

The Role of Parents in the Penn Legacy Philosophy

THE PENN LEGACY WAY.

The goal of this club is to provide the best possible, all-round soccer experience for ALL of our players. We have developed a program titled The Penn Legacy Way which closely follows the ideals described in US Soccer Federation's new-look curriculum and their Best Practices Guidelines for youth soccer player development.

We endeavor to place an emphasis on skill level, learning to play an attractive brand of soccer, good sportsmanship and teamwork. We will base our successes on how well our players develop, not just on the soccer pitch, but as young people, all the while remembering that this is a competitive sport. If our players are enjoying their soccer, and being taught the game the right way by the best coaches, then we can achieve great things.

That is the Penn Legacy Way.

The “Penn Legacy Way” is a very simple concept. When one reads it on a piece of paper it is easy to say that it makes total sense and is surely the right way to promote the game of soccer. The harder part is actually turning the concept into a living, breathing way of behaving each and every practice and game. The philosophy can be summarized as follows: Player development is King, we seek to maximize every single player’s potential and help them grow as soccer players and as young people. We require our coaches to buy into this and to create phenomenal learning environments at every practice session and game. The focus will always be on playing the game the right way, not on results, win/loss records or tournament wins. We strive to be as competitive as any team or any club out there. Our way of achieving great results will be *because* of our player development. When our kids are ready to compete, they will be ready to win because they will have become a team of talented players, playing with confidence, skill and a deep understanding of the game, **NOT** because the coach used tactics to achieve a result.

Like I said, this is often easier said than done, and it takes absolute commitment to the cause from everyone involved in the club. We lose players at times because many folks want the instant gratification of a win, and saying “my child plays on the best team in the area”. We have had coaches in the past who have disagreed

with “player development-focused model”, and they too have left. But we will continue, and we will never waver, because it is the right way. What I ask today is that you, as parents, try to stay true to what the club and our coaches are trying to achieve. Put rankings and league tables aside and enjoy the experience with your child. On gameday, don’t worry so much about the match officials, just take a deep breath and realize how special it is to have your child be a part of a team and participating in physical activity. The game is the ultimate teacher, our teams will enjoy exhilarating wins, and suffer heart-breaking losses, they will succeed and they will fail over and over again. Our coaches are dedicated to making sure positive moments of learning are taken from these experiences. Our parents can do the same. You are all vital elements of The Penn Legacy Way. Remember, together we can achieve great things!

Thank you for your support,

Seamus.

Seamus Donnelly
Director of Coaching and Player Development
Penn Legacy Soccer Club

From the US Youth Soccer Newsletter – Please read:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/10/parents-ruin-sports-for-their-kids-by-obsessing-about-winning/280442/>