**Reuben Hart – Biography, Coaching and**

**Player Development Philosophy**

As a youth, I played soccer recreationally and in high school before my family moved to rural Arizona, where there were no high school or club soccer teams, so I appreciate what a great opportunity it is to have a club like Arundel Soccer Association in which to play and learn soccer. I played intramural soccer at the US Naval Academy and in an adult league while serving as an Officer in the Navy and on and off as an adult. I returned to soccer when my son started playing ASA Clinic soccer seven years ago, and became a student of the game to contribute in whatever ways he could to the soccer development of his children and their teams. Like many parents, I want to do the best for my children, other children, for ASA as a club, and soccer/youth sports in general, so volunteered to coach when I saw a need. Coaching soccer and the opportunity it affords to make small, day-to-day differences in player development of soccer skills/strategy, physical fitness, life skills such as teamwork, sportsmanship, handling adversity, and responsibility, and simple enjoyment of the game have been extraordinarily rewarding for me.

**Coaching Experience and Qualifications**

* US Soccer Federation (USSF) Coaching “E” License (January 2013, required in Maryland for head coaches through U12)
* Head Coach of an ASA Tigresse 2015-17
  + Spring 2017 Columbia Invitational Finalist GU10
  + CMSSL GU10 Division 2 Spring 2017, 6-0 and 33 point goal differential
    - Moved to division 2 to give team opportunity to work on offense/possession
  + CMSSL GU10 Division 1 Fall 2016
    - Finished middle of the table with 4 of the top 10 teams in Maryland
    - Games against Pipeline Black book-ended the season and performance went from a 0-3 beginning season loss to a 0-0 tie with more possession and scoring opportunities
  + CMSSL GU8 Division 1 Spring 2016 – first season as a travel team
    - Finished 6-1-1, 2nd in the table
* Head Coach of an ASA Juniors (U7/8) team Spring 2012
  + Coached the team to an 8-1 regular season record in its first season moving up from Clinic U5/6
  + Won the ASA Day end-of-season Juniors Tournament (with a team that had nearly the youngest average player age in the tournament)
* Head Coach of ASA Fire Clinic Team Fall 2013/Spring 2014
* Assistant coach for five seasons (one Clinic, one Juniors, two County U8, one Travel U9)
* Teams that I’ve head or assistant coached have achieved the following:
  + 2012 ASA Day Juniors Tournament Champions
  + 2012 Arundel Cup Tournament Juniors Champions (Head Coach)
  + 2013 ASA Day Juniors Tournament – Second Place
  + 2013 Sand Duels Tournament U8 Champions
  + Fall 2013 AA County Division 2 Champions (undefeated)
  + 2013 Mountain Road Tournament U8 Champions
  + 2013 November Cup Tournament U9 Champions
* Futsal Coaching:
  + 2013 DCFA End of Summer Tournament
  + Winter 2013 Session 1 U6/U7 Team
  + Winter 2013 Session 2 U6/U7 Team (champions)
  + Winter 2013 Session 2 U8 Team (champions)
  + Winter 2017 Session 1 U10 Girls
* Played Adult County Soccer (Fall 2015 – Spring 2016, Div 2 Champions), Indoor Soccer League (Fall 2013 - Winter 2014)

**Coaching Philosophy**

I strive to help players develop mentally, physically, and as young people while learning about teamwork, friendship, sports, and the game of soccer. I make every effort to provide players a safe, healthy, enjoyable, age-appropriate learning environment where players will gain soccer skills and knowledge through positive feedback, encouragement and contagious fun. Through the use of proper drills, activities and games, I help players to learn the importance of hard work, commitment, teamwork and leadership, emphasizing individuality while sublimating personal desire to standout to team success. I work to make practices as fun as possible to help players learn to enjoy soccer, if not develop a life-time love for the sport.

Through training, practice, games and positive reinforcement, we will build player confidence as individuals and as a team and give them opportunity to demonstrate that confidence on and off the field. We will try to avoid negative feedback by coaching with positive suggestions for improvement. We will help players learn that it is great to win, but it is more important to play, try and be our best. We will always respect the game by practicing, playing, and representing ourselves with professionalism that conveys dignity and respect for the families, supporters, associations, and community that give us the opportunity to play. We will always be prepared, and will treat ourselves, our teammates, our opponents, our equipment, spectators, and officials with respect at all times. We will be stewards for the game of soccer and leave only positive contributions to game behind.

