

## **Cape Elizabeth Soccer Club FAQ**

### Questions:

Please contact the president or vice-president to assist in answering.

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## **WHO ARE WE?**

### Club Mission Statement:

The Cape Elizabeth Soccer Club (CESC) strives to provide soccer opportunities for eligible children of Cape Elizabeth, ME, an opportunity to improve skills and sportsmanship in both developmental and competitive league formats. CESC adheres to the guiding principles established by Soccer Maine and makes every effort to comply with the state organization's rules and operating philosophy.

### What is CESC?

Cape Elizabeth Soccer Club was founded back in the late 1980's as Casco Bay Soccer Club. Today it still exists, but under the name Cape Elizabeth Soccer Club. CESC continues to provide soccer playing youth (typically 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) of Cape Elizabeth the opportunity to practice and play against other towns in Southern Maine. It is entirely a volunteer non-profit organization, run by a volunteer board, with volunteer coaches at all age levels.

### What/Who is Soccer Maine?

Soccer Maine is the governing body of soccer in Maine. It provides the structure of the Fall Classic and Spring Pine Tree league and provides club insurance, among other things. Soccer Maine provides town clubs like ours with the ability to conduct in-town recreational offerings and participate in non-competitive (U8/9-U11 age) and competitive (U12-U14) age leagues, including town travel league (Fall Classic and Spring Pine Tree) and higher-level premier leagues. Their website is SoccerMaine.com.

## **REGISTRATION AND UNIFORMS**

### How and when do I register for CESC fall travel soccer?

Registration for CESC typically occurs in the month of March but may extend into April depending on various factors each year. You must register during that 3-4-week window that registration is open. There is no guarantee of a late window of registration. Occasionally, after looking at the registration numbers, registration for some age groups may reopen with limited availability or a waiting list. Registration links are posted on Capesoccer.net, the CESC Facebook page, capeelizabethsoccerclub.org, and emailed if you are in the system from the previous year. An ad is placed in the Cape Courier leading up to registration and signage is placed around the school and dump.

### I am new to town, I moved here after registration. Can I register and play?

Kids moving to town who did not have the opportunity to register during the spring registration period will be placed at the top of any waiting list. There is no guaranteed there will be room at their age, but should an opening occur, we will draw from the waiting list to fill spots.

### What does it cost and what is included in the Registration fee?

The full player registration fee is \$150. This fee includes your player's registration fee with Soccer Maine, their team registration fee in the Fall Classic League, a mid-October tournament fee, yearend Festival fee, ref fees, and general club operation expenses. It does NOT include the uniform.

### What is a Training Player Fee? This is for U13 and U14 levels only

At the U13 and U14 levels there may arise the need to create training player spots based on numbers registered. (See U13 and U14 Team Formation). If that is the case the training player fee is \$75. When registering for U13 and U14 if you *wish for your child to be just a training player* you may select that option.

### What are the age groups?

Soccer Maine has 6 levels of play for town travel: U8/9, U10, U11, U12, U13, and U14.

### How do I know which age group I am in?

Soccer Maine has a cut-off based on birth dates. The “soccer year” for this purpose is August 1-July31st. For the most part it allows kids to play with their grade mates, however, occasionally a child may not be able to play with their classmates due to the age cutoffs. CESC also requires that all U8 players be in second grade or higher. No first graders play with CESC.

Age group	Format	Player Age prior to Aug. 1 of the upcoming season
U8/9	7 v 7	7
U10	7 v 7	9
U11	9 v 9	10
U12	9 v 9	11
U13	11 v 11	12
U14	11 v 11	13

### Can my kid play up at a higher age group?

CESC does NOT allow kids to play up by their choice. CESC wants as many kids as possible to play with their age group. Occasionally, due to registration numbers and team formation needs, kids will be asked if they would be willing to play on a higher aged team. This is only done by the CESC board and after consultation with coaches and parents involved.

### What is required for uniforms?

The required CESC kit is a jersey, shorts, and socks. Uniform ordering occurs in a short window typically in late May – early June. If you register you will receive an email on how to order. The cost is approximately \$65 and your uniform will be mailed directly to your home. YOU MUST ORDER IN THE WINDOW! Ordering late incurs a \$40 late fee from the company we order from. Currently CESC has been able to have an extended run with the same uniform offering. It is our intent to secure uniforms that will have at least a three-year production run so, that families could reuse the uniform kit. You do not need a new uniform every year.

### What size uniform should I order?

Uniforms are currently made by XARA. Our experience is that this brand runs slightly smaller than some of the other brands. If you hope to use the uniform for more than one season, order larger than you otherwise might. Remember, we play in some cool temperatures late in the season so the ability to fit an extra layer under it is beneficial.

