

## Spring Sports Program

### Senior Kindergarten (SK) Soccer Manual

#### Message from the Bridlewood Community Association (BCA):

Thank you for taking part in the Spring Sports Program and making it a success year after year. The Spring Sports league is one of the programs of the Bridlewood Community Association (BCA), a not-for-profit community organization whose mandate is to work together with our community to make Bridlewood a great place to live, work and play. The BCA is committed to making sport in our community a positive and rewarding experience for everyone and has designed the Spring Sport Program to give children aged 5 – 14 an opportunity to have fun, learn new skills, get exercise and enjoy the beautiful parks of Bridlewood. It is a non-competitive league where the values of excellence, fun, inclusion and fairness dominate the game. On our fields, everyone is a winner.

#### Overall Objectives of the Spring Sports Program:

- Emphasize safety and, above all, have fun!
- Help young athletes develop coordination, a sense of teamwork and teach the fundamentals of the sport.
- Recognize the important contribution that sports can make to our children and our community.
- Afford families a chance to get to know other Bridlewood families in a relaxed, fun, outdoor setting. Make new friends!
- Reinforce the True Sports Principles as part of the culture supported by the BCA, the City of Ottawa and local schools.

#### Coaching Philosophy:

As a volunteer coach, your most important job is to ensure that your athletes have fun, learn new skills and make new friends. As this is an entirely volunteer-run program, all parents are expected to participate in some way, this includes asking parents to help out both on and off the field! Remember that the entire Spring Sports team is there to help you as well.

#### Requirements to be a coach:

- You enjoy working with children.
- You encourage and are able to organize children.
- You are available for weekly practices and games.
- You may have some experience with the sport. This coaching manual will provide rules, suggestions for warm up and drills and tips to help you teach the sport.

#### Expectations of Coaches:

- Arrange for equipment pick up as organized by the convenor. If you are not available, delegate it to another parent on your team.
- Communicate information to team regarding schedules, location, expectations for both players and parents, etc. or arrange for team manager to do so.
- Arrive on time for weekly practice with the equipment or designate someone to take your place for the warm up if you will be delayed.

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- Be prepared – plan the warm up, drills and game plan or delegate to your assistant coach or manager.
- Explain and/or demonstrate skills, rules and positions to the team.
- Ensure all children have an equal opportunity to play and try out different positions.
- Respect all participants including players and coaches from both teams.

### Expectations of Players:

- Arrive on time for practice with all necessary equipment, proper footwear and water. No sandals or jewellery.
- Respect all participants including players and coaches from both teams.
- Pay attention to coaches or managers.
- Always be aware of what is happening on the field.
- When not actively on the field focus on the game, encourage your teammates and use only positive comments.
- Work with everyone on your team, not just your friends.
- Shake hands with opposing team after the game.
- Help the coach assemble all equipment after the game and clean up after yourself.

### Expectations of Parents:

- Have child at the field on time and ready to play every week.
- Assist coach in whatever capacity they need – snacks, supervising children not on the field, with game, etc.
- **CRITICAL:** Ensure that your child is supervised at the field. If you cannot attend, please have another trusted adult supervise your child.
- Communicate any absences to coach in advance whenever possible.
- Respect all participants including players and coaches from both teams.

### Getting Ready to Coach:

- Review this manual in its entirety – contact [springsports@bridlewood.ca](mailto:springsports@bridlewood.ca) if you have any questions, concerns or are missing any equipment.
- Contact your team with information about dates, times and location of your sessions. Recruit parents to act as team manager or any other function you may require.
- Pick up your t-shirts, coaching manuals, equipment, etc. as directed by the Spring Sports Coordinator. If you are not available, please arrange for someone else from your team to attend in your place.
- To help you learn the children's names, and make t-shirt distribution easier, write their name on masking tape and attached to the front of each shirt before you hand them out.
- Select a team manager to prepare snack schedules, manage the children on the bench when you are on the field and contact parents with any schedule changes or other information.
- Don't be afraid to add a bit of silliness to the drills or practices – keep it fun!

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### Sample note to parents (prior to the first game)

Hello soccer parents,

I hope your little ones are excited about playing soccer this year. We will be playing on \_\_\_DAY\_\_\_ starting on May \_\_\_DATE\_\_\_ from 6 pm to 7:30pm. Due to the age of your child, it is imperative that a parent or guardian be present at all times. If you have a question about this requirement, please contact the BCA President Margaret Kellaway at [pres@bridlewood.ca](mailto:pres@bridlewood.ca).

I wanted to share a few things with you so that we start the season off with a common vision of what we're hoping our children will get out of their time on the soccer field.

Once again, the Bridlewood Community Association (BCA) is committed to True Sport ([www.truesportpur.ca](http://www.truesportpur.ca)), a national movement that promotes positive values in sport and in the process, which the BCA hopes will ensure that we provide a quality sport experience for everyone.

Here's what you can expect for our team during our 8 weeks together.

Schedule: 6 - 6:30pm

Warm-up and soccer drills: please show up as close to 6:00 as possible so that the kids can get properly warmed up. Remember to **bring any extra soccer balls** you may have (with your name on them) so that every child has a ball to practice with during the warm up.

Game: 6:30 to 7:20pm or so followed by SNACKS

(ADD ANY RELEVANT INFORMATION REGARDING THE WAY YOU WANT TO STRUCTURE THE GAME). Please make sure that when the kids are not playing that they're being supervised. Ideally, a parent can volunteer keeping the kids warmed-up and out of the park.

