



## PSA TRYOUT MANUAL

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### I. Introduction

The PSA conducts an annual tryout process to form teams for the next competitive year. The priority during tryouts is to create teams that will encourage player development. To this end, the PSA starts with a clean slate each year, recognizing that players develop at different rates and that dedication and commitment to the game can change over time. Parents and players should expect a high level of roster turnover at the younger ages as players develop.

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### II. Tryout Policy

The following points are the policy foundations upon which the PSA tryout process is built:

- The tryout process is administered by the Executive Director and the Director of Travel and players are evaluated by the Professional Coaching Staff.

- Parents, including parent coaches and team managers, are not allowed on the field during tryout sessions
  - Players must be pre-registered online before the age group tryout date. Players not registered will be required to register on-site with a \$25 administrative fee
  - All players must wear socks that cover their shin guards and appropriate footwear
  - All players will be assigned a tryout number which will identify them in the tryout process
  - Players are required to wear clothing that does not identify them with any PSA team or other soccer team/program ( Select, ODP, etc.)
  - All players must attend at least one (1) tryout to be considered for the team. Players are encouraged to attend all scheduled tryouts for their age group
  - Players trying out “up” must attend their own age group tryout as well as the tryout for the older age group. No player is allowed to play “down” an age group
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### III. Tryout Procedure

#### A. Pre-tryout organization

There are three key pieces to organizing tryouts. The first is to create a workable tryout schedule. This schedule should be completed by the end of March, so that planning for any conflicts, staffing issues, etc. can be taken into account. The actual tryout process occurs in May/early June, preferably before the end of the public school year, so that players with early vacations are able to participate. Coordination of the tryout schedule with known school activities during this period is critical to achieving high turnout levels.

When school schedules permit, older teams will be scheduled before younger teams to speed resolution of "playing up" conflicts (high school aged tryouts may occur later since these teams generally do not play in the fall). In order to assure that all players have a fair chance to make a traveling team, the PSA requires that the tryouts be announced publicly.

The second piece is for all professional staff to meet prior to tryouts in order to discuss evaluation. This is important in order to:

- Ensure all staff members are familiar with PSA tryout policy
- Maintain a uniform system in terms of rankings
- Make staff aware of any alterations to procedure
- Target key player identification criteria in keeping with PSA philosophy

Finally, a team rankings sheet will be distributed to all coaches (professional and parent coaches). Coaches will be asked to rank their players in different categories; ranking sheets will differ for professional (see appendix “A”) and parent coaches (appendix “B”). These ranking sheets will be used in combination with tryout rankings to create a basis for team formation. Team trainers will also be asked to fill out a professional coach ranking sheet for the teams that trainer has worked with. Ranking sheets must be submitted before the first scheduled tryout in the age group is held.

## B. Evaluation Process

PSA always takes great care to ensure that the evaluation process is impartial. The elementary first step toward a well-run age group tryout is identifying all players who participate by virtue of registration. All players must be registered to participate in the tryouts; this is generally accomplished via online registration. Players not registered online can register onsite with a \$25 administrative fee.

PSA's priority as a community-based organization is to encourage as many players as possible, regardless of financial need, to participate in the tryout process and ultimately be placed on a team.

The key to maintaining fairness in the tryout process system is the inclusion of professional staff, who carries out the following duties:

- Executes all phases of tryout session planning and preparation (field setup, bringing equipment, breakdown, etc.)
- Evaluates all players at tryouts on a 1-4 scale, with a “1” rating indicating playing at the highest level among players in the given pool. +/- suffixes can be used to create further distinctions between players.
- Enforces policy and procedure on field, most importantly making sure that parents and parent coaches are not on the field during tryout sessions.
- Assists in the collating of tryout data and team ranking sheets to produce team recommendations for Selection Committee
- Every effort will be made to ensure that, in addition to being fairly evaluated, every player receives a positive developmental experience.

The parent's role at the tryout session is limited. Following check-in, parents are expected to remain in the portion of the field designated for parents, which is, by design, a distance away from the tryout fields. Experience suggests that this reduces the anxiety for players and allows them to better concentrate on demonstrating their skills. Should

the behavior of a parent interfere with the conduct of the tryout session, he/she will be asked to leave the field.

### C. Team Selection Process

The Selection Committee will consider all information in determining the optimum team composition. As a community-based organization, the PSA will endeavor to place all interested and qualified Princeton residents on one of its teams. Financial need will never be considered in determining a player's eligibility for selection.

The Premier team in each age group will be formed from the tryout pool based on tryout performance and input from coaches. For players on the borderline for the Premier team selection, consideration will also be given to the needs of the team, the player's dedication to the game, and the player's history with PSA. The situation for each team and age group will be different; the Selection Committee will have the discretion to form the best team without predetermined limits on levels of roster turnover or player residence.

The number of teams formed will be determined by the number of players in the age group pool and criteria from the above paragraph. It often takes several weeks to determine how many teams will be formed in a given age group, to resolve rostering problems, and to secure the assent of new coaches and managers. Players and parents are strongly urged to be patient. For most age groups, the tryout process concludes in June, when the Board ratifies the majority of PSA rosters for the following seasonal year.

Results notification will be by email. Following the rostering decision by the Selection Committee emails will be simultaneously sent to every tryout participant in an age group. Players will be offered places on the premier team or the competitive team, and be required to respond within 72 hours by accept their spot online and pay the applicable deposit or decline the spot with an email to the Executive Director. After 72 hours, team waiting lists may be activated and open spots will be allocated.

Once the Board ratifies a roster for the following seasonal year, coaches and managers are authorized to card the players assigned to their team, this process begins in August. If there are open spots on a roster, the Club may recruit players to fill those slots, provided that: the rosters of other teams, both inside and outside of PSA are respected; the player(s) are evaluated by the PSA training staff and the Director of Travel approves of the change. It is a violation of PSA policy to recruit players from an already-ratified PSA roster without the consent of that player's coach, but it is expected that players from a developmental team may be offered a spot on the first team if, for example, players on the first team leave. It is considered poaching, and thus a violation of US Youth Soccer rules, to recruit a player for the current seasonal year if that player is already carded to another team. When a new player arrives in town (or approaches the PSA) after the completion of the tryout process, he or she should be referred to the Director of Travel and/or the Executive Director, who will arrange for the player to be evaluated and, if appropriate, assigned to a roster.



