



"This is No Ordinary Soccer Club You're Dealing With."[™]

BLAST PLAYER EXPECTATIONS:

We aim to be clear in our expectations in order to help players and families to have the best chance at being successful. We are not and never will be the biggest club. Bigger clubs have harder times creating and managing their goals and objectives. Here, we consider ourselves perfectly sized to deliver a consistent message and to help our players exceed even their own expectations.

We are often asked about the following elements that tug at a players and families ability to be as committed as possible:

#1: Can I play a WINTER SPORT, and still play Blast Soccer?

Absolutely! We are fans of multi-sport athletes, we just expect and anticipate players to be disciplined enough to manage schoolwork and their commitments to other sports and to do everything they can to include Blast soccer. Often times, it means going from one sport to another on one or two nights a week over the winter to contribute to both teams. All part of the DREAM Development philosophy.



#2. Can I play a SPRING SPORT, and still play Blast Soccer?

Depends on the age. At younger ages, you can try to balance a spring sport. But from age 13 up, starting in late February or March, time for a spring priority gets much more difficult. We cover a lot of our development as we prepare for both upcoming tournaments and league. For those who do play a spring sport, a simple and clear understanding with a spring sport coach to establish soccer as a priority will eliminate the stress.

#3. Can I play HIGH SCHOOL soccer at the Blast?

Rules prohibit players from doing both. We feel, if you're playing on varsity, play high school. But, JV or B-Squad? Maybe not - Blast development may be more beneficial. However, while most high school programs will be a lower quality of play than club soccer, there is a social and community value that is important to gaining friends and belonging to your community. We do encourage players who have spent the past 10+ months of club soccer to take this break and enjoy an 8-10 week high school season and rejoin their club journey in October or November.



#4. Do I have to give up our family VACATIONS?

No, you don't. But, you will need to plan them carefully in order to not have them conflict with games and or training sessions when in-season. Most Blast teams u14 and older travel during school spring breaks, and often can be coupled as vacations.

#5. This is a year I may go to PROM or our SCHOOL FORMAL, can I still go?

We do understand the excitement around prom and school dances. And, unfortunately, Prom is often held over State Cup, and it may mean you're getting dressed in a hotel room (in playing in Mankato) after a State Cup game, coming home a little earlier than others on your big night and being prepared to work hard for your team the day of or the day after your prom.

#6. What is the story on WINTER TRAINING?

Winter training is essential to our player development program. We have 2-3 sessions per week and will add others as players age and events dictate. Winter training is not something to set aside while a winter sport is in session. We ask all players and families to balance schedules to the absolute best of your ability to be present and contributing to winter training sessions as often as you can. Even if it means arriving late or leaving early. It is important to your team and your teammates.



#7. Player FITNESS Expectations.

All our players have a core workout regimen we expect them to do 2-3 times per week on their own. We also will have actual "strength and conditioning" commitments 1-2 times per week as we approach spring. The reason is simple: everyone invests too much time and money to have any injuries that can be prevented through better physical health. So, we value these sessions.

#8. Player GRADE expectations.

We are focused on helping our older players become candidates for college programs as they age into these opportunities. That means helping all our players prioritize school and value achievement in the classroom. For our older players, we will meet ahead of our season, determine their commitment for grades and help ensure they are meeting their expectations along the way. It does not mean we skip sessions because a test or a project is upcoming. We would expect that you would have prioritized the test or project schedule, planned your study around it and would not have been surprised by a test or project. Often, the busier we are, the more productive we are.



#9. Player MENTORSHIPS.

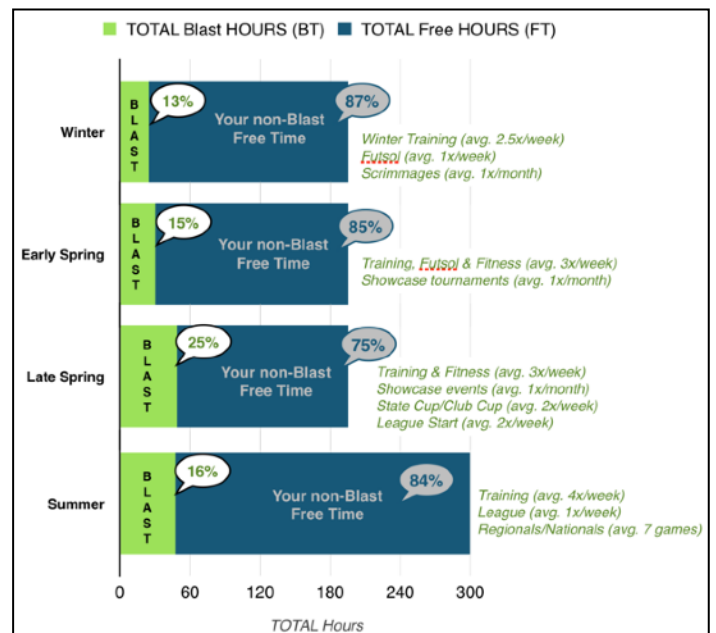
We have players in our program that can use help from our older, more seasoned players. These opportunities also help our mentors- and mentors-to-be prepare leadership qualities. We are fans of passing on the things we learned from - the things we valued - to others so they can benefit from our experiences. We have Jr. Blast, player camps, youth player development initiatives and other programs to help our players get involved in leadership opportunities.

#10. Actual TIME we are asking for.

As a high level club and having trained high level players, we understand what is necessary. We also understand what is too much. We are very careful and believe our program is the best at balancing time and expectations against high level player development. The reality is...the actual percentage of your TOTAL FREE TIME for each of these seasons look like this:

- (1) Winter - 13%;
- (2) Early Spring - 15%;
- (3) Late Spring - 25%;
- (4) Summer - 16%.

Collectively, the Blast is asking for just over 14% of your total available free time; far less than what people think. This is a very small and manageable number. With that, we can get a lot covered when we have everyone's full commitment.



This is a complete program for player development. While it might be something our younger players (u9-u11) may only take small roles in, they will be introduced to the Blast D.R.E.A.M. Development philosophy that we believe makes for successful and productive players and people.



Knowing it takes more than just trying hard.

