

**LEON HIGH SCHOOL MEN'S
SOCCER PROGRAM
HANDBOOK**



2010-11

Jamie McBrearty
Head Coach

Rocky Hanna
Principal

Mark Feely
Athletic Director

Table of Contents

1. Soccer Program Welcome	3
2. Program Mission/Goals	3
3. Coach's Expectations for Players	3-4
4. Discipline Actions	4-5
5. Importance of Player Commitment and Effort	5
6. Importance of Academic Achievement	5-6
7. Parent Commitment	6
8. Parent Behavior	6-7
9. Program Cost, Fees, and Fundraising	7
10. Assessments	7-8
11. Practice	8
12. Conditioning	8
13. Summer Camp	8
14. Absence Policy	8
15. School Absence policy for Out of Town Games	9
16. Locker Room Policy	9
17. Uniforms	9
18. Game Day Activities	9
19. Transportation to Games	9-10
20. Season Kick-off Dinner	10
21. Volunteer Responsibilities	10
22. Booster meetings	10
23. Communication	10
24. Program Contacts	11
25. Acknowledgement	11-14

Welcome to Leon High School Men's Soccer!

Almost everything in this handbook is the same for both varsity and junior varsity players. You may be on different squads, but you are all members of the same team.

Be prepared to commit yourself as we take Leon Soccer to the next level of excellence. It is going to take hard work, and most importantly, disciplined dedication to this tradition-rich program we call Leon Lions Soccer!

Go Big Red!

Program Mission/Goals

High school sports are competitive in many ways, but are designed to be personally rewarding, and a healthy part of the high school experience. The Leon High School Men's Soccer program's core principles are:

- Team Discipline
- Player Commitment and Effort
- Academic Achievement

Coaches' Expectations for Players

Player physical forms, and Leon County High School sports parent waivers forms must be completed before conditioning begins each September and provided to Coach McBrearty.

Leon Lion Soccer players will:

- ✓ Recognize that the referee is the sole authority of any scheduled game, and that maintaining respect for the referee is of vital importance to Leon Soccer
- ✓ Recognize that the coach is the sole authority on the team, and that maintaining respect for the coach and his decisions is of vital importance to Leon Soccer
- ✓ Strive for excellence in academic studies and attend all classes
- ✓ Put the best interests of the team ahead of his own
- ✓ Work each day to be a better player/person/student than the day before
- ✓ Understand and appreciate the value of the 6 weeks of conditioning before the season begins.
- ✓ Report any personal injuries to the coach and athletic trainers as soon as possible
- ✓ Playing time is never guaranteed, but rather earned
- ✓ Put forth maximum effort at practice, which provides the benefit of skill development and preparation for competitive games

- ✓ Always treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of circumstance
- ✓ Absolutely not “haze” or “initiate” any person in any form as a condition of acceptance on the team
- ✓ Always listen to the coaches and do what is asked of you as a player and team member
- ✓ Be a positive role model for others and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, and spectators at every event connected with Leon High School Men’s Soccer
- ✓ Refrain from the use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol
- ✓ Learn the rules of the game and the policies of the Leon High School Men’s Soccer program and Leon Student Code of Conduct handbook
- ✓ Not confront coaches at the game field. Players shall take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place
- ✓ Remember it is only a game

Leon Lion’s men’s soccer players will conduct themselves properly at all games and practices as well as on campus and in their daily lives. Playing for Leon soccer is a privilege, not a right.

Improper behavior includes:

- Abusive or degrading language (swearing)
- Physical threats or violence
- Advocating poor sportsmanship
- Harassment of any game official
- Disputing or attempting to influence a game official
- Any distractions that take away from the team’s focus
- Lack of respect for the coach or teammates
- Any infraction of Leon High School’s Code of Conduct

Discipline Actions for Players

The Importance of **Team and Player Discipline**: *“Discipline is not the enemy of enthusiasm.”*

Student-athletes that are suspended from school are not allowed to practice or play during the period of time they are placed on suspension. This includes ISS (In School Suspension).

