

Grizzly Lady Soccer 2018:

Goals, Procedures and other Information

This letter is addressed to the players and their parents.

The following information is designed to help answer questions, clarify policy and clearly define what is expected of a Grizz soccer player (and parent). Parents are then asked to please read and discuss the following outline with their players. I ask you to do this, to gain a mutual understanding of rules and expectations among players, parents and the coaching staff, which is fundamental to a successful year of Grizz soccer. Obviously, this letter cannot answer *all* questions, but if you ever have any questions or concerns not addressed in this letter, please don't hesitate to talk to the coaches. For varsity contact Eric: eric.wolff@ashland.k12.or.us
For JV contact Emily: in person - at the field

Team Rules

1. Philosophy

- The team *always* comes first, ahead of individual players.
- Give all you can and strive to accomplish more than expected. Be an overachiever. Don't just settle for average.
- Don't dwell on past mistakes, rather look ahead to future successes.

2. Responsibilities

- Appropriate behavior is expected of everyone at **all** times - on *and* off the field.
- Any player whose actions are detrimental to team morale, team performance or the image of AHS will be disciplined according to school or team policy.
- As athletes you represent AHS and girls' soccer on *and* off the field, 24-7. This places responsibility on each team-member to act with honor and integrity at *all* times.

Individual Rules

3. Personal Conduct

- Do what is right and treat others as you wish to be treated.
- Understand that the team as a whole comes first.
- Be on time for all practices, games and meetings. Promptness is essential. If you are at school, you are expected to be at practice. If you skip practices, you will not start the following game, or you may not play at all! *Excessive tardies or unexcused absences will result in loss of playing time and you eventually being cut from the team.*
- No swearing! Profanity is a sign of weakness.
- Illegal substance abuse will be strictly penalized. Also *stay clear of any situation, which may make you guilty by association.*
- Go to class, complete all class-work and be a responsible student. As per AHS rules, each player must have passed, and be carrying, at least five credit classes with a C or higher *and* no other class with an F in order to be eligible.
- ***On game days, players are also required to attend classes all day, or you will NOT play in the game. Also: If you skip a class or you are too ill to attend class, you will not be able to practice that same day!***

Field Rules

- Pay attention to instructions given to you. Remain focused and respectful at all times.
- Always hustle and work hard. The rewards will be irreplaceable.

Travel Information

- All students are to travel with the team *to and from* the event. Please do not ask for exceptions to this rule, unless it is truly imperative. This is vital for team morale.

General Information

- You are responsible for the equipment issued to you and you are required to return it at the end of the season in the same shape as you received it - or pay for replacements.
- Be positive with your teammates; do not bring them down with negative comments.
- Treat everyone with proper respect: coaches, teachers (most importantly your Math teachers ;-), officials, parents, classmates, and especially teammates.
- If you will miss a practice, you must tell your coach *before* that practice starts.
- Never gripe or complain to your teammates about coaching decisions.
- Players should discuss any problem with any of the coaches.
- In order to earn a varsity letter, you must compete in at least six varsity games.
- You are expected to attend any community service days or academic days, just as if it were a practice day.
- All of this information is also available on the AHS website:
www.ashland.k12.or.us/athletics
- For a schedule of all games, check out “Schedule Star” online and search for Ashland on that website

In ANY case DO NOT:

- deliberately disrupt and interfere with instructions and drills.
- verbally, or otherwise, disrespect, abuse or threaten another player.
- deliberately or carelessly injure another player.

Any of these actions can and will lead to you being cut from the team.

We plan on having fun and intend to develop our players into tough, skilled athletes with good ethics and a good sense and understanding of the game. We will experience glorious victories (hopefully many) and gravely disappointing losses (hopefully not so many), but these are all part of the bigger picture: *Teaching Life Skills through Athletics*

Our expectations of the players are that they will take their training seriously and to know that the level at which they train is the level at which they play. Everybody “turns it up a notch” for games, so if you do not already practice at the top of your game, you will also be behind when it counts.

Again, if you should have any questions or concerns at any time, please feel free to contact me or any other coach – except right after games. Thank you for your support of our Grizz soccer team and I hope to see all of you at our games.

Your Lady Grizz Soccer Coaching Staff
Eric & Aidan & Emily

PS: Parents, please do not coach any player during games. It is often confusing or distracting to players and may contradict instructions given by one of the coaching staff. And after a game, let your daughter initiate a conversation about the game. Be positive :-)

Roles and Responsibilities for Parents

First off, let me thank you for your ingenious decision to introduce your daughter to the greatest sport in the world and for allowing her to continue playing soccer through her high school years. Now, I would like to remind you to please remain a supportive, positive role model at all times, even in difficult situations – to *ALL* players, referees, other parents and especially the coaches.

