



# CAPTAIN AND CO-CAPTAIN- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

	<b>CAPTAIN AND CO-CAPTAIN- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	Doc. No.	BCSA-BULL-010
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The team captain—one of the most important roles on a youth soccer team. But a great captain isn’t made overnight. The qualities that define strong leadership—character, communication, and commitment—grow as a player develops in the sport and learns more about themselves. It’s not just about skill on the ball, but the ability to inspire, support, and lead both on and off the pitch. In this bulletin, we’ll break down the key qualities of a strong youth soccer captain and how they evolve to make a lasting impact on their team and community.

### **LEADERSHIP ON THE FIELD**

A great captain leads by example on the field. They are vocal, supportive, and always willing to step up when the team needs them most. They communicate clearly, encourage their teammates, and stay composed under pressure. It’s not just about being the best player, it’s about making those around you better.

### **LEADING BY EXAMPLE – WORK ETHIC & SPORTSMANSHIP**

A true leader shows dedication through their actions. A captain works hard in training, stays focused in games, and always competes with integrity. They respect referees, opponents, and their own teammates, understanding that soccer is about more than just winning; it’s about teamwork and sportsmanship.

### **SUPPORTIVE & ENCOURAGING, INSPIRES AND MOTIVATES**

A great captain is supportive and encouraging. When a teammate makes a mistake, you lift them up. When the game gets tough, you remind everyone to stay focused and keep going. A simple ‘You’ve got this!’ or ‘Keep working hard!’ can make a huge difference.

### **A LEADER OFF THE PITCH**

But leadership doesn’t stop when the final whistle blows. A great captain also leads off the pitch. They support younger players, help foster a positive team culture and, sets an example in school and the community. Whether it’s organizing a team bonding activity, volunteering, or just being a good friend, captains inspire those around them beyond the game.

### **PERSONAL GROWTH IS IMPORTANT TO A CAPTAIN’S TRAINING JUST LIKE ON FIELD TRAINING**

Like learning what to do with the ball, the more you do away from the field on your own, the better you become with the ball when you are on the field. The same can be said for developing leadership qualities and skills. Understanding that the more a player uses good skills away from the game such as handling emotions,

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communication, problem-solving, and staying calm under pressure, a player will become more effective as a team leader on the field.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The captain and co-captains of a soccer team who, during a soccer game, have several additional roles and responsibilities over and above those of a regular player. As in other sports, the captain and co-captains are usually experienced players with good communication skills, who are likely to be one of the more regular members of a team.

The captain and co-captains' ability to learn the complexities of soccer strategies and tactics, and shrewdness on the pitch, may contribute significantly to team success. To understand the role of the captain and co-captains, let's look at what they are involved with (*note these are examples and can be altered depending on the set-up of the team and the activities developed by the coach*):

- Leading stretching and warm-up/ cool down-sessions
- Communicating with Match Official/ Referees
- Organizing off-field activities
- Finding ways to include teammates who are less integrated into the team
- Helping settle disagreements among teammates
- Assigning other routine tasks, i.e. helping collect equipment, setting up a drill, etc while remembering to take their turn as well
- Lead by example both in terms of team conduct, focus, preparation, and effort.

## **LEADING STRETCHING AND WARM-UP/ COOL-DOWN SESSIONS**

The captain is responsible for:

- Leading the stretching for practices, games, and any technical training.
- Ensure that there is a different player in the front with the captain to give each player a chance to be a leader.
- Ensure that the team is focused during their stretching (if not done properly can lead to injuries).
- After a game and all technical training, lead a cool-down session be a light run with the captain in the middle and co-captains on each end.

Co-captains are responsible for:

- Being positioned in the middle of the group and end during dynamic stretching activities to make sure that the team is doing the exercise properly.
- Support the captain on ensuring the team is focused.

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- Be positioned at either end of the cool-down line after games and all technical training.

## COMMUNICATING WITH THE MATCH OFFICIAL/ REFEREES

The captain is responsible for:

- The captain is to meet the Match Official/ Referee at centerfield for each game and ensure the following information is covered:
  - How many subs are allowed for changes.
  - Can the team sub when the other team is subbing on their possession.
  - Establishing which end the team wants to start with if we win the toss.
- If the other team is sending out more than their captain, a co-captain is to join the captain at center field (at no time should the captain be outnumbered at centerfield by the other team during pre-game talk with the Match Official/ Referee; the remaining co-captain is to be with the team to help get them focused for the game).
- If there is a challenge that needs to be discussed, the captain is the only player that can approach the Match Official/ Referee to discuss the challenge (no other player on the team can challenge the Match Official/ Referee).
- Any questions that need to be asked to the Match Official/ Referee must go through the captain.

Co-captains are responsible for:

- Communicating with the referee in the absence of the captain at games.
- Support the captain in ensuring that no players other than the captain are to approach the Match Official/ Referee for questioning.

