

Unleash Your Team's Potential: Coaching High School Soccer Preseason And Tryouts

As summer comes to a close, high school soccer coaches across the country are gearing up for preseason and tryouts. These essential periods set the tone for the upcoming season, providing an opportunity to evaluate new talent, build team chemistry, and lay the foundation for success. In this article, we will delve into the strategies and tips that will help you make the most of your high school soccer preseason and tryouts.

1. Planning Preseason

The preseason is a critical phase where the coach sets the stage for the entire season. It serves as a period of adjustment, promoting fitness, improving skills, and forming strong bonds within the team. Here are a few key factors to consider when planning your preseason:

Set Clear Goals:

Before stepping onto the field for preseason, it is important to establish clear goals and objectives for the team. These should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). This ensures that everyone is working towards a common purpose, whether it is improving passing accuracy, developing a strong defense, or securing a certain number of wins. Communicate these goals with your players and build a collective vision for the team.

Coaching High School Soccer: Preseason and Tryouts

by Justo May Correa(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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Create a Training Plan:

Design a comprehensive training plan that covers all aspects of the game, including fitness, technical skills, tactical strategies, and psychological preparation. Incorporate a variety of drills and exercises to keep practices engaging and challenging. Consider incorporating match-simulated scenarios to help players translate their skills into real game situations. As a coach, it is crucial to strike a balance between pushing players to their limits and ensuring they have time to recover.

Conditioning and Endurance:

In high school soccer, players need to be physically fit and have good endurance to sustain their performance throughout the entire match. Incorporate conditioning exercises and endurance drills into your preseason training. Work on aerobic fitness, speed, agility, and strength to help players perform at their best. Remember to gradually increase the intensity and duration of these exercises to avoid injuries and burnout.

Building Chemistry:

Encourage team-building activities during the preseason to foster camaraderie and solidarity among players. Help them get to know each other on a personal level and understand their strengths and weaknesses. This will create a stronger bond among the team members and improve communication on the field. Consider organizing friendly matches against other schools to create a competitive environment and allow players to practice their skills in a real game scenario.

2. Conducting Tryouts

Tryouts are an exciting and nerve-wracking time for both coaches and potential players. It is essential to have a structured tryout process that allows you to assess players fairly and accurately. Here are some important aspects to consider:

Clear Evaluation Criteria:

Establish clear evaluation criteria and communicate them to the players before tryouts begin. Outline the specific skills and attributes you are looking for, such as technical ability, tactical awareness, physical fitness, communication, and teamwork. This ensures that players understand what they will be assessed on and can give their best performance.

Warm-Up and Skill Showcasing:

Start tryouts with a warm-up session to get players physically and mentally prepared. This is also an opportunity for you to observe their warm-up routines, attitude, and commitment. Then, move on to skill showcasing drills and small-sided games that test players' technical abilities, decision-making, and teamwork. Create a competitive environment that challenges players to showcase their skills while also working together as a team.

Focus on Attitude and Coachability:

While talent and skill are important, attitude and coachability are equally crucial when selecting players for the team. Look for players who demonstrate a positive attitude, willingness to learn, and the ability to follow instructions. A player with great potential but a stubborn attitude can disrupt team dynamics and hinder collective success.

Individual and Team Assessments:

Conduct both individual and team assessments during tryouts. Assess individual players' technical abilities, tactical understanding, and physical attributes. Observe how players interact with each other, make decisions under pressure, and communicate on the field. Pay attention to players who demonstrate leadership qualities, as they can have a significant impact on team dynamics and performance.

Effective Communication:

During tryouts, communicate with players regularly and provide constructive feedback. Encourage players to ask questions and clarify any doubts they may have. This open line of communication demonstrates your commitment to their growth and development as players. Offer guidance and highlight areas for improvement in a positive and supportive manner.

3. Establishing a Winning Culture

Once you have selected your team, the work doesn't stop there. It is vital to establish a winning culture that sets high standards and expectations for the entire season. Here are some ways to foster a winning culture:

Develop a Team Philosophy:

Create a team philosophy that emphasizes values such as hard work, dedication, sportsmanship, and respect. Communicate this philosophy to the players and encourage them to embody these values on and off the field. Make sure everyone understands the importance of teamwork and selflessness to achieve collective success.

Goal Setting:

Continuing from the preseason, set clear and achievable goals with your team. Encourage players to set personal goals that align with the team's objectives. Regularly review and refine these goals as the season progresses. This keeps players focused and motivated, striving for continuous improvement.

Effective Training Sessions:

Maintain a consistent and structured training schedule throughout the season. Design sessions that are challenging, engaging, and geared towards improving weaknesses as well as building on strengths.

Incorporate both technical and tactical aspects into your training sessions to ensure well-rounded development.

Regular Progress Monitoring:

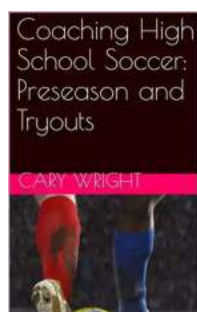
Regularly assess your team's progress and provide feedback to the players individually and as a team. Track their growth and improvement throughout the season, acknowledge their achievements, and address areas that require further development. Celebrate milestones and victories together as a team, reinforcing team spirit and camaraderie.

Maintaining a Positive Environment:

Create a positive and inclusive environment where players feel valued, supported, and motivated. Promote open communication and respect among players, coaches, and parents. Address conflicts or issues promptly and professionally. A positive team culture fosters player development, enhances team morale, and leads to better performance on the field.

By using these strategies, you can maximize your high school soccer preseason and tryouts to shape a cohesive and successful team.

Remember, coaching is about more than just teaching soccer skills; it is about nurturing a love for the game, developing character, and empowering your athletes to reach their full potential. Embrace the preseason and tryout period as an opportunity to mold young minds and create a lasting impact.



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This volume contains a valuable checklist of preseason tasks and a description of activities for the several months leading up to a high school soccer season.



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