If, in the next few weeks, you should ever have any questions, please take the time to talk to us coaches, as we like to have an open channel of communication. If you have a “problem”, you have clearly waited too long to address what was initially just a concern. Avoid this problematic state by coming to chat with us – especially before taking your concerns to the athletic director, as he will ask whether you have talked to the coaches first anyway. I only ask that you do not address problems with the coaches right before or right after games, especially after a tough loss. Any other time would likely be appropriate.

But, let me briefly address the two most common questions – the one regarding playing time and squad selection. We certainly understand that all parents want to see their daughter play every minute of every game, but perceived skill level is only one factor contributing to playing time. There are many other obvious factors, such as attitude, effort, conditioning, maturity, and experience, attendance, and there are some others that are not so obvious. On any given day it may be that we coaches want to experiment with a different line-up, other players may need to gain experience, or some players are just more suitable for certain types of line-ups than others. I can assure you that I have never put a player on the bench due to a grudge, or because I wanted to “teach her a lesson.” Similarly, I have never excluded a player from my team for the before mentioned reasons. We choose the varsity team very objectively and based on the input of all four coaches, at least one independent qualified evaluator and usually the input by the captains of the team. The JV coach chooses his team based on the same criteria.

We coaches truly believe in teaching life-skills and sometimes this includes a lesson in patience when waiting for your turn to play or to play on varsity, but every player will get their opportunity to serve the team when the time is right.

Thanks for reading this and adhering to these roles and responsibilities.

Coach Eric Wolff

PS: In order to earn a varsity letter, a player must play in at least 6 halves of varsity soccer.

Competing with Class (adapted from Bean & Shoemaker/Ann Landers)

- 1) Class always treats teammates, coaches, officials and spectators with respect and dignity. As a natural extension, it becomes a way of life for family, school and community relationships.
- 2) Class oozes with confidence, never cockiness. It has an element of pride without being proud.
- 3) Class doesn't need credit for getting a job done.
- 4) Class is never self-seeking, but always looking for ways to praise others. Class knows you don't need to extinguish another's candle in order to let your own shine.
- 5) Class doesn't make excuses. It learns from failures and moves on.
- 6) Class is doing unto others, as you would have others do unto you.
- 7) Class sacrifices self for the greater good of the game. It always integrally links sportsmanship and ethical conduct.
- 8) Class cultivates good manners, recognizing them as a series of small, inconsequential sacrifices.
- 9) Class has nothing to do with status, position or wealth. It suggests an aristocracy that has nothing to do with ancestry or accomplishments. Some wealthy folks have no class, while others struggling to make ends meet are loaded with it. Class is equally comfortable with nobility and the blue-collar crowd, or the professional and the novice.
- 10) Class has a sense of humor and knows that laughing at oneself is essential for positive well-being. Laughter lubricates the machinery of human relations.
- 11) True Class is authentic. It loathes duplicity, and has no rivals. If you lack Class, whatever else you have is comparatively inconsequential.

Five Ways to Play Ethically

Although sportsmanship comprises a core set of values and behavior, substantial disagreement exists regarding the precise content of those standards. For example, coaches and athletes know they should behave in ways that justify and generate trust, but situations aren't always black and white. Here are five guidelines to remember when faced with an ethical situation that isn't clear-cut:

- 1. Honor the letter and spirit of the rules.** An athlete should not use manipulative tactics or legalistic evasions to justify prohibited conduct. This includes rules regarding recruitment, eligibility, compensation, equipment tampering, and drug and alcohol use.
- 2. Don't cheat.** Cheating is deliberately violating the rules to gain an unfair advantage. In basketball and hockey, however, tradition permits a player to deliberately foul an opponent and take a penalty as a matter of strategy. This is not cheating.
- 3. Don't deceive in communication or representation.** A coach should not deceive an athlete, parent, or official at any time. Deceiving an opponent about your plans, however, is considered part of the game.
- 4. Don't fake injuries.** It is improper to fake an injury to gain advantage or extra time. There is disagreement, however, on whether it's okay to fake being fouled or hurt (by flopping or writhing on the ground), to pretend a ball was caught when it wasn't, or to try to convince a referee an opponent touched the ball last when he didn't. The purest interpretation of sportsmanship precludes attempting to dupe officials into making incorrect calls.
- 5. Call plays against yourself.** In volleyball, players are expected to call a touch if a ball hits them before going out of bounds and the official misses it. In tennis, etiquette requires players to correct an umpire's erroneous call. In golf, a player is supposed to alert his opponents when he accidentally breaks a rule that incurs a penalty stroke.

SEVEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD HAVE A SUCCESSFUL, EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ATHLETICS THIS SCHOOL YEAR

Contributed by Karl Kemper

Athletics are a very valuable part of the educational process. Parents can be an important part of making participation in sports a worthwhile experience for their child. However, they also have the power to take away from the value. Following are some tips from a coach who is on the inside looking out into the stands.

1. **Remember that it's a game and kids are playing it.** Let them have fun. Many players feel that they have to live up to unrealistic standards of other people. This creates unnecessary pressure that often makes them perform worse, not better. It also takes away from the fun. Often, the player's athletic achievement is more important to the parent than it is to the child. There is something wrong with that picture. You should not be angry or disappointed in your child for playing poorly, any more than you should be happy with them for doing well. Their sense of self-worth should not come from how good a player they are. It should come from how good a person they are.
2. **Expect your child do their best and let that be enough.** Do not push them to play for a scholarship or pro contract. Coaches often hear from parents that this is what they expect. For 99% of the population, it is not a realistic goal. Scholarships and professional contracts are given almost purely on athletic ability. If it happens, that's great. But, it doesn't happen very often so don't set your kid up for disappointment. If they give their best effort, they should feel successful because they are. Even though their great heart, desire, and attitude probably won't get them to college for free, those things will help them become happy, successful adults. This makes acquiring these attributes a worthwhile pursuit.
3. **Be a supportive, positive fan.** When you yell at your child, another player, or a coach it is embarrassing for everybody, especially your kid. It should be for you, too. Why not use that energy to encourage your team? Even yelling at officials is a futile use of your time. They have a very difficult job and they are not going to change their calls, anyway. Try officiating some time. It'd be educational for you. It's not fun. Somebody won't like you and will be mean to you, trust me. Why be that person when you're on the other side of the fence?
4. **Let your kid learn to work out problems for him or herself.** This is one of the most valuable lessons that can be learned from athletics. You do not help your child by complaining to the coach. Encourage them to talk to the coach if they are unhappy. Even if they don't agree and the player feels they are being treated unfairly, let them work out solutions for themselves. It is great preparation for the real world. Some day they may have a boss that they see as unreasonable and they will have to figure out what to do then, unless you plan on going to work with them to yell at their boss.

5. **Let your child take responsibility for their actions.** Setbacks and disappointment are a very real part of life. How we respond to and work to overcome obstacles goes a long way to determining how successful and happy we will be in life. Athletics is a great place for your child to learn this, if you will let them. Parents often let their kids off the hook by blaming coaches or “politics” for when their child does not measure up to parental expectations. Another common theme is to attack the abilities or efforts of other players. When you put these ideas in your kid’s head, you help to tear their team apart from the inside. Worse, you slow your child’s development by teaching them to be excuse-makers and blamers. Rather than accepting the challenges before them, they quit, thinking that it is not their fault and is beyond their control.
6. **Help your athlete learn to play a role.** There are different goals at each level of interscholastic athletics. At the younger ages, the focus is on skill development. As the student-athletes get older, the focus changes to being competitive. This is a hard time for a lot of parents, as only a few kids get to play a lot. Coaches at the varsity level are trying to win. They decide playing time based on who they best think can help the team do this. There are several factors involved including team chemistry, attitude, leadership, knowledge, effort, and competitiveness. Make no mistake about it, though. Ability is a huge factor in this decision-making process. If some player is playing in front of your kid, it is because they are more skilled at the sport and the team has a better chance to win with them playing that position, plain and simple. This does not have to be a negative thing. We all have strengths and your child should be proud of and develop theirs. Sometimes we do all we can do and other people are still better in a certain area. Yet we can all contribute to the group or team, even when we are not the best player. This is a valuable lesson.
7. **Have high expectations for your athlete’s behavior.** Playing sports is a very emotional experience. Very few other places will one experience such highs and lows. It is a great venue to learn how to conduct oneself under extreme circumstances. You can learn to win and lose with both class and dignity. If you did everything you could to be successful, then the scoreboard should not matter. Do not demand that your child catches or hits the ball better. You would be better off demanding that they demonstrate good sportsmanship, be a good teammate, show respect for authority figures, work to be the best that they can be, have a positive attitude, deal with adversity, and meet challenges head on. These are skills that will help them to be good parents, workers, and members of society. They may not be able to dunk a basketball, but they will be happy.

Athletics provide a great opportunity for your child to learn lessons about life that they may not learn in the classroom. Don’t get in the way of their learning. Join the team of people who are helping them to get the most out of the experience.