

## INSIDE THE MIND OF A YOUTH SOCCER COACH...

### The real facts about your child's soccer development

*The following thoughts were contributed AR Rush Staff Coaches along with ASSA Director of Coaching, Glen Tourville*

#### **THINGS COACHES WISHED PARENTS KNEW**

- The truth is that the majority of young players become what they were always going to be largely by their own efforts and a lot of encouragement to pursue personal excellence. Playing an extraordinary number of matches will not alter that fact. Playing in more tournaments, conducting more or longer training sessions, and forming "super teams" will not change this reality either.
- Becoming an elite soccer player is a fourteen to eighteen year process (physical prowess helps, but eventually other than pure speed all players become physically equal and then only skill and game application of that skill separates players).
- Individual development and acquiring the requisite skills to play the game under the age of twelve is the only concern both players and parents should have.
- From ages thirteen to seventeen individual players should be able to contribute their skills for the advancement of the team with the goal of understanding how to use individual and team strengths and weaknesses to get results.
- The game of soccer belongs to the players and the players who best understand what to do when their team has the ball and what to do when their team does not have the ball, are the players who advance the furthest in the game.
- Young players need the opportunity to play many positions and experience failure when attempting to be creative and individualistic in order to be successful in their teen years and beyond.
- Soccer participation should be fun and bring joy to players always!
- When age appropriate, players should test themselves in competitive environments and move out of their comfort zone, in ODP, playing up, guest playing, and involve themselves in challenging environments for challenge sake.
- Correct practice and training are the only way a player improves.
- Every time a player practices a skill, correctly, they improve and elite players must self-train outside of the team environment every day to become more than average.
- Your child will not become a great player by practicing for only three hours a week.
- A coach cannot hold back a player's development.
- Soccer is a player's game.
- You will not, and your child will not, like every person they play soccer with and you will not like all the parents that are involved with your child's team. Do you quit your job because you don't like the person you work with?
- A player's success is dependent solely on the player
- Coaches' work is done during practice; games are for the players to apply what they have learned in training and the coach evaluates what needs to be worked on during the next practice.

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- Correct practice and training are the only way a player improves.
- Every time a player practices a skill correctly, they improve. Elite players must self-train outside of the team environment every day to become more than average.
- Soccer is a game for life and not one team or one season.
- Never let anyone tell you what you can or cannot achieve in the game, believe in yourself and go for it!
- Failure is a part of soccer, get knocked down nine times get up ten!
- You control your effort every time you step onto a soccer field and it is the only thing in soccer completely under your control.
- Watching the professional game is one of the best ways for a player to learn and become a great player.
- You will not become a good player by only practicing twice a week with your team.
- Your individual success in soccer is not dependent upon your team's success.
- Your success in soccer is your responsibility.
- You will not like everyone you play soccer with. Just like at work or your neighbors, you have to respect everyone, not like them.

## Question and Answer Segment

**QUESTION:** How is coaching youth soccer different from coaching other traditional American sports, i.e. baseball, football, and basketball?

**ANSWER:** Because a coach must help players develop the skill set that will enable them to solve soccer problems, now and in the future, there is no accelerating a player's development - only years of hard work and encouragement are rewarded in soccer. A youth coach must know what the finished product looks like; an under ten player must have the opportunity to learn what helps now and in the future in order to be successful. In order for players to develop they must play in every game under the age of fourteen and many novice or inexperienced coaches make the mistake of thinking a team's result on a day or in a tournament is what develops players.

*If you have a question you would like answered, please email it to [td@ArkansasRush.com](mailto:td@ArkansasRush.com)*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Olympic Development Program (ODP) starting January 6th

AR Rush is proud to announce that four AR Rush coaches were chosen to be on the ODP Coaching Staff. We are the only club in Arkansas with more than two coaches selected from its club and the only club in Central Arkansas to have any coaches selected to be team head coaches. **Congratulations to:**

**Jeremey Bernard** (Rush Staff Coach; Head Coach Nike '94 Girls) ODP Head Coach for 1993 Girls

**Chad Flanders** (Rush Staff Coach; Head Coach Nike '91 Boys) ODP Head Coach for 1991 Boys

**Justin Neese** (Rush Staff Coach; Head Coach Nike '95 Girls) ODP Head Coach for 1994 Girls

**Matt Mittelstaedt** (Technical Director; Head Coach Nike '93 & Nike '95 Boys) ODP Head Coach for 1994 Boys

## NEXT MONTH

### The "Player First" Mentality in Youth Soccer Development