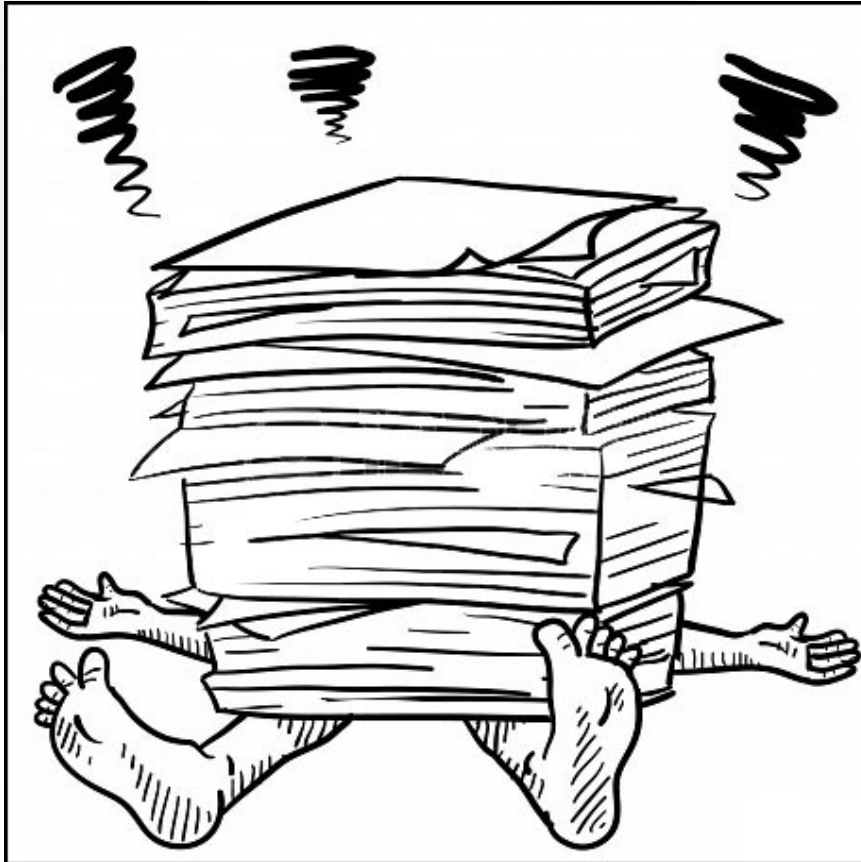
But what happens in a normal tournament? What is the application process? As discussed earlier, it is nearly the same for every AYSO tournament. There are 4 forms that need to be dealt with; The Application itself, the Referee Form, the Team Roster, and finally the lineup cards. There are other forms, but those come into play only for special circumstances, explained later. Every tournament will have its own website, or at the least a section of that region's website. You will find all the forms on this site, whether individually or downloadable, in a 'packet'. Also on the site you can get information such as the application window, teams that have already been accepted, logistics, suggestions for hotels and things to do, places to eat nearby, directions, field maps and more. In some cases you may be able to apply online, though most likely you will still need a signed roster and referee form.

continued....

7

The Application Process

Overview



All of the rules for the tournament will be explained in the 'Application'. Included will be items covering game duration for each division, playoff rules, point systems, referee commitments, check-in times, etc. Though these are fairly standard, read them carefully as each tournament tends to be slightly different in one or more aspects. It will also explain what happens in case of a rainout or other event causing delay or cancellation of the tournament. Don't take for granted these tournament guidelines. Read them.

Information Management

One thing that you will find is that in filling out these forms you will be continually inputting mostly the same information for all of them. Your Team Roster can be generated through your Administrative area for your team on the region 76 site, but the other 2, the 'Application' and the 'Referee Form' all need to be filled out by you, each time. Name, AYSO ID#, phone #'s, sometimes addresses, email addresses, date that each coach or referee was certified, level of certification, and the date each took the Safe Haven course will all be needed to complete these forms. You definitely don't want to be tracking all that information down for every application!

I assembled all that information in a Microsoft Excel document. I also put all the families contact information in this as well. In this way I can have all this information in a convenient and easily transferrable place. I have also put this information in a Google Doc in the cloud. Then I could access it from many different devices and locations. Whether you do this as well, or simply use a Word document, put it somewhere you won't lose it. It will make the Process much easier, and faster as well! This will also come in handy later on when we discuss the 'Tournament Package'.

7 The Application Process

The Forms

As we mentioned earlier there are 4 basic forms that need to be submitted for every application. They are:



- The Application
- Team Roster
- Referee Team
- Lineup Cards

These will be found on the Tournament's website, as mentioned earlier, and is usually included in what is called the 'Tournament Packet'.

The Application

This document is fairly boilerplate, as are all the forms, but you still need to go through them beginning to end as the tournaments will put all the specifics of their tournament in this document. Dates, locations, cost, etc. is included in this doc. The information they are looking from you are: Team Area, Region, Division, Head Coach contact info, certification level, Safe Haven certification date, AYSO ID#, Assistant Coach information (same as head coach), What type of team you are, (i.e., Extra, All Star) an honest evaluation of your teams' relative strength to the other teams in your region, overall team strength, and a few other items. It's important that you fill this last section out truthfully. It wouldn't be fair if you are the weakest team in your region, but you were placed in a higher competitive bracket because one of our other teams rated themselves inordinately low to get an easier draw. Tournaments will soon discover the sandbaggers, and will not hesitate to punish in their own way. Don't ruin the region's reputation for the sake of a couple wins!

This form, once filled out, needs to go to the Regional Commissioner (RC) or his designee for a signature (and of course he will also see how you have rated your team!). Fill this out and put aside, as you will need that signature on other forms as well.

