

WSA/SCSC Travel Team Formation Process - May 2018

The purpose of this document is to codify the travel team formation process for the Windham Soccer Association and South Central Soccer Club. Teams in the various age groups are formed for the subsequent Fall/Spring season based on tryouts and assessments conducted in the late Spring of each year. Teams are formed and then subsequently approved by the WSA Board of Directors based on a combination of the following:

1. Tryout evaluation scores (players are assessed by our professional trainers)
2. Assessment by the WSA VP of Travel (or other designated WSA Board Member) based on observations at tryouts, practices and/or games
3. Assessment by a player's current travel coach (if applicable) -Travel team selection is based on the individual and the availability of roster spots – it does not consider requests for specific coaches, trainers, or teammates in the selection or assignment process in any way.

All players must be registered with WSA in order to participate in tryouts. All players (including current travel players and potential new players) must attend tryouts for their own age group in that group's designated time slots based upon their birth year, regardless of current team placement. Tryouts in this manner allow WSA to evaluate players with their own peer group to provide consistency and parity, and allow the organization to gain a better understanding of the level of skill for the player pools in each age group. WSA can then effectively create the most competitive teams to participate in the appropriate age groups and divisions of any given league.

It is our intent to form all teams based on player's birth years per recommendation of US Soccer Player Development Initiatives. Please note the use of age based teams may separate current teams as they currently exist as players move through the various divisions.

In certain rare circumstances, players may "play up" on higher aged teams with the approval of the VP of Travel. Alternatively, these players may be assigned to their appropriate aged team and encouraged to "play up" to a higher age group when a player is needed, as long as there are no conflicts with their primary team game schedule.

A player's ability to "Play Up in Age" is predicated on a combination of several factors:

- the overall performance of the individual player, playing at a level above their peers
- a knowledge of the game that is advanced for their age
- their ability to take guidance and direction from their coach
- their dedication and their ability to work as part of a team
- roster availability on an older team to which they may be assigned

For a player to be considered eligible to "play up in age," they would have to be rated no lower than the top five players in his/her own age group as related to player evaluations recorded at open tryouts for their specific birth year. Additionally, the player must receive a favorable assessment by their current travel team coach (if applicable). Placement in the top five is not a guarantee that a player will be advanced. A player wishing to move up will only be considered if there is an available roster spot on a team, and the player would be considered, at a minimum, a mid-tier player for that team, contributing positively to the overall skill level of the team's roster. WSA will not move any player, regardless of their performance rating, if it will effectively degrade the current team at a designated age group or is not deemed to be in the best interest of the

player/team. The final decision lies with the VP of Travel.

Any player that is not able to attend tryouts due to unforeseen/unavoidable circumstances must notify the VP of Travel. On a case-by-case basis, arrangements may be made for these players to attend another individual or group tryout. In certain exceptional circumstances, the WSA Board of Directors may approve team placements for current travel players based on the assessment of the players' current coach and/or club trainer.

Player Evaluation Process

WSA will use a two part process to place players on the appropriate team. Information from each part of the process is used to form the teams.

- **Player Evaluations:** Players are evaluated over 2 different days. Teams of evaluators rate players on performance during a series of activities that showcase a variety of soccer skills and abilities. Each session is different, day one we will bring forth the technical & physical component, day 2 will be more tactical.
- **Coach Team Evaluations:** after each season we ask our coaches to provide us some feedback from their team/s by filling out the proper age group coach's evaluation form that will be provided by the travel director. These evaluations assess not only the player's on field performance, but also provides feedback on a player's attitude in games and practices, their level of effort on the pitch for both games and practices, and their ability to take guidance and direction from the coaches and trainers at all times.

On each evaluation day, players are checked in and given a numbered pinnie. That number is the player's identification for the day. All observations are recorded by pinnie number only on standardized forms. Players are not identified by name or current team.

A team of evaluators consisting of our independent professional trainers watch players each day and record a series of ratings on each player. Evaluators agree to keep their evaluations confidential and are required to provide the evaluation forms to the VP of Travel immediately following the evaluations.

On tryout days, players go through an age-group warm-up and are then randomly divided into smaller groups. Groups report to evaluation activities as instructed. Evaluators explain the activity and then watch the players for about 15 minutes. Groups then advance to the next game station. Each assessment day is different so it is very important & highly encouraged that each player attends both try-out dates as each day we evaluate on a different component. Players perform a variety of skill and technique based activities, small-sided games and bigger field scrimmages. For example, one try-out day the evaluators will be scoring on individual technique (Pass, Receive (1st touch), dribbling and small sided game play). The other try-out will be evaluated on the Tactical play of a player (Defending, Field awareness & Game play).

