

BRANCBURG TRAVEL SOCCER CLUB

TEAM FORMATION GUIDELINES

Updated March 2018

These guidelines are provided to aid the Board of Directors and Coaches of the Branchburg Travel Soccer Club in the formation of Branchburg travel soccer teams. They are designed to be flexible to accommodate unforeseen circumstances, fair, unbiased and provide consistency for team formation across age groups and from season to season.

Qualification for a

team is primarily determined by tryouts. Parity within a team is a principal consideration in team formation, so that player development and coaching techniques are not compromised. The ultimate goal is to provide the best possible experience for the greatest number of children.

DEFINITIONS

Competitive: The goal of the BTSC is to provide for the development of soccer skills through a “competitive” soccer program, and therefore needs to form competitive teams. Relative to Mid New Jersey flight guidelines, we define competitive to be a Team that has the minimum potential for a .500 season in an appropriate flight of the respective Division.

Qualified Candidate: For consideration for placement on a BTSC Team, a candidate should exhibit skill levels close to those of their prospective team members. Parity within the team is a prime consideration, so that player development and coaching techniques are not compromised. Qualification shall be primarily determined from “open” tryouts.

Resident / Non-Residents Status: Children of appropriate ages according to MNJYSA regulations who live within the Township of Branchburg or the Town of Somerville shall be considered to be Residents.

- Children living outside of these areas shall be Non-Residents.
- Any Non-Resident player, who is selected and plays a minimum of one season on a BTSC team, will be considered a Resident, for the purposes of team formation, while continuing to participate in consecutive seasons within BTSC.
- Any Non-Resident player, who is selected and plays on an “Elite” team and has not maintained Resident status through previous non Elite team play, will not maintain Resident status for preceding consecutive seasons.

Members: Membership categories are established by the Constitution. Player members are all children playing with a BTSC affiliated team. Non-Residents that play on a BTSC team shall be afforded the same privileges as a Resident so long as they continue to play on a BTSC team. All players on a BTSC Team roster in the immediately preceding year shall be exempt from any Resident / Non-Resident restrictions, with the exception of Elite teams as previously state d.

Playing-Up: Refers to a player who wishes to try out and play for a team whose age classification is greater than the age classification of the player according to USYSA guidelines.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Travel soccer teams are formed by birth year, not grade. Within most leagues, teams are grouped into divisions based on the year of birth of the players. These divisions are further subdivided into “Flights.” The Travel Program begins at the U8 level and continues all the way to U19. “U” stands for “Under” and means that all players must be that age or “under” during the seasonal year.

Each Travel Team is placed into a “Flight” within its particular age division. The term “Flight” refers to a grouping of teams who are considered to be of comparable ability. The number of “Flights” per age division depends on the number of teams within that age division. Teams are often re-flighted after the Fall season. Final flighting decisions are made by the league in which the Team participates.

The Travel Program includes two (2) seasons (Fall and Spring) of soccer for boys and girls age levels U8 through U15. It is possible that boys teams may be coed (girls playing on a boys team only). To begin play in the Travel Program children must be 7 years of age between January 1st of the year they are registering and December 31st. All age groups (U8- U15) follow this same age group guideline. For athletes of high school age (i.e. U15-U19) BTSC may, dependent on availability, sponsor one season of soccer during the spring season.

ROSTER SIZE

Teams will play variations of small-sided soccer in age groups U8 through U12 as determined by the United States Soccer Federation. This means they will play on a smaller field with different amounts of players, depending on the age group. U8-U10 teams will consist of 7 vs 7 players, and U11-U12 teams will consist of 9 vs 9 . The roster size for these teams will vary depending on the age group, but could be anywhere from 12 players at the U8 to U10 level, and 13 at the U11 and U12 level, but the rosters at each level can be bigger (maximum of 14 players) or smaller. Teams will play “full-sided” soccer on a regulation size soccer field at the U13 through U19 age levels. For the full sided age groups, soccer is played on a standard field 11 players playing against 11 players. The roster is comprised of approximately 15 players, but the number can be smaller or greater (U13-U15 maximum of 18 players, U17-U19 maximum of 22 players).

