



The Academy at BSC

The Academy at Bethlehem S.C

A Guide for Prospective Members

Note to players and parents – you should both read this guide carefully. It is important that all participants fully understand what is expected of members of the program and what you can expect from your involvement with The Academy.



Background

In 2009 we introduced the Junior Academy for the U8 –U12 age group. When we adopted the program last year, we felt that this would provide our younger players with the best possible next step after Rec in their soccer experience. Prior to the institution of the academy program, U8's through U12's joined teams, which competed in the Capital District Youth Soccer League (CDYSL). The limitations of CDYSL include the inability of moving players among teams as well as the sometimes-subjective league placements of other clubs.

The Bethlehem Soccer club has supported the formation of Premier and Travel teams for many years and has helped produce many players who have enjoyed success at local Varsity and College levels. Our goal has always been to provide a rich soccer experience, which allows individual players to develop and to compete at the highest level, which their skill will allow.

The formation of the Youth Academy is the natural extension of the soccer program at Bethlehem S.C. The structure is based upon the model used by the leading Professional and Amateur clubs around the world. The focus will continue to be on the individual, aimed at individual player development, which is supported by expert coaching in a structured program, provided in a competitive environment, which offers incentive and reward through advancement.

Academy Philosophy - Individual Player Development

The Academy program stresses player development versus results. It is much more important to develop players within the proper framework as opposed to demanding that teams win at all costs. While we expect our players to strive to win, we must allow them to make mistakes, which create opportunities to learn, we cannot pursue win at all costs at the expense of developing the player and the team. By focusing on developing the player and putting them in the best training situation that fits the individual, we help the entire team and success will follow. Winning every game is not our primary objective, and will NOT be how we measure the success of our Academy.

The coaches who will be working with these players are superb at training and understanding players - You can be completely comfortable in the knowledge that your child is receiving the best soccer instruction for their age and ability.

Player Evaluation – Assessment Camp

Players are evaluated at our “Open House” events in the springtime and then again at our Assessment Camp at the end of June / early July. Players will be provided with an initial skill assessment during the assessment camps. Each player has the opportunity to work towards improving skill level and advancing. Returning players are encouraged to attend assessment camps, but are not required. Their evaluations will take place in late fall when practices begin.

Within each age bracket U13-U14, U15-U16 and U17-U18, we will assign a pool of players who will receive coaching from a dedicated coaching staff at each age bracket. The assignment will be based solely on the assessment of the coaching staff.

Each player joining the Academy will be given an individual assessment from the coaching staff that will be reviewed and updated monthly with the player (during winter practice months). Evaluations during the playing season will be based on the competitive schedule.

We do not believe that players should be placed on a ‘static’ team roster for one year at a time as is the case with most Club programs (Premier and Travel). Since players develop at varying rates we offer the opportunity to move between teams, and in some cases age groups, based upon individual development compared to other Academy members. Our goal is to create an environment, which will promote the



growth of ALL players by allowing every player in the Academy an opportunity to get to the next level of play within the Academy.

Player Coaching and Training – Pool Training

Training will take place twice weekly during the winter months (November thru March). Players are identified and grouped by age and ability and will mostly follow the assignments resulting from the Assessment Camp. The coaching staff will teach and develop these players to have the confidence, and the technical ability to enjoy the game. All training is THEME BASED/CURRICULUM BASED in order to achieve basic fundamentals necessary within the game.

The training format will institute a station style of POOL TRAINING. For example; on the **first** training day the session might consist of stations that vary in theme, i.e. dribbling/passing/finishing. The groups will be matched up by level(s) in order to keep the training environment challenging.

Players might be split into different sections based on their ability for their **second** training session of the week. A coach will oversee a specific section. This coach will likely be the one that will be with them on game day.

The Advantages of Pool Training

- Player development is VERY FLUID due to different rates of physical / technical maturation and game awareness. A rigid team system does not support individual development.
- By mixing players outside their respective teams, we allow for all the positive developmental aspects that come from stepping beyond their comfort zone.
- Players are placed in an environment that allows them to develop an awareness of the “club culture” among different peers with whom they may compete in the future. It is less about the team and more about the club.
- The coaching Staff is afforded regular evaluation opportunities across a given age group.
- Pool training is a competitive cauldron across teams, giving players a chance to learn from and measure themselves against the best talent of their own age. For the best players, it is an opportunity to demonstrate skill and gain confidence and also to be a model for the players who are not as strong.
- Pool training allows us to build the future of the club. The stronger academy players will form the core of the higher-level challenge teams.
- Pool Training is NOT a lowest-common-denominator approach. We firmly believe in placing the best players together to train, compete and push each other. But the most effective U13 player may not be the best U16 player in three years’ time, so our training environment must encourage every player.
- Pool Training is NOT a refusal to recognize the social benefit of team identity or team-building that can be a great childhood experience

