



Secretary
Steve Nicks
38 Finchley Ave.
Derby, DE22 4ET

Tel. 07715 991546

GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS AND PARENTS **Development (U7 & U8) Section**

The following is a summary of some important points discussed at the Pre-Season Meeting. They are reiterated here in the form of a FAQ sheet. Managers are encouraged to distribute copies to parents. Please contact developmentsection@derbyminisoccer.com if you have any further questions.

Who does the Development (U7 & U8) Section serve?

All affiliated clubs are invited to enter teams. Due to limited space, priority is given to teams within the City Of Derby and to Clubs with teams in the older sections.

What are the main differences between this section and the U9, U10, and U11's?

Under FA Regulations we can only provide a "competition" to the older age groups. Football at U7 and U8 (the Development Section) must be "friendly".

What is 'friendly football'?

All football matches are competitive! However, at other age groups we are allowed to put teams into groups of 8, 10 or 12 teams so they can play each other home and away and thus earn points in order to decide champions. At U7 and U8 (the Development Section), we are not allowed to do this. In essence it reduces the League to a fixture scheduling service.

How does this affect Managers and parents?

Because the need and reward for winning has been removed, it gives managers the opportunity to focus on developing teams ready for U9's. Managers should consider giving all players equal playing time, fielding weaker players when they are in the lead or when playing oppositions that are known to be weaker and give players experience of playing in different positions. Most importantly from the league's point of view, no one may collate the results of matches or attempt to create a league table or league standing. Finally, there is scope to admit teams during the season. This should help Club's as they kick-start new teams.

When does the season start and end?

The season usually starts on the first weekend after the children return to school. This year we start on the weekend of 13th September.

Will there be any 'time off' during the season?

Each team is allowed two REST DAYS per season. To book yours, Club Secretaries should forward details to the League by eMail. We need four weeks notice so fixtures can be re-arranged. There are also fixed 'Closed Dates' over Christmas and Easter. NB; as we can only accommodate 48 teams each week, a significant number of teams will be without a fixture each week (we have over 60 registered). If your team is NOT allocated a fixture, you may be called upon at late notice to replace someone who has pulled out.

What is 'family-friendly' football?

This is an FA initiative that encourages Leagues to avoid scheduling fixtures at times when families might want to get together. This includes Bank holidays, school holidays and dates when major teams might be playing locally (eg the Forest v Rams derby).

Where do we play?

All matches in the Development (U7 & U8) Section are played on Sundays at Derby College, Prince Charles Ave on the all weather pitch (older ages play on grass at Derby Racecourse just off the pentagon roundabout). All fixtures and kick off times can be found on the League web site.

My team does not seem to have the same number of fixtures as other teams

The fixture schedule is fair to all. Great care has been taken to ensure everyone has the same number of matches by the end of the season, everyone has an equal number of home and away fixtures and, teams are split equally over the 4 pitches. Moreover, where teams have expressed a preference for specific conditions (eg KO times) these have been accommodated.

What are the car parking arrangements at the College?

The car park faces the ATP court and is very large. However, the access road is narrow. It is best to give way to cars leaving the site and to drive very slowly.

Are there any special or unusual requirements for the players?

Yes, as the surface is artificial, studded boots or blades are not allowed. Players should wear trainers or moulded boots. In the winter it may be necessary for players to wear additional clothing. This must be worn UNDER the normal playing kit.

How do I find out where my team is playing?

The all weather pitch is divided into four pitches. These are numbered and signed on the fencing around the court. You will find your pitch number on the fixture list from the web site.

Can teams "warm up" on the pitches?

Yes, during the final few minutes before the match starts. However, it best for teams to meet at a regular point on the grass outside the all weather pitch and conduct the main warm up there. In addition, siblings and subs must never kick balls around on the all weather pitch. This includes breaks at half time.

Do teams have to pay for pitches?

Yes; because the cost of hiring the all weather pitch is quite high, we insist that both teams pay an equal part of the fee. This must be paid to the Sports Hall Reception BEFORE the game is played.

How long are the matches?

