



Randolph Soccer Club

Operating Guidelines

Version History

1	4/17/2012	First approved version
1.1	10/21/2013	First updated version
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1.4	10/10/2015	Fourth updated version
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1. Introduction

The Randolph Soccer Club was established in 1971 and is committed to the development of youth soccer. The club strives to provide a challenging travel soccer experience for its players through quality training and opportunities for competitive league and tournament play. The club enables its players to develop their individual and team skills built on a foundation of good sportsmanship and positive leadership.

This document is intended to outline the policies by which Randolph Soccer Club operates its travel soccer program. Any issues, interpretation or questions regarding these policies or matters not specifically addressed by these policies will be resolved at the sole discretion of the Randolph Soccer Club Board. Randolph Soccer Club reserves the right to change these policies from time to time and without further notice.

2. Travel Soccer Seasonal Year

Travel Soccer represents both an increased level of competition and of commitment compared to recreational soccer. The travel soccer **seasonal year** extends from August 1st of one year through July 31st of the following calendar year. A travel soccer seasonal year consists of a fall season, typically running from August through November, and a spring season, typically running from March through June.

3. Eligibility and Playing Up

The Randolph Soccer Club's teams are primarily comprised of Randolph Township residents; however, non-residents can play for the Randolph Soccer Club's teams. The Randolph Soccer Club limits the number of non-residents to 20% of the club's total players. The limit applies in aggregate at the club level and does not apply on a team-by-team basis.

As a general rule, unless there are an insufficient number of Randolph players to form a team at the 8U or 9U level, these teams will be comprised exclusively of Randolph residents.

Travel soccer is age-based with the age brackets defined by U.S. Soccer. The boundaries for the age brackets are January 1st of one birth year through December 31st of that birth year. A player's soccer age eligibility is determined by birth year.

The Randolph Soccer Club's general policy is that a child will play in the appropriate age bracket based on his or her birth date. Over time, it has been shown that the majority of players develop best when playing in the appropriate age bracket.

The Randolph Soccer Club permits secondary carding of players with the commitment that the player will participate in the game played by their primary team in the event of a schedule conflict. Secondary carding into the Randolph Soccer Club is permitted when there is a need to complement a team roster with additional players from outside of RSC by vote of the RSC Board. Secondary carding out of RSC to a different club is permitted only by vote of the RSC Board.

4. Player Selection (Tryouts)

The Randolph Soccer Club forms teams annually based on the results of the annual tryout process. The club strives to form at least one team in each age group for each gender, and may form additional teams in some age groups and genders, depending on the number and caliber of players trying out. The Tryout Director(s) will make the recommendation to form additional teams to the Board after tryouts during the team formation process.

Annual Tryouts

a. Tryout Overview

The Randolph Soccer Club selects players for its teams based on the results of a competitive tryout process. In the event that a regular tryout process cannot be held due to events beyond RSC's control (i.e. a health crisis), club leadership reserves the right to form teams in a modified fashion, including selection based on available information that could include current RSC team ranking, modified tryouts, or even no tryouts.

b. Player Age Eligibility

Team tryout age eligibility is based on birth dates from January 1st through December 31st of a year per U.S. Soccer's birth year chart.

c. Registration

Free advance registration is accomplished through the RSC's website. On-site registrations are charged a nominal administration fee. RSC Board Members and volunteers assist with the on-site/walk-up registrations and coordination.

d. Schedule

Annual tryouts are typically conducted during late April/early May for the following seasonal year for that year's 8U through 15U age groups. Annual tryouts for an age group are conducted on two dates. In the event that regular tryout scheduling is not possible due to events beyond RSC's control (i.e. a health crisis), club leadership may modify the tryout process as circumstances warrant.

e. Attendance

It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that a player is strongly encouraged to attend all tryout dates for their birth year. Exceptions may be granted in advance at the discretion of the President/VP/Travel Director for special circumstances such as injury, illness, religious commitment, or a family emergency.

f. Player Equipment

All players MUST wear shin guards and cleats while attending tryouts and players should bring water.

