

Central Illinois Youth Soccer League

Recommendations for CIYSL
Youth Development Academy
U8 & U9 Boys and Girls

Introduction

Recently, the USSF released a document entitled "Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States."

There is a discussion about winning and losing in the document that speaks to the importance of development over results as the emphasis at the younger ages.

Transition from full blown travel teams to "Academies" would help to provide a positive environment for the children

Academy Philosophy

- Development principles that have worked globally
 - Manchester United
 - Ajax
 - Barcelona
 - Everton
- Player-Centric approach
- Giving Back to the Game

What are Academies?

- An Academy is when the club keeps a collection of players within an age group as opposed to putting them into teams
- In the CIYSL model, clubs will be able to choose players as they see fit, CIYSL recommends a no cut policy be in place to allow for all players to get a positive soccer experience.
- Ideally, players wouldn't be put into "A", "B" or "C" teams; rather they would have the freedom and opportunity to flow between "pools" of players as their talents develop throughout the season.
- The emphasis should always be on the players having FUN!

Four Objectives for the Academy Approach

1. The Players:
 - Positive Environment = FUN!
2. The Coaches:
 - Coaching Education and Repetitions
3. The Parents:
 - Parent Education
4. The Referees:
 - Youth referee development.

Player Development

- Two Simple Concepts:
 - Winning is a bi-product of development
 - There is NO tactics without TECHNIQUE
- Focus on:
 - FUN
 - Individual Technique and Skills
 - Building Confidence
 - Putting players in the environment where decisions are being made while the players have the ball on their feet – decisions made by the PLAYERS.

Coaching Education

- Average Soccer player is developed in 10,000 hours or roughly 10 years
 - Translates into = 3 hours per day for 10 years!
- What happens when the U9 game is lost or won? Why do we coaches put pressure on the children to get the results? What happens to a U9 when they don't have fun?
- Soccer is the Players' game. We coaches can't call time outs, we can't send in plays, we can't tell the players what to do.
 - Well, we can tell them what to do, but at what cost?

Coaching Education

- Academy Perception – “This style of coaching is Recreational, not Travel soccer.”
- This is not the case. This is a bridge between the recreational and travel sides.
- This is geared towards allowing for players to develop at their rates while enjoying soccer.
- There is no guarantee and no predictions for which U9 player will be the “star” at any level.
- The Academy promotes Club identity and allows for players to gain confidence in their abilities.

Parent Education

- Too often adults (parents and coaches) begin to feel their self worth manifest through their children. They put undue pressures of winning and getting results on young players.
- Academy approach helps everyone remember and focus on the development of CHILDREN and they are the reasons for our involvement from the start.

Parent Education

- Sideline behavior is often a contributing factor to player, coaches and referee drop out.
- Berating officials not only drives the often young professionals from the field but is a source of embarrassment to the players
- Academy approach de-emphasizes winning and results and focuses on the play and the players.
- In many cases, experienced coaches can be mentors for young coaches fresh from their playing experience

Referee Education

- In the Academy Model, young referees are encouraged to learn how to manage a game as well as how to identify fouls while helping young players learn the game.
- With no pressure of winning, young referees are in an environment that fosters learning and confidence as young professional referees

Club Tryouts

■ Current Model

- Tryouts = selection
- Some kids make it, some don't
- Young players have fragile view of self
- Some don't come to tryouts due to outcome, anxiety, and discouragement

■ Academy Model

- No Cuts
- Late Bloomers get a chance to "bloom"
- Stigma of "A" or "B" or "C" teams is gone
- Larger player base for
 - Friendships to grow
 - Training groups
 - Development

U8 Academy Structure

- It is recommended that the U8 Academy is used to supplement the recreational program.
- U8 Players should be registered in a recreational league.
- U8 Players would train once a week in addition to their recreational training.
- U8 Players would go to one Academy Festival per season.

U9 Academy Structure

- Ideally academies would need to have 40 players as a base. This is the number that prepares for 2 teams at U13 – eventually the players will get to that age
- It is recommended to Clubs that they have 2 training days per week for U9 Academy with each session being 75 minutes in duration.
- On four selected Sundays, it is recommended that each club hosts an in house game day.
- 2 Sundays per season CISYL would have Academy Festivals.

Independent Teams

- Practice as normal. Train 2 times per week at 1 hour and 15 minutes
- Contact area clubs for game dates and times.
- For instance: Williamsville trains 2X weekly and then travels to SASA for their Sunday game day.
 - Williamsville would contact SASA prior to the game date to coordinate with their day
 - Perhaps the following week, Williamsville would contact Illinois Fusion for the next set of games.
- The CIYSL would set up the appropriate fee structure for this type of sharing.

