

LISC Policy Manual

Updated on 9/24/2007

History:

The Little Illini Soccer Club (LISC) was formed in the spring of 1982.

1. The Club was established to provide youth in Champaign-Urbana and the surrounding areas an opportunity to participate in organized and competitive soccer in order to compete in the Central Illinois Youth Soccer League (CIYSL)
2. To promote soccer as a varsity sport within the schools in Champaign County, and to support and assist the successful recreational soccer programs of Champaign-Urbana Park Districts.

In 1991, LISC was incorporated in the state of Illinois as a not-for-profit corporation.

Mission Statement:

The Little Illini Soccer Club objective is to offer all players the opportunity to reach their full potential in soccer. This is accomplished through a structured training program in a safe, fun and challenging environment that prepares athletes for the demands of high school, ODP and collegiate competition. To further accomplish our mission of player development LISC is committed to identifying, recruiting and promoting the education of the best youth soccer coaches in the Champaign-Urbana area. By providing opportunities for year-round play, it is hoped a life-long passion for the sport on the part of all our members will be nurtured. This club operates on the belief that soccer has a unique ability to foster the positive physical, cognitive and social development of children.

Statement of Values:

The Little Illini Soccer Club is dedicated to promoting the following values through participation in its programs:

1. Friendship and support of others through an emphasis on teamwork.
2. The benefit of competition and goal-setting through a proper understanding of the lessons learned from victory and defeat.
3. The importance of attitude, acceptance, communication, and accountability in achieving personal and team success.
4. The development of character and courage through an honest and disciplined investment in a collective enterprise.
5. The importance of providing an environment where players feel welcome, respected as a team member, and feel comfortable taking risks.

LISC is dedicated to an organizational structure and club atmosphere patterned after traditional soccer clubs from around the world, where each and every member has a genuine and enduring obligation to promote the success of every other member. This model is well suited to teaching and practicing the values described above.

Staff:

The staff of the Little Illini Soccer Club consists of the Director of Coaching, an Assistant to the Director, Coaches & Assistant Coaches for each team, and the Board of Directors.

The staff will do all in their power to make the game of soccer a great experience for those children in the community who are interested in soccer. It is the goal of all those in the coaching staff of Little Illini to create a curriculum that is both challenging and fun for all of the players. Coaches will seek to teach and develop skills that are not only vital to soccer, but will help the young athletes build confidence to succeed in all areas of their lives as they continue to grow and develop within the community. The staff will work with each other, the players, and parents/ guardians to achieve the highest level of success possible.

Commitment to Little Illini Soccer Club:

Little Illini is not a recreational soccer club; it is a club for those who seek the highest level of competition, training, and coaching in the Champaign County area. It is very important that all members of the Little Illini family understand and accept this responsibility, and make the commitment required to make a program of this level a success. In order for the club to be a success the parents, players, and staff at Little Illini all must understand the responsibilities and expectations.

Dedication from staff, players, and parents alike is paramount to this process. Along with the staff at Little Illini, players and parents must work to make sure that all training sessions and games are prioritized correctly. It is essential to the club that all Little Illini activities are given their appropriate respect by all parties. Coming to games and training sessions in a timely manner, with the correct mindset to achieve all of the individual and team goals set forth by the coaching staff and the players is vital to the success of the club as a whole.

While players outside of Champaign County are welcome to participate as team members it needs to be understood that this club is based in Champaign, IL and was developed to serve this and the surrounding communities. Players from outside this geographic area need to be willing to attend training sessions and meetings within the Champaign County boundaries.

Goals:

As Little Illini Soccer Club moves into the future, one of the main goals of the club is to strengthen the girl's side of the program. It is worth noting that since the inception of the girls program, there has been steady improvement. However, it is believed that there is a vast potential in this community that needs to be nurtured to continue to grow. It is the goal of the coaching staff of LISC to see a commitment to the betterment of the club by strengthening the girl's program. The area is brimming with opportunities and examples of female soccer at the highest levels. We as a club hope to provide the girl's opportunities to observe these high level players and to work with various women's soccer coaching staffs (i.e. camps, training sessions, and clinics).

Through demonstration of responsible sporting behavior and development of exceptional soccer players we also strive to enhance the respectability and identity of the club within our greater community and hope that we might be a source of pride beyond our membership alone.

