

Sportsmanship Pledge

S. A. G. E.: Set a good example

Why we all need to make **Sportsmanship** *a priority* **NOW**

We need your help to improve the level of sportsmanship at our matches. The conduct of coaches, spectators, and players too often is not consistent with the kind of example we want to set for our children. At times, it is downright embarrassing and in a few instances elsewhere has even turned deadly. How sad is that?

Of course we want to support our team. Cheering and other positive reinforcement is always welcome.

However yelling at referees, players and coaches is not appropriate.

Referees are a consistent target. Please note these reminders:

- 1) The officials have demonstrated the courage to take on a very difficult job. The least we can give them is our respect, the same as what we would hope to receive were we to assume that responsibility.
- 2) Those who have never volunteered to take the referee license course and who are questioning a referee's decisions from 20, 50, and 80 yards away should instead relax and enjoy the match.
- 3) The referee does not change his/her decisions. All the yelling is pointless. In addition, spectators who make offensive remarks can be instructed to leave and players can hurt their team by getting yellow or red cards.
- 4) Every season, dozens of referees decide not to return because they are understandably not interested in taking abuse. The result is that more games are without a league-assigned referee.
- 5) Perhaps most important of all and worthy of repeating, when we insult the referee, we are not setting a good example for our kids. If our children were officiating, we surely would not want them treated that way.

Coaches should remember how to keep this a positive experience for the players. Praise is far more iproductive than shouting.

We need to remind ourselves as we enjoy the matches that they are about FUN much more than they are about winning. In surveys, the players consistently say that the fun they have throughout the game is far more important than the score at that single moment when the final whistle blows.

Winning can't be that critical when what we really want is to lose almost as many as we win. If we don't, we're not playing strong enough competition and that means the players won't rise to the next level as easily.

Good sportsmanship clearly is more important than the outcome of the match. It helps shape the children's attitudes toward the game and the conduct that they will adopt in their adult lives.

Players, parents and coaches, please acknowledge your support and understanding of the *Lacey Soccer Club's Sportsmanship Program*, by signing below. Thank you very much.

Parent/Guardian

_____ date _____

Coach

_____ date _____

_____ date _____

_____ date _____