



PARENT/PLAYER HANDBOOK 2019/2020

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Welcome to the CAPS Program!

We are excited to have you join the CAPS Program and we look forward to our partnership with you. This handbook intends to address the standards and requirements of the CAPS program. Outlined below are the expectations for player commitment and parent involvement. We have also included information on practices, tryouts, and an administrative overview.

We have worked hard to build this program to be a fun and rewarding experience for your child and their family. CAPS bring together families with greatly differing levels of soccer sophistication. For those of you who are less informed about the game of soccer, we have devoted a section of this Handbook as a mini-education in the rules of the game and standards of conduct for players and fans.

The sport of soccer is growing dramatically in this country, and every season brings new ideas at all levels. Therefore, our philosophies are also continuing to evolve, and our policies continue to be molded and reshaped in ways that will better serve the needs of each player and the Club. To some extent, and in order to fit unique circumstances, the policies of a particular team may vary somewhat from those set out in this Handbook. Look first and foremost to your head coach for direction.

We sincerely welcome your suggestions, as well as your participation in the workings of CAPS. It takes a tremendous effort to accomplish all that must be done in order to sustain a successful soccer program including the care of the fields, tournament arrangements, uniform/equipment orders, state and local registrations, practice scheduling, and much more. Too often these responsibilities fall on the shoulders of a very few. We are always looking for volunteers and earnestly solicit your participation. If you are willing, we have a volunteer opportunity for you!

Please read carefully the information set out in this Handbook. Your familiarity with what is contained here will help ensure you and your child has a fun and rewarding CAPS experience.

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WHAT IS CAPS?

CAPS was created to ensure that players who desire to move their soccer experience to a premier level have a local home. We sought to address the issue of players being forced to drive 60+ minutes 4-5 times a week to find a premier level soccer option. To sustain success at an elite level is a symbol of excellence in and of itself. It is this characteristic of excellence that we strive for in our program. Our teams strive towards this sustained excellence with each season.

While the success of our teams has increased over the past few seasons, we continue to be focused on long-term player development. Many of our players have advanced their skills through our 3rd day training sessions which include speed and agility, goalkeeping and technical development. We have players currently participating in ODP, Next Gen. USA, and EDP development programs. This commitment to player development will continue to be a hallmark of CAPS as we continue to grow.

In addition, CAPS currently rosters players from many parts of the New Jersey and Pennsylvania surrounding area.

A. Tryouts/ID Clinics:

CAPS tryouts are on a team-by-team basis, either formally or informally, held annually, and are open to all players who meet the age requirements for the team. Each prospect will be given a fair opportunity to make a team. The CAPS organization will announce the specific ID clinic, tryout dates and times as the Director deems necessary. If the Director deems it necessary, additional tryouts may be held during the season, and qualified players who are not committed to any team entered in the EDP Cup competition may be added to the team roster.

Evaluations and selections will be based solely on how players perform in the evaluation areas according to CAPS evaluators. Evaluations take place during the competitive soccer season (games and practices), ID clinics, as well as during tryouts.

During the tryout period please give us the same consideration and inform us whether or not you plan to rejoin CAPS if asked to do so. The Director will determine which players play on which CAPS team, including decisions in rare cases regarding playing up an age group.

B. Player Evaluation and Selection:

Player performance will be evaluated by observing the player in tryouts, training, scrimmages, and/or games. Only the Director, Administration, and licensed trainers will confer in matters of player evaluation and selection.

There are many terminologies used to categorize and describe soccer abilities. Present and potential team members will be evaluated in seven areas:

- Mental Dimensions (character, discipline, and leadership)
- Physical Dimensions (endurance, strength, and speed)
- Technical Competence (skills) pass, dribble, shoot
- Tactical Awareness (reading the game) Decision making, with/without the ball



- Ability to adapt to CAPS environment
- Practice attendance, effort, behavior
- Game performance

If you have any questions about the meaning of these terms, please ask the coaches. The coaches will base their decisions solely on the seven areas of evaluation and they are responsible for making decisions for the good of CAPS and the team. Personal and familial relationships, financial contributions and past roster placement will not enter into these decisions.

