



# Boilers FC

*Parent's and Player's Guide*



## Table of Contents

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Philosophy.....                            | 3 |
| Curriculum and Player Development.....     | 3 |
| Player and Team Selection.....             | 4 |
| Tryout Dates.....                          | 5 |
| Playing Time.....                          | 5 |
| Roster Changes and Player Movement.....    | 6 |
| Seasonal Training Schedule.....            | 6 |
| Games and Competitions.....                | 7 |
| Balance of School and Sports.....          | 7 |
| Questions for the Coaching Staff.....      | 7 |
| Parent Support for Games and Training..... | 8 |
| Team Manager.....                          | 9 |
| Feedback.....                              | 9 |



## Philosophy

The philosophy of Boilers FC is to provide an opportunity for players to develop within the best possible soccer playing experience and develop a love for the game. We aim to accomplish this by developing the players while using soccer not just for its technical skills, but also for the players' social and the physical development.

Boilers FC seeks to work with each player in an environment that challenges the individual and complements the others on the team. We prepare players with a variety of experiences and goals, including those looking for a step up from the recreational program, athletes who participate in other sports and activities, kids who are dedicated to only soccer, and even players who may dream of playing in college.

Each individual at Boilers FC is a unique player who needs the proper setting to learn, create, play, and enjoy the game. The Boilers FC coaching staff works to a culture of competition, teamwork, inherent motivation, self-confidence, and fair play. Players are encouraged to approach training with the mindset, "I'm here to learn, improve, compete, and help everyone around me become a better player."

Our goal is to:

- Foster the love of the game;
- Motivate players to become comfortable with the ball under pressure in all areas of the field;
- Achieve confidence in a variety of positions;
- Understand and implement correct technique;
- Solve problems as individuals and teams;
- Respond appropriately to victory and failure;
- Compete at all times.

## Curriculum and Player Development

The Boilers FC coaching staff implements age appropriate training sessions guided by USA Soccer's coaching pathway and a general curriculum established by the club's Director of Coaching. Our club curriculum is available on our website and contains age specific training for our soccer players. The winter training period will have a stronger focus on individual technical development, creativity, and competition.

Success, Failure, Accountability, Leadership, Cooperation, Communication, and Respect are also consistent topics within the training and game environment. These themes present a variety of opportunities for growth on and off the field, and we attempt to see that players acquire the appropriate skills and responses related to each issue. Positional versatility and flexibility are also essential for long-term development, and players will experience a greater understanding through playing various roles within the team. While our primary focus is on comprehensive player development, Boilers FC players are always encouraged to compete to win.



## Player and Team Selection

Our goal is to create appropriate teams for all players who desire to play with Boilers FC. We will build teams depending on the number of suitable players and availability of qualified coaches.

Prior to the tryout period, each Boilers FC coach submits an evaluation chart, which lays out where players currently stand on a team and includes strengths and weaknesses.

During the evaluation process, we attempt to group kids by ability. We will make observations and assessments of new players, use our understanding of Boilers FC players, determine how all of the players compare, match-up, play together, and then generate the best training scenarios and most competitive teams possible. In instances when new players may be coming to Boilers FC from rec soccer having played on a team with other new players or existing Boilers FC players, these relationships will not be accounted for when determining future Boilers FC teams.

Players are offered positions on teams after reviewing their ability and using the following four components as the basis for evaluation.

- ❖ Physical Application
  - Coordination, Strength, Endurance, Speed, Conditioning
- ❖ Technical Proficiency
  - Ball Control, Shooting, Dribbling, Heading (if applicable)
- ❖ Tactical Awareness
  - Ball Possession, Spacing, Change of Direction, Defensive Principles, Offensive Principles
- ❖ Psychological Aptitude
  - Attendance/Commitment, Consistency, Attitude

When comparing players being evaluated, U10 and under players should demonstrate high ability in one of these qualities. These players will be assigned to teams solely based upon their age group.

Players above U11 will be assigned to teams (Gold, Black, White, etc.) based upon their evaluated skill level. For U11-U12 Gold teams players should excel in one of these areas and show indication of an additional emerging component.

The desired roster size for a team in an U11 or U12 group is 12-14. While we try to make the rosters for all ages meet the ideal quantity, the number of participants or skill sets of players may create a situation where we do not have the perfect number.

For slightly older players in the U13-U14 groups, Gold level players should be excelling in two or three of the aforementioned areas, and show at least an emerging strength in the other areas. At this level the players will begin to play a full-sided game. As such rosters will expand to 16-18. Due to this it is entirely possible Boilers FC will begin only having one team at these age levels.

