

# Capitol Area Soccer Association

## Travel Description

### General Information

Travel soccer is for players (and their families) interested in developing their abilities beyond the recreational level through hard work and a commitment to increased levels of soccer training and competition.

Travel soccer requires playing games outside the club in a local league with home matches on CASA fields and with travel to away matches against other clubs in the Central Pennsylvania area. Generally speaking away games are within a 30 – 45 minute drive although there are a few exceptions. There is also travel to local, regional, or out-of-state tournaments depending on the interests of the parents, coaches, and players.

As a general rule CASA forms new travel teams in the spring of each year through open tryouts. Teams are formed for both boys and girls from U-9 through U-19. Most age groups have two or more teams. Note: CASA reserves the right to form teams through appointment when forming developmental teams such as those at the u9 level. Teams compete at various levels described herein depending upon the competitive needs of the players involved.

The travel team year begins on August 1 and runs through July 30 of the following year. The team is selected for a one year (12 month) commitment. This includes summer camp, pre-season fall trainings, the fall season, the winter season, the spring season and the summer season.

The CASA Board through the Director of Girls Travel and the Director of Boys Travel directs the Travel Program. Richard Chinapoo, CASA's Technical Director supervises the development of our players, teams and coaches. Richard Chinapoo is also the director of the CASA Premier program (CAPA). All our travel coaches must be approved by the CASA Board and the Technical Director.

### CASA Travel Team Philosophy

CASA believes that the experiences a player has with the Club will be beneficial throughout his or her lifetime. CASA believes that the pursuit of excellence helps to develop maturity and self-confidence in each player. Every player on the Club roster, from the youngest to the oldest, and from the least experienced to the most-experienced, is important! CASA is committed to making each player's overall experience a valuable one.

The Club intends to provide a competitive soccer program through local, state, national, and international competition. In addition, the Club attempts to prepare its players for State, Regional, and National Teams plus college careers. To fulfill these commitments, CASA has adopted the following general goals:

- To help each player achieve the highest level of soccer ability he/she is capable of and to provide an opportunity to learn about his/her mental and physical capabilities.
- To provide a wholesome atmosphere in which each player can learn the skills and techniques of competitive soccer and good sportsmanship.
- To create a championship environment that provides all Club soccer players the opportunity to reach their individual goals.
- To have every Club team become a legitimate contender in every match played and tournament entered.

### Player Commitment

Players are expected to work hard to adhere to the following:

- Dedication to the CASA ideals and philosophy.
- Strict adherence to the coach's instructions.

- Attend all practice and training sessions.
- Attend all games and arrive at the time given by the coach or at least 30 minutes prior to game time.
- Maintain the highest standard of conduct and good sportsmanship, especially during games.
- Maintain team and CASA dress standards (appearance and proper equipment).
- Maintain high academic standards.

Players are expected to practice outside of the standard team sessions, and agree to work on the skills and tactics being taught during team training sessions.

Players must notify their coach whenever they are participating and/or training on other soccer teams at any time throughout the travel year. This includes ODP, school, all-star, tournament guest, secondary league play, etc. Secondary play must be requested by the parent and submitted to the Technical Director by the coach for review and approval by the Technical Director.

## **Role of the Parent**

To have a successful program, there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, players, and coaches. Each player's progress will depend to a great extent on this triangular relationship. With this in mind, CASA asks you to consider this section a crucial factor in the success of the program. Parents must accept a role in the support and management of the team and CASA. Please help out and support your coach!

A player develops best when he or she trusts the coach. The coach's job is to motivate, teach, and offer constructive feedback on each player's performance. Be careful in your discussions with the child regarding the team and coaching decisions. These discussions can and will undermine the coach and ultimately the team.

Parents are welcome at all games but must agree to abide by the CASA Code of Conduct and work to maintain an attitude of good sportsmanship at all times. It is vital that parents remember that spectators can be addressed by the referee for improper behavior at any time. The coach can receive a card for parental misconduct and the misconduct call can affect the outcome of the game. In addition, your misbehavior can result in you being fined by the state and being barred from attending your child's matches.

