



LOWER MERION SOCCER CLUB

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Dear Spring Intramural Participant,

April 7, 2010

Thank you for signing up for our Spring Intramural Program.

We will be playing every Sunday from April 11th until June 13th, except Memorial Day Weekend. Each Sunday, the age groups will meet at the following times:

Atoms Division:	12:45 - 1:50	primarily boys born in 2005
Neutrons Division:	2:00 - 3:05	primarily girls born in 2005
Bantams Division:	3:15 - 4:20	primarily boys born in 2004
Microns Division:	4:30 - 5:35	primarily girls born in 2004

LATE SIGNUPS - We will accept on site registrations during the season. If you have friends who would like to play, please invite them to show up (with the proper equipment) and sign up at our registration table.

CHANGING DIVISIONS - Girls may switch between the Neutrons Division and Microns Division if they feel they are better suited for the other division. Similarly, boys may switch between the Atoms and Bantams Divisions as needed. You do not need to notify anyone about this.

We realize that there will be occasions when players won't be able to make a session or two. This is perfectly fine. We do ask however that if you are going to show up, show up about 10 minutes early so we can get started **promptly**. If you show up late, we will not be able to get you put into the flow of things right away so you will have to stand around awhile. PLEASE get to the fields on time.

PARKING - Please be aware that the police will ticket illegally parked cars. The police will be coming around, as they do every season, and look to ticket all cars parked illegally.

NO DOGS OR PETS ARE ALLOWED AT THE PARK BY ORDER OF THE TOWNSHIP!!!!

OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAM - Our primary objective at LMSC is to "provide each and every youngster with a fun filled experience in a soccer environment." We try to provide soccer for children of all ages as well as provide different competitive levels for each age.

IN THE EVENT OF RAIN - If games need to be canceled: LMSC will update the web page (www.lmsc.net) with a message saying that games are canceled. This will hopefully be done by 11:00 AM. LMSC will also attempt to e-mail those players and coaches who we have e-mail addresses for.

SKILLS CLINIC - At the beginning of each session, we will run a short skills clinic to teach the players the most basic of soccer skills. For that reason, we are asking that players bring a **size 3** ball to the field each week. Please **Be sure to put your name on the ball in magic marker.**

EQUIPMENT - Players **MUST** have shin guards, **NO EXCEPTIONS**. It is preferred that players have soccer shoes as opposed to sneakers. Players should have a dark pair of soccer shorts (preferably navy). Players are to wear their red LMSC jersey to all games (given out at the first Sunday). A filled, plastic water bottle is optional but recommended.

All these items can be purchased at most any sporting goods store. Sneaky Pete's on Lancaster Avenue in Ardmore, is our official supplier of soccer equipment. You can purchase shin guards, size 3 soccer balls, LMSC shorts, etc.

ADULT CONDUCT - One item of great concern to us is sideline conduct at our soccer games. We have several rules for our spectators that we expect to be followed by **ALL** spectators:

- Do not yell at the referees or attempt to influence them in any way. Our referees are all travel team players and are under strict orders to only follow orders from the LMSC Directors.
- Remember that the coaches and directors are volunteers. Do not give them a hard time, do not yell at them, do not whine and complain to them about trivial things. If you have a problem, state it in a mature fashion to one of the LMSC officers.
- Do not smoke at the fields. We will remove your child from play if you smoke near our athletes.
- Dogs are not allowed at the fields by order of the Lower Merion Township.
- Keep comments positive to your child and all other children. We want to create an atmosphere where the children can enjoy themselves and not feel that they are "forced" to perform up to someone's expectations. Our coaches are instructed to make the number one priority of the program to allow the kids to have fun and learn to enjoy the game.
- Don't let your children or other children to climb on the soccer nets or hang from the goalposts.
- Keep baby strollers, cribs and reclining chairs away from the fields and away from the sidelines
- Do not expect the coaches to turn your child into a professional player, the children are only 5 and 6 years old. Over eager parents are asked to realize that the best way for your child to develop into a top notch player is to let him enjoy the game and develop a passion for the sport. They are too younger to understand the tactics of the game and too young to master the skills.
- Please keep younger children off the fields so they do not get hit by a stray ball.

While on the subject of sideline conduct, please take a few minutes to observe some of the other spectators. If they are acting crazy and out of control, do you think it is embarrassing to their child? If so, please figure out how your child would want you to behave.

INNER CITY SOCCER PROGRAM - LMSC is always collecting old, used soccer equipment, including cleats and balls, to give to underprivileged children in the city who play soccer. If you have equipment you'd like to donate, please bring it to the fields no later than May 17th so that we can forward your donations to the proper people.

