

GAME DAY COACHING TIPS

LINDFIELD FOOTBALL CLUB



KEEP IT SIMPLE!

If you're not the coach but are tasked with the job of looking after your team on match day, here are some tips for you to help support the team on game day!

First of all, game day is the kids day to experience the pure joy of playing the game of football. The coach's job is to create an environment that allows for this enjoyment. This occurs when the coach provides positive reinforcement of good behaviours on the field and ensures everyone gets a fair go, by providing equal game time for all players.

WARM UP

A great starter if you don't have many footballs is survivor tag. Everyone is a tagger, if a player is tagged, they sit down until the person who tagged them sits down (gets tagged). Tags at the same time are solved with scissors, paper, rock!

If you have enough balls for half the team, you could play dribblers and robbers. Players without a ball are the robbers and try to steal the ball from the players with the balls. Once a robber steals a ball, they become a dribbler and the player they stole the ball from is the new robber.



PRE-GAME TALK

I always keep it simple and to the rule of three. Ask the players the following questions and let them have a chance to answer.

1. When we have the ball, how can we make the field big? - spread out.
2. When we don't have the ball, what do we want to protect? - the goal.
3. When we have the ball - where can we dribble? - into space.

If we can't dribble, who can we pass to? - the free player.

Lastly let the players who will be playing and resting first know. Make sure you have a plan of when you will rotate (eg every 5 mins), so everyone gets even time. Use a countdown timer on your phone to help!



DURING THE GAME

Remember, game day is the kids day, their chance to experience the pure joy of playing football. There isn't much enjoyable about a coach yelling instructions from the sideline. Our philosophy is to let them play. Saying as little as possible is ideal, and usually all that is appropriate is a few prompts of the rule of 3 mentioned above. For example, from a goal kick, you might ask: "how can we make the field big?" or when the other team has the ball, "how can we protect the goal?"



HALF-TIME

You'll probably find the players will be making a beeline to their water bottles and the oranges. Let them have some time to focus on rehydrating. Once they've had a chance to devour some fructose, I again keep it to the rule of three.

1. Positive reinforcement - "I Love the way we have been..."
2. A goal to improve - "what is one thing we can do better? How can we achieve that?"
3. Interchange - let the new players know who they are replacing, and ensure you have enough on the field.



AFTER THE GAME

Time for some positive reinforcement! Again keep it simple, start with "I really enjoyed watching you play today," The kids will likely be exhausted, so you could add one thing you were proud of the team doing as a whole, eg: "we all did a great job at protecting the goal when the other team had the ball."

Lastly, positive reinforcement for each individual player never goes astray, it could be done in front of the group, or individually on the way to the car park.

