

**Great Falls Athletic Association
Travel Soccer Program
Rules, Policy, and Procedures Manual**

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I. PROGRAM PURPOSE

The GFSC Travel Soccer Program provides an opportunity for GFSC players to train and develop under the guidance of the GFSC Technical Director and to play more competitive soccer against teams from other communities. It is a goal of the GFSC to provide at least two travel teams in each age bracket for the girls and boys programs in order to provide sufficient opportunity for all interested players.

II. PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Great Falls Soccer Club's (GFSC) programs are governed by a Steering Committee consisting of an elected commissioner and a Board of Directors.

The following is a list of the director positions:

- VP - Administration
- VP - Competition (Rules & Regulations)
- VP – External
- VP – Fields
- VP – Outreach
- VP – Recreation
- VP – Travel
- Director of Field Scheduling
- Director/ODSL
- Director of NCSL
- Director of WAGS
- Director/SFL
- Director/Adult League
- Secretary

All policy decisions affecting soccer, including rules interpretations and modifications, shall be made by the Steering Committee and shall be final unless in conflict with GFSC policy.

There is a Director of Travel for each of the Travel Leagues that Great Falls soccer participates in (NCSL, ODSL, and WAGS). Each of these Directors is a voting member of the Steering Committee. There is also a Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer that is a non-voting salaried position to provide training uniformity to the GFSC travel program and to organize and conduct a supplemental training program for all the GFSC travel teams to participate in on a weekly basis. The Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer also provides guidance and advice to the Steering Committee, coaches, and parents on various travel soccer training and development issues.

The GFSC has two distinct soccer programs: recreational and travel. The

Recreational Program is for those players who do not have either the skills or the interest in playing soccer on the competitive level provided by the Travel Program. The Recreational Program has specific rules about equal opportunity regarding participation on a team and mandates minimum playing time in games. The coaches for travel teams are selected by the Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer and approved by the Steering Committee. The players for travel teams are selected by the coaches after open GFSC tryouts. Playing time is determined by the coaches.

In order to play travel soccer, GFSC, as a club, establishes, sponsors and sanctions teams for membership to a Travel Soccer League that is sanctioned by the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA). VYSA is the state member to the United States Youth Soccer Administration (USYSA). USYSA is affiliated with the Federation Internationale De Football Association (FIFA) and the United States Soccer Federation (USSF). As such, all activities of the travel soccer teams are governed by FIFA and USSF rules that are adopted, and/or amended for youth play, by USYSA, VYSA, the Travel League, and GFSC. Travel Coaches and their managers are required to read, be familiar with, and follow the rules that apply to the Travel League to which their team belongs.

GFSC, as a club, owns the rights to each team that it establishes, sponsors and sanctions for membership to a Travel Soccer League. GFSC will sponsor and negotiate with the Travel Soccer Leagues on behalf of each team. GFSC will engage in contract negotiations and execute a contract with each team's coach/trainer. GFSC will make all payments to the coach/trainer consistent with the terms of such contract. A team may vote to leave the Club with a majority of player families voting to transfer. Individual members of a team, however, are free to leave the team and the GFSC program and move at will, in accordance with league rules.

Travel coaches, managers, players and parents of players must abide by this GFSC Travel Soccer Program Policy and Procedures Manual, and the rules, including rules of conduct, for the Travel League to which their team is a member. GFSC is currently a member of the following Travel Soccer Leagues:

- The National Capital Soccer League (NCSL)
- The Old Dominion Soccer League (ODSL)
- The Washington Area Girls Soccer League (WAGS)
- US Club Soccer

Travel teams, as the name implies, travel throughout Virginia, the District of Columbia, Maryland, and West Virginia to play their games. A travel team plays a seasonal-year which is August 1 to August 31 of the following year. There are two (2)

league playing seasons within a seasonal year: Fall and Spring. Players are registered with the Travel League in which their team is playing and are given U.S. Youth Soccer Player Passes which serve as their identification for purposes of league play. Travel players must also register with the GFSC each season.

GFSC has a two-tiered travel program. The first tier is called “premier” and includes teams in Divisions 1-3 of the NCSL and WAGS. These teams will be coached by a licensed coach approved and sanctioned by the Steering Committee. These teams will also commit to practicing three nights a week along with summer and winter training.

