



# ABSC COMPETITIVE PROGRAM

## I - Executive Summary

### 1. Description

- 1.1. ABSC's competitive soccer program is intended to provide appropriate development opportunities as well as a competitive environment for players who desire and are ready for this type of soccer experience. The competitive program requires specific commitments from the club, team, coach, player, and family.

### 2. Participation Requirements

- 2.1. **Fall:** Traditionally the fall season which runs from mid-August through November is the “official” season. Competitive players should expect to commit fully to the fall season and be prepared to prioritize their soccer over other extra-curricular commitments.
  - 2.1.1. Teams will be scheduled for two practices per week; for some of the older and more competitive teams there will be three practices per week. The coach, in consultation with the DoC, will determine the fall practice schedule for the team and all players are expected to commit to attending every practice.
  - 2.1.2. Depending on the playing level, age, and playing league, each team will typically play between 8 and 12 league games during the season. Games are predominantly played on Saturdays, but Sunday games are common. Players are expected to make it to all of their team's games.
  - 2.1.3. Roughly one half of the games are “home” games and the other half “away.” Depending on the age, playing level, and league, some of the away games can be up to forty-five minutes to one-and-a-half hours travel time from the Albany-Berkeley area. Games can be scheduled as early as 7am. All team mates are expected to be at all games and to arrive early and ready to play.

2.1.4. Each competitive team will work with the DoC to determine a tournament schedule comprised of one or two “independent” tournaments and/or a “cup” tournament. Every player is expected to be available for these games.

2.1.5. Each team will participate in a team-based camp in late August. All players are expected to attend the team camps.

2.2. **Spring:** Spring is the traditional “2<sup>nd</sup> Season.” Typically the commitment is less intense than the fall season. Spring is an important component of a competitive player’s club soccer experience. While the spring is more relaxed than the fall season, players are expected to participate with their teams in the spring.

2.2.1. The spring schedule is similar in duration and composition to the fall season. Teams will have a minimum of two practices per week. Teams may elect to participate in tournaments or not.

2.2.2. Occasionally older teams will not play games in a league during the spring. Those teams will continue to practice, schedule “friendlies,” enter tournaments, and seek other opportunities for organized soccer during the spring season. Competitive players are expected to fully participate in the spring season.

2.3. **Winter:** Most competitive teams will schedule activities during the months from the end of fall season to the beginning of spring. Typically there are weeks that the team takes off just after the fall season and during holiday breaks. Teams will often sign up for formal or semi-formal futsal, indoor or winter soccer leagues. Some teams may have a mandatory once-per-week practice for six to ten weeks. Some teams will have an optional practice or scrimmage day. Each team will work out its own schedule and plan with the DoC. Players are encouraged to participate, but participation is not mandatory.

2.4. **Summer:** Summer activities are optional and decided on a team-by-team basis. Most teams will take off the summer and at most have informal scrimmages, etc. Please note that fall season actually begins mid-August and competitive players are expected to “ramp up” for their fall season.

2.5. **Exceptions and Adjustments:** The club expects that teams, coaches and players will adhere to these guidelines. However, there are exceptions to these guidelines and the coach should consult with the DoC to come up with a schedule that makes sense for their team, their players, and the club.

### 3. Coach Qualifications

- 3.1. The DoC will recommend to the board a qualified coach for each team. The age of the team, experience, and level of play will all be considered in making this recommendation. Each competitive coach will meet the minimum credential requirements as determined by the DoC. Volunteer coaches who do not meet those requirements may agree on an accreditation plan with the DoC at a meeting before the beginning of the fall and spring seasons to become qualified to coach a team.
- 3.2. In some cases a competitive team may be assigned a professional coach. The team will cover the club's cost in providing a coach at a per-player rate arrived at in consultation with the club.
- 3.3. Most if not all competitive teams will participate in our club-wide "Plus" program and share a professional trainer on a weekly basis. Each team member will help cover the cost of this trainer.

#### **4. Tournament Participation**

- 4.1. The following are expectations of Tournament Participation.
  - 4.1.1. Minimum of two tournaments per year, with at least one in the fall. Three per year is the number recommended.

#### **5. Team finances and fundraising**

- 5.1. ABSC has made a commitment that every player should have the opportunity to play soccer at whatever level they desire, even if they cannot cover 100% of the costs.
- 5.2. It is the family's responsibility to clearly communicate with the team manager and the club if their player is at risk of not fully participating due to financial difficulties. Families need to understand the full financial commitment of participating with their team, including:
  - 5.2.1. Registration fees
  - 5.2.2. Tournament fees
  - 5.2.3. Travel costs (home, away and tournaments)
  - 5.2.4. Lodging costs for overnight tournaments and events
  - 5.2.5. Uniforms
  - 5.2.6. Cleats and equipment
  - 5.2.7. Professional trainer fees
  - 5.2.8. Camps and clinics
- 5.3. Each team will provide each player's family with a written estimate of the cost of participating with the team on a regular basis.
- 5.4. Teams will submit their proposed budget and plan to the DoC for approval.
- 5.5. Teams can finance their activities by asking each family to contribute to team costs. Teams may from time-to-time organize fundraising activities. Fundraising

plans must conform to the club's fundraising policies or be submitted to the club manager for approval.

## **6. Assistant Coach**

Each competitive team will have an Assistant Coach who will in most cases be a volunteer chosen by the team's coach and approved by the DoC. The Assistant coach should be present at all practices as well as games and be prepared to assume the coach's duties if the head coach is unavailable.

## **7. Team Manager**

Each team will have a designated Team Manager. The Team Manager will be responsible for the following:

- 7.1. Organizing all registration and tournament paperwork during the regular seasons.
- 7.2. Creating, maintaining, and distributing the team budget and fundraising plan.
- 7.3. Creating and maintaining a comprehensive practice, game, and event schedule
- 7.4. Convening a pre-season parent meeting
- 7.5. Convening a post-season "wrap-up" parent meeting/party
- 7.6. Regularly and promptly communicating with the club regarding scholarship players, team issues, scheduling conflicts, policy issues, etc.
- 7.7. Attending a pre-season team managers meeting.
- 7.8. Other requirements as indicated from time to time by the club staff.

## **8. Fourth Team Official**

Each competitive team may have a "fourth team official" who can be designated to assist the coach or team manager to carry out their responsibilities. Team officials include, head coach, assistant coach, team manager and this fourth team official. All four of these officials are eligible for the \$100 refund of their volunteer deposit if they complete the pre-season risk management paperwork and fulfill the duties of the position throughout the season.

## **9. Referees**

- 9.1. Each team is required by ACCYSL to provide three "affiliated" referees. The referees must be USSF certified "Grade 8" or above and must each referee a minimum of 5 games in the fall season. Teams that don't meet this requirement will be fined \$250 each fall season.

## **10. Code of Conduct**

In addition to teaching soccer skills and team play, good sportsmanship is an important part of our Program. Both the player and his/her parent must abide by a

“Conduct Code” and exhibit good sportsmanship and appropriate public behavior at all times. ABSC has a “Zero Tolerance Policy” regarding poor behavior at games and any comments towards referees. All competitive team members, parents, coaches, families, relations, and friends will be expected to adhere to the policies found at: <http://www.accysl.org/Policies.htm>