

West Des Moines Soccer Club Parent & Coaches Quick-reference Guide; U6/SOCCER CUBBIES



1) Quick facts about the U6 soccer player for the parent and coach

- a. Characteristics of the player
 - i. "Body & Mind" under construction
 1. Short attention span
 2. Individually focused — "Its all about ME!"
 3. No understanding of pace – they go all out!
 4. Players will chase the ball until they drop
 5. Easily bruised psychologically
 6. Not physically coordinated; lots of falling down
 7. Eye-hand and/or eye-foot coordination is developing
 8. Can balance on good foot
 9. Love to climb, run, jump and roll

2) Training sessions – homework

- a. The player's needs
 - i. A ball should be included in most activities
 1. Tag games with and without a ball
 2. Relay races with and without a ball
 3. Ball awareness – what a ball can do: bounce, roll, go up and come down
 4. Ball mastery (activities that promote foot skills)
 5. Fundamentals (dribbling and shooting)
- b. Young players need frequent touches (one ball per player)
- c. Demonstrate (if possible)
- d. Involve all children in activity
 - i. The coach should participate in activities and have fun right along with the kids
- e. Players need continuous, consistent positive encouragement
- f. End with small-sided games: 1 vs.1, 2 vs. 2 and 3 vs. 3

3) General information

- a. Practice should not exceed one hour
- b. No lines, no lectures and no laps – GAMES, GAMES, GAMES and did we mention GAMES!
- c. Small-sided games: 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2 and 3 vs. 3

4) Injury prevention

- a. Proper use of equipment (shin guards)
- b. Check field for problem areas (rocks or holes)
- c. Field-appropriate footwear (soccer cleats)
- d. Adequate water supply and breaks
- e. Avoid training during peak heat hours
- f. Follow-up call to parents if a serious injury occurs

5) What exactly will this "soccer" game look like?

- a. It is designed as 3 vs. 3 but, in reality, it will be 1 vs. 5
 - i. Everyone versus the kid with the ball!
- b. It resembles a swarm chasing a ball... somewhere in the middle is a kid with the ball
- c. A child may run off the field to hug a parent or have their parent tie their shoe
- d. A child may stop playing to admire a plane, a butterfly, etc.
- e. The kids will not remember the score or whether they won or lost
 - i. They will remember the treat after the game
- f. It will not look organized nor will it be played as though it is organized



6) Game day

- a. Arrive 15-20 minutes prior to starting time so player can get a feel for the atmosphere
- b. Survey the field
- c. Are there any safety issues? Look for holes or rocks on the field
- d. Clarify rules with referee prior to game
- e. Rotate positions of players; do not lock in a player to one spot
- f. Encourage goal scoring
- g. Discourage staying in the back as a goal keeper

7) Review of game rules

- a. **The field** – Rectangular in shape, approx. 25 x 20 yds; a center circle with three-yd radius, a halfway line, goal line and sidelines
- b. **The ball** – Size #3
- c. **Number of players** – The game is played 3 vs. 3. Each team shall have no more than three players on the field. Each roster will not exceed six players.
- d. **Player's equipment** – Tennis shoes or soft cleat shoes, shin guards and team uniform are mandatory
- e. **Referee** – A parent or coach shall act as the referee. Usually, the coaches of the teams will tag-team the match, each refereeing one-half of the game.
- f. **Duration of the match** – The match shall consist of four equal quarters, each eight minutes long, with a two-minute break between each quarter
- g. **Start of play** – The ball must be played by the team in possession before it can be touched by an opponent
- h. **Ball in and out of play** – The ball must completely cross the end line or touchline
- i. A goal cannot be scored on kickoff or from the opposite end of field
- j. There are no penalty kicks
- k. **Free kicks** – All free kicks will be indirect free kicks; the ball, after being played by the team awarded the kick, must touch another player before a goal may be scored
- l. **Throw-in / kick-in** – Do-overs are allowed for an incorrectly taken kickoff, goal kick, corner kick or throw in
- m. Substitutions are allowed during goal kick, own throw in, goal scored and start of each period

8) Coaches/equipment

- a. Age-appropriate soccer balls (size #3)
- b. A basic first-aid kit
 - i. Access to a cell phone in case of emergency
- c. Cones
- d. Well thought-out plan for each practice
 - i. Including a game-day playing rotation
- e. Plenty of patience
- f. Post-game treats and drink — the most important thing to the young players on game day!

9) Resources

- a. Mike Hopson – Director of Recreation, cell 480-0375 or mhopson@unitedfincorp.com
- b. Billy Scott – Director of Recreation, cell 865-5524 or rscott5571@aol.com
- c. Frank Gurnick – Director of Coaching, cell 988-6059 or sokreduc8r@wdmsoccerclub.org
- d. Club phone 222-0079; weather hotline 225-8219
- e. Club website – www.wdmsoccerclub.org
- f. Iowa Soccer association – www.iowasoccer.org
- g. US Youth Soccer Association – www.usyouthsoccer.org
- h. Two excellent books that can be found @ Barnes & Noble
 - i. *The Baffled Parent's Guide to Great Soccer Drills* by Fleck and Quinn
 - ii. *The Baffled Soccer Parent's Guide to Coaching Youth Soccer* by Bobby Clark
- i. Soccer apparel can be found at Soccer Connections, 63rd & Grand or 100th St in Urbandale