CLUB ORGANIZATION:

CAPS teams will compete in the EDP league. The EDP mission is to enable soccer players to reach their full potential on and off the field, with an emphasis on going to college, by providing a full range of the highest quality soccer-related experiences and empowering each player to select the pathway best suited to their goals. CAPS will work closely with EDP to develop a positive, fair, and competitive environment based on cooperation and communication.

EDP follows all mandates set by the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), and recognizes the USSF as the controlling authority for the development of youth soccer in the State of New Jersey. The USSF is, in turn, a member of the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the worldwide administrator of soccer, and the creator of the World Cup. All of our rules and policies are derived from the international FIFA rules with modifications to accommodate our youth players. Youth soccer in our area is governed by the rules of the New Jersey Youth Soccer Association.

The player's ability and desire to move to a level of soccer which makes more demands on athletic abilities and heightens skills will come as early as ten or eleven, the youngest age at which a player can compete for a spot on a CAPS team. These teams travel to compete against other teams from around the area, state, and nation.

Selection to a CAPS team requires a full year commitment. Players are financially responsible for and expected to participate in the fall, winter and spring training, league season and all scheduled tournaments.

TEAM ORGANIZATION:

A. The Head Coach

A licensed head coach will be designated for each CAPS team. That coach will have overall responsibility for the team, and (s)he should be your first contact in all soccer related matters. The coach is responsible for team training, team discipline, training, player substitution, and game tactics. Other CAPS coaches will participate, from time to time, in your team practices and games. CAPS is proud of its coaches, and we have made every effort to provide your child with the best-available teachers of the game. Please give the coach your support and assistance. Each coach at CAPS is held to a very high set of coaching rules of conduct and professional standards.

B. Team Manager

The volunteer team manager is an invaluable member of the team organization. At the CAPS level, the manager handles the administrative aspects of the team, such as uniform orders, team roster info,



tournament plans, and other items to help the coach with all of the time-consuming administrative details. If you are interested in becoming a team manager, or assisting the team manager, please contact your coach or CAPS Director. Although managers serve as communication liaisons on many occasions between the parents and the coach and the parents and the club, managers **do not** have the authority to select players, select coaches, and remove players or coaches. These decisions are addressed with the head coach and the CAPS Administration. All administrative questions should go to the team manager.

C. Other Volunteers

The demands of running a successful soccer program are tremendous. If you desire to serve, we have an opportunity for you! You can help in assisting with transportation, securing hotel reservations, organizing game refreshments, volunteering as a chaperone during tournament trips, lining fields, or scholarship donor.

PLAYER EXPECTATIONS:

A. Practice Schedule:

Without regular and proper practice, soccer skills and tactics cannot be mastered. We demand from our CAPS coaches a tremendous time commitment, and we expect the CAPS players to be willing to make the same commitment. We know that many of our players have other interests and demands on their time, however we believe it is very important that you make every effort to attend each practice session. It is important to come to practice regularly. Missing practice makes it difficult to develop and improve.

CAPS teams generally will practice two to three times each week during the year. Players are expected to wear CAPS practice attire and to bring their bag, water, shin guards, and ball to each practice. It is essential to stay current in your CAPS fees to ensure your child's right to train at CAPS. Coaches will not train players with fee delinquencies where the CAPS Board has not granted approval. If you have a problem attending a practice, send your coach an email, in advance.

Proper practice means you:

1. Pay attention to the coaches;
2. Make an effort to improve your skills;
3. Practice at game speed (learning to do a skill in slow motion will not help in a game); and
4. Do not distract others (e.g., acting silly while attempting a drill is distracting to others).

B. Tournaments:

Tournament play is an integral part of competitive soccer. Tournaments give you the opportunity to play several games in a short period of time. The opportunity for frequent repetitions of skills and tactics is often the key to improvement for players and teams. In addition, it gives your child the opportunity to travel, and meet soccer players in other cities and states. It also gives the CAPS coaching staff an opportunity to be exposed to other programs and to measure the progress of CAPS's teaching efforts.

