



# LOWER MERION SOCCER CLUB

## PROGRAM MANUAL FOR OUR 6 – 9 YEAR OLD DIVISIONS IN THE FALL INTRAMURAL PROGRAM

BANTAMS DIVISION            6 year old boys  
JUNIORS DIVISION            7 year old boys  
INTERMEDIATES DIVISION   8 & 9 year old boys

MICRONS DIVISION        6 & 7 year old girls  
PROTONS DIVISION        8 & 9 year old girls

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# OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The Middle Age Divisions are designed to give players a chance to experience soccer and develop their skills through a "team" environment. Many of the players in these divisions played previously in the younger divisions which have a less formal "pick up soccer" atmosphere (players are not assigned to a particular team for the season).

**THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THESE PROGRAMS IS TO PROVIDE EACH AND EVERY YOUNGSTER WITH A FUN FILLED EXPERIENCE IN A SOCCER ENVIRONMENT**

Bantams and Microns	6 year olds	max. 12 players	two games of 4v4 (no goalies)
Juniors	7 year olds	max. 14 players	two games of 5v5 (four field players and a goalie)
Intermediates, Protons	8 & 9 year olds	max. 16 players	two games of 6v6 (five field players and a goalie)

## TEAM STRUCTURE

- Each team will have a head coach who is in charge of the team for the entire season.
- Each team will have their own unique jersey color.
- Each team will have one practice a week, on a weeknight or on Sunday afternoon
- Each team will have one practice a week and one game each weekend, usually on Saturdays. It is possible that a team will have one or more Sunday games in their schedule.
- The first two weekends will each be a 90 minute practice (in addition to their regularly scheduled practice).
- Games will start on the third weekend of the season.

## GAME DAY

- Games will be played with two 25 minute halves.
- There will be a five minute break at halftime.
- Coaches are not to make one team stronger than then other team. Please make the teams equal in ability.
- Coaches may move their players from one field to the other, as needed, during the game.
- Teams should plan to arrive 20-25 minutes before their game time to warmup and work on ball skills.
- Standings are not kept during the season. There are no championships, no playoffs, etc.

## COACHING 6 – 9 YEAR OLDS

- Be enthusiastic and positive. Be engaged with the children.
- It is important to remember that the players are only children. They are not professional players or players with a lot of soccer experience.
- Coaches often need to double as child psychologists when dealing with the players.
- Players need to be made to feel good about themselves.
- Players should leave every game and every practice with smiles on their faces.
- Coaches and other adults need to remember that the main reason that the players signed up for to play is because **THEY WANT TO HAVE FUN.**

If the players have a fun time during the season and are eager to play again the following season, then the coach can be certain that he / she has done a good job. Hopefully, along the way, the players will learn more about soccer, but the primary purpose of the program is for them to enjoy the experience and want to play soccer again and again.

# BEFORE THE SEASON STARTS

## PRE-SEASON COACHES MEETING

The coaches meeting will be held about five days before the start of the season. At the coaches meeting, each team will be given the following items:

- Team rosters with the names of the players, their parents' names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Coaches may request an updated copy during the season by e-mailing the club President
- One game ball
- A set of jerseys (enough for one jersey per player). Each team will be assigned a unique color.
- 16 practice cones, to be used to mark out playing areas for different practice activities
- Two yellow goalie pinnies (not applicable to Bantams and Microns Divisions who do not use goalies).
- *LMSC Coaching Manual For 7 - 9 Year Old Teams*

## CONTACTING THE PLAYERS BEFORE THE FIRST PRACTICE

- Please create an e-mail list for your players.
- Contact all of your players before the first game
- Let them know the date / time / place of your first practice and your second practice
- Give them your e-mail address and phone number so they know how to contact you

## FIRST DAY OF THE SEASON

- The first practice will be held on the Saturday immediately after Labor Day. Teams will also have a practice the following weekend. The date / time / field for these practices will be assigned by the club and posted on the LMSC web page.
- Every team will be expected to have an additional practice in between the two practices listed above. This will be on the weeknight (or Sunday afternoon) that the coach has picked for their regular practice during the year.
- The first game for each team will be held on the third weekend of the season, unless that weekend is a religious holiday, in which case the first games will be played on the weekend after that.
- Coaches are asked to plan a 90 minute practice ahead of time. Coaches will find useful information about this in the "*LMSC Coaches Manual For 7 - 9 Year Old Teams*" manual which outlines several age appropriate practice sessions.

