



## Spring Select Guidelines

Spring Select is designed to provide a more challenging level of play for those players who want to improve their skills and abilities. It also enhances each player's experience and individual growth through the game of soccer while retaining the spirit of AYSO. The goal of Spring Select is to strengthen AYSO by retaining players and volunteers in additional programs operated under the AYSO philosophies. Spring Select teams travel to other regions and play in tournaments. Spring Select teams are formed following the completion of the fall season and begin practice in as early as December. The Spring Select season typically runs from January through June with tournament opportunities running through July. Spring select teams can also participate in the Area spring league depending on placement availability, this runs from February to early April.

The Spring Select committee is comprised of members of the Regional Board appointed by the Regional Commissioner and is in charge of running the spring select season.

The ideal coach would be someone willing to take teams to tournaments and able to develop a team manager who will organize fundraising activities for the children. Each Selected team is required to have a coach, assistant coach, team manager and a three- person referee crew. Spring select teams shall be comprised of players picked by the coach and who are registered in AYSO's current membership year and played at least 1/2 of "Fall Program" scheduled games.

The core philosophies of AYSO and the overall goal of maintaining a child-friendly environment are maintained during the Spring Select; however, the Spring Select Season differs from the fall season in the following ways:

- The number of players able to participate is limited by available coaches
- Spring Select is a program in which players are invited by coaches to participate on their team. Coach applicants are not guaranteed a team and may be rejected for multiple reasons, including but not limited to inexperience, attitude, and prior behavior(s).
- A greater commitment by the players and parents is required as play includes regular and sometimes extensive travel for almost six months.
- The cost of participation in Spring Select is significantly higher as travel and lodging costs are often incurred in addition to custom uniforms, registration fees, referee and tournament entry fees.
- Participation on this teams, requires an increased commitment from both parents and players, including attendance at all practices and matches as well as a sense of responsibility toward coaches and other team members.
- Teams can invite up to two guest players from outside our region for tournament play if their roster is depleted by injuries or absence, only after exhausting the search for additional players from our own region. The regional commissioner must sign any changes to the team rosters and reserves the right to approve guest players at his\her discretion.

- All funds raised by each team must be deposited with the region treasurer, regional checks required for tournaments or expenses can only be issued if the team has enough money deposited to cover said tournament or expenses.
- Each financial contribution by a player should be track by individual player's name and number in the deposit form.
- If a player decides to drop after the Spring Select season has begun, **no financial contribution will be returned to said player.**
- Teams cannot attend a tournament without the appropriate roster with the Regional Commissioner approval.
- The Region expects each Spring Select team to participate in at least a minimum of six tournaments for the season, or two per month if not in Area Spring League play.
- A coach can only participate in one Spring Select team.

## Coaches Selection

Coaches interested in coaching a spring select team must complete an application form and receive approval by the Spring Select Committee and Regional Commissioner. The committee will work in conjunction with the Regional Commissioner to recommend coaching selections for final approval. It is the responsibility of the applicant to be familiar with Spring Select guidelines, obligations, and regional expectations before submitting an application form expressing desire to be a Spring Select coach. In all cases applicants must be a current volunteer in Region 602, must have coached in the applicable division during the fall season, meet or exceed the appropriate coach training, has completed both Concussion Awareness and Safe Haven certifications, also have maintained a clean disciplinary record, **(this also apply to assistant coaches or any other AYSO volunteer helping the team in one form or another, there will be no exceptions to this rule).**

A candidate for Spring Select Coach will be deemed ineligible if they are ejected from one game during the fall season, consistently cannot control their sideline, consistently displays poor sportsmanship towards players or referees, and otherwise fails to live up to the AYSO philosophies.

Is the coach responsibility to inform the Region 602 Commissioner of any incident (**injuries, red cards, referee incidents** and so on) at any AYSO approved tournament the team is playing.

Each Spring Select coach candidate will be send an **EMAIL** with the time and date for an interview with the Spring Select committee, each coach should present a propose roster of players to this interview.

## Players Selection

Once a coach is selected, they are given some latitude in selection of players. Coaches pick players they have identified as the best Spring Select prospects from the fall season.

Additionally, coaches are encouraged by the Spring Select Committee to respect the opinion of coaching peers by reviewing coach specific player nominations carefully and clarifying any questions with said peers.

Each Spring Selected Coach will be able to protect up to four (4) players off their regular season team (**4 including their child**) to play for their spring team.

The Spring Select Committee recognizes that the high level of commitment and sportsmanship expected of players, coaches and parents involved in the Spring Select program may unfortunately exclude some highly skilled players.

A player must have played at a minimum half of the regular fall season matches in order to be eligible for Spring Select. Limited exceptions may be granted in cases of injury or other significant reasons as long as the applicant does not displace another potential candidate.

## **Teams**

Limited number of teams are formed for each gender in divisions 10U to 16U, depending on coach and player availability up to 3 teams can be form per division.

The team is financially self-supporting, so fund-raising will be recommended, with each player and parents expected to participate.

All Spring Select teams are required to play every player at least one half of the game. The Region 602 Spring Select Committee encourages teams to play every player at least three quarters of the game, as we require in our fall season. Try to balance play time as much as possible as it makes for happier players and better team chemistry.

## **Representing Covina Region 602 at Other Towns**

Whenever a team travels to another community and plays a match, the coach must remember that he/she, the team and parents are representing Region 602 AYSO. What they do reflects on the entire organization. Coaches must always maintain good decorum at all times.

## **Region 602 Recommendations for Spring Selected teams**

### **Balancing the AYSO Principles and a Higher Level of Competition**

The single most important thing to remember is that Spring Select is not “win-at-all-costs”! Every Spring Select coach must recognize and abide by AYSO’s key principles of Everyone Plays, Positive Coaching and Good Sportsmanship! The coach must always balance the desire to win versus the needs of the players to also have fun and be treated well as kids. Remember always they are children and not miniature professional athletes.

### **Developing Skills and Having Fun**

Long after the game scores are forgotten, the players will still retain the skills that they were taught in this program. Skill development, good character through a positive sports experience, and having **FUN** are the primary things the coach wants to develop in the players. If the players do not have fun, chances are they won’t want to participate again.

## **Managing Parents & Their Expectations**

Many parents bring challenging expectations to travel sports. The coach's role is to help manage those expectations to be reasonable. The coach should try to avoid a mentality where the parents see themselves – and the coach – as helping push along their child's budding "sports career". Managing these expectations will prevent many problems down the road in handling over-involved parents.

## **Positive Coaching**

Positive Coaching is just as important an AYSO principle in Spring Select as in the fall season. A coach will get the best results, and happiest kids and parents, if he or she practices positive coaching. Constructive criticism is always okay and a necessary part of coaching at this level, but **the coach should never verbally abuse or berate players**. Remember that these are children!

## **Teaching Sportsmanship**

This AYSO principle is also key in Spring Select. While Spring Select games may tend to have more aggressive play at times than in the fall season, the coach must avoid any tendency to play "dirty" even if the other team seems to be pushing the limit. Coaches must remember that they are a role model to the kids, and the kids will key on what they see the coach do and how the coach behaves.

## **Balancing Winning with Skill Development and Fun**

No coach, even in the fall season, probably ever walks onto a soccer field intending to lose a match. Nevertheless, you are better off to have a .500 season but have well-treated and happy players, than be undefeated at the expense of the kids and having fun.

Remember **LET THEM PLAY!**