

Why it is important

During a typical soccer season, there is a lot of essential information that flows between the club, coaches, parents, teams and our local and state associations. Making sure that everyone is up to date and informed helps assure everyone gets the most enjoyment out of the season and minimizes potential frustration. In addition, since the club relies heavily on fundraiser participation, sponsorships and overall volunteer participation to keep registration fees low and affordable and to maintain the soccer complex at a quality and safe level, the team manager is valuable communication/feedback channel between the team and the club. Coaching a team, planning for and running practice sessions and managing games is a big job already and coaches appreciate a good team manager to assist them.

What the team manager does

The team manager plays a vital role in helping the coach organize and manage team rosters and schedules, and maintaining an effective communication channel between coaches, parents and the club. Not all coaches are the same! Some may handle certain own their own, but most will appreciate help with administration so they can concentrate on coaching. Some things themselves, other may appreciate offloading all of it so they can concentrate on coaching. Communicate with your coach and see what he/she needs help with and fill in the gaps. Below is a list of key functions a typical team manager may handle.

Key functions a team manager

- Maintaining an active player and parent/guardian roster.
- Assist the coach in organizing preseason and postseason parent meetings, team parties, etc.
- Keeping parents informed of practice and game schedules, changes, field locations, etc.
- Help communicate between parents, coaches and the club about:
 - Sponsorship and fundraising activities
 - Volunteer needs and field work days
 - Organizing team pictures, spirit wear, uniforms, snack schedule, etc.
 - Keep a list of club contacts handy for uniforms, fundraising, sponsorships, etc.
- If you are an older team or an Academy or Select team you may also help secure hotels for out of town tournaments or playoffs. Also helping the coach collect and manage entry fees is very helpful.
- Provide parental feedback to the club for areas of improvement.

More Team Manager details if you need it.

The following paragraphs offer additional suggestions on how to handle common team manager tasks. There is no right or wrong way so feel free to use your own creativity to get things done for your team and coach. Just don't try to do everything yourself, and remember, WE ARE ALL HERE SO OUR KIDS CAN HAVE FUN!

For those of you who are new team managers, you will find that once you get through reading this, the rest of the season will be smooth sailing. Remember that there are lots of parents willing to help but may not know how; so don't be afraid to ask them. Club Board Members are here to support you in your efforts too. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact them.

Typical Team Manager Calendar

1st week of practice	Parent meeting, gather updated list of contact information including cell phones, email address, etc. Also check to see if players have other non-soccer activities that may interfere with practices. Help the coach find an optimal day for practice. If fundraising or field work days have been scheduled by the club, distribute these ASAP so parents have time to plan.
2 nd week of practice	If your team is ordering team shirts work with the spirit wear coordinator to get the team order in by the deadline.
3 rd week of practice	Update the team and the club on fundraiser's, spirit wear and uniforms. Games will begin early in September or April depending on the season.
Opening Day	Your organization and planning are paying off, enjoy this day!
Mid-season	Update the team and club on fundraising activities
End of Season	Team party

Communication

It is very important for the coaches and you to have good communication. Some coaches want things done a certain way, others give you free reign. You are their most important asset to the team, and coach. Generally, a coach will have the team parent do most of the communication. You can split the list with another parent to make it easier. Supplying the parents with a team letter that includes important dates, game times, snack schedules, parties, team news, etc. is less time spent on the phone. Communication between the club and your team is also very important and done via e-mail.

Team Roster / Snack Schedule

Creating a team roster is a must when it comes to keeping your parents informed. It should include the player's name, parents' names, phone number, email addresses, game dates and times and snack dates, if applicable. You will also want to list the coach's phone number and your phone number separately. If you are assigning a snack schedule, be sure to assign a day for each parent. A helpful hint is send a reminder text or email to whoever is due to bring snacks the upcoming Saturday because the kids look so forward to those snacks. Water, juice, sport drinks, and fruit are the norm for the half-time break. Sugary drinks should be discouraged. It is a good idea to find out if any children on the team have any allergies to certain foods such as peanut butter. Remember safety first. Snacks after the game are provided at your discretion. Remember these kids just played very hard and giving them sugary snacks will not allow for the best recovery of their bodies. Please also remember that there are many parents who do not want their children to have sugary snacks at all. Trash bags, paper towels, and ice are also a good idea.

Pictures

Picture Day takes more than 1 weekend, when the schedule comes out and you do not see your team on there, please wait for the next schedule to come out before contacting anybody. It is your team's responsibility be

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ready and on time for pictures. The team should be lined up by the picture tent in the middle of the field and be ready 15 minutes prior to their scheduled picture time for things to run smoothly. The reason for telling your team 15 minutes before is due to the photographer might be running ahead of schedule, a player might be running late, and the amount of time to find parking. Every player should have a pre-paid form filled out before arriving to picture day so your team is holding the next team up. The **MOST IMPORTANT** reason for having the form filled out prior to picture day is that having to fill the form out there will put other teams behind and there is NO CHANGE \$\$ available picture day. If the player does forget the form there will be some available picture day. The pictures take a couple of days to come in and you will be notified when your team bag is ready for you to pass out to your team. Suggested time to give forms out will be at practice the week of your picture weekend, if any questions or scheduling conflict or needing more additional forms or form emailed to you please contact the photographer: Kreative Kamera Photography, contact@kreativekamera.com or 409.724.0605.

Field Duties

During the preseason and periodically during the season, the club will schedule field work days to mow, weed-eating, marking field, repair turf patches and perform light maintenance around the complex. If each team can supply even 1-2 parents to come out and spend 4-5 hours working at the complex, the club can easily maintain the complex to a high standard we can all be proud of. The club field maintenance coordinator will schedule the work days and communicate the dates and work activities to the team managers at least 1-2 weeks in advance.

Each team is responsible for keeping their sidelines picked up of trash after EVERY game. If your team leaves trash on the sideline or bench area it reflects poorly on your team and eventually some other volunteer will have to clean up after you.

Team Parties

Most kids really enjoy the social time with team mates away from the field. Having a preseason party is a great way to initiate the team building process. Likewise, an end of season party helps kids bond and say goodbyes before the offseason begins. Many restaurants offer deals for team parties. Survey the players and parents and see what kinds of party they want to have and where. Make sure it is a safe venue and is affordable to everyone.

Coach Awards, Etc.

Make sure your team recognizes the time and effort your coaches have contributed to the team. If you provide a gift or gift card to the coach, it is best to keep the individual contributions under \$5-10 so that it is affordable to all families. Coaches will appreciate a thank you from parents and players more so than the value of the award, so don't feel obligated to go overboard.

A FEW MORE HELPFUL HINTS!

An effective way to get all of your parents involved is to have them volunteer for some of the smaller, less complicated jobs that take less time when broken down separately. Involve as many parents as possible. It makes your job easier and encourages volunteers for next season. Don't let yourself get discouraged. You are doing this for your child as well as the rest of the team.