

LGUSL Tryout Guidelines for Division-1 (Select) and Division-3 (Competitive) Teams

The purpose of this document is spell out clearly, to LGUSL coaches, as well as prospective players, how the league defines tryouts in an effort to help standardize how they are conducted, as well as provide their expectations to all involved. As this is the first time LGUSL has attempted to put these guidelines and requirements in writing, they are subject to change.

Players for Division-1 and Division-3 teams are selected annually by an open tryout process. "Open tryouts" are held after the conclusion of the fall season, and generally in the months of December through March, prior to the beginning of the District 2 Spring season.

The purpose of "open tryouts" is to form the best team(s) for the following seasonal year: August 1st through July 31st, although players selected often start playing together in the District 2 Spring league, which starts in April.

What is a "tryout?"

A "tryout" consists of a minimum of two field sessions, no less than 1.5 hours and no more than 2 hours long, where players are evaluated on both their current abilities as well as future potential. Not only should the coaches of the team evaluate players, but it is strongly advised that qualified and independent evaluators be present who participate in the process.

Frequently, the league may mandate that independent evaluators participate, most often when new teams are being formed. Not only does this help foster fairness in the process, but it also helps make it more likely that players get seen by more than one coach/evaluator, increasing the

chances the best players will be selected.

Typically, the following four characteristics would be graded for each player who attends the minimum number of sessions specified, with a weighting on each characteristic determined by coach preference, age group, competitive level, etc.:

- Technique
- Tactics
- Fitness and Athletic Ability
- Psychological Component (basically, attitude)

It should be clear that selection is a subjective decision.

It is not necessarily the case that a team's "open tryouts" are the only sessions held during the year to select players, but the intent is to have formed a viable team after this point (e.g. 9 players selected for a team with a roster size maximum of 13 players for U9 and U10 age groups). Frequently, a team will hold additional tryout sessions during the year, perhaps to fill a gap due to a player loss (through injury, personal reasons), to augment their roster, to look at potential players for subsequent seasons, etc.

The following are *requirements* for LGUSL-affiliated teams who wish to hold tryouts:

1. The tryout times/dates/fields have been approved by LGUSL

Annually, LGUSL selects qualified applicants to coach each and every one of our Competitive and Select teams, a

process that is typically completed at our November Board of Director's meeting. This is the case for both those who've coached the previous year, as well as coaches new to the league (or the team). Approved coaches are posted on the LGUSL website (www.lgusl.org) on the Competitive and Select pages, respectively.

After being notified of selection, these coaches must request, and subsequently be granted:

- Fields
- Dates
- Times

for tryouts from LGUSL to be "official".

Only fields within LGUSL boundaries may be used.

2. The tryout has been publicly announced

At a minimum, dates and times are posted on the LGUSL website, on either the Competitive or Select pages, after being approved.

Other optional methods that may be used to announce tryouts (and any restrictions) are noted below in the Appendix.

3. Any eligible player must be allowed to attend tryouts and be evaluated.

Eligibility is determined by residence and age.

We believe our commitment is to develop LGUSL players
Any players who reside within District 2 boundaries (not just

in Los Gatos, or within LGUSL boundaries, which cover Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and part of San Jose) are eligible.

Eligible ages can be determined using the 2007-2008 age matrix which is noted below (which will be updated for the 2008-2009 season soon):

<http://www.lgusl.org/agematrix.htm>

4. If there will be two teams competing in a gender/age group (regardless of Division), one team will be designated as the “A” team and the other the “B” team.

The “A” team is defined as the team that:

- Plays in the more competitive division or playing league (Select, or Division 1 vs. Comp, or Division 3) or
- Plays in the higher bracket within a division or playing league (an “A” bracket Comp team vs. a “B” bracket Comp team) or
- Is the existing team in an age group where a new team is being formed. An example would a case where the league had approved both a U11 team that competed the previous year as a U10 team, as well as the formation of a brand new U11 team.

The “B” team is thus the less competitive, or the newly formed team.

An exception to this rule may be a case where LGUSL has approved two new teams to form at the same gender/age group (a typical example would be at U9).

5. In gender/age groups with an “A” and “B” team, there must be a minimum of 13 days between the final tryout

session held by the "A" team and the first tryout session held by the "B" team.

For example, if the "A" team holds its final tryout session on Sunday, January 14th, the "B" team must not hold its first tryout session until Saturday, Jan 27th.

6. Only players who attend tryouts should be selected.

It is unfair to players who attend tryouts if players who did not attend tryouts are selected.

An exceptional circumstance would be an existing team where a returning player was injured and unable to participate.

7. Players must be informed in advance of any minimum requirements with respect to attending tryout sessions, in addition to the age and residency requirements.

LGUSL teams may not request a fee for a tryout.

Some acceptable "example" requirements are:

- Players must attend a minimum number of sessions to be considered (e.g. 2 session out of 4)
- Only players who attend complete sessions will be considered (that is, arriving late or leaving early, may disqualify a player from being considered for a session.
- Players must pre-register to be considered for a session
- Players must provide a copy of their birth certificate to verify age eligibility prior to attending tryouts.