U9 Academy Structure

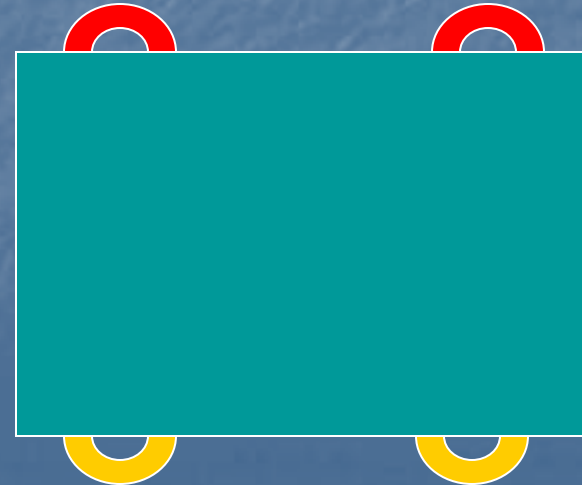
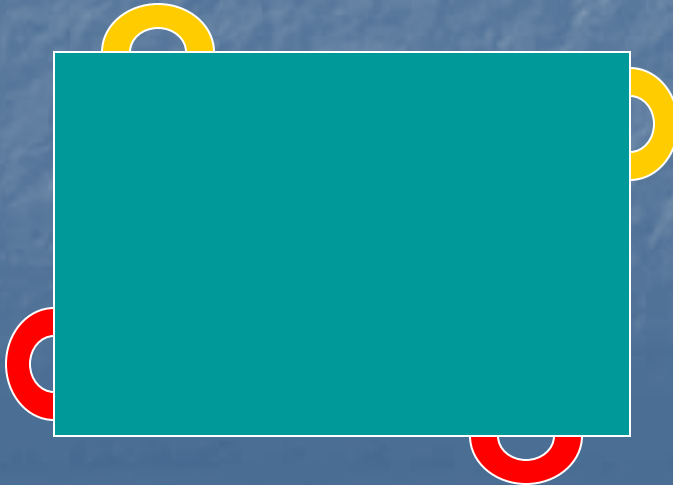
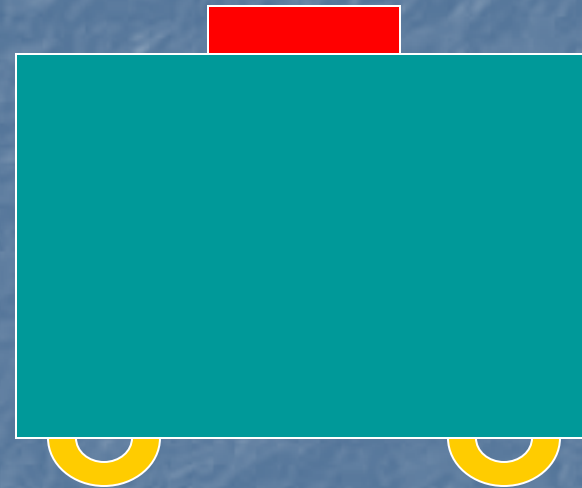
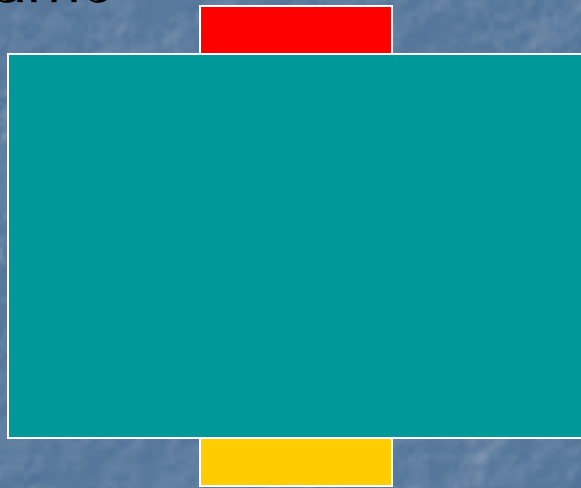
- Club game days:
 - 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 game format
 - Vary different styles of games
 - Utilize and Mentor young referees
 - NO STANDINGS OR RESULTS POSTED
 - Disperse the better players throughout the games (first game)
 - Place better players against better players (second game – notify Academy Director)

U9 Academy Structure

- Club game days:
 - Games would be 15 minutes in length with at least 10 minutes between games.
 - Clubs could play up to 3 games in a day.
 - The children would be encouraged to help organize the games and teams (game 1)
 - Coaches would organize and encourage coaching points from Academy training

Potential Game Day Activities

Four different games that bring out different aspects of the game



U9 Academy Structure

- Academy Festivals
 - Sites to rotate / vary
 - CIYSL would schedule based on field availability
 - It is recommended that the host site would treat the festival as such; possible vendors there: t-shirts / face painters etc...
 - NO STANDINGS / RESULTS

Sample Curriculum for the U9 Academy

■ Technical Emphasis:

■ Dribbling

- Finding space (head up)
- Beating an Opponent
- For Possession (shielding)

■ Passing

- Short Passing
- Deception in passing
- Striking the longer ball

■ Receiving

- Mechanics of receiving balls on ground
- Importance of 1st touch
- Taking 1st touch away from pressure

■ Shooting/Finishing

- Mechanics of striking
- Mentality of finishing
- Finishing off the dribble

■ Juggling

- Individual
- Partners

■ Goalkeeping

- Footwork (getting behind the ball)
- Collecting balls off ground
- Catching techniques
- Stance

Tactical Emphasis

- Penetration via Dribble or pas
- Role of Support
- Introduction of simple 2 player combinations
- Mentality of winning the ball back (getting pressure)
- Understanding of:
 - Transition from attack to defense
 - Transition from defense to attack
 - Basic Shape of 4 v 4

Psychological Emphasis

- Positive, Positive & Positive!
- Encouraging Players to “take risks”
(encourage dribbling and creative play
over passing)
- FUN, FUN & FUN

Physical Emphasis

- Fitness – USE A BALL!
- NO sprint tests, long distance runs, etc...
- Can make fitness fun – USE A BALL!
- Teach controlled falling
- Running mechanics
- Range of motion and flexibility (post training)
- Organized activities / games / free play should be enough