### Can I choose my number or give my younger kid their sibling's number?

Unfortunately, the answer is usually no. Numbers do matter. Your kid is assigned a number that they will carry throughout their CESC years. If you have a kid entering U8/9 and they had an older sibling and you hope to use their uniform for the younger child, please inform us and we will try our best to make it work. No guarantees though.

## **PLAYER EXPECTATIONS (PLAYING TIME / etc.)**

### What does my player need for equipment?

Each player should bring a soccer ball, water, shin guards and cleats to every practice and game. Mouth guards are not required, but are encouraged. Additional items may be required by coach or doctor. When buying cleats, please be sure they do not have what's called a toe cleat, which is a single cleat at the very front of the sole of the shoe (as in baseball, lacrosse, and football). Referees are trained not to allow players to play with toe cleats because they are not safe for soccer.

### What are playing time expectations?

U8/9-U11: CESC expects equal playing time for all players.

U12: CESC expects at least 50% playing time, and coaches at these levels may also use discretion to address behavior and attendance issues.

U13-14: No minimum; coaches at these levels may use discretion. See U13/14 Team formation for more details regarding playing time and training player potential outlines.

All playing time policies are in accordance with Soccer Maine guidelines for teams. It should be noted that "equal playing time" and "50% playing time" is over the course of a season, NOT in each and every game.

Lastly, it should be noted that in rare instances 50% may not be possible if a team has more than double the number of kids on the field. This could happen if the number of registrants pushes team numbers to the maximum allowed but does not allow for the formation of an additional team.

### Can my kid play with an earring or cast?

Earrings and jewelry are a no. Refs are instructed to make kids remove all piercings and jewelry. Putting tape over the earring is not a solution, it must be removed.

Casts are acceptable if wrapped in FOAM and not bubble wrap. Many doctors say bubble wrap is fine however, US Soccer officials are instructed to allow foam only. Bubble wrap can pop bubbles and then the safety for all players is compromised. FOAM wrap is the only accepted safety measure for a cast.

## **SEASON, PRACTICES AND SCHEDULE**

### What does a typical season look like?

March - Registration period (may go into April)

April - late registration (only if numbers still needed at particular age groups)

May - Assessments at U13 and U14 if needed

June - Teams announced in mid-June typically

August - Cape HS teams run voluntary evening soccer camp that kids can register for. Strongly encouraged to do so.

Third week of August - Practices begin (although this varies somewhat by team)

Last Sunday of August - first league games typically begin

Labor Day - Typically off, although some coaches may schedule friendlies (i.e., scrimmages)

September – 4-5 league games, most on Sundays, but may have one league game on a Saturday.

Saturdays - Coaches discretion to schedule friendlies.

October - continuation of league games as calendar dictates

Indigenous Peoples' Day weekend - Participate in a local tournament (Falmouth or Sanford usually)

Two weekends after Indigenous Peoples' Day – U9-U11 Festivals, U12-14 playoffs

Near end of October is State Final 4 - if playoff teams advance

### What are practice days and times?

Practice days and times are determined by the coaches of each team. Every U9-U12 team can expect 2 practices a week. U13 and U14 can expect at least 1 and sometimes 2 practices a week. It is a bit harder at U13 and U14 as Middle School soccer games begin to influence the ability to conduct two practices most weeks. Typically, practices are at either 4-5:30 or 5:30-7. However, as the

season moves on the practice times typically shrink in mid-September to 4-5:15 and 5:15-6:30 and by October have moved to 4-5 and 5-6 due to mother nature and the sunset.

### Where are the fields?

Capano - Full size or 2 smaller fields - Lower field near Pond Cove parking lot, in the outfield of the HS softball field

Moulton – 2 smaller fields by MS playground and Pond Cove entrance

MS Multipurpose - Full size field by the Pond Cove parking lot, just past the outdoor basketball court

Weatherbie Track - Full size field to the left as you enter the High School campus

Hannaford Turf – Turf field with lights behind the High School. This is where the HS teams play.

Fort Williams – Full size or 2 smaller fields, just past and up the hill from the lighthouse at Fort Williams (U12 fields in fall)

Gull Crest - Full size or 2 smaller fields, in the Gull Crest entrance just past the town transfer station

### What is the typical game schedule?

Every team U9-U14 can expect to have 6 league games scheduled by Soccer Maine – 3 home and 3 away. Most of the games are played against teams in and around the Portland metro area, although occasionally travel is required to towns a bit farther afield.

In addition, coaches can schedule up to 6 friendlies matches at their discretion.

