



# **BOLTON WANDERERS SOCCER CLUB**

## **RECREATIONAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES U8 TO U18**

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## ROLE OF THE COACH

A coach should help to improve the performance of the players (and the team) both physically and psychologically.

The position of coach is demanding and multi-faceted. Parent, teacher, counselor, disciplinarian, organizer...these are some of the duties demanded of the coach. When players sign-up with a club, they expect to receive something for their registration fee. They want to play and learn and they also want to do so in an enjoyable environment.

Shaping the lives of young people is a large responsibility, effected not only through what we teach, but also the way we teach. The "process" of learning is at least as important as the "product" In addition to what they Learn about soccer, children may learn to be better people. You may be overwhelmed by your influence, but you accept that influence when you assume the position of coach.

To develop players, you must have a sound knowledge of the game. This knowledge relates to skill, technique, tactics, fitness, and Laws of the Game. Coaches are, generally, knowledgeable about some of these aspects, but weak in others. Good coaches are always seeking new ideas to develop their knowledge of the game and players.

As coaches, we must try to find out what potential a player has so that we can develop that potential and make the player the best player he or she can be.

## A COACH'S CREED

The Primary responsibility of a youth soccer coach is to help the young player to have **fun, learn and improve.**

This responsibility makes a youth coach different from any other official in the club, league or association. A coach should coach for the joy and success of the players - and no other reason.

# COACHING CODE OF CONDUCT

**Commitment:**

A coach's commitment is to improve the performance of the players and the team physically and mentally.

A player needs to participate in a high quality soccer program in a positive atmosphere. (Suggest: A coach needs to provide a high quality soccer program for players within a positive environment/atmosphere.)

**Know Your Subject:**

A Coach must be thoroughly acquainted with FIFA Laws of the Game and they must keep attuned to the sound principles of Coaching.

**Respect:**

Coaches must respect all human beings ie, players, and officials. Opponents and officials must be treated with respect.

Players must be coached to win within the laws of the Game.

**Enthusiasm:**

Coaches must be enthusiastic and positive. They must ensure that they are generous with their praise when deserved.

**Personal Conduct:**

A Coach must maintain the high standards of personal conduct and fair play. Coaches should never be involved in any circumstance which is offensive or suggests sexual connotations.

# RECREATIONAL TEAM COACH PROFILE

(Recreational Program U6 - U18)

## RESPONSIBLE TO: AGE GROUP CONVENOR

### QUALIFICATIONS:

- Level 1 (Child) Coach

### GOALS:

- Instruction in soccer skills as set out by the Club
- Positional play and individual roles on a team
- Competition at an appropriate level of play
- Encouraging self-confidence and individual skill development through positive reinforcement
- Building and maintaining team chemistry
- Establish codes of 'fair play' and reinforce values of 'good sport'

### ACTIVITIES:

- Weekly practices & game(s) for players as mandated by the Club

### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Communication with players, parents (i.e. practice/game schedules; half time snacks;) and Club
- Player information forms (team roster; medical concerns; injury authorization) on hand for all practices & games
- Familiarity with guidelines for reporting Child Abuse
- Ability to set and maintain standards for players relating to respect, discipline, and fair play
- Prepared to referee(or designate) if necessary
- Attendance at meetings and clinics as organized by the Club
- Awareness of Club policies relating to player safety (i.e., weather advisories, heat policies, field conditions)
- Familiarity with Recreational Coaches' Code of Conduct
- Distribution of player equipment as issued by Club

### BOUNDARIES/ LIMITATIONS:

- Shall never be alone with a player
- Shall not be responsible for transportation to/from practices/games/tournaments
- Shall not be responsible for water or snacks
- Shall be a role model - no drugs/alcohol/smoking or abusive language at practices/games/tournaments
- Shall comply with the Dress Code as defined by the Club
- Shall adhere to OSA and Club policies
- Shall embrace Club values, principles, and policy as per Club Constitution
- Shall demonstrate the ability to set and maintain standards for players (i.e., respect, self-discipline, fair play)

### SKILLS/QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE:

- As required by the Club
- Knowledge of games and playing experience an asset
- Minimum age as set by Club (with coaches under 18 requiring written permission per Club policy)

Ability to relate to the players based on age, gender, and ability based upon the characteristics and philosophies listed.

