



COMPETITIVE DIVISION

Frequently Asked Questions



Q: Is it true that being on a competitive soccer team means my son/daughter has to give up other activities/sports?

A: No, not at all! In fact, we encourage players to play different sports and take part in many different activities. It is neither our intention nor desire to force a player to choose between sports. Part of the fun about being a kid is exploring different sports/activities. Our goal for having a competitive soccer team is to develop soccer players so they can reach their potential and instill a love for soccer. While being on a competitive soccer team involves a commitment, by no means is it expected to be your only commitment.

Q: How “competitive” is competitive soccer?

A: Competitive soccer is "competitive" in that it exposes the players to a more frequent and higher level of training and surrounds them with equally as motivated and dedicated players. Our club philosophy (which is inspired by the overarching philosophy of US Soccer) is *player development over winning*. We want players to reach their potential. Wins and losses at U8-U10 are inconsequential, hence the reason why scores and standings are not kept in league play or in tournaments until teams reach an older age (typically U-11).

Q: What is the cost of being on a competitive soccer team? My son/daughter loves soccer but I’m worried that I might not be able to afford it.

A: The cost for a full-year team is \$400 if you are a Lawrence Twp resident or \$430 if you are not a non-resident. For half-a-year teams, the cost is \$245 if you are a Lawrence Twp resident and \$285 if you are not a non-resident. We do offer financial assistance. The application form and criteria can be found at <http://www.lawrencehamnett.com/Page.asp?n=73997&org=lawrencehamnett.com>. Half-a-year fees apply to teams that only play in the Spring (and possibly Winter) and also to players who join a team mid-season due to a special circumstance. Newly formed U-8 teams pay half-a-year fees in the first season since tryouts conclude in late-October/early-November and the teams are not officially formed until January. After their initial Spring season, these teams pay the full-year fee and will play in Fall and Spring seasons. Teams U-15 and older usually pay half-year fees since they play on high school teams each Fall.

Q: What do these fees cover?

A: Our club dues cover expenses such as league fees, referee fees, insurance. They are also dispersed between miscellaneous tournament registration fees, field use and rental, and professional training sessions with the New York Red Bulls trainers. Our club fees do not cover the purchase of team uniforms. This is a separate fee incurred approximately every two or three years.

Q: I have heard that there is a lot traveling involved on competitive soccer teams. Is this true?

A: League play takes place over two separate seasons, a fall season and a spring season. League play for each season usually consists of 10 games and half of these games are at our home fields such as the Armory, Lawrence Intermediate School, Zimmer Complex, Twin Pines, etc. Away games are played at our opponents' fields. Some away games are as close as Hopewell, Ewing, Hamilton, West Windsor, and Robbinsville, while others could be played in towns such as Elizabeth, Metuchen, Piscataway, Pemberton, Moorestown, and Cherry Hill, etc. U8-U10 teams generally play in the Elite Futures Soccer League (EFSL) and travel north for 'festival' style games. Older boys teams play in the Mid New Jersey league so most of their travel for away games is north, while the older girls teams generally play in the South Jersey League so most of their travel for away games is south.

Q: What about tournaments? Will we have to travel far?

A: As part of your club dues, each team is allocated money to participate in tournaments each season. Lawrence Hamnett teams are required to participate in at least one tournament per season and sometimes may elect to enter more at each team's discretion. Tournaments are hosted by a club and usually offer 3 or 4 games over the course of a weekend. Tournaments are held both locally and with travel. There are a variety of local tournaments that are popular with our teams such as the Hopewell, Hamilton, and South Brunswick Tournaments.

Q: What day of the week do teams play their league games?

A: This varies. Our U8-U10 teams playing in the EFSL generally play on Saturdays. Older boys teams playing in the Mid New Jersey league play on Sundays. Older girls teams playing in the South Jersey League play on Saturdays.