 18th ANNUAL RIVERSIDE LOCOMOTION AYSO Invitational February 17 - 20, 2012 TOURNAMENT APPLICATION		
Section: <u>1</u>	Area: <u>P</u>	Region: <u>76</u> City: <u>Beverly Hills</u>
Team Name: _____	Division (circle one): <u>U14</u> U12 U10 Boys <u>Girls</u>	
Team Contact: <u>Alex John Arko</u>	Day Phone: <u>323-###-####</u> Eve Phone: <u>323-###-####</u>	
Team Contact Email: <u>alexarko###@gmail.com</u>	Emergency Contact Phone: <u>323-###-####</u>	
Address: <u>### South Stanley Ave</u>	City: <u>Los Angeles</u> State: <u>CA</u> Zip: <u>90019</u>	
Coach: <u>Alex John Arko</u>	Day Phone: <u>323-###-####</u> Eve Phone: <u>323-###-####</u>	
Coach Email Address: <u>alexarko###@gmail.com</u>	AYSO ID#: <u>#####</u> Shirt Size <u>L</u>	
Coach AYSO Training Level: <u>Intermediate</u>	Coach Safe Haven Date: <u>8/14/2004</u>	
Asst. Coach: _____	Day Phone: _____ Eve Phone: _____	
Asst. Coach Email: _____	AYSO ID#: _____ Shirt Size _____	
Asst. Coach AYSO Training Level: _____	Asst. Coach Safe Haven Date: _____	
Team Rating Criteria		
1. We are an Allstar/Tournament team, the only one from our region.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
2. We are an Allstar/Tournament team, one of _____ teams in our division from our region	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
3. We are a spring/fall regular season team	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
4. We are a spring select team, the only one from our region	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
5. We are a spring select team, one of <u>2</u> teams from our region	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. We are newly formed EXTRA team	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
7. We are an EXTRA team whose core players have been playing together for _____ SEASONS	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
8. My teams' competitive rating is	<u>1</u> (low) <u>2</u> (medium) <u>3</u> (high)	
9. My region does not balance teams and we are rated A, B, C, D (A=highest) relative to other teams from our region	<u>B</u>	
10. The average age of players on my team as of August 1, 2011 is	<u>12</u>	
Head Coach Approval Section		
I understand this is a 4 day Tournament with all medal rounds on Monday (4 th day) and certify all information above is accurate and true and that I have read and understand the Tournament Rules and promise to abide by them		
Coach Name _____	Coach Signature _____	Date _____
Regional Commissioner Approval:		
The above team has my permission to attend the Locomotion Tournament. I certify that the AYSO ID numbers on the attached eAYSO roster have been verified, players are registered in an AYSO program, this team is formed to meet tournament guidelines and have adequately identified themselves by answering the above questions correctly. I also approve the addition of the one Guest Player on the attached form (if any).		
Regional Commissioner, signature _____	+print name _____	date _____
Email: _____	Telephone: _____	
The Referee Refund Check will be mailed to the RC or Treasurer:	EAYO Roster is attached.	
Check Name: <u>AYSO Region 76</u>	Or: _____	
Send Check To Attention: <u>Melissa Krantz</u>	I will send my approved eAYSO roster by Dec. 31.	
Address: <u>PO Box 1761</u>		
City: <u>Beverly Hills</u> St: <u>CA</u> Zip: <u>90218</u>		
Page 3		
everyone plays		

7 The Application Process

The Forms

Team Tournament Roster Report
 S/A/R 1/P/76 Beverly Hills AYSO MY MY2013

Team Roster Div U-16/G
 Team Name G16-BH1 Team Color Orange (Solid) / Black & Black Program Primary No. of Players 20
 Team Coach Name AYSO ID Cell Phone E-mail Sponsor
 Fred Coachalot 56275949 323-555-2121 Fred@gmail.com Advanced Coach
 Asst. Coach Bob Roberts 55008667 323-555-1212 Bob@gmail.com Safe Haven Cert Date: 04/15/13
 Advanced Coach Safe Haven Cert Date: 08/28/13

#	AYSO ID	Jrny	Name/Address	Home	Phone	Birth Date	Age	Reg. Date
1	11111110	5	Sally Coachalot 6666 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca			05-07-14	12/04/12	1999 (D)
2	11111110	7	Marilyn Munster 1313 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca			03-03-15	08/20/13	1998 (D)
3	11111110	8	Julie Lugosi 3131 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca			08-06-14	12/08/12	
4	11111110	9	Fiona Frightenface 1212 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
5	11111110	14	Jenny Frightenface 1212 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
6	11111110	15	Greta Gruesome 2121 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
7	11111110	17	Ilene Intimidator 6363 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
8	11111110	19	Veronica Voracious 9191 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
9	11111110	22	Bella Bruiser 1010 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
10	11111110	25	Carmela Crusher 3434 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
11	11111110	26	Betty Blash 2020 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
12	11111110	27	Karla Kruiser 7676 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
13	11111110	31	Mabel May 1234 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					
14	11111110	33	Sarah Smash 5050 Mockingbird Ln, Mockingbird Hts, Ca					

The signature below verifies that all of the above named players and coaches stated policies.
 Rgnl Commissioner _____ (Print Name) _____ (Sign)

Team Roster

21st ANNUAL PONY EXPRESS TOURNAMENT
 Referee Information Form

I plan to bring a referee team to the tournament Y/N: _____ Referee Information Form Date: _____

Region: 76 Team Name: _____

Coach Name: _____

Age Division: U-10 U-12 U-14 Boys Girls

Referee Team Contact Person
 Name: _____ Email Address: _____
 Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Provide the following information for each referee.
 ■ For "Lodge Level", insert R = Regional, I = Intermediate, A = Advanced, N = National. Also the date they were certified at that level.
 ■ In each box under "Center/Assistant/Boys/Girls", provide the highest level they are competent to referee (e.g. BU-10, GU-12, etc.)
 ■ In "Player on T team", indicate if the referee has a child who is playing in the tournament on this team.

