

VIP Soccer Program, Useful Information
September, 2008



SOCCKER SEASON GAME PLANS

Practical Information

Game days are Saturdays, September 6-November 1, except October 11. Coaches and Referees arrive at 8:30, Buddies arrive at 8:45 and Players arrive at 9am. Game plans include skill-building, team warm-up and a soccer match. Matches are played in halves with a water break midway and a full-program snack time afterward. Remember SAFETY guidelines, with shinguards, water bottles, and no metal jewelry, hoods or jeans.

Coach Field Coverage

At least one trained adult per field, with use of experienced youth buddies who have shown leadership qualities, will monitor the fields. Our VIP leadership is currently compiling a collection of mini-games (drills) and warm-ups to be used before game time. Warm ups and mini-games are planned ahead of time, to support individual player development and team building. Coach trainer resources are Ginny Elliott, Kenny Pechtl, Bailey Cordes, Nina Koruna, Chris Best and Mark Sheffer.

Referee Field Coverage

Referee resources are Dave Zeiger, Del Parra, Kenny Pechtl, Bailey Cordes, Blanca Parra, Kelly McDougall; and our substitutes (Mark Will, Bob Pechtl, Gabby Will, Bob Balogh).

Youth BUDDIES

In the last year we focused on Buddy recruitment and training, and had almost 50 buddies actively participating in the program. Attendance at games and responsiveness to the players were excellent. Due to overlapping sports practices and games with our older buddies, we have some inconsistency with Buddy attendance. Additional buddies have being recruited and trained.

Youth Leadership

Several of our youth buddies have shown leadership qualities in their sensitivity to buddies, their input on warm-up and game plans, and their overall dependability and positive modeling as buddies. These buddies now have asst coach roles, warm-up leader roles, and are invited to participate actively in training and orientation activities.

Fall letters will again go out to the schools and organizations that the youth buddies are affiliated with, to increase acknowledgement and pride associated with participation on our VIP program. This effort has resulted in principals, scout leaders and school board acknowledgement of buddies, and increased service opportunities for some of our high school students.

Updates on Individual Players

range of players

Player Turnover

We have several *additional players* registered for the Fall 08-Spring 09 season, and others who are observing at the fields prior to registering. Observation is welcomed, and improves the transition process once players and buddies register. The Registrar is flexible with additional VIP registrations as long as parents complete the registration process fully. Common obstacles to participation and re-enrollment are: Saturday AM Dr and therapy appts., and aging out of a youth program

PROGRAM NEWS

Program Successes

U10-U14 VISITING PLAYERS

Players from 3 different U10 girls teams visited our Field C players last Spring. It was a very positive experience for all involved. The VIP leadership will continue to solicit visits from AYSO U10 and U12 girls and boys team. *We currently have several teams in the schedule to play on fields C and B.*

INTER-REGIONAL PLAY

Area VIP programs have been invited to visit and play with us. Discussion about an additional Tournament/Clinic/Picnic program for VIP programs has been initiated. Valerie Walker is in regular communication with VIP coordinators. Additional discussion and planning will happen at the VIP Networking day that AYSO Region 372 hosts twice a year. Our own region is seen as a model program, and asked to coordinate tournament and training activities for the northern Illinois area.

COACH FOR A DAY

Youth Buddies are encouraged to invite VIPs to come watch their own soccer games, to sit with the team/coaches, help keep score or handout water at breaks, given a uniform to wear or have, and overall have a fabulous experience. The VIP leadership has formalized this into an AYSO program. Benefits are to empower VIPs by giving them a chance to learn from regular games, be out in the AYSO community, and build friendships; and to expand awareness of the VIP program. Considerations are coach/volunteer coordination and VIP safety.

VIP Players moving onto regular teams

After years with our program, and much hard work, skill building and developmental growth, two of our VIP players were given the opportunity to play on regular teams. VIP leadership worked closely with the AYSO regional commissioner on team placement and coach orientation. The players will continue to be 'Buddies' in our VIP program, and we will undoubtedly go watch their games!

4th of JULY PARADE

The VIPs and Buddies who were able to participate in the parade had a positive, hot experience.

VIP Award Distribution Committee

Mundelein AYSO's VIP program received a grant from Motorola via David Zeiger being awarded the 'Motorola CEO Award for Volunteerism'. We have utilized a committee of AYSO representatives, VIP Volunteers, Consultants and parents to organize recommendations for how to best utilize the resources. Considerations for expenditure include program materials, equipment, player accommodations, training tools, and special event opportunities that can benefit all the players and program. Award distribution information is available upon request to VIP families.

Upcoming Trainings & Networking Opportunities

Four New Buddy trainings were organized this year, to train and orient new volunteers to the program as needed. Our newest Coaches and Referees will take the VIP Certification course this September. The next full training day will be over the winter break which will include VIP Coach/Referee training, New and Advanced Buddy training, an Inter-Regional Networking meeting, and a VIP Parent Feedback meeting.

VIP Player Parent Feedback

We will continue to use a mid-season survey to gather input from parents and volunteers after the Fall session. Player parents are also invited to attend an informal discussion meeting over the winter break with the coaches, referees and youth leaders (our 'VIP Parent Coffee'). Although the coaches and referees have worked to have ongoing communication on program and individual player issues during the seasons, we still hear feedback 'after the fact' at times. Volunteer and parent feedback and suggestions are essential to our program's quality and progress.

Communication Progress Update

The VIP program is utilizing a comprehensive data system, so that communication is done by fields rather than by the VIP administrator. Emergency information, contact information, player-buddy matches and backups, and special needs are included for each participant.

The VIP website has received positive feedback from users. The current 'Family Note' as well as program information, volunteer highlights and forms are included as links in the site.

Networking/Publicity

Increased publicity has been distributed to recruit additional players and buddies. Publicity options that have been successful are: contacts with Doctors offices, WOM!, letters/calls to Special services staff in schools, HS service coordinators and youth organizations, SEDOL contacts and newsletter, PSAs in local media, volunteer acknowledgements, etc. Successful strategies this past year were our 'oversize business cards' distributed to referral sources, and our participation in community networking fairs.