Coaching Games and Practice

The Director of Coaching is responsible for the staffing and scheduling of all training and games. Each team will be assigned a club staff coach for their games. BSC Academy provides a comprehensive coaching



staff including some of the region's top college and high school coaches who combine their knowledge and experience to reflect the club's philosophy. The decisions made for the groups such as playing time and any movement between sections are the sole responsibility of the coaching staff: -

Jeff Guinn - BSC Director of Coaching

USSF National "A" License - Coach, Union College Men's Soccer - Assistant Coach, Brown University - "Academic All American" North Carolina State

RJ Bevers

Asst. Coach, SUNYA, Div. I (02-present) - Dir. Soccer Training Euro Futbol Premier, Youth - Coach, UI8B NYS Cup Champions, Western NY - Coach, Eastern NY ODP - Coach, League ODP - Coach, Norwich High School Varsity Girls - Dutch License Youth - Dutch license III.

Jeremy Bogan

USSF National "D" License - Coach, Bethlehem Knights (04-present) - Head Coach, College of Saint Rose Men's Soccer (01-08) - Head/Assistant Coach, Super "Y" League (99-04) - Coach, Cross-bar Soccer Camp (02-04) - All-American Scholar Collegiate Award (2000) - Former College Player, at both Springfield College (97) & The College of Saint Rose (98-2000, 2x Captain

Andrew Clinton

USSF National "D" License – 6 year Head Coach Bethlehem S.C Travel Program, multiple CDYSL and Tournament Winner Titles, College and High School player in England and Capital District Men's over 30A league.

Bill Kelly

USSF State "D" license- Coach, Bard College Women's Soccer (Present)- Skyline Conference „Coach of the Year "(09) - Coach, College of St. Benedict Women's Soccer (96-02) - NCAA Div. III „Women ' s Soccer Coach of the Year "(02)- MN Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Central Reg. „Coach of the Year "(02) - Coach, Pine Manor College Women's Soccer (94

Greg Maher

USSF State "D" license - Coach, Bethlehem Knights UI4B, UI6B & Girls Premier UI4-UI9 - Asst. Coach, Bethlehem High School Varsity - NYS H.S. Coaching Certification - UNC Coaches Camp with Anson Dorrance

Phil Ridgway

USSF National "D" license - Coach, Bethlehem HS Varsity (06-present) - Bethlehem Varsity NYSPHSAA Section II South Div. Reg. Season Champs (09) - Bethlehem Varsity NYSPHSAA Section II Champs (06) - Bethlehem Varsity NYSPHSAA Reg. Champs (06) - NYSPHSAA Section II „Coach of the Year "(06).

Willie Sanchez

USSF National "B" license - USSF National Youth license - Coach, Voorheesville Varsity Boys (08-present) - Voorheesville Varsity Section II Class CC Champions (09) - Technical Coach, Bethlehem Soccer Club - League ODP (04-07) - Olympic Development Prgm. Staff (00-03).

Mike Young

NCAA National Diploma - USSF "E" license - Head Coach, Albany College of Pharmacy Women's Soccer (08-09) - Hudson Valley Women's Athletic Conference Reg. Season/Conference Tournament Champions (08) - Coach, Bethlehem Soccer Club Premier Boys (05-present) - Coach, Voorheesville Varsity Boys (05-07) - NYSPHSAA Section II Colonial Council Div. Reg. Season Champions (05) - NYSPHSAA Section II Class B "Coach of the Year" Nominee"(05) - Asst. Coach,



Team Formation

As mentioned above, players will be grouped into different sections for their second pool training session of the week. A coach will oversee a specific section. There is flexibility to adjust teams and section depending on the need to prepare for a game, an event (scrimmage against own or other club teams) or tournament. Teams may be shuffled and mixed for various alternative competitions over the course of the year with flexibility provided by the academy style format to encourage and reward individual player development. Alternative competitive events are valuable to player development and stimulating individual progress and will remain part of our Academy program.

We will strive to create competitive teams within and across each group in the Academy. Our highest level team – “First”, next highest “Reserve”, and finally “Development”

Competitive Play

During the winter, focus will be on competitive play between our own Academy players and will be organized during our regularly scheduled training times. On occasion, at the discretion of the coaching staff, competitive games against other clubs might be arranged and will utilize the already allocated training times and field assignments.

During the first calendar quarter rosters will be developed so that players can be registered as required by certain organizations i.e. CDYSL, US Soccer etc. in order that teams can be selected for competitive play during the spring and summer months. Based on the assessment of the coaching staff at each age group a game schedule will be generated for each age group by the end of March each year. The game schedule may contain games for several teams within each age group based upon the number, and technical ability, of players within the program, and may include registrations for competitions and tournaments such as NY State Cup, Thruway League, CDYSL, etc.