## NEW PLAYERS WISHING TO SIGN UP

During the first couple of weeks of each season, we receive several late registrations. The Division Commissioner will assign these players to a team that does not yet have a full roster. We will not go past the maximum player limit for any team (14 for Juniors and Quasars, 16 for Intermediates and Protons).

If the coach wants to add a player to his / her team, the coach must first contact the Division Commissioner. The team must not already have a full roster and the player **MUST** be of the proper age. The coach will need to have the player fill out a registration form and mail it in right away with the registration fee. This is necessary for insurance purposes and so that the new player can be put on the LMSC mailing list for future mailings (including rainouts).

# THE FIRST PRACTICE OF THE SEASON

## WHAT TO TELL PLAYERS TO BRING TO EACH PRACTICE AND GAME

- Soccer ball with the player's name clearly written on it in magic marker (size 3 for the Juniors and Quasars divisions, size 4 for the Intermediates and Protons divisions).
- A filled plastic (not glass) water bottle.
- Shin guards (MANDATORY for **all** games and **all** practices).
- Team jersey and a white tee shirt (if your team color is white, have the players also bring a dark shirt).
- Soccer cleats. Sneakers and soccer flats should not be used since the fields might be wet and slippery.
- Navy (or black) shorts and white soccer socks, worn OVER the shin guards.

Be sure ALL players bring a ball to practice to ensure a 1:1 ball per player ratio. By having each player work with his or her own soccer ball at the same time, skill development will take place at a much faster rate.

The white tee shirt will allow the coach to divide the players into two teams at practice for different skill activities and small sided games (1v1, 3v3, etc.) Players should also bring the white tee shirt to games in case of a color conflict with the opposing team.

## STARTING THE FIRST PRACTICE

- Distribute game jerseys (one per player). Hold on to the extras since additional players might be assigned to your team at a later date.
- Give each player a list of players with e-mail addresses and phone numbers. This could be done via e-mail before the first practice. Players need this so they can contact other parents for rides or play dates. Be sure that all families know what weeknight (or Sunday afternoon) your regularly scheduled practices will be during the season. Be sure they know the field and time.
- After giving out jerseys and the above information, begin the practice by teaching one or two skills of the game.
- Check to be sure that each child is having a **FUN** time during the practice.
- For more information on running a practice, please read the *LMSC Coaches Manual For 7 - 9 Year Old Teams*. This manual list practice activities for 10 different effective, age appropriate practices.

## END OF THE PRACTICE

- Be sure the parents of each child knows when, where and at what time the next practice / game is.
- Send a follow-up e-mail after each practice / game so that everyone knows when the team meets next.

## WHAT TO DO IF A PLAYER HAS A CONFLICT WITH YOUR PRACTICE SCHEDULE

- If a player has a conflict with the weeknight (or Sunday afternoon) of your regularly scheduled practice, contact your Division Commissioner. That person will move the player to a different team.
- Be sure to collect the team jersey if a player is being traded, you will likely need it for a new player who will be assigned to your team later on.
- Players will only be moved if there is an opening on the team that the player has requested to be moved to.
- Coaches are NOT to try and move a player to another team unless the player has specifically requested to be moved to another team.

# HOW TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

- Each team will have one practice a week, 90 minutes in length. Practices can be on a weeknight or on Sunday afternoon when no games are scheduled for the field. The coach should designate a particular practice day (which is convenient for his/her personal schedule) and stick to that schedule throughout the season.
- The coach should be the **FIRST PERSON TO ARRIVE AT PRACTICE** (at least 10 minutes early).
- The coach should also be the **LAST PERSON TO LEAVE PRACTICE** (only after the **last** player has left). Never leave a practice until **EVERY** player has an adult there who is responsible for him / her.

