



STRATFORD  
SOCCER  
CLUB

# COACHES MANUAL



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction .....	2
2.0	Coaching Code of Conduct.....	3
3.0	Stratford Soccer Club League Policies.....	4
4.0	Stratford Soccer Club Coaching Policies .....	4

*“At a young age winning is not the most important thing... the important thing is to develop creative and skilled players with good confidence.”*

*“Young players need freedom of expression to develop as creative players... they should be encouraged to try skills without fear of failure.”*

*- Arsene Wenger (Manager, Arsenal English Premier League)*



### 1.0 Introduction

The Stratford Soccer Club is a community based, volunteer driven organization, with a history of providing quality soccer programs in our community. The Stratford Soccer Club is committed to promoting community participation and fitness, development and excellence, and a life-long passion for the Beautiful Game. We provide players with an excellent playing facility, knowledgeable coaches, and the opportunity to better themselves through sport.

The Stratford Soccer Club accomplishes its mission, goals and priorities through collaboration and partnerships with the PEI Soccer Association and other Island Soccer Clubs, through the support and participation of local groups and businesses, and through the time and efforts of community citizens who serve as Board members, volunteers, team coaches and staff.

Our five priorities for 2012- 2017 are:

- Development
- Respect
- Partnerships
- Resources
- Participation

These strategic priorities support the three goals of well-being, excellence and passion.

- *Well-being:* The Stratford Soccer Club is focused on the positive physical activity and active living aimed at the overall health of our children, youth and senior players. Soccer is a highly physical activity, providing the necessary cardiovascular, strength and multi-directional movement necessary for the optimal growth and development. This goal includes ensuring the sport offers a cross-gender, low-cost and accessible activity that can be played at varying degrees from the purely recreational to the highly competitive.
- *Excellence:* The Stratford Soccer Club is committed to building a culture of Excellence for players and coaches who wish to reach their full competitive and development potential. The Stratford Soccer Club recognizes that development takes many forms, and children and youth who have a desire to excel should be provided with the best possible environment to help them realize their potential. In this spirit the Stratford Soccer Club will, through its player development programs, ensure that Stratford players and coaches wishing to aspire to higher levels have the required resources.
- *Passion:* Soccer is the most played sport in the world and the sport which enjoys more organized players in Canada than any other. A passion for the “beautiful game” will result in a broad array of positive physical, social and health outcomes for all involved. Building on positives and its increasing allure and popularity, the Stratford Soccer Club is committed to



providing activities and opportunities that help inspire a passion and love for the sport of Soccer within our youth, and community pride in Stratford teams.

This guide has been designed to provide a general outline of what coaches and the team officials can expect during the summer soccer season and answers many of the questions that are posed to the club executives each year.

## 2.0 Coaching Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish a clearly defined policy of acceptable conduct on the part of Stratford Soccer Club volunteer coaches. Stratford Soccer Club embodies the spirit of fair play, sportsmanship and participation. In accordance with Stratford Soccer Club guidelines, all coaches must agree to conduct themselves according to the Code set forth below.

### *RIGHTS:*

Coaches must respect and promote the rights of every individual to participate in sport.

### Coaches:

- Will create an environment where every individual has the opportunity to participate in a sport or activity of his or her choice.
- Will create and maintain an environment, which is free of fear and harassment.
- Will treat all children with respect, being positive and constructive at all times to all players and referees.
- Recognize the rights of all athletes to be treated as individuals.
- Promote the concept of a healthy lifestyle when not participating in sport.

### *RELATIONSHIPS:*

Coaches must develop a relationship with participants based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.

### Coaches:

- Must not engage in behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional neglect, bullying).
- Should promote the welfare and best interests of their participants
- Must take action if they have a concern about the behaviour of an adult towards a child.
- Should communicate with other organizations and individuals in the best interest of the athlete.



## Stratford Soccer Club

### Coaches Manual

#### *PERSONAL STANDARDS RESPONSIBILITIES:*

Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.