## **UNDER 6**

### **Characteristics**

High-energy Short attention span Uncoordinated individually driven Little/No team play concept  
Practice Ball Mastery – touches on the ball Fun Games – soccer related Small sided games

### **Philosophy**

Every practice must be FUN Coach is more of a facilitator No structured training sessions Many touches on the ball Let the players play

## **UNDER 7/8**

### **Characteristics**

High energy level improved co-ordination Eager to learn Short attention span Begin to understand “team” concept

Practice Ball Mastery – touches on the ball Technical skills – emphasis on Passing/Receiving – (1st touch/accuracy), Shooting – correct techniques (accuracy over power) Dribbling/Running with the ball  
Moves – 1v1 – beating an opponent Small sided games

### **Philosophy**

Every practice **must be fun** Many touches on the ball Players are encouraged to express themselves in their play Coach is able to demonstrate Introducing the concept of “team” play Coach is a “role model” able to demonstrate

## **UNDER 9/10 (U10's Play 7 vs 7)**

### **Characteristics**

Energetic Coordinated Willingness to learn Self-critical Understanding of “team” concept enjoys competition Accepts new challenges

Practice Ball Mastery – touches on the ball Technical Skills – players challenged to execute skills in progressive pressured stages Possession games – introducing the importance of finding space (passing/receiving) Individual tactics 1v1 Small sided games Team Play understanding (system of play) for 7v7

### **Philosophy**

Practice is challenging and fun Competitive play encouraged Players technically improved Clear understanding of “team” concept Coach can demonstrate Coach has a good knowledge of the game

## **UNDER 11/12 (U11's & up Play 11 vs 11)**

### **Characteristics**

Enjoy competition Psychological development Physical improvement (speed/strength) Self critical Improved team work / ability to solve problems with team mates Appearance / peer pressure are concerns

Practice Ball Mastery – touches on the ball Technical Skills Competitive, challenging, game related training sessions. Individual tactics 1v1 Introduction of Group tactics (2v2, 4v4 v 5v5 etc) Introduction to systems of play (11v11)

### **Philosophy**

Competitive and challenging environment Technically competent players Respects team mates Tactical awareness Technical and tactically competent coach

## **UNDER 13/14**

### **Characteristics**

Varying stages of puberty Sense of achievement, belonging, accomplishment Display of independence and are self critical Aware of praise, status and recognition Physical growth

Practice Ball Mastery – touches on the ball Technical Skills Competitive, challenging, game related training sessions Individual and Group tactics various systems of play functional training

### **Philosophy**

Competitive and challenging environment Technically competent players Respects team mates, Tactically aware Technical and tactically competent coach

## **UNDER 15/16**

### **Characteristics**

Change in attitude Maturity Growth spurts Serious and committed  
Practice Ball Mastery – touches on the ball Technical Skills Competitive, challenging, game related  
training sessions Individual and Group tactics Systems of play functional training

### **Philosophy**

Competitive and challenging environment Technically competent players Respects team mates Tactically  
aware Technical and tactically competent Coach must constantly strive to challenge and improve players

## **UNDER 17/18**

### **Characteristics**

Maturity/ adulthood Attitude change Serious and committed  
Practice Ball Mastery – touches on the ball Technical Skills Competitive, challenging, game related  
training sessions Individual and Group tactics Systems of play Functional training

### **Philosophy**

Competitive and challenging environment Technically competent players Respects team mates Tactically  
aware Technical and tactically competent Coach understands the requirements to play at the highest  
level Coach has ability to prepare players to play at the highest

### **PERSONAL TRAITS/QUALITIES:**

- Interest
- Positive role model
- Fair-minded, sportsmanlike approach
- Ability to communicate with players and parents
- Awareness of personal limitations and a willingness to seek assistance when necessary
- Patience, understanding and a sense of humour
- Ability to exercise good judgement

### **ORIENTATION TRAINING:**

- Attending mandatory clinics as set by the Club
- Awareness of personal health issues and safety practices
- Clear understanding of Club policy regarding Recreational Team matters

### **SUPPORT/SUPERVISION & EVALUATION:**

- Convener responsibility
- Random calls to parents to monitor coaching
- Convener attendance (optional) at practice(s)/game(s)