- **Everyone gets to play:** that's pretty self-explanatory.
- **Keeping it fun:** while it sounds obvious and I'm sure you're all nodding your heads, we all know how easy it is to get over zealous at times. Let's remember that this is about the kids and that the main objective is for them to have a great time out on the field.
- **Stay healthy:** in this day and age, getting kids off the couch and onto the playing field is no small feat. You've already shown a commitment by getting your children involved in a community sport programme. My goal is for the kids to enjoy moving, running, and playing so much that they'll want this to become a lifelong habit.
- **Respecting others:** using this short time together to instill a respect for the game, their teammates and competitors. We all have a role to play in that regard and as parents, we need to demonstrate this on and off the field of play

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me or the Spring Sports Coordinator at [springsports@bridlewood.ca](mailto:springsports@bridlewood.ca).

COACH NAME, COORDINATES (phone or email – whatever you are comfortable with)

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### Tips for coaching a fun practice and game for junior athletes:

- Practice begins at 6:00 pm and we encourage all children to arrive at that time. Coaches should organize drills with the help of some assistants and parents. Suggestions for warm ups and drills are included on the following pages but remember that at this age, most kids are playing soccer for the first time. As coaches, you'll need to remember to go with the flow and to allow the children to set the pace.
- Games should begin at 6:30 pm and should be played in two 20-minute halves with a 5 minute break in between. This should be timed by a volunteer on the sidelines. Before each game, meet with the other coach to discuss how you would like the game to be played.
- Place cone pylons as corner markers and goal markers. **Fields should be half a mini-field.** Goals (10 feet wide) and goal creases should be marked by flat pylons. In order to protect the goalkeeper no other player than the goalkeeper is allowed in the goal crease.
- Ensure that both teams have an equal number of players on the field (usually 6 plus the goalkeeper). Substitute kids often, if required. Rotate goalkeepers so many can get a turn at it. **Remember that winning is secondary to having fun and learning about soccer.**
- The game should be played safely. To that end, use the whistles provided if required. Field "scrum" should be avoided. The kids naturally all try to play the ball and some will be more aggressive than others. We want to avoid any injuries so gentle guidance as the game progresses is advised to help the kids understand when it is their "turn" so to speak. Slide tackles are not permitted.
- **Hand Balls:** Only the goalkeeper may touch the ball with the hands except for throw-ins or kick-ins. Remember though that the idea is to let the children play so try not to stick to the adult rules of soccer. If a child touches the ball with his hand, you can award the ball to the other team.
- **Throw-Ins or Kick-Ins:** At this age, most children will find it easier to kick the ball in instead of throwing it in. If a ball is kicked out of bounds at the side of the field or **beside the net** (no goal kicks for this age group), the whistle is blown and the opposing team gets to throw the ball in. Try to get the player to use both hands, keep both feet on the ground and throw the ball from behind the head. **At this level, please allow some latitude before blowing the whistle and try to redirect the children back onto the field first.**
- **Goal Kick:** If an attacking player kicks the ball out beside the net, then the whistle is blown and the goalkeeper gets a goal kick. He/she may kick the ball from the ground 2 – 3 paces in front of the net, drop it and kick it or throw it to one of his/her players. Use whatever the goalkeeper is comfortable with.
- When a ball is given to a team for any of the above reasons, the opposing team must give them at least 5 paces to kick the ball.
- At the end of each game, take the time to praise the athletes on what they did well; highlight some good examples of teamwork, sportsmanship and mastery of skills. You can even get the kids involved in describing their "True Sport Moment"! Be creative and see where it takes you.

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### Basic Skills for Junior Athletes

- **Receiving or Trapping the Ball:** Players learn to stop a moving ball and bring it under control. They do so by absorbing the ball into their bodies, cushioning it so it doesn't bounce off them. The first trap learned is the foot trap. A ball is pushed along the ground, and the receiving player tries to control the ball with the feet. There are two ways to do this. The first is by stomping one foot on top of the ball, pinning it between the foot and the ground. Good eye-foot coordination is needed here and timing is everything. The second trap involves the turned-out foot, slightly extended in front of the body. As the ball comes into contact with the foot, the leg is drawn back, so that the ball is cushioned, and the momentum is killed.
- **Dribbling:** This is the term used to describe moving the ball along the ground with the feet. It is used to move the ball up the field, create scoring opportunities and to evade opposing players. Players should keep the head up so that they can see where they are going.
- **Kicking:** There are many different kinds of kicks in soccer and each uses a specific area of the foot. Encourage the children to keep the ball on the ground.
  - The Toe Kick is usually the first kick children use as the ball can go a long way but it is very hard to control the direction of the ball.
  - The Push Pass is more effective in controlling the direction of the ball. Using the inside of the foot, with the knee turned out, players push the ball along the ground to each other. This pass is usually short, crisp and very precise.
  - The Flick Pass uses the outside of the foot. It is usually done on the run and the player pushes the ball to the side using the ankle and the outside of the foot. This is usually a short pass.
- **Shooting:** – All the kicking styles may be used to shoot on goal. Any manner of getting the ball into the net will result in a goal, (except using the hands), but the usual way is to take a shot. The most powerful shot comes from kicking the lower-middle part of the ball using the pointed toes.
- **Sportsmanship – Demonstrating True Sport principles** – This is an important value that we hope to help our children learn. One way to do this is to encourage shaking hands with opposing team after each game as well as offering three cheers for both their team and the opposing team at the beginning or end of each game. Another way is to cheer on the other players on their team when they are waiting on the sidelines for their next rotation.

**Above all else – have fun!**