

Director of Coaching

SUCCESS versus EXCELLENCE AND PLAYER DEVELOPMENT of 9 - 13 Year Olds

At Wisconsin Youth Soccer's recently state-hosted "C" license, psychologist Dr. Ceva Katz emphasized the difference between modern methods of coaching and old school 'autocratic' coaching.



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Dr. Katz cited famed soccer psychologist Bill Beswick in stating that understanding the difference between success and excellence is crucial in these modern methods. Bobby Howe (former USSF Director of Coaching Education) and Joe Paterno also subscribe to the idea that "success and excellence are not the same thing." Success is often perishable and outside of our control whereas real excellence is long lasting and within a person's control. Moreover, modern coaches understand that developing excellence in soccer players is a marathon not a sprint. What approach is winning the success versus excellence battle in your club or team?

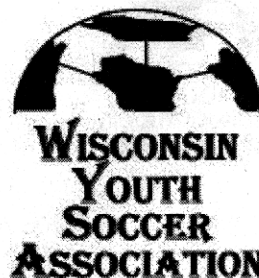
SUCCESS

1. Team Development
2. Emphasis is on winning now!
3. "Safety first" and playing to eliminating risks.
4. Youngsters play exclusively on one team.
5. Competition = Winning tournaments or leagues.
6. Award trophies & medals.
7. Teams are entered into easy tournaments to win.
8. Young players play in fixed positions.
9. Practice is a 'drill fest' or a functional tactics clinic.
10. Youth soccer clubs are parent driven. As a soccer parent, I know that parents represent the best and worst of youth soccer. Parents devote untold hours and financial resources to their children's soccer activities. However, many parents have not played so they judge progress in soccer along these lines... winning = success = development or they just don't care about development, because they are living vicariously through their child!!!

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EXCELLENCE

1. Player Development
2. Focus on creating a learning environment, "play" and teaching youngsters how to compete.
3. Being allowed to learn from mistakes, being creative and learning the technical tools needed to excel.
4. Opportunities are created where the best players are given the chance to play up or play together in an appropriate environment.
5. Competition means competing against teams and players of a high caliber in a risk friendly environment.
6. We instill the internal motivation to excel into young players.
7. Teams are entered into older age group tournaments to provide a learning experience and results are less important than performance.
8. Young players rotate to experience the technical demands of all positions.
9. At practice, all players spend considerable time with their own ball, perfect their technical skills and participate in realistic soccer games that promote thinking.
10. The needs of younger players are at the center of how youth soccer for 9 - 13 year olds is organized, so that the development of excellent soccer players can occur.



The list above is not exhaustive, but hopefully it gets the message across. If we have a success mentality and prioritize winning then we are asking younger players to win at soccer before they have learned to play and excel at the game. Winning can wait...until youngsters have got the tools to be excellent players. **Let's turn our back on coaching for success and make a commitment to teaching excellence.**

For more information, please contact Chris Brown at cbrown@wiyouthsoccer.com.