Referee Name	Badge Level	Certification Date	Center		Assistant		Player on Team (Y/N)	Home Phone/Email
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls		
1								
2								
3								
4								

Each referee will receive a tournament T-Shirt. Please indicate sizes needed. All sizes are Adult.
 Number of Shirts Needed:

XXL	XL	L	M	S
-----	----	---	---	---

Regional Referee Administrator's Name: _____ Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Referee Form

AYSO ALL AMERICAN TOURNAMENT GAME CARD
 listed are certified AYSO referees and qualified for officiating U-10

REGION: 76 AGE DIVISION: U12 HV: _____

TEAM: _____

TEAM NAME: Mockingbird Vampires (Print name and date (Blue ink please))
 COLORS: Black on Black, of course
 COACH NAME: Herman Munster

ASST. COACH: Grandpa

#	PLAYER NAME	GOAL	ASSIST	SUBSTITUTIONS	
		1	2	3	4
50	Sally Spackler				
51	Marilyn Munster				
52	Julie Lugosi				
53	Fiona Frightenface				
54	Jenny Frightenface				
55	Greta Gruesome				
56	Ilene Intimidator				
57	Veronica Voracious				
58	Bella Bruiser				
59	Carmela Crusher				
60	Betty Blash				
61	Karla Kruiser				
62	Mabel May				
63	Sarah Smash				

Date: _____ Time: _____ Field: _____
 Halfway Score: _____ In Favor Of: _____
 Final Score: _____ Winning Team: _____
 Losing Team: _____
 Team Rep Signature: _____

GAME REPORT
 SPARE REPLY ONLY

Game Cards

Team Roster

This form you will generate from the Region 76 website. You should be familiar with the website by now. In the Team Administration area of the site you will have the option to remove players who will not be making the tournament, then print out a team roster. I usually print out 2 so that I can have an extra should one get lost/destroyed, etc. You will have to get this signed by the RC or his designee as well, and you don't want to go back with another one. It takes some time to get them back. After filing and printing it out, put with the application for signatures.

Referee Form

Here is where having all that information on your refs comes in handy. You will need to input 3-4 referees that will do the assignments the tournament gives you. They need to be trustworthy, as they need to check in 30 minutes before their matches. More on that later. So, armed with all that information handy, fill out the form and once completed, put aside. Yes, you need yet another signature, but this time from the Referee Administrator from your region. (Look this up in the 'Board' contacts on the website)

Game Cards

Most tournaments will send you 4-5 lineup cards for you to fill out. You should do this just before the weekend of the tournament, as you may have late roster changes and they will only give you this one set. You could get a new set at the tournament, but this will delay your check-in, which will not make anyone at the tournament happy. Just write the information on the cards in the color ink they specify, in Uniform # order, and write neatly. Referees like to be able to actually read the cards! A happy ref is a good ref!

continued...

7

The The Application Process

The Forms

Guest Player

This may be the only other form you might need to be aware of. When you are short players for any tournament, you may add any player from your own region that played in the Core season by simply adding that player to your roster. This is done in the Administration area of the website for your team. Generally you will get the uniform from the player unable to participate and this new player will wear it for that weekend. This is the approach the region encourages when you are down a player too many. However, there is a provision that each tournament allows where you can go outside your own region to invite a 'Guest' player. This player must have participated in that region's Core program as well. There is no other requirement for this player (up to 3 per team) to play. However you must remember that you will need to get the RC's signoff on your using this player, and he will definitely ask why you couldn't find a player from our own region to join your team for the weekend. I have added guest players before, but it was under unusual circumstances. Look to your own region first before adding a guest player. The form for adding this player will be in the Application Packet. You will need to fill it out fully with the same information that the team roster provides for your own players. Then you will need to get this form signed by the RC (or his designee) of YOUR region, AS WELL AS the RC from the region the player is from.

Wrap it up, get it out

The forms are now all complete. You've double-checked them and have not forgotten anything. Here's the last piece of the puzzle. Put the Application and Team roster into an 8x11 envelope, put your team ID, your name, and your phone # on the outside, and drop that at the house of the RC or his designee. In this case it would be Rick Wolfen.continued

		21th Annual AYSO Pony Express Tournament																															
Guest Player Form																																	
Borrowing Team Information:			Roster Date:																														
Region: _____		Team Name: _____																															
Coach Name: _____																																	
Age Division:		U-10	U-12	U-14	Boys	Girls																											
<p>Pony Express Tournament rules allow teams to bring up to 3 "Guest Players" when they are unable to recruit sufficient players from their own region. These Guest Players must be properly registered AYSO players who were registered and have played in their home region for the 2010 primary season.</p> <p><i>(List In Order By Uniform Shirt No.)</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Shirt #</th> <th>Region #</th> <th>Player ID #</th> <th>Player's Name <small>Last, First (please print)</small></th> <th>Age</th> <th>Date of Birth</th> <th>Telephone <small>Including Area Code</small></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>						Shirt #	Region #	Player ID #	Player's Name <small>Last, First (please print)</small>	Age	Date of Birth	Telephone <small>Including Area Code</small>																					
Shirt #	Region #	Player ID #	Player's Name <small>Last, First (please print)</small>	Age	Date of Birth	Telephone <small>Including Area Code</small>																											
<p>By my signature below, I certify that all players on this roster are valid registered players in my region and are approved to join the above team and participate in this tournament:</p> <p>Guest Player(s) Regional Commissioner: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Print Name Signature (Blue or Red Ink)</p> <p>Email: _____ Best Phone: _____</p>																																	
<p>By my signature below, I approve that these _____ (number of players) guest players are approved to join the above team and participate in this tournament:</p> <p>Host Team Regional Commissioner: _____</p>																																	

Guest Player Form

7 The Application Process

Signatures, Checks

The screenshot shows the Beverly Hills AYSO Region 76 website interface. The main content area is titled "Team Rosters & Uniforms". Under the heading "Select the team function you want:", the option "Tournament Check Request - Tournament Fees & Referee Deposits" is selected and circled in blue. Other options include "eAYSO-Style Tournament Roster", "Regular Team Roster", "Line-Up Cards", "Picture Day Roster", "Uniform Assignments", "Team Information / Contact Info", "Team Announcements", "Team Name & Colors Page", "Coach Contact Info for Selected Division", "Player ID Cards", "Exclude Players", and "Tournament Accounting Report (Tournament teams only)".

Check Request link

NOTE: You do NOT have to wait until you have all your forms back to request your check. Getting the check is the most time consuming part of the process, so request the check first, then get the other forms filled out and signed.

He will let you know his address and how he will want to handle these packets for signature. (NOTE: I always put 2 copies in the envelope to be signed. That way I have a fallback should something happen.) Take the ref form and put it in a 8.5x11 envelope (2 forms remember) and drop that off at the Region's Referee Administrator (RA) or his designee's house. These 2 entities will let you know at the start of the season how they will handle the processing of these forms, and how quickly you can expect them back. Generally they will simply leave them out on their porch for pickup. Don't expect a call or email letting you know it's ready, but be ready to pick it up based on their policy regarding this. Once you have the forms signed and back, put one of each into an envelope. Don't seal it though, you still need a check!

