



Colorado Ice Soccer Transitioning to U9 Soccer

Big changes are ahead next year for your sons and daughters, and the purpose of this letter is to give a summary of those changes. We hope that this letter will help you navigate through your soccer options.

In a nutshell, this is how next year differs from this year

1. Fields and teams get bigger – 7v7 format. Roster sizes also increase. Probably fewer teams.
2. Teams will no longer play "in house." Most, if not all, games will be against other clubs
3. Teams play at different levels
4. Some players opt for the **Ice Developmental Academy** and others choose Traditional
5. Professional club coaches for the **Ice Developmental Academy** teams

League Structure

Next year we start playing other clubs, and we start playing at different levels. U9 and U10 looks like this

1. **Denver West.** This league is mostly for our Traditional teams and requires the least amount of travel. It consists of Ice, Wheat Ridge, Real Colorado Edge, Westminster and Boulder.
2. **Front Range League North or South.** (There can be up to 3 levels: **Gold, Silver and Bronze**). These teams play clubs a bit further away such as Edge, NA Rush (Thornton/Northglenn), Westminster, Broomfield, St. Vrain (Longmont), Boulder and Lafayette for North and Littleton, Storm (Douglas County), Pride (Colo. Spgs), Rush (Lakewood), etc. for South
3. The **highest level of play is Intermediate**, and there are a number of levels within Intermediate (Bronze, Silver, Gold and Premier). Intermediate plays teams from the entire greater Metro area, from Pueblo to Fort Collins.

The club makes the decision as to which league a particular team is assigned.

Traditional Program

This is just what it says. It is the "traditional" approach to forming teams. We will take players that choose NOT to be evaluated for the Academy program and form neighborhood or friend-based teams. The Traditional teams can play at any of the levels listed above based upon the skill level of players on the team. Traditional teams normally have parent volunteer coaches but can have paid Ice coaches. If they have a paid coach, then the fees will be raised to cover that cost.

There are no evaluations for Traditional teams and parents can request teams or friends to play with in this program. Registration for the Traditional program is in the same manner as you have done in the past. Roster size will be between 10 and 13

Teams can choose to stay together and play in the Traditional program and if your coach's child is moving into the Academy program, we will work to find a new coach for players remaining from your team.

Ice Developmental Academy

The line between Developmental and Competitive soccer has become blurred over the past decade. Most clubs have severely deviated from the Traditional neighborhood approach to team formation. At Ice we see the benefits of the Traditional approach, but we also recognize that we are not serving all of our members by adhering to that concept.

With this in mind we offer the Ice Developmental Academy. **The idea is to offer some of our players the opportunity to choose to play with teammates of like commitment and skill levels** and thus cater to their needs while, at the same time, allowing for what may be the majority of our players to continue to play with their traditional neighborhood teams. The Developmental Academy is a choice that parents can make for their kids to be evaluated and placed with other players of like abilities and the desire to commit to a higher level of training, tournaments, and games.

We created the Ice Developmental Academy Program because we believe that

- Players develop better when they are more evenly matched in skill and ability with their teammates and their opposition. This applies to all levels of soccer.
- The Club will retain more players by allowing for more choice during the U9 and U10 years.

Players who opt for the Academy program should expect:

- A **full year commitment** is required to join an Academy team. Registration is for the fall/spring and fees are charged accordingly. We will work with players that play more than one sport but you must commit to play soccer at Colorado Ice for the full year.
- An increase in fees to pay for a professional club coach –
Ice club fee \$390 (includes 2 training jerseys) plus Coach fee \$320 = \$710 for the year
These fees do NOT include fees for tournaments, winter indoor, indoor training time, etc
- Player Evaluations will be held to place those interested in the Academy on teams
- Tournaments at the coach's discretion -- most likely at least 2.
- Age Group Clinics each season will be run by Ice Technical and Program Directors
- Camps
- Rosters of 12 or less (if at all possible) to insure adequate playing time
- A more "serious" commitment to the game. Players in the Academy will be expected to put in a good faith effort to participate in all team activities as decided by the coach.
- The Club will use its discretion to place players on teams based upon the player evaluations. Players are NOT allowed to request team placement.

**There is no guarantee that all players that want to join the Academy will be placed on an Academy team. If a player is NOT selected for an Academy team they will be placed on a Traditional team. If any spots open during the year on an Academy team those players that were NOT selected will have an opportunity to be re-evaluated for an Academy team. Players are registered with Colorado Ice Soccer for the full year. NO refunds or player releases will be granted once a player is registered at Ice*

Professional Club Coaches

All Academy teams will have professional club coaches. Most Traditional teams are still under the guidance of a parent volunteer coach.

Over the past few years we have seen great strides towards ensuring that all players coming out of U10's have attained the fundamental skills of dribbling, trapping and passing, and shooting along with basic to advanced tactics (depending on level of play). We feel this is due to our professional coaches along with our quality parent volunteer coaches

Player Evaluations for Ice Developmental Academy teams

Ice will utilize 2 methods of evaluating players for the Academy program prior to selecting teams for the fall/spring year:

- Colorado Ice Coaching staff will attend current U8 games during the spring season
- 2 nights of Player Evaluations in May – a third night may be added if needed.

Monday May 8 at Rooney Road Sports Complex field #2 (first field on the right as you enter the complex)

Boys 4:30-6pm

Girls 6-7:30pm

Tuesday May 16 at Rooney Road Sports Complex field #2

Girls 4:30-6pm

Boys 6-7:30pm

***If you would like your child to be evaluated for an Academy team please register online. There is no fee for evaluation registration or commitment. Registering helps Ice staff prepare for the number of players that will attend.**

Registration is online - www.coloradoice.org then Register on the Upper Bar of the website. Be sure to choose Academy Evaluation 22/23

Parent Informational Meetings

Radu Marcu, Colorado Ice Developmental Program Director, will be at Applewood Park a couple of Saturdays during games to explain the options available moving into U9 and to answer questions. Please feel free to reach out to Radu with any questions about the program (see contact information below)

In summary, as our boys and girls move from U8 Colorado Ice in-house soccer, they are offered more choice and more opportunity. We hope that this letter helps you understand what lies ahead so that you can make an informed decision regarding your son or daughter.

If you have any questions Radu and I are more than happy to talk with you individually.

Sincerely,

-Radu Marcu
Director of Developmental, Colorado Ice
720-369-7362
radujr@tablemountainsoccer.org

-Laura Albrecht
General Manager, Colorado Ice
303-279-3686
laura@tablemountainsoccer.org