



Scarborough Soccer Club Coach's Handbook

Version 1.4
March, 2016

The purpose of this document is to help orient new coaches to travel soccer and the Scarborough Soccer Club. While we will attempt to keep this document current, the Board of Directors of the Scarborough Soccer Club reserves the right to implement policy changes which may make portions of this document obsolete. For the most current version of this document, please visit the Scarborough Soccer Club web site at: <http://www.scarboroughsoccerclub.org>

Revision History Summary of Changes

Date	Level	Person	Revision
10/18/2004	1.0	Board	Initial version approved by Board of Directors
08/21/2005	1.1	Board	Minor revisions to denote Soccer Maine changes for 2005 season
06/05/2006	1.2	Board	Revisions to denote Soccer Maine and SSC changes for 2006 season including discontinuing districts, payment at field policies, discontinuance of individual awards at banquet, and SSC collection of player fees at registration
11/15/2010	1.3	Board	Revisions to denote SoccerMaine 2009 changes of Anthem Division having end of season festivals instead of Tournament. Removal of SoccerMaine Directors names who are no longer in the organization. SSC 2009 change of referee payment procedures. Correction of names and websites for the indoor facilities. Slight modifications to match tryout and registration procedures and timelines.
03/04/16	1.4	Board	Revisions to denote SoccerMaine Changes to return to levels of end of season tournaments (Champions Cup and Classic Cup). Revisions to denote SoccerMaine roster and player pass changes. Updating of all links.

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Recommended Pre-Reading

The Scarborough Soccer Club (SSC) has developed two companion documents to address the common questions about the SSC most often raised by parents and by referees. The *Scarborough Soccer Club Parent's Handbook* in particular should be read prior to reviewing this document. As most coaches are first and foremost parents in the club, that handbook will address a wide variety of the common questions that coaches have. It also helps to outline the expectations that parents are likely to form about coaches. All the SSC handbooks are available on our web site.

Second, Soccer Maine produces a Fall Classic League handbook. The handbook contains the state contact information, FIFA rule modifications appropriate for the age groups indicated, code of conduct and Zero Tolerance policy information, state tournament dates and district playoff information, etc. This document also does not attempt to duplicate the information contained in the Fall Classic League Handbook which can be found on our website or at www.soccermaine.com

The purpose of this document is to describe the SSC policies and operations in support of our coaches. The concept is to provide a written source of information to help our coaches more easily work with the club, spend less time on “administration”, and spend more time coaching.

This document is not intended to be a set of drills, practice plans, or coaching points. That information can be obtained through the coaching education, from the SSC Director of Coaching, through peer coaches, or a variety of good manuals and web sites available online.

It is recommended that this document be re-read at the start of each season. Please submit suggestions for improving this document to the SSC Director of Coaching.

Club Philosophy & Coaching for the SSC

The Scarborough Soccer Club (SSC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a competitive and fun soccer playing experience for the youth of Scarborough. The SSC plays what is commonly referred to as “travel soccer.” We generally seek players that have demonstrated proficiency in playing soccer at the Community Services level, are committed to attend practices and improve their skills, are highly “coachable”, and enjoy competing hard against quality opponents. We expect no less in terms of qualifications from our coaches.

In general, we seek the most highly qualified coaching candidates we can find. In general the qualifications we are seeking include:

- Has played soccer as a youth and up through an advanced age group, such as high school, college, or professionally.
- Continues to play soccer currently.
- Has soccer coaching experience.
- Has youth coaching experience.
- Has an even temperament, doesn't get overly excited, and keeps things in perspective.
- Has a player development philosophy similar to the SSC's philosophy.
- Is dependable and committed to making this a fun learning experience for the players.
- Is a respected role model, and sets a good example for our players to emulate.

- Can perform the administrative tasks and communicate effectively with players and parents

Not every coach meets all points for these criteria. Often, willing parents that have a solid understanding of youth sports in general are asked to coach in the club, with the intent of educating them on the game of soccer. As rule, the more criteria that a coaching candidate possess, the more desirable they are to have in our club. Some of the criteria, including setting a good role model for the players, dependability, and overall commitment to the players are firm requirements of the coaching role and are not negotiable attributes.

While the SSC recognizes that coaches expend an enormous amount of time and energy in the course of a season, it is our contention that coaching for the SSC is a privilege. The Scarborough Soccer Club continues to be one of the top clubs in the State of Maine and a model for many others to follow. We have some of the best youth athletes in the State of Maine, and it is a significant responsibility to serve as their mentor, often for many consecutive seasons. Further, we instruct our players that they are “ambassadors” for the town of Scarborough, and the actions of our coaches and players speak loudly for the character and the quality of our town. Our coaches are expected to be the epitome of sportsmanship and grace under pressure for these young athletes.

Player Development Mission

Our mission is to provide a fun and competitive youth soccer playing experience, focused on player development. The choice of the term “player development” is very specific. Our objective is to get the most out of each member of the club, and help them develop to the best of their potential. The objective isn’t “team development” and isn’t “win at all costs”. Winning will come through the development of fundamentally sound, mentally strong, skillful and committed soccer players.

Accordingly, the SSC wants to place far less emphasis at “winning” at younger age groups. This philosophy is in alignment with the philosophy of Soccer Maine, where all games played at U11 and below are not results oriented. Our policies regarding player attraction, team selection and cuts, and games and opponents are all reflective of this philosophy. Our coaches are expected to embrace this philosophy, and focus energies on fun and skills development. At older age groups our primary focus is still skills development, but we begin to use state competitions as a measure of progress and development. Accordingly, we begin to segment our players by ability levels, to allow the coaches to train players of like skills and abilities in the fundamentals and tactics appropriate for their current level of development. This segmentation of players is reevaluated annually at the tryout process, as some players progress faster than others. Our club will foster a system that promotes advancement of players based upon merit, and rewards hard work and player development. Overall this approach builds a strong incentive system for players to improve their skills and develop the soccer attributes we are seeking.

Another important philosophical distinction is that we are not the soccer program of last resort. In situations where soccer skills are significantly lacking, there are legitimate safety concerns, or the player exhibits behavioral issues that detract from the ability of others to learn the game of soccer, the SSC has the latitude to cut these players from the program. As a general rule, we are less inclined to do this at younger age groups where many kids are still developing fundamental skills, including social skills, and more likely to do this at older age groups once development has been assessed and a track record of ability and effort has been determined. The above non-

withstanding, it is our objective to be an inclusive club and promote soccer to as many players as we can reasonably accommodate and assist. By providing a deep talent pool of quality players to high school, premier teams, and ODP, we are serving our core mission and giving many kids a rich youth soccer playing experience.

SSC Board of Directors

The Scarborough Soccer Club is governed by an elected Board of Directors. The Board contains a number of positions and responsibilities that you will likely need to interact with for a variety of situations. The Board of Directors responsibilities are approximately as follows:

- **President** – responsible for overseeing all aspects of the club. Contact the President as the ultimate point of escalation on any issue, if you are unclear about Board policy, and if you are unsure whom to contact.
- **Vice-President** – responsible for assisting the President with key focus areas. Reasons to contact the VP will be communicated during the season based upon the tasks the VP will own.
- **Treasurer** – responsible for the fiscal operation of the club. Coaches will need to turn in referee reconciliation forms at the end of the season. Coaches will be reimbursed for authorized coaching certification from the treasurer. Any other expense reimbursement requires the prior approval of an SSC Board member.
- **Secretary** – responsible for documenting the club activities. Reasons to contact the Secretary will be communicated during the season based upon the tasks the Secretary will own.
- **Registrar** – responsible for registering and rostering players and teams with Soccer Maine. Coaches will receive from the registrar official state rosters that are required for most tournaments and festivals, as well as printed player passes when required.
- **Coaching Director** – responsible for appointing coaches and overseeing player development. The coaching director can assist you with practice plans, coaching techniques, game evaluations, and general coaching assistance. The coaching director is also responsible for evaluation of our coaches and disciplinary actions if required.
- **4v4 (Lobster Classic) Chair** – responsible for organizing the annual Scarborough tournament. Coaches will receive communication from the Lobster Classic regarding necessary tasks to be performed in support of the tournament.
- **Uniform Director**—responsible for ordering and distributing player uniforms and coaching apparel.
- **Equipment Director** – responsible for ordering and distributing uniforms and coaching equipment. Coaches will work with the equipment director to obtain required practice and game equipment such as balls, pinnies, cones, and keeper jerseys.

