

**MRL MANAGER HANDBOOK**  
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**Congratulations on your appointment as a team manager  
For The Grand Rapids Crew Juniors!**

As the direct link between your coach, athlete and parents, your job is essential. This handbook is meant to be both informative and helpful, but I strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with the [Midwestregionalleague.org](http://Midwestregionalleague.org) website, which will have most important information in it.

Your team will be playing in the MRL league. There are some identical manager responsibilities inherent in both MRL and Premier Programs and also some differences. This handbook is designed specifically for **MRL Teams**.

As your Team Manager Liaison, I report directly to the GRCJ Board of Directors. I welcome any and all questions/concerns...feel free to call or email me at anytime, and if I don't have the answer, I will find the person who does.

On behalf of the GRCJ Board, our deepest thanks for volunteering in this important capacity. Listed below are some important contacts within our Club and also websites you will be frequenting. Please take time to look over the websites.

<u>Team Manager Liaison</u> Michelle Young (616) 942-0474 <a href="mailto:michelle.young@comcast.net">michelle.young@comcast.net</a>	<u>Risk Management Coordinator</u> Ken Coviak (616) 676-2873 <a href="mailto:KenCoviak@grcrewjuniors.org">KenCoviak@grcrewjuniors.org</a>	<u>MI Ref Assignor for MRL</u> Francisco Villaruel (517) 290-7681 <a href="mailto:syramich@gmail.com">syramich@gmail.com</a>
<u>Treasurer</u> Lewis Robinson (616) 828-7150 <a href="mailto:treasurer@grcrewjuniors.org">treasurer@grcrewjuniors.org</a>	<u>Club Administrator &amp; Registrar</u> Dana Hoebeke (616) 366-7326 <a href="mailto:registrar@grcrewjuniors.org">registrar@grcrewjuniors.org</a>	<u>Field Coordinator</u> Chip Hoebeke (616) 308-2821 <a href="mailto:Chip.hoebeke@rehmann.net">Chip.hoebeke@rehmann.net</a>
<u>MRL Commissioner</u> Paul Luchowski (440) 353-1199 <a href="mailto:mrlcommissioner@region2.com">mrlcommissioner@region2.com</a>	Helpful Websites: <a href="http://www.grcrewjuniors.org">www.grcrewjuniors.org</a> (Grand Rapids Crew Juniors) <a href="http://www.msya.net">www.msya.net</a> (State Cup) <a href="http://www.midwestregionalleague.com">www.midwestregionalleague.com</a> (MRL)	

## Pre Season Tasks

### Delegate responsibility to team parents.

Do not try to do everything yourself! First of all, there can be lot of work to do, and it can be overwhelming. Second, if you don't delegate work to other parents, they will not understand all that goes into running a team.

The tasks are described below as the team manager's job. Some of these tasks can and should be delegated to responsible team parents.

- Parent Meeting. Work with your coach to arrange for an athlete/parent team meeting. Check with your coach and find an agreeable date, time and place. Some of the topics that might be covered at this meeting include:
  - Practice schedule and location
  - Game schedule and locations (if available at this time)
  - Coach background and experience
  - Coaching and game philosophy
  - Athlete positional expectations, playing time expectations
  - What is expected of players at practice, games
  - What is expected of parents at practice, games, behind the scenes
  - Team costs that are anticipated (beyond the registration fee), supplemental training, tournaments, indoor soccer, winter training, etc.
  
- Prepare and distribute Athlete Information. **It is CRUCIAL that you let your team know that your primary method of communication will be by email.** Establish that all families have email access and then ask that they check their email for any update at least once a day. This cuts down on phone calls by you at the last minute.
  
- Distribute relevant information to each athlete. You can email each family this information to cut paper costs. The information provided to each athlete might include:
  - Team roster (athlete's name and jersey number, address, phone numbers, parent names, etc. and include coach and manager contact info)
  - Game schedule (dates, times, locations, opponents)
  - Practice schedule