## ORGANIZING OFF-FIELD ACTIVITIES

The captain is responsible for:

- Help the team manager come up with activities to bond the team.
- Ensure that the captain sets an example for fundraising activities by participating.
- Ensure that no players are left out of team building activities unless the player has a reasonable excuse why they can attend.
- If we are at a tournament, ensure that we do things as a team and not as individuals.

Co-captains are responsible for:

- Ensure that we follow our routines with bags, and appearance for every soccer activity.
- If we are at a tournament, ensure that we do things as a team and not as individuals.

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### **INCLUDING TEAMMATES**

The captain is responsible for:

- Rotate who they are partnered up with every practice and/ or technical training session (no favoritism is permitted on the team).
- Ensuring that no player is to be malicious in their comments or actions against another team-mate (captain and co-captain are to ensure that respect is always maintained by all players).
- When looking for ideas on team-building activities, the captain is to ensure players are involved in coming up with ideas.
- Observing teammates to ensure that no player is being left out of activities (if so, the captain is to help ensure that the player is involved).
- Encouraging teammates during all activities (this helps a player feel like they belong and are valued on this team).
- Reporting to the coaches if the captain senses that there is a player (s) that is feeling left out and is not responding to activities to get them involved.

Co-captains are responsible for:

- Supporting the captain by ensuring that no player is to be malicious in their comments or actions against another team-mate (captain and co-captain are to ensure that respect is maintained by all players).
- Not playing favorites with teammates during any soccer activities.
- Report to the captain if there are players who are not feeling involved in team activities.
- Encouraging teammates during all activities (this helps a player feel like they belong and are valued on this team).

### **SETTLING DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN TEAMMATES**

The captain is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there is respect that is in place for all teammates (at no time is a teammate to belittle or de-value another teammate).
- Taking the two players aside and discussing the issue to come up with a solution (this is to be done off to the side to not cause a distraction to the rest of the team).
- Involving the coaches if the disagreement cannot be resolved.
- Ensuring that at the end of the discussion, if the captain can settle the disagreement, communicating to the players the importance of respect involved and how if they are negative, it will impact the team.
- Thanking the players for settling their disagreements.

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Co-captains are responsible for:

- Supporting the captain when called upon to help settle any disagreements.
- Bring to the attention of the captain if the co-captains are made aware of any disagreements that need to be discussed and settled.

*Note: At no time is the captain and/ or co-captains to attempt to try and settle a dispute that they feel will cause harm between players. The coach is to be contacted immediately to settle the issue. Captain and co-captains are to be present to ensure that their role on the team is reinforced by the coach.*

### **OTHER ROUTINES**

Captains and co-captains are to do the following:

- Help ensure that players help the coaches set up and collect equipment before and after each of the practices.
- Provide support to the coaches on demonstrating drills and/ or exercises for the team to learn
- Attend training that is specific to leadership development sponsored by the team.
- Ensure that the team is focused on all soccer related events (remember the team goals are set and can only be achieved if the team is focused).
- Communicate with the coaches on things that they feel the coaches need to know with respect to a player and/or the team.

### **LEAD BY EXAMPLE**

Captains and co-captains are to do the following:

- Ensure that they are present for all soccer activities unless they communicate directly to the coaches.
- Ensure that they are focused on their soccer activities and push themselves harder than the team (this helps show the team that they are committed to their own development).
- Set the example for respect by respecting themselves, their teammates, parents, opposition players, coaches, game officials, and the club that they represent.
- Being a leader outside of soccer (learning to lead at home, school, or other events- being a leader is something you learn but also must work on just like working with the ball).

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As players get older, there is an option for a coach to develop a “Statement of Commitment” that is an acknowledgement of the captain/ co-captains’ understanding and accepting of their roles and responsibilities within a team as well as the coaches’ commitment towards their leadership development. An example of a “Statement of Commitment” is as follows (*it is important should you consider having a Statement of Commitment, that the parents of the players are also part of the process to help provide support to the players*):

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I have read the roles and responsibilities of being a captain/ co-captain for the <name of the soccer team>. I am committed to ensuring that I help foster a positive team atmosphere by leading by example and ensuring that others do the same.

I also understand that if I have any questions or concerns, I am to request time from my coaches to learn more about my role as a leader for the team and/ or being a leader outside of the team.

I am committed to the spirit and tradition of sport and the guidelines that have been established by the team, the soccer club, and of Big Country Soccer Association.

NAME	POSITION	SIGNATURE
	Captain	
	Co-Captain	
	Co-Captain	

We are committed to ensuring that we provide a positive learning environment for our captain and junior team leaders. This means ensuring that we too lead by example for our captain and co-captains to learn from. Furthermore, we are also committed to ensuring that we set up time specifically to meet with just the captain and co-captains to provide support and additional information to help with their success in their roles.

We recognize that our junior leadership can only succeed if the team leadership is committed to the spirit and guidelines that have been established by the team, the soccer club, and Big Country Soccer Association.

NAME	POSITION	SIGNATURE
	Coach	
	Assistant Coach	
	Team Manager	