

SYSA Select Soccer 2010

Questions and Answers about playing select soccer in Seattle Youth Soccer Association

This document is intended to provide general background and answer questions for parents and players who are new to "select soccer."

What is "select soccer"?

The term "select soccer" usually refers to a system where players go to tryouts, are evaluated, and then *selected* to be on teams. The term "select soccer" is also used to refer to more competitive soccer (as opposed to recreational or "rec" soccer), where players with the most ability, desire, and competitiveness are grouped on teams to play.

Select soccer generally costs more for families than recreational soccer, and teams usually have paid coaches, although some select teams have volunteer coaches. In addition, select soccer requires more time commitment from families because of travel, number of practices, length of the season, and tournament play.

What is SYSA's select soccer philosophy?

SYSA believes that a select soccer program should be player-centric. It believes that the best soccer experience for kids occurs when they are playing with and against players of similar ability and commitment to the game. SYSA supports select soccer play because it provides an option for players who have advanced beyond the competition available to them at the recreation level.

Why should a parent or player consider select soccer?

All decisions about select soccer should be focused on what the player wants and what is best for the player. If a player wants to play at a higher level, to be more challenged, to play with equally talented players, or would benefit from more experienced and stronger coaching, then select soccer might be right for them. Playing to be with friends or to be an "elite" player are not usually adequate reasons to take on the commitment and cost of select soccer.

How is select soccer different from recreational soccer?

In recreational soccer, players are grouped on teams based on when they registered, where they live, and perhaps who else they know on the team. They should not be grouped intentionally by ability. Select soccer does try to intentionally create teams based primarily on the players' effectiveness on the field. This is done so that players are challenged in training and games against players of similar ability.

How much does playing select soccer cost?

Select soccer costs more than recreational soccer. Select soccer costs can span a range from \$500 to \$2,000 a year, depending on the competitive level of the team, the select club or program, the number of seasons and leagues the teams play in, whether the coach is paid or volunteer, and a variety of other factors. In addition, there are costs to a family when teams travel to tournaments, including transportation, meals, and hotels, that can quickly add up to hundreds of dollars more.

What is the select soccer time commitment?

During a league season, select soccer is much like recreational soccer. Teams generally practice two times a week, with a game on the weekend. The difference is that select teams often train between seasons, or during the time after tryouts and before the start of a season. That means players might be training for 9 or 10 months of the year, depending on the team and the program they are in. If a team enters tournaments, there might be weekends with three or more games spread over three days. Finally, select teams often play away games that require more traveling, sometimes several hours for one game.

How much traveling will my child and I have to do?

Teams in select soccer will almost certainly travel more than recreational teams do in SYSA. Half the team's games will be home, somewhere in the Seattle area. But travel to away games will vary, depending on which league the team plays in.

District 1 leagues include teams from Seattle north to as far as Bellingham. Most District 1 teams, though, are located between Seattle and Marysville to the north, with an occasional travel game further away.

Teams in statewide leagues may travel further south and east, to play teams that are as far as Vancouver in the south or Spokane in the east. Even in state leagues, though, most teams are within a 50 mile radius of Seattle, since that's where most of the soccer playing population in the state lives.

Can my child play other sports and select soccer at the same time?

Most select soccer teams at younger ages encourage players to participate in other sports and activities. Developmentally and emotionally, that is a good guideline. There may be conflicts with practices and games. Those need to be worked out ahead or as they occur with team coaches.

How long is the select soccer season?

Most select soccer teams play in the fall, except for high school age girls, who play in the winter/spring. The fall season is usually 10 to 14 games long, running from September into late November or early December. Many teams also participate in spring leagues, which can run for 6 to 10 weeks in the late winter and spring. In addition, most teams participate in tournaments, which occur starting in the spring and running through the summer. The number of tournaments a team participates in varies from team to team. Many teams will take part in 3 to 4 tournaments a year.