- Maps or addresses to field locations (OR links to the maps)
  - Phone tree/email listing (make sure that it is "fool proof" and everyone will be notified)
  - Tournament information (hotel info, hotel map/directions, field maps, game schedule)
  - (If you are really motivated, you can do a tiny "cheat sheet" and laminate it showing the athletes' names, parents' names, athlete number, phone number, etc.)
- Applying for a Risk Management (RM) Card. If you do not have a RM Card, apply for one. Send email to our Risk Management Coordinator to initiate the process. The cost is nominal, and it remains valid for several years. **This is required for ALL managers and coaches.** Upon receiving your receipt, please forward this information to the GRCJ Registrar and Risk Management Coordinator, emails listed on the front page.
- Player Cards. Player pass cards will be given to you prior to the beginning of the season. You will need to take the cards and get each athlete to sign on the back. I would then suggest both laminating them and placing them on a key ring. (alphabetically), as they must be presented to the referees prior to each game. (Remember to have the athletes sign them before you laminate them!) Keep these in a safe place as you will need them for all games!
- US Club Pass cards. If teams will be traveling to more than 2 out of state tournys, they may be asked by GRCJ to register under US Club Soccer. This is a separate league than the State League used for MRL.
- Medical Release Forms, Player Code of Conduct and Consent-to-Travel Forms. At the managers' meeting, each of you should receive these forms. Please check each one carefully to make sure it is properly signed and that the medical release is notarized. You should make copies of each and keep them in your notebook. Please note that you may need to present the "original" medical releases upon check-in at tournaments. If you are missing one, it is your responsibility to acquire one from the parents.
- First Aid Kits. You will receive a First Aid Kit for the team. The first aid kits must be turned in at the end of the season so items may be replaced for next season.

- Scheduling of League Matches. On the MRL website, they list the day, time and location of the scheduling meeting. U14 age groups have their schedule set by the MRL. U15 and above need to set their own. Many of the teams will choose to start making phone calls ahead of time and try to work out the schedule before the actual meeting. If that happens, and all parties agree, then no one needs to be present for the meeting.
- Once the schedule is posted on the website, it is considered final, so make sure and double check it right away for any errors. Contact the MRL Commissioner for any errors/changes.
- Lodging for MRL Weekends. It is important that as soon as your schedule is confirmed, you book lodging for your team. The MRL weekends are extremely busy and usually very short on hotels. That information is listed on the MRL website.

Information on Hosting. Some games are played at team's own home fields, or a neutral field as opposed to sites that are designated as MRL weekend locations. (These games are called "One-Offs)". In that case, your team is considered to be the "host". Information on hosting and site coordinators can be found at the following link:

[http://www.midwestregionalleague.com/2011\\_Fall\\_Season/hostingfall.htm](http://www.midwestregionalleague.com/2011_Fall_Season/hostingfall.htm)

Referee Fees. You will be issued a check made payable to you as team manager for referee fees for the season. Referees require cash payment. You will need to cash the check and obtain cash in suitable denominations to pay the referees at each game.

Referees and Assistant Referees appointed under the provisions of these MRL Rules shall be paid at the conclusion of the match upon receipt by the Site Coordinator of the MRL Referee Report, Game Cards, and Team Rosters. Each team is responsible for payment of one half of the MRL required fees of the match officials.

- (a) Referee fees for U-17 and U-18 games shall total \$140.00 (\$60 for Referee and \$40 for each Assistant Referee). (Each team pays half)
- (b) Referee fees for U-15 and U16 games shall total \$120.00 (\$50 for Referee and \$35 for each Assistant Referee). (Each team pays half)

- (c) Referee fees for U-14 games shall total \$100.00 (\$40 for Referee and \$30 for each Assistant Referee). (Each team pays half)

If fields are closed and/or games are cancelled and the referees are not notified prior to their arrival at the site, the officials will be paid for their first scheduled match only. The site coordinator is responsible for collecting the referee fees prior to the match, and distributing them to the Officials.

In the event that there is only one Assistant Referee, only one Assistant Referee payment is made. The other Assistant Referee fee may be paid to a club assistant referee, if they are a registered USSF official.

**If you have a referee no show, please call the MRL Ref Assignor, phone number on the front of this handbook. The MRL is responsible for assigning all of the referees for league games.**

### **STATE CUP-IMPORTANT!**

GRCJ pays for your registration fee and coach expenses for the State Cup. **YOU MUST REGISTER YOUR TEAM BEFORE THE DEADLINE**, which can be found at [www.msypa.net](http://www.msypa.net). Application is under Tournaments. Once the brackets are published, you and/or your coach will need to schedule your preliminary home games. MSYSA will post who your opponent will be and whether it is away or home. There are 3 preliminary games. You will need to input that into their system. They have very unforgiving deadlines so please read through this section carefully!!