Coaches:

- Must be fair, honest and considerate to everyone participating in the sports session.
- Must be a positive role model for athletes at all times.
- Must promote fairness and sportsmanlike conduct before, during and after a game and practice. This include but not limited to: shaking hands with the opposing coach after each game, having my team members shake hands with the opposing team, encouraging my team members to cheer positively and in a sportsmanlike manner. I will not tolerate negative cheering, trash-talking, abusive language or displays of anger or disrespect by my team.

#### *PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS RESPONSIBILITIES:*

Coaches must commit to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice at all times to maximize benefits and minimize the risk to participants.

Coaches:

- Will provide a safe and fun environment, which maximizes potential and minimizes risk or damage to the athlete.
- Be professional and accept responsibility for their actions.
- Will not use abusive language or actions and will control anger at all times.
- Will actively promote the positive benefits to society of participation in sport
- Will gain the qualifications appropriate to the level at which they coach.

### **3.0 Stratford Soccer Club League Policies**

The Stratford Soccer Club follows the Policies, Rules & Regulations of the PEI Soccer Association Youth Soccer League. A full copy can be found in Appendix A. A copy of this document may also be obtained at [http://peisa.goalline.ca/files/pei\\_youth\\_constitution.pdf](http://peisa.goalline.ca/files/pei_youth_constitution.pdf).

### **4.0 Stratford Soccer Club Coaching Policies**

#### **Canadian Soccer Association Long Term Player Development**

The Stratford Soccer Club follows the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA) Long Term Player Development strategy which is intended to provide each child with the opportunity for all-around growth and development, within a fun play environment. The role of the Stratford Soccer Club and its coaches, no matter the level of soccer played, is to help the players to be the best they can be, both as players on the field, and as citizens in our community.



## Stratford Soccer Club

### Coaches Manual

The following phases are recognized by the CSA as important in their long-term player development strategy.

#### ***Phase 1: Developing a “Love for the Game” (Age 5 to 7)***

Phase 1 is not only the starting place for the program – it is the most important place! The One-with-One program provides an opportunity for parents to sign their children at the age of 5. The One-with-One uses an age-appropriate, child-friendly environment by starting out with fun, non-intimidating activities and games where the parent and child take the child’s first steps (kicks) in soccer together.

#### ***Phase 2: Developing a “Love to Learn” (Age 8-12)***

The years between eight and 12 have been called the “Golden Age of Learning”. This is a time when children have become coordinated and well balanced and want to know more and do more. They are inquisitive, but in a very positive way. Phase 2 is the optimum time to develop the skills and to begin to develop the game savvy that will be so important in the later soccer years.

#### ***Phase 3: Developing a “Love to Compete” (Age 13 and Above)***

Phase 3 is the first time in the LTPD program when the competitive aspect of soccer takes on any real importance. This is the graduation phase – moving into 11 vs 11 play. Even then LTPD downplays a result-oriented approach in the early stage of Phase 3. Maximizing abilities and minimizing deficiencies in a team format is the way for a coach to get results. But in doing so it limits the development opportunities of each player as they get positioned according to their strengths and weaknesses. As the “Team” concept becomes more important, and one team tests itself against another, the coach should be careful not to stifle and stereotype players too early by placing them in permanent field positions.

A more detailed version of this plan is available on the Canadian Soccer Association website <http://www.canadasoccer.com/wellness-to-world-cup-s14682>.

#### **Coaching Clinics**

The Stratford Soccer Club is committed to the growth of our coaches and will pay for all coaching courses for anyone wishing to enhance their coaching abilities. The Club strongly recommends that you hold the coaching certification for the age group that you are coaching. All coaches in the Premier division must achieve a certification level required by PEI Soccer Association for the level they are coaching. The dates and times of all coaching courses offered can be found at [www.peisoccer.com](http://www.peisoccer.com).