High School v. Club Soccer

Some of the key differences between programs include:

Feature	High School Season	Club Season
Recognition	Greater Recognition	Less Recognition
<i>"Involvement in a high school program can be good for social engagement, personal recognition and keeping a connection to community."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognized in the hallways and by your peers as a member of the team. - See your name on a roster, in the school and community paper and, if you're lucky, in big print. - You get 20 - 200 fans to a game willing to cheer for the team. - You hear your name over loud speakers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virtually unrecognized by community. Only recognized by "soccer" community only if part of "good" club or team. - Name rarely shows up outside of player roster, club web page or player pass. - Might get 100 people to a HUGE playoff game; otherwise, family and maybe a few friends.
Glitz & Glamour	More Glitz & Glamour	Less Glitz & Glamour
<i>"High school programs can deliver more 'glamour' while club will deliver more substance."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Play at night under the lights. - Ride busses to games; sit in locker rooms - Have pep fest's before playoffs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few "spotlight" game opportunities to play on "center stage" settings. - Little to no fanfare around games or game preparation.
Development	Less Development	More Development
<i>"Short high school seasons and a priority to win over a focus on executing a style of play inhibits any development."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short season with many games leaves less/no time for quality player development. - Coaches tend to "live with" weaknesses and bank on players strengths to win games. - Coaches try to stick with a system and make players fit vs. adjusting system to player strengths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longer season allows for more planned development time and train against selective competition. - Coaches have time to train out player weaknesses and refine strengths. - Coaches have time to determine systems that leverage players strengths.
Skill Level	Less Skill Level	Greater Skill Level
<i>"A general lack of development focus and teams chosen by geography, reduces overall skill level in high school."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability levels from 3-4 age levels with players from various summer programs and levels. - Level of teams competitiveness varies dramatically based on smaller communities of players. - Disparity in league competitiveness based on varied level of team competitiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher skilled based on segmented ability levels (Rec, Competitive and Premier). - Unlimited geographic "boundaries" attract greater number of skilled players that increases team's average skill level. - With segmented team playing levels, more level competition throughout league.
Recruitment Opportunities	Less Recruitment Opportunities	More Recruitment Opportunities
<i>"College coaches also compete over fall high school seasons making attendance difficult; reduced skill level pushes college coaches to club for prospecting."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In fall season, college coaches are very busy and typically look for high school standouts; and validate them through summer programs. - Specialized or skilled athlete has less impact when missing complimenting teammates. (Fewer "really good" players on one team.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Players playing at higher levels are more immediately seen as more desirable, most committed players. - Ability to participate in higher levels of play (Regional, National events) where players can get more visibility. - Players have ability to compete against other high quality players during club season.
Risks & Rewards	Greater Risk - Less Reward	Less Risk - Greater Reward
<i>"Due to varying skill levels, wide spread in age groups, the multiple games per week schedule and less focused coaching, there is a greater tendency to be injured in a high school season."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RISK: Bodies from 14 to 17 playing against each other in far too many games can create fatigue that increases injury potential. - RISK: Choosing not to play freshman soccer can put players in high school coaches "dog house". - RISK: Playing club anywhere other than where the high school coach is at can create conflict. - REWARD: Playing with high level skills in less skilled environment can build player confidence. - REWARD: Ability to be part of a socially connected program can make you feel needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RISK: It takes planning and commitment to be part of a high level development program, leaving less time for social and multiple sport opportunities. - RISK: You spend time with people who may not be part of your immediate community of friends. - REWARD: Being part of an elite group brings you uniquely challenging elite opportunities. - REWARD: Having the discipline and responsibility requirements to be successful, translates to many other life skills.



Blast program fees are broken out into 5-6 monthly payments minus a \$500.00 initial payment.
 No Surprises. ALL coaching, training and program fees INCLUDED. Only Uniform and Travel costs are separate.

2022/23 Season Fees & Planning

	'15 U8	'14 u9	'13 u10	'12 u11	'11 u12	'10 u13	'09 u14	'08 u15	'07 u16	'06 u17	'05 u18	'04 u19
Program Fee 2022/23	\$900	\$1,500	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$2,100	\$2,100	\$2,300	\$2,300	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$1,600
* NO ADDITIONAL PROGRAM FEE'S:	▲ Includes <u>All</u> Program Fees! Only travel and uniforms carry additional cost. ▲											
Est. Uniform & Training Gear	—	*New players & Returning players needing new sizes. \$375 for 2 uniform tops, 3 shorts, 3 socks 3 training tops and 1 warm-up set										
Est. Tourney & Travel Costs	—	Travel fees based on event and billed ahead of departure. Estimate between \$250 - \$375/event NOT including any airfare.										

Est. TRAVEL Plan:	<i>Please see "Typical Season Timeline" for more travel planning details</i>						
Out of region "Fly" events	0	0	0	1	2	3	2
Regional "Drive" events	0	0	0	2	3	2	2
In-State "Local" events	6	4	4	3	2	2	2
TOTAL EST. EVENTS/YEAR	6	4	4	6	7	7	6
Est. Travel or Event Months	Fall & Summer	(Apr - July)	(Apr - July)	(Nov, Feb - July)	(Nov, Feb - July)	(Nov, Feb - July)	(Nov, Feb - July)

Est. DEVELOPMENT Plan:	Based on our full training and competitive plan, it is estimated that Blast players on average, spend <u>\$9.50/hour</u> for Blast Development						
Est. Training & Competitions	48	81	112	136	170	175	140
Total Training Sessions	24	54	84	102	136	140	112
<i>US Soccer Training: Game/Event Ratio</i>	2:1	2:1	3:1	3:1	4:1	4:1	3.5:1
<i>Train: Turf/Outdoor</i>	20	44	74	57	86	90	78
<i>Train: Futsal Sessions</i>	6	10	10	20	20	20	20
<i>Train: Strength & Fitness</i>	0	0	0	15	20	20	20
<i>Train: Blast Class</i>	0	0	0	10	10	10	10
Total Competition Matches	24	27	28	34	34	35	28
<i>Tournament Games</i>	10	12	12	18	21	21	15
<i>Friendlies/Scrimmages</i>	4	3	2	4	3	4	3
<i>League or Tournament Only Games</i>	10	12	14	12	10	10	10

*PROGRAM FEE'S include: coaches and trainers fees, indoor and outdoor rental, futsal sessions, field maintenance, equipment, league fees, referee fees, MYSa and US Club player registration, player insurance and costs for support coaches that come in later in season.

