

# WAUNAKEE BOYS' SOCCER

## Player Handbook

### Fall Season

We would like to welcome everyone to the 2025 high school soccer season. We are very excited about the upcoming season and getting a chance to coach and work with all the boys.

**Philosophy:** Soccer is a healthy activity that embodies physical fitness, creativity, teamwork, and dedication. Waunakee coaches are committed to the personal and player development of each individual in the program with the belief that quality coaching, talented players, good competition, and hard work will result in a successful program.

**Objective:** The Waunakee boys' soccer program is committed to providing quality coaching and excellent competition. The goal of the high school program is for every player to reach his fullest potential. It is the program's goal that the players, coaches, and parents work together to create the best environment. It is important that players, coaches, and parents follow certain policies to make sure the optimum environment is maintained.

### Player expectations:

1. Players should work hard at every practice and game pushing themselves and their teammates to be better.
2. Be a good teammate: Positively encourage and challenge teammates. Stand up for a teammate if another teammate is negative toward him. Praise your teammates when you think they have done a good job. Be respectful!
3. Wear the correct equipment at every practice and every game.

**Policies:** Be punctual – Be on time or early for practices and warm-ups for games. Please let coaches know if you are going to be late. If this is a chronic problem, playing time and/or starting games may be reduced. Players should be at practice early, 10 mins before the start time of practice – this will allow the boys time to warm up and stretch so we can start our field work as soon as we get on the field.

For home games please be there 45 minutes before. For away games please be on time for the bus.

**Absences** – Let coaches know in advance of any absences due to school functions, family obligations, etc. Please send coaches an email/text or give them a call in case of illness. Please don't come to practice sick!! Players should only miss an occasional practice. If there is a conflict where a player is going to miss consistently, playing time will be affected. Please let coaches know by 2pm the day of practice if a player is going to miss. If there is an emergency – no problem – let us know when you can.

### **Practice Times -**

- **Varsity - 4:15-6:15 - Waunakee Pitch/Grass Field**
- **JV1 - 4:15-6:00 - Waunakee Pitch/Grass Field**
- **JV Purple/White - 4:15-6:00 - Waunakee Pitch/Grass Field**

**Practice pinnies** – All players (Varsity and JV) should wear their Waunakee practice pinnies to practice (black shorts and black socks).

**Playing time:** Playing time is not guaranteed, however, coaches believe it is important that all players play in games to improve their tactical awareness, decision-making, and skill level.

### **VARSAITY LEVEL**

Playing time will not be distributed equally and some players may not see the field during each Varsity level game. The coaching staff will use playing time to affect individual and team motivation. Playing time is earned based on your production on the field and your efforts in practice, as well as your character off the field.

### **JV LEVEL**

If our team is titled JV1 or JV2, then playing time will not be distributed equally. Some players may play the entire game, while others may only get in for 5-10 minutes. There are games where some players at the JV level will not get any playing time. Depending on roster size, our goal is to have every player play 30-40 minutes in a two game span. Please understand this goal might not be reached due to a variety of factors.

### **JV Purple and White**

If our team is titled a JV Purple/White Team, then every player will play in every game if possible, but playing time will not be distributed equally. To make things measurable, every player will most likely play at least 10 minutes in every game.

**Parent Guidelines:** - Let the coach be the coach.

A parent's role is that of a supportive parent. Deal with personal concerns at an appropriate time and in a calm manner. Do not approach the coach about a concern directly after a game. Please call the coach or schedule an appointment to meet to discuss your concerns.

Waunakee High School does not tolerate any negative comments toward referees, opposing parents, opposing players, our own parents, or our own players. There will be consequences if this happens. We will always take the high road. You, our coaches, and the boys are representing Waunakee High School and we want other high schools to have a positive experience competing against us.

Please notify coaches of any concerns you have with your son with me as they come up. Conversations about your child should be about your child and not other players. Conversations should be about things we need to know about your child's psychological state that we may not know, for example, a sick family member, something at school, misunderstandings and communication breakdowns, etc... The conversations will not be about bartering for playing time or position on the field. Please do not let things go by that are truly bothering you. We all have different perspectives on things and misunderstandings do happen. Let coaches know right away if this happens, so that we can straighten it out and understand each other. We appreciate the enthusiasm and involvement of the parents. There are so many ways you can all make your child's experience better from working at events, getting involved in volunteer opportunities, and simply being a positive involved Waunakee parent. Please get involved while respecting the boundaries of parent and coach.

## **Stay Involved**

The Waunakee Soccer coaching staff will make every attempt to keep our players and their parents/guardians up to date on soccer program issues and events. We have six consistent and reliable ways of communication.