Little Illini also encourages everyone to get out and watch the high school and college teams in the area. We hope to create an environment that is both fun and beneficial to all of the young players in the Champaign County area, and to make the game of soccer something that is a source of enjoyment for a lifetime.

Teams:

The goal of LISC is to provide at least one team at each of the following age groups: boys and girls U8-U18. Age groups can be combined if necessary. If this occurs all competition will be played at the higher age level. If there are enough players to make two teams for ages U11 and under, it is the hope of LISC to balance both teams. For teams U12 and above where more than one team can be formed there will be a premier and a classic team. The DOC has final determination of the number of teams and placement of players.

LISC Seasons:

LISC plays outdoor soccer in the fall (August to November), winter training from (January-early March) and in the spring (March- July). **Players trying out for LISC are asked to commit to all the seasons of play.**

League Affiliation/scheduling:

Most LISC teams compete in the Central Illinois Youth Soccer Association (CIYSL). Clubs affiliated with this league are from Central Illinois. Most league games are played as double headers on Sundays. Coaches and Parent Representatives are responsible for informing the teams of the schedule and any changes that occur in the schedule. It is up to the coach or the parent representative of each team to go to the scheduling meeting for the CIYSL whenever that is posted to insure that the team is available on the dates posted. The scheduling meeting dates will be made known to the coaches and the parent representatives in advance. Conflict dates can be rescheduled but it is up to the coach or designee to do this. All teams playing at U14 and under will play a league schedule in the fall and the spring. High school age girls play only the fall and high school age boys play only in the spring.

Tryouts:

Tryouts for all teams U14 and younger and high school girl's teams will be held during two weeks in June. Boy's high school tryouts will be held in late fall (October). The club will designate and post dates on the web site prior to tryouts. Players trying out will be given a numbered LISC shirt or a number that must be worn for tryouts. If they aren't given an LISC shirt then they must not wear clothes with any other club logo.

In order to secure a place on the roster all players must participate in at least one scheduled tryout. Players not able to participate due to injury or vacation etc must notify the existing coach or DOC prior to tryouts. The coach must evaluate players that wish to play for LISC after tryouts at a team training session and inform the DOC if they are to be placed on a team based on availability and skill level. If a player is unable to try out due to injury then it will be up to the coach and the Director of Coaching to determine how placement will be handled. Team numbers and previous evaluation history will be considered.

LISC will provide a number of evaluators for each session including the Director of Coaching (DOC). Each age group will have an evaluation form and every player in that age group will be evaluated. **Players wishing to play "up" will still have to tryout for their age specific team per their date of birth. Following tryouts, the coaching staff and DOC will meet to see if playing up will best suit the player(s) and the team(s) involved. All decisions will be made by the coaching staff/DOC and are final.**

Team Selection/Rosters:

Following tryouts teams are selected by a committee of evaluators that includes the coaches and the Director of Coaching (DOC). The DOC and the evaluators will begin meeting within one week of tryouts ending to establish rosters. Letters stating player status plus appropriate forms will be mailed to each player no later than two weeks after all tryouts are over. All participants who attended tryouts will receive a letter indicating an assignment to a roster, designation as a practice player, or denial.

All team placements are determined solely on age and ability and in a manner that facilitates the creation of as many opportunities as possible for teams to be formed. These teams should be established to allow optimal development of all players and promote growth of LISC as a club.

Normally there are 12 players on U9 and below, 14 players on U10 and U11, 18 players on the U12-U16 teams, and up to 22 players on the U17-U19 teams (however only 18 players can travel and play in league games or tournaments). The coach of that team and the Director of Coaching will determine roster sizes. All players must be on a roster sent to IYSA and CIYSL. Any player not listed on a roster is not insured and must contact IYSA to obtain supplemental insurance.

Playing out of Age Group:

All decisions involving player(s) playing out of their age group will be determined by the coaching staff and Director of Coaching. This will depend on individual skill level, roster size of either team, or if playing up will better develop the player.