The following positions are not voting Board positions, but are job roles adopted by Board members or Board appointed volunteers that often require frequent interaction with coaches.

- **Director of Referees/Assignors** – Coaches will work with referee assignors to obtain referees for all home games.
- **Field Coordinator** – responsible for acquiring, reserving, and managing field space for both practices and games.

Current members of the Board of Directors with associated contact information can be found online at the SSC web site, <http://www.scarboroughsoccerclub.org>. Also on the web site is a section reserved for communication with coaches, and additional contact information for these other positions and responsibilities will be held. Please feel free to discuss any questions about the operation of the club or specific responsibilities with any of the current members of the Board of Directors.

Assignment of Coaches

It is the job of the SSC Coaching Director to identify and recruit the best available coaches to the program. Consistent with our philosophy of player development, we believe that development best occurs with coaching excellence. Just as players are assigned to teams for the current season only and are reevaluated (tryout) annually, coaching assignments are made for a one season period. Every year, the Coaching Director in conjunction with the Board of Directors will recommend a slate of coaches to support the teams to be formed. In some instances, a coach for a team or age group will be asked to take a different assignment, or to step aside to allow a more qualified candidate to work with the players. When making these decisions, the overriding concern is for the benefit of all the players involved.

For prospective new coaches, the criteria we apply to selecting coaches are provided in the *Parent's Handbook*. For existing coaches, assignment of teams is also based upon:

- past coaching performance as evaluated by SSC Coaching Director other objective expert coaches
- parent and player feedback
- peer feedback from other coaches

Coach Selection

Assignment of coaches to teams is based upon many factors. The SSC Coaching Director maps the available coaching pool of resources for a particular age group and gender with the estimated number of teams we can field in that age group based upon registration numbers. Our objective is to get a highly qualified and capable head coach over every team we field in the club. In the case where an excess of coaching talent exists, the SSC Coaching Director will consider available options, such as moving a coach to a different age group if another sibling also plays in the club, moving the coach and player up one age group, or carrying excess assistant coaches.

For competitive age groups, additional factors come into play such as the relative talent level of the coach's child playing in that age group. In the situation where an excess of volunteer coaching talent exists, the following criteria shall be used by the Board of Directors to make a selection of head coach and assistant coach as appropriate:

- Placement of the coach's child on teams through objective tryout scoring, if there are multiple children involved and the objective scoring would normally place them on different teams.
- Demonstrated knowledge and commitment to the game of soccer and coaching soccer, as evidenced by state licensing level, soccer playing experience, years plus level of soccer coaching experience.
- Coaching ability, as judged by SSC Coaching Director and peer review of practice organization and overall skills development of the players.

- The ability to relate to players and parents, including feedback from both relative to ability to coach, consistent application of SSC philosophies, and clarity of decisions and actions relative to each player.
- Administrative ability, such as organization, timeliness, ability to schedule appropriate opposition, motivation skills, and communication.

Just because a coach has been involved with a team or age group for a number of years is not a firm guarantee that coach will continue with the team, if in the judgment of the Coaching Director and Board of Directors there is a different coaching combination that would better help the players develop overall. Please also note that “wins and losses” is purposely not emphasized in the list above, consistent with a player development mission overall. The SSC Coaching Director shall make the final recommendation of coaches to the Board of Directors, with the final authority to decide on the particular coaches belonging to the board overall. Based upon that approval, coaches and assistants are placed on the official state roster by the SSC Registrar.

In general, we strongly discourage two existing, qualified head coaches from combining to coach a single team. Our objectives are best served by getting the highest quality coaches over the greatest number of players. An exception to that shall be when the children of two qualified head coaches both score high enough in tryouts to make a Champions Cup team. The SSC shall not require one coach to move to the Classic Cup team unless that coach agrees to do so for the benefit of all the players involved.

Quantity of Coaches

The SSC requires one person be appointed “head” coach (or age group director) for each team. The head coach is ultimately responsible for overseeing the development of all the players on that team. The head coach may delegate certain responsibilities, but is viewed by the club as the single focal point for the development of the young athletes that form that team.

Each head coach may appoint one and only one “assistant” coach for each team. At any SSC game or tournament function, not more than two coaches may be on the sideline. This is done to limit the “chaos” that often ensues otherwise. If the head or assistant coach is unavailable, a “deputy” coach may fill in for that practice or game if and only if they have successfully completed the Risk Management process, and with the permission of the head coach and remaining coach. If both the head coach and assistant coach are unavailable, then the practice or game must be rescheduled.

Head coaches may request a particular assistant coach work with them, but the SSC Board of Directors reserves the right to reassign assistants to meet the objectives of the club overall. In all cases where selection of team is done based upon ability, the assistant coach’s son or daughter must earn a spot on the team rightfully. Any “deputy” coaches have no standing in terms of team selection to be offered a spot on any particular team.

Coaching Roles

The SSC supports the following coaching roles within the club. Not all roles apply in each age group or for each season.

Director of Coaching

This Board of Director position is usually held by an experienced and highly trained coach within the club. This person has the primary responsibility to improve the overall coaching talent within the club, and is the primary resource to the other coaching positions in the club.

Head Coach

The head coach is the person appointed by the SSC that is responsible for overseeing the overall operation of an individual team and the development of all players on that team. The primary responsibilities of the head coach are described within this document, but include assisting with clinics, communicating with players and parents, scheduling opponents, planning and executing practice plans, as well as traditional coaching duties.

Assistant Coach

The assistant coach performs a subset of the head coaching duties as delegated by the head coach or age group director. They share the responsibility for development of all the players on the team, and fulfill the head coaching duties if the head coach is unavailable.

Coaching Mentor

This is an experienced head coach appointed to help a less experienced head coach in a variety of ways including suggesting talent-appropriate opponents, offering coaching technique tips, assisting with development of practice plans, and advice or guidance on general club operations. In this document, there is frequent reference to consulting the SSC Director of Coaching (SSC Coaching Director) for more information. In virtually every instance, a Coaching Mentor can be consulted instead if that is more convenient for you.

Expectations

Regardless of the coaching position, there are common expectations the SSC has of its coaching staff, most of which are “common sense” expectations. Failure to meet these expectations can be a reason for dismissal from the club.

Expectations include:

- Coaches are expected to be as committed to coaching as the players are committed to playing. Coaches that are consistently absent or unable to make the time commitments necessary to perform the job are not serving the club and the player development mission.
- Coaches are expected to be positive role models for our players. Behavior which would not be tolerated in players will not be tolerated in our coaches. All coaches should review SoccerMaine's coaches code of ethics.
- <http://soccermaine.com/coaches-code-of-ethics/>
- Coaches shall conform to the policies and philosophies of the SSC. Coaches that wish to coach in programs that offer radically different approaches are free to seek opportunities outside of the SSC.

- Coaches are expected to curb personal desires to win games, and focus on player development. A coach's desire to win a particular game shall not outweigh the benefit of developing players, young athletes in general, and the principles of good sportsmanship. Please note that we are not telling our coaches not to try to win a particular game, but to balance that effort against the player development mission we carry.
- Coaches will behave in an ethical manner at all time, and not knowingly violate the FIFA Laws of the Game or Soccer Maine rules regarding player eligibility, tournament rules, recruitment, or additional requirements as may be established in the future and as described in the appropriate Soccer Maine Coaching Handbooks.
- Coaches are expected to communicate openly and honestly with parents, players, and SSC Board members.
- Coaches shall treat all players equally, fairly, and without bias within the guidelines and policies we have adopted. Coaches will not single out individual players for ridicule or in any way intentionally encourage players to exit the Soccer Club for reasons not approved by the SSC Board of Directors.
- Coaches will not put their needs or the needs of their children on the team ahead of the needs of the entire team. Preferential treatment of the coach's own child is unfair and prohibited.