The second tier is called “travel” and includes teams in Divisions 4-6 of the NCSL and WAGS, as well as all teams in the ODSL. In order to reduce costs, these teams will practice twice a week and will be coached by a licensed coach approved and sanctioned by the Steering Committee or a qualified, Steering Committee-approved parent. These teams will not be required to participate, nor will they be charged for, the weekly training session sponsored by the Club and run by the Technical Director and his staff. However, teams may elect to participate in these sessions should they so desire, or in lieu of a second practice with their coach or paid trainer.

III. VP OF TRAVEL DUTIES

The VP of Travel is appointed by the Commissioner. The VP of Travel shall:

- Be responsible for organizing and supervising travel teams.
- Recommend coaches and trainers for the travel teams.
- Be the GFSC’s representative to the travel league(s), and VYSA.

Supervision of the program means to oversee all rules of the soccer program that apply to the Travel Program. It also means making sure that the Travel Program and teams operate in a fashion that is in line with overall aims and purposes of the GFSC Soccer Program.

IV TECHNICAL DIRECTOR FOR GREAT FALLS SOCCER

The Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer, under contract to GFSC, will provide general oversight and guidance of the travel program - including: coach selection and evaluation; player selection; tournament selection and guidelines; coordination with Virginia and Regional soccer programs, ODP and State Cup recommendations; schedule, conduct and facilitate player tryouts; help educate travel parents on policies and philosophies; act as a resource for travel coaches; and create short and long term seasonal and yearly objectives regarding age groups and skill development of travel players.

The Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer is responsible for ensuring that the level of training is consistent throughout the entire travel program.

The Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer also provides advice and counsel to the Travel League Directors on the Steering Committee, the travel team coaches, and

team parents on any issues that may arise.

V. TEAM FORMATION/SANCTIONING

New teams (introductory age group) will be formed during the preceding spring Recreational Program for play in the Travel Leagues in the Fall. The current introductory league is Under 9. Players graduate to the next age group on September 1st of each year. This means Under 9 players in the Spring will enter their respective travel leagues as Under 10's in the Fall. It is recommended that there be two boys teams and two girls teams in each age bracket. However, two teams will only be formed for each gender when it is deemed that the pool of players can sustain two teams and, additionally, the Technical Director and his staff in their professional judgment feel this is to the benefit of the players in the pool and the GFSC. The following schedule will be followed:

SCHEDULE

For a Travel Team to Play in the Fall Season

Tentative Schedule Provided for Sanctioning Coaches	March Coaches Meeting
Coach Sanctioning Process Begins	April Steering Committee Meeting
Coach Sanctioning (All Coaches Annually)	May Steering Committee Meeting
Publish Notices of Tryouts	On or before the 2 nd Saturday in May
Run Tryout Advertisements	(From Above) Until Tryouts End
Formal Tryouts Begin	On or after June 1 st
Under 9 Travel Team Tryouts	On or After May 1 st
Formal Tryouts End	June 30 th
Team Registration Package (cards & roster) Due to the Travel League	Approximately August 1 st

The formation and/or sanctioning of a travel team must first be approved by the Steering Committee.

Travel teams that would like to transfer into the Great Falls Soccer Club must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Be sanctioned by the Steering Committee
- Bring at least 2/3 of their existing roster
- Agree to wear GFSC standard kit uniforms in all competitive games.
- Agree to accept an HP coach or have their current coach be willing to operate under HP's umbrella so as to maintain the Club's standards for training and code of conduct policies.

VI. UNIFORM KITS FOR ALL TRAVEL TEAMS

The GFSC Steering Committee has selected Adidas uniforms as the standard Great Falls uniform kit. All travel teams are required to wear the GFSC uniform kit and may not order alternate uniform packages or kits. This approach has numerous benefits – it enables teams to purchase uniforms at substantially reduced prices, based on the volume discounts the Club is able to achieve; it enables players to move easily both between teams in an age group, or play up as guest players in tournaments, or create differing summer/winter league team formations – all without the need to purchase additional uniforms. It also builds a GFSC “look & feel” which builds Club spirit at Club events and at tournaments. As a GFSC policy, recreational players use the same colors and logo – again to build Club unity.

The uniform kit will be approved for wear for two years; if the line is changed by Adidas, a new (but similar look/feel) selection will be added for the upcoming year and it will be approved for at least two years. In this fashion teams/players may expect their uniform kit to be the same for a two year period. However, this approach also allows for incorporating Adidas line changes, since uniform lines are generally modified each year.

