



Dev/Rec Definitions and Intention

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DEV/REC DEFINITIONS AND INTENTION

U10/U11 CLARIFICATION AND DIRECTION

As the landscape in Calgary's Soccer community continues to change, CMSA is prepared to be a leader in providing equal and equitable opportunities for all players to pursue the game of soccer to whatever their desired level. Given that language precedes culture, CMSA wants to ensure a clear direction is put in place regarding the labels of "Development" and "Recreation". These definitions will align with Canada Soccer's philosophy and principles around the Skill Centres and Designated Player Programs to ensure all players have access to quality programming.

Our traditional model of tiering young players early in their athletic endeavors is flawed in the following ways:

- It does not accurately predict potential or future performance;
- It can often turn away players who might have high potential but who are simply inexperienced at that moment relative to their peer group;
- Early selection prior to physical maturation implies early exclusion of the majority and can discourage players who might otherwise have become as good or better a little later if given the chance to develop;
- The characteristics that define "talented" athletes in early age are not the characteristics that define elite athletes later in their career.

This traditional model only serves to identify players who are advanced in relation to their peers; at that specific moment in time, rather than identify players who have potential to develop into a proficient player, if given the opportunity. A selection-based approach [or tiered approach] alienates a significant percentage of our player base and pushes kids away from the game (Canada Soccer Skill Centre Program Manual p. 3).

The labels of "Development" and "Recreation" are not to be used to differentiate between a player's current ability or future potential. These labels are used to provide clarity to players and families when registering for soccer. Players interested in a "developmental" stream would typically be those more interested in soccer, more likely to be a full-time soccer player (those that register in recurring Outdoor and Indoor Seasons continually) or looking for increased amounts of play and training participation within their club environment. Players interested in a "recreational" stream would typically be those that have many other interests or commitments outside of soccer, more likely to be a part-time soccer player (those that register sporadically) or looking for decreased amounts of play and training participation within their club environment to allow for flexibility within their life schedule.



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CMSA is advocating to all clubs that they look to balance their Development and Recreation rosters in playing ability and utilize social relationships (friendships) as a key determinate for forming teams. This will allow for all players to have different challenges and developmental experiences to aid in the retention and enjoyment of the majority of players.

Key difference that clubs should be aware of in the developmental and recreation streams for the Outdoor 2022 season is the season length and therefore commitment level from the family and player involved in either stream.

CMSA would like to remind clubs of some strategies that they can choose to implement:

- “4 Up 1 Up”
 - If a team is losing by 4 goals or more, they add another player to the field. Once the goal differential becomes 3 or less, the losing team removes a player and returns to even numbers.
- “Swap GKs”
 - Should the run of play be very uneven and one GK is not be involved very often, coaches have the option to switch the GKs for the two teams to allow the other GK to receive development as well. This could be in possession (distribution, etc.) or out of possession (shot stopping, organizing, etc.) developmental outcomes.
- “Mix ‘Em Up”
 - Teams are given the opportunity to combine both teams and mix the players up to support their development. Pinnies can be used to differentiate the two teams.

Please ensure all your club coaches and age group leads working with U10 and U11 players are aware of these initiatives and can implement on Match Day. This is an opportunity to separate our adult ego, and biases and put players first. This will require courage and an innovative mind to be willing to accept these initiatives but will provide an opportunity for players to have different challenges and to all enjoy the game.

We expect this message is communicated to all CMSA member families via clubs and CMSA will be sending this definition out to all U11 and younger families. Should you have any questions, please contact Jordan Stewart at jstewart@calgaryminorsoccer.com.