



Mebane Youth Soccer Association

**Travel Soccer Program
Frequently Asked Questions**

What Is Travel or Select Soccer?

The MYSA offers three levels of travel soccer: Select, Challenge, and Classic. Select soccer is a program targeted at U8 through U10 age players who may want to play Challenge or Classic in the future. Development teams play against U9 & U10 age development/academy teams from other area leagues and may attend a festival or tournament. The intent of this program is to provide a mix of team and pooled skills training to the kids without the pressures of playing in a league with standings/results, etc. It provides young players with an opportunity to play at a more competitive level than recreational soccer and it allows the kids to play competition that will push them to their full potential. Challenge soccer is the next level of soccer above recreational league soccer, starting at U11. Challenge teams play 8-10 matches per season against teams in the Triad area, traveling to half of them with matches overseen by the Triad Challenge League. Classic teams start at U11 and compete against the best soccer teams in the state, with teams playing 8-12 matches in a season, half of them involving travel. All aspects of Classic are overseen by the NCYSA. Classic teams used to travel farther to away matches than Challenge teams, but the establishment of new 'Piedmont' divisions in Classic have reduced the travel load some, grouping teams based on geographic locations. So a Classic team may have less travel than a Challenge team, or they still may have to travel to the mountains or the coast. Challenge and Classic teams often participate in a handful of tournaments during the year and there are state championships held for U13 and above.

We strongly encourage you to bring your children to tryouts, even if you aren't sure they could make a team. Our evaluators and coaches are always looking for those players with 'potential' and often take players who aren't 'stars' but love to play soccer. It's our job to develop their skills. The entire tryout process will be a great experience for the kids, whether they are selected for a team or not, and we don't want to see kids miss the tryouts because they're unsure whether they're ready or not. If your child enjoys playing the game of soccer, bring them out. Sometimes a strong desire to learn and be coached can outweigh a lack of a broad skill set. At the very least they'll get a chance to play soccer for a couple afternoons. You can always decline a spot if one is offered.

What Does It Cost?

Travel soccer is more expensive than recreational soccer since there are more costs involved. Travel soccer fees pay for professional skills training once a week, home and away uniforms, soccer bags, state registration and insurance fees, referee fees, field and league overhead, coaching equipment and/or practice shirts, and a seasonal tournament subsidy. There may be additional costs during the season, depending on an individual team's desire to play in tournaments, participate in skills training/clinics, equipment needs, etc. Financial aid is available for registration fees, so if they represent a hardship, please visit our website or ask your team manager for a financial aid form to see if you qualify. Don't let that deter you from bringing your child out to the tryouts. Tryouts cost \$5 per player to cover the cost of the tryout T-Shirt they will receive. Note that due to the up front expenses the league incurs for each player, annual fees are NOT refundable should your child drop out.

MYSA 2010/2011 Travel Soccer Fees

- **Tryouts:** \$5 per player (pays for tryout T-Shirt that all participants receive and keep)
- **U8-U10 Select:** \$300/year
- **Challenge:** U11-U14: \$435/year U15-U18: \$300/season
- **Classic:** U11-U14: \$470/year U15-U18: \$325/season

Fees for year long teams are paid in three mostly equal installments, due on the following dates: At June registration, August 1st, and October 1st. Fees are **non-refundable**, so if your child quits mid season, you will not get your 3rd payment back. Fees for single season teams (U15-U18) or players added to full year teams mid season are paid in two equal installments: 1st due with registration paperwork and 2nd due March 1st. A complete payment schedule is included on the parent contract signed during registration. **Players that owe fees from a previous season risk not being placed on teams after tryouts. Players who do not pay on time risk having their player pass pulled and will not be able to participate in games. Payments can be made in cash, by check, or credit card**

There may be additional costs depending on the team and level of play. Teams may attend tournaments, which often cost about \$20-\$40 per player per event plus travel costs. Other items like warmups, end of season events, team building events, etc. may also be assessed at the discretion of the coach and team parents. There are no fee credits for team volunteers.

How Are Team's Formed?

