

## HEADLINES

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### ***The National Coed Cup – Memories of a lifetime!***

So I'm heading up I-45 in My Toyota Camry with a car full of men with a van of women following my lead. Kara Nuckels of the Orange Crush is driving it. And you know me. I gotta make a game out of it! ☺ But try as I might to see if I can lose her, Kara whips that van around like a race car, mirroring my every move. I'm thinking, I can't wait to hit the field with this wildcat!! (And wouldn't you know that she is a superb soccer player!)

And then it happens. The van pulls over. So we pull over too. We were puzzled. The van ran out of gas. DOH!! In her hurry, Kara forgot to gas up. It was cool. I mean who hasn't had a goof like that? (I have and more than once.) No worries. The men folk headed up the road to Bucky's, got some gas, returned to our women, gassed up "the bus" and then finished our drive to Dallas. With a couple of other unexpected delays in small towns due to road work, we missed the 3:30 window and hit downtown Dallas in rush hour. Yuck!!

We managed to get to the hotel by 5 and had just enough time to unpack, distribute uniforms, get some food, and head to the field for our opening game. And we decimated our opponents, 5-0. (It was more like 10-0 games as we had tons of very close missed shots. Total booty whippin'.) Our team was comprised mostly of Spartans and Orange Crush players. Our goalie and sweeper were from the Cougars and our striker from the Tornados. And then there was Julie Nanni from Free Spirit. (She's totally awesome!) We even recruited a guy, Ben from the Dallas area to play for us. He knew Cameron Brown from the Orange Crush. We also had Antonio Garcia from the Penguins!

So we won and then headed out to grab dinner. I was nursing a swollen calf. As always I managed yet another noncontact injury, as I reagravated my calf that I had torn earlier in the season. But heh, what can you do? I guess I would have to make due with my management skills. (Yeah, we were all a little worried about that.)

So Saturday morning we get up early for our 10 am game. It was a tough one. We managed to win the game (I think it was 3-0 but since I turned 37 my memory...). And with that win, we had qualified for the semi-finals on Sunday, even without our afternoon game. Now that was cool. Right up until we faced TORSO AFC. They dished us out a dose of humble pie. I think they beat us 5-0, but it may have been worse. We had already lost me and then Pat from Orange Crush who injured her knee. Gabe, our sweeper got hurt during that game. No excuses. AFC is awesome. They lit us up. I did eventually stop crying.

So once again, we go out to dinner. This time we do Italian. It was awesome. Great conversation and dining. We headed back to the hotel, partied with Mach 1 for a spell and ended the evening by the hot tub. I have been sworn by threat of death not to divulge the events of that night, but let's just say we all bonded, eh Jinny? ☺

So we step onto the field Sunday morning. We had lost 2 of our more skilled men (Gabe and Cameron, so I played goalie). We were sore, hung over, and exhausted. And we faced the best coed soccer team I have ever played. And they had a strong wind at their back. We played 45 minutes of defense just to keep the score at 4-0. Their timing, speed, and conditioning was amazing. One of their goals was scored in very poor taste, though, as one of my defenders went down at the top of the box. Everybody froze, and I started to walk towards him. Their player then took advantage of the situation and kicked the ball over my head into the upper 90. Not cool. But what do you expect. They were from DC.

Jay was OK, and at half time, all I could say was the truth as I saw it. We were out-skilled, out conditioned, and out gunned. The odds of us winning the game were less than winning the lottery. So I changed the objective. I said let's start with scoring a goal. If we can do that, we can leave with our heads held high. And 5 minutes in the half, my star Spartans striker, Ray Stopper, (who made the drive up Saturday night as I begged for his help because of the injuries), connected in the upper 90. And then another miracle happened. Mike Prause, the Cougars keeper whom I put on the field while I played keeper with my bum calf, connected for a scissor kick style goal off of a corner kick. It was his first goal in 27 years. And he did it with his son watching. He was smiling ear to ear for the rest of the day. We were all proud and happy for him. It was a moral victory like no other.