Sterling Soccer in Sterling has been selected as the provider for GFSC uniforms – based both on their competitive pricing bid, and on their convenient location relative to Great Falls. Uniform orders should be placed as soon after tryouts as possible, to ensure delivery by the August tournament period. This provider should also be used for existing teams adding players or needing replacement items. The GFSC logo is placed on the jersey uniform over the heart; player numbers are placed on the back of the uniform. In accordance with GFSC policies, **for safety reasons – absolutely no names (first or last) are allowed on the uniforms or warm-ups.**

GFSC travel teams are able to wear any of the uniform combinations possible given the six uniform pieces (white jersey, blue jersey, white short, blue short, white socks, blue socks). In general, most teams wear blue/blue/blue at home if there is no color conflict with the opposing team. In the case of a color conflict, teams dress in the opposite color approach taken by the opposing team (for example, if they were blue/white/blue GFSC would wear white/blue/white). For away games, GFSC normally wears the blue/blue/blue or switches to white (all or partial), especially in higher temperatures.

NOTES: The GFSC kit assumes 2 jerseys (Cobalt Blue & White), 2 shorts (Cobalt Blue & White), 2 socks (Blue & White); generally younger age groups order the backpack while older groups order the duffel bag – teams should be consistent and all order one or

the other. Teams are encouraged to order the warm ups but this is not mandated.

GFA NOTES: GFA teams have a third uniform color: black

VII. COACH SELECTION

GFSC, utilizing its written agreement with the Hi-Performance Soccer Academy (HP), will select and announce the coach for the rising Under 9 travel teams in the April/May timeframe with the goal of involving these coaches in the All-Star selection and training process. GFSC has given HP the right to provide coaches for the U-9 teams, and to coach them (with HP reserving the right to adjust such coach selection as the team develops) during their tenure with the GFSC.

The Technical Director will submit coaching recommendations for all travel teams during the April Steering Committee meeting and coaches will be sanctioned by the Steering Committee no later than its May Meeting. According to the Great Falls Soccer Program Rules, coaches/trainers for travel teams are sanctioned by vote of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall evaluate all candidates for a coaching position against the following criteria:

- Experience and proven ability to teach soccer.
- Recommendation of the Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer
- Knowledge of participants of the age group involved.
- Knowledge of the competition to which the team will be exposed.
- Longevity in the GFSC soccer program.
- Availability to spend time with the team.
- License level, training and commitment to training and/or increasing license level.
- Adherence to the Great Falls Soccer Code of Conduct.

In order to improve the professionalism of the Travel Program and to improve player development, at a minimum, a travel coach should have a "C" license or its equivalent. If the coach does not have a "C" license at the time of selection, he should be encouraged to obtain it within two years of taking the coach position. Exceptions to this rule can only be made upon petition to the Steering Committee. GFSC, with notice and preapproval, will cover one-third (1/3) of the tuition costs each year that the coach stays with a GFSC travel team, until the full cost of tuition has been reimbursed. While a coaching position cannot be guaranteed, it is expected that coaches would commit to coaching/developing a team for several seasons and that the soccer program would in turn commit to the coach for several seasons.

GFSC, in conjunction with U.S. Youth Soccer, has adopted the KIDSAFE PROGRAM in order to exclude from participation in its activities all persons who have been convicted of felonies, crimes of violence, or crimes against persons. All coaches/trainers and administrators in GFSC must provide an employment/volunteer disclosure statement and agree to allow an independent organization commissioned by the GFSC Steering Committee to conduct an annual background check.

VIII. COACH/TRAINER RESPONSIBILITIES

The coach is under the direction of GFSC by way of supervision by the VP of Travel and the Technical Director. The coach is basically in charge of all functions of the team. The coach shall:

- Conduct two (2) 90-minute training sessions (or the equivalent-e.g., three 60 minute training sessions) each week during Fall and Spring seasons.
- Determine practice times and structure (checking first with the VP of Travel and the Director of Field Scheduling so that a field can be scheduled).
- Select all players, conduct practice sessions, select starting line-up, determine playing time/substitutions, make match day judgment and all game-related issues.
- Final decision maker regarding tournament selection (optionally may provide a list for discussion with team parents). Tournaments will not exceed 3 per season without the agreement of the Technical Director of Great Falls Soccer and the VP of Travel, excluding Virginia State Cup, and UYSA youth regional or nationals for state cup winners.
- Hold open team tryouts in June, and optionally (Coach decision) in November; responsible for player selection.
- Maintain a roster size of 14 (min) to 18 (max) for older teams; and 9 (min) to 12 (max) for younger teams. These guidelines may be modified based on VYSA or respective travel league changes.
- Work within FIFA, VYSA, USYSA, NCSL/ODSL/WAGS guidelines, rules and regs.
- Maintain high standards of personal integrity; must pass KidSafe evaluation and participate in the Positive Coaching Alliance program.
- Not be held responsible for weather conditions resulting in cancellation of practices or games, and must follow weather decisions made by the Club, County, and League officials.
- Determine the level of play at which the team will compete in the travel league and tournaments.