g. Evaluation

Players currently on a Randolph Soccer Club Travel team are not guaranteed a spot on a team for the following season and MUST try out each year to be eligible. The player evaluation process includes but is not limited to;

- Tryout sessions coordinated by the clubs Tryout Director(s). 2 sessions are coordinated by the club for each age group. 1-2 evaluators are provided for each session. The intention is for current trainers for each team to evaluate their teams. Club leadership develops training session outlines and instruction is provided to trainers to structure a consistent and level process from session to session. During tryouts, players will be evaluated for their technical skills (e.g., passing, receiving, dribbling, attacking, defending) and their tactical skills (e.g., positioning, movement off the ball).
 - For age groups 8U - 11U, there will be a professional evaluator from RSC's staff.
 - For age groups 12U - 15U, there will be a professional evaluator from RSC's staff.

- In the event that regular tryout scheduling is not possible due to events beyond RSC's control (i.e. a health crisis), club leadership may adjust selection criteria as circumstances warrant.

h. Player Acceptance

Once parents/guardians have been notified, players have 48 Hours to accept or decline a position. If after 48 Hours the position has not been accepted or declined, the Randolph Soccer Club may select another player. Accepting a roster spot on a Randolph Soccer Club team is a commitment to participate for the full seasonal year. It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that a player who accepts a roster spot on a team for a seasonal year and subsequently leaves the team prior to the end of that seasonal year is ineligible to play for any of the club's teams for the following seasonal year.

i. Confidentiality

It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that all tryout evaluations and current player evaluations are confidential and remain the sole property of the Randolph Soccer Club.

Supplemental Tryouts

During the course of a seasonal year, a team may need to add players to the roster for various reasons (e.g., to replace a player who has left the team) outside of the annual tryout process. To address these circumstances, the Randolph Soccer Club permits its teams to conduct **supplemental tryouts**.

It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that a team may hold a supplemental tryout as follows:

- The team manager will request permission from the VP/Travel Director to hold a supplemental tryout.
- If permission is granted, at least one supplemental tryout date will be publicly advertised at minimum on the club's web site. All players who attend the supplemental tryout will be evaluated by the team's professional trainer.
- After the supplemental tryout is concluded, if there is a player that the team wishes to add to the roster, the team manager will request permission from the VP/Travel Director to add the specific player. Permission may or may not be granted.

5. Training

It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that all teams will be professionally trained twice weekly for 1.5 hours per session during the fall and spring league seasons of play. This equates to up to 20 training sessions in the fall and up to 20 training sessions in the spring. The cost of these training sessions is included in the fee paid to the club by each player.

Teams frequently elect to continue training over the winter months between the fall and spring seasons. It is the responsibility of the team to reimburse its trainer directly for winter training.

The Randolph Soccer Club has established a training curriculum for players from 8U through 15U. This curriculum identifies the soccer specific technical and tactical skills that the club wishes its players to develop at each age. It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that its professional trainers will use the curriculum to guide player development, which will be monitored.

6. League Play

As described above, the travel soccer seasonal year consists of both a Fall season and a Spring season. Each of the club's 8U – 15U teams will participate in at least one league for the Fall season and for the Spring season. The costs associated with participating in a single league and playing league games are included in the fee paid to the club by each player.

Each league season typically consists of 8-10 league games, with half of the games played at home on Randolph Township fields and half of the games played away on the opponents' fields. The majority of the club's teams participate in the Morris County Youth Soccer Association (MCYSA) league, which draws most of its teams from Morris County and nearby areas. Some of the club's more competitive and skilled teams may play in other leagues, such as EDP. Participating in these leagues may be on a supplemental basis in addition to MCYSA or instead of playing in MCYSA.

It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that a recommended league for each team will be identified during the team formation process following annual tryouts.

7. Tournament Play

Participating in tournaments provides teams an opportunity to test themselves by playing different opponents than they face in league play. Teams will frequently play a pre-season “tune-up” tournament before the start of the Fall season and the Spring season and another tournament on an in-season holiday weekend when there is no league play (e.g., Columbus Day in the Fall and Memorial Day in the Spring). The cost of participating in tournaments is not included in the club’s annual fee.

