

CANMORE MINOR SOCCER CLUB
COACHING INFORMATION
U-6, U-8

1. The goal of the program is to have all participants involved. The outcome of any game is not as important as the participation and enjoyment of as many athletes as possible. The program will use mini soccer as its organized game. (See mini soccer example). Mini soccer allows more players more involvement during the game.
2. Every participant should be considered an equal with any player on your team. Encourage the other team's players as much as you would cheer on your own. Be positive with every player.
3. If for any reason, any other coach is not at the field at the start of practice/game time, please include their players in your practice and if necessary, game.
4. There will usually be 4 teams at each field. Each team should use $\frac{1}{4}$ of the soccer field for their practice and game.
5. The U-6 program is scheduled for 60 minutes, the U-8 program is scheduled for 90 minutes. Use the first half of your time to instruct and run drills/practice for your team. The second half of your time should be used for game time.
6. You can use your game time to; a) play a game amongst your own team by splitting them up and using your $\frac{1}{4}$ of the field, or b) play games against one of the other teams on the field.
7. Since there are no tryouts for the program, the players have been placed in teams randomly. If a game your team is involved in is unfair, please vary the teams for that game to try and make the teams more balanced. Put some of your players on the other team and take some of theirs. Players will enjoy the game more if it is close. Have the players return to their original team after the end of the game.
8. When game time begins, your team and the team it is playing can be split into two teams each. This allows for smaller number of players involved in two games, which should mean more involvement with the ball for each player. It also means that no one needs to be sitting on the side waiting for a substitution. You still have a game on each $\frac{1}{4}$ of the field. This means that you will referee/supervise $\frac{1}{2}$ your team against $\frac{1}{2}$ the other team, and the other coach will referee/supervise the other $\frac{1}{2}$ of each team. If you have a co-coach, they can be involved in the other game. Your role now becomes; Referee/Supervisor/Coach/Cheerleader/Number One Fan for all players. Therefore, remember point # 2, and encourage and cheer on both teams. All players will have a more enjoyable experience receiving lots of positive reinforcement. Please don't favour your team over the other team. Give both teams encouragement and help in whatever aspect of the game they need. Reinforce skills, encourage new skill use, referee the game and keep the players active as much as possible.
9. After about half of your playing time, stop the game and have a half time break for 5 minutes. Also, allow the players water breaks when they need it.
10. End every game with a show of good sportsmanship between the teams. Have your team cheer on the other side for competing so well. Have all players line up and shake hands and say great game to the other team. Make sure your players are showing respect to the other team.
11. The scores will not be recorded at this level, nor will standings be kept. The aim is player enjoyment, not victories.
12. Remember that as coaches we are a team. Our goal for Canmore Minor Soccer is to ensure a great game for every player regardless of whose team they are on.

Sample practice/game time U-6, U-8

- There will usually be 4 different teams per full field.
- Each team needs to use $\frac{1}{4}$ of the field to run their practice.
- Take the first half of the allotted time to talk to your team, stretch, instruct new skills, have drills and modified competitions within your team.
- Don't forget water breaks.
- For game time, we play mini-soccer. This means the size of the field, the goals, number of players involved, and rules of soccer are adapted.(see sheet regarding mini soccer rules) Try to have every player play every position on the field. It is probably easiest to set up your team with a goalie, half of the remaining players as defenders, and the other half as forwards. Make sure to move players around so everyone can have success at every position.
- The two teams each have $\frac{1}{4}$ of the field. Together, they have half a full soccer field to play two separate games on. Divide your team into two halves as evenly as possible, both in numbers and ability of play. The team you are playing will also be divided into two teams. Divide the half of the field into two separate playing areas for mini soccer. Use pylons to mark sidelines, end lines, and goals (about 4-5 metres wide). If you have the big flags, use them for goal posts.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ of your team stays with you, $\frac{1}{2}$ of the opposing team comes over to play. The other part of your team moves with your co-coach to play the other part of the other team.
- Reinforce positive play and encourage all players from both teams.
- Wrap up the games with cheers and hand shakes.