

THEIR GAME

Let Them Play



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THEIR GAME

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INTRODUCTION

Their Game weekend is designed to raise awareness of the need to create a positive and pressure-free environment that children can enjoy.

This seasons Their Game weekend took place Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd October 2021.

In order to gain feedback and recommendations for future Their Game weekends an anonymous online survey was used with a number of different questions. They were split into responses from Coaches, Parents/Spectators and Players.

From data collected Football Development Apprentice, Max Humphreys, produced the following review from players who participated in Their Game.

Please note: the following separate reports have also been produced

- Overall feedback received from Players including Future Recommendations
- Overall feedback received from Coaches and Parents/Spectators

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS - GOACHES

Common Themes:

- Coaches being allowed to Coach
- Their Game delivered later on in the season to give players time to play as a team
- Their Game would work better for older age groups

Researcher Observations:

From the qualitative data, it could be a suggestion for future Their Game initiatives to focus on U10 to U15. A lot of the comments from the 75 responses for this question were coaches of U7/U8 teams suggesting that the children still need coaching and guidance at this age as a lot of them may have or have just started playing football.

An alternative approach, based on suggestions from U7/U8 coaches, would be to deliver the initiative later in the season. A few comments suggested that if Their Game weekend was delivered just after Christmas, the younger players may benefit more from the experience compared to it being so soon after the season has started.

Additional Future Recommendations:

- Mandatory for Clubs and Leagues
- Better communication from League to Referees
- Better communication from League to Clubs
- Film a game a few weeks before Their Game and then on the day of Their Game and see if behaviour changes and watch footage back
- Their Game takes place once a month
- Secret shoppers to ensure teams are adhering to Their Game
- Referees enforce rules



FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS – PARENTS/SPECTATORS

Common Themes:

- Their Game should be implemented every week/more regularly/4 times a season
- Team behaviour reverts to normal after Their Game has taken place
- Both teams adhering to Their Game
- Representatives at games to ensure teams are adhering to Their Game

Researcher Observations:

The majority of parents/spectators were talking about Their Game in a positive light, but there was also some constructive criticism. The positive/realistic future recommendations above suggest that they would like Their Game weekends on a more regular basis which suggests their teams enjoyed the experience and that it had a positive experience.

A lot of the negative feedback received was around opponents not adhering to Their Game on the day. One possible way of tackling this for the future is ensuring leagues put harsher punishments in place for teams that do not adhere to the rules. Another way of preventing this from happening, is to have representatives were possible at the Their Game weekend.

Additional Future Recommendations:

- Coaches being allowed to Coach
- Better communication from League to Clubs
- Referees to brief everyone before the game

CONCLUSION

Researchers:

In conclusion, this season's Their Game weekend had a lot of intriguing and helpful feedback that can contribute towards a better delivery of this initiative, as well as youth grassroots football becoming a more positive environment and allowing youth players to develop their football knowledge and skills.

Consideration should be given to the impact the weekend can have on novice players balanced with the general interest in delivering the initiative more often. How compliance can be guaranteed across clubs and leagues who have opted in to take part and allowing encouragement coaching across all age groups.

Hampshire FA:

Charlotte Langley-Brown (Clubs and Leagues FDO) added: 'Their Game Weekend this season had the most responses since the start of the initiative, which was fantastic and validates data that aids us in our future planning and improvements for the initiative. Ultimately the initiative is aimed at players and them being able to enjoy Their Game without the distractions whilst also developing in making their own decisions.'

THANK YOU

Their Game | Hampshire FA



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