

# **MatsGary United Soccer Club**

## **Code of Conduct**

### **INTRODUCTION**

We enjoy successes with our involvement in minor soccer and learned that one key ingredient of success is clear, consistent communication between the club; its teams and trainers, players and parents. This document is one way of explaining, in detail, our expectations of you as a member of the MatsGary United Soccer Club and what you can expect from the club. It will help you identify some potential problem areas and at the same time answer questions about the club's decision-making process. As you have committed to become a member of MatsGary United Soccer Club, please take the time to read the following pages carefully. The signature page must be by signed to be accepted to the club.

### **PLAYER EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

Current players are evaluated throughout the season during practices, scrimmages, and games. New players are evaluated during seasonal trials. There are many terminologies used to categorize and describe soccer abilities. Present and potential team members are evaluated in four areas:

- 1) Mental dimensions (character, discipline, and leadership);
- 2) Physical dimensions (endurance, strength, and speed);
- 3) Technical competence (skills); and
- 4) Tactical awareness (runs, reading).

If you have any questions about the meaning of these terms, please ask the coaches. Coaches or independent evaluators will base their decisions solely on the four areas of evaluation and they are responsible to make decisions for the

good of the club and team. Politics, friendships, personal relationships, and financial contribution to the club or team will not enter into these decisions. Your understanding here is important, for just as players have the freedom to select a soccer club without unfair pressure and with a full understanding of what is expected, the coach needs the same freedom to work objectively. We will not always agree on issues as sensitive as player evaluation and selection. We hope you will respect our attempt to be objective in these matters.

## TRIALS

Club trials are held annually and are open to all players who meet the age requirements. Each prospect will be given a fair opportunity to make the team. The club will announce the open trials to inform the public of the specific trials dates and times. Evaluations and selections will be based solely on how players perform in the four evaluation areas according to the training staff. Evaluations take place during the competitive soccer season (practices and games), as well as during open trials. The decisions of the Board are final.

## PLAYER COMMITMENT

MatsGary United Soccer Club is a competitive soccer club geared towards players who love the sport of soccer and are serious about their development as soccer players. It is important to recognize that players and parents invest significant time and resources in playing club soccer and expect the club to create and foster an environment which will ultimately allow players to compete at the highest levels Nationally and Internationally.

Your commitment to the club and the club's commitment to you is for one soccer seasonal year only and at the end of each year, you must try out again. At the conclusion of the year your commitment to the club is over and you are free to leave the club if you feel it is in your best interest. The aim of this policy is to create an appropriate competitive environment for the proper development of our players. Also, no player will be cut from a team during a seasonal year unless it is for disciplinary reasons or failure to fulfill financial obligations.

Players are expected to make their commitment to MatsGary United Soccer Club as their first recreational activity priority during the season. However, the

club encourages members to take up other sports that are not in conflict with our soccer program.

We expect our players and parents to be ethical, honest and to honor their commitments both verbal and written; therefore you should make your decisions thoughtfully and carefully. Once your commitment is made, the club expects your full participation and support for the entire soccer season. Take into account that when you make your commitment, the coach may need to inform other potential players that they did not make the team. Please be sensitive to others and consider your decision carefully. If you have committed to the club, the club will also be ethical and honest, honoring its commitment to you.

## PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance at games is mandatory. Games will be rescheduled on short notice and you will be expected to make every effort to attend. Teams may play in matches over the long weekend and statutory holidays. Barring a special family circumstance, you will be expected to be there. Players should arrive at all games 40 minutes early. During games, players are expected to follow the instructions of their coaches. Players not on the field are expected to sit and watch their teammates from the bench. Players are expected to try their best within the rules of the game and compete aggressively but fairly at all times. No smoking and no alcohol of any type within view of the field during games.

Players are expected to condition themselves both during the season and in the off-season. Failure to be in good physical condition will necessarily affect a player's ability to perform and will likely cut a player's playing time during the season. Likewise, players are expected to work on soccer skills year round either on a formal or informal basis. Players need touches on the ball as much as possible throughout the year in order to develop. Practices are mandatory and should only be missed on account of illness, religious obligation or special circumstance. Please inform your coach in advance if you can't make a practice. Players are expected to arrive at practices 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time with lots to drink, and proper safety equipment. Players should use the bathroom prior to practice and should be ready to train seriously when they arrive.

