



***boulder county***  
***FORCE***

## **U11 TRYOUT OVERVIEW & FAQ**

Using a tryout process the Force builds COMPETITIVE travel teams beginning at the U11 year. Force competitive teams continue through high school (U18) and compete in the Colorado Youth Soccer leagues and local tournaments. Force Red teams usually travel to regional and national tournaments.

### **1) WHEN & WHERE ARE TRYOUTS FOR U11?**

May 26 & May 27, 2009

U11 Girls 6:15 pm

U11 Boys 6:15 pm.

Location: Pleasant View Soccer Complex

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to start to warm up.

Parents please watch tryouts in the “parents area”

### **2) WHAT ARE THE AGE REQUIREMENTS TO PLAY U11 SOCCER?**

As per the Colorado Youth Soccer rules: a player must be born between: 8/1/98-7/31/99 or entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade to be eligible for U11 soccer in the Fall 2009. There are no exceptions.

### **3) DO PLAYERS NEED TO ATTEND BOTH TRYOUT DATES?**

Players should attend both tryout dates to assure that they receive accurate team placement. Be sure to let us know if your son or daughter will miss a tryout date. It is very rare that a player is selected for one of the top two teams in an age group if they only attend one day of tryouts.

### **4) WHAT PLAYERS WILL BE AT TRYOUTS?**

Tryouts are “open” to soccer players from all areas and clubs. There are usually about 100 players attending each of the U11 tryouts for boys and girls. Players come from all corners of Boulder County and North Metro communities. Usually 25% of the players attending tryouts are new to the Force.

### **5) HOW MANY U11 TEAMS WILL BE FORMED?**

The Force builds as many competitive U11 teams as we can. We expect three-four U11 teams for both boys and girls.

### **6) ARE PLAYERS CUT?**

Every effort is made to place all players at tryouts on a Force team. It is very rare that a U11 player who attends tryouts is unable to find a team for the fall. Again, we do our best to find teams for all players at U11 tryouts.

### **7) WHAT KIND OF FORCE U11 TEAMS ARE FORMED?**

The Force "Red" teams play in Colorado's Premier division, practice 3 days a week, play no less than 4 tournaments a year. Red teams have a high level of commitment to competitive soccer. Red players usually select soccer as their primary sport and participate in winter and summer training programs.

After the Red team has been formed the "Advance" teams (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc) are formed. The Advance teams are named after famous professional teams (boys) and top college soccer programs (girls). The Advance teams may play in Premier, Classic and/or Challenge League as recommended by the Force Director of Coaching. Advance teams practice two days a week and play no less than 2 tournaments a year.

Recreational teams are not formed via tryouts. Recreational teams play in either the Inter-league or Option 1 league. These teams usually practice 1-2 days a week, with volunteer coaches and little to no tournament play. Recreational teams are formed by volunteer coaches and are usually based on school or neighborhood friend groups. Please contact the Force if you are interested in forming, coaching or participating in a recreational level team.

### **8) WHAT LEVEL DO THE FORCE U11 COMPETITIVE TEAMS PLAY?**

Force U11 teams are placed in Colorado statewide leagues that are appropriate for the skill level and athleticism of the team. In general, the quality of teams and players at the Force has increased over the past five years. The top U11 Force teams are among the most competitive in Colorado and the Far West Region of the US.

### **9) HOW ARE PLAYERS EVALUATED AND SELECTED FOR TEAMS?**

Every player is given a number and the Tryout Evaluators (BC Force Director(s) of Coaching, Pro Staff Coaches, Team Coaches, Assistant Coaches and Trainers) begin forming groups of players with similar evaluation results. The tryout process takes place over two days with 90 minutes sessions. Tryouts are designed to maximize each player's opportunity to showcase their abilities. Therefore, the first day of tryouts is small-sided soccer games (i.e. 4v4 or 5v5). During the second day of tryouts players are placed in larger teams of 8v8 or 9v9. The Evaluators may add 1v1 or 2v2 activities as need. When grouping players, the Evaluators look for: athleticism, speed and quickness, competitive spirit, maturity, confidence, leadership, focus, personality, communication, creativity,

composure, ball control skills and tactical awareness. The first team is made up of the top 16 players. Then the second team will be selected and this will continue until all the teams are formed.

## **9) WHAT IF MY CHILD DOESN'T GET PLACED ON THE TEAM WHERE WE THINK THEY SHOULD?**

This is one of the reason why tryouts are the least popular time of year for coaches at ALL ages and levels. There is no science to soccer team selection. There is no stopwatch as in swimming or track. There is no batting average as in baseball. Even football is based more a on pure athletic test such as 40 yard dash times and strength. Soccer player placement is subjective. A hugely successful soccer coach once said when asked what he looks for in a soccer player, "I know it when I see it."

At a Force tryout we have at each age group, several coaches and trainers evaluate each player. If a player is actually placed on the incorrect level team, it will become obvious to the Force coaching staff and the Directors of Coaching over the course of a season and they will recommend a change either between the fall and spring season or for the following year. **One season doesn't make a soccer career and it is best to remember that soccer development is a marathon not a sprint.** Sometimes a player may simply need a few more months to develop or showcase their abilities. Throughout the year the Force players are observed by our Pro Staff Coaches, Trainers and Director(s) of Coaching. We are confident the system works and there are numerous examples of Force players who have gone on to play on the top BC Force teams, high school varsity and college after starting out on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> level teams.

Sometimes when things don't go as expected it can seem like they are unfair. It is a common reaction by players or parents to even get angry with the tryout evaluators, Directors of Coaching and the Club. "Surely someone made a mistake!" The nice thing about having so many experienced coaches evaluating at each age group is that each player has a fair chance to showcase and impress. The Force staff coaches have evaluated thousands of players over the years. With four to seven BC Force evaluators rating each player at tryouts, we are confident that the team placement accurately reflects the player pool.

