

A Letter from the Director of Fields

Hello Prospector Coaches, Players, and Families!

I would first like to thank you all for the part you play in making sure that our league continues to thrive while also helping us to provide our community with a place for our kids to learn and develop a love for the game of soccer.

Okay, down to business. Over the past week since our opening weekend of games I have received numerous emails from both Coaches and Parents alike with questions and concerns regarding our fields.

First, I have been trying to ensure I respond to everyone in a timely manner so, if I haven't gotten back to you yet don't worry, I haven't forgotten about you. Second, I wanted to take this moment to provide everyone with the same transparency and information that I have provided to the coaches. I know everyone here is working hard and may not be able to disseminate the information I have been passing along. So, I thought that sending a league wide email should help clear the air.

Please take a moment of your time to read the below information thoroughly.

Field Conditions-

First, I want to reemphasize the point that I brought up at the coaches meeting. We are a youth soccer club and not a professional club. We DO NOT own any of the fields we use. Expect the unexpected when you get out to a field whether for practice or game. Now, with that said it is my responsibility to ensure that our kids are playing on not only safe but suitable and maintained grounds. However, although I may request certain issues to be addressed by the folks that maintain our fields promptly, these requests may not always be taken care of.

The folks that maintain our fields, whether it be parks folks or school personnel have an abundance of responsibility outside of just our fields. So, to ask them to cater to just our club would not be in the best interest of our other community partners or the community itself.

So, with that said please understand that although there may be some issues such as overgrown grass, water issues, gopher holes, etc. **We as a club need to be grateful for the facilities that we have.** I can tell you that as a club we have some of the better fields in the area compared to other clubs. Some clubs even down in Folsom are a lot rougher than ours. Some fields in other areas are just dirt and weeds.

Field Dimensions-

As a club, we are required to follow within the guidelines set forth by U.S. Soccer and our District and Comp organizations. The field dimensions provided have both a minimum and maximum. Almost all age groups overlap with one another for field sizes. For example: The maximum width for a U10 field would be equivalent to the minimum width requirement for U12. As a club we have 70 teams to provide fields for come game time and only 7 of the possible 10 fields we use to practice on, are used for games. This is done so in order to ensure we use the best fields we can while also ensuring that we have the space required for these fields. If a field seems either too big or too small, your eyes may not be playing tricks on you. There are fields this year that may in fact be smaller or bigger than years past. However, I can assure you that all of our fields fall within the field layout guidelines.

For example: Rassmussen has been set to accommodate both U10's and U12's. The reason for this is that these two groups alone comprise half if not more than half of the teams in the league. We simply do not have the room to strictly make U10 fields and U12 fields. Since we have dropped to a 7 v 7 format as set by US Soccer, these fields are going to seem bigger than we would like.

The same thing goes for our new school location at CMP. Those fields are indeed small but according to the guidelines, U6 and U8 have the same field dimension requirements.

Will this have an impact on play? Yes, but we are doing our best.

Coaches and families for our U6 and U8 age groups-

As you may have been made aware by now, the club has made a decision to swap the game locations for your age groups. I want to make this clear as I've received multiple emails regarding this topic. This decision **WAS NOT** made due to a field quality or safety issue. The decision was solely made due to field size. Coaches have been made aware that although we had made an attempt to make CMP work for our U8 group, the field sizes we were able to achieve are too small for a good portion of the kids in this group that are getting ready to move up next season.

I also want to make something else very clear. The club is limited to the number of fields we can use within our locality boundaries of play. The club has worked hard in collaboration with the California Montessori Project campus to rehab their field in order to obtain another location for play. We are grateful for our new relationship with another local school and look forward to the future. Those that may feel the field is in rough condition are correct. However, the field is in rough condition as it is still in the growing process. The rehab process that both school and league could achieve within our financial capabilities were to core aerate, seed and level the field with new top soil. A newly revamped field will not be achieved overnight. So, I ask that you please understand that although rough, this location is definitely suitable enough to be played on. Especially for our youngest groups.

Final Notes-

I want to leave you all with this. I highly encourage everyone to please continue to bring field issues to my attention. However, I am also asking that we as a whole understand that if something hasn't been done physically, it does not mean that it hasn't been brought up. Remember the folks that are responsible for the fields may not always see the issues right away or be able to address them right away. Just know that we are doing our best to make this thing run as smoothly as possible while also making it enjoyable. Everyone from the President of the club, down to you as the coaches are all volunteering to make this sport carry on year after year.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask and feel free to contact us.

Respectfully,

Mark A. Herrera
2nd VP Prospector Soccer Club(Director of Fields)