The procedure for getting a check cut from your team bank is fairly simple. It is all done online. Go to your team Administration area and search for: '**Tournament Check Request - Tournament Fees & Referee Deposits**'. Check this box and it will take you to a page that will ask you a few questions about the tournament. Fill everything out completely, including what they need to write on the memo area of the check. It should be something like "Corona Pony Express / BHGU12-3". This way when the check gets separated from the application, the tournament will know whose check it is. Also, when our controller gets the check back they can quickly credit your account. This is why the return address for the check is not your own but the controller's, in this case Jeff Sedacca, PO box 1761 BH 90213. After submitting all information, you will be contacted when the check is ready. If you submit your request by Wednesday it should be ready by end of the week (it needs signatures as well!) After Wednesday and it may take till the following weekend to be cut. BE ON TOP OF THIS! It does no good to pester our own accounting department. They are good, and will listen to special requests, but don't cry wolf or you will feel their wrath!

7 The Application Process

More Paperwork

ID: 66666666 AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION SECTION 1 AREA P REGION 76		Season: Fall 2013 Player Registration Form form <i>must be signed</i> REG. DATE: 9-20-2013	
Name: Marilyn Munster		Phone: 323-666-6666	
Address: 1313 Mockingbird Ln Mockingbird Hts., CA		Does this child have any disabilities, handicaps, present injuries or limitations, allergies or hemophilia, heart condition, history of respiratory illness or any other significant medical condition? No	
DOB: 9/1/2000	Sex/Div: G14	Description:	
Age: 12	Height: 62	Doctor's Name:	Doctor's Phone:
Weight: 85	Medical Insurance: Blue Cross of CA		
School: Mockingbird Hts Middle School	Grade: 7	Region 76 Record No. 24225	Emergency Contact: Shalom Illouz Phone: 310-801-1823
Parent/Guardian 1: Herman Munster	Parent 1	Head Coach: No	Asst. Coach: No Referee: No
Phone:	Parent 2	Head Coach: No	Asst. Coach: No Referee: No
E-Mail Address:			
Business Employer: Mockingbird Hts Cemetery			
Parent/Guardian 2:	Phone (work) 310-83793333	E-Mail Address: ofer@powerfullelectric.com	Phone (cell):
<p>EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION: I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian of the above-named player, a minor ("Player") hereby authorize each of the coaches, team parents, and/or other officials of AYSO to act as my agents in the capacity of activity supervisors and vehicle drivers, and I authorize each of them as well as the above-identified Emergency Contact to consent to medical, surgical or dental examination and/or treatment.</p> <p>DISCLAIMER, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND WAIVER AND CONSENT AGREEMENTS: I warrant and acknowledge that I am the parent or legal guardian of the player named on this form, a minor ("Player"), and on behalf of myself, Player and our heirs, assigns and next of kin, I hereby enter into the following agreements IN CONSIDERATION OF Player's being able to participate in any way at practices, games or other activities ("EVENTS") sanctioned by the American Youth Soccer Organization ("AYSO"). I acknowledge that participation in soccer necessarily involves travel, play in adverse field conditions, contact with considerable force, and risk of severe, permanent physical injury including bruises, scrapes, strained, sprained or torn muscles, tendons or ligaments, broken bones, dislocation of joints, concussion, brain damage, nerve and spinal cord injury, paralysis and death. I WILLINGLY AND VOLUNTARILY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS. I willingly and voluntarily agree to comply with the stated and customary terms and conditions for participation and, if Player or I observe any concern in Player's readiness for participation in the EVENTS, I will remove him/her from participation and bring such concern to the attention of the nearest official immediately and also of the regional commissioner as soon as possible thereafter. I HEREBY RELEASE, DISCHARGE AND AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS, to the fullest extent permitted by law, AYSO, its players, employees, volunteers, officials, sponsors and other representatives and any and all owners, lessors, lessees or other persons or entities allowing, permitting or releasing said persons or entities (RELEASEES) in any way related to an injury or other damage to or death of any individual I invite or for whom I am otherwise responsible. I acknowledge that I am waiving any and all claims for damages or compensation that I may have against the RELEASEES arising from the NEGLIGENCE of any individual or entity administered by volunteers rather than paid employees. This waiver is intended to be broad and inclusive. I have read the ABOVE EMERGENCY WAIVER, AND THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONSENT AGREEMENTS AVAILABLE FROM THE SAFETY DIRECTOR OF MY REGION, AND I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE. For both internal and external purposes, I agree to be added to the AYSO Player consistent with the AYSO Privacy Policy. I consent to have my photo taken for use in AYSO materials. I have read the ABOVE EMERGENCY WAIVER, AND THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONSENT AGREEMENTS AVAILABLE FROM THE SAFETY DIRECTOR OF MY REGION, AND I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE. For both internal and external purposes, I agree to be added to the AYSO Player consistent with the AYSO Privacy Policy. I consent to have my photo taken for use in AYSO materials.</p>			

Medical Form

Additional Paperwork

Okay, the forms are off to the tournament but what about the other paperwork? Just like the Core season, you will be required to have medical forms with you at all times. Have the parents sign 4 copies, and keep one, give one to your assistant coach, one to your Team Administrator, and the last one goes to the Division Director. Additionally, you will need a copy of each players' birth certificate, again to be carried with you for every tournament. 3 copies. The Division Director does not need one of these.

It is important that you assure your parents that these birth certificates are for the tournament use only, and will be shredded upon conclusion of the season. Be VERY careful with these forms! Obviously you don't want to explain that you misplaced the birth certificates of 12-15 kids! I have the Team Administrator put the forms in plastic sleeves, the med form on the front and the Birth Certificate on the back, both visible, then in a 3 ring binder. I keep the ID cards (explained below) in this folder as well. This is the easiest way to organize them, and you can just hand them to the tournament official. Don't forget to put them in order of their uniform #!

ID cards are a bit tougher. You will be able to print out sheets of cards with all of your players info on them on the administration area of the website. But you will have to take headshots of your players, cut them out and paste them onto the cards, get each player to sign them, have the RC (or his designee) sign them, then get them laminated and trimmed. Punching a hole and putting them all on a keyring is a nice way to keep them together. I do the laminating and trimming at Kinkos. This is a project for sure, and I can think of no better person to organize this than your Team Administrator, and other helpful parents!