**Optimizing Development**

As I have done throughout my professional carreer, I have spent many hundreds, even thousands of hours researching soccer techniques, training, coaching and drills, reading books, gathering best practices from other coaches, and incorporating the latest scientific studies of kinesiology, workouts and training techniques toward practice optimization and maximizing player development, while avoiding the ineffective, out-of-date training techniques from the past. Our players have developed into some of the best players in the area and consistently developed faster than peers and out-performed expectations.

I believe the most important accelerant of youth soccer player development is getting quality touches in games, game-like scenarios and competitions at game speed that allow players the freedom to be creative and the opportunity experiential learning. Challenged in this way, players develop the strength, coordination, agility, and skills to become good soccer players and all-around athletes fastest. Many coaches emphasize drills that queue players for extended time in lines or do not simulate game-like movement and speed, rendering them ineffective and poor learning tools. I avoid or minimize lines whenever possible, create as many game-speed and game-like activities as possible, while giving players the leeway to learn and experiment on their own. Sometimes the best coaching is to say nothing at all and allow the players to experiment, be creative, and make and learn from their own errors.

We will work to optimize practice and training for the bulk of the team, as opposed to only the best or only the weakest players on the team. At the same time, we will do our best to learn each individual’s level of development, skills, abilities, and interests toward the game and then tailor practices, drill scenarios, and games to enhance their play and development. I will, to the extent possible, provide extra coaching on the side to players falling behind on skills and to continue challenging players ahead of the curve. The competitiveness of the practices and games will reflect the target competitiveness of our players and league modified by the goals of our parents & coaches (from pure fun for recreational, to competitive for county, and to very competitive for travel and beyond).

Strategies for optimizing practices include:

* Modifying games such that all or as many players as possible have a ball as much as possible and players do not sit out or get eliminated
* Fast footwork, sprints, and speed and agility drills for speed development early in practice where they can gain the most from fresh muscles
* Skills & technique are introduced, practiced, or reviewed early in the practice
* Games that enhance game-speed play and stamina and a sense of the ball as an extension of the body are done mid-practice
* Small-sided soccer games near the end of practices and scrimmages at the end of every practice
* Keep practices moving quickly from activity to activity and distribute training topics throughout the practice such that we spend no more than a couple minutes at a time speaking about any topic, so as not to lose player attention/focus
* Do not spend time on warm-ups and stretching as they are mostly unnecessary at this age and waste precious practice time (per US Youth Soccer and several other resources)
* At the U11/U12, we will work on passing, possession, positioning, teamwork, and advanced individual and 1v1 skills, field vision, tactics and competitive team strategies.

**Player Expectations**

* Players are expected to attend all practices and arrive on time. If a player misses a practice, notification should be sent to the Team Manager via text, email or voice mail. Practices are an extremely important part of a player’s development and critical to the team’s development and game day preparation.
* Players are expected to attend all games (regular season and tournaments). If a player will miss a game, advanced notice should be sent to the Coach and Team Manager via email or text as soon as practical. Player availability should also be updated in the Availability section of the Team website.
* Any player that plays another sport will be expected to provide the Coach with a copy of the other team’s schedule and/or dates of conflict prior to the start of the season. The Coach and player’s parents will discuss the conflicts in advance to work out a schedule that is acceptable to all.
* At the elite travel level, players are expected to practice at home (dribbling, moves, juggling, shooting/striking the ball, etc.). ASA Tigresse will only practice twice (occasionally 3 times) per week and can only afford a limited amount of practice time for technique development, so independent self-practice/home practice is a foundational component of a player’s continued development.
* Players are expected to maintain conditioning during the off season and throughout the season. Players who are not in condition slow practices, training, development, and hurt team performance in league and tournament games. To compete at the elite travel level, all players must maintain a high level of fitness before, during, and between seasons. Players are also expected to come to practices and games rested, hydrated, and with appropriate sports nutrition.
* Players are strongly encouraged to watch soccer, soccer commentary shows, and play soccer (even electronic soccer games), which will help to increase player’s understanding of the game and provide a framework for digesting the nuances of training and game play.