



SPRINGFIELD AREA SOCCER ASSOCIATION

PASSION PRIDE LOYALTY UNITY



Play Up and Trap Year Policy

SASA recognizes there may be times when it is in the best interest of a player to play with an older birth year. When this occurs, the player is referenced as “playing up”. Playing up occurs rarely at SASA and is an exception to the player placement process for our club, not the norm. Players, parents or coaches who have an interest in a player playing up shall submit their request in writing to the SASA Director of Coaching (DOC) prior to our club’s tryouts.

The following criteria will be used to determine if a player is allowed to play up and the best interest of the player will be considered in each instance:

1. New Play Up Player

- a. A new play up player is defined as any player that has not previously played up at SASA. This applies to current SASA players and players that are new to SASA.
- b. Player is in the top tier of their current birth year and the older birth year.
- c. Player is able to handle and thrive playing at the older birth year in the following aspects; physical, mental, technical and tactical areas on the soccer field.
- d. Player demonstrates that placement on a team at an older birth year offers a developmental advantage rather than playing on the birth year team.

2. New Play Up Player Evaluation Process

- a. Player attends tryouts of their birth year and the older birth year.
- b. Player will be evaluated by SASA coaching staff, independent evaluators and the SASA DOC.
- c. If the player is approved to play up, the player will be placed on an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for the first season with the older birth year team.
- d. IDP will consist of player being rostered on the player’s birth year team and will include scheduled opportunities for training, games, and tournaments with the older birth year team. After the initial season, the coaching staff for both teams along with the SASA DOC will decide if the player will be placed on the older team the following season.

3. Returning Play Up Player

- a. A returning play up player is defined as a player that has previously played up at SASA.
- b. Returning play up players are not guaranteed placement on the older birth year team the following season as the player will be evaluated under this policy each year.

- c. Player is in the top tier of their current birth year and the older birth year.
- d. Player is able to handle and thrive playing at the older birth year in the following aspects; physical, mental, technical and tactical areas on the soccer field.
- e. Player demonstrates that placement on a team at an older birth year offers a developmental advantage rather than playing on the birth year team.

4. Returning Play Up Player Evaluation Process

- a. Player attends tryouts of their birth year and the older birth year.
- b. Player will be evaluated by SASA coaching staff, independent evaluators and the SASA DOC.
- c. If a player is approved to play up, the player will be placed on the older birth year team.
- d. If the coaches are not able to agree where the player should be placed, the SASA DOC will determine placement.

5. Trap Year Player Considerations

- a. The change from school year teams to birth year teams created a scenario in which players may be “trapped” during their 8th grade school year.
- b. The 8th grade players are considered “trapped” during the fall/spring season that the freshmen in their birth year are playing in their high school soccer season.
 - i. Girls may be trapped in the spring SASA season of their 8th grade year.
 - ii. Boys may be trapped in the fall SASA season of their 8th grade year.
- c. The SASA DOC, appropriate coaches, and parents of trapped players will discuss all options related to the team(s) the trapped player may play on during the season in which they are trapped.
- d. All 8th grade trapped players may try out at the appropriate high school tryout in which the freshmen in their birth year tryout also.
- e. Trapped players will be allowed to play with the high school team they are placed on if they qualify to play on that team via the high school tryout.

6. Exceptions

- a. In unique scenarios in which an exception to this policy may be considered, the SASA DOC will determine player placement after considering what is in the best interest of the player and these scenarios may occur at any point during the soccer season.

Effective February 2020