

Exceptional Player Policy

The Club Objective:

To develop the best soccer athletes we can and prepare them to positively impact the Brockport Blizzard Soccer Club and Brockport Central School's soccer program.

Age Appropriate Policy:

The *Brockport Blizzard Soccer Club* believes that most players will develop better at their age appropriate level than at an age level above. We believe this most strongly for all athletes through the completion of the *U12* playing experience. However, the club recognizes that however rare, highly talented players at *U13* and above may exist and want to provide an opportunity to consider them for the next age group within the club's player organization.

Exceptional Player Approval Process

Phase 1 Parent Letter

Important Note: **The athlete and parent must initiate the consideration for exceptional player status following the timeline outlined below.**

Letter requesting approval:

1. Athlete and Parent must apply in writing to the President of the Brockport Soccer Club. The parent and athlete should include in the letter the name of the player, birth date and reasons why the player should be considered for exceptional player status. The letter must be received **1 week PRIOR** to the first age appropriate tryout which typically occurs in August. The President or his/her designee will make the decision to allow the player to tryout at the next age group. Information included in the request and input from former and current coaches will be used to make this determination.

If the athlete is new to the Brockport Soccer Club, the letter must document compelling reasons why the athlete should be considered to play on a higher age level team. Approval to move on to the next phase in this process implies the athlete is guaranteed an invitation to play on their age appropriate team. If there are no compelling reasons, the athlete's request for approval to tryout at the next age level team will be denied, and the player will be expected to tryout with their age appropriate team.

If the request is denied the process ends here.

If the request is approved the process continues to the Club Tryout Phase.

Phase 2: Team Try-outs

The age appropriate coaches and the age level above coaches will evaluate the athlete. The athlete must tryout with both the trying-up age level team and the age appropriate team.

The coaches will:

1. Watch the athlete at the tryouts to determine if he/she is among the top 25% of the players when ranked against the members of the trying-up age level team and the top 10% of the age appropriate team.
2. If the athlete is playing on a Brockport School District team, input can be sought from the athlete's school coach. Furthermore, the athlete can be observed at school games as part of the evaluation process. This is at the discretion of the evaluating club coaches and is only done in the interest of better determining an athlete's ability.

If the athlete is not evaluated as one of top 25% of the athletes on the trying up age level team and top 10% of the age appropriate team, then the process ends here. The athlete is not considered an exceptional enough player to play at a higher level and therefore will be invited and required to play with the age appropriate team.

If the athlete is evaluated as an exceptional player, who is among the top 25% of the players on the trying-up age-level team, then the process moves on to the Team Impact Phase.

Phase 3: Team Impact

If the athlete has gotten this far, they have been approved by the age appropriate and next age level coaches to be an exceptional player meeting the expectations to play on the next age level team. However, the following consideration must still be met for the athlete to be invited to play on the next age level team:

1. A promising age appropriate player cannot be displaced by an under age player, if this is the first time the under age player is being considered for this team.

Even where the under aged athlete is a more skilled soccer player, an age appropriate athlete that shows promise as a developing soccer player, cannot be displaced by the under age athlete. In this case the under age athlete will NOT be invited to join the age level up team. If the under age athlete will displace a promising age appropriate athlete, then the under age player will be invited, and required, to play at their age appropriate level.

If an under age athlete will not displace a promising age appropriate athlete, the athlete is approved to play on the age level above team.

Should coaches disagree during the club tryout and team impact phases

If there is disagreement amongst the age appropriate and next age level coaches, then the decision will go to the club's board. The board's majority vote will determine the outcome.

The seasons following the approval to play on the next age level team

Once an athlete has been approved to play at the next age level, they will from that point forward be evaluated with that team as their peer group. The athlete and/or parent do not need to write a letter, or be concerned about displacing an age appropriate player.

The athlete will still be subject to the evaluation of their current coaches on the next age level team in the future.

Club's Discretion

The Brockport Soccer Club reserves the right to move athletes when it will be in the best interest of developing player and to maintain a team at a particular age group. This discretion is NOT bound by any of the guidelines in the Exceptional Player Consideration process.

The Club reserves the right to build teams based on, but not limited to, the following considerations:

1. When grade levels and age appropriate levels conflict, especially in regard to the anticipated composition of the Brockport Schools Varsity and Junior Varsity teams.
2. An under age player has clearly demonstrated exceptional play on an age level above team the previous season
3. When team continuity, established over several seasons, becomes threatened should players be required to play on age appropriate, or next age level teams.

Closing Comments

The process of evaluating athletes and building teams is not an exact science. The process exists as a means to increase consistency and the sincere desire to develop athletes to play soccer in the Brockport Blizzard Soccer Club and school district teams.

If you believe the intentions of the Club are biased and in any way inappropriate, you are welcomed to become actively involved. The only way we are guaranteed of long term, consistent application of athlete evaluation is to have many people involved in the process.