We did lose the game 5-2. And we hung around to watch Mach 1 take on the Mall Rats (The team that beat us) for the national championship. The Mall Rats scored the go-ahead goal with 2 minutes before the final whistle to win 2-1. The other goal came off of a very questionable (in my opinion) penalty kick awarded at the end of the first half. Mach 1 played with only 3 women because one had been red carded in the previous game, and 2 others became ill and could not return on Sunday. For the record, the ref called the second half at 40 minutes. I am certain because I had a stopwatch. (Yes I'm that high strung.) It seems only 1 team was committing fouls according to the refs. Guess which one? It turns out that the Mall Rats were the tournament director's team. Figures. But heh, Heather Penning and I had lots of fun haggling them the entire game. Not usually my style but when you violate honor and take a cheap goal off of me, there are consequences! ☺

Jinny Sutherland is a class act and an example of what a captain should be. She totally got my back and supported all of my decisions, even the not-so-good ones (like tequila shots by the hot tub - oops I slipped).

Special thanks to Kim "Sweetness" Barker (Spartans), Cameron "The Super Freak" Brown (Orange Crush), Charlie "The Man" Brown (Orange Crush), Pat "Cougar" Brown (Orange Crush), Jay "Smokey" Feeley (Spartans), Jenny "Flash" Hall (Spartans), Lisa "Talk to the hand" Joston (Spartans), Claudia "Lightning" Joya-Eichberger (Orange Crush), Antonio "Senor Tequila" Garcia (Penguins), Mike "Bullseye" Macakanja (Tornados), Samantha "Sunshine" Morgan (Spartans), Julie "So Fine" Nanni (Free Spirit), Kara "Nascar" Nuckels (Orange Crush), Kevin "Stonewall" Otten (Spartans), Ben "Doc" Salas (Guest), Jinny

"Virginia Breedlove" Sutherland (THE Orange Crush), Michael "Can't touch this" Prause (Cougars), Gabriel "The Fonz" Alvarez (Cougars), and Brian "Coach" Accrocco.

These were the 2009 TORSO Steelers and are the 4<sup>th</sup> best coed soccer team in the US of A!

## "SMART FOULS" - ARE THEY REALLY SO SMART?

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So there we were. Trailing 3-1. And one of my females got a through ball and broke the defense. The keeper came out to confront her, and she juked him with a sweet finesse move. As she stepped to close the goal, he wrapped his arm around her, physically preventing her from advancing. The whistle blew. The keeper was red carded (as he should have been). My female player was rattled. Emotionally she was unable to take the penalty kick. So I had another one of my females take it. She kicked it directly to the goalie.

In a heated conversation with the back-up keeper after the game, he didn't understand my anger and disgust at what had happened. "It was a smart foul," he claimed. From his perspective, she didn't score and they went on to win the game. Yes their player got a red card, but the win was preserved. And after all, isn't that the most important thing?

No, it most certainly is not.

First of all, from the perspective of winning, the foul did serve its purpose in preserving a win. I acknowledge that. Professionally, a player that allows an easy goal may risk losing his million dollar job, and so one might understand why such a foul would be tolerated at that level. But in a coed over 30 recreation soccer league - not acceptable. And one must consider undesired consequences that can ensue from such a "smart foul". Heck, most of us commit unintentional fouls all the time just in trying to make a play on the ball or get position by bumping others. That is part of the game and within the boundaries of acceptable play. But intentional "smart" fouls lead to undesired consequences. Let me share a few.

- 1) From the incident described above, my female player never really fully emotionally recovered from that foul and is not returning to play for me this season. I am sure that are many other factors, but this incident had a tremendous impact on her mental well being on the soccer field. When women are fouled in this way, it runs them off. (Heck some men too can only take so much.) We have major issues with retaining and recruiting women as it is. If it were up to me, the nature of this foul would have brought a permanent expulsion from the league. (It was not up to me, and the player got the standard 1 game suspension.) There is no shame in permitting a player who out skilled you reap the rewards of his/her accomplishment. It is just a recreational game. There is no money on the line. You will not get fired. If your ego is so inflated that you must risk the health of another as a tactic to cover your skill deficiency - SHAME ON YOU! Your selfishness and violent nature could run off skilled players.