### **MANDATORY ACTIVITIES:**

- Clinics/Orientation sessions
- Weekly practice and game
- Events as scheduled by Club
- Administrative work as set down by Club (i.e., game sheets, player grading)

### **WORKING CONDITIONS:**

- Outdoors according to Club policy re: weather & field conditions

### **BENEFITS (VOLUNTEER):**

- Working with young people
- Imparting the values of active participation, team work, and fair play
- Developing individual soccer skills and introducing game skills and rules
- Community contribution

### **SCREENING MEASURES:**

- Completion of Recreational Coaching Application Form including personal references
- Other policies referenced in the Club's Support/Supervision/Evaluation section
- A Police Records Check is required

## PRACTICE FIELDS

The Edelweiss, Jack Garret and Dick's Dam fields are for games only. There will be no practicing allowed on these fields unless you have a permit from the club.

The field at **Dicks Dam**, the **Centre field at Humberview** and the field at **Allen Drive** are reserved for the Clubs Competitive program practices only when not being used for games.

To assist you and your team in conducting a practice the Club has permitted the fields at the following schools.

- Humberview (4) **Centre Field is reserved for REP Practices**
- James Bolton (1)
- Ellwood (1)
- Allan Drive (1) **Is reserved for REP Practices Monday to Friday**
- St Nicholas (1)

Field allocation will be a first come first use bases. Each team will be entitled to use half a field and will be required to share the field with another team.

There are additional fields at some of the other schools. Please keep in mind that they are not under permit and therefore it is a first come first use basis. Also you may be requested to leave if they do not want you there.

## COACHES GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED

1. Call your players as soon as possible to let them know what team they are on, who the sponsor is, who you are, when/where the first game is, and the date and time of first practice.
2. Arrange at least one practice before the first game to:
  - Let the players get to know each other and you
  - Hand out schedules and uniforms
  - Organize your team prior to your first game
  - Meet the parents
3. Read the Recreational Program Bylaws. If there are any questions contact your convenor. Please note one change in the bylaws from previous years. Section 3.5 'A team shall not field an advantage of more than two additional players than an opposing team if the opposing teams has less than a full side'. This is to promote sportsmanship and prevent a lopsided game from being played.
4. Remember the objective of the Recreational Program is for the players to have fun and participate. Please ensure players get equal playing time.
5. All Referees have all taken a referee course but many are young and are developing their skills much the same as the players are. Please support the referees and encourage your players and their parents to support the referee decisions also. They are an important part of the game and our organization. If you have any concerns about the refereeing, please talk to your convenor.

Enjoy your involvement with your team; ensure they have fun playing and good luck with your season. The Bolton Wanderers Soccer Club appreciates you volunteering to coach. Without you we could not provide any of these soccer programs.

# COACHES CHECK LIST

## FUN

- Make sure every child experiences some feeling of achievement
- Scale down your sport if necessary
- Provide sufficient equipment
- Have a rewards system
- Ensure different children win each week
- Cultivate your sense of humor
- **Have fun!**

## FRIENDSHIP

- Call each child by name
- Have the children learn each other's names as well
- Speak to every child at every practice
- Help children who may be shy
- Use partner and small group activities
- Rotate partners and members
- Organize team events
- Involve parents
- **Have Fun!**

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- "Talk an ounce, practice a ton"
- Design activities to minimize waiting
- Vary drills
- Create challenges
- Give children activities to practice at home
- **Have Fun!**

## FITNESS

- Develop habits of stretching, warming up, and cooling down
- Set a good example
- **Have Fun!**

## SUCCESS AND SELF WORTH

- Have realistic expectations
- Emphasize performance, not results
- Measure and reward individual improvement
- Offer specific, honest praise
- Provide constructive "try this" feedback
- Give personal attention to each child
- **Have Fun!**

## POSITIVE VALUES

- Stress teamwork
- Play by the rules on and off the "field"
- Discourage cheating, reinforce fair play
- Be happy but humble in victory, dignified in defeat
- Be proud of your efforts
- **Have Fun!**

## **PRE-GAME PREPARATION**

What do you eat and drink before a game? How close to game-time can you eat? What stretches and warm ups should you do?

