



TRFC Travel Soccer Tryout Policy

Rationale

Our guiding principal at TRFC is that every player should be in an environment where they are in the best position to learn, grow and develop as an individual player. The ideal is to have every player on a team where they can be challenged by the level of play, but not overwhelmed. Anyone who is involved with elementary education, or has been involved with youth sports of any kind, can tell you that every child develops at their own individual pace. Some players develop the fine motor skills very young, some take a few additional years, and it will show in their foot skills and ability to move the ball across the field.

When we create travel teams, we are stratifying players based on their current potential skill sets. So at this moment in time, which group of players is strongest? Which group is next strongest? And so on. The number of travel teams we create will depend on the overall strength of the players that attend the tryouts. If we feel that we can create a 3rd or 4th team, and we feel they are competitive enough to hold their own in a travel league we will do so. We will not however deliberately put a team into a position we do not feel they can be competitive in.

Travel teams are then entered into travel leagues. Travel leagues also stratify their teams based on skill level, which is another reason we need to stratify our players based on skill. Every team and every player needs to learn to succeed and fail...and the goal is to get them a little of both. If they are winning every game easily, they are not being challenged and they will not develop. If they are losing every game horribly, they become overwhelmed and will also likely not develop, and they may lose interest in the sport.

Tryout Specifications

Any player, from U8 up to U19, who wishes to play on a travel team, must attend a tryout to do so. Tryout aged players who are also at Recreational team ages (currently U8-U13) may opt to stay in, or enter into, the Recreational program instead of attending Travel tryouts. TRFC would however strongly encourage all tryout aged players to attend travel tryouts, even if their initial intent is to play in the Recreational program.

Toms River FC will be moving to Birth Year based age groups for this Fall season as mandated by the USSF, so tryouts will be based on birth year and not previous soccer age groups.

The club shall also have the option to form Recreational teams at ages U11 through U13 after travel tryouts are complete, provided that Ocean County Recreational League is able to support those age groups.

- TRFC will hold club wide travel tryouts each spring for age groups U8 through U14, unless determined otherwise by the Executive Board.
- TRFC travel teams who will be U15 and above in the year players are trying out for, will have team run tryouts with the assistance of TRFC's current professional training organization.
- Tryouts are mandatory for all players who wish to participate in our Travel soccer program.
- Tryouts begin in May, but dates are subject to modification by the Executive Board.
- All TRFC tryouts will be held **after** the completion of PDA Shore tryouts at the same age group.

- Any player may attend TRFC travel tryouts, regardless of current club, residency or previous soccer experience.
- Any current TRFC travel team player must still attend tryouts for the next seasonal year's team. No current players are guaranteed a spot on the same team year after year.
- Players will be permitted to try out above their natural age group, if and only if, they register for that age group tryout in advance. The ability of those players to play up will be determined at the sole discretion of TRFC's current professional training partner. Determinations will be based on tryout results, coach evaluation forms and age group player pool sessions. Players who are not selected for placement at the older age group will be required to tryout at their natural age group and will be notified of such in advance of their natural age group tryouts. Tryouts will be held starting at U14 and working backwards to facilitate this approach.

Tryout Process

The tryout process as defined herein is subject to change as deemed necessary by the Executive Board of Toms River FC.

- Registration for tryouts is completed online at www.tomsriverfc.com prior to tryout attendance. Tryout registration opens on May 1st each spring.
- Each current coach will be required to complete and provide player evaluation forms to TRFC's Director of Coaching by May 1st.
- Players attending tryouts will be checked in and given randomly numbered jerseys.
- TRFC's current professional training partner will evaluate players attending the club wide tryout, ranking them on the following four elements (the four pillars of soccer) ...all evaluations are tailored to the age level of the players, so trainers will have different expectations of players at U8 than at U16:
 - Technical – foot skills, 1v1 play, how surely they strike a ball, etc.
 - Tactical – game awareness, playing with their head up, smart passes instead of 'kick and run' play, positional awareness, transition from offense to defense, etc.
 - Physical – general impression of the athletic ability of the player; speed, physical conditioning, agility, endurance, work rate, strength, etc.
 - Psychological – general impression of maturity, attitude, sportsmanship, ability to take direction, "coachability".
- Trainer scores are averaged and players rated without knowledge of player name (using only jersey number).
- At that point player names are revealed, and coach evaluations are taken into consideration. Evaluations of club professional trainers are also leveraged at this point (i.e., player had a rough night at tryouts, but Coach and Trainer know that they are a much better player than they exhibited during the tryout session)
- The Director of Coaching, Age Group Coordinator, and the coaches will select their players with the assistance of the tryout scores and coach evaluations, starting with the 'A' team and moving on to the next coach and next team once the first team is selected.
- The target time for completion of an age group is 14 days from the tryout date.
- Players will be contacted by the coach with an invitation to join their team.
- Players are also notified by system generated email, and will have 48 hours to accept the placement by following the instructions in the email and making payment.

- Players must play for the team they are assigned to. Any and all exceptions are handled on a case by case basis by the Executive Board.
- Players who decline travel positions on a given team are not guaranteed a spot on any team.
- Recreational aged players who decline travel positions are returned to the Recreational program. No placement in the Recreational program is ever guaranteed, however we make every attempt to place any player wishing to play.

Missing Tryouts

- Any player who knows in advance that they will miss scheduled tryouts should contact the Director of Coaching as soon as possible to schedule an alternate tryout.
- Current TRFC players that miss tryouts without notification or without a valid reason will be placed after all other TRFC players who did attend the club's mandatory tryouts, providing there are spots remaining.
- Current players from other soccer clubs who register for, but do not attend, TRFC club mandatory tryouts will be placed after all current TRFC players provided there are spots remaining.
- TRFC cannot guarantee the placement of any players who register for, but do not attend club mandated tryouts or do not accept the placements they are offered.

Team or Age Group Tryouts

TRFC allows all coaches the possibility of running 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 Director of Coaching and the Executive Board of TRFC.

Age Groups may also decide (typically when no club wide tryout for an age group is mandated by the Executive Board), after discussion and agreement between the team's coaches and Director of Coaching, to hold an Age Group Tryout at any point during the soccer year (at the age-group's expense) in order to realign the age-group, fill age-group open roster spots, etc. Each team coach in that age-group retains the right to make attendance at an age-group tryout mandatory for their players, or to abstain from the age-group tryout altogether. All age-group tryouts are subject to review by the Director of Coaching and the Executive Board of TRFC.