



## A Word on "Transparency"

OFC parents and coaches: This memo is sent out annually for the benefit of all members. We want to briefly discuss the notion of "transparency".

Club soccer is notorious for petty politics. Folks often refer to this stereotype as though soccer were unique in this practice. It isn't of course. Club soccer has no more "politicking" than club baseball, dance, civic organizations, rotary clubs. Wherever recreational and social links exist, there one will find personal discourse (favorable or unfavorable), debate and exchange of opinion. In the realm of club soccer, this reality manifests itself most distinctly in parent/coach relations and to a lesser degree in coach/player relations.

The management of disputes is that part of our job that Alex and I enjoy the least. So we wanted to offer these guidelines for all our benefit:

1) If you have a dispute with a coach, make the decision in your head to either get involved in the issue directly or to distance yourself from the issue completely, remembering that we are only talking about youth soccer after all.

2) If you opt to get involved, wait a day or so after the incident to approach your coach. A 24-hour waiting period allows for more rational, less emotional dialogue. Approaching a coach as you're leaving the field or tournament venue is not good timing.

3) Discuss the issue *directly* with the coach. Follow the age old adage "Don't say behind someone's back what you can't say directly to them." As difficult as this confrontation may be, it is the one that will yield the best result. It cuts to the root of the problem, i.e. your disagreement with the coach and his/her action(s). It attempts to resolve the dispute at the source. We would all expect the same courtesy in other areas of life, especially our relationship with fellow employees. None of us likes to hear of a complaint about us from a secondary source. This same preference extends to team meetings. Quite simply: don't have one if the coach isn't invited! This is the height of disrespect and rudeness. Al and I are prepared to end the membership in the club of any parent(s) involved in the organization of such meeting.

Process:

Please do not approach us with your concern, without first having spoken to your coach. Given our strong preference for open communication involving all parties, we will not be available to speak to any parent about any issue if the coach hasn't been approached with the item first. If after approaching the coach the situation is still not resolved to your satisfaction, we will have a 3-way in-person meeting (DOC, coach, parent) to air grievances and seek solutions. Any meeting involving the Director will also include the coach him/herself.

We thank you for taking the time to read this lengthy piece and look forward to working for you and your child(ren) for the foreseeable future.

Respectfully,  
John Keating/Alex Mason