8. Player Responsibility

Travel soccer does represent an increased level of commitment as compared to recreational soccer. By accepting a roster spot, a player makes the commitment to participate with the team for a full seasonal year (that is, both the Fall and the Spring) as described earlier.

This commitment includes regularly attending and fully participating in team events, such as practices, league games and tournaments. Absences due to family obligations or religious events are expected, but too frequent absences for other reasons (e.g., frequent conflicts with other activities) may result in decreased playing time. Players should notify their coach at least 24 hours prior to missing practice and one week prior to missing a game.

The Randolph Soccer Club expects its players to exhibit good sportsmanship and respect at all times to their teammates, opponents, referees, trainers and coaches.

9. Playing Time

Travel soccer represents an increased level of both competition and commitment when compared to recreational soccer. The game is often the best teacher, giving players the opportunity to creatively apply the skills acquired and lessons learned during training. In light of this, the Randolph Soccer Club has established the following guidelines for the playing time that each player should receive in the team’s league games:

- With regard to 8U, the goal is for each player is 50% of the game time possible at a given 8U festival.
- With regard to 9U through 10U teams, the goal is for each player to play at least 40% of the game. The focus in these age brackets is on building skills.

- With regard to 11U through 15U teams, the goal is for each player to play at least 25% of the game. In these age brackets, the focus is on both building skills and achieving positive results.

It should be noted that the nature of soccer does not lend itself to regular substitution opportunities. Thus, in a particular league game, a player's time may not be within the club's minimum guidelines. It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that in situations like this, the player's time should be increased in future games so that over the course of the entire league season, the minimum playing time can be attained.

As noted above, travel soccer requires increased commitment, which includes things such as regularly attending team events, i.e. practice sessions, league games, and tournament games. It is perfectly reasonable for Coaches to consider attendance and to reduce playing time for players who frequently miss team events.

Tournaments and State Cup matches are not subject to the playing time guidelines described above. However, the Randolph Soccer Club encourages following the guidelines even in these cases for 8U through 10U teams.

10. Player Fee and Payment

The Randolph Soccer Club fees will be established each seasonal year by the Randolph Soccer Club Board prior to annual tryouts. Some of the club's teams, typically those in the younger 8U to 10U age brackets, may be coached by a parent. Other teams, including those in all of the older 11U to 15U age brackets, will be coached by the team's professional trainer. Different fees will apply to teams that are coached by a parent versus teams that are coached by a professional trainer.

The player fee covers the following items:

- The cost of professional team training for the Fall season and the Spring season
- The cost of participating in one league for the Fall season and the Spring season, including referees
- If applicable, the cost of having the professional trainer coach the team for its league games
- The cost of using Randolph Township fields for practices and games for the Fall season and the Spring season
- Lighting of the fields

The Randolph Soccer Club Board will annually establish a payment schedule for the player fee. Generally, one-half of the player fee must be paid to confirm acceptance of a roster spot on a team, and the remainder must be paid when the team is being carded for the Fall season. It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that if the player fee presents a hardship to a player's family, they may request special arrangements from the President. In the event that a player receives a reduction in fee, the Club reserves the right to request additional volunteerism in exchange for the reduced fee.

The player fee does not cover the following items, which some teams may select:

- The cost of participating in an additional league for the fall or spring seasons
- The costs associated with tournaments, including team registration and professional coaching
- The costs of winter training, including indoor space rental and professional training
- A training uniform

The cost of any of the preceding items that a team selects will be the responsibility of the team itself to collect from its players.

It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that all players must purchase a uniform kit consisting of a primary jersey, secondary jersey, shorts and two pairs of game socks. Generally, the club changes uniforms every two seasonal years.

11. Volunteerism

Volunteerism is required on behalf of Randolph Soccer Club for the club to function. The club fee paid by players does not fully cover the actual per player expense each year; so fundraising is essential for club fees to remain relatively stable from year to year. Volunteer opportunities each year will include activities such as involvement with club leadership, team leadership, fundraising events, the sponsorship program, and tryout assistance. The club will publicize volunteer needs as they arise.