ID cards

Coach Identification

Name: Herman Munster
 AYSO ID Number: 66666667
 Region #: 76 Division: GU14
 Season: 2011-12 Certification: U12
 Team Name: Beverly Hills 'RED'

Name: Marilyn Munster
 AYSO ID Number: 66666666
 DOB: 6/6/2000 Gender: G
 Region No: 76 Division: GU14
 Season: MY2013
 Player Signature: _____
 RC Signature: _____

8 Tournaments

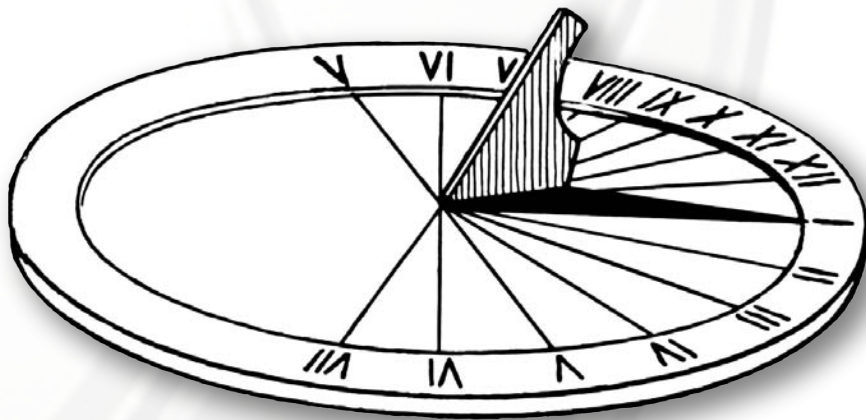
What To Expect

Different tournaments will expect different things from their participants. This is just mainly a human element kind of thing. Some will be sticklers on your paperwork, others will give you a chance to correct it later. Some will try anything they can think of to keep your referee deposit. If you show up with a different ref than what has been put on your Ref Form, they will not let him ref and take your deposit, whether he is qualified or not. Better make sure all your refs are properly uniformed! That could bite you as well. Not there 30 minutes before? Might as well not show. Others will be a bit more relaxed about the process. While all tournaments are different, they all have some things in common. How strict they are you will find out soon enough. I will try and let you know what to watch out for from my own experience, but in the end it's just better to be prepared, on-time, and treat the organizers courteously. They can make your life miserable if given a reason to.

After the Application Process

You have sent in your application, now what? Generally the tournament will contact you approximately 6 weeks before the tournament to let you know if you've been accepted or not. This is critical. Given enough time, if you were not accepted you may be able to find another tournament to fill the void. However remember they have your check! They will ask you if you want to be placed on a waitlist in case someone drops out. If you do they will keep your check, and most likely not return it until after the tournament (2-3 weeks after) whether you participate or not. That means you will have checks out that you cannot get back, and that money is not yours to spend until they do. For some tournaments they are not conscientious at all in returning checks, (not high on the list when there's a tournament to put on) and this can be extremely frustrating.

continued...



8 Tournaments

What To Expect

Your team bank runs low when you have 2 checks out to tournaments, and 3 tournaments who still owe you your ref deposit. You may have no reserves to apply for another tournament. This can get tricky near the end of the season, so be careful about who has your checks. It's sometimes far better to turn down the waitlist early, especially if you can get them to agree to return your check immediately. Remember, the volunteers who run these tournaments are under a lot of pressure. Treat them with respect and kindness and you will find that they will help you out more often than not.

So you've been accepted, now what?

Great, you are going to your first tournament. Very exciting! You start checking their website to try and get information but.... nothing. Don't worry. All of the tournaments' timing is similar. You will be able to see all the teams accepted shortly after the application deadline has passed, approximately 5 weeks out. You will find out who is in your 'flight' approximately 3-4 weeks out. They will post a schedule of games between 1-2 weeks out, and the ref schedule is usually a week from the tournament, but sometimes it is even later. This is frustrating as there are obvious scheduling considerations for your ref team, but it is always the last thing to get done, and for good reason. They schedule the refs around their team's games, trying to make it as convenient as possible. If you play on field 3 at 1-2:15, they might schedule you to ref a game on field 4 at 2:15-3:30. You still need to check in to the ref tent 30 minutes before, but you may be able to coordinate that at halftime of your match. Don't show up late to the field however. Your refs won't be able to watch the end of your match as they need to check in the 2 teams they will be refing, and without exception no tournament will accept having their matches start late. Just another reason for them to keep your ref deposit!



"No soup for you! And we will keep your referee deposit too!"

8 Tournaments

What To Expect



Another thing about the ref experience (or 2 or 3 things actually), keep ALL paperwork that they provide you that acts as a sort of receipt for the games you ref. Sign the back of all cards LEGIBLY, even if you simply print your name, region and team ID! I have had many a bad experience trying to prove I refed our own, and even more than our own matches in order to get our ref deposit back. If you have no proof, you will be SOL! It's the old guilty before proven innocent routine. I can't stress this enough. Additionally, keep a close watch on your ref team. Many refs think that their mere presence is a joy to behold, and they will show up 5 minutes before a match. This will invariably lead to another team being assigned your match, and a loss of your ref deposit. Stress that they have to be properly uniformed. Some refs will come without the proper socks, white tennis shoes, or missing their badge (a BIG no-no!). Check the ego at the door on this one. There will be little sympathy for the diva ref! They expect a professional attitude from the ref teams, as they should. This is tournament play, and as such more is expected of them.

Roll Call

About the time you see the game schedule (10-14 days out) you will get your first surprise (actually this may not be true as there are surprises all along the way). You've been scheduled an 8:00am match on Saturday, and the next match isn't until 3:00 that afternoon. Well, 8:00am isn't THAT bad right? Hold on. That 8:00am match is actually a 7:00am match as you need to check in your team one hour before your first match of the tournament! Yikes! And oh-by-the-way, the tournament is 75 minutes drive away in Corona. So let's do the math. 7:00 check-in, 5:45am to be on the road to get there at 7:00am, that means you will probably be getting up sometime before 5:00am!

continued...