Nutrition and rest are also the responsibility of the player. We expect players to eat nutritious, healthy food in a timely fashion so as not to interfere with performance. If you have questions about which foods are best for performing athletes, please ask the team coach.

As a member of the MatsGary United Soccer Club, you are responsible for your own performance and conduct. Honesty, communication, and reliability are expected at all times. The club asks that you care about yourself and the sport of soccer. This requires that you maintain a healthy lifestyle and a healthy team attitude. Any use of drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes is not acceptable to the club and may result in temporary suspension or even removal from the club. In addition, our club will insist you maintain a positive team attitude and a personal sense of sportsmanship and fair play.

## OFF THE FIELD

Matsgary United players are expected to carry themselves as gentlemen and ladies on and off the field. At matches, player behavior is expected to be exemplary on and off the field. As elite athletes, players are further expected to conduct themselves with dignity and respect at home and at school. Disrespect of adults, including teachers and parents, will not be tolerated. Poor behavior by one player is a bad reflection on teammates and the club.

## SCHOOLWORK

Part of the commitment of playing for MatsGary United is a commitment to being able to handle all the obligations that a student has in his or her daily life. It is expected that all players be prepared to play soccer at games and practices. This demands that players do their best in school and budget their time in order to fulfill their obligations in their primary role as students. Players who are not doing their best in school and/or are not meeting their homework obligations are jeopardizing their position on their team and letting their fellow teammates down.

## COMMUNICATIONS

As a member of MatsGary United, you are responsible for your own performance and conduct. Honesty, reliability and communication will be

expected at all times. There will inevitably be times during the season when coaches make decisions and players will be instructed to do things they may not understand. During such times, players are encouraged to talk with their coaches so they can gain a better understanding of why certain decisions are being made and what is expected of them. If you have issues or concerns such as the amount of playing time you are receiving, whether or not you are starting, what position you are playing, etc., please do not hesitate to speak with your coach at the appropriate time. All of our coaches have an open door policy with respect to such issues or concerns and they encourage and expect you to communicate when you have such issues or concerns. You and your coach may not ultimately agree on such matters but you will both have a better understanding of each other and what needs to be done to resolve the matter. Ultimately, if you feel your coach is treating you unfairly, you may contact your club board.

You are responsible for knowing what is going on with your team. There are times when changes are made (sometimes last minute) to practice and/or game dates, times and/or locations. Our club will have the updates on our website or may via e-mail, so you must check the website or your e-mail box daily. If you are going to miss a practice or game (or be arriving late or leaving early) you must notify your coach or the designated person at the earliest possible moment. In case of inclement weather your team has a procedure for announcing field closures.

## THE PARENTS

Parental support and involvement in the club are essential. Team parents must make sure their child attends all possible club and team functions (practices, meetings, games, etc.). We understand there will be times when conflicts cannot be avoided and other more important events occur. The club requires your communication, planning, and understanding so we can minimize conflicts. It is the team's responsibility to present a periodic schedule to allow time for your planning. When parents or players have an unavoidable conflict, the club expects timely communication to see if the club or team can make any necessary adjustments. The team manager will make final decisions on scheduling after careful consideration of your needs and those of the club or team.

## SIDELINE COACHING

There will be no coaching by parents. “Go,” “shoot,” “pass” or “send it” are interpreted as instructions and as such are not desirable. No matter how good your intentions are; we insist there be no shouting instructions to your child or any other player on the team. We also insist there be absolutely no yelling or complaining to referees or officials during or after games. Your vocal support and positive encouragement are welcome after good play. Please do not criticize or “moan” with disappointment when mistakes are made. The players are well aware of mistakes they make (especially the bad ones), and we also teach our players that overcoming and learning from mistakes are an important part of the learning process.

It is important that players not be distracted at practices, during games, and that players are given only one set of instructions by one voice before, during, and after practices and games. For this reason, the club insists the coach be the only voice before, at and after all games and practices. No one other than those listed on the official game roster may sit on or near the team bench before and during games (please respect the space and privacy necessary for the trainer and team to carry out their game responsibilities).

Please respect all of the other players on the team; please do not make critical remarks to others about specific players on your team. Many times, these comments are overheard by the players or others and can be quite hurtful and foster an unhealthy team environment.