Leon soccer players must have a deep respect for the game of soccer, and for the possibility of Yellow Card and Red Card infractions while on the field. Infractions in games that cause the referee to use these cards hurt the team, and can generally be avoided through self-control.

Infractions of the Leon High School Code of Conduct or any of the coaches expected player behaviors:

Any infraction of the Leon High School Code of Conduct or the expected player behaviors outlined above, whether on or off the field, (depending on the severity of the action) throughout the season will be awarded a “Yellow Card” or extra conditioning. The Yellow Card serves as a warning to the player that further infractions will be dealt with more severely.

The 2nd infraction of a rule during the season will provide a “Red Card” for the committing player. Again, depending on the severity of the infraction, this Red Card represents a game suspension, and other disciplinary actions deemed necessary.

In the game of soccer, a “direct Red Card” is often times awarded without a warning Yellow Card issued first. If a player is given a direct Red Card, it will require a meeting with the coaching staff to discuss the player’s future with the soccer program.

Yellow and Red cards will be used in the daily lives of Leon soccer players as well. Receipt of these cards in a game will be used as a reminder of how to conduct oneself off of the field. Leon Lions men’s soccer players will uphold and represent the school with the utmost respect and will accept unfortunate turns of events gracefully, and without anger.

Our team goal for the season is to have no one carded (no Yellow or Red cards issued to any players).

We want to continue to develop a program that fosters community spirit, school pride, and a deep respect for good sportsmanship through the game of soccer.

The Importance of Player Commitment and Effort

The factors that will determine the success of any team are the personal commitment and responsibility to the overall program applied by each and every player on the team. It takes intense dedication to reach both personal and team goals. The Leon Lions soccer program strives to play well into the post season each year. Effort, concentration, and perseverance are the basic foundations of a successful team. Player attitude that reflects dedication to these goals makes the difference between excellence and mediocrity. You are a select group of young men. Nothing short of 100% of each player’s effort is expected at every practice and at every game.

The Importance of Academic Achievement

Leon Men’s Soccer has historically had one of the highest overall GPA averages of all male sports at Leon High School. This is a tradition we value greatly and would like to continue. The soccer schedule is very demanding on a player’s

school work and free time. It is each player's responsibility to balance all of these throughout the school year and season.

- ✓ All players must have at least a cumulative 2.0 GPA on an unweighted 4.0 scale to be eligible to play.

Parent Commitment

Parents make certain commitments when they allow their player to try out for and join the Leon Men's Soccer Team. These are:

- ✓ Not to force a player to participate in soccer
- ✓ To remember that players participate to have fun and represent their school, and the game is for players, not adults
- ✓ To inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety the player or the safety of others on the team
- ✓ To teach the player to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence
- ✓ To discourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health or well being of any of the players
- ✓ Ensuring that the player treats other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect, regardless of circumstance
- ✓ Recognizing and supporting the player's commitment to the game by providing the means to get them to and from soccer events on time, in sound physical shape, and mentally ready to play
- ✓ Teaching the player that doing one's best is elemental to achieving team goals
- ✓ Reinforcing the concept that putting forth a best effort is more important than the outcome of any one game to the player
- ✓ To praise the player's efforts and successes
- ✓ Ensuring proper nutrition and sleep for the player
- ✓ Emphasizing the benefits of skill development and practices
- ✓ Learning the rules of the game and the policies of the Leon High School Men's Soccer program

Parent Behavior

Certain behavior is expected of all parents of players involved in Leon Men's Soccer:

- ✓ Refrain from coaching player/players during games and practices from the sidelines, unless designated as one of the official coaches of the team.
- ✓ Be a positive role model for the player and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every Leon High School Men's Soccer program event.
- ✓ Parents will refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting, or using profane language or gestures.

- ✓ Respect the officials and their authority during games and not confront coaches at the game field. Parents should take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- ✓ No player, coach, parent, director, board member or anyone affiliated with Leon High School Men's Soccer shall by actions or works bring the program into a state of disrepute.
- ✓ When attending games parents must sit in the stands and avoid standing near or on the track.

