

# GAME DAY

*What every player lives for!*



## THE GAME

COLORADO SOCCER ASSOCIATION

G A M E D A Y

## Managing the Game



## Game Day

### Pre-game

Warm-up, starting line up, equipment

### Game

Starting line up, substitutes, Coaching from the side line

### Half Time

Half time talk, check for injuries, general information, specific information to specific players, hydration, what do the players have to say

### Post game

All players should have a safe and appropriate training area.

### Planning for the next game

Display sportsmanship, cool down, general comments, check for injuries, clean up the area, and remember its only a game



## GAME DAY

Every player and coach waits with anticipation for the weekend and “Game Day”. This is when everyone has the opportunity to compete and participate in a sport that they all enjoy. Soccer is only a game and is meant to be fun, but at the same time it’s important to define what ‘fun’ means in this competitive sport. For most players and coaches, true fun in soccer lies in working hard, improving one’s game, and playing with others as a well-coordinated team. Having a winless season isn’t fun. Trying to convince your team otherwise is not being honest with yourself or your players. Working hard toward the goal of improving one’s skills, and then achieving that goal whether the team wins every game or

not, is not only enormously satisfying, but makes the ‘work’ of team practice seem like ‘play.’ Sometimes ‘fun’ is confused with ‘no effort.’ It’s often a challenge to ensure that players have fun and work hard at the same time. But in order to truly enjoy the game and have the opportunity to improve, players need direction and discipline, including a schedule of well-run, organized practices. Without these, players won’t be able to focus and concentrate on their goals and play well. When players are motivated to devote their time and energy in organized practice, they will be able to perform well both individually and as a team.

# The more prepared you are as a coach, the easier the game is to manage.

**Pre-game:** This is the time for teams and players to get ready physically and mentally to play the game. Coaches need to stress the importance of arriving at the game on time which means being on time for warm-up activities. The team's printed schedule should include arrival time for pre-game warm-up in bigger print than the kickoff time.

*Team warm-up:* This is a time where the players warm up their body, get a feel for the ball and get in the right frame of mind for the game. Warm-up activities should include dynamic stretching, small sided keep away games, players striking long balls to one another and the warming up the GK. This is also the time to let the players know who is starting, their position, and any last minute instructions. Standing in line waiting your turn is not a way to warm up a players body.

*Just before kick off:* The players who are on the sideline, not in the game, should be organized and paying attention to the game. They should be sitting in a chair



or on a bench. (There are a number of companies that sell portable team benches for a moderate cost.) All balls should be put away and all bags should be placed behind the team bench. The water and medical kit should be placed at the end of the bench where everyone can find them.



## The Game and Coaching from the Sidelines:

Remember you are a role model for your players. How you behave on the sideline is what the players see and assume is proper behavior. How can you expect them to sit still during a game if you are pacing up and down?

Find a spot on the sidelines to stand or



sit down. Remain calm. Observe what is going on in the game. Give limited coaching points to players to help them solve problems in the game.

## Remember:

- Most of your coaching should have been done during the week at practice. Remember you can't stand next to your kid in school during a test and tell them how to solve the problem. If you really want to see how helpful your coaching points are from the sideline, tape record yourself during one game. (Were the comments constructive to help players solve problems or were you more of a cheerleader?)



# Remember it's the kid's game!

**Substitutions:** Every child joins a team to play in the game, however every one can not play at the same time. How you handle substitutes is just as important as how you picked your starting line up. Before you put players into the game its important for that player to know who they are subbing in for and what position are they playing?

Here are some reasons why substitutes enter the game:

- A player on the field is not playing up to certain standards.
- A player on the field is not following the team tactics.
- A player on the field is tired. (They are not getting back to defend or getting forward to attack.)
- Because it's the clubs rule. (Some clubs have rules on how much time each player must play in each game.

**Halftime:** Pick a spot where you can assemble the team, preferably away from distractions. Depending on the weather you may want to select a sheltered area out of the wind and sun. Send your team in that direction while you talk with your assistants to confirm your opinions or get more suggestions.



Try and get the team to face you with no distractions behind you. They should be drinking and partaking in the half time refreshments while you get ready to address the team and the individuals.

Below are some suggestions:



## Half time

- Check to make sure there are no injuries or if anyone is not feeling well.
- Give the team some general feedback. Point out the positive and list what needs to be corrected.
- Make sure there are only one or two coaching points for the team otherwise they will get lost in translation.
- Give individual feedback and instructions to players.
- Ask for feedback from the team, What issues do they see out on the field?
- Get the team focus again and go over the starting line up and review the coaching points made at half time.
- Have a team cheer before the start of the half.





**Post Game:** Once the whistle has blown the contest is over, its now time to congratulate everyone for competing in the game.

- Pull the team together and congratulate them for playing the game to the best of their ability.
- Have them congratulate the opposing team and the referee. Also have them applaud their parents.
- Take the players through a cool down. this is a good time to remind them of the next practice or game.
- After the cool down check for any injuries.

- Clean up the area for the next team.
- You can talk **briefly** about the game, but hold onto most of your thoughts until the next practice when you have thought them through.
- If you are driving home with your son or daughter always remember the worst part of the game for a player is the “car ride home”.

**It's now time to start planning your next practice session to solve the issues you had in this game.**

## FAIR PLAY & SPORTSMANSHIP



### Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship teaches children to aspire for the nobler things about sports—enjoying the activity for its own sake; proper consideration for ethics, fairness, sense of fellowship and respect for teammates and opponents; as well as knowing how to be a good sport when it comes to winning and losing. Above all, sportsmanship



teaches kids integrity and how to be better human beings.