

# Skiatook Soccer Club Play Up Policy

In order to provide a fair, balanced process, for determining the ability of registered players to play in an age group higher than the player's actual age, the Skiatook Soccer Club (SSC; club) sets forth the following policy.

Players may "play up" (i.e., play for a team in an age group that is older than the player's designated age group) only with the prior approval of the SSC Play Up Committee (the committee).

The following considerations will be made for all play up requests:

1. Coaches may not permit under-age players to register or play with their team without ensuring that the player has followed the procedures set forth herein. Conversely, coaches should bring to the attention of the play up committee, any player on their team that they feel would be better served by playing at an older age-group.
2. In all cases, the desire to play up should be driven by the player first and the player's parents second, not by the coach of the team at the higher age group. The decision should be based upon what is in the best interests of the player and the Club. It should not be based upon ego, prestige or the particular best interests of any one team. When faced with making the decision whether the player should play up, adult leadership must be prepared with sound rationale to support their decision. Under no circumstance should coaches exploit the situation by holding players back in their quest for winning team championships, nor should parents push their child in an attempt to accelerate their ascension to the top of the soccer pyramid.

## **Play Up Committee**

After consultation with the current coach, proposed coach, and player's parents, the committee will make determinations regarding all play-up requests based upon all relevant factors. The committee ordinarily shall consist of the President of SSC, the VP, and the Registrar; however, (1) if any committee member believes that he or she should not participate in any particular playing-up request because of a personal interest in the outcome of any playing up request, he or she may recuse himself or herself from participating in that particular decision, and (2) the Board may alter or add to the composition of the Play Up Committee on a permanent or case-by-case basis for this, or any, reason. All decisions are final and cannot be appealed. Decisions are applicable

to the current season only, and cases can be brought to the committee for the following season for reassessment, if so desired.

### **Guidelines**

In making decisions regarding each play-up request, the committee shall take into consideration the following guidelines:

1. When it is appropriate for soccer development, the opportunity for the exceptional player to play with older players may be approved. Occasionally, a player may have such extraordinary ability that the best thing for that player is to play in a higher age group. In those cases, permission may be granted if it is determined that allowing the player to “play up” is necessary and/or appropriate to (1) expose the player to levels of competition commensurate with their skills, and (2) provide the player with a challenging environment necessary to inspire the player to higher levels of play and thus maintain their interest and passion for the game.
2. If a player’s correct age group is unable to provide player with the training, coaching and/or competition that he or she needs, strong consideration will be given to allowing the player to play at the next higher age group.
3. In addition, the committee may from time to time deem it necessary or appropriate to place player(s) in a higher age group in the best interest of the Club (for example, if the ability to form a team depends on relocating some players from one age group to another to fill a vacancy on a higher age group team.) Ordinarily, however, no player will be required by the Club to play at a higher age group.
4. Players must have played at least one season in the club to allow for the proper assessment of all factors related to the request to play up. Players may only play up one age group, unless otherwise approved by the committee.

### **Team Play Up Policy**

SSC will allow a full team(s) to move to the next age group, however this will also have to be approved by the committee. SSC will not allow two teams to combine to make one “super team” to play at the next age group. Due to the possibility of player(s) being left behind without a team the following season SSC will not allow a team(s) to join and play up early.