Registration:

Registration will be held each year in July at a published location for all players who have a fall season. High School boys will register in early November. Site may vary from year to year. A player's position on the roster is not secured nor may he or she play until registration is completed and first dues installment paid. At registration a copy of the player's birth certificate (for new players only), copy of medical insurance card, signed IYSA medical waiver, a 1x1 picture of head, and parent/player signature is required. There will be two opportunities to register a player for ages U8-U14 boys/girls and HS girls. If parents are unable to attend either session then arrangements to register must be made with the LISC secretary. Contact info can be located at www.liscsoccer.com

Uniforms:

All players and coaches will wear uniforms with the Adidas name brand. New uniforms will be purchased every two years.

All players are required to own the uniform, which consists of 2 jerseys (orange and blue), 1 pair of blue shorts, 1 gray LISC practice shirt, 1 pair of blue socks and 1 pair of orange socks. Teams are required to be consistent with the LISC uniform policy and look the same. Numbers on the LISC training shirts are not needed as players numbers might switch from team to team. Cleats and shin guards must also be purchased and worn to all games and training sessions. Uniforms are to be worn to all games. LISC gray practice shirts or light colored shirts are to be worn at all training sessions. This is done so it is easier for the coaching staff to split up teams in training with colored training vests and for LISC to be uniform in each training session.

Staff/Parent Relationship:

Each coach will conduct pre-season meetings to discuss his or her expectations for the season. Attendance to these meetings are of the utmost importance as this is a chance for parents to talk with the coaches and have questions answered. Tournament schedules and training schedules will be discussed here, as well as the coach's philosophy. However, the coach and the Director of Coaching will have the final say in determining each team's tournament schedule.

All staff work under the "24 hour rule". This rule means that any questions or concerns that a parent/guardian has must be addressed after 24 hours have passed from the cause of the problem. This waiting period allows the emotion to fade and helps the parties to approach the problem with a level head. After the 24 hours is up, if there is still a concern, then it is the responsibility of both the parent and the coach to set up a meeting to discuss the situation. Please refer to the section that addresses the process in dealing with parent concerns with the coach/club.

Attendance Policy:

All players, or their parent/guardian, MUST notify a team coach, or coach's designee, of all absences from training and games alike. This can be done to each specific team's guidelines set forth by the coach in a pre-season meeting. If attendance is not consistent then it is well within the coach's rights to reduce playing time, or even suspend a player from participating in a game.

Respect:

In all events associated with Little Illini Soccer Club (training, games, tournaments, or other group activities) there should be a certain sense of respect that goes along with participating in the club. This includes, but is not restricted to, all parents, fans, children, referees, and administrative personnel from both Little Illini and other clubs. Remember at all times that this is a youth soccer club and actions of all people associated with the club reflect on the club.

Please do not conduct or condone any acts that could be seen in anyway to diminish or harm the integrity and perception of Little Illini Soccer Club. At all times when at an event as part of Little Illini, all participants are representatives of the club so please act accordingly. What is done or not done reflects not only on the individual and family but also on the team, the coaches, and the club as a whole.

Tournament Travel:

Participating in tournaments, as a part of Little Illini should be a great chance for the players to bond as a team, as well as to participate against teams they may not encounter within their league schedule. While at tournaments, all players need to be reminded that they are at the tournament first and foremost to play soccer. There should be a certain sense of responsibility in terms of how to spend time outside of the soccer field by the players and their parents/guardians.

It is up to the coach to hold a “players only” meeting for an overnight tournament. All players should attend this meeting, unless the child or the parent can provide a valid reason for their absence. This meeting is a way to talk about various topics & should take place in the early evening,. At the meetings, the players will be informed of game strategy, game times, & the curfew for the night, etc. At the conclusion of the meeting, the players are free to do whatever activities they want to do, but must be back in the rooms they are staying in by the designated curfew. If players are out after curfew they may experience consequences from the coach such as decreased playing time.

Player Conduct:

All players that are a part of Little Illini are expected to act under a certain set of guidelines. Players should treat ALL members of their team with respect, whether they get along at a personal level or not. Likewise every player within Little Illini Soccer Club should treat all fans, referees, coaches, parents, and anyone else in a manner that reflects respect and good sporting behavior. The staff at Little Illini will not tolerate arguing with other players, parents, or referees. Similarly, the staff at Little Illini will set an example of how to deal with all players, parents, and referees and officials of the game.

