

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL MAPLE PARTICIPANTS:

We would like the reputation and integrity of the MAPLE to be free of the effects of irresponsible conduct of clubs and coaches. The pressure that some clubs and coaches feel to win, even at the expense of fair and ethical behavior, produces actions that set a terrible example for the players and turn MAPLE into a cutthroat environment. When such conduct goes unchecked, pressure mounts on other clubs and coaches to respond in kind in order to compete.

USSF/USYSA rules articulate a *\_player's bill of rights\_*, which should by now be generally well understood. The player has the right to change teams if he or she wishes, and the right, once selected, not to be dropped by a team for other than very extreme circumstances. *There is no corresponding coach's bill of rights.* Our By-Laws contain certain rules with which you must all be familiar. We draw your attention in particular to the sections on RECRUITING OF PLAYERS and COACHES' & MANAGERS' CONDUCT & RESPONSIBILITY.

In addition, the MAPLE Commission feels that there are more subtle ethical standards that must be observed by its members. The next page sets out MAPLE's brief code of conduct for coaches. On the second page following, in the same spirit, is MYSA's *Coaches Code of Conduct*, to which MAPLE also subscribes. All member clubs and their coaches should know these codes and follow them.

We urge all MAPLE participants to report violations to us. Please do so in writing, and be specific. The Ethics Committee will consider all such reports and punish breaches of the code. We expect your full support in this effort to bring balance to our activities.

Sincerely,

**THE MAPLE COMMISSION**

**ETHICS COMMITTEE:**

Steve Robinson, *Chairman*

Michael Eschelbacher

Ross Weaver

Paul Irwin, *ex officio*

## A COACH'S ETHICS

### Conduct at the Game

Remain within the technical area; keep your comments positive; do not abuse your players verbally.

Do not address the referee or the assistants during the game. If you have a question or criticism, make it privately to the official after the game.

Never comment on the other team.

### Responsibility for Others

If an assistant, manager or parent becomes abusive in any way, and you cannot quiet them, ask them to leave *before* the referee has to. They are all your responsibility from the time you come on to the field until you leave.

Explain to parents that the referee is trained in the laws of the game, and is almost always better positioned than a spectator to see what actually happened. Point out that much of refereeing is judgment and that the referee is neutral, parents are not. Let them know that all referees miss calls in every game; three people watching 22 in constant motion over 2 acres cannot see everything.

### Recruiting

Before inviting a player to try out for or join your team, ask him/her if he/she has signed with *or is committed to* another team; if he/she has or is, **leave him/her alone**. Do not try to exploit technicalities; if the player *believes* he/she is dedicated to the other team for the year, that is sufficient. We are trying to teach fair play, not sharp practice.

Do not approach, *or encourage the approach of*, an individual player on another team for the following year, *or for guest tournament play during the current year*, until the current playing season has ended for that team. Let the player focus on the task at hand, not on where he/she might be headed.

Do not hold any tryouts for your team until all MAPLE and State Cups play is over for the previous year.

### Player Selection

Notify each player who tries out for your team of your decision as to him/her; if you are cutting him/her or not picking him/her up, tell him/her why; if you cannot, you did not give him/her a fair look. Try to make a painful experience as productive and helpful as possible. Notify promptly; the player may lose opportunities to play with other teams.

Give marginal players an early and honest estimate of their chances of making the following season's roster and of playing regularly. Let them have enough information to make intelligent decisions about their own future.

Do not roster a player you do not intend to use regularly, for any reason.