

## *BE A ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR PLAYERS*

Practicing good sportsmanship is an individual act that reaches beyond just your players. Achieving good sportsmanship requires individual acts by all involved in the competition; players, coaches, parents, and referees. As a coach, use your position of authority to set expectations and most importantly, to guide your players.

- Always maintain respect for the game of soccer, both in competition and at practice.
- Never emphasize winning at the cost of sportsmanship.
- Do not teach or encourage unsporting tactics or techniques.
- Learn the Laws of the Game and teach your players the letter and the spirit of the Laws.
- Give added respect to youth referees. This is often their first experience in having a position of authority over adults and they may be nervous.
- With that, give respect to everyone involved in the match. If you have an issue, please save it for your game report.
- Encourage your parents to report poor spectator behavior to you, whether it is from your opponent or from your own team.
- Do not criticize referees in front of your players, nor should you “work” them in order to get favorable calls.
- Do not let your players or parents use offensive, abusive or insulting language or behavior.
- Let your players and parents know what you expect in terms of good sportsmanship, and what results and actions the consequences of poor sportsmanship will bring.

Game reports are important to us. While the official scoring will come from the referee’s report, a coach’s game report is reviewed by several people within ENSA and may be used to confirm scores and events. We take great care in reading these reports. If you mark an item as FAIR or POOR, please explain why you gave low ratings. We track this information, and hope to derail potential serious issues before they may occur. We do not review complaints about a game from parents. If you have a parent that has an issue, they need to notify you so that you may include that information in your game report.

By that same token, if you run into a coach or team who displays exceptional or superior sportsmanship, let us know about it when you file your game report.