

# ROLE OF AGE GROUP COORDINATOR

## RYE YOUTH SOCCER

Your primary role as Age Group Coordinator (AGC) is to assist with the organization of your age group and the communication of policies and procedures associated with the travel soccer program of Rye Youth Soccer (RYS), and to ensure that all the logistical activities required for players and coaches to participate in the travel program are coordinated and completed. You are also a key liaison for coordinating the resolution of any issues or finding the answer to any questions that may arise from coaches or parents.

One key philosophy of RYS is that as a town program, Rye players (residents and students attending Rye area schools) get first priority for available spots in the travel program. Non-Rye players can be included on teams if there are no other Rye players available. A second one is that we seek to fill all the roster spots available on teams if there are players interested in joining.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Any questions that may come from the coaches regarding procedure or protocol should be directed to you initially. IF you are not sure how to answer, then it is recommended that you consult with the Travel Program Director for Boys or Girls, or the Travel Program Registrar, or another Age Group Coordinator (AGC), before responding. RYS is very sensitive to ensuring that all parties have a good experience with the program – players, parents, coaches, etc. – while ensuring decisions are made under the overall guidelines of the program policies. Examples of areas worthy of discussion with others include behavior concerns of coaches or players, attendance issues, procedures for promotion of players, etc.

### **EMAIL LISTS**

Create Email lists of all the Coaches, as well as Taxi Squad players (if any). Introduce yourself to all the coaches and offer your assistance with communication between the Registrar, Travel Program Director, and Director of Travel Soccer Operations. It is much easier if all information is funneled through you, directly to the above persons.

Recommend to all head coaches to create e-mail distribution lists for their teams. Coach or manager communication with RYS should generally start with you, the AGC, who can then coordinate or direct communications with the Registrar, Director of Travel Soccer Operations, the RYS Travel Committee, or the RYS Board.

Encourage the coaches to assign a Manager (unless head coaches wants to handle everything themselves) that will communicate directly with his or her own team. You will send practice info, schedule changes, etc., but each team is responsible for their own communication. Encourage the coaches and Managers to familiarize themselves with the WYSL website (which has schedules, coaches' course, forms, etc.) so that they can access their individual team's information. [www.wyslsoccer.org](http://www.wyslsoccer.org)

### **RYS TRAVEL COMMITMENT LETTER**

This letter should be distributed to each head coach and they should make sure every parent and player is given this player agreement letter before the season begins. This letter outlines the level of commitment expected from each family and player.

### **UNIFORM ORDERING**

Contact Willie Totten at Bruce Park Sports—203-869-1382, [wtotten14@hotmail.com](mailto:wtotten14@hotmail.com), they are the sole distributor for RYS uniforms. Work with Willie to determine costs and timing for uniforms to be ready in time for start of season. Willie would prefer to have orders coming in bulk, so it is recommended that the AGC coordinate the ordering of uniforms. For new U9 teams, AGC should work with the coaches to compile a single age group order detailing sizes and what numbers to use for the uniforms (e.g. sequence from 1-42 for 3 teams of 14), and collect checks from the families made out to "Bruce Park Sports". One suggested approach:

- Have each head coach collect checks from his families made out directly to "Bruce Park Sports", with the child's size written on the bottom of the check.
- Create a sheet of pre-assigned uniform #'s for each player (so it can coincide with size). Alphabetically works best using the entire group – you never want duplicate numbers in case kids switch teams, etc.
- Submit the full order to Willie. Pay Willie after receipt of the uniforms.

For older age groups, if replacements orders for existing players or new uniforms for new players be required, AGC should be sure to order any required new uniforms prior to the start of the season. **Make sure not to duplicate any existing player numbers in your age group!**

In addition to uniforms, Bruce Park Sports also offers optional items such as soccer duffels and backpacks, and warm-up clothes with the Rye Youth Soccer logo for purchase. Willie can lend samples which you can show the coaches and parents at practice.

### **COORDINATING MANDATORY MATERIALS**

Communicate with the Registrar about exactly what the coaches need to do to be approved ASAP. For new coaches, there is a mandatory two hour course in the fall for all new coaches that requires advance registration, photos need to be turned in, and Risk Management completed online, etc. There is also an 8-hour course that all new coaches will be required to attend in order to be fully carded after the initial fall season and before the start of the following spring season. If the coaches do not complete this 8-hour course before the start of the spring season, they will not be permitted to coach – NO EXCEPTIONS! You and the Registrar will need to work together to make sure these are completed before WYSL carding deadline – for U9 teams, it creeps up in July!