If a coach is found to be in violation of the above expectations, the SSC Director or Coaching or other board member will work with the coach to bring him or her into compliance. Consistent or flagrant violation of these expectations will result in referral of the coach to an SSC board appointed disciplinary committee, which will recommend a course of action to the Board of Directors up to and including removal from the SSC club and banishment from coaching within the club.

Getting Started

Being a new coach can be overwhelming at first, but there is an extensive support structure behind you to help make the process easier. All coaches new to Scarborough Soccer Club, and certain returning coaches based upon age group, will need to accomplish the following tasks.

Risk Management Application

Soccer Maine requires all soccer volunteers that come into contact with the players and youth involved in the sport to complete a Risk Management Application. This application is used to validate against sex offender registries and other known, public data bases to help protect the youth involved in our sport. Completing this application is mandatory every two years.

Coaching Certification

It is a Soccer Maine requirement, and Scarborough Soccer Club policy, that all coaches must be certified at the appropriate age group level. Coaches that are not certified will not be permitted to be on the sidelines at Soccer Maine sponsored tournaments and festivals. Each team may only have two coaches on the sidelines, but must have at least one or will be forfeited from the competition. Coaches should retain their proof of license and carry this document along with player passes to all such tournaments. For coaches that achieve certification near the tournament

date, please make arrangements with the certification class leader to obtain a letter indicating successful completion of the course in lieu of the proof of license.

Certification is managed by Soccer Maine, and classes are held at times and locations of their choosing. The SSC Board works with Soccer Maine to ensure sufficient classes are held in dates and locations convenient to Scarborough, but as a club we do not control these decisions.

Courses

Certification level requirements are:

Age Group	License	Description
U9 & U10	U10 Youth Module	A four hour course that addresses the most basic of situations and skills
U11 to U14	“E” License	A sixteen hour course, often taught in four 4-hour segments, that teaches basic skills and tactics, with field time mixed with classroom exercises.
	“D” License	A forty hour course, including a field examination that must be passed to achieve the license, which covers advanced tactics. After receiving a “D” license <u>and</u> selected as Head Coach of a team, the player fee for your first child in the club will be waived.

The E license course has a prerequisite the U10 Youth Module. The D license course has a prerequisite the E license course. Coaches should retain their license information and provide a photocopy of successful course completion to the SSC Registrar.

Enrollment

To find the current certification course schedule, and to get enrollment information, first visit the Soccer Maine web site at:

<http://soccermaine.com/current-coaching-courses/>

As course announcements are sent to the club presidents, these e-mail messages will be forwarded to all the coaches involved.

Completion

All education courses need to be completed prior to participation in Soccer Maine festivals and championships, which are normally contested from mid-October to early November.

You must attend all segments of a course to complete certification. However, with prior permission of the course instructor, you may miss one session and make up that same portion of the agenda at a different location. If you need to have this flexibility, you must work with the class instructor directly.

To help us track certification attainment, please notify the SSC Registrar via e-mail when you have successfully completed any course, and provide a photocopy of your certificate as soon as you receive it.

Reimbursement

The SSC will reimburse you for the cost of these courses if you are appointed as a coach for the particular age group. Please note that the SSC will not reimburse you for taking courses above your current level (e.g. taking an E license course while still a U10 coach), unless you have the prior approval of the SSC Coaching Director.

If you need an advance to pay for a course, you may request the proper amount from the SSC Treasurer.

Advanced Licenses

While not required by Soccer Maine or the SSC, there are many additional levels of licensing available to coaches. In keeping with the SSC philosophy of attracting and training top level coaching talent, the SSC funds a limited number of “D” license courses for coaches in the club. If you are interested in becoming D license certified, contact the SSC Coaching Director to find out if budget exists for the SSC to pay for the license. D license course information in Maine is posted to the same web site location as noted above, however many of these courses are offered out of state as well.

As an incentive to promote advanced education, the SSC has adopted a policy of refunding the equivalent of the first child tuition annually for all D-licensed head coaches, D-licensed age group directors, and D-licensed Director of Coaching. This credit applies to the season once the D-license is earned. If the D-license is earned mid-season, the Board of Directors shall have the authority to grant a full, partial, or no refund depending upon what point during the season the license is earned.

This credit is not applied to D-licensed assistant coaches. Also, there is no direct payment of the player fees to a D-licensed coach that doesn't have any child in the club. For questions concerning application of the fees for D-licensed head coaches, contact the SSC Treasurer.

Tryouts, Team Selection, & Player Notification

Tryouts

The SSC Coaching Director determines the dates, drills, scoring method, and roles needed for all SSC tryouts. Tryouts are normally held early spring every year.

Past coaches will be asked to communicate tryout information to all parents, usually via an e-mail distribution list. All coaches should contact players, who in the opinion of the coach show soccer aptitude, a willingness to learn more, and a desire to play at a more competitive level, and provide them appropriate information about the SSC and the tryout dates.

All coaches are expected to attend all age-appropriate tryout sessions if requested by the SSC Coaching Director. The SSC Coaching Director will appoint coaches to serve in one of several capacities:

- Evaluator – These coaches are responsible for evaluating and grading each of the players in a particular age group. There are two types of evaluators. Independent evaluators are those coaches invited by the Coaching Director to grade the players for an age group that they do not coach nor have children playing in. Age group

evaluators are those coaches invited by the Coaching Director to grade the players for the age group they coach. The SSC may use either or both independent and age group evaluators to get multiple evaluations of the players to help best assess the overall capabilities of the players. This is more critical at the U12 and higher age groups, where separation of players by ability level is performed. In general all evaluators are the more experienced and more highly certified coaches within the club. The SSC may also use evaluators from outside the club. Instructions for scoring the tryouts will be provided to all evaluators as the tryouts approach.

- Drill Leader – These coaches are responsible for organizing the players and helping them execute the specific drills associated with the tryouts. Coaching should be kept to an absolute minimum, allowing the evaluators to judge core skills and playing ability. The drill leader is responsible for ensuring all players have an equal opportunity to be judged, for making sure different combinations of players are frequently used, and for explaining the drills and refereeing the associated games as they are executed.
- Administration – These coaches will assist board members and others with tasks such as registration, meetings with parents, recording scores, and any other organizational tasks that may need to be done at the field.

Evaluations

Evaluators must turn in all scores, and these scores will be computed by an appointed board member. Because of past issues with scores becoming divulged to players, who then use them as a point of ridicule in the worst of situations, the scores are confidential and individual scores are kept to the Coaching Director, President, and Vice President only. This group may, in specific instances where a right to know outweighs privacy concerns, share limited information with addition SSC personnel as required. The scores shall be used only for the purpose of team selection. It is expressly forbidden to share scores with individual players or parents. If questioned about the score of a particular player by that player or his/her parents, you may refer them to the Coaching Director who will discuss in general terms their relative positioning compared to the age group as a whole, and the strengths and weaknesses for this player as determined in the tryout. The Coaching Director will not make comparisons to other specific individuals and their scores, nor make comments on the relative strength and weaknesses as determined in the tryouts of other players. The Coaching Director will not indicate which evaluators scored the player highest or lowest, but may indicate the general degree to which the tryout scores were alike or dissimilar without revealing how individual evaluators scored the player.

Team Selection

Head coaches will participate in the team selection process in certain defined instances. For the U9 through U11 age groups, team selection will be done by the board to balance teams. This may mean a coach has substantially different players than the previous year. Head coaches will receive team rosters and may raise concerns at that point with the Coaching Director and Registrar. However, only significant and tangible reasons to force a roster change will be considered. Changes for convenience, friendships, or other factors not related to our team selection criteria will not be entertained. Assistant coaches may participate in the absence of the head coach only.

