

One of the most common obstacles for new teams in the MWSL is a lack of organization and experience running a team. For this reason, the MWSL interviewed some of our more experienced team reps to get an idea of what they do to make the experience of team managing more enjoyable. Here is a list of some of their best tips to reduce stress.

Do

- **Contact potential roster members early** in the year (most start at least gathering players who may be interested around Feb-March, but can continue throughout the spring) and choose a date where a commitment to the team is required.
- **If you are securing your own fields for the season, do that EARLY.** The sooner you do this, the better your chances will be at getting the fields you want.
- **Collect a deposit from each player** to help cover the Team Registration Fee (most teams collect between \$50 and \$100 dollars), then collect the remainder of fees by the date of the first game. Alternatively, managers can collect a one-time payment from players after all the fees are calculated, but this often helps to solidify a player's place on the roster.
- **Have a team meeting at the beginning of the year or send a "Beginning of Season" email to get everyone on the same page.** This is a great way to set expectations, gather deposits as needed, understand players' commitments and discuss with the team any issues. If you haven't already, provide a breakdown of summer costs so players understand what they are being charged and why.
- **Communicate important or reoccurring MWSL rules** to your team, like forfeits, bad weather situations, or changes to the Laws of the Game. Some of these things may require that you collect extra funds from your players.
- **Utilize TeamConnect or another means of quickly communicating with players** so you can send game day information and keep everyone in the loop. This is a great way to send out reminders about upcoming games as well and collect attendance for those games.
- **Designate someone to take care of equipment for each game.** Most often managers can take on the responsibility of flags, nets, or equipment, but this role can be delegated.
- **Designate a backup manager** if you are not available for a game. Only those designated as "Coaches" in the TeamConnect system have access to printing rosters and other game-day information.
- **Always be aware of when you might need subs.** Get an idea of when players will be on vacation or require their attendance by a certain date so you can determine if subs are needed and aren't scrambling hours before kickoff.
- It's not a bad idea to **keep spare equipment with you for players to use**, like shin guards, socks, first aid equipment, jerseys, etc. There's always someone who will forget something.
- **Have a way to pay referees at halftime.** This can be by check or cash.

Don't

- **Charge players different costs for different amounts of playing time** (i.e. all players must pay the same amount regardless if they are going to make all the games)
- **Give out any personal information you collect about the players.** The MWSL has a strict policy against this.
- **Allow players to play without providing you with the remainder of their team fee.**
- **Take on all the responsibility to run the team on your own.** Designate certain tasks for players (i.e. nets, communication, fees, etc.).
- **Figure it all out yourself!** There are several other team managers and board members who are seasoned veterans in the league who are more than happy to help or explain a procedure.