



# Scotch Plains Fanwood

## SOCCER ASSOCIATION



Dear All Rising U8 Parents,

April 9, 2015

The purpose of this memo is to explain why the newly formed travel committee has decided to change the current structure of our U8 SPFSA travel program and why we feel it is the best solution for all U8 players in town.

First, we will explain how the current U8 travel program is structured:

- Players can or cannot sign up for an open try out. Players are evaluated over 2 sessions, 3 hours maximum and then placed on teams. Those teams are weighted forming an A, B, & sometimes C team if there are enough players. Any players who do not make a travel team have the option to play in the house league. Think about that, before a player turns 8, after 3 hours of evaluation, players are potentially noted as 'not good enough' for the next development step while still in the infancy of their development.
- The players that are selected go from parent coaches into a competitive team environment with a professional trainer. This is not only a giant step for players but parents as well. They will practice two days a week with games on weekends.
- Travel teams, usually 12-14 players per team play in a league that is 8v8. That means there are 7 players plus a goalie on a 45x60 field at one time. Halves are usually 30 minutes and if you consider how much the ball is out of play (on average 30%), your son or daughter is not getting enough touches on the ball. These games can also be as far as 1 hour away based on the opponent.
- The SPFSA current annual cost for a U8 travel players is in the \$750 to \$950 range once all costs are included.

Second, what happens when a player does not make a travel team in the current structure?

- A player is welcome to sign up for the house league.
- The U8 house program consists of 1 practice a week with a parent coach and games on weekends. There is some intermittent professional training in the House Program.
- Annual cost of U8 house league is \$140.

Third, what is our new U8 Diamond Academy program and why is it the best option for U8 players:

- It is an open sign up, any player who wants to play can. Everyone has the opportunity to pursue the next step in player development.

- There will be an initial evaluation so teams can be formed and made as evenly as possible. Teams will consist of approximately 8 players and be offered (not mandatory) 2 one-hour training sessions per week plus a game on Saturday.
- Depending on numbers, all boys will train at the same time and all girls teams will train at the same time. Professional trainers will rotate throughout the program training new groups each session. We will also look for 2 parent coaches per team that will help facilitate and focus on parent education within the game.
- All games will be 4v4 without a goalie on a 35x25 field, with 4 x 8 goals. Games will be run by the trainers. This will provide better ratios for player's time on the ball with the idea of continuous play. For example, if the ball goes out of bounds, throw a new one in and do not worry about the players fighting over who will take the throw in.
- The premise is to 'introduce competition'. Scores will be kept and recorded in a table with a champion at the end of the season. There will be no refs.
- All practices and games will be held in Scotch Plains-Fanwood.
- The cost of this program is \$345 for the year. Players will get practice jersey, game uniform, and a ball in addition to the professional training.

We realize change is not always easy however, a lot of thought and planning has been put into this idea and the Scotch Plains-Fanwood soccer association is committed to offering our young boys and girls the best avenue to enjoy and succeed in soccer. This is a widely accepted approach to the sport for young players.

The initial evaluation mentioned above will take place on May 3 at 6 PM, location to be announced. There will also be an open parent meeting on April 28 at 7:30 PM at the SPF High School cafeteria to address questions about the U8 Diamond Academy, as well as other questions pertinent to the SPFSA Travel Program.

If you have any question prior, please feel free to reach out to Todd Moser at [atmosers@gmail.com](mailto:atmosers@gmail.com) or 908-447-2198.