



Reasons to play for your School - A few thoughts from Coach Rich Bourne

Many think that high school soccer may not be very competitive. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't play for your school. See if you agree with the reasons I have for playing school soccer.

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Personal note: When I was of high school age I loved playing with honor for my school so much so that when offered a contract as a semi-pro player I included a clause that I would not play unless allowed to play for my school as well.

1. **School Pride!** - You get to play for your school, wear your school colors and compete on behalf of your school against other schools. You play in front of your classmates and friends. There's an excitement in doing this that you don't get on your travelling team.

2. **May be the Only Time in Your Life You Can Play for Your School** - While many soccer players have dreams of playing college soccer, the reality is that most won't. That means high school could be the only time in your life you play for your school. There's definitely something emotional about competing for your school by wearing your school name and colors against other schools. For many soccer players, high school will be the last (and possibly only) time they have this opportunity!!

3. **Possibly be Part of Some Big Rivalries** - While there are no doubt some very big tournaments in travel ball, there usually aren't many big rivalries. That's another cool thing about school ball. Every school has an arch rival about whom they dislike against whom they summon up more emotion. These rivalries are an exciting part of sports and are something that every athlete should get to experience.



4. Play with Your School Friends - Lots of soccer players have grown up going to school with the same kids and high school provides a great opportunity to play soccer with those friends. Sure, that sounds more social than travel ball but a **HUGE** reason that many girls play soccer is for the social aspect.

5. Exposure to Another - Coaching Style-Learning how to take instruction from different coaches is like learning how to follow directions from different bosses- it's part of life. Always playing for the same coach doesn't broaden your horizons much so playing school ball can give you exposure to a different teaching style and temperament-both of which are great ways for you to extend yourself as a player.

6. Possibility to be a Leader. - While you may not be a leader on your travel soccer team, playing on your school team just might give you that opportunity. If you play a lot of travel ball and your skills are greater than your school teammates, they're going to look to you for direction. Becoming a leader is a tremendous skill that will serve you well throughout your life and school soccer just might give you the chance to develop this part of yourself.

7. Learn Patience with your Teammates - Since your teammates may not have quite the skill level that you do school ball is a wonderful opportunity to develop patience.

8. Enjoy Soccer - Chances are if you've played for a travelling team very long then you're familiar with the pressure and tension from all directions. Coaches feel pressure, parents feel pressure and without a doubt, the players feel pressure. So much of this pressure and tension comes from the fact that everyone nowadays seems to be playing travel ball simply to get a scholarship. High school offers a chance that for the first time in in a very long time, when you play school ball you'll remember you're there for the fun of it.