Travel teams are formed via tryouts held in late May, and if necessary, late November or early December to fill roster slots mid season. The tryout procedures can be found at the end of this document. Players are evaluated over the course of two days in a variety of areas. Once the tryouts are completed, each player is assigned an evaluation score computed from the scores assigned by each evaluator. Players are then ranked and assigned to teams by the committee of evaluators. The scores are only guides and the committee may shuffle players around based on other factors and observations. If players decline their roster slot, the next player in line is offered it and so on, until all the teams are full.

Players must accept or decline their roster slot within **one week** of the tryout results being posted. Tryout results are posted by name and jersey number, so *please* make sure you write down your child's assigned tryout jersey number. Players are under NO obligation to accept an offered slot and **do not risk their Recreation League eligibility by trying out** and turning down an offered slot.

Teams remain together for the entire soccer year (July 1st – June 30th). Winter tryouts are only held if a team loses a player and needs to fill an open roster slot.

Can Players Tryout for 'Older' Teams?

All players tryout within their age group and are evaluated against their peers. Players do not tryout for specific levels or age groups. Aging up is strongly discouraged – see the 'Age Up' section below.

Should My Child Tryout For Challenge or Classic?

Players do not tryout for a given team, coach, or age level. All players are evaluated against peers of the same age (U10, U11, etc) and are then placed on teams best suited for their abilities in the view of the evaluation committee. You will be told what level a team is expected to play at if your child is offered a roster slot and should take that into account when making your decision.

What Age Group Will My Child Be Trying Out For?

Figuring out your child's age group is simple. The cutoff date is August 1st. So take your child's age on July 31st, 2011, add one to it, and put a 'U' in front. So a child who was 11 on July 31st, 2011 would be under 12 or 'U12'. Thus players must have been born before August 1st, 2004 in order to tryout (**U8 is the minimum tryout age**). Team names will contain the age designation. For 2011-2012, the following chart will be helpful in understanding team age designations:

Players born between...	Level Designation	Age Designation
August 1 st 2002 & July 31 st 2004	U9	'02
August 1 st 2001 & July 31 st 2002	U10	'01
August 1 st 2000 & July 31 st 2001	U11	'00
August 1 st 1999 & July 31 st 2000	U12	'99
August 1 st 1998 & July 31 st 1999	U13	'98
August 1 st 1997 & July 31 st 1998	U14	'97
August 1 st 1996 & July 31 st 1997	U15	'96
August 1 st 1995 & July 31 st 1996	U16	'95
August 1 st 1994 & July 31 st 1995	U17	'94
August 1 st 1993 & July 31 st 1994	U18	'93

Travel teams are referred to by their birth year, *regardless of the level they play at*, so a '99 team playing in U12 would still be officially referred to as a '99 team ('99 MYSA Strikers) playing at the U12 level.

Can Parents Watch The Tryouts?

We prefer that parents not be in the complex during tryouts. The complex parking lot will be closed except for drop offs and registration. Once registration is finished, we ask that all parents leave the complex. You should park in the Arts & Community Center parking lot across the street from the complex. Please don't cheer or yell at your children during tryouts. We want their full attention and need them focused on the drills and games we'll be running during tryouts.

Other Nearby Leagues Tryout At The Same Time – Are Makeup Tryouts Held?

Yes. Most leagues hold their tryouts the week after the NCYSA State Cups are over to ensure most players are in top form and vacation conflicts are limited once school lets out, so it can be tricky for players to tryout for multiple leagues. We understand that there may be reasons to tryout in a nearby league instead of or in addition to the MYSA, and actually encourage players to do this so they have multiple options. If two leagues hold tryouts on the same days, try to attend at least one of the makeup sessions or contact the DOC to arrange an alternate date. We encourage players to attend 2 tryout session, but one is acceptable. However, this limits your child's exposure and may negatively impact their evaluation. Another thing to keep in mind is when the acceptance deadlines are for each league you tryout with. You want to avoid getting caught in a bind having to respond to one without knowing the decision of another. Note that many nearby leagues don't hold makeup tryouts – only supplemental tryouts to fill in spots at certain age groups.

The MYSA reserves the right to hold supplementary tryouts if needed to complete a team or if a player was unable to attend tryouts due to exceptional circumstances. *This is at the sole discretion of the MYSA and our DOC and Travel Director.*

We also work with nearby leagues that may also have 'fragments' at a given age level to see if a combined team can be formed to give the players a chance to play.

