



# ACADEMY PROGRAM RULES



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## **PHILOSOPHY**

*"True player development focuses on the development of the player, not the development of the team! Up to age 12, this should be the only criteria used in designing and running youth soccer programs."*

*-Ron Quinn, leading contributor US Youth Soccer Programming*

*More than 73% of all kids who play organized youth sports end up quitting by the time they reach the age of 13 (Time Magazine, July 12, 1999)*

### **The major two reasons children give up sport:**

1. It's no longer fun
2. It's too competitive/too much pressure

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Associations must be empowered to provide a variety of programming options for their players. The NC Youth Soccer Academy Program philosophy is to emphasize player development over team development and focus on the technical development of each child without the pressures of short-term wins/losses/results.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. The NC Youth Soccer Academy Program will be offered for the TRUE 8U - 12U PLAYER age groups.
2. In addition to these NC Youth Soccer Academy Program Rules, the rules and policies of NCYSA, USYSA, and USSF are applicable.
3. Associations that notify/apply to implement and participate in the NC Youth Soccer Academy Program is based on the rules herein.
4. (A) A NC Youth Soccer Academy Committee will be the governance of the NC Youth Soccer Academy Program. Subject to the NCYSA Executive Board, the NC Youth Soccer Academy Committee will accept associations to participate in the program upon determining compliance with these rules. The Committee may apply sanctions if an association fails to meet the criteria listed in these guidelines or intentionally violates them.

(B) The NC Youth Soccer Academy Committee will be comprised of the NCYSA VP for Player Development, the NCYSA Technical Director of Coaching Education and Player Development, the NCYSA Assistant Technical Director for Academy and members approved by NCYSA Executive Board.

## ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES

1. Associations will be accepted for participation in the NC Youth Soccer Academy for a period of one (1) seasonal year. They must participate for the full year (fall and/or spring seasons). Associations must re-apply for acceptance every seasonal year by means of an ITP application each fall and spring. The ITP will be the Association's commitment to have teams in the Academy program.
2. Associations must administer a NC Youth Soccer Academy Parent Engagement Program in accordance with the NCYSA Youth Academy philosophy established by the NC Youth Soccer Academy Committee.
3. Each association must have an established yearly curriculum for its NC Youth Soccer Academy program that must be submitted to the NCYSA Director of Coaching on a date set by NCYSA. Help in creating a NC Youth Soccer Academy curriculum will be provided by NCYSA Technical Director of Coaching Education and Player Development, the NCYSA Assistant Technical Director for Academy, the local "NC Youth Soccer Academy Liaison," and the NC Youth Soccer Academy Committee.
4. Each association will be required to have its representatives attend two seasonal scheduling meetings: one for the fall season and one for the spring season.

## PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1. Players must be registered with the NCYSA. The cost is \$26.00 per player.
2. All players within an association's NCYSA Youth Academy Program will be registered directly to the Academy pool with their association and will not be assigned to a specific team.
3. Associations may have a NCYSA Youth Academy Program, a Classic program, a Challenge program and a Recreational program; but, a player registered in NC Youth Soccer Academy may not participate/register in Recreation, Challenge, or Classic. They must choose to participate in one or the other. **Nor may an Academy registered player "guest play" on a Recreation, Challenge or Classic team. In turn, a Recreation, Challenge, or Classic player may not "guest play on any NCYSA Youth academy team for a tournament or event.**
4. As per USYS Guidelines players are eligible for the NC Youth Soccer Academy Program if they are:
  - True 8U - 12U player only.
  - Properly registered with an Academy Player Pass.
  - Players are registered to a Club Academy Pool.
  - Players may be assigned to teams on a game to game basis.
  - Playing rules
    - i. 8U – 4v4 (no goalkeeper)
    - ii. 9U – 7v7 (6 players plus a goalkeeper)
    - iii. 10U – 7v7 (6 players plus a goalkeeper)
    - iv. 11U – 9v9 (8 players plus a goalkeeper)
    - v. 12U – 9v9 (8 players plus a goalkeeper).
  - Players in game attendance should play a minimum of one half of each game and preferably more.
  - Each player will receive a minimum of two written evaluations per year from their association's NCYSA Youth Academy Director; one in the second half of the fall season and/or one in the second half of the spring season.

## GAMES

### For 11U-12U

It is recommended that games follow the [US Soccer Player Development Initiatives](#) Modified Rules for small sided games.

- (9v9 – 7 field players and 1 goalkeeper; 11U & 12U).