All matches at all age-groups are 20 minutes each way with a 5 minute break at half time. In the Development (U7 & U8) Section, additional stoppage time is NOT played - all matches kick off on the hour and finish at quarter to. This leaves 15 minutes for the changeover between matches. Once matches are over, managers must immediately vacate the pitch to make room for the next match. Team talks and presentations can be done at the side of the pitch.

Who puts the goals and barriers up and who takes them down?

You do!! There are matches on every pitch throughout the day so the first teams to use the pitch must erect the goals & respect barriers and the last teams must take them all down. First kick offs are at 10:00am and the last kick offs are at 3:00pm. Each of the last kick-off teams must take down one goal and one respect barrier and return them to the store. If any are left up when all teams have gone, both teams on the pitch concerned will be taken to task!!

Does the League allocate Referees?

The League is able to appoint Referees to most competitive matches. However, we do not have enough referees to address the Development Section. We hope this will change shortly. If no League Referee is appointed, the home team should nominate a (preferably qualified) referee. Once agreed, this referee shall assume complete responsibility for the control of the match with the same authority as a League Appointed Referee. If a League referee is appointed to a fixture, teams cannot refuse the appointment.

Does the Referee get paid?

League appointed Referees are entitled to a fee of £10 which is payable by the HOME team. The fee must be paid BEFORE the match kicks off. Referees who are NOT appointed by the League are NOT entitled to a fee regardless of their qualification.

What if I am concerned about the standard of refereeing at a match?

Both parent referees and league appointed referees are expected to control matches in an unbiased and impartial manner. League Officials are always onsite and monitor the performance of referees and Club representatives discreetly.

...but the Referee got it wrong!!

The Referee is the sole arbiter on matters of fact on the pitch. For example, he is the only person who can decide whether it was deliberate hand ball and not accidental hand ball. Those spectators who disagree are expected to bite their lip.

What are the 'Rules of the Competition'?

The Rules of the Competition is an official document you can download from the web site. It contains all the details of how the League is administered and run. The Rules are sanctioned by the FA and there is an opportunity to change them at the League AGM. Whilst some of these rules are not applicable to 'friendly football', managers are encouraged to abide by them. In this way, they will find the migration to fully competitive football at U9 so much easier.

...and what about the Laws of the Game?

The League has adopted the FA's Mini-Soccer Handbook. Not only does this outline the Laws of the Game but it also gives guidance as to how these Laws should be adapted across the ages.

Why are identity cards issued to players?

The league has a responsibility to ensure that only eligible children take part in games. For this reason we must ensure all players are registered. They are issued with ID cards so that their opposition can be sure only qualified players take part. Card checks are mandatory before every game.

As a manager, what should I do if my opposition is unable or unwilling to carry out a card check?

If a card is not presented for a specific child, the opposition may object to him/her taking part in the match. All instances where cards are not shown must be reported to the League within 24 hours. The child's name and team must be quoted.

What do I do if I'm unhappy about the conduct of my team or the opposition at a match?

Our Code Of Conduct states that; everyone should applaud good play from both sides, players should not be shouted at or scolded by anyone, bad language should not be tolerated, players should be encouraged to shake hands at the end of the match, referees must not be quizzed or questioned but supported at all times, officials must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance at all times and everyone must accept success and failure, victory and defeat, equally. Infringements should be reported directly to the League.

What happens if the weather is too bad to play a match?

If the long-range weather forecast looks bad, all matches will be cancelled. Clubs will be notified by eMail, a notice will be placed on the web-site and the answering service will be updated. The same action will be taken if a decision is made on the day – if time allows.

What if the weather is not too bad of if the match has kicked-off?

If no notice is given (see above), teams MUST travel to the match regardless of the weather. At kick-off time (or at any time during the match should the weather worsen), the two team managers may decide to call the match off. In the event of a short heavy shower, referees can use their discretion and call a 'time-out'. However, the watch continues to run during all stoppages.

As a parent, who should I contact if I have questions or problems?

Your first port of call is your team Manager or your Club Secretary. You are also welcome to approach any of the League's on-site officials.

...but I'm a Manager

If in any form of doubt regarding League business, Managers should always refer to their Club Secretary. However, if there are basic problems on match day (eg you don't know where you are to play or your opposition has not turned up), you should contact one of the League's on-site officials.