Can Players 'Age Up'?

The MYSA, since its inception, has had a strong opposition to players aging up. The league believes it is often better for players to train and develop with their peers: players of the same age and similar ability. The MYSA offers three different levels of travel play, Select up through Classic. Within each of those levels are often individual divisions that vary based on skill. This helps ensure players have ample opportunities to be challenged within their own age group. We also discourage aging up because of the domino effect it can have. If a strong player at U12 moves up to U13, then the U12 team will often need that spot filled, and so on downward, often weakening the teams at the bottom. This is especially true if the player pool is thin for a given birth year. There can also be significant size differences in the U11-U14 age levels, where younger players can struggle to succeed, regardless of skill, simply because most opponents are bigger.

That said, there are certain **rare** circumstances where players MAY age up to play on older teams. Those include, but are not limited to, U9 players on U10 teams where we try to balance teams and field multiple small U10 teams to maximize playing time, instances where there is no team for a player to play on at their age or skill level, if aging a qualified player up will allow the league to field an older team without adversely impacting the younger team, etc. However, even in these cases, **the decision is entirely up to the evaluation committee.** *No requests for aging up will be accepted or taken into account.* Players will be evaluated against their peers in tryouts. Decisions like this are only made once team rosters are worked out, the committee understands how any age up will impact the player in question, and the impact on the rest of the travel teams is understood.

Players cannot age up into the Select program. **Only true U8-U10 age players will be accepted, though U8 acceptances are exceptions since there are no 'U8 Teams'. It is unlikely that U10 players will earn spots on U11 travel teams as the MYSA feels their developmental needs will be better served playing in the Select Program.** If a player does age up in a given year, there is NO guarantee they will age up the next year. The decision is made every year after Spring tryouts, like all other team assignment decisions.

We remind parents that our top goal is to ensure the best development and competitive environment for your child. There is nothing 'glamorous' about your child 'playing up' if they're getting little playing time or are struggling to improve due to the increased pressure from older opponents.

Can Girls Play On Boys Teams?

Yes. However, we strongly prefer they play on our girls teams. The most common case where a girl will play on a boy's team is when they are good enough to make the boys team *and* there is no girl's team in their age bracket. As with aging up, girls playing on boy's teams will be at the discretion of the evaluation committee. It will be very rare for a girl to play on a boy's team if there is also a girl's team at the same age. The benefits to both the player in question and the girl's team far outweigh any perceived benefit of having a girl play on the boy's team.

Can Players 'Dual Roster'?

Yes – though this is also an exception and at the sole discretion of the evaluation committee and travel director. Certain players may be allowed to 'dual roster' on different teams. This rare scenario will see the player balance practice time between two different teams and play in matches for both teams. Note that NCYSA rules forbid players from playing for two different teams on the same day, so they will almost never play two 'full' schedules.

My Child Played Travel Soccer Last Year. Do They Still Need To Tryout?

Yes. Children must tryout for the travel teams every year. Previous travel experience is not taken into account when forming teams for the next year beyond whatever skills they learned on their previous teams and exhibit during tryouts. The fact that a player was on a travel team in a previous year does not ensure they'll make a team in the next. They must earn their spot each year, judged against all who show up to tryout.

The Team My Child Is Trying Out For Is 'Full'. Why Should They Tryout?

This is a common misconception among parents - that teams already are 'full' from a previous year, so there's no point in trying out. After a season ends in late May, the travel teams 'dissolve'. All players must tryout to retain their spots on a team. If your child performs at a level above some of the returning players, they likely will earn a spot on that team. There also is no limit on the number of travel teams the MYSA can field at a given age. If we find we have enough 'Travel Ready' or 'Travel Capable' players to form another team, we will work to identify a coach and form a new team – *which*

may necessitate moving some players from a previous year's team to the new team. So, we encourage you to tryout regardless of who is already playing at a given level – players tryout to make 'travel teams' – the teams themselves are formed by the evaluators after tryouts.

My Child Has An Injury And Cannot Tryout – What Can We Do?