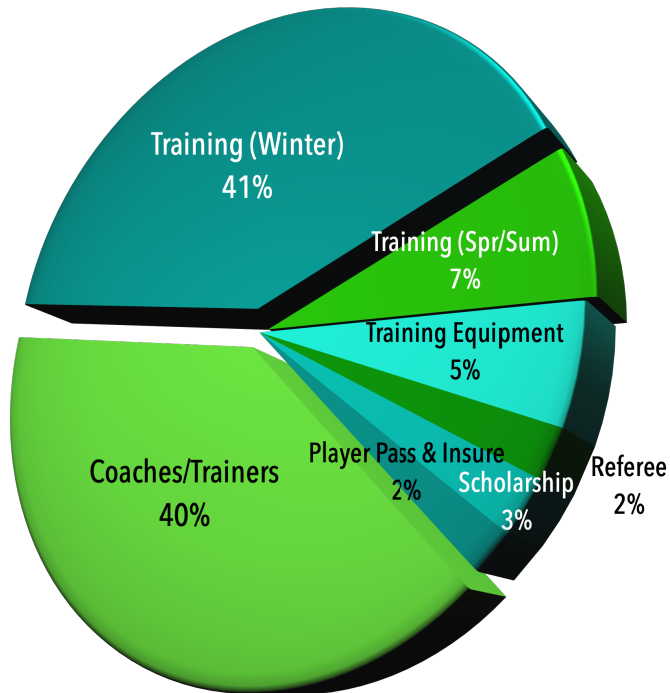


Blast Costs:

We are a smaller club that does not rely on a large recreational program to subsidize competitive teams. Age groups truly "pay their way" with expenses calculated and broken out so each age group covers its share of its costs. From coaching to field rental all the way down to player insurance and passes, we manage costs carefully

2022/23 Season Cost Breakouts

Average Team (age group) Expense



While each age group has a slightly different overall cost total, the percentages allocated to the costs are very much the same. In the end, over 80% of our costs go to training facilities and coaching staff, with the remaining +/- 20% covering player and training expenses.

Coaches & Trainer Expenses

Our coaching and training staff do not make their living off of coaching or as directors. They have primary jobs or are students, willing to give back to youth sports because they can and are willing to try and make our sport better.

1. Blast Coaching Fee Structure:

- Head Coaches: \$6,000 - \$8,000/Yr. (96% Attend Rqrd.)
- Assistant Coaches: \$2,000 - \$4,000/Yr. (75% Attend Rqrd)
u9/u10: 1 coach; u11/u12: 1.5 coach; u13/u14: 2 coaches;
u15/u16: 2 coaches; u17/u18: 2 coaches
- Trainers (club-wide): \$1,000 - \$3,500/Yr. (Paid Hourly)
* Trainers may be keeper, fitness or trainers to help run a set

2. Blast Directors:

- Program Directors [1]: \$4,000/Yr. (2-4 hrs/week)
* Build age-level programing and development plans.
- Technical Directors [2]: \$4,000/Yr. (2-4 hrs/week)
* Execute technical requirements by gender and age-level.
- Club Directors [1]: \$4,000/Yr. (2-4 hrs/week)
* Manage operational needs of organization.

There are a growing number of twin-city based clubs paying coaches over \$20,000 to coach a single team and directors of coaching (DOC's) making over \$85,000 annually. We do not feel this pay level is necessary to make our sport better.



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HOW BLAST FEES WORK

Blast fees are calculated over the course of the entire year. From tryouts through playoffs, the fees are used to pay for everything from coaches and facilities to player registrations league fees and our newer, "tournament only" competitive plan each year as well.

Age Level	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
u9/u10	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓			
u11/u12	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
u13/u14	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
u15/u16	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
u17/u18	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
u19	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓			

"Why the different fees for different ages?"

Blast players from u9 to u14 have a fall season that accounts for a fall league and training 2-3 times per week. This cost for younger players gets offset during winter when younger players do not have the exact same amount of weekly training hours.

With our indoor space costs higher, our older players will see more winter training time than our younger players will. Which does increase the overall cost for training for players 14 and older.



"How are coaches and trainers paid?"

Our club is unique in that we have set amounts for head coaches and assistants. We have small flexibility to adjust, allowing our head coaches to earn between \$6,000 and \$8,000 per year for teams u14 and older; and \$4,000 - \$6,000 for u14 and younger. Assistants receive between \$2,000 and \$4,000. We have used this model every year to find coaches who are also "professionals" or in career paths and not looking to make a living out of soccer. We believe it paints a more accurate picture for our players. Still, we find quality, knowledgeable and passionate coaches each year.

Recently, budgets from larger MN clubs were inadvertently made public showing some head coaches of "top teams" earning \$20,000 per team and assistants at \$10,000. These clubs are also paying directors between \$40,000 and \$85,000 annually. The Blast pays its directors \$4,000 per year. These are clubs Blast teams have beaten regularly in competition. The point here is not to reveal the unfortunate "money grab" in youth sports, but to inform our members we pay the same amount for our teams - nobody get's "special consideration" based on a coach who demands/needs more money. In fact, as a club, the Blast has the largest percentage of premier teams in the club and the smallest coaching budget accordingly.

"What if my child cannot make winter training?"

We are unable to provide different costs for all the variables for all our players. We find that once a family understand the DREAM Development philosophy and works to incorporate Blast training into their other sport calendar, they find that can make most sessions. So, they do ultimately benefit from training despite having a winter sport.

"What if my child is injured?"

We do provide some relief for players who will be out for longer than 30 days. In cases of surgeries and such, we do our best to accommodate cost reductions. At the same time, we also have a complete Rehab plan we offer for post-surgical players and rehabbing players to keep them engaged and ready to compete as soon as ready and cleared by physicians.

We hope this helps answer questions about Blast fees.



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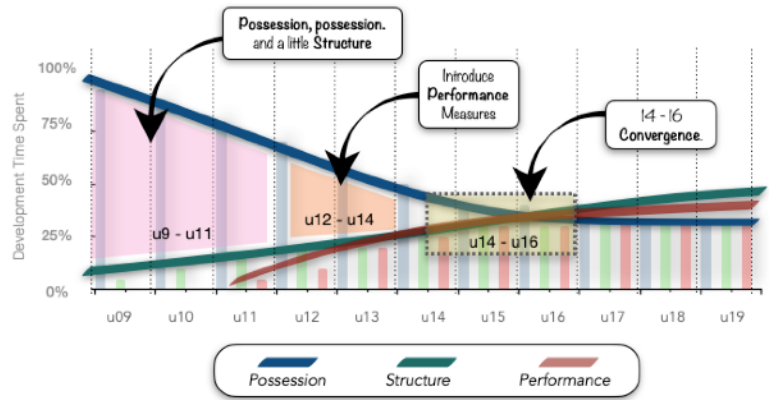
Possession-Structure-Performance Development

We focus on Possession from the start and continue possessional development throughout the Blast journey. Once possession is prioritized, we turn some of our focus on Structure to help players understand how we defend and how we transition into attack. With possession and some level of structure understood, we begin to use some performance expectations to help teams see where they are progressing and where we need work.

In our opinion, too many programs focus on "winning" (performance) before a style of play (structure) that uses everyone's skillsets on the field (possession) has been firmly established. So, teams become accustomed to "winning" or "performing" before they know what it is they are supposed to be performing much less how to actually do it.