### What is a "friendly" game? Aren't they all friendly?

A friendly is a scrimmage game that does not count toward the regular season standings. They are typically played on Saturdays, although that can vary. Friendly games are a way to gain additional playing experience.

### What's a festival?

Soccer Maine runs the U8/9 – U11 level as a developmental non-competitive level. This means no scores are recorded and no playoffs held. They do however have a year-end festival for each age group in lieu of playoffs. The festival is typically a one-day event in which 3 slightly shorter games are played all at one sight. It is not a tournament, as there is no opportunity to advance if you win. This festival is almost always during the last two weekends of October.

### Are there playoffs?

The U12-14 level plays at a Soccer Maine competitive level which means the 6 league games have scores recorded. Those scores determine standings in the state. The top 16 Division 1 teams will be in a Champions playoff. The Division 1 teams seeded at 17 and below and all the Division 2 teams will be in the Classic playoff. In recent years the playoffs have been single elimination and held at the home field of the higher seed.

### What level of play does CESC play at?

U8/9 - U11 play at a developmental non-competitive level.

U12-U14 teams play at a competitive level. The competitive level is divided into two levels.

CESC has determined that all teams should attempt to compete in Division 1 (highest competitive level) unless there is compelling reason, as determined by the board, that a team should compete in Division 2 (lower competitive level).

## **Team Formation**

### CESC Guiding Principles of Team Formation:

1. Registration will remain open for a designated period of time and all registrants will be accepted; there are no space limitations during the open enrollment. Late registration is NOT always available if numbers following open enrollment work for team

formation. Kids who move to town in the summer and did not have the opportunity to enroll and wish to play will be placed on a team only if space is available.

2. CESC does NOT cut kids.

3. CESC does NOT send kids to play with other towns.

4. CESC will work hard to keep kids playing within their age groups and with their grade peers. This is not always possible based on registration numbers, but every effort will be made, and should movement be necessary, potential players' families and their coaches will be consulted.

The CESC board has undergone a thorough review of its own and its competitors in the Metro and South leagues and their competitive levels, team formation, and playing time policies. It has examined Soccer Maine requirements and restrictions as well as the Soccer Maine competitive levels of U12, U13 and U14.

## **U8/9 – U12 TEAM FORMATION**

### **How are the U8/9 – U12 teams formed?**

CESC believes that every child should have the opportunity to play soccer in Cape. At the U9/9 – U12 levels, all registered players are placed on a team. We make every effort to ensure that the teams within a given age group are "balanced," such that they are as equal as we can make them. For kids who have played with CESC already, this is done based primarily on evaluations prepared by coaches after the prior season. No formal tryouts or assessments are held. For those who have not played previously, placement is largely based on numbers.

### **Are younger players encouraged to develop their skills in a variety of positions, rather than specializing at a young age?**

Yes. CESC is a developmental club, meaning that we focus on development over winning. Kids should try all positions at the younger ages, including goalkeeper. There is no way of telling where a kid will excel if they are not given the opportunity in the early years.

## **U13/14 Team Formation**

Starting with the 2021 season, CESC will form competitive teams at the U13 and U14 levels. This is a change from prior years in which all kids were placed on the same team without regard to player evaluations. The following is a brief synopsis, please consult the U13/14 Policy Statement and Q & A for more answers.

### **What does this mean?**

CESC will form competitive teams of 16-18 players at the U13 and U14 levels to play at the Division I level for the Fall Classic League. Players who do not make the team will not be cut from CESC. The options for players who do not make the Division 1 team depend primarily on the number of total players registered at the U13 and U14 groups.

If there are enough players (typically at least 16), either at one age group or by combining some of the U13s and U14s, a Division 2 team will be offered. If there are not enough players to form a Division 2 team, either at one age group or by combining age groups, or a player would prefer to stay within their own age group, players will be offered a training player roster spot on the Division 1 team for their age group. A training player is a player that will practice with the Division 1 team and may get the opportunity to play in friendlies (i.e., scrimmages), if scheduling allows. Players who choose not to play will be offered a full refund. Players who play as training players will receive a 50% refund off of the registration fee.

For consideration for placement on the U13 or U14 Division 1 team, one must.

1. Register on time.
2. At registration determine if you want to be a full player or training player (see discussion below for a description of a training player).

- Attend assessments, if conducted. Depending on numbers registered there will likely be a need for **assessments** depending on the number of registrants. Soccer Maine states that a team of 16-18 players is ideal. When registration numbers go beyond this threshold, there will be a need to assign some players with an option that may not be on a Division 1 team.
- Following assessments, “offers” will be made to players to participate in one of 3 ways: Division 1 team; Division 2 team (either within their age group or on a combined U13-U14 team); or training player. Those who choose not to accept the offer will receive a full refund.