We recognize that players may be injured and cannot tryout. In these rare cases, the MYSA travel coordinators, in consultation with the player's coach, will determine if this player would have earned a spot on a team, based on previous known performance. If they feel the player would have earned a spot, the player can be placed on a travel team *without trying out*. These medical exemptions are rare and are often used in cases where a player has broken a bone and is in a cast, is ill with a severe infection, etc.

My Child Isn't A Great Field Player But Does Well At Keeper. What Should I Do?

Have them tryout. At the younger ages, we tend not to specialize, so players making those teams are often solid all around players with some who have a knack for keeper. However, we encourage you to have them tryout, as some teams will want to have a dedicated keeper on their roster. We will be evaluating keeper abilities separately and that will be taken into account when teams are formed. Keeper evaluations may be held during tryouts or soon after.

How Much Travel Is Involved?

A common misconception is that travel soccer requires a lot of traveling. During each season (Fall and Spring), teams will have an equal number of home and away matches, usually four or five of each. So you travel to 'away' matches 4-5 times in a season. Challenge teams play within the Triad Challenge League, which consists of teams as close as Burlington and as far away as Statesville. You can expect to travel between 20 and 90 minutes to reach an away match. On average you'll travel 30-75 minutes per away match. Classic teams may travel about the same as a Challenge team if they play in a 'Piedmont' division, or they may travel to the coast or the mountains to play some teams in 'East' or 'West' divisions. Classic soccer may involve more travel distance wise than Challenge, but sometimes will actually involve less. Select teams travel mainly to Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Cary. Most travel teams attend a few tournaments as well, which are located across the state – though the most commonly attended are held in Raleigh, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro. Teams often caravan/carpool from a central meeting spot or parents will drive individually. If teams decide to attend tournaments, this can involve additional travel, but they are optional and coaches generally ensure they have most players committed to one before applying.

Who Will Be Coaching My Child's Team?

While we often try to have the upcoming year's coaching assignments published before tryouts, there is not a requirement to do so. Given how little time there is between the end of the previous season and the tryouts, we may not have all coaching assignments finalized before the tryouts. There is no guarantee that a coach will 'move up' with their team from one year to the next. The MYSA tries to match up coaches with teams where they will do the most good. We will try to publish any assignments we have in mid May and will update it as necessary – but it may just be a list of coaches planning to coach, without team assignments.

What Happens Once We Accept A Slot?

Once a player accepts their travel team slot, there will be paperwork to fill out. Much of the paperwork is the same as with a Recreational team. However, paperwork will be due by June 30th to ensure we have player passes in July, as some teams participate in pre-season tournaments. ***Players on MYSA travel teams are not allowed to play for MYSA recreational teams during the same season.*** We understand some players may be nervous about leaving their Recreational team. However, they will be part of a new team, with new friends, excitement, and coaching styles.

By accepting their slot, your child is making a commitment to a team **for a full year** (U15-U18 teams only play one season). Players are expected to participate in team training sessions, which are held 2-3 times a week. This is necessary to improve their skills and help them achieve a higher level of play. Players are expected to give 100% during both practices and games. Playing time will be based on ability, work ethic (during practice and games), and attitude (this includes attitude with coaches, teammates, opponents and referees). **Younger age teams (U9-U12) have a development focus where players should be playing at least 25%-50% of a match or more (See the MYSA Travel Soccer Guidelines).** However, playing time may be affected by a players lack of participation in practice.

My Child Made A Team, But Also Wants To Play Football. Is This A Problem?

Yes. Travel soccer requires a significant time commitment. While the MYSA strives to be as flexible as possible at the Recreational level so children can play in other sports as well, the level of commitment needed for travel soccer is higher. Players need to be at *all* practices during the week. Missing a travel match for another sport's event can have a significant impact on a team and a player's development. Since the players play at a higher level, they tire faster and substituting is more critical to a team's success than you might see in Recreational soccer. Also, travel coaches have found that when

players are doing two sports at once, they don't have as much stamina and energy during their matches, which also hurts the team.

We're talking mainly about sports that happen at the same time as the soccer season, like football. Many of our travel players also play county basketball, since the seasons don't overlap much. Some also play baseball, though that can be difficult since half of the seasons overlap. Just keep in mind that by accepting a travel soccer slot, *your child should be willing to treat their soccer team as their top athletic priority during the soccer season.* If they wish to play football and soccer, we strongly suggest they play Recreational Soccer.