Team selection for U12 and up will be based on tryout score. Initial rosters are two fewer players than the final roster. Head coaches are given the opportunity to select the final two players from the remaining pool of players. This allows them to add a goalie, an injured player, an over-looked player, or their own child to their roster.

Team selection will be facilitated by an assigned SSC board member, and will be conducted in a method of the Board's choosing to be consistent with the selection philosophy for the age group. Specific information will be provided prior to the team selection meeting. Team selection is targeted to be completed no later than two weeks upon the completion of tryouts.

Final approval for all teams and the associated selection of players rests with the Board of Directors. Upon the completion of team selection, the Board will set a date to approve the teams as selected or make necessary changes. Coaches should not communicate selection information to players until notification from the Board has been received.

Notification of Players

Final team selection will be posted on the Scarborough Soccer Club Website:
www.scarboroughsoccerclub.org

Though the club tries to place every child on a team, cuts are sometimes necessary. In the event of this the Director of Coaching will communicate with the player's family prior to teams being posted.

Organizing for the Season

There are several activities involved in planning your season and preparing for the first set of games. These tasks can be done in any order, but all are important items to accomplish.

Team Administrator

While the Board of Directors tries to simply many of the administrative tasks and offload our coaches, there is a certain amount of communication and coordination that must be done by each team. Appointment of a good volunteer team administrator can offload the coaches and improve the flow of communication. Ideal qualities in the team administrator are:

- Willingness to perform the role
- Communication skills
- Organization skills

The tasks offloaded to the team administrator vary by team and head coach, but may include:

- Coordination of volunteers for tournaments
- Dissemination of directions, schedules, and team communication
- Reporting game results to the league
- Coordination of team pictures and banquet activities
- Planning team meetings and end of season gathering, if desired
- Gathering of necessary paperwork
- Distribution of uniforms, merchandise, and other items ordered through the SSC
- Collection of coaching items needed for the season

Collecting Contact Information & Reconfirming Commitment

The SSC Registrar will provide you with much of your team contact information, but when calling and notifying the players on your team it is a good idea to gather and validate information such as e-mail addresses, name spelling information, addresses, and additional phone numbers. On occasion some players try out for the SSC, and subsequently decide not to commit to the club for the season for one of many possible reasons. For this reason, it is a good idea to validate as you call that the player is committed to playing the season.

The contact information should be retained by you, allowing you to build a distribution contact list in e-mail. You may also wish to provide this to your team administrator, so they can manage the overall communications if you so desire.

If you learn of any players that drop from the program after team selection, please notify the SSC Registrar as soon as possible. The SSC incurs fees for these players in Soccer Maine registration fees and uniform orders if this information is not captured in a timely fashion.

Selection of Tournaments

The SSC traditionally funds every team to participate in four tournaments every year. This level of participation in tournaments is unmatched by most other clubs. The tournaments are:

1. Our own Lobster Classic 4v4 Tournament, which is played in August.
2. Labor Day Tournament of coach's choosing. Traditionally the SSC sends many teams to Cumberland, ME for their annual Kickoff tournament and Londonderry, NH for their Labor Day tournament. We have sent some teams to other events as well. The SSC Coaching Director will provide you more information on available tournaments at an appropriate coach's meeting.
3. Columbus Day Tournament of coach's choosing. Traditionally the SSC sends many teams to Falmouth, ME for their tournament, to Sanford, ME for their tournament, Gray New Gloucester Patriot Tournament, and to York, ME for their Harvest Cup tournament. The SSC Coaching Director will provide you more information on available tournaments at an appropriate coach's meeting.
4. U10 Festival, U11 Festival, Champions Cup, or Classic Cup tournaments.

You do not need to do anything to be entered into the Lobster Classic. As this is the SSC's primary fund raiser, we allocate teams to fill in brackets and round out the tournament. More information the Lobster Classic is described later in this document.

For both Labor Day and Columbus Day, head coaches should notify the Coaching Director of their desired tournament selections as soon as possible. An appropriate board member will complete the tournament application on your behalf and send the required payment to secure a spot. As many of the popular tournaments fill quickly, making a timely selection of tournaments is very important to ensure you enter the tournament of your choice. Once entered, the hosting tournament organization may contact you with requests for additional information, such as mailing in a player roster in advance of the tournament, providing record and strength of schedule information, and providing other information. You should respond to these items directly, and seek assistance from the SSC Registrar if unclear on what is being requested.

Because of the travel involved and our team selection philosophies, we prohibit U11 and younger teams from traveling to any SSC funded out of state tournaments without approval of the board. At U12 and higher, one tournament may be out of state if desired and funding approval is

obtained. Exceptions for two out of state tournaments are granted rarely, but may be considered under certain circumstances. The SSC Coaching Director or the assigned coaching mentor can help advise you on appropriate tournament selections among the available options.

To complete the season, all U9 and U10 teams are automatically entered in the Soccer Maine sponsored U10 Festival. This non-results oriented tournament completes the season for all teams in this age bracket. Likewise, the U11 teams are automatically entered in the Soccer Maine sponsored U11 Festival. The festivals are held at different host clubs over time, and frequently are different weekends of the season. Coaches of teams in these age brackets do not need do anything to be entered into a festival.

For U12 and higher, a state championship tournament exists for both the Champions and Classic Division. Throughout the season scores are kept for these teams and they are then seeded at the conclusion of the season. All teams qualify for the tournament. Four host sites are selected throughout the state for the preliminary rounds of play-offs. A single winner from each site will advance to the State semifinal.

More information on the tournament structure and rules can be found in the Soccer Maine Fall Classic Handbook.

Game Schedules

There are games that are organized by Soccer Maine on your behalf that are played against opponents within a league to which you are assigned. These are considered League Games, and are normally scheduled for each of six Sundays of the regular season. Then there are games that you are free to schedule on your own against opponents of your choosing. These are Open Scheduling Games, and normally Saturday dates are left “open” for scheduling of these games. Each of these are explained in more detail below.

League Games

To simplify arranging game schedules, Soccer Maine will take all the teams registering for a competition level (Champions or Classic Cup), an age group, and gender, and break them into up to four leagues. These leagues will consider geography, but in some instances, such as “U13 Boys Classic Cup”, it is possible that the “league” will consist of teams from across the entire state due to the limited numbers. Leagues normally will consist of four to seven teams per league, depending on the overall registration numbers across the state. Soccer Maine will appoint a “league director” who will be responsible for creating and publishing a league schedule. That schedule will be given to our club, and the SSC cannot control the teams formed as part of the league, the order of teams played, or the location of play.

League schedules should be created and published roughly mid-August. The most current information on league composition can be found in the appropriate Soccer Maine *Fall Travel League Handbook*.

Within each league, Soccer Maine will establish an appropriate game schedule for all six Soccer Maine approved weekends of play, which begins the weekend preceding Labor Day going up to the first weekend of league playoffs, excluding Labor Day and Columbus Day weekends. League games are scheduled on Sundays. Soccer Maine now allows games to be moved to the preceding Saturday, if both coaches agree to this change. If you wish to change a game date, you must communicate as soon as possible with the Club's field assignor.

The games times and fields will be set for you by the SSC Field Coordinator. Once established, the SSC Coaching Director or other Board member will forward you the schedule. The schedule must be played as provided. However, if you have any specific concerns about the schedule or wish to implement some schedule changes, then please consult the SSC Field Coordinator.

Additional Games/Friendlies

In addition to the Tournaments and District play, the SSC funds a limited number of additional games per team that can be chosen by the head coach. The number of additional games funded shall be communicated to you at an appropriate Coach's Meeting, or you may as the SSC Coaching Director for input. Currently the Club is funding 4 friendlies.