- Provide information concerning the above to the team manager for dissemination to the parents and work with the team manager as liaison to parents of the team.

IX. COACH/TRAINER CONTRACTS

If a coach quits or if a team uniformly desires a change in coach, it is incumbent upon the VP of Travel and the Technical Director of Great Falls Soccer to find a suitable replacement. Any coach openings will be filled by the VP of Travel and the Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer and with Steering Committee approval. All travel teams will be incorporated under the terms of the Master Agreement between GFSC and HP. All teams must adhere to the terms of the Master Contract.

X. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIGH PERFORMANCE ACADEMY ("HP")

HP, through its written agreement with GFSC, will provide the following services to the travel program:

- Provide for summer practice opportunities (which may be fee based/additional fee) for all travel players (mid June- mid August). Summer practice sessions may not be run by the individual team's coach in order to gain coaching and training exposure to other Coaches.
- Provide for winter practice opportunities (fee based/additional fee) for all travel players. For developmental purposes, winter sessions may similarly not be run by an individual team's coach in order to gain coaching and training exposure to other Coaches.
- Provide coaches for winter or summer league play, at the request of an individual travel team (fee based/additional fee).
- Organize and conduct eight (8) cross training sessions each season, Spring and Fall, for all GFSC travel players to include both a soccer skills component and a fitness component.
- Organize and conduct summer camps for travel players, both individual and team (fee based/additional fee), and provide recommendations on "sleep-away" camps to any travel team upon request.
- Select the Under 9 travel teams.
- HP, at all times, has the right to use alternative, qualified trainers and coaching assistants to substitute for HP coaches (in recognition that many of the HP coaches also coach High School or College teams or play professionally and thus may have conflicting schedules). Such alternates will be under, and adhere to, the same contract of services arrangement as is concurrent with all HP coaches/trainers in positions with the GFSC.

NOTE: Fee based/additional fee means that the service is generally not covered under the

terms of the coach's contract and generally requires additional fees to be paid by the team for these additional services.

XI. PLAYER SELECTION

GFSC requires all its travel soccer teams to hold open tryouts every year, generally in June after the spring season ends or is ending. Tryouts shall be held on local fields – the same fields where Great Falls travel and house teams play. Tryouts typically consist of 1-3 or more practice sessions to evaluate the player's athletic ability, speed, skills, and interest. After the tryouts, an offer may or may not be extended to your child. Alternatively, after the first tryout, the coach may ask your child to return for additional tryouts or suggest that the team is not a good fit for your player.

As stated above, some teams may invite players to guest play in a tournament as part of the evaluation process. Occasionally, teams may pick up a player or two between the fall and spring seasons. However, within each travel league, there are limits in the number of players that can be picked up between seasons (generally three players may be picked up).

As stated above, players for travel teams are selected at open GFSC tryouts. Tryouts are to be well publicized within and around the community. In an effort to make sure that all team tryouts are broadly publicized, the VP of Travel will help coordinate advertisements in local papers and/or post tryout information on the GFSC website (www.greatfallssoccer.com) at least one week prior to the tryouts. In addition, the VP of Travel will coordinate with the VP of the Recreational Program and the appropriate age group coordinator of the Recreational Program to make sure that all children within the Great Falls Soccer Program are advised of the opportunity to try out. Team tryouts are open to age eligible players from all areas in and around the Great Falls community; however, whenever possible (assuming all things are equal in terms of performance/interest evaluations), players from within the Great Falls community should be given preference when selecting qualified players for GFSC travel teams over a Player from outside of the Great Falls community.

For existing teams, tryouts for the selection of the whole team will take place at or near the end of the spring season. A tryout may be held at the end of the fall season, if the coach so desires, to replace as many players as he sees fit (keeping in mind the rules of the travel league in which the team will be competing in the spring as to how many transfer players may be added to an existing roster.)