Player Evaluation Criteria

During tryouts, players will be evaluated and assessed based on the following criteria:

- **Passing & Control**
 - Quality of pass, Decision to pass, Weight of pass, Accuracy of pass, Follow through, Readiness to receive the ball, First touch control, Open body technique
- **Dribbling Technique**
 - Ability to take players on, Keep ball close to feet, Keep head up
- **Finishing/Shooting Technique**

- Decision to shoot head up, ball away from feet, Position of standing foot-close to side of the ball, Strike the ball with laces, Head over the top of the ball when striking the ball, follow through for power
- Defending
 - Ability to mark players, Take away & clearance, Maintain balance, Body position
- Positional Play
 - Field awareness, Movement to open space
- Aggressiveness
 - Challenges player with ball, Contests loose balls, Back tracks, Uses physical strength
- Effort/Enthusiasm
 - Positive attitude, Encouragement of others, Consistent energy level, Leads by example, Listens, Understands rules and tactics of game
- Speed
 - Pace with and without the ball, Ability to separate from opposing players
- Goaltending (if applicable)
 - Hand responsiveness, Playing angles, Field control & communication, Footwork

Player ratings for each criteria will range from 1 (Developing) to 5 (Advanced), with a score of 3 representing an at-level (Competent) rating.

Prior to the completion of the Spring season, the coaches of current travel teams will also be requested to provide an assessment of each current travel player. Assessments will be based on the same criteria as those used during tryouts as well as the player's attitude, level of effort, and 'coachability' as noted above.

Roster Formation Process:

1. Shortly after tryouts, team rosters will be formed by the VP of Travel, the Director of Player Development, and at least one other Director (Player Selection Committee) based on a combination of the following:
 - Tryout evaluation scores by tryout evaluators
 - Assessment by WSA VP of Travel (or other WSA Board Member) based on attendance at tryouts or travel practices/games
 - Current travel coach assessment (if applicable)
2. Team rosters will then be presented to the WSA Board of Directors for comments.
3. The Player Selection Committee may solicit input from current season coaches for each age group.
4. The Player Selection Committee will finalize all rosters.
5. After the conclusion of the Spring travel season, team rosters will then be publicized and coaches instructed to contact players selected for teams.
6. Players not selected for a travel team will be contacted by phone or email.
7. In certain instances, a TEAM may be allowed play up an age group if the team has successfully performed at a higher competitive caliber than its current age group and advancing would be considered a benefit to their strategic team play and player development. At a minimum, the Team requesting advanced competition must have demonstrated significant achievement in its current season, participated as a "Finalist" in their age group playoffs, shown consecutive divisional promotion by the league in which they play, or demonstrated proven success in multiple tournaments playing at the older age group in a given season. The final decision rests with the VP of Travel Soccer.

Other Notes:

- Players attending tryouts should wear cleats and shin guards, and bring a water bottle as well as a soccer ball (with their name on it please). Current travel players must NOT wear travel soccer uniforms. No jewelry can be worn. Goalkeepers should have gloves.
- Tryout evaluation scores are the property of WSA and are not disclosed for any reason. Questions regarding team formation should be directed to the VP of Travel.
- Current travel coaches are invited and encouraged to assist with tryouts (i.e. set up drills, etc.) and observe players. Coaches will not be submitting formal assessments of players' performance at the tryouts, and must refrain from personal interaction and instructing of players in order to maintain a fair and equitable tryout for all. Coaches should in no way attempt to influence the assessment by our professional trainers. Efforts to do so may result in them being asked to leave the field of play for the remainder of evaluations.
- There may also be tryouts or other evaluations during the year in order to fill any vacancies and/or create new travel teams for the Spring season. These tryouts are typically held in the fall following completion of the Fall recreation season.
- Travel coaches are selected and endorsed by the WSA Directors based on an application process each year and must pass all KidSafe background screenings as well.
- While interested in seeing how their players perform, Parents are not allowed on the fields for any reason during the evaluations. Parents MUST remain by the snack shack area away from the field of play. This is to allow the players to perform at their highest level without the added worry of parents watching over them