Parents/Guardian Responsibilities:

All parents/guardians are expected to:

1. Attend games and support the team
2. Attend parent, team, and club meetings
3. Ensure that players arrive on time to practice and games
4. Volunteer when asked, especially with the tournaments held in the Fall and Spring
5. Serve as role model for good sporting behavior, setting an example for the players to follow.
6. Be willing to serve as a parent representative for a team at some point during their players involvement in the club

The staff at Little Illini Soccer Club will not stand for any embarrassments caused by disruptive behavior by any individual associated with LISC. Getting into any confrontations or conflicts (psychological, physical, or verbal) with officials, players, parents from opposing teams, or other parents connected with Little Illini will not be tolerated. The staff at Little Illini prides itself in having a set of parents/guardians that have their child’s best interests at heart, and have a genuine respect and love for the game of soccer.

Cheering and encouraging players is important and can motivate players, however, negative comments directed at the players, coaches or referees are not acceptable.

Please leave all coaching decisions to the trained staff at Little Illini. All coaching decisions are made with the best interest of the team in mind, so please encourage the players, but do not try to make coaching points to the players on the field.

All parents/ guardians are expected to pay their dues within the designated timeframe. Failure to pay your dues can result in your son or daughter being withheld from events until the payments are received.

Process for Parent and Player Concerns:

1. Player voices concern with the coach. If the child feel's uncomfortable doing alone then the child and the parent need to discuss with the coach. The coach has the right to inform the Director of Coaching and the coach's representative about the situation as well so that they are aware of the issues. If it is an issue of playing time then the "24 hour rule" needs to be withheld before taking the first step.
2. The coach, coach's representative, Director of Coaching and the parent and or child have a sit down to discuss things over. It is in this stage that most if not all of the problems are resolved and discussed. If one or more people don't feel comfortable having a discussion with all the parties involved then they need to then voice their concerns with the Director of Coaching before the meeting is held.
3. If the issue is still unresolved then the LISC Board of Directors along with the Director of Coaching will have the final say in the matter. Before the issue is taken to the Board, it will need to stay between the parties that are involved.

Team Training and Meeting Guidelines:

It is LISC policy that all training sessions and team meetings will be held in Champaign County. If the team is traveling together outside of Champaign County (i.e. tournament) then team meetings may be held outside of playing time. If some players can't attend the meeting then the coach will need to inform them of any business conducted. **Training sessions are non-negotiable and are to be held in Champaign County.**

LISC Player Responsibilities:

Come prepared for practice at least 2 times per week. Players are expected to respect their teammates and coach. All players will refrain from negative, unsafe or disruptive behavior, during and after practice, games and tournaments. **Failure to abide by these rules may result in suspension or dismissal from the team without reimbursement of fees.** A proper course of action will be administered by the coach, coach's representative, and the Director of Coaching to make sure all the steps are followed. Players or parents must notify coach as soon as possible if player will not be at a practice, a game or a tournament. **Generally 2 hours before a practice and 2 weeks before games/tournaments is expected. This allows for coaches to plan training sessions and find guest players for games/tournaments.** Players must arrive on time to practice. Arriving late to practice or a game is very disruptive to teammates and interrupts the flow of activity. If this is a reoccurring problem then the coach can discipline players by reducing playing time, increasing intensity in practice etc.

Playing Time:

LISC is a competitive club that offers structured training in a safe fun and challenging environment. The amount of playing time afforded to each player may be affected by roster size, attendance and participation in training sessions, behavior, attitude, and the competitive level of play. Coaches are encouraged to give playing time to every player as each game situation allows. It is unrealistic to believe that every child is going to play every minute of every game but every child will be given a chance to showcase their skills.

LISC believes that playing time should be more equally divided during league games for developmental purposes, however, tournaments are played to win. It is important that each player be given some time to play in all tournaments but individual factors such as level of play, importance of game to advance to the

next round, or if a team is winning or losing by a substantial amount will be considered by the coach when deciding on playing time.

State cup games are played at the highest level. When teams are competing at this level the coach will field a team that will give them the best chance to win. State cup games and showcase tournaments also allow players to demonstrate their skills for prospective college coaches. When teams are participating at this level, these factors and possibly others will be taken into account when determining playing time.

Adding/Dropping or Transfer of Players from the Roster:

Individual players may be added to the rosters prior to or during the season if roster space is available. "Classic" or "practice" players who improve may be promoted to whichever team the coach and Director of Coaching feels is appropriate.