## MRL Game Day Procedures

- You can find these on the websites listed on the front page. Link: <http://sports.activecm.net/Assets/Midwest+Regional+League+Digital+Assets/MRL+Assets/pdf/MRLRules.pdf>
- Near the beginning of the season, the MRL website will post game day forms you will need to download and fill out for your games.
- Confirmation of Games/maps. Any team that is hosting (you are the home field) should send out maps and information to the opposing teams. Should your field location be a host site for more than one game, please see the information on the MRL website about hosting. This is found at this link under 2011 Fall Season or 2011 Spring Season "hosting information": <http://www.midwestregionalleague.com>

### Basic list of what you should bring to each game:

- Player and Coach pass cards  
US Youth Soccer Member Passes shall be presented to the referee upon entering the field of play. Passes will be returned to the players at the end of the half. Players will present passes upon entering the match during the second half. This rule shall not apply for U-14 age group as due to the open substitution rule for this age group, all player passes are to be presented to the Referee prior to the game.
- MRL Lineup Game Card
- A copy of their Official MRL Roster and Official MRL Team Guest Roster Lineup Game Cards are to be given to the Match Referee prior to the start of a match.
- The Official MRL Team Roster and Official MRL Team Guest Roster is to be provided to the opposing team upon request. Each team must complete and provide a three-part copy of the Lineup Game Card to the Referee prior to the match.

### Other Information:

- Field Preparation. The home team is responsible for having the field ready for the game. This should already be taken care of and you should not

need to do much. The field should already be marked, and the nets should be in place. For home games, you should inspect the field and nets upon arriving. Problems with the nets should be fixed. (Remember, Velcro straps or cable ties only, do not use tape!) The goals must be securely anchored. Objects or litter on the field should be removed. If there are any holes or divots on the field, they should be filled or repaired.

- Uniform Jerseys. The players are responsible for arriving at games with both their white jersey and their black jersey for every game. If it should happen that both teams have similar colors, the home team will change to their alternate jersey.

### Post game

- Retrieve the Player Cards. The player cards are generally returned to the manager or coach after the team is checked. However, if the referee keeps the cards until after the game, **be sure to get them back.** This is specifically for u15 and above due to the substitution rules.
- Verify that the field area is picked up. If necessary, remind athletes and/or families that the field area needs to be cleaned up after the game. **PLEASE TRAIN YOUR ATHLETES TO PICK UP THEIR TEAM BENCH AREA AFTER EVERY GAME.** On our home fields (MVP), if the visiting team does not pick up after themselves, we need to do it. It's all part of the responsibility of taking care of our home fields. **MVP Fieldhouse has a rule that there are no snacks allowed on the turf. There are picnic tables on the concrete provided for your after-game snacks. You are responsible for letting the opposing team know this!**

If your game is the last game of the day on a home field, it is especially important that the field area be THOROUGHLY picked up. This means the entire field, goal areas, spectator areas, and both team areas. If EVERYONE helps out, this can be done quickly in a couple of minutes.

- Score Reporting. If you are the hosting team, you must report the scores to the MRL Commissioner via email. Be sure to include all details (opponent, location, game number, score). Do this within 24 hrs. If you are playing at a designated MRL weekend site, the scores are typically posted by the site coordinator, however, always double check your scores online to ensure accuracy.

## Tournaments

Premier and MRL teams have a built in budget for tournament registration costs. Please check with the GRCJ Treasurer to confirm what that amount is. Once that is spent, it is the team's responsibility to pay for any addition tournament costs, including coach fees/ travel, etc. In addition to this budget, the coaches have their own stipend to use for travel costs, etc. so you will not need to send reimbursement requests in for these expenses.

### Applying to a Tournament

Most tournaments will have a website which will provide general information, an application form, and contact information if you have further questions. ***Pay attention to the application deadline.*** Not all teams will be accepted for every tournament.

It is wise to obtain a thorough team history from your coach and keep it in your files. You will need that to apply to most tournaments.

You will need to either pay for the tournament yourself, then request reimbursement, or the other way around. Either way, please give the GRCJ Treasurer a week turn around to process.

Each time you need a funds reimbursement, please email the GRCJ Treasurer with the Request for Funds Form with any accompanying receipts (usually application receipts). This form is on our website under forms, then for Premier Coaches and Managers. This can be downloaded and filled in electronically, then sent to the Treasurer.

Please also fill out an Auto Debit Authorization form (under the same spot on our website) which will allow the GRCJ Treasurer to make automatic deposits for reimbursements. This is preferred, as it is simpler and more cost effective than having to reimburse you through check writing.

The coach or manager may handle submitting the tournament application, arranging for lodging, applying for any other necessary forms. Sometimes a parent volunteer will handle some or all of the tournament responsibilities.

### Tournament Lodging

Most tournaments at this level require that you handle all hotel reservations through them, and will penalize or disqualify you from the tourney should you not abide by this. Please explain this to your families. Others may provide a list of local hotels, and leave it to you to handle arrangements. Start as early as possible for the best options.

Pay attention to cancellation policies and deadlines. Pay attention to other restrictions (e.g. two night minimum stay). Make sure this information is provided to all families.

When booking a room block for your team, ask if you can put the entire block under one credit card, then ask for a cut-off date, so any rooms in the block that go unbooked will be released. There are some hotels and travel companies that require you to submit a rooming list with individual credit card numbers on them. PLEASE USE COMMON SENSE AND DO NOT EMAIL CC#S.