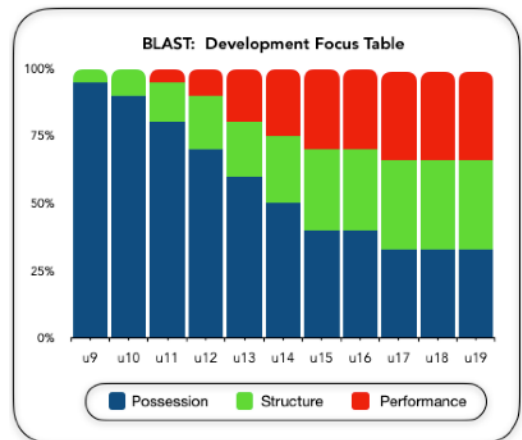
We believe it is always harder to take "success" away, than it is to keep building toward it. The young player, age nine, ten or eleven, who "wins" games by outscoring the opponent, by a little or a lot, begins to expect these kinds of results, despite not knowing how the results are achieved. Did they contribute? Do they feel valued? Will they keep investing?

If the results come from the efforts of only a few, over time, either those few will leave in search of greater purpose or satisfaction, or those remaining will feel less and less valued and able to contribute, eventually quitting the game.



Blast development goals have purpose that involve everyone. Our goals build over time, allowing people time to improve. It is a system for development. It is our roadmap to success.

Our development model typically has our young teams losing - often substantially - at 9, 10 and 11. Our proof that other programs do not value possession or structure is in the lopsidedness of their "victories". A team that wins 10, 11 or 12 to zero clearly does not see all the areas they could be developing. Instead, they are developing a handful of players with a single set of skills. This will not serve them or their program well in the future.



So, we educate and train our players and our families through this young "losing" curve to help them see a development model that will best fit their growth (intelligence and physical) in the years ahead.

NOSC Training Set Breakout: Number of touches



We create training blocks to meet our possession metrics. We provide players with an large number of touches in every training session to develop the possessional skills we need to be effective in competition.

TYPICAL TRAINING SESSION BREAKOUT							
		Typical BLAST Session		Typical "other club" session			
BLAST TRAINING BLOCK	Players in Block	TRAINING MINS	EST. TOUCHES	MINS	EST. TOUCHES		
BLOCK 1: Technical #1	1-3 players	15 minutes	600	5 minutes	200		
BLOCK 2: Technical #2	4-6 players	20 minutes	235	10 minutes	120		
BLOCK 3: Tech/Tact #1	7-8 players	15 minutes	50	10 minutes	30		
BLOCK 4: Tech/Tact #2	9-11 players	15 minutes	30	15 minutes	30		
BLOCK 5: Interplay Small	12-14 players	15 minutes	20	25 minutes	15		
BLOCK 6: Interplay Large	12-14 players	10 minutes	10	25 minutes	15		
TOTAL TRAINING		90 minutes	945	90 minutes	410		
TRAINING BLOCK TOUCH COUNTS							
Training Block	Player/Ball Ratio	Technical% vs. Tactical %	Est. Avg. Touches/Second	TRAINING MINUTES:			
				5:00	10:00	15:00	20:00
Technical #1 - Option A	1 player: 1 ball	TECH - 100% / TACT - 0%	1 touch every 1.5 seconds	200	400	600	795
Technical #1 - Option B	2 players: 1 ball	TECH - 100% / TACT - 0%	1 touch every 2.5 seconds	120	240	360	475
Technical #1 - Option C	3 players: 1 ball	TECH - 100% / TACT - 0%	1 touch every 3 seconds	100	200	300	395
Technical #2 - Option A	4 players: 1 ball	TECH - 90% / TACT - 10%	1 touch every 5 seconds	60	120	180	235
Technical #2 - Option B	5 players: 1 ball	TECH - 90% / TACT - 10%	1 touch every 8 seconds	40	80	110	145
Technical #2 - Option C	6 players: 1 ball	TECH - 80% / TACT - 20%	1 touch every 15 seconds	30	50	80	95
Tech/Tact #1 -- Option A	7 players: 1 ball	TECH - 50% / TACT - 50%	1 touch every 18 seconds	20	30	50	65
Tech/Tact #1 - Option B	8 players: 1 ball	TECH - 50% / TACT - 50%	1 touch every 22 seconds	20	30	40	48
Tech/Tact #2 - Option A	9 players: 1 ball	TECH - 30% / TACT - 70%	1 touch every 28 seconds	20	20	30	40
Tech/Tact #2 - Option B	10 players: 1 ball	TECH - 30% / TACT - 70%	1 touch every 36 seconds	10	20	30	35
Tech/Tact #2 - Option C	11 players: 1 ball	TECH - 30% / TACT - 70%	1 touch every 48 seconds	10	10	20	25
Interplay (small) - Option A	12 players: 1 ball	TECH - 20% / TACT - 80%	1 touch every 58 seconds	10	10	20	25
Interplay (small) - Option B	14 players: 1 ball	TECH - 20% / TACT - 80%	1 touch every 70 seconds	10	10	20	15
Interplay (large) - Option A	16 players: 1 ball	TECH - 20% / TACT - 80%	1 touch every 82 seconds	n/a	10	20	15
Interplay (large) - Option B	18 players: 1 ball	TECH - 20% / TACT - 80%	1 touch every 95 seconds	n/a	10	10	15
Game Play	22 players: 1 ball	TECH - 10% / TACT - 90%	1 touch every 140 seconds	n/a	10	10	15
AVERAGE TRAINING TOUCHES PER SESSION/WEEK/MONTH/SEASON							
TOTAL TRAINING		BLAST SESSION		Other Club Session			
<i>5 Blocks for u13 and younger</i>		EST. TOUCHES/SESSION	945	EST. TOUCHES/SESSION	410		
<i>6 Blocks for u13 and older</i>		EST. TOUCHES/WEEK	2,840	EST. TOUCHES/WEEK	1,230		
		EST. TOUCHES/SEASON	90,880	EST. TOUCHES/SEASON	39,360		
AVERAGE COMPETITIVE TOUCHES PER PLAYER							
Game Play	Players on Field	FULL GAME Minutes	Est. Touches/GAME	HALF Minutes	Est. Touches/HALF		
<i>Game (90:00): u18/u17</i>	22	<i>80 - 90 minutes</i>	46	<i>40 - 45 minutes</i>	23		
<i>Game (80:00): u16/u15</i>	22	<i>70 - 80 minutes</i>	41	<i>35 - 40 minutes</i>	20		
<i>Game (80:00): u14/u13</i>	22	<i>70 - 80 minutes</i>	41	<i>35 - 40 minutes</i>	20		
<i>Game (70:00): u12/u11</i>	18	<i>60 - 70 minutes</i>	29	<i>30 - 35 minutes</i>	14		
<i>Game (60:00): u10/u9</i>	18	<i>50 - 60 minutes</i>	15	<i>25 - 30 minutes</i>	8		

NOSC Training Set Breakout: Number of touches



We create training blocks to meet our possession metrics. We provide players with an large number of touches in every training session to develop the possessional skills we need to be effective in competition.