## DIVIDE PRACTICES INTO THREE SEPARATE SECTIONS

Each team will run a 90 minute practice during the first two weekends of the season. These 90 minute sessions should be divided into three distinct sections:

- First 30 Minutes: Skill Development
- Second 30 Minutes: Small Sided Group Activities
- Final 30 Minutes: Small Sided Games

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (FIRST 30 MINUTES OF PRACTICE)

- Practices should always start with skill development.
- **Each** player should have a ball or be sharing a ball with at most one other player.
- Teach two or three skills.
- Get the players moving and active right away, with as many balls in use as possible.
- Initially, have the players practice the correct technique with no opposition.
- Once they can perform the technique, add some form of mild opposition or pressure so they can practice executing the technique under game like pressure.
- Players should always have a ball during skills development. Jumping jacks, situps, running laps, etc., do **NOTHING** for skill development and are a **waste of time** for children of these ages. Youngsters will plenty of general exercise and conditioning both at home and at school.
- **Practice time should be spent developing soccer skills and tactics.**

## SMALL SIDED GROUP ACTIVITIES (30 MINUTES)

- Organize activities where the players will be able to not only practice the skill just learned, but will be able to experience a high level of **SUCCESS**, under pressure of time and space, using the skill just practiced.
- In order to ensure the players have success, adjust the size of the field and the ratio of attackers to defenders in all practice activities.
- Refer to the ***LMSC Coaches Manual For 7 - 9 Year Old Teams*** manual to see age appropriate activities.
- Always observe the activity to see if the attackers are **CHALLENGED**, but still experiencing enough **SUCCESS** to make the activity worthwhile.
- Be ready to make adjustments to the activity if it is too easy or too difficult for the players. Different teams will need different parameters (number of defenders, size of the field, etc.) to ensure success in a particular activity.
- When necessary, stop the activity to make a coaching point to the players. Keep coaching comments brief.
- **DEMONSTRATE** (or have a player demonstrate) when appropriate. If helpful, have one or two players walk through the activity to demonstrate the coaching point made.
- **Coaching COMMENTS need to be BRIEF and to the point.** Be sure to NOT "over-coach." Do not stop the practice every 10 seconds to talk. Let the players have as much time doing the activity as possible.
- Coaches should restrict the majority of their comments to those related to the skill or tactic that was worked on earlier in practice. Stopping practices every 30 seconds to analyze every aspect of an activity will be an annoyance to the players who will eventually get bored and turned off.
- A good time to make coaching corrections is when the players are a bit tired and need to rest for a few seconds. Let the players first catch their breath, then make the desired coaching points while the players are getting a few more seconds of rest time.

## SMALL SIDED GAMES (FINAL 30 MINUTES OF PRACTICE)

The final section of practice should be dedicated to games of 1v1, 3v3, 5v5, etc. Get as many players active and playing as possible. It is better to have two games of 3v3 than one game of 6v6 since more players will be around a ball, each player will get more touches on the ball and each player will make more game decisions.

# GAME DAY PROCEDURES

## WHEN TO ARRIVE AT THE FIELD

- The time listed on the schedule is the start of your game.
- Players should arrive 20-25 minutes early for a warmup / skills development session.
- Each player should have a ball to work with. Have the players work on ball skills, each player working with a ball.

## SIDELINES

- Parents and spectators should be at least a yard or more away from the sideline so as not to interfere with play.
- Only coaches and players should be in the area between the two fields.
- Parents should not be in the area between the two fields since it makes it difficult for the coaches to work with the players.

## STARTING THE GAME

- Games must start promptly (at the time listed on the schedule) in order to get the full amount of time in.
- If there are not enough players for two games, move the goals in on one or both fields and have each team play with one fewer player.
- Starting lineups and field assignments are to be discussed well before the start of the games.
- Be sure your starting two goalies each have a yellow pinnie on well before the start of the games.
- Games are played in two halves periods, each 25 minutes long.
- There is a five minute halftime break.
- The game must end exactly 60 minutes after the start time listed on the schedule.
- The game must end PROMPTLY at the 60 minute mark so that the next teams on the schedule may start.
- The length of the second half will depend on how fast your game got started.