In general, U9 and U10 teams should find ten games, combined with aforementioned tournaments, to be a sufficient number of games. This also leaves these kids and parents some Saturday's free, consistent with the attention span and interest level of most 8 and 9 year old children. In general, U11 and U12 teams will want to schedule additional games with diverse opponents. As a club, we recommend ten games plus tournaments. In general, U13 and U14 teams will want to selectively add additional games. Remember most of these young athletes will also be playing Middle School soccer, and the approximately 14 game schedules that season entails. Try to pick selective opponents and space in free weekend days occasionally to provide time for these young athletes to recover and rejuvenate.

For advice on the number of additional games, and which opponents to target, speak to the SSC Coaching Director or your Coaching Mentor for assistance.

Means to Schedule Additional Games

Means to find possible opposing coaches include:

- Speak to an experienced SSC coach in your age group, and ask them for contact information for other coaches they know that might be appropriate competition for your team. Likewise, you can attempt to combine games and opponents. For example, one U11 boys coach might agree schedule round robin games or "share opponents" for multiple Scarborough teams if all head coaches agree.
- Keep a list of age group coaches from the prior year, and call these coaches to find out if they still coach the team and would be interested in playing your team.
- Wait for the listing of coaches statewide to get published, and then contact these coaches.
- Go to the Soccer Maine web site (<http://www.soccermaine.com>) and click the "Clubs Online" link in the left navigation pane. This will bring you to a listing of the club web sites, and most provide a directory for their coaching staff online.

If all of the above fail, you can contact the SSC Coaching Director for advice. However, it is generally the responsibility of the head coach to find and schedule any additional games, if they are desired. Further, the SSC Board strongly encourages our U11 and up teams to use these additional games to play the most challenging teams you can find and schedule.

Schedule Home Game Fields & Times

For district games, coordinating of home field locations and game times will be done on your behalf. For any of the additional games, if the SSC will be the hosting club, we need to ensure

adequate field space is available. The SSC Field Coordinator is the contact point for this. Provide the date you want the game to be played, the opponent(s), the number of games involved, and any known time restrictions. The Field Coordinator will attempt to honor all game requests, but on occasion more teams will request access to fields than we can support for a given date. In this instance, games will be honored first come, first served up to a team home game maximum, which is dependent upon the fields available and the number of teams using that type of field configuration in the club. After this maximum is reached, teams not yet at their maximum will be given a higher priority when conflicts arise. League games take priority over open scheduling games.

The Field Coordinator will set game times. Our field game times will fall into fixed blocks to maximize field use and the number of games we are able to support in a given day. While you may request certain times, the Field Coordinator will also organize game times to run games consecutively, which allows us to more effectively assign referees to multiple games and keep the facilities open.

Once the Field Coordinator has confirmed the game times with you, you should contact the opposing coach and provide them the game time and field location information. Home games are usually played at the following:

- U11 through U14
 - Peterson Field – Saturday and Sunday
- U9 and U10
 - Peterson--Saturdays
 - Springbrook – Sunday afternoon

Combined, the tournament games, district games, and additional games constitute the entire fall travel soccer season.

Parent's Meeting

One of the first activities for the coaching staff is to hold a meeting for the parents and the players combined. If the parents and players are all experienced with the SSC, this often can be more of a formality. If this is a new experience for all involved, it's a critical first introduction to the club.

At this meeting, you have several key duties.

1. Discuss your coaching qualifications. Explain what you personally hope to get out of the season, and how you will measure "success" in terms of our objective of player development. If appropriate, you can also ask the parents and the players to identify their objectives for the season.
2. Communicate your coaching philosophies. It is important that you explain how you will handle playing time, positional play, team dynamics and discipline, expectations of the players, and expectations of the parents.
3. Review the commitment expectations. Travel soccer is absolutely meant to be fun, but we also expect more in terms of attendance and involvement than Community Services. In particular, players are normally expected to be at all practices and games unless excused (illness, injury, academic priority). Parents are expected to bring players to events on time and perform assigned duties, such as 4v4 volunteer duties.
4. Tournament selections. In particular if choosing a tournament that requires an overnight stay in a hotel or significant travel, letting parents know that early is important.

5. More information. The Parent's Handbook and other information is available on the SSC web site. Questions should first be brought to your coach, and then to any Board member if the coach cannot resolve the issue for you.

We have provided a sample discussion outline on the following page, which can be used to help you build your own discussion agenda for the parents meeting.

Parent's Meeting Agenda

1. Collect contact information (parent names, e-mail, cell phones, etc.)
2. Welcome to Scarborough Soccer Club. We are a "travel soccer" club, under the Soccer Maine state organization, which in turn is a member of US Youth Soccer. We are a "competitive" program, with higher levels of commitments and expectations for our players, coaches, and parents alike.
3. Our mission is "player development", which is defined as helping each player reach their greatest soccer potential. We do this through extensive training and game experience using licensed soccer coaches augmented by paid soccer professionals.
4. Describe your soccer experience, goals, and objectives for the season.
5. U9 through U11, all games and tournaments are considered "non-result oriented." That means the players are all still competing hard to win, but as a coach staff we will still rotate kids around, and may not always have our "strongest" players in the right positions during games. No state champions are declared for these age groups. U12 through U14 do have state championships, and during tournaments we may attempt to "match up" and test our development of players in critical game situations.
6. Player and parent commitment is critical. We need the whole team at all practices and games, as often as possible. If you cannot attend a practice or a game for a valid reason such as illness, family emergency, unique academic (school) events, etc., please contact a coach as soon as possible.
7. Team practices will begin in early August. Our first tournament will be the Scarborough Lobster Classic in mid-August. We will also play in <<fill in>> Labor Day and <<fill in>> Columbus Day tournaments. Our regular season schedule should be out shortly as well, which begins the weekend before Labor Day and runs every weekend through late October (U9-U11 or early November (U12 & up)).
8. Our expectations of all Scarborough parents are clearly stated in the Parent's Handbook which is on the SSC web site (www.scarboroughsoccerclub.org), but bears repeating. Parents will be expected to contribute time for the Lobster Classic tournament, and may also be expected to contribute time for end of season festivals and/or district tournaments the SSC may be hosting. These tournaments raise approximately 35% of our operating costs, and afford us the chance to offer you child this wonderful opportunity. Likewise, there is a strict code of conduct we expect all Scarborough parents to adhere to. Please realize your actions on the sidelines are emulated by the players, and good sportsmanship is a very important lesson. While unfortunate, every year the SSC deals with multiple instances of parents stepping far out of line at games with referees, opposing parents, or opposing players. It won't be tolerated, and the Soccer Maine "Zero Tolerance" policy means if you violate basic code of conduct you will be removed from the game, and possibly could face additional club sanctions including dismissal from the club.
9. <<Insert any specific expectations for players, such as playing hard, support teammates, only positive encouragement, listen when coach is talking, show good sportsmanship at all times, and have fun.>>

10. <<Insert any coaching philosophies, such as rotating positions, playing time, reward or incentive system for player development, discipline, etc.>>
11. For more information on SSC and club policies, see the SSC Parent's Handbook on the web site.

Starting the Season

As the first set of practices and games begins to approach, there are some coordination items that you will need to be aware of and help manage.

Equipment Needs

An equipment bag will be provided to all coaches consisting of:

- a few practice balls (we encourage all players to bring their own ball)
- a game ball
- cones
- pinnies
- goalie shirt and gloves (upon requests—typically older players have their own)

Coaches are expected to return all equipment at the end of the season. Unsafe or worn equipment can always be turned into the SSC Equipment Director for replacement. Equipment costs for the SSC are very substantial, and your help in managing these costs effectively helps us keep the player fees more affordable.

Practice Fields and Time

The SSC Field Coordinator will organize a practice schedule for all teams. You should communicate to the Field Coordinator any preferences and time restrictions relative to practices you may have for the season.

In general, you should plan and expect to share practice space with a team of the same gender and age. It is the strong desire of our club to have all kids within a given age group to practice together, to foster a sense of one club and build teamwork and awareness of all players with one another.

Important: Please don't make requests for field space directly to Community Services. Because of our size and the need for coordination, the town has asked the SSC to funnel all requests through a single focal point for field space. Any direct requests to Community Services not authorized by the SSC Field Coordinator will be refused.