- 2) Also in regards to the incident described above, the captain of the offended team (me) was also a member of the board and one of the most influential people in the league. (Yes I am so modest and humble huh?) My daddy always told me to be careful of the toes that you step on as they may be attached to the a\$\$ that you have to kiss later. And I do have oodles of passion and zero tolerance for abuse and violent play. You'd better believe I raised hell. And it was most unpleasant for many people involved. I will leave it at that. Let's just say if you mean to foul somebody, you should deeply consider the ability and influence that this person or his/her teammates may have. If my words have no impact on your will to commit such smart fouls, all I can say is choose your "smart" fouls wisely. Very wisely.
- 3) The same player who committed the hard foul, by an act of universal karma, ended up with a broken collar bone from indoor soccer just days later. No worries. He is doing well. I actually spoke with him about it weeks later. I never wish that kind of misfortune on anybody. And one may simply dismiss it as pure coincidence. But in my 37 years of life, I have seen plenty of evidence that what comes around, goes around. Whether or not that is the case here would require input from a much higher power. All I can say is that, in my opinion, the worst kind of retribution is the kind brought on by the universe. That one you can't see coming. And if you think you can live your life and violate the boundaries of others without some degree of undesired consequences, I got news for you.
- 4) In a completely different situation, a player in TORSO was slide tackled and earned a yellow card for the illegal play, as slide tackles are strictly forbidden in TORSO. The slide tackle act allegedly caused an ACL rupture in the other player. That other player has filed a \$40,000 law suit against the player who made the slide tackle. No need to panic. We all signed waivers, and we live in a conservative state. I can't see any jury awarding this. Nevertheless, the player accused of the slide tackle leading to the ACL tear has to retain an attorney which will cost money and deal with the stress of all of this. Was that slide tackle worth it? Probably not. Better to let the other player win the engagement. And I'm not taking sides. That is not my place. I wasn't there. I'm just sayin'.
- 5) I know of another excellent female player who played for a team that I formally played with. She was slide tackled from behind resulting in an ACL tear. Her recovery was rough, apparently requiring a second surgery. She says she will never play again. Again, another example of unnecessary rough play leading to a severe injury and the loss of a highly skilled female player. Does that influence other women to quit? Maybe. Who can say for sure? I tore my ACL playing indoor soccer. I am retired from indoor. It is amazing what our personal experiences and those we witness can influence us to do and not do. Again, I'm just sayin'.

The point of all of this is simple. Having fun and playing safe should come way above doing what it takes to win in this league. Me personally, I do commit fouls occasionally. I

admit that. But never by intent. (Usually more out of clumsiness.) If I am close to a woman and she goes up in the air, I do not jump. I weigh 210 lbs. If I come down on her, I will hurt her. Badly. Her health is far more important than my getting that ball. If I am playing sweeper, and an offensive player out foxes me and get open, I do not trip him/her. Our keeper comes out, and I go in behind to take away the finesse shot. I do not "smart" foul. He/she beat me fair and square. Risking injury to an opponent who out foxed me fairly is dirty, immoral, unacceptable, and intolerable. In my opinion.

The problem is that there are plenty of people out there who do not share my view in this regard. I cannot change that. We must each choose our attitude and aggressiveness on the field, and we must each choose what we will tolerate and when we will choose to raise concerns about violent play. As a captain, I constantly tell my team to play fair. And I do my best to lead by example. I do get mad and lose my temper from time to time when the other team is playing too aggressive or downright dirty and not being properly managed by the officials.

So by all means, if you think there is such a thing as a "smart" foul, I say I disagree and offer a different term - "Ignorant foul." If you really challenge your mind to unravel all of the possible negative consequences to you and others for committing a hard foul as a means to protect a win or establish your dominance, you'll find that the "smartest" foul is one that you do not choose to commit.

### ***North Region Sweeps Playoffs – 3 new TORSO Champions emerge***

Twelve teams qualified for the playoffs in fall, 2009 - six teams from the North and six from the West, four in each of the three divisions. And per our new alignment strategy, the semi-finals were pairing of a north team versus a west team of corresponding divisions. Now a nice even 3-3 split of victories between the two regions would be expected and mathematically common. Even a 4-2 for one region or the other wouldn't be unusual. A 5-1 would definitely not be expected but would happen from time to time. However, all six semi-final playoff games were won by the North teams. How do you explain a 6-0 for the north? I mean the odds are...

Some might suggest that this is an indication of an elevated level of play in the northern region. Perhaps the northern divisions are stronger? Was it that all 6 west teams were under resourced due to the timing of the games in December? Maybe a little of all of the above? Maybe it was just an anomaly. Perhaps if we played the games again, it might flip flop. Who can say? But as sure as the wind blows, in fall, 2009, the North completely dominated the playoffs. Go figure. Too bad the crossover wasn't the same. The Orange Crush represented the West as they took down my Spartans. And believe me; neither team was under-resourced. ☺

And wouldn't you know it. Three first-time TORSO champions emerged this season. In division 1, Moroccan Funk, who have been knocking at the door for 3 years now, finally broke through and defeated defending champions, Puebla, for their first TORSO title. The

Angels likewise defeated a former Division 2 TORSO Champion, The Express, in a game that went into overtime. Finally, Zoyto won a hard fought defensive battle over the Celtics (who were only in their second TORSO season ever) to earn their first title. Both The Express and Zoyto will be promoted based on their winning their respective divisions. Challengers II and Olympia 6, who did not advance to the finals will also be promoted, as they won their divisions as well. Congrats also to the Cougars, Olympia I, Penguins, and Mirage for qualifying for the playoffs and for a remarkable fall, 2009 season!

