

Lubbock Soccer Association

General Rules

7. Chapter 7: Player Development

The Lubbock Soccer Association offers players an opportunity to play at a purely recreational level and also the opportunity to compete for positions at all levels of youth play offered by North Texas State Soccer, United States Youth Soccer, and United States Soccer.

7.1. RECREATIONAL PLAY

League play between Lubbock Soccer Association teams will be strictly recreational and will provide an opportunity for players to learn and master the basics of the game of soccer. The emphasis for players under six years of age will be on learning age appropriate basic individual skills

7.1.1. Under 5 and Under 6

7.1.1.1. kicking the ball

7.1.1.2. receiving the ball

7.1.1.3. starting and restarting play

7.1.2. Under 7 and Under 8

7.1.2.1. continue developing individual skills

7.1.2.2. learning to support teammates when the player does not have the ball.

7.1.2.3. (7v7 only) learning to play the goal keeper position. The goal keeper position should be rotated among all players and assigned exclusively to one or a few players. 4v4 play does not have a goal keeper.

7.1.3 Under 9 and Under 10

7.1.3.1. add knowledge of playing in set positions on the field.

7.1.3.2. learning the off-side rules.

7.1.3.3. learning to play the goal keeper position. The goal keeper position should be rotated among all players and not exclusively to one or a few players.

7.1.3. Players ten years of age and older

7.1.3.1. continue developing their own individual skills as their bodies mature.

7.1.3.2. work on mastering the tactics of team play in the game.

7.1.4. All of this development should take place in an environment which focuses on the players

having fun without undue emphasis on winning and losing. Good sportsmanship is expected of all participants in the Lubbock Soccer Association programs.

7.2. ALL-STAR TEAMS

The Lubbock Soccer Association has chosen to make all-star teams the vehicle for players who wish to play soccer in a more competitive environment. All-star teams may be formed in the Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, and Under-19 Leagues.

The Association may form as many all-star teams in each League as there are players interested in playing on those teams. Every player who shows a sincere interest in playing soccer at this level will be given the opportunity to play on these all-star teams. Players are selected to play on the all-star teams based on the player's demonstrated individual and team skills. Players will, therefore, be on all-star teams with other players having approximately the same skill levels. As players skills develop, they may move up from a less-skilled all-star team to a more-skilled team.

Every player legally eligible to participate in these Leagues is invited to attend practices for the all-star team for their own age group and to compete for positions on the all-star teams. Participation with an all-star team requires a greater commitment from the player (to develop his own skills to a higher level) and from the player's family to support the player with frequent travel throughout the region.

All-star teams may compete in the open division of any restricted sanctioned youth tournament throughout the United States. New all-star teams will be formed (rostered) for each individual tournament.

7.3. INDIVIDUAL PLAYER OPPORTUNITIES

Players who wish to play soccer with state, regional, or national teams are also given the opportunity to try out for these teams. During the process of selection of these teams, the emphasis is on the skills and team play of the individual player, not on how well his team plays as a team. Naturally, players on a team which plays well as a team are shown in a better light. Still, being selected to play on a state, regional, or national team requires a great individual effort. Players are usually between 11 and 14 years of age when they first enter these selection processes. The selection process is known as the Olympic Development Program. These programs are controlled by the North Texas State Soccer Association, the United States Youth Soccer Association and the United States Soccer Federation. The Lubbock Soccer Association works within the rules developed by our affiliated organizations to help our players successfully compete within these programs.

North Texas Soccer invites selected players to participate in the Olympic Development pools beginning in November each year. Players selected to the state pools will practice together weekly for a couple of months before the coaches select the state teams for the age group. The state teams then usually play with other state teams in regional events where a regional pool is selected. Our region includes North & South Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, North & South Carolina, and Florida State Soccer Associations. Players selected to the regional pools again work together for some period of time before regional teams are selected. The four regional teams then compete in national level events to select the players in the national pool and then players are selected to the national team. Players on the national team represent the United States in events such as the Youth World Cup, CONCACAF tournaments, international games, the Olympics and the World Cup tournament. Lubbock Soccer Association players can, if they have enough desire, play on the national teams. Selection to these teams is not a one year process. Usually a player begins to participate in this process during the eleven to fourteen age group. The first year they might only be selected to the state pool but not be selected to the state team which goes to regional events. In another year they might make the state team. Some players may be good enough to make the state team the first year they participate in the process. Just as in any sport (or any other endeavor) a tremendous commitment is required from the player and his family to engage in this process and carry through to possible selection to a national team.