◀-----15:00-----▶▶-----20:00-----▶▶-----15:00-----▶▶-----15:00-----▶▶-----15:00-----▶▶-----10:00-----▶

BLOCK 1: Technical	BLOCK 2: Technical	BLOCK 3: Tech/Tact	BLOCK 4: Tech/Tact	BLOCK 5: Inter-SM	BLOCK 6: Inter-LG
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BLOCK 1: Technical	10-20 Mins	1 - 3 PLAYERS
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- Z-Drill
- Passing Grids
- Dribble Grids

VIDEO

BLOCK 2: Technical	15-25 Mins	4 - 6 PLAYERS
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- Lay-off Grids
- Cross-over Channels
- Slide-Support squares; 2v2v2

VIDEO

BLOCK 3: Technical & Tactical	10-20 Mins	7 - 8 PLAYERS
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- 3-2-2-1-1-1; Red-Green-Blue
- 5v2; 4v3
- Transition grids

VIDEO

BLOCK 4: Technical & Tactical	10-20 Mins	9 - 11 PLAYERS
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- Lane Change Grids
- 3v3v3; 2v2v2 w/side support
- 4v4v3

VIDEO

BLOCK 5: Interplay Small	0-15 Mins	12 - 14 PLAYERS
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- Build-up play from technical sets
- Open small situational play (6v6, 7v7, 4v4v4, etc...)
- Set-pieces

VIDEO

BLOCK 6: Interplay Large	0-15 Mins	12 - 14 PLAYERS
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- Build-up play from technical sets
- Open large situational play
- Set-pieces

VIDEO

PLAY-UPS



As part of the club's focus on high level play and player development, there will be times players will "play up" at an older age to be challenged or to increase the competitive level of a team.

How are PLAY-UP Player's selected? PLAY-UP players will show skill delivery that falls in the **top 10% of their current age level and in the top 50% of the age level they are being considered for PLAY-UP.**

Development directors use three elements to identify this criteria:

- (1) Players that consistently demonstrate a high-level effort and a positive attitude in training and games;
- (2) Players that consistently deliver high level possession-based technical skills and;
- (3) Players that consistently reveal high-level soccer IQ, and/or show tactical awareness.

PLAY-UP players are identified in training and in competitive events. They are players considered capable of playing at an older age level where more complex movements and a deeper awareness of the game is necessary to be successful at quicker speeds of play and with higher rates of execution.

Why PLAY-UP's: While PLAY-UPS are not limited by age group, at u14 and above, the club does prioritize being highly competitive in league and at events. For these reasons, PLAY-UP decisions may be made simply to have sufficient substitutes. However, most often, PLAY-UP decisions are more complex; like increasing the tactical or technical execution by position. Sometimes we select players to expose them to the next level of development as a way to gauge a more aggressive development opportunity.

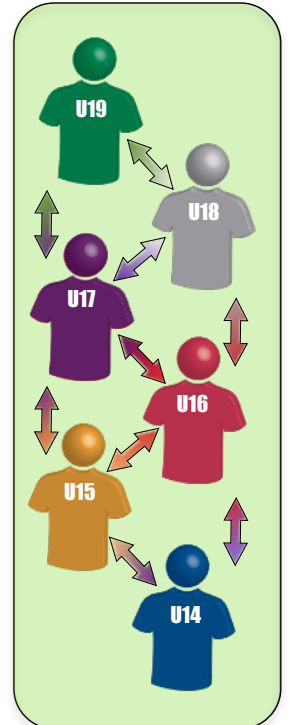
Club Impact: PLAY-UP movement benefits players and teams both directions. Either by increasing or filling out a positional skill set of the team receiving the PLAY-UP player; or the team "loaning" the PLAY-UP player benefiting when a PLAY-UP player returns, sharing their growth with current team. And while the "soccer-side" benefits, so does the culture. "Cross-pollinating" players through the system helps them prepare and shows other players where opportunities are based on hard work and improved skill sets.

Team Impact: A PLAY-UP decision is done with a great deal of thought. The club looks at how the player moving will be affected, just as we consider how the players who will have a play-up player will be affected. We consider if we feel a player is ready to be challenged and if they have developed enough technical skill sets to be comfortable at a higher level. A final decision takes many of these things into consideration and makes a decision we feel is best for everyone involved.

Player Impact: We also know the first couple times, a player being offered to PLAY UP may hesitate and maybe even reject an opportunity. Eventually, the player becomes comfortable enough to acclimate and embrace new team dynamics. We will not offer a PLAY UP to a player we do not think is ready. We fully appreciate the need to keep building confidence.

"How do I develop the skills to be considered at the top of my age group?" PLAY-UP's challenge the thinking and attitude of all players. How players respond will play an important part in defining them as players and as people. First, we urge all our players to deliver a high level training effort and positive attitude every opportunity they have. Decisions are made from what is seen in training, typically, not in games. Second, stay focused on delivering high-possession oriented technical skills. Lastly, watch some soccer. Recognize tactical movements. See the game clearer.

Like all the other things we do, we seek to continue to challenge our athletes and provide them with opportunities that are unique to developing high level players. This truly is, "No Ordinary Soccer Club You're Dealing With."





TOURNAMENT ONLY PLAN

Updated for 2022-23 Season

Age Level	Estimated Number Of Games/Season								Total Games	Total Trains	Train > <Game
	Fall Games	Fall Train	Winter Games	Winter Train	Spring Games	Spring Train	Summer Games	Summer Train			
u8 - u10	12	20	3	30	10	36	12	32	37	118	3.2
u11 - u12	12	20	4	30	8	36	14	32	38	118	3.1
u13- u14	12	20	4	36	10	30	12	30	38	116	3.1
u15 - u16	3	6	6	36	14	30	14	30	37	102	2.8
u17 - u18/19	4	6	7	36	14	30	12	30	37	102	2.8