A number of things are key to maintaining proper game behavior. Parents are asked to participate as a spectator and not as a coach. The development of the players while at training sessions and during games is the responsibility of and controlled by the team coaching staff. Parents must refrain from sideline coaching or instructing any player on the team.

In addition, parents must refrain from criticizing the calls and performance of the referees. Parents shall not interact with the referee, regardless of the quality of the referee's performance. Parents shall not interact with the players, parents, or spectators of the opposing team in a harmful manner.

The players and the coach need the parents and spectators to be supportive. Please cheer and applaud good performance and be encouraging when the team is taking its knocks. Let the coach run the team. Attempting to coach from the sideline is distracting to the players and frustrating to the coach, and above all it is counterproductive to the team. Sideline comments should always be positive. Continued abuse of proper parent sideline etiquette will be cause for player to be removed from the game until such unsporting behavior is stopped.

Parents must notify the coach whenever their player is participating and/or training on other soccer teams at any time throughout the travel year. This includes ODP, school, all-star, tournament guest, secondary league play, etc. Secondary play must be requested by the parent and submitted to the Technical Director by the coach for review and approval by the Technical Director.

Parents must strive to have the player at all team functions on time and picked up afterwards in timely fashion.

## **Code of Conduct**

The Club requires that each player and parent sign a Code of Conduct at the beginning of the fall season outlining the standards of conduct and the level of commitment expected in the Capital Area Soccer Association. CASA's Executive Board will review violations of the Club's Code of Conduct Policy on a regular basis.

## Professional Training

Professional training for travel teams is required and CASA's technical staff will be available for teams at all levels. The amount of professional training a team participates in will be, in large part, determined by where the team falls on the continuum of skill and competition.

Professional training is designed for the youth athlete who is serious about soccer and is interested in playing at the most competitive level available. Professional training is specifically designed for athletes who are considering making soccer their primary sport. All teams can expect to play against the most competitive teams from Pennsylvania and in their travel outside the state within their respective Divisions.

CASA believes single age teams create the best learning, training, and competitive environment and seek to achieve such teams. Training sessions will be determined and announced by the coach as prepared by the Technical Director. Every effort is made to establish regularly scheduled training sessions with the travel teams. This is not always possible; however, and training times and locations may vary during the year due to such things as field availability, daylight savings time, weather, and trainer availability.

## Coaches

Our coaches are committed to soccer excellence and to working in a youth soccer program. The variety of coaching experiences and philosophies provided by the coaching staff will expose players to different coaching styles and techniques during their career with the Club. The role of the team coach is three-fold:

- To contribute to the personal development of each player
- To develop each player to his/her fullest potential as a soccer player
- To guide and manage the team so it achieves and performs at its highest level

Coaches are expected to meet the needs of each player while striving to enhance the team's performance. To this end, coaches will choose each player's position(s) and determine playing time. Position(s) and playing time are not negotiable. Parents who have concerns about their child's development as a player need to discuss these concerns in private with the coach.

## Travel Year & Training Schedule

The travel year runs from August 1 to July 31 of the following year. The Fall League starts in early September and runs through mid-November. The Spring League starts at the end of March and runs through early June. Most teams practice two times per week during the Spring and Fall seasons. Teams also participate in Winter Indoor Leagues and indoor practice and training sessions utilizing local indoor soccer facilities or school gyms where available.

## Levels of Play

CASA is organized into a four-tier structure of play, which is best viewed as a continuum of player development, skill level, and the level of competition in which each team participates. As players move up the continuum from recreation teams to a travel team or a premier team, the level of commitment increases in terms of time, travel, and expense. Most travel teams will participate in the Central Pennsylvania Youth Soccer League (CPYSL). High-level teams may participate outside the CPYSL.

The first tier of play, Intramural Recreational - the in-house recreational program, although not a travel program, is vital to CASA as the place where CASA player development begins.

The next three tiers of play involve increasing levels of development, skill, and competition:

- Club Recreational: Division II and Division III Travel Teams
- Club Travel: Division I Teams
- Premier: Highest Level of Play & Commitment

### *League Play*

The CASA Technical Director consults with the coaching staff of each team and the program director to determine the best level of league play for each team. The first choice will be to play in the Central Pennsylvania Youth Soccer League (CPYSL). When a team's level of play can move to stiffer competition and the players need such exposure to continue their development, the above mentioned personnel consult on other choices available.

