**Expectations of Academy Players**

**9U/10U Soccer**

**Purpose:**

In soccer terms, an "Academy” is when a club keeps a collection of players within an age group as opposed to placing them on individual teams.  All players of the particular age group will train together. This will allow players to work with a USSF licensed training staff to improve their overall individual skill development.  The emphasis will be on technical training and working to instill a passion and love for playing with the ball (and less on competitive matches).

**Player Development Philosophy:**

The academy approach accommodates and accepts that younger players still have a lot of learning and growing to do within the game and recognizes that putting them in an environment where they receive more training than games is more developmentally appropriate. This approach allows SESA to keep players in larger pools, foster development over winning, and let these young players play freely.  SESA will play non-result oriented competition within the Academy format.

With the academy approach, the focus on improving the individual player’s technique will be emphasized because players will be in an environment where they will not have to worry about making poor decisions or fear of failure during the match. Training and perfecting SESA’s Outplaying Curriculum will be stressed at this age. Young players need to get a “feel” for the game; to learn to play instinctively. Young players will be allowed to show their abilities in an environment in which they will still be playing against competition without the “fear” of losing a match.

It is difficult for anyone to predict how good a nine or ten year old player is going to be.

With young players it is the coaches’ job to develop every player without discretion of ability. How many times have we seen late bloomers?  An academy provides an environment that allows these young players to experiment and play without the fear of losing a game. SESA will foster an environment where players will look to be more creative, take risks, become better with the ball and have more fun

**Eligibility:**

Any player in the 9U and 10U age range.

**Fees:**

Fees for the Academy program are an initial $90 registration fee plus $300 for the year.  Monthly automatic withdrawals can be set up as an option.

**Training:**

Academy players will have the opportunity to train at least two nights per week; once under the direction of the professional coaching staff and one session with a qualified parent coach.  Training sessions last approximately an hour and half in duration.  A flexible training schedule will be created to accommodate multi-sport activity participants.

**Games:**

Academy teams will play in the Iowa Soccer Academy league and play approximately 6-8 matches.  Academy matches are played on Saturdays for boys and Sundays for girls.  Academy clubs must still follow recreational play guidelines, such as 50% playing time in matches. The emphasis is placed on creating an environment that is focused on individual development as opposed to team development.

**Festivals**:

Inaddition to the league matches, the teams will also participate in 2 Academy festivals and our annual Monster Match Tournament in the fall and our Midnight Cup in the spring.

**Team benches and spectator sideline:** Players and team officials will be positioned on one sideline that is opposite the spectator sideline. It is not permissible for spectators to be positioned behind the team benches.

**Equipment:** Wearing age- and size-appropriate shin guards will be enforced, and goalkeepers must wear gloves to help ensure their safety. Casts are allowed if properly padded, keeping in mind the safety not only of the player wearing the cast, but of the other players.

**Heading Restrictions and Limitations:**

As per the Iowa Soccer Concussion Management Policy, heading is not allowed in 9U or 10U games

**Sportsmanship:** The 9U and 10U age groups are commonly-used training grounds for youth and newer Referees and therefore it is not acceptable for a coach/team official or spectator to negatively and/or consistently engage with the Referee about a disagreement with how the game is being called.

**SESA Academy Player Code of Conduct:**

**As a SESA Academy Player, I will …**

* Train and play to the best of my ability
* Have a positive attitude and never quit
* Win without boasting, lose with dignity, and demonstrate sportsmanship at all times
* Respect officials and accept their decisions without question
* Only give positive encouragement to fellow teammates
* Arrive prepared for all games and training sessions (proper mental attitude and equipment) Arrive 15 minutes before all activities
* Be responsible for all my own equipment and carry my own INFLATED soccer ball and water to all practices/games
* Respect my coach, teammate, opponents and facilities
* Learn and follow the rules of the game, the team and the club
* Come to training sessions regularly, knowing that you cannot expect to improve while missing sessions.
* Practice soccer skills and condition on my own
* Notify the coach or team manager if I will be tardy for or unable to make a practice, game or meeting
* Wear my SESA training jersey to all training sessions
* Wear shin guards to all sessions and games

**I will not…**

* Allow my enthusiasm and commitment for soccer to come before my responsibilities to my education
* Use profane or vulgar language
* Use a controlled substance unless prescribed by a physician
* Leave the field or a training session without the permission of the coach
* Disregard any instructions of my coach
* Forget that I represent SESA
* Distract others at practices
* Bully others