

Kicking off the soccer season (and looking for my rose-colored glasses)

Soccer season.

It's...well...not exactly my favorite.

So as we prepared for our first practice of the year, I may not have been the most excited member of the family. Soccer is a great sport, but I'm just not a fan of extracurricular activities that throw our lives into a tailspin for months.

And, as far as I can tell, soccer season starts in August and goes until just before Thanksgiving. Or is it Christmas?

We had two soccer practices to get to at two separate fields in two zip codes. So we divided to conquer, and I headed off to the under-8 practice, while my husband drove off to the under-10 group.

Then, thanks to the GPS, I got lost on the way to the field—a field that is just a few miles from our home.

But the 7-year-old optimist in the back seat was confident we would get there. Even as I was turning the car around in a cul-de-sac, wondering which way I should go, he piped up, "Can I be on the travel team?"

"Um," I said. "I don't know about that."

"Oh," he said. "I get it. Because you don't want to have to go to soccer games in West Virginia or Mexico or California or Africa."

"Well," I said, "you're right. I don't. But I'm also not sure they have travel teams at your age. And I think we might have enough to figure out just with the practices and games we already have."

I'm not sure he was satisfied with that answer. But we found the field.

And you know what? The bugs were biting my ankles, I should have worn a hat to keep the sun off, and the practice was a ridiculous 90 minutes long.



Still...there was a beautiful breeze. I chatted with some of my favorite mom friends. The children were excited, and the coaches were low-key. Our 7-year-old got to be the goalie for a little while. And he loved every minute.

When we got home, my husband said they had had a great time at their practice, too.

Huh. Imagine that. I even found myself saying, "Maybe this will be the best soccer season ever."

And you know what? It just might be. At least now I know how to find the field.

But let's not hear anything more about travel teams. Because I do not want to drive to soccer games in California.