### What is a Training Player?

A training player is a player that sticks with their age group but is not rostered on the Classic league or tournament game rosters. Training players will participate in all Division 1 team practices and may have the opportunity to play in some friendly matches (i.e., scrimmages). Registration as a training player is 50% off of the normal registration fee.

### Will team formation be the same every time?

The common theme for team formation is flexibility. It is a framework and expectation to help create our teams at U13 and U14 levels. Each season and group has its own unique challenges. The number of registrations is the biggest key. CESC will also consult with coaches from past seasons, consider the results of assessments, and factor in other considerations that may be relevant from year to year.

### What are other towns doing?

Nearly all of the towns we play in the Fall Classic League have competitive teams at U13 and U14. This has been done as Middle School soccer begins and players have a choice whether to play for their school, their travel club, or both. For comparison, the following chart details what some of the other Fall Classic League in the Portland metro area towns are doing.

Town	D1	D2	Assessments?	Cuts?	Training Players?	Competitive teams at U13/U14?
CAPE	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
CUMBERLAND	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
FALMOUTH	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes	?	Yes
FREEPORT	Yes	Sometimes*	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
GORHAM	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PORTLAND	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
SCARBOROUGH	Yes	Sometimes*	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
SO, PO	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes	?	Yes
WINDHAM	Yes	Sometimes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
YARMOUTH	Yes	Frequently	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

## Who coaches the teams?

CESC is an entirely volunteer organization. Parent coaches are the success of the program. Each year we attempt to get additional practice support for one practice a week at the U9-U11/12 teams. This support has come from paid staff members of Premier Club programs in the area.

## What does it take to coach?

Simply...a commitment. Coaches must be able to run two practices a week and coach 1-2 games each weekend from mid-August to late October. Teams usually have one or two assistant coaches as well as it is a team effort to get through a season.

## What do I need to do in order to coach?

1. When registering your child there will be an opportunity to inform us of how you wish to volunteer. Please fill that out.
2. You will then receive a coach registration link following registration. This is essentially an application to coach.
3. After filling out the application link, there is no guarantee you will be selected to coach. If selected, Travel Directors will communicate with you on coaching.
4. After that, completing requirements in GotSport will need to be done in order for Soccer Maine to verify your eligibility. There are links in the system to the following three items required of all coaches.
  - a. CDC Concussion Protocol link (approx. 30 min)
  - b. Safe Sport link (approx. 2 hrs. every other year, and 30 min refresher on opposite year)
  - c. Background check (every 2 years)
5. In addition, one coach on each team should be licensed with US Soccer per Soccer Maine. There are 4 different under 14 youth levels. Classes are a mix of online and in person. The programs are great for learning to run practices as you progress through coaching youth soccer. Taken from the Soccer Maine website, everyone must take the 20-minute Grassroots video and then can progress with ...

### Soccer Maine Coaching License Requirements

1. U-9,10 – USSF 7v7 In-Person Grassroots License
2. U-11,12 – USSF 9v9 In-Person Grassroots License
3. U-13,14 – USSF 11v11 In-Person Grassroots License
4. U-15 – USSF D License

Each of these educational opportunities is available on line in the US Soccer Learning Center, and will be hosted by Soccer Maine in conjunction with member clubs. The Courses are tailored around four Grassroots game models: 4v4, 7v7, 9v9, and 11v11. These course options will offer coaches the chance to learn more about how to develop a player-centered approach to coaching.

Spanning 4-hours in length, each in-person Grassroots Course consists of both classroom and field-based sessions. Coaches will learn more about U.S. Soccer's Coaching Education philosophy, Play-Practice-Play Methodology, and the Six Tasks of a Grassroots Coach among other topics.

## If I coach at U8/9 does that mean I have a team for the next 6 years if I want to?

Unfortunately, no. Each year is different. The number of teams tends to pyramid as the kids get older. At U8/9 we may need 6-9 coaches as we often field 2 or 3 teams at that age level. At U11/12 when numbers on the field increase to 9v9 we may only need 4-6 coaches as often only 2 teams are formed and at U13/14 we often only have one team. Thus, coaching is a privilege and not a guarantee. Selection is based on those who have completed licensing, meet requirements, and provide CESC kids with an outstanding practice and game environment.

## Can I coach more than one team?

Yes, many of our coaches have multiple kids playing with CESC and wish to coach multiple teams. Letting us know this in your kids' registrations is very helpful. Often these coaches assist with multiple teams. To head coach two teams there must be a strong need for

head coaches and an extremely committed and organized individual willing to do so. It is not ideal but it does occur and can be very successful.