8 Tournaments

What To Expect

Now I don't know how you perform getting up approximately 2 hours at least before normal, but you might imagine how your little dynamo might be feeling! All you need is some cappuccino and a bagel, sitting in your foldable chair yakking with the other parents about how cold you are. Your kid actually has to do the running, kicking, jumping, etc., all for your entertainment! I hate to even bring this thought up but it's pretty much a given that the other shall we say 'less affluent' regions like the idea of getting our little princesses out of bed at the crack of dawn (or earlier) and making them actually 'uncomfortable' for their first match. Don't think that's true? My rule of thumb is the farther away the tournament the earlier the first game will be. Expect it, and suck it up. They are testing us fat cats from BH. They don't really purposely set out to do this, but if it happens... There will be little sympathy. Some times you will find your first match will be against a team from the host region. They have a 5-minute ride to the fields. This starting to make sense now? All in all the tournament directors are good people, but they have many more things to deal with than what time you wake up for your first match.

It doesn't stop there? Stop the bus, I want off!

Let's say you have an 8:00am game and a follow-up 12:00 match. You're done at 1:30, right? Wellllllllll... not necessarily. What if they decide to give you the last match of the day to ref, at 5:30? You may be hanging around the field (or exploring the wonders of downtown Moorpark) for 3-4 hours before you can ref your last match and drive the 75 minutes home. Don't think that couldn't happen, it will. Be very good to your ref team, as they will suffer a lot of indignities, with very little appreciation. You need them. Make them feel special! Make sure THEY have coffee in the morning. It goes a long way!



8 Tournaments

What To Expect

We're playing who?

So you've gotten the schedule and you've survived the sticker shock. The heartbeat has come back down to normal and you take a look at the flight you're in. Whoa.... Culver City? Santa Monica, Corona? And that's the familiar! How about Bullhead City, Arizona? Visalia, Chino Hills, Covina, , Redlands, North Irvine, Downey, Moreno Valley. Clearly you are in a whole new space and need to adjust your expectations. Many of these Inland Empire communities live breathe and eat soccer! You really don't know what to expect, and that's okay! You are on a journey, and there are lots of unknowns. You will prepare your team the best you can, and let the chips fall where they may. Small victories may be your best friend. Revel in them. A 0-0 tie in the rain in Corona against Palos Verdes may be your most memorable game of the season! And that's okay. We had that experience in one season's first tournament and it spawned a relationship that produced many scrimmages and social events that suggest it may have been the best match ever!

Travel, and hotels

So there will be tournaments that you just don't want to drive back and forth for. You need to take this into account and choose tournaments accordingly. One or two overnight tournaments are okay, even expected and anticipated. More than that and you will run into a lot of families that suddenly have obligations that weekend. Choose the overnight tournaments that give you the best bang for your buck! The tournaments that provide the better overnight experience are Riverside and Santa Barbara. Riverside because the hotels, and in particular the Marriot, are packed with kids who are on a high like no other. It's hard to explain but this is a must-see tournament. The other I recommend is Santa Barbara's Splash. It's Santa Barbara, and it's a lot of fun.



“Rock, paper, scissors?”

8 Tournaments

What To Expect



What else?

Well, really, I don't want to tell you everything! I mean some of the best parts of all this is the unknown journey. If you knew everything then there would be no adventure, and after all that is what makes it all so sweet! Over the course of the season you will encounter all sorts of issues involving your players, but also the families of those players. You will find some sibling that proves invaluable as a foil for the older brother or sister. You will find and cherish a relationship with one or more of the parents. You will find challenges with other parents. It's all part of the deal you signed onto. And it is the best part of it all. You will experience a relationship with all of your families unlike any other that you will have in any other aspect of your life! Just wait until you are called 'coach' for the first time by a parent! It's a weird feeling, and at first you will not know if that is what you are comfortable with or not. I found it unnerving, and just wanted to be called by my first name. But some enjoy it. You'll make up your own mind on that one.

Wherever you fall in these experiences, expect some things that you will have to deal with that you never expected to. The player who is too bossy and is annoying her teammates, the girl who just needs the right push to bring out her 'devil' side, the player who is timid and shy, until she scores a goal and turns into a monster! (Obviously I coached girls teams as I had only one child, a daughter. I couldn't be happier about that!) Just expect the unexpected, and be able to roll with it!

9 Family Management



How you manage the families, and their expectations, could be the most important determination of you enjoying your season versus you just surviving it! Having your families behind you is of the utmost benefit while navigating the season. A combative, unfriendly group will make the season long, unsatisfying and even distasteful. On the other hand, having the backing of your families will make your job immensely easier in many, many areas. Take practice and game attendance. If you don't have support and buy-in from your parents that this is an important aspect of their kids' development, you will find that you have 5 players at practice and no way of improving your team's progress. But if you have buy-in, you will have a majority of players in practice and actually be able to make a difference in your development as a team. Add to that support for attending the out-of-area tournaments means that you will have 2-4 substitutes a game, instead of the minimum number of players, until Susie has to leave for the ICES. And it won't only be Susie, once the other parents get bold enough to pull their kid from the tournament at the last minute. You don't want to be scrambling for players every tournament. You need full commitment, or at least as much as possible. There will always be attrition, but if you have the support of your parents you have a fighting chance that you will not play any games a man down from the start. There are a several ways to help secure their buy-in. Here are a few:

The email wrap-up

Your tournament is over, you did not-so-well, and you need to address the troops. Sending a wrap-up email is key to getting your families invested in the team and the experience their kids are building. I always try and focus on the positive aspects of any tournament. It is likely that in your first tournament you did not exactly blow the competition away!
continued...

9 Family Management



You may actually have exceeded your worst expectations. It's not unusual. After all, what did you have as a reference to manage expectations? So the need to accentuate the positive to keep the morale up is crucial. Focus on the small moments that every game produces. Keep track of these in your notes. Ideally you will have one good thing to say about every girl on the team. The parents like this, as they see this as a sign that you are paying attention to their child, and know that they are not getting 'lost' in the mix. But also sometimes it's good to understand that praising every single girl on the team when you just lost 4 games by a combined 24-2 score is a tactic easily seen through by Dad, even if Mom loves it. And let's make no mistake about it, when you coach a girls team Mom is the one to get on board, but when it's a boys team Dad is the Alpha dog! They both matter and should not be slighted, but know your target audience and secure their support early. If you don't happen to acknowledge their girl (or boy) in your email, follow that up with a brief talk about their player when you see them at the next practice. Letting them know that you are there for all the girls or boys, including theirs, is the best way to get buy-in from your families.