REQUEST TO PLAY-UP

All players may request to play up One (1) year. A player requesting to play up will be required to submit a waiver for try-outs. This waiver will inform the parent(s) of the associated risks in playing up and request parent approval for the child to participate in the tryout. The sole purpose of this form is to obtain parent approval for the child to participate in the tryout.

TEAM FORMATION PROCEDURES

1. The Director of Team Formation, with the assistance of Board, coaches and volunteers, shall organize and schedule “open” tryouts by age group, to be held primarily in the spring. Fall tryouts may be scheduled to form spring only teams. A goalie tryout will also be scheduled. The Player Development Committee shall determine the tryout format.

2. Notification for all tryouts should be published in the local newspapers, cable TV, the club Web site, etc. and distributed within the appropriate local public and private, schools for the applicable age group. The notice shall provide information regarding the tryout and team selection procedures.

3. Candidates shall be ranked according to the tryout results and the information listed in section 3.6. The Board shall then work with the approved Coach(s) to establish Team Rosters, using the following principles:

3.1. USYSA guidelines state that the maximum number of players for U11-U19 shall be Eighteen (18), and the maximum number of players for U8-U10 shall be Fourteen (14). BTSC strongly recommends that the number of players for U11-U19 be Fifteen (15) and the number of players for U8-U10 be Eleven (11). U-19 teams may roster 22 players at any one time. However, such teams are not permitted to play in State Cup, Tournaments, and only 18 of the rostered players may participate on any given game day.

3.3. Non-Resident Restrictions - U11-U12 teams may accept three(3) Non-Resident players, U13-U14 teams may accept five(5) Non-Resident players, there are no restrictions for U15-U19. See also “Elite” team Non-Resident guidelines below.

3.4. Parity - Maintain parity amongst team members. Parity within a team is a principal consideration in team formation, so that player development and coaching techniques are not compromised.

3.5. If a Resident player’s talent is comparable with those of a Non-Resident, the Resident player shall be selected.

3.6. Three sources will be used to complete the player ranking process. The independent third party evaluation/ranking from the try-out, ranking from the current "A" team coaching staff and ranking from the current "A" team trainer. The team trainer rank will carry a weight of 1.5x that of the coaching staff. These three rankings will be combined and used for team formation for U-9 and above.

3.6.1. Before tryouts each BTSC “A” team head coach (with the assistance of his assistant coaches) and the trainer from each team will independently rank each player on the team (1 highest – 18 lowest) and submit their separate ratings directly to the BTSC Team Formation Chair. See example of Coach Ranking sheet in Appendix.

3.6.2. The BTSC Team Formation Chair will enter the information on each player on the Formation Ranking sheet. One value will be entered from the coaching staff and one from the team trainer. See example of Formation Ranking sheet in Appendix.

3.6.3. Evaluations from the “A” team coach and trainer will be handled as follows: Players in the bottom 25% per each “A” team children will be assigned a rating of 1. The next 25% a rating of 2, the next 25% a rating of 3 and the highest 25% will be assigned a rating of 4.

3.6.4. Independent, third party evaluators will run the tryouts and rank the tryout candidates. A numeric value will be given to each tryout candidate starting with 1 for the highest candidate and going up sequentially. Tryout candidates that are evaluated as Not Travel Appropriate will receive a NTA, rather than a numerical rank.

3.6.5. For each tryout candidate, with the exception of Elite team formation, the coach/ and trainer rating values will be added to the tryout ranking and this number will constitute the candidate’s final tryout rank position. The final try-out rank position is used, in order of rank, to form all teams at any age group. Ties regarding making or not making the team will be decided on by the Board and the coach of the team.

4. The Board is responsible to form and approve all teams. This is typically done with the coach and a voting majority of Board members. If there is more than one team in a designated age group, if practicable, the coaches of each team should meet with the Board concurrently to form such teams. The Board, at its discretions, may form teams without a head coach involvement. This is typically done when a coach has not yet been identified or approved for a team.