Uniforms

In general, there isn't anything required of coaches for team uniforms. All the necessary sizing is performed at registration. Team uniforms will be given to the head coach for distribution to players just prior to the Lobster Classic tournament. Any issues with uniforms not matching what was ordered should be referred to the SSC Equipment Director.

Lobster Classic Organization

The coaches, or their team administrators, will need to organize at least one parent of every player on the team into assigned time slots for volunteer activities at the Lobster Classic tournament. This is extremely important, as the tournament cannot be run by a small group of committed volunteers alone. The job is made much easier if all contribute a small amount. The time slots offered will be sent to you by the 4v4 Tournament Director. All slots must be filled. If an individual parent cannot volunteer for some reason, that parent is expected to swap with another person or otherwise find another parent willing to fill their shift.

Official Rosters

Prior to the Labor Day tournaments, all SSC head coaches should obtain from the SSC Registrar an official, stamped state roster. Coaches should check the roster carefully to ensure all players are listed, the information on the roster is accurate, and that the roster bears the stamped signature of the State Registrar for Soccer Maine. Any roster discrepancies should be immediately reported to the SSC Registrar for correction. Roster changes requested after the official Soccer Maine roster freeze date, as identified in the appropriate Soccer Maine *Fall Travel Handbook*, cannot be made. Any player not listed properly on the official roster will not be allowed to play in any subsequent tournaments and festivals.

After the roster freeze date, you should obtain another official roster from the SSC Registrar. This will be identical to the other rosters, but additionally bear the stamp “FROZEN” at the top to signify no further changes can be made. The official “frozen” roster is required at the season ending district playoffs, state championships, and festival competitions.

Also **make an extra copy of the official roster**. Rosters you turn in at any tournament or festival are retained by the tournament hosts, and will not be returned to you. If you misplace or lose your last copy of the official roster, contact the SSC Registrar to obtain another copy.

Player Passes

Player passes are no longer required for our in-state play. If your team is playing in a tournament that requires player passes, SSC registrar will make sure that they are provided to you in a timely fashion. Player and coach passes will need have a photograph.

Player Picture

Instructions on how to upload a picture into your player's account, can be obtained from the SSC registrar.

Player Signature

Player signatures are no longer required.

Retaining Passes

Player passes should always be retained by the coach. Replacement passes are very difficult if not impossible to obtain. For that reason, many coaches use plastic sheets or lamination to protect them and ensure photos stay affixed. Passes may be surrendered to a tournament director, but coaches should also reclaim any passes prior to departing a tournament.

At any tournament that checks rosters and player passes, please plan to have your entire team arrive early, very often one hour to 45 minutes prior to the start of your first game. Players should line up in the order listed on the official roster, with player passes in hand. Tournament officials will then match the pass information and photo with the player and the roster. More information on proper tournament procedures will be provided by the club that is hosting the particular tournament you have selected. Based upon historical precedent:

Date	Hosting Club/Tournament	Roster/Pass Requirements
Mid-August	Scarborough 4v4 Lobster Classic	Roster required, but doesn't need to be official state stamped roster. Player passes not required.
Labor Day	Cumberland Kick-Off	Neither rosters nor player passes required
	Londonderry	State signed roster and player passes are required
	All Others	Check with tournament officials
Columbus Day	Falmouth	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp
	Patriot Crossroad Challenge	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp
	Sanford	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp
	York Harvest Cup	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp
	All Others	Check with tournament officials
October / November	U10 Festival	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp
	U11 Festival	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp
	Champions Cup	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp
	Classic Cup	State signed roster, with "Frozen" stamp

During the Season

Now you are ready to play the first set of games. Here is some helpful information to keep the season running smoothly.

Coaching Clinic Participation

Our coaches are expected to participate in any coaching clinics. The SSC Coaching Director will organize clinics to help improve the overall coaching capabilities of our staff. Information on the clinics, their timing, and contribution of ideas or drills to share in clinics will be communicated at various points during the season.

4v4 Lobster Classic Preparation

Coaches have additional duties prior to and during the Lobster Classic tournament.

During the tournament, coaches will be asked to serve as "field marshals" – girls' coaches while the boys' teams are playing and boys' coaches while the girls' teams are playing. Again, more information will be provided as the tournament approaches.

Also during the tournament, one of the coaches or the team administrator should make sure that all parents know their volunteer duties, and reconfirm that these people will show up when requested.

Away Games

As a rule, one of the coaches or the team administrator should call the home coach to validate the game information. The key information to obtain is game time and game location with directions. The SSC web site contains directions for a great many of the field and towns that have been used in the past. However, there are always new clubs and existing clubs with new fields joining the leagues. Therefore, it is good practice validate all this information. Nothing is more frustrating than driving to another town, only to find no opponent to play. Direct communication with the home team coach is the best way to reduce the odds that this occurs.

All coach contact information can be found within the contacts section of the on-line League schedule.

Home Games

One of the coaches or the team administrator should call the visiting head coach(es) to validate the game information. You should ensure the visiting teams know the game time(s), field directions, and that you have “emergency” contact information such as a cell phone number in case of a last minute change. We ask that these calls occur no later than 72 hours prior to the game. Generally it is good practice to call early the week prior to the game, so there is no confusion and ample time to make adjustments if necessary.

If playing a round robin, it is customary for the home team to play the first and last games. This is done because the home coach is responsible for ensuring the field is set up prior to the first game, and cleaned up after the last game.

Referees & Referee Assignors

The role of the referee assignor is to appoint referees for all home games. The appropriate referee assignor for your age group will locate and assign referees for all your home games.

One of the coaches or the team administrator should contact the SSC referee assignor 24 hours prior to the appropriate home game, if you haven’t been contacted earlier, to validate referees are assigned and to get the referee contact information in case of game cancellation. In general our referee assignors locate game referees between one week and 72 hours before the designated match, so don’t expect communication much before that. Once referee assignments are confirmed, the assignors will communicate the assignments to referees and coaches.

For insurance reasons, coaches may never assign their own referees. Doing so voids the insurance policy carried by Soccer Maine and exposes the players, coaches, the referee(s), and the club to potential lawsuits.

Field Preparation

The SSC works with Scarborough Community Services to line the fields and provide team benches and nets for use by the club. In general, you should not need to do anything to have fields lined and ready to play.

Immediately prior to any home game, coaches should quickly walk the field and remove any debris that could potentially cause injury or alter the course of the game, such as sticks or trash. Coaches should also validate that the nets are properly positioned and anchored so they won't tip over (usually with sandbags placed to weight them down). **Having the nets anchored with sandbags is required, and our referees are instructed not to permit a game to begin until this has occurred!** Finally, coaches should retrieve a set of corner flags from the SSC Storage Shed and place them at the corner of the field. These flags need to be immediately returned to the shed upon completion of the game.

Referee Fees

Referees who work the Lobster Classic will be mailed payment approximately one week after the tournament.

For League games all referees are to be paid in cash at the field prior to the start of the game. Age appropriate payment amounts can be found in the SoccerMaine *Fall Classic League Handbook*. At Home games collect the money from your opposing coach and you pay the center referee directly. It is good practice to make sure that you have the correct change to pay the referees (do not assume that the opposing coach will bring exact change). At away games give the money to the Home coach and have him pay the officials.

Coaches will be issued two checks during the season to cover the cost of referee payments one prior to the first game and another mid September. The amount will allow the coaches to pay for 6 League games and 4 Friendlies. At the end of the season referee reconciliation form and any unused money needs to be returned to the Treasurer.

Reporting Results

SoccerMaine asks U12 – U14 coaches to keep track of results and Home teams must report the game results to the league (phone or internet options are explained on the SoccerMaine website) within 24 hours of the game being played. The purpose for collecting this information varies, and includes:

- Used for seeding purposes in district playoffs for age groups U12 and higher
- Used for bracketing teams with like ability at the U10, U11 and Anthem festivals.