Please respect your trainer and do not make negative remarks to others about coaching decisions. The club’s first concern is for the long-term growth and development of our players as individuals along with their soccer abilities under pressure. There will be times trainers make decisions and players are instructed to do things parents will not understand. Club, team and player development will sometimes be given a greater priority than winning, especially in the younger years. Parents must understand this and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this philosophy in order to maintain a healthy team environment. Remember, playing only to win without taking healthy club, team and player development into account will not result in a solid foundation upon which your child will be prepared for winning.

Parents, always at the appropriate moment and time, should feel free to communicate and ask questions about your child. Also, please take the initiative to encourage and teach your player to speak up and communicate for

themselves whenever possible. MatsGary United Soccer Club believes in and teaches players the benefit of having mental toughness to guide their intense focus on the game of soccer. We will instruct your child to ignore adverse conditions such as bad referees, name calling, foul language, rough play, cheating, poor weather, negative behavior by parents or opponents, etc. We expect our parents (as well as our coaches) to have this same mental toughness.

## THE COACH

The coaches for MatsGary United Soccer Club are instructed to conduct themselves first as teachers and second as soccer trainers. Nothing positive will come of the club's efforts if we produce world-class players who do not know how to conduct themselves as successful human beings. In this regard you can expect our coaches to conduct themselves as positive role models and display appropriate behavior. Our coaches recognize they are dealing in an important way with young people and cannot overlook the impact they have on players' lives. Coaches, are responsible for the conduct of the team on and off the field whenever the team is together. We insist our players are polite, well behaved and respectful. Players and parents can expect honesty, communication, consistency, and reliability from the coach. The club and the coaches are committed to giving players the tools and skills to enable them to become as good as their ability, desire, commitment, and effort allow. Coaches are committed to creating an environment that is conducive to the development of quality competitive soccer. We recognize there are things more important in life than soccer. In terms of priority, family and school work come first. However, if the coach see you are not willing to put your soccer above other recreational activities during the season, it may affect your playing time and/or your status with the club. Do not expect the coach to praise everything you do well. After a time, there are things the coach will come to expect from every player. There are times when the coach will say very little, and times they may yell out instructions. There are times they will be critical of players, and other times they will be generous with praise. Players and parents are expected to take constructive criticism along with praise for a job well done, and be able to deal with both.

The coaches will make decisions on player selections, game lineup, player positions, amount of playing time, etc. Players must be positive in fulfilling the

role they are asked to perform for the team at any moment, even if that role has them not playing at all, coming off the bench, or playing a different position. If conflicts or issues arise between a player and/or his/her parents and the team, then the coach will be responsible for addressing and responding to the conflicts or issues and making the final decisions for the good of the team.

## PLAYING TIME

Except for small-sided players, there is no guaranteed amount of playing time and there are many factors that can affect the amount of playing time for a particular player. The policy of the club is that playing time is earned and not given. Starting positions and playing time are both earned by coming to practice regularly and by working hard, competing and concentrating during practices and games. Should you have any questions or concerns, please talk with your coach at the appropriate time.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Our attempt with this code of conduct is to present in clear detail what will be expected of you and what you can expect of the club, the team and the coaches. If you are uncertain what is expected, it is your responsibility to ask one of your coaches. Knowing and understanding these things, your participation in the club will be positive for you as you develop your soccer abilities to the highest level possible. We have high expectations of the club, the teams, the coaches, and you. These expectations are really the rules, regulations, and policies of MatsGary United Soccer Club. So that you and every player in our club can get the maximum benefit, we need you and every player to abide by the club Bylaws, rules, regulations and policies. Everyone has problems from time to time and we will make every effort to work with you to help solve the problems you may have. After we have exhausted all efforts to solve the problem, we will be left with little choice other than to pursue disciplinary action as outlined below. The same procedures will apply to situations where parents may require warrant disciplinary steps.



- . 1) The coach will discuss the problem directly and privately with the player, with the assumption the problem will be corrected immediately.
- . 2) If the problem persists, the coach will communicate with the player's parents to discuss the problem and lack of response on the part of the player. Parents will have the opportunity to be involved with correction of the problem at this time.
- . 3) If the problem continues, the coach may temporarily may suspend the player.
- . 4) The parents of any player recommended for removal from the club may speak with the club board.

I have read the code of conduct and I agree to abide by these policies.

## PLAYER INFORMATION

Player Name:

Parent's Names:

Team: Coache's Name:

## SIGNATURES

Player: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_