

## ***Frequently asked questions about the Columbia Soccer Club Academy Program***

### **1. Is the Academy separate from the Columbia Soccer Club Association?**

No, we are a specific part of CSC. The club launched the Academy program in June of 2010 to serve as a bridge between the recreational league and the Pride program. For the 2010 seasonal year, the Academy will be in its first year and will include the U10 and U11 age groups and will add U12 in 2011.

### **2. Do you have to tryout?**

Yes, admission into the U10, U11, & U12 Academies are through invitation only. However, very few, if any, kids are excluded, except when numbers do not allow. We evaluate both recreational and former Academy participants at a formal tryout held in June as well as any other area players interested. We recognize that tryouts can be stressful, so the players are evaluated within the context of small-sided games. We won't single any players out by making them "do" a drill by themselves. Our tryout format is intended to both minimize the player's stress levels while at the same time allowing coaches to watch them in action.

### **3. Will players stay on the same team for the entire year (both Fall & Spring)?**

One of the benefits of the Academy program is its flexibility in player movement. Rules allow for players to play with different teams when necessary and appropriate. For the most part team cores remain the same. Typically there may be a small number of adjustments to team rosters between seasons. Also, during the seasons and when appropriate, players may be asked to play with another team to maximize their development. This can mean playing for a higher-level team because coaches feel they're up to the challenge. It can also mean playing for a lower level team to put them in a more relaxed situation or more of a leadership role thus helping elevate their confidence.

### **4. Is this a year-round commitment?**

Yes and no. It's a 1-year commitment that covers fall and spring seasons. However, we don't play year-round. After tryouts are complete, we break until we start getting ready for the fall. The fall season ends before the Thanksgiving holiday. We start preparing for the spring season in mid-March to early April.

### **5. When are practices?**

We practice two times a week and play most of our games on Saturdays. Players also have the opportunity to attend additional "technical" practice sessions offered as well as attend optional goalkeeper training.

### **6. Is this a travel team?**

Yes, but with limited travel. We play about half of our games at home, the other half at fields around the metro area. Our opponents are all located around the Mid Missouri area so there are no "long distance" trips.

**7. How old does my son/daughter need to be? Divisions based on the MYSA age matrix.**

\* U9s and U10s are eligible to participate in the U10 Academy

**8. How many tournaments do you play?**

The U10s & U11s typically play one tournament at the end of the fall season and one at the end of the spring season.

**9. What are the coaches' qualifications?**

Coaches are licensed by the US Soccer Federation (USSF) and/or the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA). They have many years of playing experience and many years of experience coaching youth "select" teams.

**10. How much does it cost? TBD**

This includes:

Professional coaching

Two training opportunities per week (2 mandatory)

Exposure to different coaches, yet consistency of a team

Optional goalkeeper training sessions

Speed and Agility training for u10 program

Player evaluations (one each season)

Tournament application fees

Competitive Saturday games and local festivals

Invitational training and matches

**11. What are the coaches looking for in a player?**

Three main characteristics: attitude (for example, hard working and eager to learn), awareness on the field/intelligence, and athletic ability. Current technical skills are a bonus, but if a player has the other three qualities, we believe they will be able to develop technical skill through training sessions and by playing with strong players in practices and games.

**12. Do you play full field or small-sided soccer?**

We (U10 & U11) play 8-aside soccer on smaller fields. The smaller team sizes allow players to get more touches on the ball. The smaller fields allow players to progress based on soccer skills instead of using a "bunch" or "kick" ball mentality.

**13. Is the Columbia Soccer Club Academy all about winning?**

No. At young ages, player development is much more important than winning a game. Our goal is to create an environment where players are allowed to begin acquiring confidence and skill within a competitive arena where winning is not a determinant of success. We firmly believe that providing Academy players with opportunities to develop their skills and learn are much more important than the short-term success of winning a game. Research suggests that most of the problems in youth sports occur when adults erroneously impose a professional model that emphasizes winning on what should be an educational experience. We measure success in learning (skill development) and fun, not with scores and standings.

**14. What happens if my son/daughter tries out and makes it?**

We will invite him/her to join the CSC Academy, either via a phone call, a face-to-face conversation at the fields, or via our club's website. If you need to think it over for a day or two, that's no problem. If you decide to join, then you will need to attend a parent's meeting in July to complete registration. If you decline the invitation, you are still welcome and will play in our Columbia Soccer Club Recreation program.

**15. What happens if my son/daughter tries out and doesn't make it?**

If your son/daughter had the initiative to tryout, we encourage your child to stick with soccer and keep practicing. He/she will register for the recreational program, keep improving, and try again next year.

**16. What are the coach's expectations?**

We expect three things from each player: come to games and practices prepared to play, do the best you can, and have fun. A good attitude and consistent practice will produce results. Players will only benefit if they also spend time at home practicing the new skills they learn. We do not expect everyone to do everything perfectly. Mistakes are a key part of the learning process.

**17. What are your expectations for parents?**

A few things: a. organize a way to get your child to training and games on time; b. be supportive of your child and their teammates; c. leave the coaching to the coaches; d. when fees are due, pay them promptly, and e. make an effort to understand the Academy program's mission and our strategies toward achieving our objectives.

\* The following questions are specific to the U10 program.

**18. Will my child have to play goalkeeper?**

All players in the U10Academy are expected to learn how to play multiple positions on the field, which includes goalkeeper. While we want the players to become comfortable in positions that fit their abilities, we also want them to have the opportunity to play in a variety of roles on the field. While your son/daughter will not play every position in each game, over the course of the season, he/she will be able gain experience in a variety of positions. We feel that they are too young to be sorted out into permanent positions and that a part of the learning process is becoming a well-rounded player.

**19. Will my child make the "A" team?**

For the fall season, U10s will not have an "A" team. We feel that one of the strengths of our program is that all of the players, regardless of how talented they are, are distributed evenly across all of the teams during their first season. We do not differentiate between our teams by grouping our best, worst, oldest or youngest players onto a team together. We feel that it is more important for the players to have ample opportunities to learn from each other. However, for the spring season, this will change. The players will then be placed on teams A,B or C.