## PLAYER POSITIONS

- All field players should play both offense and defense throughout the game.
- Goalies are NOT used in the 6 year old divisions (boys Bantams Division and girls Microns Division)
- Goalies are to wear a yellow pinnie over their team jersey. Coaches keep the pinnies throughout the season.
- The goalie should be encouraged to help the offense by coming out beyond the goal area and supporting his / her teammates when they have the ball.
- Have a different player play goalie each period. Nobody should play more than one period in goal each game.
- No player should play strictly as a defender, no player should play strictly as a forward and no player may play strictly as a goalie.
- Each team will be given two yellow goalie pinnies.

## SPECIAL GOALIE RULES

- Goalies are NOT used in the 6 year old divisions (boys Bantams Division and girls Microns Division)
- Goalies may only use their hands inside the goalie box.
- Goalies may NOT pick the ball up when it is passed to them by a teammate. They must instead play the ball with their feet.
- Goalies may NOT punt the ball. Instead, they should either roll the ball or throw the ball to a teammate. If nobody is near the goalie, the goalie should put the ball on the ground and dribble up the field.

## END OF PERIOD BREAKS

- There will be a five minute halftime break.
- Players should quickly get water.
- Coaches should quickly change goalies and change who is on each field.
- Coaches may briefly discuss one or two points during the break, but they need to realize that the longer they take during the halftime break, the less playing time the players will have in the final period of the game.

## PLAYING TIME

- All players are to be given **equal** playing time, regardless of ability.
- The strongest players are NOT to get extra player time, nor is the child of the coach.
- All players are to play a MINIMUM of half the game, barring injury or discipline problems.

## MAKING SUBSTITUTIONS

Coaches may make substitutions at the following times:

- When play is stopped and your team has the restart (goal kick, kick-in, etc.)
- When play is stopped and the other team has the restart, but ONLY if they are making substitutions.
- At the start of a period, after a goal or if the ball went far out of play.
- Subbing is only to be done while play is going on. If a player on the field is hurt but can walk off the field.

To make a substitution, get the attention of the referee by yelling "substitutions, please." If the referee does not hear you and play continues, the substitutes may not enter the field.

Please only change goalies in between periods. This will minimize the amount of playing time wasted.

**Please minimize the number of times substitutions are made** since the process reduces the amount of time the ball is in play during the game. Please get the players on and off the field as quickly as possible.

## GAME COACHING

Game day is the time for children to have fun. **Do NOT be constantly yelling out instructions to the players**, telling them what to do each time they touch the ball. Soccer is a game of decision making. Please let the players make their own decisions with the ball, DO NOT make the decisions for the players.

One of the biggest problems in youth sports is "over-coaching" which can be described as a coach who is constantly yelling out instructions to the players. This is both annoying and confusing to the players who probably do not understand what the coach is yelling.

**YOUR PLAYERS DO NOT COME TO THE GAMES TO GET YELLED AT.**

Coaching comments should ONLY be made when the player is AWAY from the ball. At that time, the coach should only briefly mention to the specific player any comments about the PREVIOUS play. Never tell a player what to do while he or she has the ball.

It is very important that coaches limit their coaching to the important things and not shout instructions every time a player touches the ball. The majority of comments made by a coach should be limited to "encouragement" and "enthusiasm." Keep the atmosphere positive. Negative comments must be kept to a bare minimum.

As a test of this, try to silently count out 20 seconds to yourself immediately after making a coaching comment during a game. Do not allow yourself to make another comment during these 20 seconds. As the season goes on, try to increase this to 30 seconds and up to a minute by the end of the season. If you find yourself failing this test, then you are guilty of "over-coaching."

