

EDEN PRAIRIE SOCCER CLUB

What Coaches are Looking For

Our aim is to provide ongoing feedback on an individual and team basis both in verbal terms and written assessments. Our written assessments are based on four areas:

- 1) **Technical development.**
- 2) **Tactical development.**
- 3) **Physical development.**
- 4) **Psychological development.**

For years 9-12 greater emphasis will be placed on technical development both in practice and match play with enjoyment being a pre-requisite to all players.

For years 13 - 19 increasing emphasis will be placed on all four aspects related above.

Whilst the **development** of youth players at all levels in our club is important, the **enjoyment** aspect is of paramount importance and I will strive to promote this aspect at all times. These two aspects should go hand in hand.

GUIDELINES IN OUR AREAS OF ASSESSMENT

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

Technical ability refers to how well a player performs the basic soccer skills, including passing, dribbling, running with the ball, shooting, tackling, receiving and turning etc.

Players must have the basic techniques and be able to perform them **under pressure** and **at speed**, for example:

- 1) Accurate passes with proper weight, performed with the inside and outside of either foot and with the instep.
- 2) Quality first touch-take the pace of the ball with any surface of the foot and control the ball into space away from defensive pressure to set up a second touch.
- 3) Ability to shield the ball.
- 4) Accuracy and power of shooting at goal.
- 5) At least one dribbling technique to beat a player 1 v 1.
- 6) Heading and tackling technique.

Other Points to Note

- How many bad habits does a player have (e.g. sloppy, inaccurate passing)?
- Players must be competent with both feet.
- Goalkeepers must be agile/mobile, have good positioning skills, good distribution skills (kicking and throwing)
- How quickly can a player play without loss of control?
- The ability to increase the speed of play is crucial at all levels.
- How composed is the player in possession?
- Does the player **open up** when receiving, or receive the ball in a closed position?
Can the player adapt to a higher level.

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What Coaches are looking For (Continued)

TACTICAL DEVELOPMENT

Tactical ability refers to how well a player recognizes opportunities or dangers and how well he makes decisions based on that recognition e.g. in 1 v 1 or group situations. Tactical training means looking beyond the ball, an awareness of player positions and space.

For Example

1. Does a player generally make good decisions (keep possession) or bad ones (lose possession)
2. Does he / she play with their head up to aid awareness of opponents and team mate's positions to ensure possession is maintained.
3. Communication skill- organizing, helping team - mates.
4. Defensively can the player read the game, know when to mark, when to cover, when to intercept, tackle or jockey.
5. Goalkeepers- have they good concentration, communication, composure and courage, are they able to play a keeper / sweeper role.
6. Does the player know how to take a defender out of position to create space for a team - mate?
7. Know when to drop off to support or when to go forward, open up to receive a pass.
8. Play more than one position.
9. Recognize and implement opportunities for combination play (overlaps, crossovers, 3rd man runs).

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Physical ability can be called athleticism, refers to running speed, reaction - time, strength, stamina etc.

For Example

1. Has the player quick feet.
2. Can the player last in a full game in terms of stamina (a good engine)?
3. Is the player brave?
4. Has the player pace (over the first 2 or 3 yards), is the player quick over distance up to 40 yards.
5. Is the player physical, not afraid of contact.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

All about **ATTITUDE**, a major part of a player's make-up, includes desire, commitment, determination, pride, enthusiasm, confidence and composure in practice and match play.

For Example

1. Does the player set goals and assess their own strengths and weaknesses on a continual basis.
2. Is the player easily intimidated by opponents or able to stand up to mental pressure.
3. Has the player self discipline in terms of prepared to live a football lifestyle e.g. meet the nutritional and rest demands of an athlete (can depend on the level they play at)?
4. How well does the player take constructive criticism?
5. Can the player perform in high pressure situations (has he / she got bottle)
6. Can the player adapt to new situations e.g. play a different position with confidence.

In summary, all these aspects of development will apply at different levels of intensity depending on what age the player is, but all are vitally important to the development of a soccer player.

This presentation is to provide a **rough guide** to what our coaches will be looking for in players and is **not** provided as a hard and fast set of rules.

We as coaches will be honest with ourselves in terms of our coaching and communication ability and will strive to provide the best support we can to our players.

It is very important that parents and players are honest with themselves about the abilities of players, and recognize and make the most of strengths, and work hard to correct weaknesses.

In each case players should ask themselves, what I am good at, what do I need to improve on? We as coaches try to help them to achieve this.