

# Summit Soccer Club Overview

The Summit Soccer Club (SSC) is an independent, nonprofit organization of volunteers dedicated to the development of youth soccer in the city of Summit. The Club introduces children to the exciting sport of soccer and provides professional skills training and high level competition designed to meet the needs of committed players during the spring and fall seasons.

The Mission of the Summit Soccer Club is to create an environment where Summit's youth have the opportunity to develop to their full potential in a high quality, competitive program that allows individual and team goals to be achieved. SSC is committed to the development of the whole child as it relates to physical exercise and sportsmanship. SSC will provide the best training and support available for players, coaches, and parents. SSC encourages moderately competitive teams that play in less competitive flights as well as competitive teams capable of State Cup play or the equivalent.

Summit Soccer Club's goals include:

- To enable our children to have fun playing competitive soccer;
- To teach our children good sportsmanship towards teammates, opposing players, coaches, and officials;
- To teach our children the importance of teamwork, and the responsibilities and rewards that come with commitment to a team;
- To provide high quality, professional soccer training so players can develop to the best of their ability;
- To enable our children to develop soccer skills, experience, and a passion for the game that will permit them to reach their highest potential.

## **Academy Teams**

The Summit Soccer Club offers an in-town program for U7 and U8 players known as the Academy. The Academy is designed to teach soccer technique to children under 8 while they have fun playing the game. The program consists of a weekday instructional session, led by professional trainers. The U8 Academy offers a one-hour weekend game session combining instruction by trainers and parent coaches

## **Travel Teams**

Travel teams begin at U9 and continue through U14. Most SSC teams compete in the Morris County Youth Soccer Association, a part of the New Jersey Youth Soccer Association. The league offers different levels of competition within each age group. These levels are called “flights”. The Fall and Spring soccer seasons each last for ten weeks and offer ten games per season. Games are usually held on Sundays beginning as early as noon. Half of the games each season are usually played in Summit. Travel to away games can be up to eighty-five minutes away from Summit, although sometimes we play as close as Chatham!

## **Travel Team Expectations and Commitment**

The Summit Soccer Club is committed to providing a strong platform that allows each player to develop to his or her highest potential. In order for each player to reach their highest potential, attendance at practices and games is essential. Missing skill training at practice hampers a player’s development and can hurt the team’s play as well. Player development and team success depends on each player making a concerted effort to attend all practices and games. Players with significant attendance issues are susceptible to reduced playing time and jeopardizing their team placement next Fall.

SSC expects that travel soccer will be a priority during the Fall along with a strong commitment during the Spring season. SSC recognizes that Spring potentially involves an additional sporting commitment.

However, SSC expects parents and players to work together with the team's manager to reduce schedule conflicts. Absences from games should be avoided and if unavoidable, should be communicated early enough so that each team can assemble enough players for every game. Players with assistance from their parents, must strive to attend Spring games to ensure that their team can play at the highest level of enjoyment and competitiveness.

Children who enjoy the game of soccer but want a lighter level of commitment may prefer the recreational program offered by Summit's Department of Community Programs.

### **Training and Coaching**

Summit Soccer is a two-season club. Our teams practice and compete during the fall and spring. Each team practices twice a week; usually on a weekday after school and on Saturday. Each practice is ninety minutes long. Training begins in early September and continues through mid-November. Training resumes for the Spring season in early April and runs through mid-June. Each season is ten weeks long which equates to ten games and twenty practices. The Club encourages each team to enter tournaments during the course of the seasonal year. Each team may enter as many tournaments as they wish. SSC will reimburse the approximate entry fee for one tournament entered per seasonal year per team.

The SSC Board selects professional training companies to provide each team with a top quality trainer to conduct practice sessions twice a week. The SSC training curriculum nurtures and develops player technique in all areas of play. Skills and principles learned in earlier years are extended into development of technique, tactics, and strategies as players mature within the Club. Trainers and coaches also emphasize developing our players' leadership skills and self-confidence.

Games are coached by professional trainers with assistance from parent coaches. Trainers are expected to attend at least 80% of their teams' games each season. The conduct of both a team's trainer and parent coaches is expected to meet the high standards required

of role models. Language and conduct must be above reproach. Please see the Coaches Code of Conduct form on the Club website. All coaches must have an F license and consent to a background check beginning with the Spring, 2010 season.

A parent team manager is required for each team. The manager is responsible for team administration such as scheduling games, and communicating with the team, opponents, and the league.

### **Development**

A primary goal of the Summit Soccer Club is to provide a fun, high quality environment in which our children can develop soccer skills to the maximum of their potential. Winning is less important than skill development. We believe that winning will come as players grow physically stronger and more coordinated, and as their tactical understanding of the game increases along with their ball skills.

