

Travel Soccer Information

General Information:

The goal of the Lancaster Depew Travel Soccer Organization is to deliver a well rounded program that affords the opportunity to maximize skills development and provide the challenge of playing at a higher level of competition for those that demonstrate the desire and potential to compete at this level.

The Lancaster Depew Soccer Travel Program consists of age groups from U8 to U19. These teams are selected from open tryouts that are held once each year. The teams play competitive soccer in the Buffalo & Western New York Junior Soccer League (BWNYJSL www.bwnyjsl.org) against other clubs and towns. Several of these teams also compete in tournaments throughout the state, outside of the state and in Canada.

It is a goal of the Buffalo & Western New York Junior Soccer League that every player in age groups U12 and below should receive at least one half game playing time in each regular league game, unless otherwise prevented due to injury or absence. It is further highly recommended that this policy be voluntarily followed at all higher age groups. Please note however, that travel soccer requires the commitment from players to attend practices and the level of participation may impact playing time.

Players and parents **must make a commitment to the team and the club**. A player's commitment includes, attending practices, scrimmages, and all scheduled games. It will also include participation in tournaments, camps indoor training and outdoor training. Parents are expected to support their children in those activities. Parents may also be asked to participate in tournament fund-raising to help keep the cost of travel soccer down and to improve or add to our facilities and fields.

Playing time for your child will be fair and as equal as possible through U12. At the U13 and older age groups the amount of playing time shall be earned based on merit, commitment and attendance as determined by the travel team's coaching staff.

Travel Soccer Uniform (2010) & Logo:



Coach Selection Process:

In order to review coaching candidates and have coaches in place prior to roster selections, we request that coaches indicate their interest in coaching by July 15th. Prospective Travel coaches must provide a summary of their experience and qualifications on the "Intent to Coach" application which can be found on the LDSC website under Travel Soccer Forms. The Travel Soccer Director will review applications and interview coaching candidates. Returning coaches must notify the Travel Soccer Director of their intentions for the following season prior to July 15th and will be evaluated against new candidates for the age group.

Evaluating Prospective Coaches

Coaches are expected to be strong in three areas:

1. They must enjoy and have some proficiency at the game of soccer
2. They must enjoy young people and be able to develop good working relationships
3. They must be able to coach, teach and train others

Choosing Coaches

LDSC will select Coaches who are the best fit for a particular team. The following criteria will be considered:

- Previous experience coaching youth soccer (travel or in-town)
- Feedback from players and parents on previous teams
- License courses
- Previous experience playing soccer (high school, college, adult league)
- Willingness to commit to building good fundamental skills for every player on the team by providing organized and progressive training
- Ability to work well with children

All of these factors will be considered in the decision making process. Excellence as a player does not equate to excellence as a coach. LDSC is looking for individuals who want to be more than coaches; they want to be soccer teachers. Coaches teach you what to do on the field. Soccer teachers impart life lessons through soccer such as good decision making, fair play, teamwork, and sportsmanship that are applicable in everyday life.

Applications are reviewed by the Travel Soccer Director, who will make recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval of head coaches. Anyone wishing to coach should contact the Travel Soccer Director as early as possible but no later than July 15th.

Travel team rosters are selected by September 30th. Accepted coaches will be notified of their selection by the Travel Soccer Director by the end of July.

Team Placement & Tryout Policy:

The Lancaster Depew Soccer Club will strive to form at least one boy's and girl's team at all age levels. Lancaster Depew Soccer Club will also support the formation of a second or third team in an age group wherever possible provided there is a qualified coach and the appropriate number of qualified players.

Each team will play in the BWNYSJL at the appropriate age division according to the US Youth Soccer and New York State West Soccer Age Matrix (http://www.nyswysa.org/reg/matrix/index_E.html) and as requested by the coach of each team and approved by the Travel Soccer Director.

All children shall tryout to play on teams within their age group as designated by US Youth Soccer and New York State West Soccer Association (<http://www.nyswysa.org>). However, children within the same birth year may be considered to play up provided they meet criteria 1-3 below.

A player considered to be an influential or impact player (will be in the top seven) in the older age group by the Travel Soccer Director and Director of Training may be considered for placement in the next age group. The Travel Soccer Director will approach the parents and player about the possibility of playing up. The player must be clearly an "A" player AND one of the top 7 players in ability in the entire older age group.

No child may be moved up to a higher age group without the approval of the Travel Soccer Director, Director of Coaching and the Board of Directors.

In the event that there is an insufficient number of players within a designated age group, the Travel Soccer Director and/or the Board of Directors may hold an open tryout for underage players who may wish to move up to a higher age group.