Coaches will be expected to reply to parent e-mails within 24 hours of their receipt. Parents may speak to any coach by contacting him in person, through e-mail or by telephone, and arranging a meeting time. Parents should check the team website for information before calling the coach about general information.

Program Cost, Fees, and Fundraising

Like most extra-curricular programs, athletic programs receive very little financial support from the County School District. The Leon's Men's Soccer program costs more than \$30,000 annually to effectively operate. This includes player uniforms; coaching stipends, referee fees for all home games; player and coaching staff travel costs, equipment replacement (balls, goals, etc.), field seeding and irrigation and lining, and tournament fees.

The Leon County School District allocates \$0 per year to the program. The cost of the program is met through player assessment fees, individual fundraising, and group fundraising. All players' parents are members of the Leon Men's Soccer Boosters, the volunteer support organization that raises funds in support of the program.

The full cost of the program is approximately \$750 per player. Each year, the Soccer Boosters develop and approve a complete budget. About 60% of the budget is met with player assessments, and the rest comes through fundraising. Fund raising continues throughout the year. **Players and parents are expected to participate in at least three fundraising events each year to meet the full cost of the program.** The Boosters organize many opportunities to meet this expectation throughout the year, not just during the soccer season.

Assessments

The Leon men's soccer program would not function annually without the financial support of the Boosters. All parents of players that make the soccer team (both varsity and junior varsity) are soccer program Boosters by definition. Season assessments average between \$400-500, depending upon scheduled tournaments in which the team competes and related expenses as listed earlier in this document. These costs must be paid to the Leon Men's Soccer treasurer by the time of the season kick-off dinner (see below) after the acceptance of your player as a member of the soccer team. (Checks made out to **Leon Men's Soccer**.) Payment at the season kick-off dinner is expected unless prior arrangements have been made for payment with the booster Board.

Opportunities are provided for players to secure sponsorships or media guide advertisements, a portion of the proceeds of which can help offset assessment fees. Boosters are encouraged to secure such sponsorships well in advance of the start of the season. Please refer to the *Leon Men's Soccer Program assessment policy* attached to this document for specific details.

Practice

Team practices begin after tryouts in late October each year. Practices are held daily, Monday through Friday after school or as scheduled by the coaches. Players are expected to be on time and prepared to play with their appropriate gear.

Conditioning

Soccer is a sport of constant movement and running. In an average game, a player can expect to run about 4-6 miles, depending upon the position played. Players must be in top physical condition to be capable of peak performance. Fatigue is directly related to human error. Conditioning practices will be conducted throughout the summer and will begin daily in the fall. No player is permitted to start conditioning until they have completed their Leon County school physical and student waiver forms. Players should realize that they need to report to the first day of tryouts in top physical condition so as to put their best effort forward when competing for a place on the soccer team.

Summer Camp

The Leon High School soccer program holds a summer camp each year usually during the last week of July or first week of August. This camp is open to all rising freshman (8th graders of the preceding school year) to returning seniors interested in playing Leon men's soccer. The cost is approximately \$150, and players attend daily sessions from Monday-Friday for a week. Coaches from regional college teams are typically recruited to assist with daily camp training. The camp is held on the Leon campus, and Leon facilities are used in the training events. All potential Leon soccer players are welcome to attend.

Absences

The practice season and playing season are short. Please try to schedule family activities or medical appointments around soccer events if at all possible. Contact the coach in advance if you must be absent from planned soccer activities during the season. When possible, all dates of absences should be submitted via email to the coach prior to the absence taking place. For any unplanned absences, a note from doctors, parent or legal guardian is accepted.

School Absence Policy for Out of Town Games

Students will be excused early from classes on the day of an away game for travel to the game destination. Arrangements for boarding a chartered bus will have been made for the appointed time by the booster Board or coach. The coach will provide the attendance office with the list of players traveling and the time they should be excused. Players will be notified in advance of the time to leave class and board the bus. The team occasionally returns late in the evening. If the return is after midnight, the players may be excused from the first portion of school the following day. The coach will inform the players before they exit the bus what the attendance policy will be for the following morning.