Game Cancellations

Game cancellations naturally occur during the course of a season for a variety of reasons. If a home game is cancelled, for any reason, you need to notify the Field Coordinator and the Referee Assignor both so the game slot can be freed for another team and referees are not assigned to the game. For any cancellation made 48 hours or less before the game start time, you should phone as well as e-mail everyone involved.

In general, travel soccer games are played in conditions that community services soccer might cancel. That said, most game cancellations occur because of inclement weather or unplayable conditions, which are game time decisions. The decision to play or not play a game ultimately

rests with the hosting coach. In the event weather appears it might affect play for a given date, you should plan to contact the opposing coach at a set time and make a determination prior to commencement of travel if at all possible.

If you are the home coach, use your judgment as a guide. Here are some helpful questions to ask in making the decision to cancel a game or not.

- Are the conditions dangerous, such as lightning, and is there increased risk of injury because of these conditions?
- Will playing on the fields do significant damage to them, hindering play later in the season?
- Are the playing conditions on the field likely to change the outcome or how the game is played, such as significant standing water?
- Can the game be easily rescheduled?

If the answer to any of the above questions is true, then it is probably wise to cancel the game. If you are the visiting coach, and feel strongly that the conditions are dangerous, then you have the right to refuse to play the game. In some instances the SSC will be liable for full payment of the referee fees, but the club will stand beside the decisions of our coaches who err on the side of safety.

If you cancel a home game, you need to contact the opposing coach, all your players, and the referees. It is very important to contact the referees if games are cancelled, because the SSC must pay them by Soccer Maine mandate if they appear for a scheduled game, regardless of whether the game is played or not. Accordingly, failure to communicate with referees will count as two games (because referee fees are not split) toward your team's maximum number of games allowed. Contact with these individuals should be done by phone call and direct conversation and not e-mail or web site posting, which usually aren't as consistently checked (unless you have pre-arranged to use these mediums with all involved). Your team administrator and coaching staff can help perform the phone calls to distribute the burden of communication.

Finally, within 72 hours, you should communicate the cancellation to your referee assignor and the field coordinator. The communication is necessary so we avoid overpayments to referees and the district for cancelled games. Communication via an e-mail message is fine for this purpose.

Game Situations

Shortage of Referees

The SSC and the referee assignors work very hard to make sure we have the best qualified referees available to work all games. However, as can happen on occasion, a referee will sometimes not appear for a game for a variety of possible reasons. If playing a game with only one referee (U10 and below), the SSC Head Coach should first attempt to call the referee based upon information provided to you by your assignor. If no response or the referee will not attend the game, then you may work with the opposing coach to determine if a suitable, knowledgeable, and objective adult can and will serve as referee. Ideally this volunteer will be a US Soccer Federation certified referee. The game should be played as a "scrimmage", and results are not official. Safety of the players is most important, and at the youngest age groups the referee does

as much “instruction” as actual officiating. If a suitable volunteer cannot be found, then the game should be cancelled.

At U11 and higher, there is a three referee system used. If one or more referees don’t show up, then the head coach should first attempt to call the missing referee. If that fails to resolve the situation, then of the remaining referees one will serve as the “center” referee for the match. The other referee will serve as an assistant referee. If there is a willing, knowledgeable, and objective adult that can serve as a “club linesman”, that person may fill in if the opposing coach and referees present agree. The club linesman role is limited to assisting the center referee with out of bounds and offside situations. They may not call fouls or contribute to other on field decisions.

In all cases, please report missing referees promptly to the referee assignor. Missing a confirmed game is a serious offense for our referees, and such behavior can result in refusal by the SSC to assign this particular referee any future games.

Referee Concerns

If you are concerned about the competency of a particular set of referees, it is inappropriate to confront the referees during the course of play or berate them from the sidelines. Our preferred method of addressing these situations is to have the coach calmly and factually discuss any concerns with the center referee during halftime. Comments such as “I’m getting concerned the play is becoming too physical” or “can you ask your assistant referees to pay closer attention to offside calls” would be acceptable, and most referees accept it in the spirit of cooperation it’s being offered. Asking for clarification on a ruling during the game is also appropriate. Comments such as “you really blew that call,” “I’m going to see you never referee another game again,” or “your assistant referees are horrible” are inappropriate and not helpful to the players. While this may seem common sense, our club unfortunately has to deal with situations where our coaches express these exact comments every season.

Expressing concerns at the end of the game directly to the referee, other than for rule clarification, is generally not helpful either.

If as a coach and upon having “slept” upon the situation for 24 hours believe there was a case of clear incompetence involved, you should express the concerns to the SSC President and SSC Director of Referees for both home games and away games. For our home games, feedback on quality of referees is helpful so we know who is advancing in this profession. For away games, we will provide through the club president channel appropriate feedback to the referee assignor of the home club so they too can improve.

Please keep a few points in mind. Most of our referees are very young adults, and it can be very intimidating to talk back to an adult coach. They are learning to be good referees, but are going to make mistakes same as young soccer players make mistakes playing the game. It is very important to teach our players to play the game as it is called, and adapt their style of play accordingly. Also, referees are paid but their pay generally covers the cost of referee uniforms, education, and related items. Most are doing this job for a love of helping the kids, improving their knowledge of the game, and a passion for soccer. One overbearing coach can dampen that enthusiasm very quickly. Please take an approach of working to help make our referee pool better, which serves our club best in the long run.

Parent Concerns

If a particular parent or fan is overly boisterous, or unruly in behavior, it's the head coach's responsibility to help address that situation. In general, there are three situations that need to be addressed. First, the parent or fan is acting in a way that it is a significant distraction to the learning and fun for all the players on the team. Second, the parent or fan is acting in a manner that is clearly contrary to the zero tolerance policy (whether or not the zero tolerance policy is invoked by the referee). Third, the parent or fan is clearly under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or is using tobacco products on school grounds. In any of these situations the head coach should:

1. Attempt to speak to the parent or fan one on one and let them know they must immediately alter the behavior. If there is a group of parents or it's a general warning to all parents, it can be done in group settings.
2. If the parent or fan refuses to change their behavior, then the practice or game should be stopped (with the referee's consent) and will not resume until the offending individual moves to a distance away (e.g. parking lot) such that they are no longer an influence on the game or practice.
3. If the parent or fan still refuses to change their behavior, the remainder of the game or practice should be cancelled (with the referee's consent), and you should notify the SSC Board of Directors for appropriate disciplinary action.
4. If you have a legitimate concern of physical or verbal abuse, you should contact the Scarborough police department to ensure order is retained.

In general, the SSC Board should be informed of any significant event that happens that the field that may need to be addressed or demonstrates a continued behavior that reflects poorly on the SSC. Situations that are exceptions and are handled in a civil manner without the need to invoke the zero tolerance policy don't necessarily need to be reported unless there is a history of this behavior. Any situation where the zero tolerance policy is invoked, should have been invoked, or any parent, player, fan, or coach needs to be removed from the field must be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors promptly.

“Blow-Outs”

On some occasions, as may happen with differing philosophies and capabilities relative to youth soccer, SSC teams may be on the winning or losing end of a lopsided match. If this occurs, the following are guidelines you may use to help manage the situation.

If the SSC team is overmatched, the other coach may perform certain actions to manage down the score. Do not construe these actions to embarrass the Scarborough team. With your players, stress small victories, and encourage the kids to focus on the small victories towards improved skills. Examples include trying to win back possession of the ball, to execute a certain number of successful ball control passes, to focus on getting shots on goal (instead of goals), or any other measure that can be counted and are personal challenges requiring execution of techniques taught in practice. Remind the players that we aspire to improve, and playing the best teams helps make all our teams better.