The players for a travel team shall be chosen by the coach on the basis of his/her evaluation of the performance of the interested players at tryouts. The players will be chosen on the basis of their commitment level and their ability to contribute to the team's success and not solely on the basis of past performances. Only players participating at tryouts shall be chosen for travel teams (exceptions for illness, injury, etc. can be made with the approval of the coach). Any player eligible to play in the applicable age group may participate in tryouts.

The age group of the team is determined by the age of the oldest player on the team. In some exceptional situations, players may be allowed to play “up.” The two top considerations are: (1) whether the player is in the same grade level as the other players (in other words a child with an August or September birthday will often be in 3rd grade with the U9 players that meet the age requirement); AND (2) whether the player is able to play at the same competitive level as the other players. Despite these exceptions, each travel league does restrict the number of players on a team that can play “up” (generally to 2 players). It is prohibited for a child to play “down” an age group. Per the rules of the travel leagues and VYSA, a child is not allowed to play “down” an age group.

XII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH TRAVEL TEAM

The following is a list of duties normally handled by each team. Responsibilities may be allocated between team parents or handled in the best approach determined by each team:

- Complete registration and preparation of team rosters according to guidelines and schedule provided by each league representative (NCSL/ODSL/WAGS).
Registration and payment must also be completed each season.
- Uniform order and coordination, according to the GFSC uniform selection set forth herein.
- Tournament registration and coordination (including travel arrangements if needed).
- Game day manager duties (outlined in league manuals).
- Practice day coordination.
- Team email/telephone list/phone tree/phone cards.
- Summer practice schedule and summer camp coordination.
- Winter practice schedule and winter league participation.
- Tryout notices and coordination.
- Attendance at monthly meetings of the Steering Committee and any NCSL/ODSL/WAGS training sessions (via notification from representatives).
- Handling of team financials under guidelines from the Steering Committee.
- Operate within GFSC, VYSA, NCSL/ODSL/WAGS rules, regulations and guidelines.
- Hold parent meetings, as needed, to ensure the smooth operation of the team.
- Select a Team Manager

XIII. TEAM MANAGER DUTIES

The parents of each team shall appoint a manager for the team. The manager is usually selected from the available group of parents of the team players. If a team is unable to choose a manager, the VP of Travel shall make the selection, with input from the Steering Committee.

The duties of the manager are to support the coach administratively and to communicate information from the coach to the parents. The manager should also serve as a liaison between the team and the GFSC, supporting the goals and interests of both. The manager is not involved in decisions concerning the team selection, game related situations or any coaching duty. The manager's duties are guided by the coach/trainer. The manager may select others from the parent group to provide additional support such as a treasurer, tournament coordinator, a refreshments coordinator, etc. Specific duties assigned to the manager may include:

- Ordering uniforms. The home team color for a Great Falls travel team is blue.
- Ensure that all information concerning practices and games gets to each player's parent.
- Ensure that all team registration material is filled out online.
- Ensure that winter space is secured for indoor training, if appropriate.
- Collect funds from the team's parents to support the team (tournament fees, etc.).
- Ensure that all relevant team fees are paid to GFSC.

XIV. ISSUE ESCALATION PROCEDURES

All travel teams and parents should work together to resolve any issues arising within the team. The team manager (or managers) should immediately be made aware of any issues on the team -- financial, operational, etc. The team manager is responsible for ensuring the resolution of those issues.

Any questions or issues relating to league guidelines and requirements (NCSL/ODSL/WAGS) should be resolved by having the team manager contact the GFSC travel league director for the appropriate league.

Any administrative issue, complaint or question should be resolved by having the team manager contact the GFSC Administrator [at administrator@greatfallssoccer.com](mailto:administrator@greatfallssoccer.com). This includes notification of any issue or complaint within a team that the manager has not been able to resolve.

The Administrator will involve the Technical Director or the Commissioner, as necessary, to handle issue resolution or put an issue on the Steering Committee agenda. A team parent should not contact the VP of Travel or Commissioner, or the individual travel leagues, regarding issues specific to one team without following these escalation

guidelines.

Should the issue not be resolved satisfactorily, any member of GFSC is free to petition the Steering Committee and raise any concerns. The team or member should request a slot on the agenda in advance of the monthly meeting and provide an outline of the issue to be discussed prior to the meeting.