## HOW TO HANDLE LOPSIDED SCORES

- LMSC uses special rule to lessen the chance of running up a score: **a team that is down by four goals may play with an extra player on the field.** If a team is winning by **five** goals, the team must take a player off the field. If a team is winning by six goals, the team must take two or more players off the field. These changes reverse if / when the goal difference decreases.
- If your team should get a large lead in a game, try to prevent running up the score by taking your star players off the field, having them play goalie or asking them to stay back on defense. Also, please put your weaker players up on offense

## **PARENTAL CONDUCT DURING THE GAME**

- Even more disturbing than an overbearing coach is an overbearing parent. At the start of the season, tell all of the parents to limit any communication on game days to that of POSITIVE CHEERING.
- Parents are NOT to coach YOUR players and are NOT to tell YOUR players what to do during the game (including their own child!)
- Please remind the parents that the children do not come to games for the purpose of being yelled at.
- Establish this policy right away, it is in the children's best interest.

## **WHEN THE GAMES END**

- Teams are to line up at midfield in single file and shake hands with the opposing team. Be sure that players do not say anything derogatory to the members of the other team. Teaching good sportsmanship is an important responsibility of the coaches.
- Give the players time to get a snack and water. Be sure to delegate a different family each week to bring snacks.
- Snacks can include water, juice, cookies, fruit, etc. Snacks are only to be served AFTER the game, NOT at halftime. Be sure that the snacks are served well away from the sideline so as not to be interfere with the teams in the next game. Please be sure all trash is properly disposed of.
- Be sure that all of the parents know when the next practice or game will take place.
- After the players leave, check for any items that players might have left behind (jackets, soccer balls, etc.)

## **ABOUT THE REFEREES**

- Every effort will be made to provide two referees for each game (one for each field). If there is no referee for one of the fields, the coaches must find someone to referee the game or agree to each referee half the game.
- Please be aware that the referees are quite young (12 years old on up).
- DO NOT YELL AT THE REFEREES. DO NOT LET PARENTS OF YOUR PLAYERS YELL AT REFEREES
- Someday your child might be a referee. How would you expect your child to be treated?
- Referees are ONLY to take orders from the LMSC Officers and the Division Commissioner, not from coaches.
- The primary job of the referee is safety of the players
- If you feel that the referee did a poor job regarding player safety or did not know the rules, please contact your Division Commissioner or contact LMSC.

## **HEADING A BALL IS ILLEGAL**

The United States Soccer Federation has mandated that players under the age of 10 not be allowed to head a ball in games or in practices. This rule took effect in the spring of 2016. Coaches are instructed to NOT teach heading to players. Referees have been instructed to treat intentionally heading ball as a foul.



# TEAM TACTICS

- Team Tactics (strategy used during a game) should be kept simple.
- Coaches working with 6 - 9 year olds should concentrate on developing each player's technical skills.
- Complex tactics are generally beyond the comprehension of children of these ages.
- The basic game philosophy of coaches **MUST BE: to allow children to handle the ball and practice the skills they have learned.**
- When a player has the ball, he/she should be encouraged to do any one of three things with it:
  - Pass the ball
  - Dribble the ball
  - Shoot the ball

**Players should NEVER be allowed to just blast the ball down the field.** That is not passing, not dribbling and not shooting. In order to develop their skills in the fastest possible time frame, players must be encouraged to try and beat an opponent with the ball or look around for a teammate to pass to.

- Coaches who tell players to just boot the ball down the field are going against the coaching philosophy of both LMSC and the United States Soccer Federation.
- Encourage the players to "take chances" and try the skills they have been taught and have practiced.
- Do not criticize players for trying their skills in games, even if they do not succeed.
- Players will fail many times on their road to skill development. Eventually, they will be able to accomplish their skills.

**Players on defense should NEVER be told to kick the ball out of bounds** to stop the other teams attack. Instead, they must be encouraged to try and steal the ball and start your teams counterattack. This philosophy will allow the players to develop their attacking skills. Kicking a ball out of bounds develops no skill whatsoever.