Your team's tournament schedule must be pre-approved by the CAPS Director. Because of the importance of tournament play to the development of a team, all CAPS players are expected to participate. This means that all players will share in team tournament expenses. To aid you in planning, you should know that there are several major tournaments, which take place every year and in which



CAPS teams participate. Please plan your child's schedule so as to allow him or her to be available to participate in the tournaments scheduled by your head coach. Parents should look to the head coach for more specific information about tournament possibilities.

In addition to the primary tournaments in mid-August through Labor Day, some CAPS teams also participate in tournaments on Thanksgiving weekend, Memorial Day weekend, as well as EDP Cup Competition and USClub National Cup.

C. Uniform Policy:

When a CAPS player is in their training or game uniform, (s)he is representing CAPS and should wear the uniform properly and with pride. Please read and abide by the following guidelines:

1. Jerseys will always be tucked into shorts whenever you are wearing the uniform.
2. Uniform socks will be pulled up whenever you have them on. Socks must always cover shin guards.
3. Have your equipment bag with you at all practices and games. Place your bags in a proper team location at practice.
4. Take care of your footwear. Keep your cleats clean.
5. Bring your soccer ball to every practice and every game, properly inflated.
6. Leave your rings, watches, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, other jewelry and hairpins (except for rubber bands or other elastic bands) at home or in your equipment bags.
7. Each game jersey must have a number on it.

D. Equipment Bag:

The following items should be kept in your equipment bag at all times:

1. All alternate uniforms
2. CAPS Pinnie
3. Soccer ball
4. Soccer Shoes
5. Shin Guards
6. Extra pair of socks
7. Elastic hairbands, headbands
8. Band aids, tape, epi pens, vaseline, sunscreen, etc. (as needed)
9. Players should also have water at all times

E. Insurance:

All players fall under the club's insurance through NJ Youth Soccer Carding.

F. Guest Playing:

Borrowing players from other teams within the same club for games and tournaments, commonly referred to as "Guest Playing," is commonplace in youth soccer. Unfortunately, this occurs sometimes between two different clubs at the expense of existing players within a club/team who would benefit by the experience, and is also used by some teams as a form of recruiting players from one club to another. Guest playing without the consent of the CAPS Director of Coaching may result in disciplinary action. CAPS not only allows, but encourages its coaches and teams to allow guest playing within its



own club inclusive of GFSC (i.e. a CAPS '06 player guest playing for the CAPS '05 team). Players are “club passed” so technically belong to an age group, not a team, until they are rostered and play a game.

Given the size of our club and the number of players available, CAPS teams are discouraged from utilizing guest players from other clubs, and advises teams to attempt to “play-up” players from younger age groups or on similar age teams within the club after consulting the CAPS Director of Coaching. In addition, CAPS players are strongly discouraged from guest playing for other clubs under most all circumstances. If a player or parent is contacted by another coach to guest play, the player or parent should notify their CAPS coach. The CAPS coach must then notify the CAPS Director of Coaching. Final decisions regarding guest playing requests will be at the discretion of the CAPS Director of Coaching.

G. Playing Time:

Playing time is not guaranteed for any player at CAPS. Players earn their playing time during practices and/or games by showing a good attitude and contributing to the team in a positive way. Playing time will be at the discretion of the team coach.

H. Bad Weather Procedures:

First check the website for information on game or practice cancellations, field closure and other special messages. Also rain days before field usage dates may cause cancellations to protect the fields. Please remember that, although it may be raining in your part of town, it may not be raining at the practice fields. The head coach will call the team manager to report rainouts. When in doubt, please show up for practice. At times, your coach may schedule an indoor practice or soccer video session in lieu of an outdoor practice.

Games are considered on until called off. Even if it is raining, the games will be played unless there is a threat of lightning or the fields have been closed. This applies to even the youngest age groups. Soccer is a game that is played in all weather conditions, and it is necessary that all players and parents learn that this is part of the commitment to the game. It is the responsibility of the home team to advise the visiting team coach of any game cancellations. Again, please contact your coach or team manager if you have doubts. If you have not heard from your coach or team manager, please show up at the game to ensure that your team does not forfeit.

I. Participation in other activities/school soccer:

There have been many studies and articles recently about the specialization of youth sports. Most experts agree that playing multiple sports or participating in other athletic opportunities like swimming, biking, etc. are beneficial to a players overall athletic development. While our players do participate in additional athletic activities, they do make CAPS their priority and attend all games and training sessions.