- LGUSL teams may require a reasonable deposit (no more than \$100) from all players who try out, and stipulate that the deposit will be returned (or an uncashed check destroyed) to players not selected in a timely fashion. For those selected, the deposit may either be returned or applied to team fees (even if the selected player(s) declines to play).

1. Through the “open tryout” process, teams must select a minimum number of players for their final roster with which to form viable team.

The minimum number of players to be selected are:

- 9 players at U9 and U10 (with 8 players on the field and maximum roster sizes of 13)
- 12 players at U11 and above (with 11 players on the field and maximum roster sizes of 18)

Prospective teams unable to select this modest number of players are unlikely to have enough players to survive a season. Teams in this situation after Open tryouts must inform their respective Division coordinator.

2. Players who attend tryouts, whether selected or not selected, must be notified of results promptly.

Teams must inform all players who attended tryouts via email or in writing whether they have been selected or not selected within 10 days of the last tryout session. This is independent of whether initial notification is done via phone or in person.

This gives players the opportunity to try out for other teams,

whether in LGUSL or outside. The 10-day deadline is designed specifically for the case in LGUSL where a player was not selected for "A" team, and can then attend the "B" team tryouts.

Notification of selection (as well as acceptance) should be considered equivalent to a written contract, both from the team's perspective as well as the player's. Coaches who break this contract -- perhaps because they've found superior players afterwards -- may be subject to disciplinary action.

10.

11. Players selected should be given a reasonable amount of time to accept a roster spot, or not.

Player selected should be given a reasonable deadline on whether they will accept the spot or not. This prevents players from "shopping around" indefinitely and expecting the team to wait around for them.

In the case that that a selected player elects not to join the team by the deadline, this allows the team some flexibility to select another player who was not originally accepted.

12. LGUSL teams must not:

- (1) Promise players (new or returning) that they will have a spot before Open tryouts are held
- (2) Tell prospective players that spots are limited on the team, due to the number of returning players.

Both of these actions imply that the "Tryout" will not be conducted on a level playing field, and that decisions have already been made. Thus, it is not "open", nor is it fair.

It is fair to tell prospective players that 16 of last year's team are trying out again this year, but not that they have guaranteed spots.

After the completion of "Open Tryouts" however, when teams may evaluate players to fill existing roster openings, it is perfectly fair and reasonable to discuss how many roster openings the team has (especially since the players selected during open tryouts may not be displaced).

13. LGUSL has the right to request a list of all players and contact information who have tried out for a particular team, as well as a list of the players who were selected to the initial roster, two weeks after the final tryout session.

Teams are required to collect this information during the tryout process.

This information can be used to verify the make-up of the roster used to register the team through the league or to survey those players who attended tryouts.

14. LGUSL reserves the right to dictate both how tryouts are to be held and how players to be selected for any team or age group.

Some examples follow:

- (1) LGUSL may require that a certain number of league assigned evaluators participate in selecting players
- (2) LGUSL may require that there be a single tryout for an age group with two teams and designate one the "A" team and allow them first choice of players, with the "B" team being able to choose from the remainder

(3) LGUSL may require that there be a single tryout for an age group with two teams and distribute players equally, either through league-controlled selection or a draft-like process between the two teams.

Appendix:

A) Tryout announcements

Following are some additional options that may be used announcing tryouts:

1) Posting a notice on the District 2 Tryout page

<http://cysa.eapps.com/cysa/Tryouts.nsf/Main>

2) Posting a notice on the San Jose Mercury events page

<http://events.mercurynews.com/>

(under "Sports & Outdoors")

3) Posting a notice in "local" newspapers like the Los Gatos Weekly Times.

A "local" newspaper is one whose distribution covers some or all of the geographic boundaries of LGUSL. Notices or postings may NOT be made in newspapers that do not satisfy this requirement.

Currently, the contact at the Los Gatos Weekly Times is: Dick Sparrer. His most recent email address was:

dsparrer@community-newspapers.com

An example announcement might be:

The Los Gatos Thunder, a LGUSL-affiliated Select (Division 1) U-12 (Select) Boy's team in 2006-2007, is looking for players for State Cup in January and the Spring and Fall 2008 seasons. Boys with birthdates on or after August 1st, 1994 are eligible. Tryouts will be held weekends throughout the entire month of January. Please contact the coach, Thierry Henry, for additional information at 408-xxx-xxxx or email at: thierry@yahoo.com.

4) Posting a notice at a local Soccer or Sporting Goods store (e.g. "Play" in Downtown Los Gatos)

5) Posting a notice at regional soccer facilities

An example would be:

Off-the-Wall-Soccer indoor

The website for Santa Clara facility can be found at:

<http://www.offthewallsoccer.com/other.htm>

B) Residence requirements

District 2 stretches from San Mateo county in the north through San Benito and Monterey Counties in the south.

<http://www.cysadistrict2.org/registration/d2boundaries.htm>

President, Los Gatos United Soccer League