7.4. PERSONNEL

Many dedicated volunteers are needed to make all of these opportunities available to the players of the Lubbock Soccer Association. These volunteers include the coaches of the League teams, the All-Star teams, and the Lubbock based coaches who are on the State coaching staff. The Youth, Group, and League Commissioners serve as the link between the coaches and the Association Board of Directors. The Coaches' Committee serves to advise, recruit, and educate team coaches. The Coaches' Representative is responsible for making every one aware of the importance of the Olympic Development Program.

7.4.1. The Coaches' Committee is appointed by the Coaches' Representative with the approval of the Board of Directors. The Coaches' Representative is chairman of this committee. The Coaches' Representative may appoint such individuals as the Coaches' Representative believes desirable to fulfill the duties assigned to the Coaches' Representative.

The Coaches' Representative is encouraged to recommend individuals for assignment as Recreational team coaches and All-Star team coaches. The Coaches' Representative is encouraged to recruit new individuals to volunteer their time and energy to coach these various teams.

The Coaches' Representative is responsible for offering educational programs locally to allow the coaches of the Association to develop their coaching skills and obtain United States Soccer Federation licenses.

7.4.2. Recreational team coaches are selected by the League (or Conference) Commissioner with advice from the Group Commissioner, the Youth Commissioner, and the Coaches' Representative.

Recreational team coaches are expected to develop the individual skills of the players assigned to their team. Coaches are expected to use practice time to bring each player's individual skills up to the level appropriate for the player's age and physical development.

Coaches will teach the principles of good sportsmanship to each of their players, and will set an appropriate example for their players of good sportsmanship in action. Coaches should not place undue emphasis on winning and losing (Under-6 and Under-8 team coaches should communicate that all their players are winners no matter how many goals may have been scored by which team). Recreational team coaches must provide an environment where their players can have fun, learn to play the game of soccer, develop their own individual skills as appropriate to their physical development, and build a foundation for playing the game at whatever level the player desires to perform in future years. Recreational team coaches must also teach the players and their families the Laws of the Game and appropriate behavior during games. Recreational team coaches are expected to assist the all-star team coaches during all-star team practices.

7.4.3. All-star team coaches are selected by the Coaches' Representative with advice from the

Youth Commissioner, Group and League Commissioners. An all-star team head coach should have a North Texas State Soccer Class E license.

All-star team head coaches will work in practice with all the players who desire to participate in these practices. All-star team practices are an opportunity for the best coaches in the Association to help all the players in an age group to develop to a higher level of play. All-star team coaches are expected to use the recreational team coaches as assistants during practices, to utilize the recreational team coaches' talents for the benefit of all the players in an age group, and to help the recreational team coaches develop their own knowledge and skills so that they may progress to higher levels of coaching.

Each player who desires to compete at this level will be given the coaching which that player needs in order to successfully compete. No player will be refused the chance to play with an All-star team for his League. Even though the All-star teams will play to win, the coaches must teach winning and losing with good sportsmanship. The coaches themselves must be living examples of good sportsmanship.

7.4.3. The most important person in the player development process is the player. With the support and encouragement of the player's parent or guardian, each player registered with the Lubbock Soccer Association has the chance to play soccer at whichever level the player and his family feel comfortable. If a player only wishes to have some fun and kick the ball around with some friends, the only effort necessary is to attend a couple of practices and a game each week during the outdoor soccer season. If a player wishes to be competitive on any higher level, the player must devote some time on his own working on the skills being taught to him during those practices. All the work expended by the coaches and other volunteers of the Lubbock Soccer Association cannot make any individual player successful without the player's cooperation and active work on his own time to improve his individual skills. Players who desire to play on an all-star team are required to be a member of a recreational team and to attend the practices and games of that recreational team on a regular basis.