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Dear DUSC Players and Parents,

Are you ready for soccer season to start? We certainly are ready!! We have held a coaching and referee clinic, and all we need now is for the weather to cooperate.

This winter brought some new challenges to the club. Our Director of Coaching, Doug Mello, resigned in January when he became the Men's Soccer Coach at Hendrix College in Arkansas. Doug had been in charge of, not only coaches, but also referees and fields since the inception of the club, over 10 years ago. His presence on the fields will be greatly missed.

The board has hired and trained Luther College student coaches again this year. Many coached for us last year and are either on the Luther College Soccer Team or played in high school. All of our coaches attended a mandatory pre-season coaching clinic that was held in February. It was an exciting clinic and our coaches claim that it was well worth their time. We are pleased to be able to offer our coaches a \$200 stipend this year. To see what we expect from our coaches, go to our website and click on the Coaches Page, Coaches Handbook. Any questions regarding coaches may be directed to Randy Olson (rolsondds@hotmail.com), Director of Coaching for the spring season.

Practices will be Mondays and Thursdays from 6:30 – 7:30 on the Luther College Fields. You may notice this is ½ - hour less than previous years. We were advised during our coaching clinic that a 1-hour practice should be sufficient for most of our teams. We will give our U13 and U14 coaches some flexibility to extend practice 15 minutes if needed. All players are expected to attend practices or notify the coach in advance of their absence. Players are required to be on time, arrive prepared with equipment, work ethic and desire to listen to coaches at all practices and games. Failure to meet the expectations of the coach regarding practice attendance or work ethic may result in reduced playing time.

Our first meeting/practice will be 6:30 p.m., Thursday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, at the Luther College Fields. The meeting is for sure, but practice afterwards will depend on field conditions. Our coaches ask that at least one parent be present for this meeting so that they have an opportunity to meet you and go over a few things. Please plan to attend even if you are a veteran soccer parent. Our first game is scheduled for Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, again weather permitting. We expect to receive schedules on March 24<sup>th</sup> from the Coulee League and we will post them on our website ASAP.

We will distribute jerseys on the first night of practice. Support the club and show your spirit by ordering promotional DUSC items. Check out the new car decals and funky socks, plus our usual items, on our website under "DUSC Wear". Teams could organize and vote on a funky "team" sock to order at the first meeting/practice. We will have these items on hand the first night of practice for your viewing. The first order is due March 31. The second order is due April 14<sup>th</sup>.

We are making an effort to develop our website and to keep it updated this season, so please check it periodically.

We wish you a fun season. Let's Play!

The Decorah United Soccer Board