



Representative (Rep) Handbook

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1. Introduction

This document has been created to give the Representative head coach and their team staff an overview of how a Representative team functions. It has been developed based on past experiences and will be revised after the 2025 season, incorporating insights and the registered league rules. The goal is to produce a document that will serve as an effective guide for Representative teams each year.

Terminology

The Club = Saugeen Shores United Football Club or SSUFC.

Rep team = Representative team. Note that the *SSUFC Representative Program* includes all reps, festival, all-star and tournament teams.

SSUFC = Saugeen Shores United Football Club

1.1 General Principles

The Rep team is conducted under the SSUFC banner. This means that the team has to be run consistent with Club rules. In general, all policies and procedures that apply at a Club level also apply at Rep level. For this reason, general policies and procedures will not be restated in this document. They can be found at: <https://www.ssunitedfc.com/page/show/4672069-policies>

Playing Rep typically means playing at a higher level and representing the Club further afield. For this reason, additional rules apply.

The Rep team operates separately from the Club's House League and Lakeshore League. Whilst the Club has responsibility for operating soccer locally, **the head coach is responsible for operating their Rep team. The head coach is accountable for the operation of the team.** This means that the head coach needs to be able to articulate plans, operations, decisions, etc. to players, parents, the Club and the wider community.

The Club is responsible for appointing suitable candidates to Rep management positions. The Club is also responsible for providing a suitable point of contact to liaise with the Rep teams. This position is the Rep Program Manager (RPM). The RPM will be your first line of contact with the Club.

The RPM can be contacted at **rep@ssunitedfc.com**. The RPM is a Club operating committee position, and reports to the Board of Directors on a periodic basis.

Good sportsmanship, integrity, and transparency are the cornerstones of managing a Rep team. Excellent communication with all parties is expected.

Rep team players, parents and staff are reminded that they are representing SSUFC and the community of Saugeen Shores when they play. The conduct of players, parents and staff will be a reflection of our local community. All parties should be mindful of this at both home and away games.

2. Pre-Season

Appointing the head coach for the Rep team

Applications for head coach take place in August prior to the playing year. For the upcoming playing season, applications must be submitted by August 15, of the current year. Application forms are available on the Club's website. Each candidate will be interviewed within 30 days. Appointments will be announced no later than September. Head coaches are appointed for one playing season. The interview will be conducted to assess each candidate's ability to fulfill the responsibilities of the role. The head coach's responsibilities and duties are given at the end of this document.

2.1 Rep team tryouts

Initial Rep tryouts will be held in the fall prior to the outdoor season. However, further tryouts should take place in the pre-season spring to confirm the final roster. The Club will post notices about tryouts on behalf of the Rep team. General principles are that any player can attend the tryout of their specific age level. Players should attempt to attend a minimum of 50% of tryouts.

Tryouts must be structured around evaluations of individual players. The evaluations should be conducted by the RPM and other community members with input from the head coach. Evaluators (Selection Committee) are independent of the players taking part in the tryouts. It is the head coach's responsibility to have field evaluation sheets with players' names/info for the selection committee.

2.2 Player selection for the Rep team

Player selection is made based on the evaluations from the selection committee and head coach. The RPM and or Vice President runs this committee with the head coach having input on player selections.

The selection committee and head coach must be able to defend their decision to include and exclude players from the Rep team. Parents with an interest in the Rep program can challenge the Club as to how decisions have been made. For this reason, evaluations must be kept for the season. The Club can ask for player evaluations at any time. A player or parent can request to see their (child's) evaluation. Ideally the evaluation is provided in person by the RPM with an opportunity for discussion. The player and / or parent is permitted to have a copy.

2.3 Appointing Rep team staff

2.4 Season plan

The head coach will have a plan that will help develop the players and the entire team. This should include an outline of the season program. It can include pre-season training and conditioning activities. The plan should include objectives for the team, as well as resources needed to meet the program. example of some training material can be found in <https://www.ontariosoccer.net/>

2.5 Pre-season administration

Rep teams have significantly more administration compared with Lakeshore Soccer League and House League. Many of the deadlines are pre-season (February to April period).

The administration is ultimately the responsibility of the head coach, but the RPM will help navigate the procedures and deadlines.