12. Player Uniform

It is the policy of the Randolph Soccer Club that all players must purchase a uniform kit consisting of a primary jersey, secondary jersey, shorts and two pairs of game socks. It

is the players' responsibility to maintain their uniform in a usable condition. Generally, the club changes uniforms every two seasonal years.

Uniform design and modifications shall be decided only by the Randolph Soccer Club.

Additionally, in response to the growing concern over child safety Randolph Soccer Club will restrict the placement of player's names on uniform kit items such as jerseys. No identifying first name, last name or nickname may be put onto such items until the team reaches the age of 16U. At that point, teams may be starting to get involved with college showcases and the names are important for identifying purposes. Such customization must be pre-approved by the Randolph Soccer Club.

No individual team shall seek commercial sponsorship for their team in any fashion.

13. High-School Aged Teams

Based on player interest and ability, the Randolph Soccer Club will form spring league high school aged teams (16U - 19U) following club coordinated tryouts. Typically, these teams play a spring season only; although some teams may choose to begin training in the late fall to play in tournaments in November or December. All high school aged teams must be carded as Randolph Soccer Club teams. The fee for high school players will be comprised of a Club Fee, which will cover the cost of the township player registration, league registration and lighting on the fields as well as an additional fee that will be used for 50 hours with a professional trainer. At the time of the offer, payment in full of this RSC Club Fee must be made to secure a spot on the team. High school aged teams will have team managers as designated by the Randolph Soccer Club. All high school aged teams must have a professional game day trainer. The team trainer will be selected by RSC's Training Coordinator, in consultation with the team manager. Uniforms for high school aged teams must have the "Randolph Soccer," "Randolph Soccer Club," or the RSC crest clearly displayed on the uniform (although it is not necessary that high school aged teams wear the most current club uniform).

14. Grievance Procedure

Any problem or concern regarding the RSC experience should first be addressed within the team. Administrative questions regarding fees, payment, etc. should initially be addressed with the Team's Manager. Issues regarding training, playtime, etc. should

initially be brought to the attention of the Team's Coach. Please note that it is not appropriate to approach a coach during game time or scheduled practice time. With regard to issues arising during a game, the parent/player must wait 24 hours before raising the concern with the Team Coach. If the matter cannot be resolved at the team level, a parent/player may bring the issue to the attention of the Club President or Vice President who will designate an appropriate committee member (s) to address the concern.

Note RSC has a specific Safe Sport policy which can be found [HERE](#). This RSC policy complies with US Soccer's requirements which come out of The Protecting Young Victims From Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, which is also known as the "Safe Sport Act, requiring all amateur sports organizations to have a risk management program to promote the welfare of participants and to adopt policies prohibiting sexual abuse. Per this policy, there are mandatory reporting requirements as laid out on page 5.

Those requirements are as follows:

MANDATORY REPORTING

All Adult Participants of RSC are mandatory reporters of any known or suspected child abuse. All reports must be made to the appropriate law enforcement authorities within 24 hours; the abuse does not need to be confirmed [see below for law enforcement information]. Adult Participants should never seek to conduct their own investigations. RSC does not tolerate retaliation of any kind. Any Adult Participant or Minor Athlete who makes a good faith report will not be subject to retaliation, including harassment, as the result of making a report. The Safe Sport Act of 2017 also includes qualified immunity for good faith reports. The obligation to report is not always satisfied by making an initial report and an Adult Participant is required to report supplemental information of which he/she becomes aware that may be relevant in a pending investigation. As RSC is now required to have a mechanism for all individuals (adults and minors) to report abuse, all are encouraged to utilize the "[Report an Incident](#)" feature with the NJYS digital compliance platform (after guidance and direction has been received from law enforcement authorities and/or the Division of Child Protection & Permanency). Regardless of the method for reporting any known or suspected child abuse, all Adult Participants of RSC are also required to report the information to RSC.

Randolph Township's Police Department can be contacted at 973-989-7000 (use 911 for an emergency situation).

New Jersey's Division of Child Protection & Permanency (formerly Division of Youth & Family Services can be contacted at 1-877-NJ-ABUSE

Click [HERE](#) to see information on "How to Report Child Abuse and Neglect."