While CAPS does not run teams in the Fall High School season, we do run our teams simultaneously with Middle School soccer seasons. We have found that the CAPS fall season provides a better opportunity to further the player development of our middle school aged players. We understand that some players want to play for their middle school team, but this is detrimental to a player’s form and



potentially puts them at higher risk of injury. We do not recommend players play middle school soccer in the fall season.

J. Evaluations:

Feedback is an essential part of player development. Each CAPS player will receive a written player evaluation after the Fall Season.

FIELDS: (reference website) <http://www.greatsoccer.org/field-locations/>

A. CAPS Home Games:

- Clover Hill – 6 Clover Hill Road, on the corner of Old York Road, Flemington, NJ
- Hunterdon Central High School – Stewart Field (outdoor turf) – 84 Rt. 31, Flemington, NJ
- Lenape Park - 115 Sergeantsville Rd, Flemington, NJ

B. CAPS Practice Fields:

- Clover Hill – 6 Clover Hill Road, on the corner of Old York Road, Flemington, NJ
- Diamond Nation – (turf) 129 River Road, Flemington, NJ
- NexLevel Arena – (indoor turf) 426 Case Boulevard, Flemington, NJ
- Hunterdon Central High School – Stewart Field (outdoor turf) – 84 Rt. 31, Flemington, NJ
- Lenape Park - 115 Sergeantsville Rd, Flemington, NJ

C. CAPS Facility Rules:

We are proud of our facilities. They are maintained through hard work and significant financial investment. We hope that you, too, will take pride in these fields. To help us keep the fields in better condition, we ask that you always observe, and remind others to observe, a few special rules.

- Whatever you bring to the field, take it home with you at the end of the day. Do not leave trash on the facility ground.
- Please be especially careful and drive slowly when entering and leaving the facility.
- Take special precautions when the ground is wet.
- Soccer nets and goals are expensive –treat them with respect. Do NOT hang from any crossbars.
- Our fields are to be used only for Club sponsored activities and only by Club members.



PARENT EXPECTATIONS:

Procedures for Handling Problems

The Director of CAPS is charged with the responsibility for investigating internal complaints and disciplinary problems. Please look first to your coach for the handling of any problems, which you encounter. If, after consulting with the coach, you still feel that additional attention to the problem is needed, then you may refer the matter to the Director of CAPS. For the CAPS Board to review any problem, it must be submitted in writing.

A. Parental Support:

Parental support and involvement in the Club are essential. If your son/daughter is selected and chooses to commit to CAPS, your commitment is also necessary. Making sure your child arrives to practice 15-minutes early and 45 minutes early for games is a good best practice. If players are to make a quality commitment to the Club and their team, parents must see to it that players attend all possible Club and team functions (practices, meetings, games, etc.). There will be time conflicts that cannot be avoided, and other more important events occur. The Club's responsibility is to present a schedule to allow time for planning. When parents or players have an unavoidable conflict, the Club kindly asks for timely communication to see if the Club or team can make any necessary adjustments. The Director of CAPS will make final decisions on scheduling adjustments after careful consideration of your needs and those of the Club or team.

B. Sideline Coaching:

There will be no coaching by parents!

No matter how good your intentions are, we insist there be **no shouting** instructions to your son/daughter or **yelling** (complaining) to officials during games. Your **vocal support and positive encouragement are welcome** after a good play. "Go" or "Shoot" are interpreted as instructions, and, as such are not desirable. It is required that players not be distracted at practices or during games, and that players are given instructions before, during, and after practices and games, by the CAPS coaches only. No one other than those listed on the official game roster may sit on or near the team bench before and during games. Please respect the space and privacy necessary for the coach and team to carry out their game responsibilities.

Our first concern is for the safety and long term growth and development of your son/daughter as a person along with their soccer abilities. There will be times that coaches make decisions and players are instructed to do things parents will not understand. Club, team, and player development may be given a greater priority than winning. And yet as a competitive club we do place emphasis on competing for state and national championships. Parents must understand this and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a healthy team environment.