While exceptions sometimes exist, Boilers FC will predominately keep players assigned to teams with other players their age through the younger age levels.



Once the players move into High School only one season in the spring will be played. Teams will be determined in a fashion similar to what the athletes may experience in their respective schools and ages may become mixed (i.e. Juniors and Seniors potentially on the same teams and Freshman and Sophomores potentially on the same teams). Players will tryout with a Gold level team in mind. The number of teams and age division of the teams will be determined by the number of players who attend tryouts, accept the offer to play for Boilers FC, and their associated skill sets. If the numbers allow, a Black team could be an option as well.

One important caveat to the U15-U18 method of selecting players is a rule restricting the number of players from a given high school allowed to play together on a travel team. The current rule by the Indiana High School Athletic Association precludes more than seven players who played together for one high school team (seniors are excluded) from playing together on a travel team. When creating teams as previously mentioned for high school aged players, some decisions will have to be made specifically because of this IHSA rule.

Youth rosters are established at the conclusion of the tryout and assessment period in June. High School rosters will be completed by the end of November. We know there is no perfect evaluation system for players, especially in a one-day window, and we reserve the right to move players to appropriate teams upon conclusion of the fall season and/or winter training sessions if there is a demonstrated need for adjustment.

## Tryout Dates

The dates for tryouts are posted in March following Indiana Soccer Association's release of allowable tryout dates, with times and locations posted mid-season. All of our tryout information will be posted on the Boilers FC website, <http://www.boilersfc.org> as soon as it is available.

## Playing Time

Player development is our primary objective however, this does not mean winning and/or competing to win is not important. Competing to win is an incredibly important aspect of development, but winning is not always the most important measurement of success especially at the younger ages of development.

While we expect players to get an appropriate amount of playing time during each contest, it is nearly impossible to get equal playing time during a game. For our U11 and U12 teams, competition for time on the field becomes an extension of player development. As ages increase, the disparities for playing time may also increase.

Every player of the roster has an important part to play in the success or failure of a team. Players may be asked to play unfamiliar roles or fill in for players who may be missing or injured or just simply may be having a bad day at the office. As the players get older some may see less playing time but that doesn't mean that they are no longer a valuable member of the team. In some games players will play more and in some games players will play less. There are many situations when playing time may be tilted toward those who are playing the best (tournaments, key league games, etc.). The objective is to



provide a balance among development in proper game situations, learning to compete at a high level, and competing to win.

## Roster Changes and Player Passing

The club's intent is to continually challenge those advancing inside their current teams by ensuring they compete within the appropriate playing group. For some players this means training or playing with a team at a higher level, or an older age group. The club must also ensure those who are not keeping up with their current team/peer group get paired with players of a similar set of skills.

- Throughout the year players may train or "player pass" to another team in addition to playing with their current team with approval from the DOC and Area Director.
- Players who excel or struggle in a particular environment may be given opportunities to play in a different setting to either see new challenges, or to gain confidence or develop a certain set of skills. This could take place at any time during the year and the players would remain with their current team.
- At the conclusion of the fall season, the coaching staff will make recommendations about players who may need a roster change.

Each scenario attempts to provide appropriate developmental opportunities for the players and the teams involved. The Director of Coaching, the Area Director and other appropriate board members as needed will make all decisions about player movement and will communicate any changes and meet with each family involved to explain the decision.

## Seasonal Training Schedule

All outdoor training takes place at the Boilers FC fields on Salisbury Road in West Lafayette. In the winter months our teams practice inside in various facilities available to the club. The season will run approximately 10.5 months in length, with a small break usually between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Fall: Early August thru late October or Early November. Two practices a week with a third skill specific training. Sessions last 90 minutes each.

Winter: January thru March. One practice a week. Sessions last 60 minutes each.

Spring: Late March thru early June. Two practices a week with a third skill specific training. Sessions last 90 minutes each.

In the Fall and Spring practices start at either 5:30pm or 7:00pm. Teams generally practice individually with a specific team coach, but coaches will also choose to train together for a variety of purposes. Staff may choose to move players between age groups or teams if an alternative environment is needed.

Our winter training sessions are focused on individual technical development and an understanding of the game. Practice times start at 6:00pm, 7:00pm or 8:00pm. Players are encouraged to play in an indoor league as well.



## Games and Competitions

Over the course of the season each team will play in Indiana Soccer League or the Midwest & Great Lakes Conference.

For Indiana soccer leagues each team will usually play a minimum of 5/6 league games and a maximum of 8 games each season depending on how many teams are in their league.