Get a cell phone number for each family if possible. Tournaments sometimes make last minute changes to schedules, field assignments, etc., and you will need to be able to contact everyone if this happens.

### Tournament Documentation

When going to a tournament you will need to make sure you bring all the paperwork a tournament requires. No one wants to travel for hours and find out that a team or athlete cannot participate because the paperwork was not handled correctly. This is not the same for all tournaments! Make absolutely sure you read the tournament's rules, several times. **If you have questions, call the Tournament Director, not GRCJ or MSYSA. We do not control the tournament and may give out misinformation by accident.**

Most tournaments require the following:

- Player pass cards with pictures and signatures (some tournaments require these to be laminated)
- An Official Roster (signed and sealed by the League Registrar)
- Medical Release forms for their State
  - Note that if the tournament is in another state (e.g. Illinois), the tournament may require that state's Medical Release form. If so, they will typically provide it with the tournament application or your acceptance into the tournament.
- Player Cards and Team Rosters for Guest Players

They may ask for additional information:

- Guest Player Roster
- Tournament Roster
- Photocopy of Risk Management ID cards for coaches and manager
- Anything else they think of ...

An out of state tournament will require that you submit an approved USYSA *Application to Travel* form. This can be found and paid for online at [www.msysa.net](http://www.msysa.net). If your team possesses US Club passes this is not necessary.

Two procedures cause the most problems. For all out of state tournaments the *USYSA Application to Travel* form must be obtained. This is now done with an online application on the MSYSA website. The application requires a credit card number for payment of the \$50 fee. This should be done at least 30 days before traveling to an out of state tournament. This should come out of your tournament allowance for the team.

Guest players seem to cause a lot of confusion. Tournaments often allow teams to bring several players who are not part of the team, since not every player can attend tournaments. However, this is strictly up to the individual tournament. Some events, such as State Cup, do not allow guest players at all. Most events allow up to three, but this may vary. The important thing to do is **read the tournament rules**.

Typically, any player may participate as a guest, as long as his or her team is not also playing in the same tournament. As long as an athlete is registered with MSYSA, the procedure is pretty easy. You will probably need his or her player card, and a copy of the player's regular team roster, which the player can get from their team manager.

Out-of-state tournaments and some Michigan tournaments require a *Tournament Guest Player Roster*. Usually you will submit this along with the *USYSA Application to Travel*, but you may submit it afterwards. This can be obtained through the MSYSA website, and there is now a fee for this service.

If your team is US Club carded, these items for guests may not be necessary. Please contact the GRCJ Team Manager Liason for any US Club questions. More info on US Club Soccer is found as an addendum to this manual on page 13.

This handbook is meant to be a guide for you; however you will find that by browsing the MRL website, you should find answers to any question you may have. If you cannot find what you need on the website, please do not hesitate to contact me for help.

THANK YOU  
FOR ALL OF YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION  
TO GRCJ!

Michelle Young  
TEAM MANAGER LIASION  
[Michelle.Young@comcast.net](mailto:Michelle.Young@comcast.net)  
616-942-0474

## US Club Soccer Registration

Your team will register under the league, US Club Soccer. This is a nationally recognized league used for youth soccer. If your team plans on playing more than 2 out of state tournaments, then it is a much simpler alternative to registering for tournaments. Those teams will fill out the below upon registration for their team.

The advantages to registering your team under US Club soccer include the following

1. Once registered under US Club soccer, a travel permit is not necessary. The team's registration is their travel permit.
2. If you need to add a guest player, the process is very simple.
3. Under US Club, you have the ability to move registered players from roster to roster if needed for any tourneys.
4. The carding process is quick and simple.
5. The med release forms do not expire, or require notarization.

Please follow the below process to register your team under US Club soccer:

1. Please have each player download and fill out the med release form. This is found on the [www.usclubsoccer.org](http://www.usclubsoccer.org) website.
2. If the athlete has never registered with US Club, please include a copy of their birth certificate, or passport, along with a 1x1 photo for their pass card.
3. Either email or send these items to: Jane McClure, US Club Registrar, 2706 Elmwood Dr SE Grand Rapids, MI 49506. Your team will be registered upon receipt of all items within approximately a one week turn around.
4. If you have a player you wish to add as a guest for a tournament, you can submit the above items and have them added to your roster. They will need to pay a 20 dollar fee as well.
5. Once your proof of birth is submitted, along with your med release, you stay in the system and will not need to submit it yearly. Each new year, you will just need to request new pass cards and collect new pictures for them.

Please direct any questions regarding US Club Soccer to  
Jane McClure  
US Club Soccer, Registrar