As a result, in the younger age groups emphasis is placed on developing ball skills and on learning many positions on the soccer field including goalie. Practices focus on learning how to control and manipulate the ball with all surfaces of the feet as well as learning when to dribble, pass, and shoot. During games, players will learn how to play different positions on the field. This is important in the development of technical skills and helps the player gain a better understanding of the sport. It is important as a parent that you support the trainer in this approach. Soccer is a team sport and acceptance of assignment to various positions is part of teamwork and the understanding of a player's responsibility to the team. A team with eight strikers is not going to be successful. A player with the ability to play comfortably in multiple positions has more options as they develop and a greater tactical understanding of the game. This goes for young goalkeepers, too!

Once players reach the U11 age they often become more proficient in one or two positions given their physical development and skill level. The coach may place them in positions that he/she perceives they are most comfortable and suited given their abilities and the needs of the team.

Each player will receive an independent evaluation by the team's professional trainer each season that addresses ball skill, tactical understanding, attendance, attitude, and athletic ability. The evaluation will provide the trainer's perspective on a player's performance and provide input on areas for improvement.

### **Game Participation**

Game participation is broadly based on attendance, attitude, effort, focus, conditioning, athleticism, tactical understanding of the game, and soccer technique.

The following guidelines are for use by trainers and coaches in managing the game:

- Small Sided (Academy and U9-U10 teams) players should receive relatively equal amounts of game time with all players playing at least half of each game. Playing time above the minimum is at the discretion of the team's coaching staff.
- Full Sided (U11-U14 teams) players should receive reasonable amounts of playing time each game to ensure a player is continuing to develop his or her skills. Each player should play at least twenty-five percent of the game.

### **Tryouts and Team Formation**

The team formation process begins in mid-May when the Club holds a Skill Assessment Session (SAS) for each age group by gender. A session lasts for approximately ninety minutes. All children seeking placement on a Summit Soccer Club team and who live in the Summit area at the time of the SAS, must attend a SAS. New participants to Summit Soccer are welcome to register and participate in the SAS as the first step toward team placement.

The Skill Assessment Sessions are run by an independent, professional training organization selected by the Director of Trainers in coordination with the Team Formation Committee. The

professional training organization running the SAS ranks each player in an age group based on their performance during the SAS.

Complementing the SAS ranking, trainers and coaches rank each player on the basis of ball skills, tactical understanding, attendance, attitude, communication, and athletic ability. There is no guarantee that a player will be placed on a Summit Soccer Club team after participating in a SAS. With few exceptions, teams formed in the Fall Season remain in place for the Spring season.

To ensure that all trainers in an age group are familiar with the players on other teams in the age group, trainers may exchange practices or observe other team practices and/or hold scrimmages which include players on other teams so that they are able to evaluate and compare all players in the age group. All trainers in an age group reach a consensus ranking of all the players in the age group, including new participants.

New participants to Summit Soccer are encouraged to register early for the SAS and to contact the Chair of Team Formation to schedule two practice sessions with a team in their current age group. This will permit current trainers to evaluate and compare the new player with existing SSC players. Based on a new participant's performance at practice, the trainers for the age group will add the child into the ranking for the peer group. The SAS ranking and the trainer ranking will comprise 100% of the new participant's score for purposes of team formation. If a new registrant misses the SAS and fails to attend practice sessions with the appropriate age group, the player will not be placed on a team. New arrivals to town after the team formation process (May timeframe) are encouraged to contact the Summit Soccer Club and may be placed on a team on a space available basis.

The Club seeks to form teams that are competitive, inclusive, and committed. By and large, the number of teams and the size of team rosters are based on the number of participants that tryout for the program and the amount of field space that is made available to Summit Soccer. In addition to the aforementioned criteria, the Board also seeks input from coaches before making a final determination. Team Formation meetings are run by moderators chosen by the SSC Board. Each moderator is an experienced Summit Soccer volunteer

who has served on the Club's board and/or coached SSC teams. The moderators oversee the decision-making process that is driven by the trainers with input from coaches in each age group based on the weighted rankings from the SAS, trainers, and coaches. At the Team Formation meeting, "alternate" players are designated for each team in case roster spots open up after new teams are announced. These alternate players also serve as a waitlist in the event some registrants do not join their teams.

### **Refund Policy**

Once a player is placed on a team, which generally occurs in early June, membership fees are non-refundable. Before registering, please carefully consider whether your child can commit to a travel team that practices twice a week with a game each Sunday during the fall and the spring.

Membership fees will be refunded if the Summit Soccer Club is not able to place a child on a team, a family moves out of town, or a medical reason prevents a child from participating. In the latter case, a doctor's note must be sent to the Club's registrar.

All other cases where mitigating circumstances apply will be reviewed and evaluated by the Board.

Requests for refunds must be in writing and submitted to [registrar@summitsoccer.org](mailto:registrar@summitsoccer.org). A \$20.00 administrative fee will apply to all refunds.

### **SAGE**

We are a supporter of the S.A.G.E. (Set A Good Example) Sportsmanship Program and we strive to provide a safe, healthy and fun environment for our youth by employing professional trainers and relying on parent volunteers to promote teamwork and fun as our Club members pursue their individual soccer goals.