LISC does not permit coaches to dismiss players during the season simply to open space for a player identified as more talented. However, a player may be dismissed from a team for inappropriate behavior; i.e., lack of attendance, repeated lateness to practice, habitual failure to notify the coach if not able to attend a game/ tournament. If the coach feels behavior or attendance is a problem a conference will be held with the coach, coach's representative, parent, parent representative, player, and Director of Coaching before dismissal.

The DOC and the Secretary will have copies of the most updated rosters which will be kept in the LISC office. **All changes and player information must be obtained by the coach and sent to the DOC within 2 weeks. The DOC will update rosters and notify the secretary and the treasurer so invoice for payment (if applicable) can be sent.**

Term of Roster:

The club season lasts from August 1st until July 31st. During that time frame, any player in good standing (i.e.-dues paid, attending training sessions, etc.) is encouraged to participate in any team function, especially tournaments. After August 1st, the new team will be established and a new roster will be submitted.

Injuries During the Season:

If a player is injured during the season they will be pro-rated the amount deemed fair by the LISC Board of Directors on a case-by-case basis. This process will need to be brought to the team's coach, then the Director of Coaching and then to the LISC Board for a decision. All requests will need to be in writing.

Financial Assistance:

A fundamental precept of LISC is that no player should be denied an opportunity to play traveling soccer on the basis of an inability to pay. To achieve that goal, we have instituted the following financial assistance policies/programs.

1. Levels:

Full Scholarships include dues, uniforms and tournament fees.

Dues Scholarships include dues for the season requested.

Partial Dues Scholarships include a portion of dues for the season requested, pro-rated to whatever it is deemed the family is unable to pay.

2. Scholarship Committee

This committee will be comprised of the following 3 Club Members

The Finance Committee is responsible for appointing the following three Club Members to sit on the Scholarship Committee:

Chair – Board Member who serves on the Finance Committee

Member – Board Member who does not serve on the Finance Committee

Member – Parent from the Membership at Large

3. Application Process

The attached application will be filled out by the family requesting the scholarship, accompanied by appropriate documentation. Extenuating or extraordinary circumstances will be considered at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee. Players may apply for scholarships on a season by season basis, or for the entire year. (Fall/Winter/Spring)

All Scholarship information is confidential.

Practices:

Practices during the spring and fall seasons are held outdoors. Times are established by the DOC and communicated to the coaching staff. All teams will have 2-3 times available for practice. A player must attend at least half of the practices each week. Most practices are held at Dodd's fields. These fields are owned by the Champaign Park District. When dropping off players to attend practice parents may pull into the parking area northwest of the fields.

Practice consists of warm ups, stretching technical development, small sided games, and scrimmages. Practice times, time with trainers, and field space are determined by the DOC. Teams who are receiving less than 2 training sessions a week of need more sessions than is scheduled need to address this with the DOC.

Coaches must notify their team when practice or games are cancelled. Email is the most efficient way to do this but must be sent by 3 pm or 2 hours before the scheduled event. If changes occur after this time a telephone tree needs to be implemented.

Fundraising:

Each team will be allowed to participate in fundraisers as desired. Each team is required to assist with the Fall and Spring cup tournaments. All fundraising plans must be submitted in writing to the parent representative to be taken to the Board for review and approval. LISC merchandise (any item with the LISC logo) may only be sold to benefit the entire club. Teams wanting to sell LISC merchandise as a fundraiser will be allowed a percentage for their team. The club treasurer will maintain the club's and team accounts. LISC is a not-for-profit organization and must follow specific guidelines to maintain this status.

Coaches Responsibilities:

The coach's objective is to assist each player to develop to their optimal ability and to promote a positive team environment where self esteem is enhanced. To accomplish this, the coach will:

1. * Maintain current rosters and keep LISC office informed of any changes
2. * Be certain any new players added to the roster are properly registered
3. Treat all players equitably and with respect.
4. Stay current with team schedule and communicate this to parents/guardians.
5. Reschedule games when conflicts arise.
6. Arrive at practice on time and prepared wearing proper coaching attire
7. Check fields for hazards before each practice.
8. Provide basic first aid at games and practices.
9. Avoid conflict with parents and other coaches (see parent/guardian conduct)
10. Make certain all players have been picked up or left the practice area.
11. Hold a preseason meeting that clearly outlines expectations of players and parents.
12. Check player for proper attire at all times. **Players are expected to wear shin guards!**
13. Provide safe practice activities and conditioning appropriate to age, i.e. warm-ups, stretching, technical development, small sided games, and scrimmages.
14. Be inclusive of all players in drills, warm ups, scrimmages etc.

