

Policies and Procedures - Travel Soccer Program (Player Evaluations, Try-outs, Team Placement, Roster Approval, and Coach Selection)

The travel soccer program is a major component of New River United Soccer Club (NRU). Consequently, it is imperative that the policies and procedures outlined in this document be adhered to by everyone involved in the travel soccer program.

The NRU try-out process is designed to ensure a fair, impartial and consistent manner for selecting players with the ultimate goal of ensuring the placement of all players into the right program and best possible experience for their future soccer development and growth.

The travel program open try-outs are a process designed to ensure every player has an equal and impartial opportunity to demonstrate their skill, attitude and effort to possibly be invited to play select level. It is a privilege to play at the travel level and no player has a predetermined right to be on a team. The primary objective of try-outs is to identify players with a strong level of commitment and skill level whom are seeking to further advance their skill development at a more competitive level.

When joining the New River United Travel Program, one joins a club with the philosophy of development over winning. NRU does its absolute best to provide the proper atmosphere for all travel players to grow in order to reach their full potential, and placement on teams is based on this philosophy.

I. Player Evaluations

The Director of Coaching will supply all coaches for their respective age group with a player evaluation form at the start of each season. Only an approved player evaluation form from the DOC may be used.

- All head and assistant coaches must complete and submit player evaluations for the team and season coached.
- Coaches' player evaluations are an integral part of the team placement process (failure to submit player evaluations may have an effect on future coach selection).
- In order to be considered valid, all player evaluations must be submitted to the Director of Coaching and Executive Director.
- Player evaluations must be submitted prior to the commencement of try-outs at a date to be determined by the Director of Coaching
- Head Coaches will share player evaluations with other head coaches for players moving into a new age group. This also applies to the U10 players that are new to the U11 age group from which the evaluations will come from the Academy Director.

II. Try-outs

Team assignments are made by the NRU coaches, with approval by the Director of Coaching, and are based upon skill level and capabilities. The club is committed to ensuring that the team assignment is age appropriate. However, the Club reserves the right to assign individual players to teams that are not age appropriate, but better fit with the player's skill level and capabilities. The Club also reserves the right to assign players to teams to ensure that there are enough players to field a team at a particular age group, as long as the assignment does not negatively impact the player's development. At times players will be asked to play for other NRU teams as a guest player for development purposes.

- Try-outs are intended to evaluate a player's ability to play soccer with children of the same age group and supplement player evaluations in the team placement process.
- Try-outs will be open to all players from any club. If a player cannot make a try-out for various reasons and did not play for the club the season prior, they may ask the Director of Coaching for a scheduled try out with the team they wish to try-out for.
- Only a NRU approved try-out evaluation form may be used to evaluate players at a try-out.
- Prior to try-outs, each coach must have the try-out plan reviewed and approved by the Director of Coaching. The try-out plan should include:

- The number and duration of each try-out
- How players will be matched against each other during the try-out process. (Describe the drills and activities will be used to evaluate skill levels.)
- The try-out evaluators. Note – Parents should not be part of the evaluation process.
- Try-outs will include an appropriate warm-up, age-appropriate small-sided games, and scrimmages.

Age Appropriate play - All players will play age appropriate unless deemed “exceptional” and recommended by the Staff Coaches and DOC. Only in a special few cases will a player be deemed exceptional. They also must rank as one of the top 3 players in their respected age group for which they will participate. All “play-up” players must be approved by the DOC.

- In the event where a team roster cannot be filled with age appropriate players, or where appropriate age teams are full, the DOC may pull younger players up into a higher age bracket. This may be the case for BRSL teams if the DOC deems beneficial to both the team and the player.