* Plan assumes reaching two semi's and at least one final per season

Goal is 32 games a season

Season	Month	State	Event	Date (known)	Teams
Fall	September	Iowa	Just For Girls	9/17 - 9/18	u11 - u14
Fall	September	Minnesota	Shakopee Fall Cup	9/17 - 9/18	u8 - u13
Fall	September	Minnesota	NSC Fall Cup	9/24 - 9/25	u8 - u14
Fall	October	Minnesota	Coon Rapid Fall Cup	10/7 - 10/9	u8 - u14
Fall	October	Minnesota	Salvo Fall Classic	10/7 - 10/9	u8 - u14
Fall	October	Minnesota	St Croix Boarder Cup	10/14 - 10/16	u8 - u14
Fall	November	Minnesota	NSC Showcase	11/4 - 11/4	u15 - u18
Fall	November	Missouri	SLSG College Showcase	11/4 - 11/5	u15 - u19
Winter	December	Florida	Disney		MN Blast Combo Team
Winter	January	Minnesota	Friendlies/Scrimmage		u8 - u14
Winter	February	Minnesota	Friendlies/Scrimmage		u8 - u14
Winter	February	Phoenix	PDT		Selected Premier Teams
Winter	March	Las Vegas	Player Showcase		Selected Premier Teams
Spring	April	Texas	Dallas International		MN Blast Combo Team
Spring	April	Indiana	Crossroads of America		u15 - u19 Premier teams
Spring	April	Ohio	Bluechip		u15 - u19 Premier teams
Spring	May	Minnesota	Wave Future Stars		u8 - u16 Non premier teams
Spring	May	Minnesota	NSC Spring Cup		u8 - u16 Non premier teams
Spring	May	Minnesota	President Cup		Premier 2 teams
Spring	May	Minnesota	Shakopee Cup		u8 - u13
Spring	May	Minnesota	State Cup		Premier 1 teams
Spring	May	Minnesota	Rev It Up		u9 - u13
Summer	June	Minnesota	All America		Club event all teams
Summer	June	Minnesota	Lakeville Cup		u8 - u14
Summer	June	Minnesota	Coon Rapid Cup		u8 - u14
Summer	June	Illinois	US Club Regional		u13 - u19
Summer	June		USYS Regional		u13 - u19
Summer	July	Minnesota	USA Cup		u9 - u15
Summer	July	Colorado	US Club Nationals		u13 - u19
Summer	July		USYS Nationals		u13 - u19

**Team/Player
Itineraries**



**Coordinated
Hotel Planning**



**Group Ground
Transportation**



The BLAST Road Less Traveled:

We know our choice of travel is much harder to execute, more challenging to set-up and one that requires more resources to support properly.

However, we have also found our travel plan consistently delivers eventual success for our players not only on the field, but off.

Please know, we chose the harder path not to make things difficult or uncomfortable. We choose the harder path only when it is most likely to provide the greatest rewards.

We will continue to dedicate time, resources and energy to maintaining our Blast travel expectations.

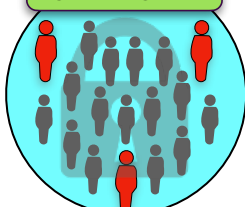
**"COLLEGE-STYLE"
3 or 4 Per Room**



**TEAM
MEALS**



**WELL
CHAPERONED**



**TEAM/PLAYER
MEETINGS**



**24 HOURS / 3 to 4
DAYS OF TEAM**



**Team Meeting
Areas**



**TEAM
CHALLENGES**





"This is No Ordinary Soccer Club You're Dealing With."™

WHY WE TRAVEL

"Life begins at the end of your comfort zone."

– Neale Donald Walsch

We travel:

- (1) To be technically pressured and tactically challenged by better players and teams;
- (2) To execute the skills we are developing at a faster pace with greater consistency;
- (3) To adequately prepare for local-based events ahead of league season.
- (4) To get to know our teammates on a more personal and or individual level.
- (5) To reinforce our D.R.E.A.M. Development Philosophy.

1. Development Priority:

We try to select travel events that challenge us in as many conceivable ways so we can determine if our current development process is meeting the development expectations we had before starting the season.

And, unless it is to accomplish a goal like winning a regional or national title, we will not travel to an event to "win it" or to try and earn "points" to achieve a higher soccer ranking. Because of this philosophy, our travels may be seen as "unsuccessful". However, what we are able to learn from our events, and how they help us measure our development progress, our participation makes the travel experience way more valuable than any trophy or title ever will be. For that reason, we highly value the entire travel experience and process, not simply the results.

2. Deepen the D.R.E.A.M. development philosophy:

An equally important reason for Blast travel is to continue preparing us for so many experiences ahead of us; not just soccer. High school where work loads are heavier and more complex. College when we're balancing school, work and maybe a sport demands that will demand a lot of planning, organization and communication. And, from all this, eventually, a world where life is a careful balance of family, work and play that may find a player working with younger kids, instilling the same process all over again.



When traveling, our D.R.E.A.M. objectives remain the same: be Disciplined in our technical and tactical expectations; be a Responsible collection of individuals representing their team and our club; put forward your best Effort under new, unique and challenging conditions; carry a positive and productive team Attitude that reveals a quality and successful program; use these things to continually be Motivated to reach our goals.

Our travel experiences as a soccer team is a very important pre-cursor to our players ability to grow their independence to becoming not just more complete players and teammates, but more complete people.

Playing time for PRE-Season Regional and National Travel Events:

From a playing time perspective, we do not see pre-season regional travel any differently than national pre-season travel. The intent for both is to be challenged and grow ahead of season. It is not to win an event. Therefore, we will plan for equal playing time for all as much as possible. Please know, if a player has not attended a majority of training, but is available for an event, we will likely adjust playing time for that player accordingly.

As we approach the event date (5-7 weeks out) , we may limit rosters based on who has committed to an event. If necessary, we may combine teams or add committed players to teams with room so we can begin the planning process early and help families minimize costs by committing to travel costs as early as possible.

Playing time for IN-Season Regional and National Travel Events:

While we still recognize the added cost for National ravel vs. Regional travel, when we are in-season, and traveling to National events, it is because the event will provide team exposure and potentially opportunity to be invited to even more competitive events in the future. Because of that, we will play these in-season events to win, vs grow and develop. However, we will make every effort to have equal playing across the entire event and alter play-off games differently.

We value our travel events and see them as great opportunities to grow as players, as teammates and as a club.



Blast 2022-23 Info Deck:

- **Leagues and League Performance**
- **The “alphabet soup” of soccer**
- **Soccer Marketing 101**
- **Blast Development**
- **College talk & Blast Start-up**

Heading into 2022/23:

We are eagerly awaiting the start of the 2022/23 season. But, also very much looking forward to getting players through try-outs where after, they can take a breath, relax a bit and enjoy the rest of summer break.

We feel it is essential for all considering being part of Blast in 2022/23 to understand why we do what we do and why we have been able to deliver success year after year.

This time of year, there can be apprehension about the upcoming season. Some of this surrounds league play and travel plans and, for others, the level of support for multiple sport athletes. We will cover our beliefs here.

Briefly, while we understand people’s anxiety about league play, the reality is that only 10% of our competitions occur in league. Our events comprise 90% of our competitive opportunity. And, in this 90%, we can plan ideal training cycles between events. So, while league play feels essential, and we always have plans for it, every year, we also have alternate plans if a league is not strong enough to hold our interest.

We prioritize training and always have. As an example, we know our best train-to-game ratios average 6:1 in winter; 4:1 in spring and at least 2:1 in summer. On average, we get a 3:1 training to game ratio by the end of the year.

