

GCVSA TRAVEL: BOYS & GIRLS

Fall 2020 – SPRING 2021

U9 - U15

Training and home games are played at GCVSA's beautiful **Line Road Complex** located at 137 Line Road near the intersection with Paoli Pike in Malvern.

Players Name:	
Parents Name:	
Address:	
City/Zip:	
Player Birth Year: 20	
# of years played: recreational soccer	# of years played: travel
E-Mail Address:	
Any additional information:	

For more information, send an email with your question(s) to:

Colleen Galbraith at: c8galbraith@gmail.com

**Send a Deposit to hold your spot on a travel team in the amount of \$100.00 to: Registration
c/o GCVSA, P.O. Box 382, Malvern, PA 19355**

Redefining "Winner"

In the professional sports entertainment business, there is only one goal--to have the most points at the end of a contest. In youth sports, however, there is a second goal: to produce young people who will be winners in life. In order to help our children, get the most out of competitive sports, we need to redefine what it means to be a "winner." Regardless of what the scoreboard says, here's what winners do:

- They make maximum effort.
- Continue to learn and improve.
- Refuse to let mistakes (or fear of making mistakes) stop them.

This is referred to as a Mastery Orientation. PCA has developed a memory aid for athletes called the "Tree of Mastery." We say that the Tree of Mastery is an ELM Tree where ELM stands for Effort, Learning, and Mistakes. If our athletes approach this season with these things in mind, not only will they be successful in practices and games, but they'll also develop habits that serve them well throughout their lives. There is an added benefit. Athletes who are coached with a Mastery Orientation tend to have reduced anxiety and increased self-confidence. And when athletes feel less anxiety, they are more likely to have fun playing their sport!

Here's how you can help as a coach and or parent:

1. Tell your children that you want them to be winners in life and remind them of the three things that winners do (remember ELM).
2. Let your children know you appreciate it when they and their teammates try hard even if they lose the contest.
3. Challenge yourself not to ask: Did you win? -- until after you've asked several, more important questions. Reveal what matters most to you through the questions you ask: Did you try as hard as you could? Are you getting better? When you made a mistake did you bounce back? You could also ask them if they had fun!
4. Recognize that commitment to Mastery is hard work. Be patient and selective when criticizing your child's play, choosing times when they're most receptive. Also, point out situations in which you noticed them trying hard. Tell them when you notice that they are improving regardless of the outcome of a particular play or contest.

(#2) FILLING THE ATHLETE'S EMOTIONAL TANK

Like gas tanks in cars, all of us have an Emotional Tank that fills and drains. An athlete with a low emotional tank is irritable, pessimistic, and unable to deal well with adversity. On the other hand, an athlete whose tank is filled is cheerful, optimistic, and better able to deal with adversity. The bottom line is that players with empty tanks are less coachable, while those with full tanks are more coachable. As coaches and parents, there will

be times when we need to correct and criticize. **Research has shown that a "Plus/Minus Ratio" (praise to criticism) of 5:1 or better is ideal for children's learning.** When the ratio of praise to criticism drops much below 5:1, children become discouraged (their tanks become drained!).

Here's how you can help as a parent and coach:

1. Fill your child's Emotional Tank. Encourage them regardless of what happens in the game. Try not to give them a lot of advice (which after a tough game can seem like criticism, which drains a person's tank). Remember, it's difficult to do well with a low tank. When they make a mistake, you might say something like "Don't worry. It's okay. Let's get the next one. You can do it." After tough losses, it's often helpful to acknowledge your child's feeling of disappointment. For example, saying "I can imagine you must be disappointed to have lost." might help them recognize your sincerity.
2. To give advice your child can hear, try using the "3-Pluses-and-a-Wish" technique. Before you give advice, find three things about your child's performance that you appreciated. Phrase the advice as a wish: "You really tried hard in the game today (Plus #1). I also saw you filling your teammate's emotional tank after he made a mistake (Plus #2). And that play you made towards the end of the game shows how much you are improving (Plus #3). One thing I wish is that you wouldn't get down on yourself when you make a mistake." If you can't come up with three pluses, don't say the wish because then it may drain your child's emotional tank rather than fill it.
3. Remember the Golden Ratio. Try to praise your child about 5 times for every time you criticize. If you do, your child will be better able to hear your criticism without becoming defensive.

(#3) HONORING THE GAME

Sportsmanship may seem like an out-of-date concept today when professional athletes and coaches act in ways we would not want our children to imitate. We intend to reverse this trend on our teams with the concept of "Honoring the Game." Honoring the Game gets to the ROOTT of the matter, where **ROOTT stands for respect for: Rules Opponents Officials Teammates Tradition.**

Rules: Respect for the rules is important, even when it's possible to break them without getting caught. Our teams should play to the letter and spirit of the rules, and to refrain from "bending" them when it dishonors the game.

Opponents: Without opponents, competitive sports make no sense. A worthy opponent challenges us to do our best. We must respect opponents and remember they are members of our community. We should try our hardest to win but not at the expense of demeaning or demonizing our opponents. Show respect for opposing coaches and teams and teach that to your athletes.

Officials: Officials have been selected and trained to enforce rules to keep sports from degenerating into chaos. Officials are not perfect (just like coaches, athletes and parents!) and sometimes make mistakes. However, there is no excuse for treating officials with disrespect when they make errors. Players and their parents should show respect for officials, even when they disagree with the call.

Teammates: Players should feel a commitment to each other as teammates. Encourage and support one another on and off the playing field.

Tradition: The game our children play has a great tradition. Share that tradition with your athletes.

Let your players know that you want him or her to honor the game. Discuss the meaning of each element of ROOTT with your team. This idea may be difficult for younger children to understand so you may have to adapt the idea to the age and comprehension level of your child. 2) Be a good role model. Cheer your team and the opposing team when good plays are made. If, in your opinion, an officiating mistake is made, refrain from yelling at the official. Use this as an opportunity to think about how difficult it is to officiate a game perfectly.

For more information about the Positive Coaching Alliance, you can visit the PCA web site at www.positivecoach.org, call 650-725-0024, send e-mail to pca@positivecoach.org, or write Positive Coaching Alliance, Dept. of Athletics, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-6150.