

Introduction to NVYSL travel teams

The HSC Travel Soccer Program is offered for ages 8 and up, with the following age based divisions: U10, U12, U14, U16, U18, and U19. Teams play two seasons each year: 8 games in the fall, and 8 games in the spring.

Travel teams play within the Nashoba Valley Youth Soccer League (NVYSL). This league is composed of 29 towns in Middlesex and Worcester counties, some as far as 45 minutes away.

Most travel teams play half their games in Harvard, and travel for the remaining games to one of the other NVYSL member towns (some balanced teams play in flights with other Harvard teams and may play more than half of their games in town).

The Harvard Soccer Club (HSC) organizes players into a mix of skills based and balanced teams using a set of best practices and processes which evaluate each player's skill level from historical experience in HSC. The HSC then recommends each team's placement into the NVYSL divisions where the HSC has estimated that each team will have a rewarding and competitive experience. **However, ultimately, the final team placement in the NVYSL divisions is determined by the NVYSL Competition Committee.**

For U10, all teams play in a non-outcome based (also known as recreational) format. Scores are not kept, and there is no end of season tournament. Teams are grouped in flights of 8 to 12 teams roughly according to their skill level.

For U12 and above, NVYSL offers three divisions of play:

The Recreational Group is for teams that are most likely unable to play in one of the higher skilled groups. Scores are kept, but there is no end of season tournament. This level is offered for U12 and U14. A High School Recreational league (A&B divisions) is offered in the fall season for players that do not participate in their school's freshman, JV or Varsity programs.

The Nashoba Cup (NCup) Group is for teams of a higher competitive level than recreational group, but are unable to play competitively in MTOC. There is an end of season NCup tournament in the spring. Generally, the top 50% of teams in all of the flights within an age group qualify for the tournament, which produces an NVYSL league champion. This level is offered for U12 and U14. Starting in Spring 2008 a High School NCUP division will be offered for players at any high school age level (U16 & U18 combined). This group is meant for the more recreational players that continue to play at this age.

The MTOC Group represents the highest level of competition. In the fall there is one level of play and in the spring there are two levels of competition – Division 1 and Division 2. These division placements are determined based on fall standings. There is an end of season Massachusetts Tournament of Champions (MTOC) tournament in the spring, held at Progin Park in Lancaster. Only the top team per age group and division represent the entire NVYSL at this tournament (Note - as there are only 10 leagues, there are two additional annual wild card slots rotated among the various leagues). The other leagues competing are Berkshire, BAYS, Coastal, Essex, MAYS, Middlesex, Pioneer Valley, South Coast and South Shore. The winner of this tournament is the state champion. This level is offered for U12-U19.

It should be noted that the end of season MTOC tournament is scheduled for the last week of June. Coaches should advise their players and parents in advance that this tournament often takes place after school has ended, so that families can take this into account for summer planning.

More detailed information is available on the HSC and NVYSL websites.

HSC programs

<http://leagueathletics.com/page.asp?id=1040&snid=38859887&org=harvardsoccer.org#otown>

NVYSL overview <http://nvysl.eyenab.com/about.php#Overview>

NVYSL rules <http://nvysl.eyenab.com/pdf/Rules.pdf>

NVYSL bylaws <http://nvysl.eyenab.com/pdf/Bylaws.pdf>