



Youth Soccer Academy - Denver Kickers Sport Club, Inc

PURPOSE - To provide a place for our children to develop the life skills of integrity, sportsmanship, discipline, responsibility, humility, commitment and respect, as well as promote a healthy, athletic, and active lifestyle, through the sport of soccer.

OBJECTIVES

- FUN !! - Convenience - Affordability - Community
- To provide a youth soccer program along that promotes the integrity of the game of soccer, develops individual skills and team concepts, teaches participants to become "Complete Players", and develops a *Passion for the Game*.
- To provide high quality instruction and education for players, coaches and parents.
- To provide professional coaching to ALL players. This will allow them the opportunity, *from the very beginning*, to develop their soccer skills and understanding of the game from the proper and appropriate standpoint.
- To provide a GREAT experience for ALL players from U4 through High School.
- To promote personal satisfaction and enjoyment of the sport.

PRINCIPLES

- Remember that we are coaching KIDS, not just soccer.
- Youth Soccer is a KIDS GAME.
- Coaches, Parents, Directors, Administrators, and Board Members (i.e.: Adults) should not let ego's or personal gain get in the way of what is best for the KIDS.
- The GAME should be a FUN, LEARNING experience!
- Don't judge success on winning or losing but rather on the IMPROVEMENT and ENJOYMENT of the players.
- THE YOUTH SOCCER CLUB SHOULD BE AN END IN ITSELF, not caught up in winning National Championships, and how many College Scholarships it's members have been awarded.. Instead, it should concentrate on the PLAYERS; the KIDS.
- Soccer development is a long process. The Club should NOT be looking for the "quick fix", or to have a "win now", at "all costs" mentality. This can lead to "recruiting" of players, out of control ego's and player "burn out".
- Quality is better than Quantity.

SOCCER PHILOSOPHY

- The Club is in the process of developing players, not teams. The development of INDIVIDUAL SOCCER SKILLS and an UNDERSTANDING and ENJOYMENT of the game is the NUMBER ONE PRIORITY. The development of the individual player should NOT be sacrificed in order to win the game. **"Complete Player" Philosophy** - developing an understanding of the techniques, skills, and tactics necessary to become a complete soccer player.
- THE COMPLETE SOCCER PLAYER...1) - is comfortable with the ball and uses appropriate techniques on demand and under pressure. 2) - has an understanding of the game. 3) - understands the roles and responsibilities associated with attacking and defending. 4) - is comfortable in all positions or areas of the field.

AGE GROUPS

THE PROGRAM IN ACTION

- U5 and U6 Kickers Kids Family** - Camp format for practices - Random Teams for Game Day - 3v3 - No GK - 1 practice per week - 1 Game Day per week - 8 week season - Fall & Spring
- U7 & U8 Fall Kickers Kids Micro Teams** - Camp format for practices - Random Teams for Game Day - 3v3 MicroSoccer - Sweeper/Keeper role in place - 2 practices per week - 1 Game Day per week - 8 week season - Fall
- U7 & U8 Spring Kickers Kids Micro Teams** - Camp format with coaches for practices – Random Teams & Random Coaches for Game Day – 3v3 MicroSoccer – intro to 4v4 micro soccer - 2 practices per week - 1 Game Day per week - 8 week season – Spring Tournament

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AGE GROUPS

THE PROGRAM IN ACTION

- U9 Fall** - **Team Format** - Regular Games - 8v8 - 12 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 2 practices per week (1 clinic with Developmental Club Coach & 1 practice with Team Coach) – 5 scheduled Coerver sessions 1.25 hours.
- U9 Spring** - **Team Format** - Regular Games - 8v8 - 12 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 2 practices per week (1 clinic with Developmental Club Coach & 1 practice with Team Coach) – scheduled School of Excellence clinics.
- U10 Fall** - **Team Format** - Regular Games - 8v8 - 12 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 2 practices per week (1 clinic with Club Coach & 1 practice with Team Coach) – 6 scheduled Coerver sessions 1.5 hours
- U10 Spring** - **Team Format** - Regular Games - 8v8 - 12 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 2 (sometimes 3) practices per week – (1 clinic with Club Coach & 1 practice with Team Coach) – scheduled School of Excellence Clinics (Coerver developmental and competitive Club Coach trainings).
- U11 - U14** **Developmental** - Team Format - Regular Games - 11v11 - 15 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 2 practices per week – (1 clinic with Developmental Club Coach & 1 practice with Team Coach) – scheduled School of Excellence Clinics
- U11 - U18** **Option Developmental** - Team Format - Regular Games - 11v11 - 15 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 2 (sometimes 3) practices per week – (1 clinic with Developmental Club Coach & 1 practice with Team Coach) – 6 scheduled Coerver spring sessions 1.5 hours and fall scheduled School of Excellence Clinics
- U11 Fall** **Competitive (advanced)** - Team Format - Regular Games - 11v11 - 15 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 3 practices per week (2 practices with Team Coach & 6 scheduled Coerver sessions 1.5 hours & scheduled School of Excellence Clinics
- U11 - U18** **Competitive (advanced)** - Team Format - Regular Games - 11v11 - 15 players max per roster - Regular FIFA Laws apply - 3 practices per week (2 or 3 practices with Team Coach & scheduled School of Excellence Clinics)