XV. TOURNAMENTS

The Technical Director for Great Falls Soccer is responsible for selecting and advising on appropriate tournaments in which GFSC travel teams should be competing. The Steering Committee recommends that each travel team participate in only two (2) tournaments per season.

XVI. COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Any breach of the GFSC code of conduct, other unsportsmanlike conduct, use of derogatory language, or the willful failure to follow the rules by a coach or any team official, player, or parent at a game will be brought to the attention of the Referee and shall be noted by the Referee. Such complaints can also be the subject of a notice from the respective travel league or the Director of Referees to the VP of Travel or the Commissioner.

Upon receipt of such notice, the VP of Travel or Commissioner shall forward the complaint to the Rules & Discipline (“R&D”) Committee. The R&D Committee will be drawn from the following members: VP of Competition, an HP representative, SFL Director, VP of Recreation, and the Directors of the Travel Leagues. The GFSC Secretary shall be present at any meeting of the R&D Committee to take notes. Should the R&D Committee decide that the matter warrants investigation and Committee action, it shall make a sufficient investigation and make a recommendation to the full Steering Committee which shall determine if misconduct has occurred.

Otherwise, the appropriate Director of Travel shall investigate the facts in order to make a recommendation to the Commissioner who shall refer the matter to a special meeting of the Steering Committee, which shall determine if misconduct has occurred.

XVII. PENALTIES

The following penalties will be imposed for misconduct:

- Except in the case of grievous or flagrant violations of the rules, the penalty for a first-time violator will be a written reprimand. The penalty for a first-time grievous or flagrant violation will be suspension from all GFSC soccer program activities for one game. The game from which the violator is suspended shall be specified in the letter imposing the penalty.

- The penalty for a second-time violator will be expulsion from all GFSC soccer program activities for the remainder of the season. If the infraction occurs within three weeks of the end of the season, the expulsion carries over to the following season.

- The penalty for a third-time violator will be a permanent expulsion from all GFSC soccer program activities.

The Steering Committee shall have the authority to modify or change these recommended penalties based on the facts and circumstances surrounding the violation.

In deciding whether and what penalty should be imposed for a violation of the rules, the Steering Committee may consider the severity of the violation, the number of prior violations; whether any applicable referee action during the game in which the violation occurred was adequate to address the violation; and all appropriate mitigating circumstances.

Failure to comply with the terms of an assessed penalty or ignoring an assessed penalty will result in suspension from all GFSC soccer program activities until full compliance is achieved.

XVIII. FINES

All fines or fees imposed on the Great Falls Soccer Club by a State Association, travel league, or other organization, resulting from the actions of a person associated with a GFSC travel team will be paid or reimbursed by the team or the offending person (coach, player, team official, spectator, etc.). Failure of the team to pay the fine or fee will be cause the immediate revocation, without reimbursement, of the GFSC membership of the team, including all rostered players, coaches and other team officials. Any team that is not a member of a club sanctioned by the USYSA State Association cannot participate in any of the travel leagues.

If a travel team does not pay or reimburse GFSC for fine or fee, and allows itself to be removed from the GFSC, all existing GFSC travel teams will pay a pro-rated share of the uncollected fine or fee.

XIX. SPECIAL RULE FOR UNDER-12 BOYS AND GIRLS AND YOUNGER TRAVEL SOCCER TEAMS

In accordance with USYS and State sanctioned Travel Soccer Leagues, Under 11 and Under 12 boys and girls travel soccer teams will play 8v8; Under 9 and Under 10 boys and girls travel soccer teams will play 7v7.

At the Under-9 age group, GFSC will usually sanction no more than two (2) travel teams in both the boys and girls groups.

If two teams are created, they will either be divided by skill level (into an "A" and a "B" level team), or will be based on having two teams with a balance of skill level

divided equally within the two teams. The final number of teams and the applicable methodology for the division of the players into two teams will be determined by the HP staff, as deemed appropriate for the age group.

If two teams exist in an age group, both coaches of the teams must maintain, and exhibit to the Steering Committee, a clear policy of cooperation between the two teams, with the goal of:

- Providing the best opportunity to develop the skill of each individual player; and,
- Providing a level of cooperation, that is in the best interest of each individual player.

This same goal will be maintained by a single coach if he or she is coaching both of the teams. The Steering Committee will not sanction a team that does not follow this special rule for play in a travel soccer league the season following infraction of the rule, and may invoke more severe disciplinary action.