## GOALIES

- Goalies should be encouraged to be part of the offense when their team has the ball.
- They should go up as far as the midfield line and help their team try to score.
- Remember that the other team cannot score a goal from their defensive half of the field so the goalie should have plenty of time to get back to the goal if their team loses the ball.
- Goalies should call for a drop pass when a teammate needs help. The goalie should then look to play the ball to a teammate on the opposite side of the field. Remember that goalies may not use their hands when a teammate passes the ball to them.
- Goalies are not used in the Bantams Division and Microns Division.

## FIELD PLAYERS

- All field players should be involved with both the offense and the defense.
- On defense, they should NEVER be told to kick the ball out of bounds to deny an opponent a scoring chance. The players should learn to play the ball skillfully and creatively at all times.
- The "NO BOOM BALL PHILOSOPHY - The best way to instill this skill oriented style of coaching is to not allow "boom ball" play. Boom ball is a style of play where players just kick the ball down field as hard as they can. This leads to a "kick and run" style of play which is what we DO NOT WANT.
- Require the players to "PASS, DRIBBLE or SHOOT" when they get the ball. Let the player decide which of these three things to do, but don't let the player play boom ball.
  - In your scrimmages at the end of your practices, make boom ball play a penalty.
  - Keep in mind that if a player "booms" the ball, the player will have developed no skill and will have very little soccer success in future years. If you instill a skill oriented, attacking style of play in your players now, they will have the potential to develop into soccer stars in the future.
  - It is this coaching philosophy that will have the greatest impact on the players' future. Let them attack, don't worry about winning and losing.
- Obviously this liberal style of coaching will result in mistakes leading to goals by the other team. Remember that your job as a coach is to develop players. Be patient, don't worry about the score or about winning. Let your players develop skills, let them develop into top notch soccer players. This should be your gauge to success.

# INJURIES AND PLAYER EMERGENCIES

## RECKLESS PLAY

- Coaches are responsible for the safety of the players (including the safety of the opposing players).
- If one of your players is playing out of control or is being a bully, correct this immediately.
- Coaches have the right to remove a player from a game or practice in order to correct any problem. The player should NOT be allowed to return to play until the coach is satisfied that the problem has been resolved.
- If a player continues to demonstrate reckless play or very bad behavior, the coach should contact the Division Commissioner or LMSC President. These people will step in when necessary, to deal with problems regarding out of control players, out of control parents, etc.

## DEALING WITH AN INJURY

- If a child is injured during a game, the referee should IMMEDIATELY stop play. Remind the referee of this if he or she fails to stop play.
- Once play has stopped, the coaches of both teams should have the players on the field sit down and stay AWAY from the injured player.
- Be sure that the other players ARE NOT kicking the ball around since it might accidentally hit the injured player.
- When a player is injured, the player's coach should immediately come onto the field and try to calm the player down. Chances are that the player is frightened and unable to catch his breath. Have the player breathe **slow and deep** to bring his breathing back under control. Comfort the child and try to relieve him of any fear or anxiety.
- An injured child should NEVER be helped up off the ground until the injury has been diagnosed and the player has regained his composure. The player should remain on the ground until the coach is sure that it is all right for him / her to get up.
- If the injury appears serious, the player's parents should be waved onto the field while the player remains on the field.
- The coach or some other adult (or possibly the referee) should stand next to the player in a position where his / her body will block the sun from the injured player's eyes.
- In the event of a major injury, leave the player on the field and call 911.
- **Coaches should ALWAYS carry a list of the player's phone numbers to practices and games.**

## DEALING WITH AN EMERGENCY SITUATION

Never leave the team without adult supervision. It is important to have at least one other responsible adult (who has a car) at both games and practices. This is a very important item since it will help to deal not only with an injury when the parent is not available, but also help deal with a player suddenly getting sick or having a bathroom emergency.

There have been occasions when a player will suddenly get sick and need to go home or use a bathroom. Having another adult drive the player home or to a restroom will allow the coach to stay with the rest of the team.

It is also a good idea to keep a roll of toilet paper in the trunk of the car for the players in case of an unexpected emergency (note: this paragraph was added at the request of several "veteran" coaches who have experienced such a situation).