For teams playing in the Great Lakes league, the travelling is more significant, and teams will travel to neighboring states such as Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and even Kentucky to play other teams.

Teams will often participate in tournaments throughout the season. These tournaments can vary in location and cost. The costs are not covered by the player's registration fees. Team representatives will generally discuss the possibility of tournaments at the beginning of the season to gauge each player's interests.

## Balance of School and Sports

Academic activities or responsibilities should be a priority and we expect that kids will be exploring the athletic and social benefits of multiple sports and activities. Some families and players are able work through the schedules and choose to balance multiple commitments, while some kids choose to focus on soccer at an early age. Boilers FC supports multi-sport participation, but we anticipate that Boilers FC players will make soccer an equal focus during the fall and spring seasons.

## Questions for the Coaching Staff

Each coach is here to help. Do not feel as if you are bothering the coach by asking a question. Please notify the coach at any time if you have a concern about your child or feel that the coach needs to be aware of issues the player may not want to discuss (health or personal issues, family, school, etc.).

If a player has questions or anxieties regarding playing time, positions, or areas of improvement, please encourage your child to speak with the coach. It may help to send a text or email in advance of the player's communication and the coach can help get the conversation started. This is a good opportunity for your child and we are here to support this process.

If a meeting needs to be established with the parents, please let us know. We prefer for the player to be included in all soccer related discussions if possible. Each coach can create an improvement plan and provide suggested activities for completion at home.

There are understandably times when parents can become frustrated or protective in regard to a child. Unless the safety of a player is involved, please adhere to the following sequence for concerns with playing time, positions, and game related issues:

1. Wait 24 hours following all games and events.
2. Initiate communication with the head coach.



3. If the issue is not addressed appropriately, please contact the Director of Coaching and Area Director.

We rarely see issues arise to this magnitude and they most often relate to miscommunication or a simple misunderstanding. When these scenarios develop, we know how important it is for everyone to take a breath and approach the matter with the proper perspective and demeanor.

## Parent Support for Games and Training

If a player has a conflict (concert, school function, family vacation, etc...) with any scheduled practice or game, please notify the coach and update TeamSnap (or other similar team management tool). The consistent use of TeamSnap is tremendously helpful for our coaches to prepare training sessions and for managers to see how many players they have for a game and for club passing opportunities. Please use the availability function and make updates as needed.

The Boilers FC training kit is to be worn for all practices and it is very important that each player is prepared with all equipment for practice such as shin-guards, proper shoes, a properly inflated ball, and plenty of water.

Practices will begin at the time listed on the website and schedule and we encourage players to arrive 10 or 15 minutes early to ensure an efficient start. If you arrive early and are waiting for other teams to complete their practices, be as respectful of their time and space as you would want them to be of yours.

For games each coach will have his or her own specific warm up and arrival time, but usually you will be expected to be there 45 minutes to 1 hour before kickoff time. Players are encouraged to bring both game shirts (home and away) as well as the needed equipment for the game, e.g. shin-guards, proper shoes, a properly inflated ball, and plenty of water. If a player is going to need something during the game such as an inhaler, please ensure that they have it with them on the bench.

During games Boilers FC would ask all parents to follow a few guidelines to help in the development of the kids. They are summarized as follows:

- ✓ Keep comments positive and encouraging towards both teams. We want Boilers FC parents to represent good examples for all the youth in the game.
- ✓ Refrain from "coaching" from the sidelines during games (pass it, run, dribble, send it, move here/there, etc.). The kids may have a certain set of instructions from their coach that they are trying to fulfill. If they hear a different message from the parents it can be confusing for them.
- ✓ Refrain from all comments to any referee or sideline official as even positive comments can be seen as sarcastic or derogatory. We wouldn't have a game without referees. And even a job well done by a referee often leads to someone being unhappy.



## Team Manager

Each team has a manager to assist with various needs of the team and club (communication, tournament and play registration, team/referee fees, etc.).

The managers at Boilers FC are volunteers and are a critical piece of the coaching and administration staff at the club, without their support and help the running of each team would be very difficult.

It is helpful to avoid asking the manager any question beginning with “Why, What, Where, How, When, Will, Does the coach \_\_\_\_\_?” Please understand that the manager is not involved in decisions related to playing, coaching, or training. If there is a question that the coach needs to handle, please contact the coach directly and he or she will be happy to address it.

## Feedback

We always want to improve the experience for each player at Boilers FC. The club will send requests for feedback at the end of the fall and spring seasons. Please contact any board member, or email [boilersfc@gmail.com](mailto:boilersfc@gmail.com) at any time if you have ideas or suggestions that you feel will create a stronger environment at Boilers FC.