### **Food and drink**

Hydration is the key to pre-game conditioning. Drink several glasses of water or fill a water bottle and drink from it on the way to and before the game. Sufficient hydration will enhance the body's ability to rebound from the stress during the course of the game.

A pre-game meal is an individual choice. Some players are able to eat a meal or a sandwich right up to game-time without apparent adverse effects. A prevailing view among players is that food should not be eaten any later than two hours prior to a game.

Eating food any closer to game-time may affect your ability to play in several ways. First, an upset stomach or heartburn is a possibility, which is an unpleasant experience while you are being pushed to your physical limits. Second, the blood supply is directed to digesting food, which takes it away from the supplying the muscles needed to play Soccer. A meal close to game-time will deprive a player of needed energy for the game.

### **Stretching**

Pregame stretching enhances flexibility and helps prevent injuries. Until muscles are warmed up, aggressive stretching is counter productive. Pregame stretching to loosen up muscles can be performed on the sideline before putting on equipment.

Before stretching, run several times around the field first to warm-up arm and leg muscles. A mistake many Soccer players make is to begin stretching their hamstrings before warming up their muscles. A cold muscle cannot be easily stretched and risks injury.

Exercises on the sidelines include hamstring stretches on the boards. This exercise is risky depending upon the player's physical size, the height of the bench, the player's ability to balance themselves on one foot, and the slipperiness of the playing surface.

Stretch the legs first then the arms. A good groin stretch is to place one leg behind while maintaining balance on the other foot. Leg kicks and calf stretches (pull one leg up by the ankle toward the torso while balancing on the other foot) are good pre-game stretching exercises.

An effective back stretch is to go to the knees and bend backwards stretching the back and neck. Another back and arm stretch is to place a Soccer ball behind the back in an arching and uplifting action.

### **Post-Game**

Most Soccer players are unaware of the secret of post-game stretching. Stretching after an athletic event, especially a Soccer game is the key to minimizing injury and reducing muscle soreness. It is surprising how few players and coaches know this.

Once the game is done, the same pre-game stretching routine should be followed. Sometimes this is difficult due to time constraints. At a minimum stretch the legs. Make sure to do a groin stretch, a calf stretch, and stretch the hamstrings. This becomes more important over time as a player becomes older and less able to bounce back from the stress and strain of Soccer. Continue to drink water after the game. Fill up the water bottle and drink it on the ride home!

## A LETTER TO PARENTS FROM A COACH

1. Soccer is a team sport.
2. If you think your child is better than the other kids on the team--congratulations. You probably fall into the majority of soccer parents. However, this is largely irrelevant. (See # 1.)
3. If you want your child to improve his/her skills and performance, then leave it the coaches. The parents' jobs are to: pay, drive, and offer positive support. Great soccer parents come to games and shout FOR their kids -- not AT them!
4. If you think you can offer good advice to one of the coaches, then see the team manager and arrange to take the coaching certification exam. If you want to coach from the side-lines without coming to team practices, team meetings, team camps, coaches clinics, coaches meetings -- please, keep the advice to yourself until you can watch soccer on TV and tell *those* guys what to do.
5. Communication is very important. If anything at all is bothering your child, let the coach know as soon as possible so that he/she has an opportunity to adjust if possible to make your child's experience more rewarding and enjoyable. If you are really upset about something, the 24-hour rule is required. If you really want to destroy a team, tell everyone except the coach about your child's problem. Talk about it and complain about it with the other parents all season and never let the one person who can fix it know that there is a concern.
6. If you think you can offer good advice to a referee, see # 5 above.
7. A soccer match is not won or lost by any child (see # 1 above).
8. To play well during the season, our children must come together as a team, support each other, and communicate with and trust each other. The coaches and children will accomplish this if we don't undermine their efforts. However, if you disagree with the foregoing statements, undermining can be easily accomplished by using any of the following tactics: criticizing the efforts of your child... telling your child he/she is the most/least important and best/worst player on the team... telling your child that another child on the team is lousy or has deficiencies... yelling negative comments during practices or games... criticizing the decisions or strategies of the coaches... hollering at the referees... or claiming that victory or defeat was the responsibility of any child, yours or someone else's.