Law 1 – The Field of Play Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. Length: minimum 70 yards’ maximum 80 yards Width: minimum 45 yards’ maximum 55 yards Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it. The Goal area: Conform to FIFA. The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, ten (10) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of ten (10) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made eight (8) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area. Flag posts: Conform to FIFA. The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA. Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The maximum distance between the posts is twenty-one (21) feet and the maximum distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is seven (7) feet.

### For 9U-10U

It is recommended that games follow the [US Soccer Player Development Initiatives](#) Modified Rules for small sided games.

- (8U – 4v4 – 4 field players & no goalkeeper; 7v7 – 6 field players and 1 goalkeeper; 9U & 10U)

Law 1 – The Field of Play Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line. Length: minimum 45 yards’ maximum 60 yards Width: minimum 35 yards’ maximum 45 yards Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line. The center mark is indicated at the midpoint of the halfway line. A circle with a radius of eight (8) yards is marked around it. The Goal area: Conform to FIFA. The Penalty Area: A penalty area is defined at each end of the field as follows: Two lines are drawn at right angles to the goal line, ten (10) yards from the inside of each goalpost. These lines extend into the field of play for a distance of ten (10) yards and are joined by a line drawn parallel with the goal line. The area bounded by these lines and the goal line is the penalty area. Within each penalty area a penalty mark is made eight (8) yards from the midpoint between the goalposts and equidistant to them. An arc of a circle with a radius of eight (8) yards from each penalty mark is drawn outside the penalty area. Flag posts: Conform to FIFA. The Corner Arc: Conform to FIFA. Goals: Goals

must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corner flag posts and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The maximum distance between the posts is eighteen (18) feet and the maximum distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground is six (6) feet.

1. NCYSA, through the scheduling meetings, will help facilitate the scheduling of the NC Youth Soccer Academy Program. NCYSA will help provide oversight to schedule games so that all NC Youth Soccer Academy Programs obtain a minimum number of games.
2. Games will be in the form of NC Youth Soccer Academy games with NO published scores or standings.
3. It is recommended that an NC Youth Soccer Academy player not play more than 100 minutes in one day.
4. Academy Player Passes must be at the competition site.
5. Team Travel and Tournaments:
  - a. It is recommended that NC Youth Soccer Academies do not participate in any elimination bracket tournaments. It is recommended that they participate in showcases.
6. NCYSA will help facilitate regional NC Youth Soccer Academy showcases during the fall and spring.

***The following amendments were made to Team Travel and Tournaments (February 24, 2009) by the NC Youth Soccer Academy Committee:***

- Each association would be required to attend the Fall and/or Spring NCYSA Youth Academy Showcase Events. These events are part of a bid process.
- Each association would be allowed to attend one (1) competitive tournament each season, excluding one tournament hosted by their home association.

***The following amendments were made to Academy Rules, Tournaments, and the NC Youth Soccer Academy Showcase (December 5, 2012) by the NC Youth Soccer Academy Directors.***

- On a goal kick all players for the opposing team need to be at midfield before the kick is taken. Once the kick is taken the players from the opposing team can play.
- On a goal keeper save (through the run of play) the players on the opposing team, need to permit the goalkeeper to play the ball wide to their teammates before they can intercept the ball.

## **REFEREES**

1. The hosting association is responsible for providing NCYSA certified referees for each Inter-NC Youth Soccer Academy game. **Referees are REQUIRED to check Academy passes at each game.**
2. Inter-NC Youth Soccer Academy games will be assigned one certified center referee and two certified assistant referees (per USYS Rules). Referee fees based on a consensus agreement of the participating associations for NC Youth Soccer Academy at the scheduling meeting, the referee fee for NCYSA Youth Academy will be a minimum of \$34 for the CR and \$18 for the AR involving 9v9 games. Using one referee, as approved by NC Youth Soccer Academy, will pay the referee \$28 per match for 7v7 games.

## PLAYER TRAINING

1. Each association will provide its players, as part of the association's NC Youth Soccer Academy Program, with a maximum of three (3) training opportunities per week.
2. Training should be conducted in a pool training format - not with specific teams.

### 3. HEADING – US Soccer Heading Mandate

#### A. U.S. Soccer Recommendations 11U and younger.

1. U.S. Soccer recommends that players in 11U programs and younger shall not engage in heading, either in practices or in games.
2. U.S. Soccer further recommends for players in 12U and 13U programs, that heading training be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week.
3. All coaches should be instructed to teach and emphasize the importance of proper techniques for heading the ball.