## **PROPER HYDRATION**

- All players should bring a water bottle to practices and games.
- Give the players regular water breaks.
- Players should NOT be drinking soda since soda actually increases dehydration.
- On hot days, players should start their water intake in the morning, at home, well before leaving for the field.
- Lack of proper hydration can lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- Be sure to keep an eye on the players, especially on hot, humid days.

## **CHILDREN RUNNING INTO THE STREET OR A PARKING LOT AFTER A BALL**

Depending on the field where the practice is taking place, it is possible that a ball will roll into a street or into a parking lot. Be sure to SCREAM at any player who looks like he / she is going to run after the ball. Do not assume that the player is aware of the danger of this situation. If possible, have another adult near a street or parking lot to help with this.

## **SAFETY OF OTHER PEOPLE AT THE FIELD**

Occasionally parents will leave the player's brothers or sisters at the field, unattended, while they dash off to the stores. While coaches are not babysitters for these other players, they still need to keep an eye out for any other children who might be at the field.

NOBODY should be hanging from the crossbar or climbing on the nets of the goals. Tell young children to get off of the goals immediately.

Older kids are not to be kicking balls near the players. If one of the younger players gets hit by a ball kicked by an older person they could get hurt. Be sure that no older kids are presenting a danger to the players.

If a stray dog wanders on the field, be sure to keep it away from the players. Many youngsters have a great fear of dogs and will immediately panic if they see a stray dog wandering about.

## **THE DIVISION COMMISSIONER**

Each intramural division will have a Division Commissioner who will be in charge of the following items:

- Distribution of jerseys, game balls and equipment before the start of the season
- Distribution of team rosters before the start of the season
- Coordinating player trades during the season
- Assigning late signups during the season
- Distributing end of season gifts just before the end of the season

## **IN THE EVENT OF BAD WEATHER**

LMSC will notify coaches and players if games and practices need to be closed because of bad weather. LMSC will contact all coaches and ask them to contact their players. LMSC will also attempt to directly e-mail all players and also post a notice on the LMSC web page.

# THE END OF THE SEASON

## LAST GAME OF THE SEASON

- A few days before the end of the season, LMSC will give each coach a set of end of season gifts to distribute to the players. LMSC has migrated from end of season trophies to end of season gifts since many people do not believe it is appropriate to give "participation trophies."
- Distribute the end of season gifts at the conclusion of your last game.
- Coaches may keep the LMSC game ball, practice cones and goalie pinnies.
- Coaches will also be e-mailed a player evaluation form. This form will enable coaches to rank their players based on skill and soccer ability. These rankings will go into the LMSC database and will be used in future seasons by the Division Commissioners to make fair and even teams. The evaluations will be kept confidential by the club.

## TEAM PARTY

Teams are encouraged to have a team party after the season. This can be done at someone's house, at a local McDonalds, a bowling alley or near the field right after the last game.

## PARENTS VS. KIDS GAME

Some teams have enjoyed having a parents vs. kids game after the season. The coach must contact the Division Commissioner to reserve a field on a particular date and time since other teams might have the same idea at the same time.

It is important that the coach tells the parents to not play hard. Often times an overexcited parent will either run over a youngster or kick a ball right into a player and injure the player. A general rule for parents vs. kids games is to require the parents to run at half speed or less and require them to keep the ball on the ground at ALL times.

## COACHING EDUCATION

Both The United States Soccer Federation (USSF) and the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) offer different level coaching courses. Some coaching courses are geared toward novice parent coaches who are coaching very young players. There are also higher level courses geared for travel team coaches, high school coaches, college coaches, etc.

LMSC FULLY reimburses the registration cost of any coaching course which an LMSC coach successfully completes. If you are interested in taking a coaching course, please contact LMSC for information about when courses are offered.

# THE END OF SEASON ALL STAR GAMES

At the end of the season, LMSC will hold all-star games for each division (except our youngest divisions; the Atoms, Neutrons, Pee-Wees and Special Needs Divisions). Each player selected to play in the all-star games will be given an LMSC All Star Game tee shirt as well as an All Star Game roster with the participating players' names on the roster.

