



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

May's Newsletter

What is best for the players? That is the question youth soccer is based around and also one that has hit home quite hard in the recent week. For two years now I have put amazing amounts of time and energy into my team. They have meant the world to me and given me back seventeen times what I have given them. I had big plans for my team and true to form, they would have exceeded every one of my expectations. Thursday, I had to look them in the eye and break the news that this will be my last month as their coach. I am not leaving the club, simply moving on to another team. There is a philosophy behind rotating coaches, but that was the last thing on my mind when I was told I was switching teams. I fought and fought against this policy, as I think most coaches would. Not the idea and general philosophy of the policy, but against the practice of it on myself and my team. The last thing I want is to give up my team, especially one I have worked so hard to build into a success. I lost a lot of sleep, crashed my car, thought of every way out of it, called every coaching mentor I have and finally chewed my DOC's ear off for hours. Every minute of thought, talking and fighting lead to the same conclusion. It had to be done.

As I talked to a mentor of mine he told me a story of a coach with a National Championship winning club team. The newspapers praised him for bringing his team up from U11 and finally winning the championship in their U18 season. My first thought was "that's amazing!" My mentor's first thought surprised me. He said "poor kids." See, yes those kids won a National Championship, but at what cost? All those players know is one style of coaching, from one coach. The idea of sacrificing the player for the team. That idea got me thinking and I began to apply it to the current situation. As coaches we all believe we have the answer. Heck, it is our job to have the answers and to be the best for our players. So naturally, we come to think that we are the best thing for our players and no other coach could possibly understand how to make the team work as well as we do. But is that pride worth the gamble? Are we willing to risk our player's development because we think we can develop them better than anybody else? And the biggest question, what if I am not what's best for my players?

To the first two, the answer is easily no. The third takes a big swallow of pride to admit that the answer just may be yes. Maybe there is another coach out there that can teach my girls something I can't. Maybe a new coach sees something that can take an average player and make them amazing. Maybe a sub becomes a starter because of something I just didn't see. These are the maybes that have run through my head the past week and taken me to the biggest maybe of all.

MAYBE this could be the best thing I do for my players.

So I ask you, what are you willing to do for your players? Are you willing to risk your hair to reward your team for winning a tournament? Would you willingly make a fool of yourself by dancing in front of 14 year old girls while waiting for a ferry? Would you spend a week in another state to learn new ideas to give your players? Would you risk being scored on so your backup keeper gets playing time? And finally, would you let them go and hope you taught them well enough to be okay?

I know one thing from my 23 years of playing. The best coaches I ever had were willing to sacrifice the team for the sake of the player. That...is what's best for the player!

Kicks n' Gigglez,

Brandon Schreiner
RCSC President

