

A GUIDE TO FESTIVALS IN ONTARIO

For the 2013 Season onwards



L·T·P·D

long term player development



A. Purpose

In support of Long-Term Player Development from the 2012 season forward, “Festivals” are the only form of competition for both male and female players in the Under-8 age group and one form of competition for the U9-U12 age groups. This document has been prepared to assist both District Associations and Clubs understand why a festival playing format is of greater benefit to individual player development and, most importantly, ensures all young players have fun.

Please use this document and other associated resources (outlined at the end of the document) to help educate coaches and parents so they understand that these changes are in the best interests of their children that play soccer.

B. Philosophy

“No Scores, No Standings and No Trophies”

At this stage, individual player development is paramount. Coaches and teachers should create a stimulating learning environment where the atmosphere is “Freedom and Fun”.

The philosophy underlying the new Festival format is to focus on FUNdamentals and emphasize skill development and movement through games and activities that promote a feel for the ball, while teaching basic principles of play within a fun but structured setting.

C. The Festival

Season Festival

Festivals where local Club/Academy or District Association member teams play a regular schedule, same teams at a central location over the course of a season. These festivals would be arranged for preferably a Saturday or Sunday. Typically involving 20-30 teams playing 2 games each during the festival.

Fixture Festival

One-off festival where local Club/Academy or District Association member teams come together for one day of activity on a Saturday or Sunday. Typically involving 20-30 teams playing 2 games during the festival.

Skills Festival

One-off festival for local Club/Academy or District Association member teams. There is a mixture of skill activities, coaching sessions and matches on a Saturday or Sunday. Typically involving 20-30 teams playing 2 games during the festival plus the various fun activities taking place.

Club Festival

A festival that only teams from within the same Club/Academy participate in. This Club Festival would take place on a Saturday or Sunday.

Futsal/Futsal Festival

Futsal is a 5v5 indoor soccer game that is typically played in school gymnasiums. It takes the form of Futsal Festivals, leagues and tournaments. The leagues and tournaments are usually managed by Clubs, leagues or Tournament operators. Festivals are organized by Clubs/District Associations.

Game Format	Squad Size	Game Duration	Ball Size	Field Size		Goal Sizes (no larger than)
				Min/Max Width	Min/Max Length	
3 v 3	Max 6	2 x 15 min	3	18 to 22m	25 to 30m	5ft./1.52m x 8ft./2.44m
4 v 4	Max 8	2 x 20 min	3	25 to 30m	30 to 36	5ft./1.52m x 8ft./2.44m
5 v 5	Max. 10	2 x 20 min	3/4	25 to 30m	30 to 36m	5ft./1.52m x 8ft./2.44m
7 v 7	Max. 12	2 x 25 min	4	30 to 36m	40 to 55m	6f / 1.83m x 16f / 4.88m
9 v 9	Max. 16	2 x 35 min	4	42 to 55m	60 to 75m	6f / 1.83m x 18f / 5.49m

For further information on age appropriate competition formats see *OSA Game Organization Guide—Physical Literacy (U4 –U12)*.



A Festival can be structured in many ways but must work within the parameters set in the development stage table above. The points below also give further guidance for Festival formats.

- 4 v 4, 5 v 5, 7 v 7 or 9 v 9 playing formats
- A Festival could take the form of a basic schedule of matches but no standings should be kept (taken from *Wellness to World Cup Volume 1*).
- In 4 v 4 playing formats a goalkeeper is not recommended. If playing 5 v 5 the use of a goalkeeper is optional, if you choose not to use a goalkeeper please reduce the goal size.
- All players must play equal time and try all team positions, including goalkeeper [if a goalkeeper is included in the playing format in 5 v 5].
- If the Festival format is purely game based it would be recommended that the games have referees. This would be a good introduction to match management and education of coaches and parents.
- Game Sheets are not required however a Participant List will be required for Insurance purposes and in some cases referees may be required to complete Incident Reports.

D. Registration

All players participating in a Festival must be registered with their Club and District Association for the appropriate program.

District Association residency rules still apply.