For the first hour or so of the bus trip out of town, a quiet period will be encouraged to give players the opportunity to work on their homework or other academic endeavors.

Locker Room

Due to space constraints, the men's soccer locker room is available only to varsity players during the season. JV players use the men's locker room in the "new gym" and will store bags in the varsity men's locker room.

Uniforms

Players are issued a warm-up suit, shorts, socks, practice and playing jerseys and a team bag for the season. Everything (except the socks) is to be thoroughly cleaned and returned at the end of the season. Players must provide their own cleats and shin guards. At no time will players be allowed to participate in practices or games without cleats or shin guards. Shin guards must be the correct size for your height and NOCSAE approved (bearing the NOCSAE sticker on them).

Game Days

Players are expected to wear the game jersey or shirt and tie to school on all home and away game days. On the day of home games, varsity booster parents alternate providing a team meal to the varsity players after school and prior to the game. Locations are announced weekly during the season, generally by e-mail from the Booster Board secretary.

Transportation

Players provide their own transportation for local games. The Boosters arrange bus transportation for almost all out-of-county games. (Neighboring county

games, like those in Gadsden County are the exception.) Players will need to bring meal money on any out-of-county trips. Hotel and meal costs for out-of-town tournaments are the responsibility of the players, and are in addition to the season assessments paid.

Season kickoff dinner

Each year, the season kicks off with a pot-luck “Spaghetti/Pasta Dinner.” Held soon after player selection in late October, it is both a celebration of the new season and an organizing event for the Boosters. Coaches introduce themselves to families, introduction of players and the Booster board are made, assessment payments are due, and important information is shared with all participants. Players are expected to attend in dress shirts/pants including a tie. This is a very important event, and all players and parents are strongly encouraged to attend.

Volunteer responsibilities

All parents are asked to volunteer to work at least three home games by either selling tickets, working concessions, or selling team spirit wear. Usually JV parents work varsity games, and varsity parents work JV games, so parents are free to watch their player’s game. Sign-up sheets for various activities are available at the first joint team-Booster meeting (Spaghetti Dinner) at the end of October, and all parents should sign up for scheduled events prior to leaving the event.

Booster Meetings

Booster meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month in the Media Center of Leon High School or at a Booster Board pre-determined location if the media center is not available. All soccer parents are strongly encouraged to attend. (Remember: this is the program you help make it!)

Communication/Website

Our website is the best way to stay informed about the team. It contains the schedule, announcements, pictures, etc. Most communication is done either by email or through the website, www.leonmensoccer.org. All parents and players are expected to provide a current email address and cell phone number at tryouts, so we can build a good communication network.

Email is also a good way to contact coaches, the Booster Board, and other parents.

Contacts:

The Booster Board is made up of the head coach, a president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. For the 2010-2011 season these individuals are, and may be contacted at:

Head Coach: Jamie McBrearty (850) 294-9466
mcbreartyj2@mail.canopyoaks.leon.k12.fl.us

JV Coach: Mario Solari (850) 339-1176
mario@xafsu.com

Booster President: Chris Eggert (850) 322-7371
eggertchristopher@gmail.com

Booster Vice President: Dano Fiore
fiore@bio.fsu.edu

Booster Treasurer: Nora Doran
edoran@comcast.net

Booster Secretary: Patrick Kennell
pkennell@admin.fsu.edu

Acknowledgement:

All players and parents must acknowledge an understanding of the expectations for the Leon men's soccer program as outlined in this handbook by signing the following Acknowledgements of Program Rules (3 pages). Signed pages must be turned in to the Coach or a Booster Board member by the first official function of the Boosters after the selection of the team players (generally the Spaghetti Dinner in the 3rd week of October).

With this information and these expectations in place, it is the expressed wish of the Board that each player and parent has an enjoyable and rewarding season with Leon men's soccer. Remember to bring your team spirit to every high school soccer event and.....Go Lions Soccer! Go Big Red!