### ***The Three Division System - Is it Working?***

A long long time ago in a galaxy far away...

TORSO had 5 divisions and a lot of travel. And it didn't work. Then we went from five to 2 divisions. That seemed to work for quite some time. But it just seemed like there were teams that were getting stuck between the top of div 2 and the bottom of div 1. Five divisions were too much. Two was two few. So naturally, we decided on 3.

Is it working? Well, that is for the players to decide. But we definitely are seeing evidence of more parity. Teams like The Gray Matter and Free Spirit that seemed to go eons without a win both had very successful seasons. We were able to introduce several new teams (thanks to the hard work and dedication of Samantha Morgan). Those new teams didn't get their teeth kicked in every game as happened often in the old days. By forming division 3 with the lower end of division 2 combined with new teams, it made for a more competitive outcome. At least the scores seemed to reflect that claim.

And even division one was made a little smaller as we cut off the bottom and combined with the upper part of division 2 to form a highly competitive division 1 that produced not a single undefeated team as well as a good solid middle ground in our div 2. My own team struggled in the early part of the season starting 0-5, but then pulled it together at the end to finish 4-6.

And what's more important isn't just the competitive parity, but the improvement in enjoyment. That's the key. This is recreation. Nobody has millions of dollars on the line. The goal is to go out and play a safe fun game, get some exercise, try to find a winning combination, and have a few frosty beverages after the game and laugh at Joe Schmo for missing that wide open goal from 5 feet away. (Hey we've all done it.)

The 3-division system was designed to bring competitive parity, closer more enjoyable games, and a true balance representing the 3 levels of play that TORSO seems to have naturally evolved. Did we get it right? Well one season doesn't give enough data to make that determination, but the feedback that I have gotten has been overwhelmingly "Yes, you guys nailed it!"

## ***And So it Goes...***

For the last three years, TORSO has been an important part of my life. I have served on the board in a number of capacities and leveraged my unusually robust skill set of business process and technical expertise to try to influence positive changes. It hasn't been easy and such an undertaking never is. But it has been an adventure. But as they say, all things must come to an end. And so it goes. 2010 will be a year of change for the Accrocco household, as I spend time in the spring to acquire entrance into graduate school to begin working on an MBA. Should I be accepted, I would plan to start in September.

As it goes with all things, time must be managed much like money and used sparingly. After all, I have 2 young men that I am trying to develop into responsible men and a drop-dead gorgeous very loving wife who wants more of my time and deserves the best lifestyle that my God-given abilities can achieve. So I am glad to have had the opportunity to serve and shape this organization, and I hope that history will remember my contributions as having more of a positive impact than negative. I am stubborn and arrogant at times, but I give 100% and say what I mean and mean what I say. That's all really any of us can ask.

Good luck to the board for 2010. Perhaps, years down the road, I will be called again to lead the league. For now, I will stick with the Spartans. We are a fine team with oodles of potential!

## **LEAGUE LEADERSHIP**

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### ***Elections and Resignations***

Pascal Piazza - Elected as President

Ted Brumbaugh - Elected as Senior Commissioner

Mieko Rivas - Elected as Registrar

Jim Dickinson - Elected as Referee Liaison

Jackie Casas - Elected as Scheduler

Ernie Rivas - Elected as D&P Chairman

Diane Gomez - Elected as Secretary

Edgar Baquero - Elected as Treasurer

Bernie Casas - Elected as At Large Member (Park Liaison)