Camps

Summer U10 and younger Fairmount Park Camp – Date
Summer Kickers Weekend Team Camps August – Team building camp all U11 and older teams

ADDITIONAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN SOCCER CAMPS

U10 Tournament Camp

PARENT EDUCATION

Pre-Season “Parent’s Day” - Prior to each season, a meeting will be held with all of the parents of players in the program to discuss the following topics:

- Purpose and Objectives of the Club
 - Philosophy of the Club
 - Various Age Group Formats
- Parent, Player and Coach Responsibilities
 - Laws of the Game
 - Player Equipment and Clothing
 - Sideline Etiquette

Parent Responsibilities

- Each parent is responsible for their child and their child’s equipment ONLY.
- **Be ON TIME!** - Have your child at the field and **READY TO PLAY** at the scheduled time
- **Pick Players up ON TIME!** - Be at the field at the scheduled time to pick them up.
- **Stay and Observe!** - Feel free to stay and watch practices, games or both!
- If you will be staying and watching, please observe the following guidelines:

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- 1) You are NOT allowed to COACH!! - NO COACHING or INSTRUCTING from the sidelines... ("Boot it!", "Get the Ball!", "Go Johnny!", "Spread Out", etc.)
 - 2) Only POSITIVE Encouragement, AFTER the fact. ("Nice Play", "Good Pass", "Great Shot", etc.)
 - 3) Stay OFF OF THE FIELDS while the kids are playing.
 - 4) This is a YOUTH SOCCER PROGRAM - It is for the KIDS!!!
- **Keep things in PERSPECTIVE** - This is a GAME!

- **Player Equipment** - EACH PLAYER must bring the following items to EACH SESSION:

- Size 4 Soccer Ball - Full Water Bottle - Shirt or Game Jersey – Shorts - SHIN GUARDS – Socks – Snack - Cold Weather Gear (Sweats or Warm-Ups) - NO JEANS - Rain Gear?
- Comfortable Athletic Shoes U6 and younger- Cleats are not necessary - NO Boots, sandals or dress shoes.-U7 and older - Cleats are recommended - NO Boots, sandals or dress shoes.

Player Responsibilities

- Come to PLAY - Have FUN (enjoy soccer)
- LISTEN, PAY ATTENTION and FOLLOW DIRECTIONS: - Look at the Coach - Be Still - Be Quiet
- LEARN SOMETHING - Give your BEST EFFORT - Work Hard - NO Playing in the Grass
- Keep your Hands and Feet to yourselves - NO WHINING

SYNOPSIS OF THE SOCCER PLAN

The overall soccer club program is being developed to meet the needs of ALL players, not just an elite few. The program and structure for one level of the club is designed to carry over into the next as the players' progress in age and ability.

The U5 through U8 ages will be playing within a program, but without official teams or coaches. The players will be trained by the Club Coach, along with selected parent coaches, and on "Game Day", the players are randomly placed on 3v3 teams and will play three to four, 10 minute games.

The U5 and U6 "family" program will operate a bit differently, as at least one parent of each child will be required to attend and participate in the practices and help out on game day. The U6 program will be utilizing a select number of volunteer parent coaches as determined by the Club Coach.

The U7 and U8 players will play 3v3 "Micro Soccer", complete with the "Sweeper/Keeper". The idea for Micro Soccer is that the game is the great teacher. The program or these age groups will focus mainly on developing the individual skills of the players. The 3v3 Micro Soccer format itself will help to teach the players movement off of the ball, switching positions regularly, and covering for each other on defense.