COACHING VOLUNTEERS - One of our objectives at LMSC is to provide ample coaching material to our coaches. We have different coaching manuals for the different age groups in our program. All of this is in our budget because we believe that players will enjoy the sport more and develop faster if our coaches know the game and know how to coach it.

We realize that most parents did not play the game as a child. If you are interested in helping to coach, please volunteer. We will try to help you improve your knowledge of the game, no matter what your background. All we ask is that you do your best to make sure the children have fun, and you do your best to improve your soccer knowledge and your coaching skills. Please let us know if you are interested in helping coach your child's age group.

END OF SEASON TROPHIES - At the conclusion of the session on the last day of the season, all players will be given and end of season participation trophy. Please be sure to be in attendance that day as it is a big part of each child's season. If you miss the last day and want to pick up your child's trophy, please contact LMSC by e-mail **AFTER** the season is over. We will let you know how to go about getting your trophy.

BEYOND THE SPRING INTRAMURAL PROGRAM - The primary season for LMSC is in the fall where we have over 1700 youngsters playing in the intramural program and over 600 players in the Travel Team Program. The Fall Intramural Program offers 14 divisions for boys and girls ages 4-13. Players have a game every Saturday. The season will start on the Saturday after Labor Day Weekend and run through mid-November. **Below is the anticipated setup for the 2010 Fall Season:**

Boys Divisions

Pee-Wees Division:	Boys born in 2006 (play on Sundays)
Atoms Division:	Boys born in 2005
Bantams Division:	Boys born in 2004
Juniors Division:	Boys born in 2003
Intermediate Division:	Boys born in 2002
Seniors Division:	Boys born in 2000 and 2001
Majors Division:	Boys born in 1997, 1998 and 1999

Girls Divisions

Pee-Wees Division:	Girls born in 2006 (play on Sundays)
Neutrons Division:	Girls born in 2005
Microns Division:	Girls born in 2004
Quasars Division:	Girls born in 2003
Protons Division:	Girls born in 2002
Electrons Division:	Girls born in 2000 and 2001
Cosmos Division:	Girls born in 1997, 1998 and 1999

The Youngest Age Divisions (Atoms, Neutrons and Pee-Wees) will NOT be on set teams for the fall. Each week, the players will led through a skills clinic, which will be followed by small sided games.

The Middle Age Divisions (Bantams, Microns, Juniors, Intermediates, Quasars and Protons) will have the players placed on teams of up to 14 players. Teams play two simultaneous games of 5 vs. 5. Team standings will not be kept during the season.

The Oldest Age Divisions (Seniors, Majors, Electrons and Cosmos): The Seniors and Electrons are placed on teams of 12-14 players and play games of 8 versus 8. The Majors and Cosmos divisions have players on teams of 15-18 players. Games are full sided 11 versus 11 soccer. The Majors and Cosmos will have end of season playoffs to determine a league champion.

In addition, each fall we offer a **Special Needs Division** for youngsters ages 7-15 with physical and mental limitations. For more information on this program, please call our hotline.

THE TRAVEL TEAM PROGRAM - One of the primary purposes of the intramural program is to advance the more athletic and competitive players into the more prestigious Travel Team Program. Travel teams for both boys and girls start at Under 9 and run through Under 19. The Travel Team Program offers the players a chance to play against other local clubs such as Downingtown, West Chester, etc. The program offers a more extensive soccer experience and more experienced coaches. Many of our travel teams play indoor soccer in the winter months.

Since 1989, our travel teams have won 33 State Championships and have had 96 teams reach the semifinals of State Cup competition during that time. We hope that our more talented and enthusiastic players will give consideration to playing travel ball when they are old enough. Several of our former LMSC Travel Team Players have played professionally, including Ben Olsen who played for the 2006 USA World Cup team and the 2000 USA Olympics team. Olsen played for DC United of MLS for 10 years. Former LMSC player Jon Conway is also a ten year MLS veteran, playing for the San Jose Earthquakes and the New York Red Bulls and now with Toronto FC.

Several other LMSC players have reached the professional ranks, including LMSC Officer Justin Ceccarelli (Worcester Wildfire of the A-League), Allan Greaves (Philadelphia Freedom of the USL) and Richard Wilmot (Reading Rage of the USL).

Several former LMSC Travel Team Players have represented our country on the National Youth Teams: Will Kohler (U-17 National Team in 1992), Jon Conway (U-20 National Team in 1997) and Olsen. Former LMSC player Suzie Grech was a member of Spain's Under 17 National Team in 1999. Former LMSC player Max Kurtzman was on the U-15 National Team in 2007 while Emily Morgan was on the U-14 Women's National Team in 2009. LMSC had at least 36 alumni playing college soccer in the fall of 2009.

