

Published November 21st, 2012

Eclipse Soccer Club Focuses on Leadership

Submitted by Stacy Giglio



Photo provided

groups and matched up with younger Eclipse players, called "little buddies." The LEAP students taught their little buddies about LEAP and then created a group presentation about one of the leadership themes they had learned. Each team, along with their little buddies, gave presentations to the LEAP class at their meeting.

"Parents talk a lot about the amount of time their kids spend with coaches playing sports, and how they wish coaches would also focus on life skills and sportsmanship during their many hours of practice," says Stacy Giglio, parent of an Eclipse U11 player. "LEAP is a welcomed addition to the Eclipse program, and I hope that other sports clubs in our area can learn from LEAP and incorporate players' personal development into their programs also."

Twenty boys and girls, ages 10 to 12, from the East Bay Eclipse Soccer Club, recently participated in a nine-week leadership development program called LEAP (Leadership for Eclipse Athletes Program). The goals of this new program were to help Eclipse players understand what leadership means, develop their own unique leadership style, and create strategies for applying their leadership style within their team and club.

"LEAP taught us how to be a leader and find confidence," said Eclipse U11 player Alyssa Runckel. "I enjoyed every session of LEAP. The teachers always had fun games and ice breakers."

The curriculum, which involved lots of games and interactive activities to engage the student soccer players, focused on several themes including: motivation, responsibility, honesty, communication, compassion and team bonding.

"I learned how to handle problems like a leader and not shy away from difficult situations," commented Giovanni Gasperini, a player from the U11 boys' team.

At one of the final meetings, students were put into

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