5. During the team formation meeting the coach identifies the number of players they want to have on the team as X. The team is then formed from the final ranking sheet 1-X. Once this group of players is identified it is checked for conformity with resident / non resident guidelines. Players rated NTA are not required to be selected. At this point the coach can exercise goalie, coach and medical picks as defined. This final group of players will then be offered

a position for a particular team. If a player does not accept a position, it is filled from the next highest ranked player on the list until the team is formed at X players. Coaches maintain the ability to use their goalie and coach picks throughout the process until they are fully used.

6. Goalie Pick - The coach, with Board concurrence, may select any goalie who has attended the separate goalie tryout, even if that player has been ranked lower than the highest-ranking player that was not selected for the team.
7. Coach Pick - The coach, with Board concurrence, shall have the prerogative to select *Two (2)* Resident, age appropriate players to be included on the roster. A coach's selection cannot be a player playing up.
8. Medical Pick - The coach, with Board concurrence, may place a player on a team that cannot attend a portion of, or the entire tryout, as the result of significant extenuating circumstance (i.e. medical, religious, or required scholastic) A coach's Medical Pick can not be a player playing up.
9. The A team coach has the responsibility to notify all registered try-out candidates regarding their placement on a team (or non-placement) as soon as possible after tryouts and after the final spring season game/activity. However, no notifications shall be made until all conflicts are resolved. All notification within an age group shall be attempted on the same day or weekend. All candidates must be notified of their status and either accept or turn down a position.
10. Players accepting a roster position are expected to participate in fall and spring seasons, failure to do so may impact eligibility for the next season. The Board will approve all rosters.
11. The Board shall review and approve all roster changes, including additions, deletions and Spring season changes. The Board may request additional evaluations.
12. All coaches must confirm their roster with the BTSC Team Formation Chair as soon as final player acceptances have been received. Coaches must obtain prior Board approval to add players to a roster beyond what was agreed to at team formation, including adding players during formation to substitute for those that have turned down a position on the team.
13. Elite Teams: An Elite team is defined as a team competing in a higher level league; such as EDP or JAGS, and may have more than the allotted Non-Resident players.

Initial Formation of an Elite Team:

-After gaining information and/or consensus from the current resident player families, a coach, parent, and/or Board member must submit a request in writing to form an Elite team. The Board must review and approve the request to form an Elite team. The request for an Elite team usually takes place when there are a larger pocket of players and/or a player pool in a certain age-group with identified talent that is looking for more of a challenge for the players. Elite teams are also often formed at the High

School age level.

-The tryouts will be conducted by a BTSC Board selected consultant and/or coach (which will be paid by BTSC). The selected consultant will choose the players to be selected for the team.

-There will be one/two tryouts conducted to form an elite team. Tryout candidates will be told the requirements, expectations and level of commitment for play on an elite team either before and/or at tryouts by the coaches and/or Board member.

-If the majority of the roster spots are filled, but a couple more players are needed to complete the roster, a team can still be formed and players added to initial formation at any time after an evaluation by the coaches.

-Coach and trainer rankings and rating values will not be used during the formation of Elite teams; non-elite teams will follow the normal formation guidelines above including rankings.

-Formation of the Elite teams will typically take place prior to the regular travel tryouts. The timing will support the formation of subsequent A and B teams at an age group.

Formation of an existing Elite Team:

-BTSC allows all elite team coaches/managers the possibility of holding a team tryout at any time during the soccer year in order to fill vacant roster spots. All team tryouts are subject to review by the Board of BTSC.

-In the spring, the coaches/managers will determine which players will be offered a returning spot on the team. Once offers are sent and acceptances are returned, there may or may not be a need to hold a team tryout. If there are only a few roster spots open, interested players will be invited to tryout by attending team practice(s) within the specific age group. Vacancies will be filled as necessary. If a full, open tryout is necessary, they will be scheduled.

-At any time during the year, a player can ask to be evaluated by the current coaches. These players may join training after signing a medical release form provided by the BTSC. There is no fee for a player to be openly evaluated.

-Registration fees for the Elite teams will be approximately 150% of the regular registration fee established by the club for that season.

Elite High School Teams (additional clarifications):

-An elite high school team can be formed at any time prior to the start of a season. For teams to play in a spring league it is best to form the team during the prior spring season; however that is not always possible. Therefore, high school elite teams can be formed at any time during the year when it makes sense. All formations will be approved by the Board.