The following table is a reminder of all the mandatory material requirements for players:

<b>Player</b>	<b>Medical release form</b>	<b>Photo</b>	<b>Copy of birth certificate</b>	<b>Signed transfer/ release form</b>
New players	Y	Y	Y	If applicable
Existing players – for fall season	Y	N	N	N
Existing players – after U12 tryouts	Y	Y	N	N
Player transfer for spring season	Y	Y (plus old card returned)	N	Y (+\$50 for xfers from non-RYS clubs)

Communicate with the Registrar about what is still missing in order to register all the new players, and then work with the coaches to make sure that the parents resolve those issues by the deadlines set by the Registrar. At the end of each spring season, all coaches and player cards must be returned to the Registrar.

## **TAXI SQUAD**

Taxi Squad players are those that did not make travel, but have been allowed to practice with the teams. For insurance reasons, they must be registered for intramurals in order to be able to practice with the teams. As Taxi Squad players, it is assumed that they will still participate in intramurals while attending travel practices. The philosophy is to have them get the benefit of the training offered to the travel teams, so they can more easily assimilate once they make the team. One caveat: with U9 age groups we must ensure that the number of players at practices is manageable in order to offer taxi squad as an option. With the advent of 4 teams in this age group for both boys and girls and large numbers of potential players not assigned to a team, it has become increasingly unwieldy to offer the taxi squad option. For U9 age in particular, World Cup and intramurals are the suggested programs as intramural players will play alongside travel players on Saturdays in the World Cup program until such time as they try out again and can be accommodated on a travel roster.

Communicate with Taxi Squad how the system works, when they tryout again, etc. Make sure they are always informed of any practice time changes, field changes, etc. When you email the coaches with an announcement, think, “do I also need to notify taxi players”??

With larger groups it is helpful to assign a taxi player to a specific team to practice with – make sure the parents understand this has no bearing on what team he or she might end up on, that it’s purely for organizational reasons. It also provides the taxi players with more of a sense of “belonging”. Finally, keep in mind that it is RYS policy that a Taxi player can’t go directly to an A team – they must play on a B team for at least one season.

## **PRACTICE TIMES/TRAINER ASSIGNMENTS**

You work directly with the Director of Travel Soccer Operations on this topic. Once he/she finalizes everything with you, then you will send the information to the coaches, who in turn will communicate to their respective teams. Please let your coaches know that it is usually the norm to not have this information until right before the season starts. Explain that it involves field allocations with the town, trainers’ schedules, etc. They need to be patient.

## **IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR COACHES/MANAGERS**

Medical Release Forms: Remind Head Coaches that these forms must be present at all practices, games and tournaments in case of player injury (in absence of parent).

Field Procedures: Suggest the coaches carry a copy of this in their coaching bag (available on the RYS website). They need to see if they are “first game” or “last

game” and how to set up, close up the field, etc. Please encourage the players to clean up after themselves at all games, both home and away.

Before Game Day: Contact opposing coach during the week and confirm time and location. Also confirm jersey color and directions. Do not simply leave a message, but make sure to speak to someone in advance.

If a child drops off a team, the coach should notify you ASAP and then you communicate that information to the Registrar and the Travel Program Director. In some cases a taxi player will then move up (depending on timing).

### **GOALIE CLINICS**

Once these are confirmed, ask your coaches to gather interested names and send them to you. Create a fair schedule to incorporate the kids who want to attend, and give to the Director of Travel Soccer Operations directly.

### **TRAINER PAYMENTS**

RYS pays for trainers for Saturday and mid week practices. Any additional time is at the team/age group’s expense. If you choose that option, you will receive a monthly invoice from the Director of Travel Soccer Operations and you are responsible for paying the trainers on a timely basis. Each age group has their own system with this; some calculate the projected cost ahead of time and collect accordingly, while others receive a monthly check from the head coaches who then handle their own reimbursement directly with their team. It is recommended that you determine with your coaches what system to use for your age group.

### **TRYOUTS**

Each season a tryout date is scheduled for each age group. This is a chance for taxi players and newcomers to town to go through a formal tryout. Rankings are then used for future spots.