Q: We were given a flier about tryouts for a new U-8 competitive team but my son/daughter is too old for that team. How and when can he/she try out for a team for his/her age?

A: Tryouts to form new U-8 teams are generally held around mid-October to early-November. Tryouts for all other ages take place annually in late-May/early-June, as determined by each team. Be sure to look on our website at for tryout information or contact the coach for your age group directly to find out when they are taking place
(<http://www.lawrencehamnett.com/Page.asp?n=74015&org=lawrencehamnett.com>)

Q: How do I know what team my son/daughter should try out for and how do I know the coach for that age?

A: Team and contact information for each competitive soccer team can be found on our website:

<http://www.lawrencehamnett.com/Bulletins.asp?org=lawrencehamnett.com>.

We also have included an age chart (<http://www.lawrencehamnett.com/Page.asp?n=78631&org=lawrencehamnett.com>), which will help you determine for which team your son/daughter should try out.

Q: I'd like to coach one of the competitive soccer teams? How do I do that?

A: Fantastic, since we are a volunteer-run organization. For newly formed U-8 teams, the selection of coaches takes place *after* the selection of players. If you are interested in coaching please reach out to Kay Bidle, our VP of Competitive Soccer, at compinfo@lawrencehamnett.com. New Jersey Youth Soccer Association requires that all competitive division coaches have a minimum of an F coaching license. Information about different coaching licenses offered in New Jersey can be found on the New Jersey Youth Soccer Association website (<http://www.njyouthsoccer.com/clubsite/?p=4750>). In addition, all coaches are required to complete a background check through the Lawrence Township Recreation Department and on-line concussion training.

Q: How often do competitive teams train/practice?

A: During the fall and spring seasons, competitive soccer teams have two 90-minute practices a week at the Village Park soccer fields (<http://www.lawrencehamnett.com/Facility.asp?ID=71473&n=74134&org=lawrencehamnett.com>)

Additional training in the winter or summer is at the discretion of each team. One of the advantages of playing competitive soccer is the access to more frequent and higher quality training,

Q: My son/daughter is 6 years old and loves soccer. Is there a competitive team for his/her age?

A: Competitive soccer teams are formed starting at the U-8 age group, so your child is too young. However, he/she still can enjoy playing soccer year-round by participating in our Recreation program in the fall, registering for indoor Recreation training in the winter, taking part in our spring technical training program, and by attending summer camps.

Q: How many players make a competitive soccer team?

A: The number of players on a given team varies depending on the age group and respective league with which teams/players are registered or 'carded'. Based on a detailed assessment of the talent pool of players by our tryout evaluators (see below), LHSA will determine the number of players selected on new U8 teams. Lawrence Hamnett's driving philosophy is to 'stay small-sided longer' in the interest of maximizing touches, enhancing technical proficiency, and fostering creativity. U8-U10 teams playing in the EFSL play a mixture of small-sided 5v5 & 8v8 games. U11-U12 teams play primarily 8v8 games. Teams U13 and older play full-sided, 11v11 games.

Q: How do you determine who makes the team?

A: For newly formed U-8 teams, players are selected by the VP of the Competitive Division along with a group of experienced, competitive coaches, board members, and/or independent evaluators. Players are evaluated during the two tryouts on the four pillars of soccer: *technical* (skill, comfort with ball), *tactical* (decision making, playing the game), *physical* (fitness, speed, agility, etc.), *mental* (attitude, coachability, focus, etc). Existing teams will have tryouts annually every spring in mid-May/early-June and will have independent evaluators in addition to the current coach take part in the evaluation process. Newly formed U-8 will be together for three seasons (spring, fall, spring) before having tryouts again (to be run by their respective coaching staffs).

Q: I don't live in Lawrence but my son/daughter loves soccer. Can he/she try out for a Lawrence Hamnett competitive team?

A: Absolutely. Players from all towns are welcome on our competitive teams. Note that these players are subject to non-resident dues.