My Child Didn't Make It. Now What?

First, make sure they understand this is not the end of the world. We often find that players near the cutoff are VERY similar in abilities. However, due to roster size restrictions, we have to draw the line somewhere. If they had their heart set on playing on a travel team, remind them that a) there is always next year, b) they could get a slot if someone decides not to take theirs, and c) that they should work hard to improve in the Rec league for the coming year to prepare. Travel team tryouts can be a stressful time for the kids and parents – we need to make sure things kept into perspective, both for us and for them. If you're curious what areas your child needed improvement in, contact our Travel Director and they can give you some pointers based on the tryout evaluations.

If your child was on a travel team, but finds they didn't get a slot this time around, encourage them to participate at a lower level to continue working on their game. Team sizes increase at U11 and U13 age levels, so a player who played travel soccer at U10 or U11, but doesn't make it at U12, has a better chance at U13 when the roster size increases. Even if they're at an age where the roster sizes don't increase, players should continue to improve their game as they can always try again the next year or even during a supplemental tryout held in the winter time.

We also would encourage you to explore any openings at other area leagues, as most leagues will hold supplemental tryouts after Memorial Day to fill any remaining slots and they might have a team more suitable to your child.

My Child Should Have Made Classic!

Players will be placed on teams based on their abilities as evaluated by the MYSA evaluation committee. However, there are other factors that can impact where a player ends up. If a few players are deemed ready to play at the Classic level, but not enough to form a team, those players will be placed on a Challenge team. This is not meant to be an indication of their ability, but sometimes just an indication of demographics at a given age.

Placement decisions are made at the **team level**. If a team is deemed by the committee to be ready for Classic, they'll be placed there. If the committee feels a team will fair better development wise in Challenge, then they will be placed there.

We have found many coaches and parents place an incredible amount of significance on the terms 'Challenge' and 'Classic'. This is unfair and can cause much stress for both the players and the teams. Our goal is to place teams at a level that best suits their development. The difference between Challenge and 2nd Division Classic is NOT as much as most people think.

Do Teams Change Divisions Between Fall and Spring?

This does happen on occasion. When you accept a slot on a travel team, you are agreeing to participate with that team, regardless of the level it plays at. Sometimes a team will end up doing very well in the Fall and the league will move them 'up' in the Spring to ensure the players are being challenged and face solid competition in most matches. Parents should be prepared for this – the logistical differences between Challenge and Classic are minimal at the U11-U13 age groups. Beyond that, slightly more travel may be involved. Older Classic teams (U14 and above) are promoted and relegated after every season, so you may find yourself moving from 2nd Division to 1st Division simply due to the team's Fall performance.

When Do Practices Start?

Most teams will begin practicing in mid-July to prepare for the start of the season in late August and possibly some pre-season tournaments. Practices become more frequent and formal in August when teams often practice three times a week before matches start and two times a week after. Practices are usually 60-90 minutes long. Due to limited field availability, travel teams cannot always get a 'perfect' practice night where they can practice for 90 minutes. Wednesday night practices are common and practices for U11 and older teams will often stretch until 8:30PM.

When Do Matches Start?

Match play for the Fall begins in late August and in late February for the Spring. **There ARE some Sunday games, so consider that when signing up if it is a problem.** Most matches will be on Saturdays, but makeup matches and some regular season matches may end up on Sunday afternoons and all tournaments play matches on Sunday morning.

I've Heard Play Is Much Rougher In Travel Leagues. Is That True?

Travel soccer matches are governed by the same 'rules of the game' as Rec, with a few minor exceptions. Travel soccer parents will tell you that while the level of play is a bit more intense, there is just as much 'jostling' for the ball in Rec as there is in Travel. However, with any sport where the competition and skill level is higher, there will often be more speed and physical contact. Yet many players and coaches find the higher skill at higher levels of play can actually reduce the physical nature of the game, with more refined play.

What Type of Equipment Is Needed?