### *Tournament Play*

CASA understands that growth and improvement as a soccer player requires more than just training and league play, it requires tournament play. Tournament play gives teams the opportunity to observe and play against new teams with different styles of play, and to develop team camaraderie in a focused atmosphere. The guidelines for the minimum expected CASA travel team involvement in tournaments at each level are listed below.

For U-9 & U-10 age groups:

- Division 1 teams are expected to play in three tournaments per travel year.
- Division 2 teams are expected to play in two tournaments per travel year.
- A maximum of 5 tournaments is the limit for the U-9 and U-10 age groups.

For U-11 and Older:

- Division 1 teams are expected to play in four tournaments per travel year.
- Division 2 teams are expected to play in three tournaments per travel year.

For U-12 and Older:

- Premier teams are expected to play in at least five tournaments per travel year.

### *Club Tournament Participation*

The Technical director will review the current travel team rosters and determine if and what tournament the club will attend as a group. Each team selected to attend this event will be responsible for player participation and the team registration fee.

### *State Championship Participation*

Division II and III travel teams are encouraged to participate in indoor or outdoor cup competitions and as the coaching staff deems appropriate, based on the skill level of the team.

However, Division I and Premier teams are expected to participate in the EPYSA indoor and outdoor state cup championships at a minimum of the "B" cup level. Exceptions for not participating must be approved by both the Technical Director and the program director. Failure to comply may result in dismissal of the coaching staff or changing the rating of the team to a lower level.

## **Costs of the Travel Program**

Expenses vary by team, depending on the number and types of activities scheduled. Travel teams are permitted to organize fundraising activities to offset some of these costs. Listed below are the approximate costs of the levels of play offered through CASA. The costs can vary significantly from team to team, especially in the travel program, based on the age of the player and the level of play. Key items that factor significantly into the cost are professional training, tournament play, indoor league play, professional coaching and team fundraising.

- Division II: \$300-500 per player/year
- Division I: \$500-800 per player/year

All costs for the team are the responsibility of the parents and players. This includes all training costs, registrations, team fees, referee fees, field fees, tournaments, etc.

The parents of a player who leaves the team prior to the completion of the year-long travel season will be required to fulfill all financial responsibilities up to the date of departure before their release is completed. Failure to do so may

result in the player being placed in bad standing with the local league and state association. This worst case situation will result in the player not being able to play in any game, league or tournament for any other team.

## **Playing Time (Division I and II)**

CASA policy does not guarantee a specified amount of playing time for the travel team player during league or tournament play. Most coaches will try and get every player at least 30 minutes of playing time for league and tournament games. There will be certain games (State Cups, Tournament Championship Games, etc.) when particular players may see little or no action. It is also not unusual for certain players to play entire matches without substitution on a regular basis. The philosophy of the Club is to develop strong, competitive players and teams.

## **Team Tryouts & Selection**

The formation of new teams in all age groups occurs towards the end of the spring season, April/May. All players who wish to be considered for selection for fall teams must attend try-outs in the spring. This includes current travel team players and players from the Recreational League and other clubs. Coaches reserve the right to arrange additional try-outs following the original try-out to further evaluate a reduced pool of candidates.

All travel tryouts will be open tryouts and will be promoted both within the CASA membership as well as to the general public. Players will be selected based upon their ability. The Technical Director, Evaluators (Selected by Technical Director) and CASA coaches serve as the evaluators for all tryouts. Coaches will not be allowed to evaluate in their own age group.

CASA recommends that players playing-up in age are the exception rather than the rule. They are expected to be impact players who, as a minimum requirement, would be considered a starter on the older team. Exceptions to this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Selection to a travel team is an honor that is earned – it is not a right or entitlement. Selection to a team one year does not guarantee selection in subsequent years. Players are expected to continue to develop and earn that distinction each year. As noted above, all players are required to participate in the open tryout for the travel year.

