

RYAN SUMMERS  
EPIC UNITED  
& THE EPIC FAMILY  
THOUGHTS ON...

# PLAYING TIME

---

## THE RATIONALE BEHIND EPIC UNITED'S PLAYING TIME POLICIES

*The "Thoughts on" series is a series of papers designed to supply Epic family members (and potential Epic family members) with our thoughts on various topics. There are exceptions to many rules, so if Epic is "for" or "against" a topic, that does not mean that it's members cannot or must participate or that there is not an exception for a specific player. These are general guidelines and are a reflection of the opinions of the Epic Administration in most scenarios.*

- I. Playing time policy
- a. Epic United's playing time policy is "Coaches determine playing time"
  - b. Epic United's coaches' playing time policy is "Players will play in accordance with their ability to help the team be successful." Coaches can interpret that in many ways and award playing time for being talented, an emotional leader, committed, knowledgeable, disciplined, or many other factors. Coaches have a lot of freedom in this area as they should.
  - c. Epic United also has a minimum playing time policy, which is "unless there is extenuating circumstances, players will play a minimum of three repeatable rotations each match," which usually equates to about 25% of the time or half of 1 set (game) every match. Most of our athletes get considerably more.
- II. Rationale:
- a. Some clubs play to win and only to win. The players who help them win on that day play and everyone else sits the bench, focusing on today's match today. Other clubs play everyone equally, knowing this may sacrifice wins, especially in the short run as well as sacrifice the relationship between improving and more playing time.
  - b. Epic wants to be both fair and competitive. Our policy falls between these two extremes. Below are some pillars of our beliefs policy.
    - i. Properly constructed teams have multiple lineups involving different players with similar chances of winning.
    - ii. A team's success needs to be tied to a player's success for his/her desire to improve. This drive is more powerful than most other drives.
    - iii. Today's best lineup may not be tomorrow's best line up or next year's best lineup, so it is vital to develop all players (and the right thing to do). Maximizing wins today may not be maximizing wins tomorrow.
    - iv. Stronger players should be rewarded with more playing time.

- v. Players are not guaranteed playing time at the position of their desire. In rare situations a player's position for Epic may be different than their position for school. In this case, they can request practice time at that position, but Epic coaches are not required to play a player in a position due to a player/parent request.

III. Extenuating Circumstances

- a. Players may get less than the minimum playing time if they are disrespectful, insubordinate, or a danger to those around them. This has never occurred in our club.
- b. Players may get less than the minimum if they have missed practices or have been injured.

IV. How do I get more Playing time?

- a. Step 1: Determine if you/your daughter is playing more than or less than our minimum requirements. If it is below our minimum, then schedule and appointment with your coach ASAP. If the player is above our minimum then continue with the steps below.
- b. Step 2: Determine if you are being realistic. It is important to mention that we get very few complaints about playing time in our club, so the next step would be to evaluate if your desires are reasonable. If you find yourself in situations like these below, and are unhappy with your playing time, perhaps you should switch to band, golf, or cross country or any individual or participation-based activity.
  - i. I play in every set (game) but I am still unhappy with my playing time
  - ii. I play a lot, but there are some people on the team who play more
- c. Step 3: Avoid these Traps as they are not ways to get more Playing time:
  - i. Speaking to your coach (or AGC or Director) is not going to directly result in more playing time. Often parents view these conversations as a method

for more playing time. Coaches (and AGC's and Directors) view these conversations as a chance to explain the rationale for the decisions of the past. I have coached for 4 clubs, 4 schools and multiple other programs and have never once heard of a coach after a meeting saying, "wow, that parent was right, I do need to play his/her daughter more."

- ii. Expecting to get more playing time, because you can point out the flaws of other players on your team is unreasonable.
  - iii. Pouting or withdrawing when you play less does not earn more play.
- d. Step 4: What will help you get more playing time is out-improving those around you. Work harder, get more athletic, go to more lessons, be more focused, play with more energy, be louder, increase your vertical more than others do, be a better and more supportive teammate..... and then be patient, but keep repeating step 4 until your actions change the coach's opinion.