

THE SUBJECTIVITY OF SOCCER

Anyone who has ever played soccer or been around soccer in any capacity, has developed their own personal perspective about how the game should **best** be played.

By its very nature, soccer is a simple game – played with emotion, passion, skill and teamwork -- blending individual talents and abilities into a cohesive team unit that, when functioning at its best, is greater than the sum total of all its parts.

The simple objective of the game is to outscore your opponent by 1 goal in order to win the game -- how you choose to go about doing that, and how you evaluate that – runs the gamut. Therein lies the difficulties and conflicts of soccer.

With everyone having an opinion and an operational plan, conflict is inevitable. Thus, coaches are the ones responsible for choosing a plan that is appropriate both for their own personality, coaching style and background joined with the abilities and potential of their available talent pool. Conflicts arise when people outside of the group (team) try to influence people inside the group (team) with their opinion and perspective about how they feel you should be playing. The problem is that people outside of the group are not aware of the **intent** and **plan** of the group --- their ideas and helpful hints – albeit well intended – cause confusion, uncertainty and at times problems.

When I go to watch a club game involving CBC soccer players in the off-season, I find it very difficult and uncomfortable because I look at the play from my perspective and what I would want them to be doing. I do not know what their coaches are wanting them to do. Thus, they may be playing the perfect game according to the plan of the team and the coach, but in my eyes, I see where things could be different. So I usually pick my spots to watch just a few of the more meaningful games and always , try to keep my thoughts to myself.

As parents, it is only natural and expected that you have a personal interest in your son. There is a tendency to see things **only** through your son. This become subjective as the perspective narrows to only your son and your concerns. As coaches, we maintain an objective approach – focusing on what is good for the group. We would forfeit every game if we lined up 22 starters for the opening kickoff. Therefore, coaches are forced to choose 11 to start the game—the choice is based upon performance and attitude that best supports and represents the action plan of the team. In the eyes of the coach, your son is 1 of 22, from your point of view, he may well be the only point of view. When objectivity clashes with subjectivity, problem can occur. Choices made by coaches will always be made objectively , what is in the best interest of the team. Problems in soccer occur at every level -- the million dollar players all over the world have their share of problems with coaches and management. Problems in soccer occur beyond CBC Soccer. Problems in soccer are a natural occurrence and happens as a result of the subjectivity of soccer.

How can you best help your son ? Have him talk to his coach !! He needs help with a CBC Soccer situation that can only be resolved through the CBC soccer coaches. Don't involve club coach or anyone else because, they don't know nor understand the specific CBC soccer plan. Their advice would tend to be more confusing and could lead to further problems. It's easy to find people that will support your complaint, but that doesn't always work best to resolve the problem.

It would be very similar to any of the coaches showing up at your work place and telling you how we think you should do your job. ((By the way, we are terribly behind in the tally in that regard). It would be unfair of us to do that and you would not appreciate it – you know your job and you've got your expertise. For us to show up and question you about how you're doing your job might just create a problem. You just might take offense to that.

We coaches do actually have an idea of what we want to try to do – an organization plan
We do our best to communicate the plan to our players
We value practice as our opportunity to develop our action plan
Games provide us an opportunity to test , evaluate and correct our plan
Games tell us what we need to be working on to better improve and refine our plan
In summation, we develop a plan, put it into practice, evaluate it, improve it and d our best to get it as right as we possibly can.