* These tasks may be delegated to parent representative or other team volunteer.

All LISC head coaches must obtain certification or must be scheduled for a coaching course by the IL Youth Soccer Association (IYSA), the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), or National Soccer Coaches Association (NSCAA) before the start of their second season with LISC. Coaching education is provided for in the annual budget and needs to be requested from the DOC. Education is encouraged for the coaching staff.

Stipends are paid to all coaching staff; assistant coaches make 50% of the stipend for a head coach. Coaches are paid in two installments each season.

Parent Representative:

The Parent Representative is the main communication coordinator between the coach and the team and plays a vital role in the club. The Board Parent Rep forwards information from the LISC Board and staff to the parents via the Team Parent Rep. to distribute to each individual team.

Team Parent Representatives will report to the LISC Board through an elected representative, which is the Board Parent Rep. The LISC Board, will provide By-laws and policies/procedures for the function of the club. Team parent reps. should have a copy of these documents for reference when situations involving player, coaches, and parents occur. When issues occur, the team parent rep. will follow the process for player/parent concerns, which is mentioned in the Policy Manual.

The Board Parent Rep will schedule two meetings per season to discuss club activities and needs. These meetings are vital to the club and should be attended by all team parent reps.

The parent rep will work along side the coach to ensure communication of all games, practices and player availability. Please refer to the Policy Manual for proper communication time line for the parents and players to address the coach for absence of practices and/or games.

Suggestions for team organization administered by the team parent rep:

Team Contact List - Keep an updated phone list to include player/parents names, uniform number, address, phone numbers - home, cell, work, and email address. Each team should have a phone tree assigned in case the parent rep./coach is unavailable.

Hotel/Travel coordinator - Keep a list of parent's credit card info and hotel preference. Review the websites for the tournaments and book the hotels via the tournament website or find hotels as needed. Send out directions to the hotel and to the fields. Work with the club treasurer to make sure that the coach's expense is covered as well as any other financial concerns.

Tournament Registration Assistant- Work with the coach to register for tournaments in a timely manner to meet the registration deadline. The club will pay for each tournament and will bill the team for the amount that exceeds two tournaments per season.

Social Coordinator - During each tournament the team is to meet on Saturday to discuss the games with the coach if they wish. Work with the coach to plan this meeting and to set up other outings for the team.

Uniforms - Work with the coach and the Board Parent Rep to ensure all orders for uniforms are placed and that correct uniform numbers are assigned. Pick up the uniforms. Label bags with player name and number. Assemble the orders using the uniform order list that can be found at Soccer Country. Hand out the uniforms during practice or arrange for pick up of the uniforms.

Fundraising Coordinator - To defray the costs associated with travel to large tournaments (i.e. USA Cup, Europe tournaments). Plan and coordinate fundraisers with all parents. Must keep the Board Parent Rep. and Director of Coaching informed of all scheduled fundraising opportunities.

Photography - Photograph the players and team during games to share with the team. Forward photos and a brief description of the games and/or tournament to the Director of Coaching. The DOC will distribute the photos and description to the LISC website and/or the Media.

Please refer to the LISC By-Laws to access the roles and functions of our Directors and Officers in the Club. That information can be accessed at www.liscsoccer.com under the Mission, Philosophy, and Policy link.

Weather:

Soccer games are played under most weather conditions. Games are called when safety is an issue. Coaches will make the decision to cancel or shorten practice if necessary. If lightening is experienced players are to leave the field, find shelter and may not return until 30 minutes has passed with out any lightening. Players may not remain on the field or be left unattended during a lightening storm.

Web site:

www.liscsoccer.com

This site is a source of information to anyone interested in LISC. On this site there is a listing of the teams and coaches, minutes from the board meetings, email addresses of the Board members, Fall and Spring Cup information and much more. Some of the teams have even established their own blog for communicating to members