Player's acknowledgement of program rules:

- ✓ That the referee is the sole authority of the game, and that maintaining respect for the referee is of vital importance to Leon Soccer.
- ✓ That the coach is the sole authority on the team, and that maintaining respect for the coach and his decisions is of vital importance to Leon Soccer
- ✓ Strive for excellence in academic studies and attend all classes
- ✓ Put the best interests of the team ahead of my own
- ✓ Work each day to be a better player/person/student than the day before.
- ✓ Understand and appreciate the value of the 6 weeks of pre-season conditioning.
- ✓ It is the player's responsibility to report any possible injuries to coach and athletic trainers.
- ✓ Playing time is never a guarantee.
- ✓ Putting forth maximum effort at practice is expected and provides the benefit of skill development and preparation for competitive games.
- ✓ Each player will always treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of circumstance.
- ✓ Absolutely no hazing or initiation of any person in any form will be tolerated.
- ✓ Always listen to the coaches and do what is asked.
- ✓ Be a positive role model for others and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, and spectators at every event connected with Leon High School Men's Soccer.
- ✓ Refrain from the use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol.
- ✓ Learn the rules of the game and the policies of the Leon High School Men's Soccer program and Leon Student Code of Conduct handbook.
- ✓ Do not confront coaches at the game field. Players shall take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- ✓ Student-athletes that are suspended from school are not allowed to practice or play during the period of time they are placed on suspension. This includes ISS (In School Suspension).
- ✓ Remember it is only a game.

I will abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines and if I fail to abide by the rules and guidelines then, I shall be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to:

1. Extra conditioning and/or one of the following
2. Verbal warning by an official, coach, or administrator of Leon High School
3. Written warning from any of the above persons
4. Limited play and/or suspension from the Leon High School Men's Soccer team
5. Dismissal from the Leon High School Men's Soccer team for the season.

Player's Signature

Parent's Initials

Parent's acknowledgement of program rules:

- ✓ I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, game officials, and administrators at all times.
- ✓ I will place the emotional and physical well being of all players ahead of any personal desire for the team to win.
- ✓ I will support the coaches, officials, and administrators working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- ✓ I will remember that the game is for the players, not for the adults.
- ✓ I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, game officials, administrators, and fans with respect.
- ✓ I will always be positive.
- ✓ I will always allow the coach to be the only coach.
- ✓ I will not get into arguments with the opposing team's parents, players, or coaches.
- ✓ I will not come onto the field of play for any reason, unless asked by the coach to come to the aid of my injured player, during the game.
- ✓ I will not criticize game officials.
- ✓ I will follow protocol by stating my concerns within the vehicle the program provides (through the Booster Board or with the coach directly).

I will abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines and if I fail to abide by these rules and guidelines, I shall be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to, the following.

1. Verbal warning by an official, head coach, and/or President of the Leon High School Men's Soccer program Booster Board
2. Written warning from any of the above persons
3. Requested removal from the arena of play for one or a specified number of games
4. Season suspension from attendance of all games.

Parent's Signature

Date

Parental Acknowledgement of Leon Men's Soccer Program Financial Obligations and Program Considerations

We understand that having our son play with the Leon High School Men's Soccer program involves payment of an assessment generally in excess of \$400, and requires our participation in further fund raising efforts for continued program function and success.

Additionally, we understand and agree to support the Leon High School Men's Soccer program through participation in at least 3 fundraising events each season beyond and above payment of assessment fees.

We understand that the Leon High School Men's Soccer program will provide training, practice and coaching during the school week during the soccer season.

We understand that Leon High School Men's Soccer program play in a competitive environment and therefore there is no guarantee of playing time during competitions.

We have received and read the Leon High School Men's Soccer program handbook for parents and players as printed above, and agree to abide by these guidelines accordingly. We will act in a manner of respect at all practices, games, travel events, etc, and serve as role models to others to maintain the integrity of ourselves, our team, and all of Leon High School Men's Soccer program participants. Players will conduct themselves in accordance with Leon High School Men's Soccer program, Leon High School and Florida High School Athletic Association rules at all times, or will be subject to disciplinary action.

PARENT NAME (PRINT)	PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	Date
---------------------	---------------------------	------

PARENT NAME (PRINT)	PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	Date
---------------------	---------------------------	------

BOARD MEMBER