



Iowa Soccer League-Tryout Tips: For Parents

Tryout Overview:

Tryouts provide the opportunity to observe and evaluate all interested players (in and outside of the Club) and appropriately place them into developmentally appropriate teams that align with the player's stage of development, skill level and level of commitment. It is crucial that you, as a responsible parent, are well informed about the organization and the team formation process (i.e. tryout dates, selection criteria, club philosophy, club coaches, etc.).

Step 1: Pre-Tryout

During the two weeks prior to attending clubs tryouts, research the clubs thoroughly. Some things to consider as you explore select soccer:

- + Is your child ready for Select soccer and at the level the club has to offer?
- + What type of club are you looking for (i.e. small/large, local, regional, and competitive/highly competitive)?
- + What is the cost of the program?
- + Is the cost something you can afford?
- + What is included in the cost and what is not included?
- + Does the club offer scholarship support or financial assistance programs?
- + Does the team/age group commitment to travel align with your child and families commitment?

Step 2: Attend Tryouts

When attending tryouts, players and parents are encouraged to give consideration to the following areas. From the time you attend tryouts, to the time bids are offered, it is the responsibility of the parent to do their research on the club.

General Questions:

- + How organized is the tryout?
- + How well does the club leadership communicate before, during, and after tryouts?
- + What information do they provide regarding the specific age group your child is interested in joining?
- + What is the annual calendar look like from a training, league play, and tournaments perspective?
- + Who is the coach going to be for the team?
 - + Is the coach someone that will be a good fit for your child's personality and development?
 - + How long does the coach stay with the age group (i.e. one, two or three year cycle)?
 - + Are the coaches licensed through a credible coach education association?
 - + What experience does the coach have with this particular age group/gender?

Player Development Questions:

- + Have you evaluated the soccer program from a player development perspectives?
- + What is the clubs philosophy on player development?
- + What is the clubs selection criteria when assessing players and why?
- + Does the club have a history of success in player development?
- + Does the club have a player pathway that has a seamless transition between age groups?
- + What is the club structure like from a coaching perspective?
 - o Who do you contact if you have questions?
- + Does the club have an age/developmentally appropriate curriculum?
 - o Is there continuity in the curriculum across all age groups so coaches are working from the same blueprint when educating players from one stage of development to the next?
- + Does the club have a player evaluation tool in place to provide
- + Did your child enjoy the tryout and how did they interact with the players and coaches?

Note: it is crucial that parents do their homework and select a club that is the best fit for their child, not necessarily the club that is perceived to be the best club. The process of selecting a club should be focused on what is the best team/age group/club for your child's development.

What Parents and Coaches CAN and CANNOT do during the tryout Process.

What Parents Can Do?	What Parents Can't Do?
Attendance: players can attend as many club tryouts as they desire and as many clubs as they desire during the designated tryout window. Parents and players should not feel fear or pressure from any club, especially their current club when exploring their options.	Attendance: during tryouts parents should not be speaking to other players or parents to influence their decision. Parents and players should be able to make their own decision on what is the best environment for their child.
Communication: You can call a club or a coach at any time to gather general information about the club and the process. Please note that if you call a club or coach that they should only call you back one time and answer questions that you have asked.	Communication: Parents cannot ask the club about the team a child will be placed on prior to the official bid day. Parents cannot make random calls to one another to influence/sway other family decisions. You cannot be the vehicle for a coach's attempt to illegally recruit players. You cannot call or try to generate interest for players from another club. The intent is not to prevent families, friends or neighbors from different clubs from talking with one another, the intent is to prevent parents who are trying to act as a vehicle to recruit players away and circumvent the rules.

What Coaches Can Do?	What Coaches Can't Do?
Attendance: Only coaches from the club hosting the tryout should be present at tryouts.	Attendance: Coaches cannot be present at another clubs tryouts.
Communication: During the tryout window, coaches can respond to communication/calls from parents asking about general club information. Contact from the club after tryouts shall be limited to one informational email (i.e., age group and number of teams, schedule of events, practice schedules, coach of the team, and bid day process), with only pertinent details about the program and the bid day.	Communication: During the tryout window, coaches cannot randomly call parents, or players, to influence their decision making process. Coaches cannot contact players from another club at any time who have not attended their tryouts.

Step 3: Bid Process

All players who attend tryouts will receive feedback from the club to confirm which program/team they have been placed on within their club. By bid day, the parents and players should have completed a thorough analysis of the club and should be, at this stage in the process, ready to make a final decision.

Timeline	Process
8:00am	Players receive bid from club tryouts they attended. The bid can come in the form of an email or phone call. Player can accept or decline their bid any time after 8:00am and before 8:00pm of bid day.
8:01pm	If a player does not respond that they are accepting a bid by 8:00pm on bid day, the club is able to reissue the bid to another player who is on the alternate list.

Parent note: it is critically important that players and parents communicate clearly and quickly their intentions as to which club they are joining (i.e. accepting the bid). It is equally important that all players communicate to the clubs they are not going to join (i.e. decline a bid). Players or parents who wait too long run the risk of potentially losing their spot on the team. Moreover, please note that parents who delay the process are not only slowing the process for clubs to finalize their rosters, they are also, potentially, impacting the placement of other players who are on the alternate list waiting for an opportunity.

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