Parents, always at the appropriate moment and time, should feel free to communicate and ask questions about your son/daughter. Please take the initiative to teach your son/daughter to speak up and communicate for themselves whenever possible. Your coaches will always express their observations and views of an individual using the areas of evaluation outlined in the team selection process.



CAPS Administration believes in and teaches players the benefit of having the proper “game mentality”. We will instruct your son/daughter to ignore adverse conditions such as referees calls, name calling, foul language, rough play, cheating, poor weather, negative behavior by parents or opponents, etc. We expect our parents to have this game mentality as well.

C. Parent Conduct at Games:

Soccer games are as exciting (and nerve-wracking) for some parents as they are for the players. For many of the spectators, however, soccer is a sport about which they know very little. They want to support the team, cheer for the team, and encourage their child. Occasionally, this enthusiasm combines with a parent’s lack of familiarity with the game, or lack of knowledge of the coach’s instruction to the team, in a way, which causes problems.

We do not wish to curb your enthusiasm for the game. We do wish to make sure that your enthusiasm is channeled in a way which will be helpful and complies with the rules of the game.

In this spirit, please keep these suggestions in mind as you attend CAPS soccer games:

1. DO NOT YELL AT THE REFEREE

It is our goal to build not only good soccer players, but also positive examples of good sportsmanship. Your positive, or negative, example at games will either greatly reinforce, or significantly undermine, that effort. The coach has principal responsibility, although limited latitude, in speaking with the referee. Let them do their job when, and if, they feel it is necessary.

2. KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE RULES OF THE GAME – Sometimes, parental ill will toward the referee is based upon a parent’s ignorance of the rules of the game. Common problems are the understanding and application of the rules governing offside and illegal contact.

3. ENCOURAGE – DO NOT CRITICIZE –

One of our goals is to help your child play good soccer. No less important is our goal to make every effort to ensure that your child has fun. Your child understands the Club’s high expectations and feels the peer pressure to do well. You can best help by confining your talk during the game to positive encouragement.

If possible, be quietly enthusiastic and supportive. We encourage you to cheer supportive cheers such as “nice pass”, or “great job”. Please do NOT yell direction to the player. Leave this to their coach. It only confuses the player and disrupts what the coach is trying to achieve on the field.



TEAM MANAGER EXPECTATIONS:

1. Primary administrative assistant to the Team Coaching Staff.
2. Ensure Team compliance with policies and procedures of the Club as they pertain to day-to-day operations of the team.
3. Ensure that the team roster is current and accurate at all times, per the Club Registrar.
4. Maintain a file of all official documents (e.g. birth certificates, medical releases, etc.), as may be required.
5. Ensure that all team and individual registration deadlines are met.
6. Work with the Team Coaching Staff to schedule practice and scrimmage times and locations.
7. Check team in prior to the beginning of any tournament play and be familiar with the rules and regulations of the tournament in which the team is competing.
8. Communicate to players and their families timely and accurate information about scheduled events such as practices, games, scrimmages, club camps and tournaments. The club uses TeamSnap. The manager will have access to input information on the team's schedule, in case the Team Coaching Staff cannot input the information.
9. Communicate with the coaches or managers of other teams in the League or tournament to confirm game times and locations or changes in either and obtain field directions (if necessary).
10. Assemble player cards for the team.
11. Enter weekly EDP league, and or EDP Cup game scores.
12. Provide game roster sheets and player cards for the referee at all EDP League and EDP Cup games.
13. Act as Head Chaperone when the team is traveling or assure that another responsible adult assumes this duty in the Team Manager's absence.
14. Assign responsibilities of Team Manager to another parent in the event that the Team Manager will be unable to perform his/her duties and notify the Club Representative and the Team Coaching Staff of the assignment.
15. Perform other duties as requested by the Team Coaching Staff, or the Club Board of Directors.
16. Maintain a relationship of mutual respect and coordination. The Team Manager must work directly with the Coaching Staff and the Team Representative regarding team disputes or other problems that may arise.
17. Treat all matters, especially those involving players and parents, in a mature, fair, honest, and confidential manner.
18. Chain of Command for disputes, Team Manager, Team Coach, CAPS Administrator, CAPS Director of Coaching.