## **11) WHO WILL COACH MY CHILD'S TEAM?**

The Force has a dedicated staff of soccer professionals who are passionate about developing youth soccer players. In addition to team coaches, each competitive player will be exposed to additional training from Pro Staff Coaches, Directors of Coaching, Assistant Coaches and Trainers. No player or team is left alone as an island unto himself or herself. That is a why the BC Force is a true soccer club.

Every Force U11 team coach is hired and selected by the Director(s) of Coaching. All Force coaches are required to pursue USSF or NSCAA coaching licenses. Many of the Force coaches are professionals who coach full or part-time in soccer. Our coaches have

college, semi-pro and professional playing experience. Each fall we receive numerous inquiries to coach. The Director(s) of Coaching interview each applicant and select the best candidates. The Force is the one of the only clubs in Colorado that has staff coaches and trainers employed with the sole responsibility of providing extra coaching to second and third level teams. These special coaches are known as Advance Team Trainers.

## 12) WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT OF U11 COMPETITIVE SOCCER?

**Pre-season Soccer Camps:** As preparations for the Fall season all U11 Red players are expected to participate in 5 days of preseason camp late July / early August. Advance teams are encouraged to participate in preseason team camp. Preseason camp is at Pleasant View Soccer Complex.

**Practices:** Red teams practice 3 days a week. Advance teams practice 2-3 days a week with optional skills training on the third day. Fall practices begin in early August and end in early November. Spring practices begin in early February and end in early June. Please note that individual coaches will set the official practice schedule and start dates.

**Games:** There is a fall and spring league commitment. Each team will play 5 home games at Pleasant View Soccer Complex in Boulder and 5 away games each in the fall and spring. The majority of opponents are located along the Front Range between Colorado Springs and Fort Collins. Additional away games may include Cheyenne, Vail, Pueblo, Grand Junction or Steamboat Springs. The state soccer office tries to limit each team to one long away game a year. The majority of teams do not have to travel further than the Front Range for away games.

**Tournaments:** Tournaments schedules are shared with the parents at the beginning of the season. Tournaments are a weekend of 3-6 games and usually include Friday, Saturday and Sundays. The top U11 team will play a minimum of 4 tournaments a year including a preseason tournament in August and the Rocky Mountain Cup in mid June. All other Force teams will play a minimum of 2 tournaments including the Rocky Mountain Cup in mid June. Teams are welcome to play more than the minimum number of tournaments. The Red team usually travels out of state once a year between U11 and U14. Advance level teams usually do not travel out of state until high school.

**Winter:** The Force offers an optional winter indoor camp. Many Force kids play indoor soccer at Boulder Indoor Soccer in the winter.

**Spring Break:** Plan on the state league scheduling games during spring break. (Every school district has different spring break dates; therefore, the league makes no attempt to schedule around them). It will be up to the Force team coach to determine if practices and games will be held during spring break. Please check with your coach to find out about their spring break practice policy and plan.

**Summer:** Most teams complete their seasonal year with the Rocky Mountain Cup in mid June. The Force does offer summer soccer camps.

### 13) ARE THE TEAMS FORMED BEFORE TRYOUTS?

This is a common misconception and over simplifies player placement. The Force does not formed U11 competitive teams prior to the official tryouts. For players new to the Force tryouts are opportunities to be evaluated for team placement.

For all Force players, "tryouts" really begin at the first practice of the season. Force players should be aware that team placement is based more on the previous soccer year than tryout performance. What if someone has a "great tryout"? What's more important for accurate team placement, how a player practice, plays and behaves over the previous 10 weeks or how they play in 180 minutes of tryouts? The answer is that the total evaluation of a player at practices, games, jamborees, tournaments, Force events, camps, clinics AND tryouts determine team placement. Final decisions regarding team placement are made within 24-36 hours of the last tryout date.

### FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT TRYOUTS :

There are many life lesson opportunities when players, and to some extent their parents, participate in tryouts and sports. Eventually every athlete will have to face a disappointment. Disappointment may be a major injury, losing a big game or not making the desired team at a tryout. It is highly likely that that athlete's parents will empathize with their child's disappointment. **At the Force, we believe that each disappointment is really an opportunity!** In regards to tryouts, coaches' decisions, team placements, field conditions, weather and the other kids are all outside the control of the player and parent. However, a player and parent can control their own thoughts and reactions to tryout results. The Force looks at tryouts as an opportunity for self empowerment, regardless of the results.

A player and parent can determine whether they will respond positively or negatively to tryouts. Assuming a player is unhappy with their team placement, ideally, they will choose to accept the team placement, be it accurate or inaccurate, recognize it was really beyond their control, and be motivated to work harder to achieve their goals. A negative response to the disappointment would be for the player to blame the system and coaches, quit the sport or play begrudgingly. Likewise, the parent can choose to unconditionally support their son or daughter and empower them take ownership of their own soccer experience. Or the parent can try to influence the coaches and system to change the results of today's disappointment. Sometimes a player or parents will choose to simply have the last word and react in anger.

At the Force we believe that one of the most important lesson learned from sports is how we as players, parents and coaches respond to the disappointment and successes sports inevitably send our way. These choices will influence whether not the children we parent or coach are "learning to be confident and empowered or one of life's victims"\* Again, the player and the parents have no control of the tryout selection process but they do have control over how they react.

Please feel free to contact Director of Coaching, John Welsch with any tryout or competitive questions.

*\* Dr. TC North (Sport Psychologist and Peak Performance Consultant)*