Our more talented intramural players should give serious consideration to trying out for the Travel Team Program when they reach eight years of age. Tryouts are held each spring. LMSC will field up to four boys teams and up to four girls teams in each age group from Under 9 up through Under 15.

THE UNDER 8 DEVELOPMENTAL TRAVEL TEAM ACADEMY - One of the purposes of the Spring Intramural Program is to develop our more talented and enthusiastic players for the LMSC Travel Team Program. Many of the players in our older divisions will be eligible to tryout for our Under 8 Developmental Travel Team Academy. The upcoming Under 8 Academy will be open to players born between August 1, 2002 and July 31, 2003. The program offers a first look at the Travel Team Program for our seven year old players.

We will pick a team of up to 24 boys and a team of up to 24 girls. In the fall, each team will have two practices a week (one on a weeknight, the other on Saturday) and play 5 v 5 games on Sunday afternoons, using the same format as our 6 - 9 year old intramural divisions. Our Under 8 Developmental teams will also participate in one or more tournaments towards the end of the fall season, competing against Under 8 teams from other clubs in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Each team will play in an indoor league during the winter months and train occasionally in local gyms during the winter months. The teams will also practice outdoors in the spring. We anticipate about 40 girls trying out for the Under 8 Girls team and about 60 boys trying out for the Under 8 Boys Team.

The Travel Team Program offers a much higher level of play than the intramural programs as well as a much higher level of coaching. Both teams will be run by a group of non-parent coaches who all have a very extensive soccer background (as players and as coaches). The Travel Team Program requires a greater commitment on the part of the players, and their families.

If you have any questions, please feel free to send us an e-mail at soccer@lmsc.net . Again, please be aware of the limited parking and please do not park illegally. Thank you for your participation in the Spring Intramural program, we are looking forward to yet another fun filled season.

Soccerly,

Biff

Biff Sturla
President
Lower Merion Soccer Club

THE MODIFIED RULES FOR LEVEL ONE SOCCER GAMES

- The field will be approximately 30 yards long and 20 yards wide. There will be a goal kick line drawn 6 yards in front of each goal where the goal kicks are taken from. There will be a large 'X' in the middle of the field where all kickoffs are taken from.
- The Level One Divisions will all use a size 3 ball.
- Games will be played with 4 players on the field at a time. Small sided games will minimize the "swarming" around the ball and maximize the amount of involvement each child has while playing.
- Players will NOT be placed on permanent teams during the season. Each week, the players will be randomly divided into teams.
- These divisions do NOT use goalies.
- Coaches will rotate the players so that all players get equal playing time. If needed, players will be switched from one team to another to ensure a competitive balance.
- Games will be played 4 vs. 4. If there is a shortage of players, the games will be played 3 vs. 3.
- If a game is played without substitutes (or very few substitutes), regular water breaks should be given.
- Shin guards are mandatory. Cleats are recommended over sneakers. Hats and jewelry may not be worn. Earrings and necklaces must be removed, or covered with tape at a minimum. Navy shorts should be worn. Sweat pants may be worn, long pants should not be worn.
- The referee's job is primarily safety. The referees will only call out of bounds, dangerous play and major rule violations. They are to briefly explain all calls so that the players will better understand the game.
- There are no time limits to the games. The games will continue until it is time for the next division to start their session, or until all the players are too hot or too tired to play. Water breaks will be called if needed.
- Game scores are NOT to be emphasized. The focus of the games is on fun and learning the game.
- All kickoffs are to be a pass so that the players will learn a little bit about "teammates."
- If the ball goes just over the line and comes right back into play, the referee may let play continue.
- There is no offsides rule, but all players will be expected to come back and help on defense. No players are to "cherry pick" (stay up by the other team's goal at all times).
- Only major or deliberate fouls will be called. The three calls that will be called the most are:
 - **dangerous play** (to ensure each child's safety)
 - **intentional hand balls** (not accidental hand balls)
 - **sliding tackles** (illegal in ALL LMSC intramural divisions)
- All free kicks will be "indirect" meaning that a goal may NOT result directly from the free kick. Players will be expected to restart the game with a pass. Again, the purpose of this is to try and teach the concept of "teammates."
- Opponents must be at least five yards away from the ball on all free kicks.
- Any foul committed just in front of one of the goals should be brought out to goal kick line.
- There are no penalty kicks in these age groups.
- There are no throw-ins. If the ball goes out of bounds, play will be restarted with an indirect kick.
- Opposing players must be at least 5 yards away on a free kick.
- Goal kicks will be taken from the anywhere along the goal kick line (approximately 6 yards from the goal line).
- Corner kicks will be taken from the corner of the field.
- In all situations, coaches and referees are to use common sense and improvise as needed to ensure the safety, happiness and well being of each child.