
MEMORANDUM

TO: MSC PARENTS
FROM: MSC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SUBJECT: ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROGRAM CHANGE
DATE: 10/3/2007

The Mechanicsburg Soccer Club currently offers two types of programs for youth soccer: Recreation and Travel (now referred to as League). Our Recreation program begins at U6 and traditionally ends at U12 depending on the number of registrations we receive. League soccer begins at U9 and continues through U19.

This structure creates an overlap with some age groups, particularly U9 through U12. A player in one of these age groups could choose to play Recreational soccer or tryout for a League team. This structure causes numerous issues for the club:

- League teams sometimes cannot be formed due to a lack of very capable players who remain at the Recreation level.
- Field supply to play both League and Recreation games/practices cannot meet the demand.
- Significant administration to run Rec and League teams at the same group, coupled with a significant shortage of volunteers to make it all happen.
- Rec teams may have to play against each other several times per season and players aren't afforded the opportunity to play against other diverse teams.
- It is also worth noting that most sports programs do not offer both a Rec and League program for the same age groups. For example, in baseball there is no separate Rec or League program for a 10 year old player. There is simply one program where some games are played at home, some are played away.

Over the past couple of years, the MSC board has met numerous times with experts in the soccer community to get their advice, guidance, and input regarding our current structure. They all agreed that changes were needed. Some changes have already been made... including a new program for our U6 players, training for our U7 and U8 players, and training for League teams throughout the year.

Another change will take effect in the Spring of 2008. **The Mechanicsburg Soccer Club will only offer recreational programs to players U6, U7, and U8.** Under this new model, once a player reaches the U9 level, he/she will be afforded the opportunity to play in our League program. Similar size clubs have already moved in this direction (Camp Hill and Dillsburg for example).

So, what exactly is League soccer? In short, MSC plays in the Central PA Youth Soccer League (CPYSL). This is a competitive league (score counts) made up of teams in the Central PA area. Tryouts are usually held in April to determine placement. There are 3 divisions: Div 1 being the most competitive. Typically, half of the games played are at home (Friendship Park) and half are played away (usually just a short drive to neighboring towns like Dillsburg, Hampden, Camp Hill, Hershey, etc.). However, on occasion, some teams in League are further, such as Shippensburg or Lewisburg. Most MSC League teams receive supplemental professional training/coaching to help our players reach their potential. Teams can also elect to participate in tournaments. Most important, League soccer is fun because it exposes our players to teams and players from other communities!

Another change is the year-round training programs we will offer. The game of soccer is continuing to evolve in this country. Many of our volunteer parent coaches may have had some exposure in school or elsewhere, but it still is foreign to many parents and players. To learn the game in just the Fall season is asking the impossible of our kids. We highly encourage keeping the kids active with soccer throughout the year. We certainly recognize that there are other things to do than just play soccer, which is why the “off-season” programs we created only involve an hour or two each week. Below is a menu of the programs offered throughout the year:

Fall (August - early November)

U6-U8: Recreation (1-2 practices/week, 8 game season)

U9-U19: League (2-3 practices/week 8 game season)

Winter (November - March)

U6-U8: Recreation (Jan-Mar: 1 hour of indoor training on Tuesday evenings at McBIC Church)

U9-U19: League (Nov-Mar: 2 hours of indoor training...time/location to be determined)

**details on our winter program will be coming shortly*

Spring (April – May)

U6-U8: Recreation (no practices, 6 game season)

U9-U19: League (limited practices, 8 game season)

Summer (June – July)

U6-U8: Recreation (Parks and Rec camp in June, MSC sponsored camp in July)

U9-U19: League (weekly team training and/or MSC sponsored camp in July)

We are very excited about the upcoming changes and the anticipated positive impacts it will have on our players. We have taken some significant steps to make our soccer club one of the best in the area and will continue to evaluate ourselves and make improvements. We appreciate your involvement and support.

Should you have any questions, please contact a member of the MSC Board or leave a message on the club phone (802-0652) and someone will return your call. Thank you.