- Sports Engine Email
- Text
- Facebook: Waunakee High School ' Boys Soccer
- Instagram: waunakee.hs.boys.soccer
- Twitter: @KeeBoysSoccer
  - Sign up if you would like to receive soccer messages, game scores, highlights, and updates.
- Sports Engine Website: [www.waunakeeboysoccer.com](http://www.waunakeeboysoccer.com)
  - Make sure to register on Sports Engine in order to view rosters, practice and game schedules, and receive updates and notifications by text and email.

## **Program Alignment**

### **Freshman**

**Purpose:** To introduce student-athletes to the initial rules of high school soccer, to learn the four components to the game of soccer (technical, tactical, psychological, and fitness), to emphasize being a part of a TEAM, and to teach the concept of student first.

**Emphasis:** For student-athletes to have the opportunity to participate in learning the game of soccer. It is a vital component that our coaching staff is teaching our student-athletes the fundamentals, at every position, in a way that the players are engaged and having fun. While winning is a very important lesson to learn how to do, it is more important, at this level, to teach our players the process of how to win as a team. To get our student-athletes acclimated to high school life.

## **Junior Varsity**

**Purpose:** To continue the development of our student-athletes for the Varsity level in a way that keeps them engaged in learning our system and style of play.

**Emphasis:** Prepare the players, both mentally and physically, for varsity soccer. While winning becomes more important it is not as vital as continuing to learn and understand the process of how to win as a team. Technical ability becomes more detailed along with tactical strategies to perform against our opponents. Student-athletes continue to develop their skills at a more specific position in order to transition to Varsity.

\*The number of JV teams each season will depend upon the number of players in our program.

## **Varsity**

**Purpose:** To continue to teach our student-athletes the advanced rules, techniques, fundamentals, and tactics of Waunakee soccer.

**Emphasis:** To compete and win games by fielding the best team of players possible, who are both mentally and physically prepared to play at the varsity level, while understanding how to perform and play as a team. Prepare potential college athletes for the collegiate level.

## **Program and Team Expectations**

1. Every player will avoid receiving a code violation during their four years of high school, while maintaining academic integrity and eligibility.
2. Players and families will realize the Program comes first, Team comes second, Individual comes third.
3. Every player will learn and progress over the season.
4. Coaches will assist students in becoming students of the game of soccer:
  - a. Identify cues of the game
  - b. Assess options
  - c. Make a decision
  - d. Execute
5. Coaches will emphasize defense first. Move the ball. Play with pace and rhythm. Eliminate Mistakes.
6. Compete with Class, Compete By Thinking, Compete As a Team.
7. Win State Tournament, Win Conference Championship, Work Hard, Listen, Learn, Compete, Have Fun.

## **Commitment and Attendance Policy**

Our players are expected to attend all scheduled soccer related events. Please understand it would be very challenging to list every situation or reason for why a player could be tardy for or miss a soccer related event. The discretion of the coaching staff will be consistent and fair when

an attendance related issue occurs. We want all players to have a commitment to each other and the program.

As a member of this soccer program, each player is required to communicate with their coach individually. If a player is unable to attend an activity, then that player (not the parents) will need to contact their coach prior to that event.

### **Communication Process**

Coaches and administration have the authority over who becomes a participant of the team and when the participant plays or is removed from the team. The coaching staff determines coaching strategy. Acceptance of a position on a team and in this program includes acceptance of this policy. It is NEVER acceptable for a parent or player to attempt to discuss playing time with a coach during a game or practice. It is also NEVER acceptable for a player or parent to attempt to discuss the performance or playing time of another participant. Coaches will only discuss playing time with the player.

Head Coach, athlete, and/or parent meetings may help to resolve OTHER issues creating concern or dissatisfaction. Such meetings MUST be scheduled beforehand and will be held at school. Any meeting with a parent may also include an assistant coach, and/or an administrator.

Meetings can be scheduled by contacting Head Coach Ross Nelson by phone or email. Contact should not be made to an assistant coach. If a meeting is requested it should be done through Coach only Nelson. The vast majority of player concerns will be worked out at this level. If the player or parent were not satisfied with what transpired at the coach's level, the next step would be to involve the Athletic Director. If all else fails, the Principal will become involved.

### **Practice Requirements and Expectations**

Practice is a player's time to learn, experiment, and prepare for competition. Trust that if you try what the coaches say, you will become better. Know that you need to be patient through the process of learning. Be willing to step outside your comfort zone and take risks needed to reach your potential.

Practice is your time to prove to yourself, your teammates, and your coaches that you truly deserve to play on game day. Always try to make yourself better today than you were yesterday. You must make some personal sacrifices to ultimately succeed as a team and as an individual.

