

Which Model "Fits" Recreational Soccer

If Recreational Soccer is to be "The Players Game"; we need to identify which of the two models fit.

Using the two different models to evaluate what is commonly called "recreational soccer", recreational soccer is designed to follow the "Pleasure and Participation" Model.

- Access is open to all who desire to participate, (The Game for ALL Kids)
- Emphasis is on active participation (half game playing time)
- Success is developing each player to their potential
- Objective is for the players to enjoy the experience
- Players are to learn the game through learning to make decisions (The Game Within Each Child)
- Focus is on the CHILD, team is deemphasized with frequent shuffling (redraws annually or semi-annually)

"Travel soccer" balances between the "Pleasure and Participation" model in the early years and lower levels and moved into the "Power and Performance" model in the older years and elite levels.

Model	Emphasis	Excellence	Body	Decisions	Opponents
Pleasure & Participation	Active participation	Perform to capabilities	Source of enjoyment	Shared	Needed
Power & Performance	Strength, speed, & power	Winning	Machine	Coach-made	Enemies

Use of the "Pleasure and Participation" model is most appropriate for recreational players because the model directly addresses the reasons why players play or quit by maximizing the reasons they play and minimizing the reasons they quit. Success and Excellence in Recreational Soccer is measured in players attracted and players retained. Teams win games, players do not. Recreational Soccer is all about fun, recreation, love of the game – winning is **not** a measure of success.

Why Children Play

- To have fun
- To be with their friends
- To make new friends
- To improve and learn
- To feel good
- To wear the stuff

Why Children Quit

- Criticism and yelling
- No playing time
- Emphasis on winning
- Not fun

US Youth Soccer Player Participation Objectives

- Fun! It is critical that players involved in youth soccer enjoy the game in which they are playing. If the organization is able to instill a passion and enjoyment in the game then half the battle is already won. This also relates very closely to how players perceive their coach(es) and their interaction with them. One of the main reasons players under 12 decide not to continue is that they no longer are enjoying the game, it has become work.
- Development: A necessary element to support fun, without it training and games get stale because there is no improvement.
- Life skills: In our case through the sport of soccer (Mission)

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