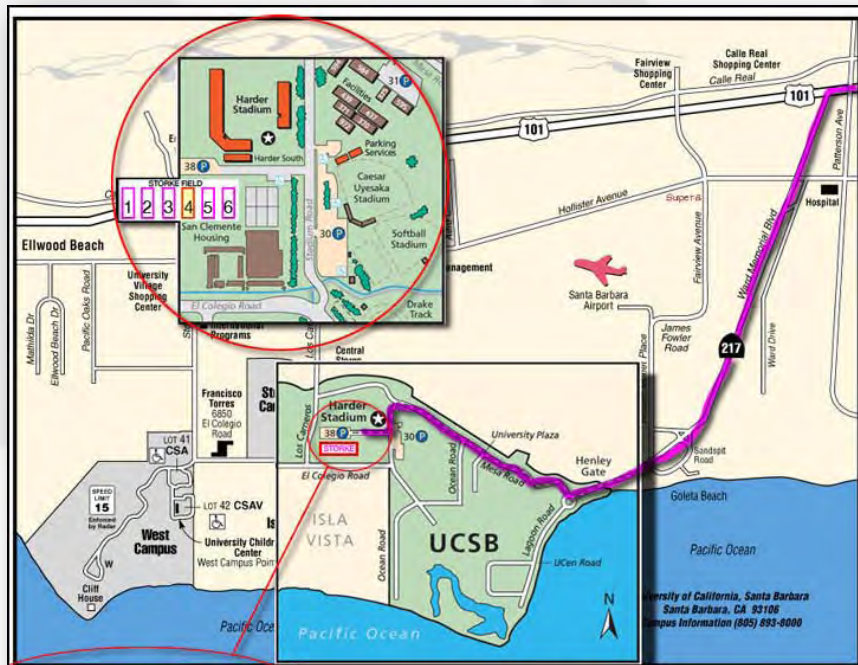
While this may all seem a bit calculated, in reality it's just understanding what the parents are hoping/expecting from the program, and acknowledging them for the important role they play. After all, how can you ask and expect them to volunteer their own time to ref and take on other tasks if you don't let them know that you value them, and by extension their child? It's a situation where a little effort goes a long way.

The Tournament Pack

Now you know how to get to the fields, and you know the game schedule. You even memorized the ref schedule. Good for you. But if none of your players actually show up at the

continued...

9 Family Management



Directions to Storke Field

US-101 N	101 mi, 1 hour 44 mins
	<small>In current traffic: 1 hour 45 mins</small>
3. Turn right to merge onto I-405 N/San Diego Fwy toward San Diego Fwy	7.9 mi
4. Take the exit onto US-101 N toward Ventura	65.1 mi
5. Take the exit onto CA-217 W/Ward Memorial Blvd toward Airport/UCsb	2.6 mi
6. Turn right onto Mesa Rd	1.0 mi
7. Turn left onto Stadium Rd	0.1 mi
8. Turn right Destination will be on the right	269 ft

REF SCHEDULE

SATURDAY 3:30pm:
Standby: Storke Fields
1: Alex
2: David
3: Norman

SATURDAY 4:45pm
Storke Field #6 GU12
1: Alex
2: David
3: Rick

SUNDAY 10:30am
Storke Field #5 GU12
1: Patrick
2: Norman
3: Alex

Rick Wolfen
rwolfen@aol.com
310 999-9512 (cell)
Ji Lee
ji.lee@nstnet.com
213-700-1740 (cell)

SATURDAY game 1 game 2

H- BH Cats	H- BH Cats
A- Beaumont	A- Santa Barbara
• gametime 9:00am	• gametime 1:30pm
• arrive 8:00am	• arrive 12:30pm
• Field: STORKE #4	• Field: STORKE #4
ORANGE JERSEY BLACK SHORTS STRIPED SOCKS	Uniform TBD

SUNDAY game 3 3rd-4th / Final

H- Santa Barbara	3rd/4th place game:
A- BH Cats	• gametime 1:30
• gametime 9:00am	• Field: STORKE #2
• arrive 8:00am	Championship:
• Field: STORKE #4	• gametime 1:30
	• Field: STORKE #1

...right field, at the right time, ready to go, you are basically screw..! You just can't leave it to chance. You need to develop a consistent package that makes attending these tournaments and knowing all the information a no-brainer! Because that's what some of your families will bring to the tournament, no brains. I like to spell every aspect out in an easy to decipher document that I can use over and over again. I just input the new information and send it out for each tournament. This information includes:

- Dates
- Location of fields, including address they can input into their GPS
- Map of fields
- Game times for each day, with field assignments and color selection of jersey for each game (and show up times, not just the actual game time)
- Check-in location and time for first match
- Referee games, time, fields
- Map to the fields from Beverly Hills (with estimated time of travel)
- Hotel information (if appropriate)
- Important contact information; head coach, assistant coach, team administrator
- Links to the tournament website, specifically the game schedule page and the field maps.

If you think about how you present this information knowing that you will not want to reinvent the wheel but simply input new information for each tournament, you will go a long way toward eliminating confusion and increase accountability with your families. Not giving them any excuse for showing up late, or not at all, goes a long way toward improving your chances that your team will be there when you need them! Spending this time (possibly a couple of hours a tournament) will make your life immensely easier when you are under the gun and have other issues to deal with, like coaching!

9 Family Management



Another thing I like to do is make sure I ask every family member to do something during the course of the season that benefits the team. This makes everyone feel that they are invested in the team and no one is overlooked in the process. You would be amazed at how some parents are just waiting to be asked if they can do something, and how grateful they are when they are included. Don't ever underestimate the power of inclusion! The best way to handle what seems like an unruly, negative parent is to engage them and get them 'on the team'. They may be at first reluctant, but if it's a legitimate task, and you picked them specifically to handle that task because of some talent/skill they have, you will find a more cooperative, invested parent from that point on. I cannot stress enough how important having every family member on-board is to the overall success of the team. You may never have total buy-in, but the more you get the more successful your season will be. The importance of this cannot be overstated.