Uniforms and soccer bags are provided to players by the league every two years at no cost. The level and intensity of play in Travel can more intense than in Rec. We recommend purchasing a set of quality cleats and shin guards. There is no reason to spend \$100 on a pair of cleats, but you may find the \$25 cleats with rubber studs fall apart quickly at this level, so you'll find that a good pair of Nike or Adidas 'firm ground' cleats in the \$35-\$65 range will do well for most players. However, regardless of cost, most travel players wear through cleats every year. Teams often fund raise to get warm-up suits, so you may wish to hold off on that until the teams are better organized and know what their budget will allow for.

Many matches and practices are played in cold weather, so we highly recommend getting them long sleeve Under Armour ('ColdGear'). It will get used frequently and is worth the expense. Note that many alternate brands are just cotton and do not wick away moisture and trap heat like UA does, so be careful when making your purchase. Any garments purchased to wear under travel jerseys should match (yellow or royal blue), but this is not required. Extra socks are always worth having if matches are held on wet fields or in the rain. We also strongly suggest players NOT wear their cleats before/after matches since they aren't great for walking around in – have them bring socks and sneakers/sandals to change into.

What Is Expected Of Parents?

1. Understand the level of commitment involved with travel soccer (this includes making the sure the kids are at practices/games, in a timely manner and equipped to play...shin guards, water bottle, and a soccer ball at EVERY practice/game)
2. Ensure timely payment of fees and completion of all paperwork. *There will be no refund of fees if a player drops from the team during any point in the season.*
3. Provide support to the players/coaches during games...please don't "coach" your kids during the game or yell any derogatory comments to them or teammates/opponents during any game. Sit back, and enjoy watching your kid do their best on the field. Loud cheering is always encouraged!
4. Foster a good attitude for your kids, so when they come to the field, they are ready to play. This includes making sure the kids get a proper night's rest the night before games and eat well before matches.

What Is Expected Of Players?

1. Participate in team training sessions.
2. An excellent sense of sportsmanship and teamwork.
3. Give 100% effort at all practices and games.
4. Respect their coaches and teammates.

Playing time will be based on age level, ability, work ethic (during practice and games), and attitude (this includes attitude with coaches, teammates, opponents and referees).

What Is Expected Of Coaches?

1. Develop the soccer skills and team play of players on the team
2. Communicate often with parents as the season progresses, keeping them informed of things such as player attitude and development, scheduling changes, and any potential problems with their child's behavior or performance.
3. Foster a healthy environment, physically and mentally, for the kids, to put them in the best possible atmosphere for learning and developing their skills
4. Be an excellent role model for the kids

Practices will start mid-July (conditioning practices) and then team practices will begin in August. Games typically start at the end of August. **There ARE some Sunday games, so consider that when signing up if it is a problem.**

If you have any questions regarding the travel program or tryouts, please contact our Director of Travel:

Shannon St. Pierre - MYSAs Director of Travel - Phone: 336-516-1234 Email: travel@mebanesoccer.us

MYSA Travel Soccer Tryout Procedures

There is nothing secretive about the travel team tryout process. Our goal is to identify the players in a given age group that are ready or at younger ages have the potential to be top level soccer players. Below is a complete overview of how we organize and administer our tryouts. We want our parents to be well informed about the process to ensure there isn't rampant speculation about why certain players made a team and others didn't, etc.

Tryouts for the 2011/2012 Season will be held on the following dates at the Mebane Soccer Complex and Eurosport Soccer Center. Each player is expected to be at BOTH nights of the tryouts for their age group.

- **Rising U8-U10 Boys & Girls: May 23rd & 24th 6:00PM – 7:00PM – Mebane Soccer Complex**
- **Rising U11-U12 Boys & Girls: May 23rd & 24th 7:00PM – 8:00PM – Mebane Soccer Complex**
- **Rising U13-U15 Boys & Girls: May 25th & 26th 6:00PM – 7:00PM – Eurosport Soccer Center**
- **Rising U16-U18 Boys & Girls: May 25th & 26th 7:00PM – 8:00PM – Eurosport Soccer Center**
- **Supplemental Tryouts: May 31st & June 1st U8-U12 6-7PM and U13-U18 7-8PM – Walker Baseball Field**

Players should arrive 30 minutes early to register and receive their tryout T-Shirt. Tryouts cost \$5. Tryouts will begin promptly. Players will tryout with their age group. If a player wishes to "age-up" and play at an older age, the evaluators will determine if the player is strong enough to do so after tryouts when the scores are evaluated.