The coach is responsible for the actions of his or her team. The Steering Committee will not be required to make a distinction as to which controlling member of a team (i.e., coach, manager, trainer, parent, or other team official) is responsible for the infraction. Disciplinary action by the Steering Committee will be based on the occurrence of an infraction only.

XX. PARENTS' ROLE

The parent's role within the Travel Program is very similar to their role within the Recreational Program. Their role is one of support to the players and coach. In addition, the parents control the team's expenditures associated with the Travel Program. They determine how much they wish to spend on tournaments, if any (i.e., even though a coach may say that a team is ready to play in a tournament, the parents as a group do not have to approve the expenditure for such a purpose). Decisions of the parent group shall be on the basis of a democratic process with one vote for every child on the team. If parents are unhappy with any aspect of the Travel Program they should contact the VP of Travel individually or collectively.

A budget which outlines the expected expenses (uniforms, supplies, tournament fees, and other costs) and the pro-rata share of the necessary revenue to cover those expenses for the parents should be approved by the parent group at the beginning of each season. These costs should be shared pro-rata by all the parents.

To avoid the appearance of preferential treatment, a child's parents or relatives shall not be permitted to contribute additional funds to that child's team budget and any parent wishing to make such additional contributions should be directed to instead to make such additional contributions generally to the GFSC.

The parent's shall not engage in "coaching" from the sidelines; criticizing players, coaches or game officials; or trying to influence the makeup of the team at any time.

Parents are required by GFSC and the travel league in which their child is competing to be knowledgeable of, and abide by, the rules of conduct for the league and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct presented to them during their child's registration process.

Parents shall be positive in their support of all the players, the coaches, the game, the officials, and the Travel Program.

Parents shall not bring pets to the fields. Pets are prohibited from the soccer fields pursuant to Fairfax County Regulations.

XXI. FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

No GFSC player should be denied the opportunity to play travel soccer because of financial hardship or inability of the player's family to make the required payments. A family experiencing financial difficulties or hardship should contact the Commissioner and a registration waiver and/or other benefits shall be made based upon eligibility in the school lunch program.

XXII. SUMMARY

In summary, travel teams, as with the recreational teams, are sponsored by GFSC. The coaches are selected by the Technical Director and must be sanctioned by the Steering Committee annually. The VP of Travel will promote the Travel Program in order to achieve the purpose as outlined in the beginning of this manual. The Travel Program players are selected by the coach on the basis of his/her evaluation of their ability to contribute to the program. The parents' role is one of support for the team and the program. Parents do have a role in administration of the travel teams by way of control of the team's budget. They also have a role in the administration of the Soccer Program in that every parent whose child plays in GFSC soccer either in the Travel Program or the Recreational Program, is eligible to vote in May of each year to elect the Commissioner of Soccer and attend the monthly meetings of the Steering Committee. In addition, parents may contact the applicable director of the Travel Leagues and subsequently the VP of Travel at any time with concerns about the Travel Programs, and if these concerns are not handled satisfactorily, parents are free to petition the Steering Committee during the public open session of the monthly meeting.

XXIII. REFERENCES

FIFA. Laws of the Game. Zurich, Switzerland: Federation Internationale De Football Association (FIFA). Published annually, in July.

Great Falls Athletic Association. Travel Soccer Program Rules Policies and Procedures Manual and Recreational Soccer Pro Ram Rules Policies and Procedures Manual.

United States Soccer Federation (USSF). Official Administrative Rule Book. Chicago, Illinois (312) 808-1300. Published Annually, September. (Tel: 312-808-1300)

United States Youth Soccer Association, Inc. (USYSA). Travel and Tournament Manual and

Official Administrative Rule Book. Youth Division of the United States Soccer Federation 899 Presidential Drive, Suite 117, Richardson, Texas 75081, Tel: (800)4-SOCCER. Published annually, in December.

Other Sources of Information

Virginia Youth Soccer Administration (VYSA) 2239-G Tackett's Mill Drive Woodbridge, Virginia 22192. Tel ; (703) 551-4035; fax-on-demand service (703) 645-0900 <http://www.VYSA.com>
Virginia List of Tournaments, Coach Licensing Classes, and links to USSF and USYSA available from the VYSA web site at <http://www.VYSA.com>

Each Travel League has a Rule Book and a Registration Manual that is provided to each team upon membership, and at the beginning of each seasonal year (September 1).