You are responsible for organizing these ahead of time, making sure you have numbers, pins, clipboards, and most importantly, enough trainers/coaches to run the tryouts. Usually they are run during the beginning of your travel practice that day, and a few parent coaches and at least one pro trainer will run these for you. It is important that somebody there has done it before and knows how to set up the stations, sign in players, etc., so work closely with the Director of Travel Soccer Operations on this to make sure it runs smoothly. When the tryout players show up, make sure that you or one of the coaches is responsible for getting the names, phone numbers, e-mails, and birthdates. If you will not be attending the tryout, notify one of the parent coaches of all the players that have notified you of their planned attendance.

This tryout date is also an opportunity to reshuffle your teams (see policy on this under travel teams link). RYS policies must be strictly adhered to if you choose this option. It is strictly voluntary and all must agree..

At the end of the U11 spring season, tryouts are mandatory to narrow down the teams in an age group. As the teams move up U12 and beyond they will be playing an 11v11 format, and the roster sizes of each team goes up to 18. This will require the age group to go from three teams to two teams.

To ensure fairness, it is recommended that you use trainers to conduct the tryout. This can be coordinated with the Director of Travel Soccer Operations to ensure that the tryout is impartial. The ranking of the players will ultimately be a combination of the tryout results and the coaches' rankings of the players based on experience and observation during the practices and games over the last 6 seasons (U9, U10, and U11).

## Rye Youth Soccer

### **Travel Soccer Tryout Guidelines**

Tryout Dates:

In general, fall season tryouts will be held on the late in October, and spring season tryouts will be held near Memorial Day weekend.

Eligibility: Players who live in or attend public or private schools in Rye City or Rye Brook (although Rye Brook does have their own travel program) are eligible to join RYS travel teams. Fall tryouts are only for potential openings in the following spring on existing teams. Spring tryouts are for potential openings on existing teams and the formation of new U9 teams in the following fall.

Location and Time: Tryouts for each age group will be held at the same time and field as its regular Saturday practice session. The field and time for the spring tryouts for new U9 teams in the following fall will be announced no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled tryouts.

Registration: For tryouts for potential openings on existing teams, there is no pre-registration online or advanced submission of any registration material. It is the responsibility of each age group's coordinator to maintain detailed contact information for each tryout candidate (see Player Info sheet within the attached RYS Tryout Worksheet).

For spring tryouts for the new U9 teams, players pre-register online, and are required to bring all necessary registration material to the tryouts (i.e., photo, signature label, a copy of birth certificate, medical release and a check for the registration fee).

Evaluators: Each age group's coordinator is primarily responsible for running the tryouts, with the assistance of the volunteer coaches and professional trainer(s) for that age group. There should be at least three evaluators available at each tryout.

Tryout Format and Evaluation: The Evaluation Sheet in the attached RYS Tryout Sheet suggests a simple format of evaluating the players based on their performance on the following basic soccer skills – dribbling, passing, receiving, shooting, communication (via small-group play), and speed. The coaches and professional trainers are responsible for designing and organizing the specific activities that will be appropriate for their age group.

For the timed run to assess the candidates' speed, it is recommended that each candidate be given two opportunities to complete the run, and the elapsed time for each run be recorded.

For the other activities, it is recommended that the evaluation be based on a simple three-point system: 1-Excellent; 2-Good; 3-Adequate. Given the inherently subjective nature of the task, it is important that each candidate receives evaluation from at least three evaluators, and that each evaluator be consistent in his or her grading. In the end, we are much less interested in the actual final average grade for each candidate than in the relative rankings of the candidates.

At the end of the tryout session, each evaluator should submit his or her evaluation sheets to the age group coordinator. At no time during or after the tryouts should the evaluators and age group coordinators discuss or in any way share the results on the evaluation sheets with any candidate or the parents.

The age group coordinators will send the evaluation sheets to the Director of Travel Soccer Operations, who will tabulate the results and report them to the age group coordinators and the RYS VP of Travel Soccer, within one week of receipt of the evaluation sheets. The original evaluation sheets will then be sent to the RYS registrar for record keeping.

Notification:

All tryout candidates should be notified once the final results are determined. Candidates should be notified whether they have made a team or not. The detailed scores on the evaluation sheets are **not published and not shared** with the candidates or their families.

Head coaches and age group coordinators must clearly explain to the tryout candidates' families that acceptance onto an existing team will depend on available openings as well as the candidates' performance at the tryouts.

For fall tryout candidates hoping to join an existing team in the following spring season, we may not know whether there will be openings on existing teams until February or March, or even early April. Notifications will be made probably no sooner than early





