

**North Georgia United Soccer Club
Parent and Spectator Sideline Behavior**

Introduction

North Georgia United Soccer club promotes youth soccer with the goal of providing the opportunity and training for the youth within Rome & Floyd county, to learn the game of soccer through the development of individual skill, fitness, teamwork, and fair play. The emphasis of North Georgia United Soccer club is to create a fun and safe environment within which players; parents and coaches may enjoy the game of soccer.

To better achieve that mission, we provide the following policy for sideline behavior for all North Georgia United Soccer club parents and spectators. This policy is not meant to curb enthusiasm for the game, but to channel parental enthusiasm in a way that is supportive for the players and coaches.

The Basics

1. **Be a fan, not a coach.** Encourage without instructing. Please leave all technical instruction to the coach on the sideline. Often a coach has given instruction or is providing instruction to players and they must learn to make their own decisions on the field, no matter what those decisions look like to those watching. Parents shouting instructions to their children may directly contradict the coach, leaving the child confused or distracted.

Examples of acceptable encouragement

“Go United,” “Keep up the good work,” or “Keep working!”

Examples of inappropriate instruction and/or comments

- *Saying “Shoot,” “Boot it,” “Quickly,” “Get wide,” or “Go get the ball;”*
- *Directing negative comments at your own child or any other player; or*
- *Using offensive or foul language.*

2. **Keep your opinions about refereeing to yourself and never under any circumstances interact with a referee.** Referees are human and will make mistakes. It is important to remember the referee is doing his or her best. Our players will take on your attitude and sentiment from the sideline and replicate it towards the referee. Please remain positive and refrain from any negative comments to the referee.
3. **Engage other teams’ parents and representatives only in positive ways.** Always rise above any comment or action from opposition fans. Never stoop down to their level. If you hear something that you find to be highly negative and detrimental to the game at hand find the highest-ranking North Georgia United Soccer club staff member and they will intervene and fix the situation. Never allow yourself to be drawn into a verbal disagreement with opposing parents or coaches.

4. **Stay on the sidelines.** Never encroach onto the field of play during practices or matches, unless you are a selected EMT specialist and there is an incident on the field that requires your immediate assistance (i.e player injury) and you have been invited on by the coach and referee.

Note: During training sessions, parents should not be involved in any way. Therefore, they should remain at the perimeter of the fields – including after practice - unless asked on to the field by their child’s coach or another club official.

Consequences of Violations

North Georgia United Soccer club parents and guardians are required to adhere to this Policy. Violations of the Policy will be brought before the North Georgia United Soccer club Executive Director and Board of Directors for review and possible sanction.

In the event that a parent or guardian violates the Policy at a game or training session, the Coach, Team Manager, or other club official may:

- Direct the offending parent to leave the field; and
- Refer the matter to the North Georgia United Soccer club Executive Director and Board of Directors for review and possible further sanction. All referred matters will be investigated and a determination shall be made as to what, if any, sanctions shall apply. Sanctions may include, but are not necessarily limited to a warning, suspension, probation, and/or dismissal from the Club. In all cases, the decisions of the North Georgia United Soccer club Board are final. If suspension or probation is implemented, those sanctioned will not be considered members of the club during the period of suspension or probation.

ALWAYS, Be positive and supportive. Support your child by giving encouragement and showing interest in his or her team. Help your child work toward skill improvement and good sportsmanship in every game.

ALWAYS, set a good example. Children learn more by example than by criticism. Work to be a positive role model, and reinforce positive behavior in others. Applaud good plays by others on your child's team as well as good plays by the opposing team. Do not criticize any child’s performance from the sidelines. Accept the outcome of each game. Teach your child to be gracious in victory and to turn defeat into victory by learning and working toward improvement.

Parents play a special role in the development of their daughters and sons and of their teammates. Your encouragement and good example will do more to ensure good sportsmanship and self-discipline than any other influence.