#### B. Implementing Members

1. The Implementing Members accept the recommendations of U.S. Soccer set forth in item A above and recommend that each of their respective members follow such recommendations as well.
2. Provide parent education.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

1. Explore growth of bi-monthly showcases to allow for different competition and to help scheduling.
2. Creation of NC Youth Soccer Academy Manual for policy, questions, etc. Update as needed.

## NC YOUTH SOCCER ACADEMY ASSESSMENT

1. "Assessment" or "Evaluations" **NOT "tryouts"** are the terms to use when selecting players for the NC Youth Soccer Academy program.
  - Before state cups, you may ONLY assess registered players from YOUR association.
  - Open Assessments can be conducted - **The first Monday after Singer Cup**
  - ***"Cannot recruit player 12U and below to participate."***

## PRE-ODP – OPTIONAL COMPONENT OF NC YOUTH ACADEMY

### Coaching Education Pathway Platform

Currently the NC Youth Soccer Academy has 63 associations that offer this optional program to their players. This program is offered to players that are true 8U through 12U across the state. The number of players registered in the NC Youth Soccer Academy was at 4,212 as of May 1, 2017.

Under the current model all active associations must have an Academy Director who completes the following coaching education requirements.

USA COACHING EDUCATION	6U-8U			9U-10U		11U-12U		13U-19U					
	Free Online Grassroot Coaching Course	4v4 Online	4v4 In-person	7v7 Online	7v7 In-person	9v9 Online	9v9 In-person	11v11 Online	11v11 In-person	USSF D License	USSF C License	USSF B License	USSF A-Youth License
NC Youth Academy Staff	Required	Required		Required of 7v7 coaches	Required of 7v7 coaches	Required of 7v7 coaches	Required of 9v9 coaches						
NC Youth Academy DIRECTORS	Required	Required											

**\*\*ONLY registered and approved NCYSA Risk Managed adults can work with the players.**

This platform helps ensure the associations across the state are teaching age-appropriate activities under qualified guidance. Each fall and spring hundreds of teams from across the state participate in the NC Youth Soccer Academy Showcase, which provides the NC ODP program coaches the opportunity to observe.

- **Soccer Landscape in North Carolina**

Beginning in the fall of 2016 the U.S. Soccer Development Academy will begin competing at the 12U age group for the first time. This change in the soccer landscape within North Carolina could result in several players opting to participate in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy from the 12U age group.

Thus, the question becomes how can we enhance opportunities for our current 11U-12U players within the NC Youth Soccer Academy by increasing player development in conjunction with the NC ODP program?

- **Pre-ODP: 11U & 12U Players**

Our solution to this challenge is to connect the large number of players, as well as coaches involved, in the NC Youth Soccer Academy with the NC ODP program curriculum.

The aim would be to implement the US Youth Soccer ODP Player Manual, currently utilized by NC ODP, which provides a player development curriculum for the 11U-12U age group and beyond.

Players would develop two-fold as they are immersed in the 8U-10U curriculum then graduate to the 11U-12U “Pre-ODP” player development curriculum. This “Pre-ODP” training would supplement the learning environment already established in our current NC Youth Soccer Academy Associations, thus introducing players and parents to the NC ODP program’s focus on development of players at an earlier age.



## PROGRAMMING

The NCYSA Technical Director for Coaching Education and Player Development and the NCYSA Assistant Technical Director for Academy and ODP will work with each NC Youth Soccer Academy Director on implementing the US Youth Soccer ODP Player Manual for the “Pre-ODP” 11U-12U players which:

1. Creates an opportunity to evaluate coaches and players while providing support & feedback.
2. Creates an environment which is age appropriate and player centered where NC ODP coaches can begin to evaluate players in a controlled environment.
3. Provides the NC Youth Soccer Academy Fall & Spring Showcases as an assessment opportunity; with the intent of inviting players to NC ODP training sessions and/or tryouts.
4. Gives a natural building block of player development from 8U-10U to 11U-12U.  
Educates the players and parents of the NC ODP process as well as future opportunities for their sons and/or daughters through ODP Sub-regional & Regional Events.
5. Gives those associations participating in the NC Youth Soccer Academy Program a marketing tool to retain players through this unique programming. This merging of the NC Youth Soccer Academy Program curriculum and the NC ODP Program curriculum will permit both programs to develop players for the future of soccer in North Carolina no matter what pathway the player chooses. (8/9/16  
*Approved by NCYSA Executive Board*)

