



SCSA Eleven

Player and Parent Guide

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1. Club Mission

The South Central Soccer Academy Fire mission is to provide a safe, fun and competitive environment where kids can grow their love for the game of soccer with an emphasis on community, inclusion, and player development.

2. Curriculum and Player Development

As a player-centric Club, SCSA Fire understands that each unique player at SCSA Fire needs the proper setting to learn, create, play, and enjoy the game. SCSA desires a culture of constant improvement, high demands, competing at all times, self-confidence, confidence in teammates, assertive communication, and positive influences.

Our coaching staff implements training sessions according to a curriculum established by the Directors in connections with Indiana Fire Academy. The curriculum will be executed in one-week and two-week blocks based on the topic. All members of the coaching staff have access to daily session, and each coach has the freedom to develop and apply specific sessions directly related to the topic or theme. Positional versatility is also essential for long-term development and players will experience a greater understanding through playing various roles within the team.

3. Player and Team Selection

Tryouts are in June and additional information on current year tryouts can be found on our website (www.scsaindy.com).

Our goal is to create appropriate teams for all players who desire to play with SCSA Fire. Our coaches have observed players throughout the year and have a good understanding of where kids need to be positioned if there were no new players entering the picture.

During the tryout process, we attempt to group kids by ability fairly early and make changes based on performance throughout the session. We will make observations and assessments of new players (some have been observed during the year), use our understanding of players, determine



how all of the players compare, match-up, play together, and then generate the best teams possible.

U11 – U19 players are selected to ability-based teams in the following order:

- Red
- Grey (if applicable)
- Black
- White

The desired roster size for a team in each age group is listed below. While we try to make the rosters 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.

- U11-U12 teams play 9v9 with 12 players per team preferred
- U13-U14 teams play 11v11 with 14-16 players per team preferred
- U15-U17 teams play 11v11 with 16-18 players per team preferred
- U18-U19 teams play 11v11 with 16-18 players per team preferred

We know there is no perfect evaluation system for players, especially in a two-day window, and we will move players to appropriate teams during the fall, winter, or spring if there is a demonstrated need for adjustment.

4. Alliance Fire FC

Alliance Fire FC is a highly competitive, player centered soccer development program. It is a joint effort of the SCSA Fire and Bloomington Cutters soccer clubs focused on helping each player reach the “next level”. Alliance Fire provides high-quality soccer development and playing opportunities for U15-U19 players seeking to reach the “next level.” Whether that next level is the transition to the MLSNext, Elite 64, National ECNL teams with Indiana Fire Academy, College Soccer, or simply being the best, they can be.

Teams at Alliance Fire mostly compete at a regional or national level and are led by Coaches from local colleges, currently Indiana University Men’s and Women’s as well as Franklin College



5. Playing Time

Academy and Junior Travel Player

development is our primary objective and a team may appear to struggle during a contest because players are placed in unfamiliar positions or the “best” players may not be on the field at a given time. 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 at this time. We anticipate that players get an appropriate amount of playing time during each contest. It is nearly impossible to get equal playing time during a game, but playing time will likely be balanced throughout the season for our U8-U10 players. For our U11 – U14 teams, competition for time on the field becomes an extension of player development. There are many situations when playing time may be tilted toward those who are playing 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.

Senior Travel

Each player selected to a U15 – U19 team has proven he or she is a quality player and able to make a contribution to their team, but the job has only started with being named to the team. While player development is still the club’s primary focus the senior travel teams also have focus on competing at the highest level possible. This competition could be done at a State or Regional level.

Healthy competition among teammates will be elevated by the number of quality players vying for opportunities on the field. The amount of playing time is not guaranteed but earned.

6. Seasonal Training Schedule

All training takes place at SCSA Complex on the grass or at Center Grove High School Soccer Field. In the winter months our teams practice inside the SCSA Indoor Facility. The season is approximately ten months in length with the majority of games and tournaments taking place during the fall and spring.



- **Fall:** August through October or early November, 75-90 minute sessions, U7-U8 teams practice two times per week and U9-U15 three times per week
- **Winter:** (A) November and December (3-4 weeks) U15 – U19, (B) January through March (10 weeks), 60-75 minute sessions, all teams U8- U19 practice two days per week
- **Spring:** April to the first week of June, 75-90 minute sessions, U7-U8 teams practice two times per week and U9-U19 three times per week
- **Team Camp** – A preseason camp in the Fall and Spring involving high level coaching to prepare teams for their upcoming season.

