

A Soccer Fable as told by Karnak | Print |

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Once upon a time, in a club far away, a young soccer team was formed. With a stroke of good fortune, most of the

players were of above average ability as was the coach. The first year the team won most of their games. They were good. All were happy. Everyone loves a winner.

But "The Team", as they became known were not alone in their club. There were two other teams of the same age as "The Team". One of the other teams only won half their games and the other hardly won any at all. Some of their parents were not happy. The players were having fun but some of their parents wanted their children to be winners too. They went to the Coach of "The Team" and said "our kids want to be winners too". The good ones the Coach let join "The Team".

It came to pass that the "The Team" won every game. Each season more good players would want to join "The Team". Soon every good player in the club and even some from other clubs were on "The Team". The parents were so proud, "The Team" not only won every game, the parents started talking about going through a season without being scored on and winning by 10 goals every game. They sang the Coach's praises, "He is a great coach, He is a winner." We all know everyone loves a winner.

One day the Coach went to the parents of his players and said, "We need a trainer to get 'The Team' ready for competitive soccer". "The rules say we are not to have a trainer but I think we need one". The parents were impressed that the Coach was so humble. About the rules, they asked each other "who are these other people to tell us what is best for our children"? They hired a trainer. They told themselves "One day those other people will be glad to have "The Team" as a core to build a competitive team around". You see, they knew everyone would want to be with a winner.

You may ask, "but what of the other two teams, What became of them"?" The first couple of seasons were not bad. Of course they never came close to beating "The Team" but against teams from other clubs they won some and lost some. But as the best players from these teams slowly joined "The Team", they won fewer and fewer games until they won hardly any at all. Eventually enough players left and the two teams had to become one. But they still lost all of their games. No one remembers the name of the other team, the players of "The Team" started calling the other team "The Losers" and that is how they are remembered today. When the players of "The Losers" got old enough to play school sports they quit soccer. No one in the local soccer community even noticed. No one likes losers.

It came to pass that "The Team" made the transition to the highest level of competitive soccer. They played well but they did not win all of their games. The Coach was troubled. Some of the parents were asking "why are we not winning all the games"? The Trainer came to him and said that some of the players were no longer the best in their age group and should be replaced. The coach did not want to cut these players, he had known them and their parents for years. Instead he changed trainers. He told the parents, "A new Trainer will make us winners again."

A dark shadow fell over The Team, they never got better. The Coach could not believe how ungrateful and disloyal the parents and players became. After all The Coach did to develop those players they still began to leave "The Team" for new teams that won. You see the players and their parents never learned to love the game for the game's sake. They never learned how to handle defeat and use setbacks to make them stronger. Some of the players became soccer mercenaries hopping from team to team looking for a new team that never lost. Others left the soccer altogether, if they could not play at the highest level they did not want to play at all. The team collapsed and is no more.

But you ask "what of the Coach" in your fable? "Was all his hard work for naught"? Do not despair. No one from "The Team" blames the Coach for the downfall. The ones who stayed until the end blamed the ones who left. The ones who left blamed his kind heart. All still sing the praises of coach. All still remember the magical season when "The Team" was hardly scored on. Besides the Coach has a new youth team. They are good. The other good players are starting to want to play with the Coach. Their parents want their kids to be winners.

There are new rules to keep one team from being too good but the Coach knows there are always ways around the rules for winners. Besides will anyone who matters complain? We all know everyone loves a winner, right?

Submitted by Karnak

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