# Stratford Soccer Club

## Coaches Manual

### **Tournaments**

Teams may only participate in tournaments sanctioned by the PEI Soccer Association (PEISA). Teams traveling off-island must complete a Travel Permit (Form PEISA 07/05) and pay the required fee. The permit must be approved and signed by the Executive Director of the PEISA. All tournaments sanctioned by the PEISA can be found on their website at [www.peisoccer.com](http://www.peisoccer.com).

### **Sponsorship**

Sponsorship for teams representing the Stratford Soccer Club and involved in programs of the Stratford Soccer Club, is most welcomed. However, all sponsors of Stratford soccer teams have to be approved by the Club.

### **Penalties & Suspensions**

Should any parent(s), guardian(s), or player(s) disagree with the decisions of any coach with respect to any of these guidelines, complaints should be forwarded to the Stratford Soccer Club in writing, for either clarification, or ruling, if necessary.

The Executive shall appoint a Disciplinary Committee consisting of three (3) Coordinators/ Directors who shall have the duty to recommend penalties to the Executive. No action may be taken by the Disciplinary Committee other than to recommend appropriate penalties to the Executive.

The Executive shall have the power to impose and enforce penalties, including suspensions for any violation of the Constitution or By-Laws or for any conduct deemed unbecoming to the Stratford Soccer Club. Such penalties may be imposed on any individual when deemed necessary. Players, coaches, managers, referees, club members, and any parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of any registered player, all fall under the jurisdiction of this Article.

The Club's decision will always be final as to the form of discipline to be used for any violation of the coaches' code of conduct, in consultation of the coach. The Club will support coaches, players and parents/guardians in the enforcement of this code of conduct.

The Stratford Soccer Club teams represent the Town of Stratford and as such, should be expected to behave in a way that will make our Town proud of our soccer organization. It is therefore necessary to set out a code of conduct that all players and coaches should be expected to abide by. This code will be reviewed, by the coach, with the players at the start of the season and reinforced throughout the year.



# Stratford Soccer Club

## Coaches Manual

### **Playing Time Policy**

It is the general policy of the Stratford Soccer Club that the role of the Club and its coaches, no matter the level of soccer played, is to help the players to be the best they can be, both as players on the field, and as citizens in our community.

Regardless of player caliber, every child should have equal playing time in each game at the First Division Level.

While every effort will be made to ensure equal playing time for each player in each game at the competitive level but equal playing time is not a given and cannot be expected. Playing time is earned on a practice to practice and game to game basis and is subject to the following:

- the player adheres to the teams' practice schedule and other Club and team rules set out and communicated by the coach;
- the player's effort and dedication at practices meets the requirements of the team;
- the player commits to his/her best effort within a game; and,
- the player follows the coaches' instructions within the team's system of play.

### **Call up policy**

From time to time, players may be called up to play on a Premier team and/or a higher age group level Premier team. The coaches of both teams will consult to ensure the player's physical and social development and agree to the player playing up. A player may be called up to play up to six (6) games after which, that player will be part of the team called up to.

### **Picking up players from other teams in the Club**

In regards to player pickups within the Stratford Soccer Club, a player may be "picked up" by another Stratford team as long as the requesting coach receives the consent of the coach and/or manager of the affected team. The requesting coach can then proceed to contact the player's parents/guardians for permission for the requested player to play on the team for the length of time agreed to all parties.

A player thus "picked up" and joining the team temporarily shall not have more field-time during a game than a regular full-time player on that team.

### **Announcements**

Announcements will be made on the local radio stations, Facebook and Twitter if games are cancelled due to weather.





# Stratford Soccer Club

## Coaches Manual

### Coaching Considerations

All coaches are asked to submit a coaching application to the Stratford Soccer Club Board of Directors. All coaches in the First and Premier divisions must participate in a **screening process with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police** and must present the screening certificate to the Chairperson of the Stratford Soccer Club.