Guest Passing/ Dual Roster - At times a player’s development may benefit from a greater level of competition and their present skill level deems it necessary. These elite players can be invited by the Head Coach of the teams above their age level to participate in a secondary role as a guest player or as a dual roster player from their primary team. Both head coaches must be in full agreement as well as the DOC must approve such moves. The team at their age bracket will be their primary team and their participation in the secondary option shall not interfere with any of the primary team’s games or training sessions. This can also take place within teams of the same age group (BRSL and Skyline)

III. Team Placement

No team will be designed with the intention of keeping the team together as a unit from year to year. In order to ensure fair and consistent selection of players to their appropriate teams the following guidelines will be implemented:

- Teams competing in the Skyline league will be constructed with the intention of fielding the strongest and most competitive teams.
- Prior to the placement meeting, each head coach will create a proposed ranking of the player pool for their age group based upon all information available. This ranking will only be used as a guide during the placement process.
- The DOC and Head Coaches will use all information available in order to make roster decisions.
- A Try-out Committee will be held after the try-outs and will review initial team placement for each player by committee consensus at the placement meeting.
- The Try-out Committee will include all coaches participating in try-outs, the Director of Coaching/Executive Director, and a small group of unbiased soccer evaluators selected by the DOC. This group will use all information available in order to make roster decisions.
- Each placement meeting must be attended by at least one neutral soccer evaluator selected by the DOC. It is recommended that the attending evaluator not have a child in the respective age group. The designated evaluator(s) will be available to help facilitate try-outs to assist with the process and serve as an additional voice for placement dilemmas. The role of the DOC during the Try-out Committee meeting is to inquire about the try-out process and ensure that the process and policies were followed in accordance with guidelines.
- All individual player placement discussions are considered confidential and should not be disseminated outside the placement meeting.
- Roster spots may be held for tentatively assigned players.
- In order for a younger player to play up an age group they must be considered one of the top three players of that age group as determined in the player pool ranking.
- A player has the right to choose not to play “up” if chosen to do so.

IV. Injured Player(s):

In the event a player is injured, or sustains an injury during try-outs, a team can temporarily hold a roster position on the team in order to accommodate. This may happen only if the current head coach feels that this particular player will be beneficial to the team as a whole. Approval must be unanimous and agreed with the Try-Out Committee.

If a player is not in attendance due to injury, once again the current head coach may hold a roster spot , with the approval of the Try-out Committee; however, if the individual is not present during try-outs, he/ she must then attend a specifically designed session in order to be properly evaluated by the head coach, or DOC. Acceptance on the team will then run its due course.

V. Coach Selection

NRU policy is to place players on team rosters regardless of the selection of coaches. When selecting coaches to teams factors such as licensure (USSF and NSCAA), coaching and playing experience, parent and player feedback will be considered. All coaching assignments will be made by the Director of Coaching.

VII. Roster Approval

No individual may release team placement information until rosters have been approved by the Try-Out Committee.

VIII. Roster Adjustments

Occasionally, due to various reasons (a player quits, a coach is needed, parental request, etc.), roster adjustments need to be made after the Try-Out Committee meeting or roster approval by the Director of Coaching. The following methodology must be followed to resolve any, and all, roster issues:

- Director of Coaching must oversee the roster resolution process. Coaches should present all roster adjustments to the DOC.
- Only those individuals necessary need to be involved in the roster resolution process.
- Because the roster issue will inevitably involve multiple teams, it is advised to wait until coach selection has occurred before attempting to resolve the roster issue.
- If those involved in the decision making process are unable to reach an equitable resolution, the matter must be escalated to the Try-Out Committee. The Try-Out Committee will then make the final decision on the roster issue.

IX. Selection Notification

Players selected who are not currently rostered with an NRU team will be notified of bids via email within 24 hours after the Try-Out Committee Meeting which should occur no later than 1 week following try-outs. Each player will have 48 hours to accept a bid with a down payment. Players currently rostered with an NRU team, will be notified of bids via email 48 hours after the last competition for that age group (ie National Bank Summer Kickoff or Skyline league matches). These players also have 72 hours to accept a bid with a down payment. Within 24 hours after bids have been rejected, the Club will extend bids to alternates in the sequence determined by the player pool ranking finalized after the Try-Out Committee Meeting. Once all bids have been accepted, the Club will inform all alternates that they are free accept an invitation from any other club.