If the SSC team overmatches the competition, we generally ask our coaches to impose a greater challenge on our players to make the effort to score a greater burden, and demonstrate a greater level of skill than the game might normally otherwise require. In general, the preferred method is to voluntarily play a “man down” such that the SSC team has fewer players on the field than the opponent, creating a more balanced match. This should be done in as subtle a manner as

possible, and you should generally let the center referee know this is your intent so undue attention is not accidentally called to this situation. Other possible options to increase the scoring difficulty include:

- Playing “1”, “2” or “3” touch maximums to force passing and movement
- Requiring a minimum number of passes (often 5 or more) prior to any shot
- Shots may only be headers, or must be played with any part of the body other than feet
- Shots must be from beyond a certain distance (such as outside penalty area)
- Shots must be played with opposite foot

In general, the SSC does not recommend that we tell the players to stop shooting and scoring all together. Doing so removes the overall incentive in playing the game, and is a significant deterrent to the fun our players experience on game days. We believe increasing the level of difficulty mandated can still accomplish the player development mission, and preserve the goal of not embarrassing or discouraging a less skilled opponent.

If playing at a competitive age group in a competitive tournament or playoff situation, coaches have latitude to ensure factors such a goal differential and goals allowed are maintained to support the competitive position of the SSC team playing.

Player Discipline

The SSC gives our coaches reasonable latitude to set and enforce reasonable disciplinary penalties for players on their team. Discipline should be used in situations where the actions or behavior of one player are a detriment to the learning or enjoyment of others. Examples of this behavior would include “goofing off” in practices, picking on or action that imposes risk of injury to teammates, and refusal to follow coaching instruction. Coaches may also impose disciplinary penalties for players that have unexcused absences from practices or other critical team functions. Note that school (academic) functions take precedent over soccer, and we ask our coaches to understand these young athletes have many other important activities in their lives that need to be balanced. Disciplinary penalties should not be imposed for purposes linked to “ability”, such as a player’s inability to perform a particular soccer skill.

Penalties within the coach’s jurisdiction to impose include:

- Laps, sit-ups, or some other physical activity to release pent up energy
- Sitting out a particular drill or portion of a practice until the behavior corrects itself
- Sitting out a portion of the next game (usually not more than 50% of the game)

Coaches should make sure the player understands the behavior (cause) for the disciplinary action. Normal team discipline situations do not require notification of the SSC Board. We insist that the discipline be applied fairly and evenly to all players on the team, that the penalty is communicated and clear to all in advance, and that each situation be addressed with open and honest discussion of what behavior or actions crossed the line and must not occur to avoid future situations.

If the behavior is so egregious that these penalties are not sufficient, the coach should bring the event(s) to the attention of the SSC Coaching Director who will convene a disciplinary committee meeting as appropriate. The Board of Directors must be involved in any situations that warrant suspensions of one full game or more, suspensions from practice, dismissal from the team, or banishment from the club.

Team Photographs

Each coach (or team administrator if you delegate this function) should seek one parent volunteer to take team, action, and candid photographs during the season that will subsequently be used for the season ending banquet. In general, it's easier to take photos at different points during the season, rather than waiting for the end of the season and possibly missing certain players or taking photographs in poor weather. More information about the number of pictures required and process for submitting them in time for the banquet will be provided by the SSC Board of Directors during the season.

Wrapping Up The Season

The season has just ended, and hopefully your team has had a wonderful, fun, and successful season. Here is what happens at the end of the season.

SSC Celebration

The SSC normally holds a season ending celebration a couple of weeks after the completion of the fall state championships.

More information on the celebration will be provided as it approaches. However, coaches should attend and have the following responsibilities:

1. Gathering players by team and general monitoring of behavior during the event.
2. Introduction of team members, and presentation of any medals, trophies, plaques, and awards.

As most teams elect to have their own gathering, the SSC Celebration is not used to speak about each player. It is an opportunity to celebrate the season just passed and to provide a public forum to thank the coaches, players, parents, sponsors, and volunteers who have all contributed to the success of the SSC during the year.

Awards

To commemorate the season, the SSC normally provides some award that is presented to every player in the club. Coaches will hand these out at the banquet.

Slide Show

The team pictures, taken during the season, will be turned into the SSC banquet organizer and used for the slide show presentation. Specific deadlines and instructions will be provided during the season.

U14 Sweatshirts

U14 players by age, and U13 players that will become high school freshman the following fall, receive a SSC Sweatshirt to commemorate their contributions and commitment to the program, as well as their graduation to the high school ranks for purposes of playing competitive soccer. Prior to the banquet, the SSC banquet organizer will contact all U14 and appropriate U13 coaches to get size and embroidery information for the players. This task may be delegated to a team administrator if desired. Coaches will present these sweatshirts at the banquet.

Equipment Return

All equipment must be returned at a time designated by the equipment director. A completed inventory sheet should accompany the equipment. Please alert the equipment director if any of your equipment is no longer of good enough quality to continue to use. If you would like to sign out equipment to be used during the winter, you can do so at this time.

During the Off-Season

While the SSC doesn't officially sponsor winter or spring teams, we provide reasonable logistical support to our coaches and players that wish to continue to train and play beyond the fall season. Playing in the winter or spring is completely voluntary, and coaches are under no obligation to sponsor teams if represents any conflict or concerns.

Winter Leagues

Indoor winter leagues are run in Saco, Portland, and Gorham among other locations. Sessions are usually about 8 weeks, and fees for these sessions vary based upon location and field configuration (e.g. full field or half field games). As a coach, you are free to select the players you want, pick the location and age group you want to play in, and decide the per player fees to cover the session cost. The SSC will provide you the following logistics and services:

- Use of the SSC name, if desired, for your team name
- Use of SSC equipment (balls, pinnies, keeper jerseys, etc.)
- Consultation with SSC Coaching Director on advantages and disadvantages of each facility
- Broadcast e-mails for certain age groups regarding open slots on teams
- For Soccer Maine approved facilities (revalidated annually), coverage for insurance and liability under the Soccer Maine umbrella policy. Realize that currently none of the indoor leagues are affiliated with SoccerMaine, so coaches and players have no coverage.

If your winter team will also include players not yet in the SSC, you may contact our club uniform director to see if any additional SSC shirts are available for purchase.

To get more information about sessions, dates, costs, and registration forms, see:

Spring (Pine Tree) League

Soccer Maine sponsors the Pine Tree League in the spring, which are far more informal than the fall season. For spring play, as with winter, the SSC provides the same support as described above for winter leagues, plus the following additional services.

- Coordination with Scarborough Community Services to locate available field space for games. No practice space is provided.
- Coordination of lining of fields.
- Referee assignment for games.

For more information about the Soccer Maine spring league, view the *Spring Season Handbook* available on the Soccer Maine web site (contained within the “Handbook” section).

Premier Teams

The SSC does not formally align or bless a particular premier program, but many SSC coaches and other Scarborough residents are involved with premier programs. Consistent with our player development objectives, the SSC should actively encourage all players who might benefit or wish to play premier to try out for one or more of these teams. However, during the fall season the Scarborough Soccer Club must be their primary team in the event of any game conflicts. For more information on premier programs and the associated involvement, contact the SSC Coaching Director.

Useful Information

Scarborough Soccer Club

The most useful source of information for parents is the Scarborough Soccer Club web site. The web site will contain the most current information about the season, key contact information, and for most teams the latest game and practice schedules.

Our URL is:

www.scarboroughsoccerclub.org

FIFA

Many parents are new to the rules of soccer, and some of the rules are modified for the younger age groups to support player development objectives. If you have a deep desire to better understand the rules of the game, you may go to Federation Internationale de Football Association, or FIFA, which is the worldwide soccer governing body. The current rules of the game can be found on their web site.

The FIFA URL is:

<http://www.fifa.com/en/index.html>

Laws of the game (2010/2011):

<http://www.ussoccer.com/Referees/Laws-of-the-Game.aspx>

Soccer Maine

Likewise, the Soccer Maine web site has many useful links for parents, including a link to locate all of the other travel soccer clubs with an online web site and a document that list the “rule modifications” appropriate for U11, U10, and U9 age groups.

The URL for Soccer Maine is:

<http://www.soccermaine.com>

US Youth Soccer

The URL for US Youth Soccer is:

<http://www.usysa.org/>