Administration that needs to be completed includes:

- Player and team staff registration. Before players can be a part of the Rep team, they must be registered with the Club.
- Registration with Sports Engine Ontario Soccer (SEOS). All players and team staff must have a SEOS player registration booklet. These books are known as Player Cards or Player Books.
- Player roster. The head coach must submit a completed player roster with names of the players for the season. This must be submitted to the RPM before March 31.
- The Club will arrange and pay the Club bond for each Rep team.
- Call-up players. The process for selecting call-up players should be fair and transparent. A player's priority is to their team (practice & game), not to the rep team. The number of call-ups will be determined by both the Head Coach along with the RPM/ Vice President prior to the season. Players selected will be playing either for Rep team one age division lower or players in the same birth year playing in Lakeshore or HL. (Example U10 Rep <> U10 Local League, U15 Rep <> same BY of those playing rep).

- Each representative team should review and address the blackout dates for tournaments and festivals, then share the relevant information with the respective districts where they intend to register.
- The Club sets the Rep fees after discussion with each team. The Rep fees for each team may vary. **In general, Rep teams are expected to be financially independent.** Rep fees need to cover uniform costs, tournament costs, ref fees, fines, and additional training. Fees must also cover other anticipated costs such as staff training and transportation.
- Each Rep team will use a Club sanctioned bank account to manage finances. The Club Treasurer will be the point of contact. The overall principle is that team finances are transparent. The team manager is responsible for the finances and is accountable to the parents and the Club as to how the funds are used. Typically, the Club does not pass on the Club registration fee of players.
- Rep teams are encouraged to complete fundraising and seek sponsorship. It is the responsibility of each team to do their own fundraising and approach potential sponsors. Teams need approval before approaching companies / individuals to ensure that there is no duplication of sponsorship.
- The club established a policy or deadline by which the coaching staff must complete the necessary certification.

- At the time of writing, the qualification requirements for Rep team staff are:

Respect in Sport (RIS), Making Headway, Emergency Action Plan (EAP), understanding the rule of two and Making Ethical Decisions (MED).

Coaches must also have the following theory & practical certification:

Learn To Train (U9-U12) OR Soccer 4 Life (U13+).

- Teams have the option to select their own uniforms, but they should adhere to the club's colours (blue and white). The club strongly prefers that all representative teams wear the same-coloured jersey, if feasible. Teams are responsible for covering the costs of player uniforms and coaching attire.

2.6 Pre-season parent meeting

This should take place once the players have been selected. The RPM should be present at this meeting. Areas to cover include introductions, coaching philosophy, season plan, player development, expectations, finances / budget, fundraising, practices, league games, tournaments, anticipated player absences and scheduling conflicts. Again, good communication is the foundation of the team. Coaches can utilize the sport engine app as an application for communication with parents and other coaching team members.

The Club supports the **24-hour rule** which is that parents cannot approach the Rep team staff about an issue until 24 hours have expired. There are exceptions to this. For example, a significant safety matter which should be addressed immediately. The 24-hour rule is designed to allow a *cooling-off* period which is time for both sides to consider the matter more dispassionately. Parents should first speak with the Rep team staff if there is a matter to be discussed or resolved. Parents can then contact the RPM if they still have concerns. Parents should be given the contact information of the RPM.

3. Playing Season

3.1 In-season

These issues apply to all Club teams including Rep teams:

- The team needs approval to play or practice on any Club soccer field.
- The Rep team has to fit into the Club's playing schedule. It does not get priority over House League or Lakeshore League.
- Any injury (including concussion) or incident must be documented. The Club has policies that must be followed in these circumstances. These can be found at:
 - Injuries: <https://www.ssunitedfc.com/page/show/4686107-player-injury-report-form>
 - Incidents: <https://www.ssunitedfc.com/page/show/4748543-incident-report-form->
- Any changes to the team roster during the playing season must be done in accordance with Club and league rules
- All players, parents/guardians and team staff must be made aware of the Club's code of conduct and Club related policies. Parents must have signed acceptance of the code of conduct as part of Club registration.
- It is the responsibility of the team staff to familiarize themselves with league and tournament rules and regulations. This includes travel permits, scheduling officials, paying officials and paying fees and fines.
- Teams must have all documents as required by the league or tournament. In particular, player cards must be available.
- Only one person is allowed to stand on side lines and authorized to convey tactical instructions from the technical area to players

- Only rostered players and team staff are allowed at the bench (technical area) during games.
- The team is responsible for paying all fines levied against a team member. **The Club is not responsible for any fines that fall under team responsibilities.**
- The Club does not have a policy on equal playing time for all players on a team. There is an expectation that all players will be treated fairly and equally.
- It is the responsibility of the team staff to decide how to handle non-attendance, poor behavior, etc. of players and staff. This needs to be communicated to players and parents at the outset.
- Any contravention of Club policies by players or staff is subject to discipline.

