

Elite Team Head Coach / Age Group Coordinator Program Overview (updated Fall 2008)

Coaches:

We wanted to update our expectations and requirements for being an Elite team head coach in any age group. Clearly there will be more than one highly competitive team in each age group and our high standards apply to all teams. However, it is the charter and goal of this organization to field at least one Elite level team in every age group and compete in top tournaments, state cup, etc. To accomplish this, we need to pool our talent as much as possible. Coaches for our “Elite” teams must meet and maintain the criteria below – from a coaching as well as a competitive perspective if he/she expects to maintain their position as the Elite team Head Coach and Age Group Coordinator.

1. The Elite team must play in NCSL, WAGS or VCCL (which are currently our most competitive leagues). Note: Only exceptions are teams on the waiting list to get in.
2. The Elite team must play in all State Cup competitions (no exceptions). This begins at U12 – and is a requirement (all FASA Elite teams must compete in State Cup every year). The State Cup Fee will be paid by FASA for all Elite Teams.
3. The Elite team must apply to premiere / gold level tournaments - and must ask to be put in the top bracket possible. The goal is to build a resume so that our Elite teams can be accepted into better events in the future (I realize that you may not be accepted into some of these events initially - but apply... and then have a back up tournament if you are not accepted. If a tournament rejects a team they fully refund the registration fee). FASA’s Technical Director will provide a list of preferred tournaments for all level teams.
4. FASA will conduct open tryouts for every age group each season. Tryouts will be conducted by the head coaches within the age group along with evaluators assigned by the Technical Director and DOC. The Elite team Head Coach will make the final roster decisions in consultation with the evaluators, TD & DOC for the top team – and the head coaches of the Premiere & other teams will select in order from the remaining players. This will be done working together with the best interest of the players, teams and club in mind.
Each player must earn a roster spot based on their ability (not just because they have been on the team in the past). There are no guaranteed spots for any player at the Elite level (this applies to head coaches that may have a child on the team – they must earn their spot)
5. The Elite team must have a minimum of 2 training sessions per week (preferably 3 for U13 and up) and offer specific Goalkeeping training for their GK’s (preferably FASA’s GK training program). They should also offer additional training opportunities in between seasons – and encourage their players to attend skills camps (individual and/or team).
6. As the teams get in the U15 & above age groups - the Elite team must help players interested in college soccer with résumé’s, contacts, etc. and apply for as many showcase events as possible. FASA will help and offer assistance in this process (contact our College Prep Coordinator for details)
7. Attend FASA coaches meetings and training sessions that are set up and continue their education & training process.
8. Head Coach must be Nationally Licensed - or be in the process of obtaining their USSF “D” National as a minimum. Exceptions may be considered based on long-term successful Club Coaching and/or College level Coaching/playing experience.
9. The Elite Team Coach is also considered the Age Group Coordinator and must maintain a presence with all other teams in the age group. This includes attending and/or running training sessions for other teams; coordinating and managing tryouts for the entire age group; scouting players from the other teams in conjunction with the head coach of the Premiere or other teams; working with the Technical Director on decisions regarding player movement; be involved in the selection process for the other teams with the Technical Director and Director of Coaching.

The goal of each age group that has multiple teams is to **work together**. All coaches should meet on a regular basis along with the Technical Director and Director of coaching to review:

- Players that should be considered for the Elite team
- Players that are struggling on the Elite team and may need time to develop with less pressure and stress.
- Consistent messages to all parents in every age group (all parents from all teams should be getting the same message and be aware that the training expectations for all FASA teams are extremely high!) All FASA travel teams are competitive and have quality coaching.
- That the Elite team members (players and parents) have the correct “attitude” about the program and shows proper respect to all teams and players in the entire organization (we are one family here). This starts with the head coach setting the example – and he/she takes responsibility for this message to go to all players & parents on the team.
- Elite teams must earn that title – being listed as the Elite team is meaningless – it is training program and player development where they will earn their title.
- Coaches must meet prior to tryouts and organize the entire process. There can be no confusion with players or parents. All must be on the same page.
- If there are disputes or problems – the Technical Director and DOC will meet with all head coaches and we will resolve all issues as a “team” – working together!
- Communication – communication – communication..... it is up to each coach to reach out and talk through any/all issues – and work together!!

Other Clarifications

- The Elite team will have first choice on all new and/or undeclared players (at tryouts – or that move to the area).
- Coaches will not directly recruit players from any team. If the Elite team coach is interested in a player on another team – they will go directly to the head coach to discuss – not contact the player or parent directly. We want the players to have the opportunity to grow and be pushed to the highest level – but this must be done in a professional manner and always starts between the coaches. Players on Premiere teams should be encouraged to make the Elite team by their coach. Quality coaching is what prepares them to compete at the highest level.
- No players will ever be “forced” to move to an Elite team. For example, if a player is happy on the team they are on – which is not designated as the Elite team – and they request to stay with their current team (for social, family, financial, etc. issues) – that is fine.
- We would love to see all FASA teams play in State Cup! This is certainly not limited to teams designated as Elite teams. We encourage all teams to consider playing State Cup.
- FASA expects head coaches to “coach” and “train” their teams! We have and will continue to help provide training assistance and programs through our TD to help “train the trainer”. We fully support coaches bring trainers in from time to time for a change of pace (and the TD or DOC will be happy to run sessions upon request) – however – feel the head coach should be the primary trainer – especially for our Elite teams. If an Elite team plans on using a trainer as the primary “coach” – this needs to be approved by the TD.

Please don't hesitate to call if you have questions or concerns.

Regards,

Carl Gray – Technical Director

Pete Cinalli – Director of Coaching