# NC YOUTH SOCCER ACADEMY TOURNAMENT RULES/GUIDELINES

**Academy Pool: A player pool of (X) number of players, true 8U-10U & 11U-12U, which form teams and play matches with focus on technical development. No keeping score, standings, wins/losses are recorded.**

**Academy players may not be registered with any other level of play.**

## NC YOUTH SOCCER ACADEMY TOURNAMENT RULES

1. The rules and policies of NCYSA, and USYS are applicable for tournaments, in accordance with the NC Youth Soccer Academy Program Rules and USSF Modified Rules.
2. Players must be registered with NCYSA/USYS and possess an Academy Player Pass.
3. Only players that are true 8U thru 12U as per USYS Guidelines are eligible.
4. Tournament play should follow the US Soccer Modified Rules for small sided games.
5. Players who are enrolled in an NC Youth Soccer Academy Program cannot participate on any Recreational, Challenge, or Classic team as guest players.

It is recommended that players in match attendance should play a minimum of one half of each match and preferably more.

## TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION FOR NC YOUTH SOCCER ACADEMY

It is the responsibility of the Association to file the tournament application form for all NC Youth Soccer Academy players to a tournament. The Association could be subjected to a per team entry fee that will be determined by the Tournament Host Association.

The following credentials must be presented and checked at tournament registration:

- NCYSA Official Academy Pool Match Roster (Red Stamped) it is strongly recommended by NCYSA not to provide the NCYSA Official Roster which includes all player information. This NCYSA Official Match Roster is generated by NCYSA and red stamped.
- Laminated Player NC Youth Soccer Academy Passes with pictures.
- Medical Wavers

## TOURNAMENT PLAY FOR NC YOUTH SOCCER ACADEMY

1. The official NC Youth Academy Pool Match Roster will be used as follows:
  - Presented before each scheduled game.
  - The maximum of 12 participating players should be highlighted on each official NCYSA Match roster.
  - NC Youth Soccer Academy passes will be presented to coincide with the roster.
  - Medical waiver forms should be at the field of play.

2. For an 8U, 9U or 10U NC Youth Soccer Academy Division: Tournament division play is limited to Academy “teams” only. Academy teams will play in a separate division. No other “level of play” may be combined with Academy teams or their brackets.
3. For an 11U or 12U Academy Division: Tournament division play is limited to Academy “teams” only. Academy teams will play in a separate division. No other “level of play” may be combined with Academy teams or their brackets.
4. It is recommended that Academy teams not participate in any elimination bracket but could participate in a Festival format.
5. Games will be in the format of Academy league play with NO published scores or standings.
6. Games will have NO Champions or winners. It is up to the tournament’s discretion to provide “gifts “or “participation tokens” to all players from all teams. These items are recommended to be the same.
7. It is recommended that an Academy player may not play more than 100 minutes in one day.
8. Games will be assigned one certified NCYSA referee (per USYS Rules). Referee fees will be the same as for age appropriate Challenge level teams.
9. Ball size: 4
  - Roster size: Maximum 12 Duration of the Match: Two 25-minute halves with half-time interval of 5 minutes Offside: None Substitutions: (Consistent with league play. See below.) NCYSA EXCEPTION: THAT THE SUBSTITUTION POLICY FOR AGE GROUPS PLAYING SMALL-SIDED GAMES CONFORM TO FIFA, BUT WITH UNLIMITED SUBSTITUTIONS, AS ADOPTED BY NCYSA. PASSED BY CHALLENGE COUNCIL 6/11/2005

***THE FOLLOWING IS TAKEN FROM THE NCYSA RULES, AS REFERRED TO IN THE ABOVE EXCEPTION:***

During Classic and Challenge games, players may be substituted only during a stoppage of the game (FIFA Law III, International Board decision #6, and Law \*X paragraph [a] and [b], the number of substitutions shall be unlimited unless the rules of a competition superseding the jurisdiction of this association specifically determine otherwise.) Substitutions may be made, with the approval of the referee, at the following times: A) Prior to a throw-in, by the team in possession B) Prior to a goal kick, by either team C) After an injury, by either team D) At half-time [taken from NC Youth Soccer Association Rules: Section 7, Rule 5] These would only apply to the 9U Fall Season.

10. On a goal kick all players for the opposing team need to retreat to the “build out line. Once the kick is taken the players from the opposing team can play per the US Soccer PDI, before the kick is taken.
11. For 9v9, players will follow the current US Soccer PDI.