One important task is finding a parent with a camera who knows how to take a good picture. Looking around at the end of a season and realizing none of your parents actually took any shots of the kids will leave you frustrated and without photos for the memories. It is also necessary so that you can add and customize the yearbook that you will have input on. So get out the photographer and get them busy!!

10 Do the Right Thing

There are many approaches you can take to your season. However perspective may be the most important thing to keep close in mind. Yes you now have a group of 'all-stars', looking to you for direction and leadership. But your main focus should not be on winning at all costs. This may provide some short-term rewards, but in the end it will dissappoint. Not only yourself, but the players and families as well. AYSO, for all it is, is not about one thing only, winning. It's about providing the players with a fun, safe, challenging experience. One that they will learn and grow from. If all you are looking for is to prove something to yourself, or to others around you, you are in the wrong place. Your season will be far more successful in every way if you take your time, get the players and families invested in your journey, that they know you will allow them time to bond and have fun, and that the emphasis will be on personal and team growth. If your focus is only on winning, and you omit the fun, the players will not respond, and your families will not support you. This is the quickest way to a lousy season. The wins won't come, and the morale will deteriorate quickly.

There are other things to keep in mind, that are perhaps not as apparent but are important to know so that you will earn the respect of your peers, and gain the support of the region and the folks that you will need at the tournaments. There's a 'right' way and a 'wrong' way to approach things that will inevitably come up, and how you choose to deal with these issues will be closely watched. Some things you may encounter:

Finding Players to fill your roster:

You will find on occasion that you may not be able to field a full squad for a particular tournament you are entered in. Perhaps one of your players got injured, a family matter comes up, or they simply came down with a bad cold.

...continued



10 Do the Right Thing

You need some players, and you start looking around at the other teams who are in your division to see if anyone is free that weekend. You find one team is free, but 2 others are also short players as well. Suddenly those players on that idle team are being sought after by 3 teams. You know some of the girls on that team as you coached them during the Core season. You know you could call the parents up directly, you have their numbers. You know they would want to play on your team, so what's the harm?

Going around a team's coach to recruit his players is the worst thing that you could do to your peers. They will not appreciate that you showed him/her no respect in regards to his team and his players. This cannot be overstated. If you need players, respect the coach and deal only with him, or her. You would expect the same courtesy, and would be upset if another coach did it to you.

Playing time:

This seems to be a simple issue. You're the coach, and should be able to play anyone any amount of time you wish. And to a point this is absolutely true (except of course for the '2 quarters' rule). But consider for example a coach who may not have a full roster for a particular tournament and he has the opportunity to recruit a 'Guest Player'. Now having a sub or 2 is definitely critical. But if you sit your own players in favor of playing this star recruit just because he may give you the best chance to win (in your opinion) it will resonate throughout your team. The player who sits out for 2 quarters of your last match, when your 'Guest Player' has not sat out a single quarter the entire tournament, will never forget, nor forgive you. And neither will their parents. This player is part of this team. The Guest player is not. If anything the Guest player should sit more than the player that is actually part of the team. Now of course this is your decision to make, but remember, the player, and especially their parents, ...continued



10 Do the Right Thing



vs.



will never forgive, and obviously never forget. Putting the win above all else in these situations may cost you much more in the end. You will need this player, sometime during the season. Don't risk long-term problems for short term gain.

Instruction:

One thing you should never do is single out any player in front of the team for any perceived mistake. Errors happen. Lapse in focus happens. But singling out a player in front of his friends will not help solve the particular problem. Use the word 'we' often. Make it about the team, not about a player. It's a poor coach who does not care about the mental well-being of his players. Take that player aside at some point down the road and discuss with him what you felt he could have done in that situation. Treating the player with respect will earn you their respect, and the respect of his parents. This is no small thing.

Sideline Demeanor:

Many coaches present a running dialog on the sidelines, whether it is directed at the referees, the players, or even to 'entertain' the parents. Some humor is a good thing, but a constant stream is a bad idea. It creates the impression that you do not take the game seriously. Your focus should be on the play on the field, and what adjustments you need to make at the next break to help your players. You are not there to entertain. The parents will get tired of this, and will soon wonder why your focus is not on the players.

Something that should always be kept in mind is that you represent the region, wherever you are. Be it a practice or a tournament, your actions reflect on you but also on the region. Be careful if you have an issue with another coach, a referee, a tournament official, or even a member of your region's Board. Remember you have this team because the region trusts you to do the right thing, *...continued*

10 Do the Right Thing

to represent it in the best way possible. Many coaches believe that they can say whatever they wish, to whoever they wish, at any time. They also may feel that since they are volunteers, they are immune to any repercussions from their actions. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact almost everything said or done gets passed along and scrutinized by more people than you could imagine. You should assume that everything you say, everything you do, is in the presence of the Regional Commissioner. Because if it is egregious enough, that's exactly who will hear about it. This can be most embarrassing, but also extremely detrimental to everything you may be trying to accomplish. Just be respectful that the other volunteers are doing their best, and if you don't happen to agree with their actions, consider that they are entitled to handle their areas as they see fit, and in the best interest of the program. It may not always be how you would do it, but unless you are willing to take on their duties (and can convince the board that you should), you need to concentrate on your own business first, and be thankful that we have all these volunteers that make the whole engine run.

I guess my point in this section is simply do the right thing. Look outside of yourself and your own needs and think what is best for the kids. After all they are why we are all doing what we do. If that becomes secondary, then you need to step back and evaluate why you are doing this in the first place.



And that's it?

Well, I'm sure you are pretty fatigued reading this. I don't blame you. I never intended it to be this long nor go into as much detail as I did. But as I wrote this so many things came into my head that I wanted to share. And as soon as I post this for you all to read, many more things will come to mind! I hope you all got something you can use from this primer. I know now what I wished I knew before I started this, but I also value the road traveled. There needs to be some unknowns to be dealt with, and that is the adventure you are embarking on. I wish you the best and only hope your experience is as rewarding as it has been for me. I wouldn't trade it for the world, and I continually drawn upon it every day of my life!

Good luck, it is worth it all!

Alex