***** Girls and Boys will tryout separately *****

Players MUST bring the following to tryouts in order to participate:

- Water Bottle
- Properly Inflated Soccer Ball (Rising U10-U13: Size 4 Rising U14-U18: Size 5)
- Shin guards
- Cleats are *strongly* recommended

We strongly suggest rising U13 players tryout with a Size 4 soccer ball, even though they will use a Size 5. Players will be evaluated by the MYSA coaching staff, MYSA Director of Coaching, and select independent evaluators. The panel will grade the player's performances and then meet to compile the results and form the teams. Due to the panel sizes, individual coaches cannot 'pick' players – **teams are formed by consensus among all the evaluators.** Players receive an overall tryout score which is computed from the individual scorings of the MYSA evaluators, which is used as a guide for creating teams, not as a final determination.

A common complaint heard after the tryout is a given child didn't make a team because the coach 'picked' his/her favorites. Rest assured that the MYSA travel coaches want to put together the strongest teams possible to compete. This requires that they pick the best players, not their friend's kids. Since players will be evaluated by a panel of evaluators, **a single coach's input represents a small portion of their overall score.** However, it is very common for the children of long time coaches to make travel teams since they are often strong players. But those players earn their spots just like any other player. Any player making a team is there because a group of experienced MYSA evaluators felt they were qualified to be there.

Another common misconception is that the biggest and fastest players will be the ones chosen. This is not true at all. The players are evaluated on a number of factors, including:

1. Technical Ability (foot skills, dribbling, passing, shooting, etc.)
2. Tactical Ability (game awareness, use of open space, passing lanes, etc.)
3. Athleticism (speed, agility, fitness, etc.)
4. Psychological (intensity, 'coachability', desire to improve, etc.)
5. Potential (Can a player be developed to the 'travel level')

Often you may see a player make a team that doesn't have existing skills as strong as some other peers, but they were still chosen for things like tactical ability and their mind set – skills can be developed. Many parents will keep their kids from coming out for travel soccer because they think they aren't 'fast enough' when their child may have excellent tactical and mental abilities and just need some polishing of their foot skills. So **don't try to judge if your child is 'good enough' or not** – they may miss out on a chance to play. Let them come tryout. This is especially true of girls, who are often unfairly compared to the boys on their Rec teams when parents are deciding if they should tryout.

The evaluators will be looking at approximately 8-10 different skill sets and abilities, including, but not limited to:

- Speed & Agility
- Ball Handling
- Passing Ability
- Shooting Ability
- Soccer 'Moves'
- Intangible Play
- Defensive Skill/1v1
- Overall Game Play
- (optional) Goalkeeping

The tryouts are designed to provide players many different situations to exhibit their soccer skills and ability. The first day of tryouts will see players participating in a few 'skill drills' stations meant to exhibit a wide range of soccer skills. Players will be broken up into groups and will rotate among the various drill stations. The second day and a part of the first day will then be spent in game type situations. We will focus on 3v3 small side scrimmages to give all players a chance to 'show off' in a game situation. To a lesser extent, we'll put players into normal size match scrimmages as well to see how they perform on a 'full field' for their age.

There will be a separate goalkeeper tryout session for those players that wish to play goalkeeper in addition to other field positions. This may be held on a different day.

We respectfully ask that you drop your kids off at tryouts and then stay away from the fields until the tryouts have ended. It makes the kids and evaluators jobs more difficult with parents nearby. The kids are nervous because their parents are watching and we really want to see the kids play in a more relaxed manner. The ONLY adults that will be allowed in the complex with the kids are the evaluators and any coaches helping facilitate the drills for us. Parents should remain in the Arts & Community Center Parking Lot after registering. The soccer complex parking lot will be closed off except for dropping players off and registration. Otherwise park across the street and come to the concession stand to register. Parents needing curbside access to registration will be allowed to drive up to the concession stand, but still must leave the parking lot after registering. Please do not sit on the Field 1 or Field 4 hills or stand near the Field 3 fences. Parents will be allowed into the parking lot to pickup children after the tryouts are over.

Teams will be announced on the MYSA website the week after tryouts