7. Games and Competition

U8-U10 Teams

- 16-20 league games in the local area and within 30-45 minutes of SCSA Complex
- Two outside tournaments/events within the local area and two tournaments hosted by SCSA Fire, 3-4 games in each event
- All teams play in the Central North Conference (CNC): Indiana Fire Academy, Dynamo FC, Indy Premier SC, Carmel FC, Hoosier FC, USAI, FC Pride, St. Francis

U11-U12 Teams

- 16-20 league games in the local area or within the state, subject to the level of team play (Red, Grey, Black, or White) and the league requirements – These games are split between the Fall and Spring season.
- (2) tournaments hosted by SCSA Fire with (2) additional tournaments outside the club. 3-4 games in each event.

U13-U14 Teams

- 16-20 league games split between the Fall and Spring Seasons – These games are split between the Fall and Spring season
- (2) tournaments hosted by SCSA Fire with 2 additional tournaments outside the club. 3-4 games in each event.



U15-U19 Teams

- 8-10 league games
- (2) Tournaments/Showcases with the potential for 1-2 out of the state, 3-4 games in each tournament and 1 tournament hosted by SCSA Fire

8. 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 to balance multiple activities, while some kids choose to focus on soccer at an early age. SCSA Fire supports multi-sport participation but we anticipate that SCSA Fire players will make soccer a primary focus during the fall and spring seasons.

9. Absences

Religious holidays/observances, family weddings, reunions, emergencies – Players should spend time with family on these occasions and are excused from practice and/or games on these days. When possible, please inform the coach at least 1 week in advance of the holiday or observance.

10. Player Action Plans

SCSA strives to engage each player in their own Action Plan via two-way dialog instead of only one-way coach feedback. The best outcomes are created when the player takes an active role in defining their own goals, digesting their coach's feedback, and turning that into their own self-guided actions. Each player receives an Action Plan (evaluation) near the middle of the fall season (late September) and in the middle of the spring season (April). The Action Plans have 2 different sections. The top part must be completed by the family and submitted back to the coach. Once the coach receives the completed first part of the action plan back, they will finish the action plan and give it to the family.



11. Questions for 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 an 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 you would like additional input or perspective, please contact the Director of Coaching.

12. Parent Support for Games and Training

If a player has a conflict (performing arts concert, academic field trip, school function, family vacation, etc.) with any scheduled practice or game, please notify the coach and update TeamSnap. The consistent use of TeamSnap is tremendously helpful for our staff. Please use the availability function and make updates as needed.

The SCSA Fire training kit is worn for all practices (grey top and black shorts). It is important that each player is prepared with all equipment



for practice: shin-guards, proper shoes, a properly inflated ball (unless the coach states otherwise), and plenty of water.

Please help your child, the other members on the team, and the coaching staff by arriving on time or early for training and games. Practices will begin at the time listed on the schedule. Unless otherwise notified, players should be ready to warm up 30 minutes prior to each game - - at the appropriate field, ready to play. Please allow extra time for unfamiliar game locations and tournament parking.

Players should always be prepared with home and away jerseys, shorts and socks. Needed equipment for every game: home and away jerseys, home and away shorts, home and away socks, warm-up, shin-guards, proper shoes, a properly inflated ball, and plenty of water. Players need to have these items accessible while on the bench and during the warm-up. The extra uniform pieces, water, etc. should be with the player and not in the car or with mom or dad.

Most parents are great fans and supportive on the sideline. We appreciate the excitement and enthusiasm that takes place during games and we want the families and players to enjoy the experience. We also want to support good sportsmanship and avoid inconsistent or conflicting communication from two sideline.

- Keep comments positive.
- Refrain from “coaching” from the sidelines during games (pass it, run, dribble, mark up, kick it, move here/there, get the ball, turn, etc.)
- Do not attempt to get your child's attention during the warm-up or game.
- Avoid information and/or instruction directed at your child or other players during games.
- Refrain from all comments to any referee.

An important part of development requires players to make decisions for themselves on the field with limited instruction from the sideline. It is incredibly beneficial for parents to follow these guidelines to create the best environment for all players involved in the game - - We appreciate your support!



13. Feedback

We always want to improve the experience for each player at SCSA Fire. The club holds a “Town Hall” gathering in November each year and is available at all times during the year. Please contact Cody Graman or Matt Wilhoit at any time if you have ideas or suggestions that you feel will create a stronger environment at SCSA Fire.

14. Player Pathways

SCSA Fire Competitive Platforms and Player Pathways