Approximately three weeks before the all-star games, the LMSC Officers will e-mail each head coach and ask them to rank their **all** of their players from strongest to weakest. The LMSC Officers will use these evaluations as part of the process to determine which players are to participate in the all-star games. These evaluations will also be used to try and make fair and even teams in future seasons.

The LMSC Officers will use the following criteria to invite players to participate in the All Star Games:

- observations made by LMSC Officers and LMSC travel team coaches (this is the primary criteria for selection)
- the intramural coaches evaluations
- the strength of each intramural team, compared to the other teams in the division
- the age of the players (no overage players will be selected for the all-star games)

The LMSC Officers will notify the selected players by mail as to their selection. The intramural coaches will NOT be a part of the selection process or the notification process.

**There will NOT be a set number of players that will make the all-star game from each team,**

**Coaches are not authorized to tell a player if he / she is being selected for the all-star games since the coaches are not the ones who determine who will be selected for the all-star games.**

One of the purposes of the all-star games is for the travel team coaches to watch these players in action. Many of the players in the intramural program will tryout for the Developmental Academy the following year or tryout for the LMSC Travel Team Program. The all-star games allow travel team coaches to observe the players in a competitive situation without the players having to feel the pressures of a tryout.

Overage players in the divisions will NOT be eligible for the all-star games.

The player evaluations submitted by the coaches will also be used in following intramural seasons to help make fair and even teams. It is very important that coaches evaluate ALL players on their team, not just the top players who will be in consideration to play in the all-star games.

It will be very important for the head coaches to respond to the e-mail requesting them to evaluate the players so that these evaluations can be used to help with the selection of the players for the all-star games.

# BEYOND THE MIDDLE AGE DIVISIONS

## THE TRAVEL TEAM PROGRAM

One of the primary objectives of the intramural program is to develop the more talented and enthusiastic players for the LMSC Travel Team Program. Our travel teams compete against local area clubs in Southeastern Pennsylvania and beyond.

LMSC fields several boys teams and several girls teams in ages Under 8 up through Under 18. Younger age teams begin play in the fall season. Older age teams begin play in November, after the high school season has finished.

The more talented and enthusiastic players in the intramural program are strongly encouraged to tryout for the Travel Team Program when they are old enough. The Travel Team Program provides more experienced coaches, better competition and a more extensive soccer experience for the players.

Tryouts for our travel teams take place starting in mid-April and running through May.

For more information on the LMSC Travel Team Program, please visit the LMSC web page.

Since 1989, LMSC travel teams have won over 70 state champions (indoor and outdoor state championships). In 2016, LMSC had three teams crowned state champions: U-11 boys, U-15 boys and U-15 girls. LMSC also had three state champions in 2014.

Several LMSC players have gone on to play professionally. One LMSC alum played in the 2000 Olympics and the 2006 World Cup. Long time LMSC player Jon Conway played in the MLS for 12 years and is now coaching in the league. Former LMSC player Jimmy McLaughlin was on the Philadelphia Union for several years and played against Cristiano Ronaldo. Former LMSC player Matthew Real currently plays for the Philadelphia Union and played for the USA Under 18 National Team.

## THE DEVELOPMENTAL TRAVEL TEAM ACADEMY

Each spring, LMSC holds tryouts for their Developmental Travel Team Academy. This program is for our top 6

The Developmental Academy trains from September through early April under the supervision of our very experienced staff coaches. During the fall, the team will train two times a week and play small sided games once a week. Academy players also compete in two tournaments in early November, playing against other local area clubs. In the winter, each team will play in local indoor soccer leagues at a nearby indoor soccer facility.

The Developmental Travel Team Program will give our more talented players a chance to develop their skills and prepare for the actual Travel Team Program that will start the following fall. LMSC staffs the program with very experienced staff coaches who have been coaching for many years.

## THE OLDER INTRAMURAL DIVISIONS

The Spring Intramural Program offers play for children ages 5-12. Due to field limitations, the Spring Intramural Program is only able to offer soccer to children ages 5 - 12.

The Fall Intramural Program offers play for children ages 4-14.