Kevin Ashton - Elected as At Large Member

Brian Accrocco - Resigned as Scheduler / Park Liaison

Samantha Morgan - Resigned as Registrar

## 2010 SPRING SEASON DETAILS

<b><u>Season Official Start Date</u></b>	Sunday, 1/31/2010
<b><u># Regular Season Games</u></b>	10
<b><u>Weeks with Limited or no Scheduled Games:</u></b>	Sunday, February 7 - NFL Super Bowl Sunday, March 14 - Spring Break Sunday, April 4 - Easter Sunday, May 9 - Mother's Day Sunday, May 30 - Memorial Day
<b><u>Game Days / Times</u></b>	Sundays - 1:00, 3:00, & 5:00 (1:30 & 3:30 only for George Bush Park)
<b><u>Regions</u></b>	North and West
<b><u>Divisions</u></b>	1, 2, and 3
<b><u># Teams Qualifying for Playoffs</u></b>	Top team from each division plays top team from corresponding division in other region for single Championship Game
<b><u>Team Fee</u></b>	\$650
<b><u>Player Registration Fee</u></b>	\$21 (New players only)
<b><u>Player Transfer Fee</u></b>	\$10 (per transfer)
<b><u>Field Fees:</u></b>	<i>Bayland Park - \$350 per season per team</i> <i>Bear Creek Park - \$35 / game</i> <i>Dyess Park - \$40 / game</i> <i>George Bush Park - \$35 / game</i> <i>Lone Star College - \$125 per season per team</i> <i>Meyer Park - \$50 / game</i> <i>Missouri City Community Park - \$35 / game</i>
<b><u>Red and Yellow Card Fine / Suspension Schedule:</u></b>	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Yellow - \$5</i> <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Yellow - \$10</i> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Yellow - \$20 &amp; hearing before executive committee</i> <i>4<sup>th</sup> Yellow - \$30 &amp; minimum automatic suspension for rest of season</i> <i>1<sup>st</sup> red - \$20 fine and minimum 1 game suspension</i> <i>2<sup>nd</sup> red - \$30 fine &amp; minimum automatic suspension for rest of season</i>

## LEAGUE POLICY CHANGES / UPDATES

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### **2010 Spring Season Schedule/Post Season Structure Change – NEW\*\***

In summer, 2009, the league captains voted to try a newer, simpler playoff structure. We decided that the top 2 teams from each group would qualify for the playoffs and then play semi-finals and final / 3-4 playoff games combined with 2 regular season games. All team not qualifying would play 2 cross-regional/divisional games. We were able to complete this, but we did find the scheduling of the post season to be a bit challenging.

For spring, 2010, the captains voted to make the model even simpler. The top team from each Region-Division will advance to a championship game against the corresponding division winner from the opposite region. All teams will play 10 regular season games, and then we will have 3 championship games, 1 for each division. That will allow us to schedule the games on a separate day and make a day of it. It allows TORSO to have some element of post season, but not put so much emphasis on it. We lose the flexibility to play teams normally outside of our group, but we also then don't have to travel for a crossover game.

So we have tried a complex playoff scenario using all of 2009 in a single season followed by a 4-game grouping style. We had a simpler 2-game set-up, and now we go to the simplest model – a single championship game. Now that we will have had exposure to all 3 models, the captains can decide which one (if any) would work best for the long term.

### **Zero Balance Policy Status**

Well it took most of the fall to get it done, but we were able to refund all teams that had credits their positive balances. And we collected from teams that owed. For many years TORSO had taken on the responsibility to manage accounts for teams. While this does offer flexibility for teams that want to overpay and have fines auto-paid, the work involved to manage the accounts and maintain absolute accuracy among all of the registration and booking transactions just simply required way too much time and stress for volunteer positions (and the registrar who draw only \$3 per player which is nice but ain't worth 20 hours a week).

Going forward, all teams will pay as they go. All team and field fees are due by season start (and by all fees that means 100% of the cost), and bookings are paid at the league meetings for the weeks prior to the meeting. Captains should collect fines from players who get booked. That or make them come to the meeting and pay it, least they lose eligibility. And if fines are not paid by meeting time, eligibility is lost. Of course they could just play a little safer and nicer and avoid getting cards. Heh, a man can dream. ☺

## FROM THE CAPTAINS

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This is a new section that I began to allow captains to share their knowledge and wisdom with other captains / players.

### ***The Pros and Cons of Team Leadership – By Brian Accrocco***

So you have a captain whom you may or may not like and you think that you could do a better job. And maybe you can. And maybe not.

There are many perks to being a captain. You get absolute autonomy over your team. You decide who plays, where they play, and for how many minutes. If somebody is not being cohesive or contributory, you can give them the boot. If you want to only bring on the most skilled players, then that is your prerogative. If your team is more about fun and family and you prefer husbands, wives, cousins, and other family and close friends who may be nice but lacking in some skills, then that too is your call. You can choose the name, colors and uniforms. And (most importantly) you can play where you want as well (though I find that I often end up not playing where I want). You may not be the best striker. But if you want it – you're the captain so it's yours. Pretty sweet deal, huh?