E. Team Travel

The OSA recognizes that some of the recommendations in this document are not in alignment with the current OSA rules. That being the case the OSA Strongly Recommends that District Associations and Clubs follow the guidelines in this document. The OSA will make the necessary rule changes moving forward, and as part of a wider rules review.

- Player development and “Festivals” ultimately should occur only within a Club or District Association. There is no need for unnecessary travel at these younger ages, that travel time is better spent for players training and developing within their local Club with their friends.
- Due to this being a year of transition the following team travel will be permitted by the OSA;
 - Within District = Preferred
 - Neighbouring Districts = Allowed (only during the transition period in 2013, subject to both District Associations’ approval). This should only be approved in exceptional circumstances where Clubs or District Associations do not have enough teams or there are practical travel benefits for the teams involved.
 - No Inter-Provincial, North American or International Travel should be permitted. The only exception being Districts bordering another province or the USA. District approval is required.

F. Frequently Asked Questions...

Can we give the participants mementos?

Yes, as long as each participant gets the same memento and it is deemed to be a ‘Participatory Memento’.

Do we have to guarantee each team the same number of games?

Yes, each team and each player should expect the same amount of playing time.

Can we have two divisions and have the first two teams play in a final game?

No, this would be a ‘play-off’ format.

Can we have two divisions and have the second-place teams play in a final game?

No, this would suggest teams are being placed at the end of the regular games.

Can Festivals be 2-day events?

Festivals are one-day events.

Does a team require a Travel Permit when going to a Festival outside of their District?

Inter District travel is not encouraged at this development stage. In the odd occasion where inter-District competition may occur between neighbouring District teams in 2013, then Yes a Travel Permit is required. Competition Policy 10.1 (Team Travel) states a team travelling out of District needs a Team Travel Permit. OSA is working on more practical solutions so this may not be a requirement from 2014 onwards.

How does a Club apply and have a Festival approved?

Approval of the Festival is a District Association responsibility. The OSA has modified the Tournament Application Form on the OSA Switchboard to accommodate Festivals. This application form is located on the OSA website under ‘Competition’.

Do we still require Player Registration Books this season?

Player Registration Books are not required for Festivals because the OSA's Registration Policy 6.1 a) does not include "Festivals" in the game types at which Player Registration Books are required.

What is critical as stated earlier is the odd exception where players from neighbouring Districts participate in a Festival. This must be approved by both Districts via a Travel Permit.

Where can we get Festival rules?

Please see the guidelines on page 3 or visit the OSA Website and view the Mini Soccer Guide and Rules. They can be found under Organization/Rules/ Published Rules/Playing Rules.

<http://www.ontariosoccer.net/Rules/Published Rules/PlayingRules.aspx>

Can boys and girls play on the same team?

Yes. Boys and girls should and can play on the same team.

How much should we charge for a Festival?

Affordability and lowering the barriers to participation is most important. The objective for hosts should be covering their costs for a Festival.

Can we use U7 or U6 players in an U8 Festival?

Players who are registered as Under-7 and Under-6 are not eligible to play in Under-8 Festivals.

...FAQ continued

How do we mark out a field for a Festival?

There are a variety of ways to mark out a Festival Field and the most simple and effective manner is to mark the field out with cones. Other ideas within existing fields could include using different colour paint. Half way lines and goal boxes are not essential at this development stage. Refer to OSA Field Organization Guide for further explanation.

Why are we not staying with the status quo when there are so many unanswered questions re the hosting and entering of Festivals?

The introduction of the Festival Format is not designed to be onerous. This is a gentle change in philosophy and where appropriate common sense should prevail.

How does this affect the U4 –U7 age groups?

There should be no Festivals, tournaments or exhibition games from U4—U7.



Appendix

Please visit the Ontario Soccer Association website to download the appropriate Coaching Brochure designed to support coaches that work with players in each development stage. Additional documents:-

- Game Organization Guide –Physical Literacy (U4-U12)
- League Management Guide –Learning to Train (U8-U12) are also available on line.

<http://www.ontariosoccer.net/Coach/ResourcesForCoaches.aspx>



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