Player selection will be announced within two to three weeks following the final CASA tryout date. The player/parents are requested to respond to CASA within two weeks to confirm their selection to the team.

NOTE: Check the CASA web site calendar for tryout dates/times. In case of bad weather or unplayable fields, updates will be posted on the CASA voice mail system at 657-9596.

As openings develop on teams during the year, whenever possible, it is preferred that the "A" teams first look to the "B" teams for a secondary player to replace a player that has left the team mid-year. As much as possible, given the competitive and skill level of the teams and players involved, CASA looks to promote from within before looking outside the Club.

## **Removal of Player from Team**

Once accepted onto a team players will not be removed from that team during the travel season unless the situation is reviewed and approved by the competition committee. A removal will only occur for serious or repeated violations of the Code of Conduct and behavioral problems with either the parents or the player.

## **New Players**

During the travel year, as space is open on a team the coaching staff of the team along with the technical director may have tryouts to add players to the team throughout the travel season. These tryouts may occur during normal team training sessions. Players will not be removed from the team roster during the travel year to make room for new players to be added.

## **Team Organization**

The leadership of each team must include a head coach, one or more assistant coaches, and a team manager. Teams will also need a team web page contact person and may choose to have a team treasurer and a trip

planner. Travel team parents are expected to volunteer for these duties that help reduce the overall work load on the head coach and team manager.

## **Commitment**

As travel teams are formed for a 12 month travel year, it is also important that players and parents understand that the expectation of CASA and the team is for full year of participation.

CASA recognizes that family, school and religious events may sometimes take priority over team activities. CASA also recognizes that players may have the interest and desire to participate in other sports, and encourages players to do so. Players and parents must inform the coach of conflicts with team activities as far in advance as possible so that plans for other players and the team can be adjusted accordingly.

In considering these potential conflicts a key element is commitment to the team. The CASA travel program has been described as a continuum of increasing skill development and competition, with increasing cost, travel and involvement as players and teams advance in age and levels of play. Similarly, as players and teams grow and advance the expectation of player commitment to the team increases as well. At that point players and parents are expected to make the team a priority consideration in planning for other activities.

## **Uniforms**

The team shall only wear the currently specified CASA uniform for all outdoor and indoor league play, tournaments, and state cup games where the team is playing under the CASA or CAPA name using the current club roster created by CASA. Deviations from the prescribed uniform are not permitted unless authorized in writing by the Technical Director and approved by the Competition Committee.

Uniform style and the required uniform items for CASA and CAPA travel teams are subject to change every two years with the selection being made by the competition committee. This change occurs in the summer, prior to the commencement of fall league play. CASA may elect to stretch the uniform cycle from two to three years when certain economic conditions warrant such a change.

The player and parents agree to purchase the currently specified CASA or CAPA uniform from CASA at the specified cost. The player and parents are responsible for maintaining that uniform until the new design is implemented. Any cleaning, repair, replacement for lost pieces, or undersized piece are the responsibility of the player and parents.

## **Acknowledgement**

Selection to and acceptance of membership on a CASA travel team is a year-long commitment to the team and CASA by both the player and the parents to:

- Attend and participate in year-round team activities and events.
- Be responsible for the costs associated with the player and the team activities.
- Maintain open communication with the team coaches/manager and be supportive of their efforts.
- Be involved as a volunteer to support the team and its activities and the CASA travel program.
- Accept and abide by the rules of the game and the CASA code of conduct.

## **Membership**

As members of a CASA travel team players and families must agree to abide by all rules and regulations established by the Capital Area Soccer Association (CASA), Central Pennsylvania Youth Soccer League (CPYSL), Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association (EPYSA) and the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA). The player and family or guardian must agree to support the requirements of the Club and must provide the Team Representative with a signed and notarized Medical Release Form.

## **Codes of Conduct and Acknowledgement**

The Club requires that each player, parent, and coach sign a Code of Conduct form and an Acknowledgement form at the beginning of the fall season outlining the standards of conduct and the level of commitment expected in the Capital Area Soccer Association. CASA's Executive Board will review violations of the Club's Code of Conduct Policy on a regular basis.