We also know that insufficient training cycles in winter make unprepared players come spring. And, too many games at the end of a development cycle (summer) is unsafe, with “nagging” injuries and less recovery time for players.

That said, leagues that start in December would not give us the development time we need and likely, compromise player safety. Plus, winter league demand would eliminate or reduce our winter event availability.

We also find that traveling every other weekend over winter and spring for one game on Saturday and one on Sunday is not an ideal use of funds when an event can deliver 3-5 games and provide better culture development.

One of our club’s advantages is our size. Our smaller size allows us to deliver what we do and how we do it consistently. We know our plan is best managed over hundreds of players, not thousands.

We have chosen a path different from other clubs. That path and the players that have truly followed it have found consistent and repeatable success year after year.

We have found a development, competitive, and culture-building plan that works for our players. Once established, our players and families make it stronger every year.

1. **The Blast League Plan:**

The Blast is an MYSA Club based on MYSA’s affiliation with USYSA that delivers a Promotion-Relegation process for competitive teams from u14 - u18. We feel the “earn-it” philosophy represents the kind of competitive mentality that best prepares athletes for high-level development.

For 2022/23, we are prepared to compete again at the MYSA Premier I and II levels. However, just as we plan every year, if MYSA competition is not strong enough, we will implement our “Tournament Only” competitive plan, where we select the events that best suit our competitive objectives.

Click to see our updated:
[Tourney Plan for 2022/23](#)

We actually believe our Tournament Only plan is ideal for player development, but have willingly participated in a league that also suits our competitive philosophy. We will do so again for 2023 providing the league is strong enough.

2. Why Not Minnesota's NPL League?

Blast leadership has been involved in Minnesota soccer for over a collective 50 years. We've seen it all and still, thoroughly assess every opportunity that comes forward each year. For us, a Minnesota NPL opportunity is not a good fit at this time. Here is why:

(a) Compromises our Developmental Focus:

From December to April, when NPL league games start, our priority is player development and using selected events to assess and/or adjust our development plan. Focusing on league play when we may not have the numbers or commitments would disrupt our development plan over several months.

(b) Unable to Support Multi-Sport Athletes:

We support multiple sport athletes. But, we do expect them to participate in as many of our winter training and events as possible. Still, a league that starts in December and runs through May makes it very difficult for multi-sport athletes to participate consistently.

(c) Not Part of Our Competitive Objective:

The current US Club-based program (Minnesota NPL league) does not fit our competitive objectives. The Minnesota NPL continues to be back-filled with teams that have not shown a history of Premier level play.

(d) Set up for Larger Clubs with Disposable Funds

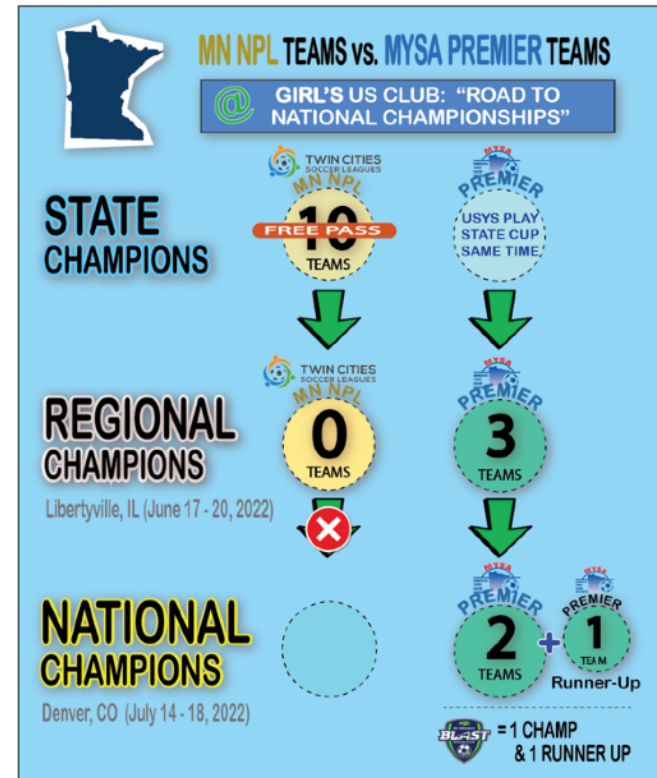
We are skeptical of a model where clubs can select the level of play based on the size of their club and the amount they are willing to pay. We have not found that the size of a club or the higher the cost for the program translates to stronger competition or greater success.

(e) MN NPL Lacking History of Success.

Our belief around the size and higher cost is not translating to success. This is not just a feeling we have. We have tracked the data for several years now.

It is worth noting that very few of MN NPL's larger clubs want the Blast in the MN NPL league. This despite Blast delivering regional and national success; this despite Blast being part of the original 5 member clubs to start Minnesota's first US Club league.

The facts are that the current NPL in Minnesota is not developing teams that are showing success at a National or Regional Level. Some quick facts from the recent 2021-22 Post-Season:



- 6 NPL Girls teams from Minnesota's NPL skipped NPL Regionals and went directly to NPL Nationals.
None of the 6 Minnesota NPL Girl's teams advanced out of their pool at NPL Nationals. (Exclusive to NPL teams)
- 12 Minnesota NPL teams went to US Club Regionals after winning their NPL event in Minnesota;
None of the Minnesota NPL teams advanced out of US Club Premier division pool at US Club Regionals.
- 10 Minnesota NPL girls teams were sent directly to US Club Nationals, (skipping Regionals) to play in the US Club Nationals highest "Super Group" division in Denver.

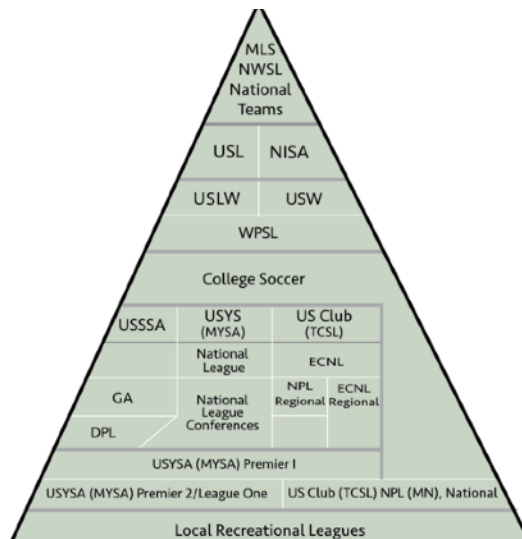
None of these Minnesota NPL teams made it out of their "Super Group" pool. (See graphic above)

- 3 MYSA Girls Premier teams competed in the same "Super Group" division at US Club Regionals.
All 3 MYSA (MN) Girls Teams advanced to US Club "Super Group" National event in Denver.
- All 3 MYSA Girls played in the same "Super Group" at US Club Nationals in Denver; as did the MN NPL teams.
All 3 MYSA (MN) Girls Teams advanced to a US Club "Super Group" Final at National in Denver.
- 2 of the 3 teams in the US Club "Super Group" National Championships were Blast teams:
 - * Blast u17's played Legends FC (OH) and won the Championship 3-1.
 - * Blast u18 played u19 Salvo (MN) and Blast took 2nd, losing 0-1.