1. We will have soccer almost every day Monday-Saturday. Expect to have 3-5 practices each week.
2. All outdoor practices will take between 4:00-6:15 pm on the Soccer Stadium Turf Field or the grass practice fields. Practice times may change due to inclement weather or assigned indoor gym time.
3. Players need to wear their practice shirt to every practice.
4. Players must wear properly dressed clothing attire, socks, legal shin guards with the NOCSAE logo, and proper cleats. Players are to wear shin guards at all times until their coach tells them otherwise.
5. Players must have a properly inflated ball and bring their own water.
6. Players are expected to attend every practice, on time, from start to finish.
7. Appropriate behavior and language is expected at all times as well as maximum effort

### **Game Requirements and Expectations**

1. Expect to have 2-3 games each week.
2. Report on time. Going to the trainer should be done well in advance.
3. Place bags and equipment neatly behind our team bench.
4. Do not worry about warm-up music, you are here to play a game.
5. Be engaged in the game whether you are playing or on the bench. Listen and learn. Conversations should be about the game in progress.
6. Players receiving a yellow card for dissent (inappropriate behavior at the referee, both non-verbal and verbal) will have consequences. It may include sitting at least the remainder of that game and may include serving an additional one game suspension.
7. Keep the bench area clean for both home and away games. Keep your team bags in an organized line.
8. Remove any jewelry prior to the game. By NFHS policy, it is a mandatory yellow card (caution) to the head coach. Players may sit the remainder of the game as a result.
9. No cell phones allowed on the sidelines. You are here to play and support your team. Phones will be taken by the coach.

### **Equipment Requirements and Expectations**

1. Players should keep clothes at school to practice, run, or workout in for any and all conditions. Practices and games will take place in cold, snow, rain, or whatever else Wisconsin weather might throw at us! Clothing should include shorts, pants, shirts, long-sleeve shirts, sweatshirt, jacket, socks, shoes, stocking cap, gloves, and extra dry clothes.
2. All players should have the proper shoes. This includes cleats for outdoor and running shoes for indoor. Be prepared for indoor or outdoor practice.
3. Players need to have a properly inflated ball and appropriate workout attire.
4. Players are to wear shin guards at all times. Please buy shin guards that are appropriate in age and size and also has the NOCSAE logo.
5. Players need to have their own water bottle at all times.

### **Uniform and Clothing Requirements and Expectation**

1. The coaching staff will provide every player in the program with a home and away game jersey (white and dark), shorts, bag, reversible pinnie, socks, program t-shirt, and program warm up top.
2. The Booster Club will cover the cost and distribute one bag.
3. Uniforms, shorts, and pinnies need to be returned to their level coach on the final day of competition each season. Theft, loss, or damage of equipment will result in the player needing to pay for a replacement.
4. Any clothes worn under the uniform must match the solid (dominant) color of the jersey.
5. Players and families will have a chance to purchase spirit wear. Purchasing any items is optional.
6. Any clothing created or made by any player needs to be cleared by Head Coach Ross Nelson prior to being purchased or worn.

## **Traditions**

### **DRESS UP DAYS**

We may have players at all levels participate in formal dress up days. This is a great way to bring positive attention to our games. On other game days players may choose to wear game jerseys or program gear. All dress up days or themes need to be cleared with Coach Nelson prior to wearing them to school.

### **KIDS CLINIC**

If we have a clinic, all Varsity players will participate in the annual youth clinic. This event usually takes place on a Sunday afternoon for a three hour period. This is a mandatory event all Varsity players must attend.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

There is a chance that all players will participate in a community service event at some point during the season. Our coaching staff will notify all players and parents of such an event in a timely manner once details are finalized. Community Service events are also mandatory for all players to attend.

## **Team Dinners**

Coaches, players, parents/guardians may arrange team dinners throughout the season. Team dinners will take place after practice. Team dinners will take place at school, at a restaurant, or at the home of a player on your team. The freshmen and JV level will need the help of parent drivers. At the JV and Varsity level, players are allowed to drive themselves and other players. Players need to remember team dinners are a privilege. It is an honor to attend, and should be realized by all players. Parents put forward a tremendous amount of work to provide our meals. Take PRIDE in that and be thankful. Players should show their appreciation by acting polite and always disposing of your trash properly. Thank our supporters as you leave.

## **Social Media Guidelines**

The Waunakee Athletic Code includes language that social media posts that put the school, coaches, athletes, etc. in a bad light are subject to Athletic Code violations. Our Athletic Code states the following in regards to social media guidelines:

*The same rules of appropriate, respectful behavior which apply to Waunakee High School student-athletes, also apply in on-line environments such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, message boards, and any other social media site. WHS student-athletes are to conduct themselves in a manner that is representative of their pride and respect for themselves, their families, their school, and their community at all times, whether in person or on-line. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to: indecent language, racism, sexism, homophobia, indecent pictures or videos, bullying, trash talking, and criticism of opponents, coaches, teammates, or game officials. Student-athletes who re-post inappropriate material originally written by others are subject to the same consequences as if they had posted it themselves. Student-athletes who fail to meet this expectation and who violate the code of conduct on-line are subject to the same consequences as if they did them in person.*

# **“WE ARE WAUNAKEE”**