4. Post-season

The team needs to be disbanded once all the season games have been played. The following administrative issues need to be performed. There may be other informal *season ends* for each team.

4.1 Player evaluation

At the end of the season, each player should receive a performance evaluation from the head coach. This does not have to be in writing, but the Club may ask to see or hear examples of evaluations.

4.2 Player cards

Player cards must be given to each player. They are the property of players.

4.3 Final communication with parents

There should be a summary to formally bring the season and team to an end. This should be communicated to players and parents. It does not have to be in person.

4.4 Finances

The team manager should provide parents and the Club with a detailed summary of the season's finances. Refunds (if applicable) should be issued. The bank account needs to be closed before the end of the calendar year.

4.5 Seasons debrief

The RPM will do a debrief of the season with the team staff. This will typically take place in September or October.

4.6 General issues not covered elsewhere

- All female Rep teams must have at least one female staff and/or parent-guardian present at the field.
- The Club aims to help **all** potential players take part in soccer. If a player is selected for a Rep team but will have difficulty paying the Rep fees, this can be discussed with the RPM. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in light of the financial standing of the Club. A decision for one season will not necessarily apply to another season.

5. Appendix

5.1 Head coach duties:

- Is responsible for the overall operation of the Rep team.
- Prepares player evaluation schedules for tryouts. Familiarize themselves with the Club's evaluation assessment sheets.
- Setups and conducts player tryouts in conjunction with the RPM.
- Selects team staff and outlines their duties and responsibilities.
- Prepares a season plan including development goals, training schedules etc.
- Holds a minimum of two team meetings during the year with players and parents.
- Trains the team during the season, either directly or indirectly.
- Coaches during games.
- Communicates with the players regularly.
- Ensures that all players are treated fairly.
- Is the first line of communication for parents when a potential grievance is identified.
- Liaises regularly with RPM.
- Is one of the signing authorities for the team bank account.
- Performs final evaluations and feedback to each player at the end of the season.
- Attends meetings, reviews etc. as requested by the Club throughout the season.

- Acts in a manner to promote the reputation of Rep soccer, SSUFC and good sportsmanship in general.

5.2 Assistant coach duties:

The assistant coach acts in the capacity as head coach if the latter is absent. For this reason, the assistant coach has the same responsibilities as the head coach including course certifications. In addition:

- Prioritizes the safety of players on the field.

5.3 Team manager duties:

- Oversees all of the administrative duties of the team.
- Creates a team budget.
- Orders uniforms.
- Maintains a database of players, parents and team staff (via Sports Engine).
- Maintains a database of medical information of all players.
- Ensures players are registered, rostered etc. for games and tournaments, and that players have their player cards.
- Ensure all game sheets are uploaded to the league website according to league requirements
- Organizes travel arrangements including Application to Travel forms (ATF) for tournaments.
- Books facilities including game officials if necessary.
- Ensure all fees are paid.
- Ensure all fines are paid.
- Ensures that any injury or incident is documented.
- Follows Club policy on injuries, incidents etc.
- Keeps an account of all financial transactions of the team and shares this information with parents and the Club.
- Is one of the signing authorities for the team bank account.
- Acts in a manner to promote the reputation of Rep soccer, SSUFC and good sportsmanship in general.

5.4 Rep Program Manager duties:

- Regularly check club email rep@ssunitedfc.com
- Is the liaison between each Rep team and the Club.
- Offers support, advice and oversight to each Rep team.
- Is part of the interview panel evaluating applicants for the head coach position.
- Conducts Rep team tryouts with assistance from other evaluators, the Club and head coach.

- Runs the player selection committee.
- Conducts a season end debrief with Rep team staff.
- Updates the Board, on a periodic basis, with Rep team matters.
- Acts in a manner to promote the reputation of Rep soccer, SSUFC and good sportsmanship in general.
- SWDSL Contact
- SWDSL Responsibilities
<https://swrsl.e2esoccer.com/PageDisplay.aspx?SideMenuID=151>

6. CHECKLIST:

- Playing out of District EMSA
- Playing in District SouthWest
- Print/Download Admin Process
- Pre-Season Admin Deadlines
- League Rules
- League Meeting Date(s)
- Coaching Courses & Quals completed