Players may be included on several rosters in order to maximize playing opportunities. Roster changes will be made at the sole discretion of the coaching staff throughout the outdoor season consistent with our goal to reward and encourage individual player development.

Positive Coaching

Positive coaching from our staff is very important to our players' development. We must ensure that our players are instilled with confidence to play and have an understanding of the coach's instructions as well as the ability to handle constructive feedback from the coach. Encouragement at this level is a massive motivational tool to making our players successful, creative and well-rounded soccer players.

Positive Encouragement

Positive encouragement from parents is vital in helping soccer players succeed and enjoy the game. The job of the parents is to be their child's biggest fan. Positive feedback and encouragement should outweigh constructive criticism by at least 10 to 1. This allows players to grow in confidence, which is the key to success in soccer as well as any sport.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Academy Philosophy?

The Academy Program philosophy is to emphasize player development over team development and focus on the technical development of each player without the pressures of short-term wins/losses/results.

How does my child get into the new Academy system?

Assessments are during the spring “Open House” and the Assessment Camp in June / July. We anticipate taking 250- 300 players. Participation in the academy is both for the fall and spring seasons. You will know within 48 hours of the last Assessment Camp date the initial placement that your child will enter The Academy at BSC. Your child will not be placed on a specific team. We will assess where your child will be best suited within the tiered structure of the academy.

When will we know which team our child is placed on?

Teams will be selected weekly for all games from the rosters developed by the coaching staff at the end of the winter training program. Your child will be placed on at least one roster based on his technical skill and overall soccer ability.

How is the weekly schedule structured?

Theme based/curriculum based pool training will be the focus of the first training session of the week. In the second session, players will be grouped into one of three sections with players of similar ability. They will train with a technical director or coach that will be coaching them on the weekends. Games will be both on the weekend and mid-week. We will publish game schedules, including tournaments by mid-April.

Is there much movement of players in this system? If so how is this communicated to the players and the parents?

Having worked with the younger ages for such a long time a majority of the time players are placed in the correct age bracket in this system right after the Assessment Camp. This system does allow us to make adjustments throughout the season if players are either excelling at one level or on the other hand if they are struggling. If players are to be moved between tiers this will be communicated to the parents and the players ahead of time by the coaching staff.

Who will The Academy teams play?

Academy teams will compete with age and technical skill appropriate teams from other clubs. Our goal is to create a game schedule that will enable our players first; and our teams as a whole to enjoy challenging competitive games on a weekly basis which will promote player development and create coaching and learning opportunities.

How far will we have to travel?

Travel will depend on the coaches’ evaluation of the team’s ability and interests. Games will be scheduled against suitable opposition. However, typical travel distances increase for higher skilled players. CDYSL league games average about 1 hour travel. Thruway league games for higher skilled players are often held in Syracuse or Rochester.

When we will know the schedule of games?

Our goal is to have the full schedule of games for you by the end of April.

What are the dates of the “Assessment camp” mentioned in this packet?

Assessment camp will be towards the end of June / early July (details on camp specifics and registration we be available on our website at www.bethlehemsoccerny.com. This will be a great camp that we highly encourage your child to attend. Players will be receiving high quality training as well being assessed during our matches as we begin to place players in their respective tiers.

Will teams still enter tournaments throughout the season?



Yes. We will enter our own tournament in mid May plus at least one other tournament. Tournament choice and player selection will be at the discretion of the coaching staff.

How much does this program cost?

The cost per player will be not more than \$850. This will be due in payments beginning with \$250 at registration. There will be 2 payments of approximately \$300 due at November 1st and January 1st. The final payment will be reduced if program costs are less than \$850. The club will subsidize costs above \$850 for 2010-11.

What does the \$850 fee include and not include?

The program fee includes all indoor practice time, outdoor league play, coach's salaries and a player uniform (every other year). It does not include any additional indoor game sessions or additional optional indoor/outdoor tournaments beyond those selected for play by the coaching staff. The \$850 fee is intended to be an all-inclusive fee. However, travel and living expenses for out-of-town tournaments are not included.

What is the age breakdown for each group?

We plan to group 13-14 year olds, 15-16 year olds and 17-18 year olds. The age cutoff is currently 8/1 but is subject to change. Higher skilled players will have the opportunity to play in a higher age division.

What will the entire schedule look like?

A calendar of events is in the planning stages. However, assume that age groups will begin practicing in November. They will continue through the winter and head outdoors as soon as the fields are playable. The outdoor season begins in late April and the program ends around the end of June. There will be some later championship games or tournaments played in late June or early July.