Problem is, to be an effective captain, there are many costs as well that more than balance out the perks (in my opinion), depending on the management skills and style. What "costs" do I mean you ask? I'm glad you asked.

### **Financial Responsibility**

You ever tried to rope cattle? Me neither but I figure trying to track down those last 3 people who haven't paid is about like that. Either they have an excuse or don't answer their phone or may be awaiting that stimulus check. Or maybe they have some advanced skills and think it entitles them to free soccer. Whatever. The problem is you have to invest your time to track them down and collect their share. Meanwhile, the mean unbending TORSO board is breathing down your neck for their cash. And if you are late, it means a fine or forfeit. So you have to front the money. Doesn't seem too fair. But heh, you get to be striker, so suck it up and pay. And then you grad your lasso and go ropin'.

### **League Affairs**

And so while your players are home watching the US whip Italy (like that would ever happen), you have to attend the league meeting that the mean TORSO Board intentionally scheduled on that day just to make you miss that important game. (I'm telling you it's a conspiracy.) In all seriousness you have to attend 3-4 meetings per season. Well you don't have to. But if you don't – you got it - fine! And when you attend them, often there is little to no real business discussed. Or it gets heated with lots of debate. It's actually kind of interesting. Especially when that Brian Accrocco guy starts getting all heated and egotistical. Where does he come off being so arrogant anyway? ☺

## Managing the "Sniper"

Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about. We all know what a sniper is. If you've managed a soccer team for 1 season, you've had one. There is always that 1 player who thinks they know better than you and should be making all the decision despite the fact that you do all the work. And they talk about you behind your back. They make comments on the sidelines about what poor decisions you are making. (I know because I actually was this jackass once until a light bulb went off.) Sometimes it is minor enough that you can overlook it, or the other players respect you enough to blow them off. Often you can pull that person aside and have a talk and that clears things up. But many times that just makes it worse. And if they actually begin to influence dissention on the team, then you may have to go as far as to give them the boot. And good luck getting that uniform back. But all that stress is worth it. You get to play 90 minutes. Perfectly fair. Right?

## Communicating and Preparation

This one is easy. You get to send the emails or make the calls each week to determine who is playing and who isn't. I suppose you can just not do this and see who shows up. I know some captains do this. Not my style. I like to prepare a game plan and know who is coming so I can determine switch partners and combinations and minutes. And so I send emails. And I always have that 1 player who just won't return calls or emails. And I have to send out 2 or 3. Is it really that difficult to respond to an email? When you don't communicate your intentions to your coach, the whole team suffers. You risk your team being under resourced as you don't give your captain ample time to find a sub, or you risk being overstaffed and then players not getting enough minutes (discussed in the next paragraph). I can see why some captains just don't even bother. But I believe that preparation and management are key elements in winning. So I invest the time and endure the stress. After all, I get to decide where everybody plays.

## Maintaining the Balance

If you have more than one child, then you know all about sibling rivalry. And you also then have knowledge of managing soccer egos. God help me I have never witnessed adults acting like whiny babies like I have on a soccer team. I only got to play 25 minutes of the second half and Robbie got 40. Or how about I don't like Johnny because he won't pass to me when I am open. This coming from a player who always launches the ball over the goal the instant he/she crosses that penalty box line. Nobody wants to be accountable. Everything is always everybody else's fault. (I embellish as my current team is actually quite humble and mostly fair, but man have I been on some whiny teams.) The point is that you are the one who has to keep the peace and listen and try to make the right adjustments and decision on positions and time to keep people happy. And no matter what you do, somebody is always unhappy about something. And the first time somebody makes a snotty remark about you playing striker, good luck not biting their head off. And they look at you with this puzzled look wondering why you seem so agitated. Some people just don't know. ☺

## Summing it up

And so to all of you players who are sure that you could make better decisions than your captain, well by golly step up and start a team. I didn't even go into the emotional and financial stress of building a team and then spending the first year weeding out the snipers, goofballs, and irresponsible people to develop a solid core. (I'll save that for another newsletter.) And to all of you captains, who understand everything that I have said here, take comfort in knowing that you're not alone. ☺

## **THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF JOURNALISM**

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Do you have some soccer wisdom to share? If so, The Striker welcomes your contribution. If you have an idea for an article or would like to write on a topic given to you for our March newsletter, please contact Brian Accrocco @ 832.375.4394 or [baccrocco@att.net](mailto:baccrocco@att.net).