By adding the "Sweeper/Keeper" role, we are hoping to develop greater numbers of players who not only have a basic understanding of the goalkeeper role, but also enjoy the position. This is very important when developing 8v8 and 11v11 teams in the future. We will include a 4v4 format for the last week of the season to prepare for the spring U7 & U8 tournament in May before Memorial weekend. Depending on the number of participants a team format can be introduced in the spring of the U8 season. Depending on the U8 players ability to grasp the 3v3 game concept additional team skills are introduced and possibly a 4v4 format can be adopted.

For the U9 and U10 players, we will have designated teams, each with their own coach, and play within an 8v8 format: 7 field players and a designated goalkeeper. It is very important that coaches DO NOT defeat the purpose of the previous year's 3v3 format by locking players into individual positions at 8v8. The free flowing, constantly changing style that has been developed in 3v3 is stifled by forcing players to play in only one position on the field. A position in the game of soccer is NOT a player; it is an area of the field.

Players should be learning, practicing, and playing ALL of the roles in ALL areas of the field. Initial understanding of these concepts can easily be developed during training sessions by practicing 2v1 combinations (wall passes, takeovers, and overlaps) and the defensive ideas of Pressure and Cover. These general ideas do not change much, regardless of the area of the field in which they are executed.

We begin Coerver individual skills training as part of the Kickers School of Excellence program. Coerver is a philosophy of play that emphasizes the quick attack and ball skill movements needed for the

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1v1 challenges that happen in every game. Creating space to make a successful pass or shot as well as being creative with the ball is important to a player's development.

For more information on Competitive teams, Youth Soccer Academy and School of Excellence see <http://www.dkysa.org/>

The U11 year constitutes the most change for the players, and is usually the most difficult. Not only do teams switch from 8v8 to 11v11, but the players are also allowed to try out for competitive (select) teams. Recreational teams play an 8 game season, while competitive teams play 10 games per season.

Even with the major changes, the soccer plan remains the same for each level. Most coaches want to immediately figure out a way to beat the other team, so they concentrate on team tactics in their training sessions. In reality, the best training at this level remains on the technical skills. The more proficient the players are at basic and advanced skills, the easier the game becomes for them.

Competitive teams get a club certified coach working on being a state licensed coach that now develops players to understand the new positions of the field, continue with the individual skill training and starts to develop a comfortable position on the field. If positions are worked on, they are done so such that that a player learns assignments, not to stay in a location on the field. Positions are based on the players on the team, not that players are chosen to play a certain position. Flexibility is important to fill in for a position as the team concept begins to take shape.

Coerver individual skills training continue as part of the Kickers School of Excellence program. All players are encouraged to continue to understand the basic needs of individual skills but at a more advanced level with finishing techniques. Juggling provides the players a feel for the ball and is something the players begin to master as well as other important skills. The competitive teams begin working with a coach using the school of excellence to supplement what the coach determines is most beneficial to the players.

For U12, U13 and U14 players, coaches should continue to emphasize technical skills along with allowing players to learn and understand the roles in all areas of the field.

The Triangle concept from 3v3 should be very prominent even at 11v11. Players should now be very comfortable attacking in 2v1 situations and in covering for each other on defense. They should also have a good feel for attacking and defending as a team and for balancing the field with proper team shape.

U15 and older players should now have command of their technical abilities and therefore be able to concentrate more of their time in learning the tactical aspects of the game. Combining the 2v2 combinations, switching the point of attack, balancing the field with width and depth, zonal defending, and playing all of the "positions" are advanced team concepts that are simply a progression of what was started in the 3v3 game.

When our players graduate from high school, they should excel in their technical skills and have a tactical understanding that will enable them to move on to the next level should they choose to do so.

Regardless of their path, it is hoped that their years within the Soccer Club will have developed an appreciation and a passion for the great game of soccer, but also an understanding of the lifetime values of integrity, sportsmanship, discipline, humility, responsibility, and respect for others

REFEREES

A referee training program will be developed to train persons, youth or adult, to referee at the various levels of the club. Basic levels of certification will take place "in house", while advanced training will be done at the state level.

The U5 and U6 program will NOT need referees. A beginning referee program can be implemented at the U7 & U8 Micro Soccer Level if desired. This would be a good opportunity for older youth players in the club to get introduced to refereeing.

U9 and older games will need certified referees so the training program will be of great benefit for these ages.

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