

Player Placement and Play Up Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the objectives of player placement on United Soccer of Auburn (USA) teams and defines the process and criteria used to determine player placement, including considerations for having a player "play up" into a higher age group.

Organization Objectives

- Place each player on a team best suited for their individual technical, tactical, emotional and social development
- For in-town leagues (U8 and under) field teams that are as balanced as possible
- For travel leagues (U10 and above) field the most competitive teams possible and place them in appropriate divisions within the age group.

Process

The USA Board of Directors (BOD) has final authority over all player placement, rostering and play up decisions. Age group/league coordinators, reporting to the Director of Programs, are responsible for creating the initial team rosters and player placement recommendations in their assigned area. These proposed rosters will be developed using all player evaluation data available and reviewed at a BOD meeting for Board approval. All play up requests, whether recommended or opposed by the age group/league coordinators will also be discussed by the BOD as part of this process.

Player Evaluation

Consideration will be given to the following information, as available, during the placement process:

- USA's annual player evaluation event results
- Coach evaluation data collected at the end of each season
- Player physical attributes (size, age, relative to peers) and emotional intelligence
- Discussion with other Board members, coaches, player's parents, family or friends who have worked with the player in the past
- Individual player evaluation, if requested by the BOD
- Other sources requested or initiated by the BOD

Playing Up

A player is "playing up" when he or she is participating on a team in an age group above the one in which he or she would normally be placed according to league rules. This also includes girls playing on a boys team in their correct age group for non-coed leagues.

Play Up Requests and Decisions

Play up requests may be initiated by age group/league coordinators or by a player's parents/legal guardian and presented to the BOD in written form. All play up decisions are made by the BOD following the criteria outlined in this policy.

Play Up Criteria

- The default position is for all players to play in their regular assigned age groups which supports the organization's objectives defined above
- A decision for a player to play up must be agreed upon by the player's parent/legal guardian
- A player may be asked to play up, or a play up request granted, in situations where there are not enough players (or coaches) at the older age group to field a complete roster. Considerations will be given to dual-rostering the player, if feasible.
- A play up request may be granted if, in the opinion of the BOD, there is no placement within the player's normal age group appropriate for that player's continuing development
- A play up request may be granted if, in the opinion of the BOD, having the player stay in their normal age group would be disruptive to the competitive balance of the age group (in-house leagues)
- A play up request may only be granted if, in the opinion of the BOD, the player's evaluation data, defined above, indicates that the player has the skill, physical attributes and emotional intelligence to constructively contribute to team practices and compete with players in the older age group.