

Thunder Soccer Club

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U-12 thru U-14 Expectations

We, at Thunder Soccer Club, want to create the best environment for our soccer players to improve their skills to their maximum potential, and to provide the greatest opportunities for our teams to compete. We cannot set upon this journey alone and appreciate your support. **For our part, we have appointed coaches that have played or coached at the highest levels - most of them at the collegiate or professional level, some at the national level.** These coaches are not only aware of the required skills that the players must possess, but they also have a thorough understanding of the unique physical and emotional changes at these age groups. We would like you to understand what our position is on the development of young athletes:

- No matter what the age, fun should always be the first priority. Everyone must help to create an environment where the players want to be there.
- Coaches and adults have to set an example. Show respect for the opponent, the referee AND your child's teammates. Encouraging or teaching players to cheat or foul is wrong.
- Parents are encouraged to cheer for all the players but must respect the difference between cheering and coaching. Aside from possibly contradicting the coach, the player can easily be confused and distracted about whom to listen to.
- Players will learn that while it is good to be talented, talent alone is not enough if they are not prepared to put in the necessary practice. Proper commitment separates a champion from a pretender...
- Players are expected to practice at home and have ambitious goals for themselves and their team. It is expected that they must do a lot of work with and without the ball, and be committed to improvement.
- Attendance at two practices per week is mandatory. Players on the top team (especially), should expect a year-round commitment that includes fall and spring seasons, winter indoor soccer and summer training. Each team has their own expectations, which should be read very carefully!
- Training will revolve around technique, skill with speed, making quick, sound tactical decisions, and education of game situations.
- Teams will be entering the strongest possible leagues and tournaments so as to compete at the highest level.
- If appropriate, teams will also enter regional leagues such as Region 1 and MAPS.
- There are no playing time guarantees but each player will get some playing time. The coaches decide what player will play in what position.
- Winning, and developing a winning mentality is becoming very important!
- Multiple sports are OK as long as soccer is the TOP PRIORITY over other sports.