The Travel Director and the Board of Directors shall consider the following criteria in determining whether a child shall be allowed to play at a higher age group.

1. Playing ability and years of experience of the child
2. The emotional and physical maturity of the child
3. Input from prior coaches

Tryouts will be held between August and September for the following Spring Soccer season. **No** child shall be allowed to tryout without first completing a registration form.

There is no guarantee that every child who tries out for a travel team will be placed on a travel team.

Coaches needing to find players to fill out a team shall consult first with the other coaches of the appropriate age and the Travel Soccer Director before filling a team position with an underage player.

Player Tryout & Selection Process:

THE TRYOUT PROCESS

The goal of the assessment process is to maintain a fair, objective and thorough process for assessing player abilities and skills in order to place each player onto a team that will best challenge their current level of play.

The tryout process is held once a year in the Fall and consists of two or more individual tryout sessions. The results of these tryouts will determine the teams for the following Spring season. Tryout times and locations will be posted on Travel Soccer section of the club website. www.lancasterdepewsoccer.com

Participants are required to make at least one of the tryout sessions and are strongly encouraged to make both. Attending both sessions will allow the player the best opportunity to demonstrate their talent.

Process

LDSC uses a three part process to place players on the appropriate team. Information from each part of the process is used to form the teams.

- **Assessments:** Players are evaluated during two (or more) days of assessments. Coaches and/or teams of evaluators rate players on performance during a series of stations that showcase a variety of soccer skills and abilities. Players' assessments will consist of skills and technique based drills, game situations, and small sided team play.
- **Coach Evaluations:** Written and verbal evaluations from a player's current coach are included to help place players. The Coach's evaluations are a critical aspect of the process since coaches know their players best. Coaches provide as much detail as possible on players' ability in order to help the placement committee to properly assess and place each player.
- **Game Observations:** Age Group Coaches and Evaluators may watch players play during regularly scheduled games when additional information is needed to place a player.

While no one process is perfect, LDSC believes this process does a good job of providing fair and unbiased evaluation of player's current abilities and skills and provides the right information for proper placement.

The evaluators consist of third party trainers, coaches, and club members. All results will be tabulated and weighted appropriately so that the players overall score will not be based on one individual evaluator rating. The coach will have more discretion in determining their roster based on the player evaluations and the characteristics that they believe are critical to a team's success.

Tryout Day

Parents must fill out a registration form prior to tryouts and hand it in at the tryouts. See website for complete details. Participants will be issued a colored practice vest with a number on it.

- Players must wear appropriate soccer gear including cleats and shin guards.
- Players must bring their own ball.
- There will be water breaks between drills. Players must bring their own water, etc.

What will the tryout evaluators will be looking for?

- **Dribbling** – ball control, inside/outside foot control, pace of dribbling, feinting, inside/outside cutting skills, acceleration and deceleration with ball, head up while dribbling.
- **Passing** –technique with both feet (inside/outside of foot), crisp/accurate passing to feet and to space, pace of pass, movement after passing.
- **First Touch/Ball Control** – trapping and receiving ball in front of body, positioning to field when receiving, head up and field awareness after controlling ball.
- **Shooting/Finishing** –technique of driving shot with laces/inside of foot, body position on shot, follow-through, decision on when/if to shoot, following shot for rebound
- **Defending** – marking player, pressuring player without over committing, body position when defending, stopping forward progress, tackling/gaining control of ball, knowing when to clear ball vs. dribble/pass
- **Shielding** – body position when under pressure, “showing the ball” or shielding from defender, back to defender or side to defender.
- **Heading** – attacking/striking ball with forehead, heading for control, passing or clearing.

- **Speed** – quickness off/to ball, acceleration to ball/space, change of direction and deceleration
- **Strength** – standing ground and/or winning position
- **Aggressiveness** – attacking and going to the ball on defense, attacking and dribbling around/through defenders on offense, attacking and finishing shots
- **Communication** – calling for the ball, directing players to space
- **Field/Game Awareness** – head up view of the entire field/game, awareness of other players, knowing when to pass vs. dribble or shoot, seeing plays materialize and moving to position
- **Attitude** – are they having fun? Positive to other players/referees, not giving up on plays, sportsmanship, coachability, overall potential.

Use your time playing at the tryouts to show off any or all of these skills. If you are interested in playing as goalkeeper, let the evaluators know.

TEAM SELECTION

Participant results will be tallied by the travel selection committee. Player selection will be determined through a combination of tryout results, trainer and coach recommendation. Having previously played for a team does not guarantee a spot for the next season.

The travel selection committee will meet with coaches to determine the roster for the upcoming seasons. Letters of acceptance will be sent out as soon as selection is made. This is typically within a few weeks of tryouts.