It is concerning that not one of the 10 Minnesota NPL teams advanced out of the higher "Super Group" division or even the lower "Premier" division pools at NPL Regionals, US Club Regionals; or US Club Nationals.

However, all 3 Minnesota MYSA teams (2 of them Blast teams) that earned their way through Regionals to play at US Club Nationals, advanced out of the higher "Super Group" division's at Nationals and went on to win a championship or take 2nd place.

- US Soccer Pyramid of Alphabet Soup:**
The US Soccer Federation is the governing



body for soccer in the United States. The graphic "pyramid" shows the various US Soccer levels and tiers:

Local competitive leagues are usually governed by their respective **US Soccer State Associations, which are in turn governed by USYS.**

Here are the regional and national league options available through US Soccer:

(a) National League (USYS)

Like most local competitive leagues, the **National League ultimately falls under USYS.** The National League has 13 regional Conferences. Teams *earn their way into their Conferences based on success in competitive opportunities within their respective US Youth Soccer State Associations.*

Unique to USYS is a Promotion-Relegation system among Divisions based on end of season results. Unlike individual Conferences where travel is regional, the locations for

National League events involve national travel that often begin late fall or early winter.

(b) ECNL (US Club):

Elite Clubs National League is also sanctioned by US Club Soccer. There are currently 12 regionally based conferences. Like the NPL, the ECNL is a club commitment and each club must maintain fairly high standards with respect to facilities and coaching.

(c) NPL (National Premier League US Club):

The National Premier League falls within US Club Soccer. There are 20 *somewhat regional* member leagues in the NPL. The NPL is a *club commitment.* In other words, if a club wants to participate in the NPL, they must put a team in at every age group.

This is different than the National League in which individual teams qualify. There are certain fairly low minimum standards that must be maintained to qualify as a member club.

NPL - MN (National Premier League - US Club)

The NPL has allowed certain states to create their own "National" League in which their own states teams compete against their own local teams.

MN NPL is different that the USYS Premier leagues, in that it does not have the promotion-relegation standards; and MN NPL is a club commitment, whereas USYS leagues are team commitments. In these MN NPL leagues, teams and or clubs select the levels

they choose to play in and their decisions are approved by a for-profit director, or chosen members of delegate clubs.

MN NPL has arranged for teams to bypass regionals and go straight to nationals if they place high enough in NPL (state) leagues.

4. **Blast's take on "League play":**

- (a) **Fan of "Earn-It" Mentality for older ages:**
The Blast fully supports the "earn it" (aka promotion-relegation) philosophy to competition that exists at MYSA. We feel this most accurately defines competitive clubs and teams as opposed to clubs being able to buy their way into levels of there choosing. We feel these types of decisions are ultimately based on a club's size and the annual revenues they collect and in no way resembles a club's quality of play.
- (b) **Not a fan of leagues requiring club commitment.**
It is unlikely that a club can field strong teams at every age level. It is more likely that a club will have strong teams at certain ages and that these teams would provide strong national level competition.

The unseen pitfall in the club requirement is that other clubs investing significant travel expenses only to discover a club does not have a strong team to challenge them, will likely seek to avoid these expensive journeys in the future.

In some respects, that is how MN NPL was created. Clubs from other states, not wanting to travel to Minnesota, allowed Minnesota to create its own, internal level of "national" (NPL) competition. However, the "national" competition is only for its Minnesota based clubs; thus MN NPL.

- (c) **Not a significant part of our Development:**
For us, with league making up only 10% of our overall competitive play and within it, roughly 50% being highly competitive, we are confident by selecting appropriate events and training for them accordingly, we can continue to increase our overall competitive challenge.

Every year, if the league we compete in looks competitive, we will pursue it as we've done in the past. If it is not, we have plans for valuable competitive play opportunities outside of the league.

- (d) **Why directors choosing less competitive play:**
It is significant when none of the 10 MN NPL teams given free "passes" to US Club Nationals advance out of pool play, and the 3 MYSA (MN) teams who actually won at Regionals and earned their way to Nationals, all played in a Final at Nationals.

Based on that alone, one would think growth in a less competitive MN NPL

league would be slower. But, that has not been the case. The number of MN NPL clubs has grown over the past few years. Meanwhile, the number of MYSA teams that have delivered regional and national success has shrunk. This should be of significant concern for the future of Minnesota youth soccer.

5. **The Marketing of Soccer Leagues:**

As you can see, the club soccer marketing campaign has only increased over the past five years. Across the country, clubs toss out monikers like ECNL, GA, NLP, and the new state or regional NPL's creating "alphabet soup" confusion that leaves parents uncertain about their child's "best" options.

We avoid all these letters as much as possible and focus on select our competition and the development around it carefully. From a Blast perspective, our "marketing" angle is simple, PREPARE PLAYERS:

- (a) Prepare all players' technical skills so they can compete in higher-level competitive play;
- (b) Prepare our youngest players to focus on possession metrics (counts) and ignore "winning" or scores to achieve the possessional metrics we need for development.
- (c) Prepare our "mid-age" players to begin to acclimate for "winning" by using the technical skills and possessional metrics we are developing, knowing it will be successful.

(d) Prepare our oldest players to expect high-level possession play that focuses on “winning” and achievement.

6. **Decisions Driven on Development:**

We make decisions here that focus on the development of players. We know team success is a byproduct of successful player development. Quick facts:

- The Blast has put in the most number of true ‘Premier’ level teams than any other Minnesota club over the past 5 years.
- The Blast is one of the smallest clubs in Minnesota, with just under 300 members.
- 90% of Blast teams have performed in the top 10% of their leagues. Currently, 80% of our teams aged 14 - 19 are Premier I or Premier II teams.
- The Blast has earned two National Championships and one runner-up in the past two years.

7. **Blast Developmental Objectives:**

From u8 - u10: We balance fun and engagement with a hint of technical discipline, so players begin to acclimate to the concept of being developed vs. simply participating. We do not travel or attempt to expose them to “high level” play at these ages. History reveals that kids being pushed too hard this young will quit.

From age u11 to u12: We increase “volume” slightly, still recognizing soccer must be

engaging and enjoyable. But, knowing players will benefit most from some technical skill development. Therefore, we expose players to some level of “in-over-your-head” experiences only to help them discover they are fully capable of surviving and thriving from being challenged.

From ages u13 and u14: We know that we have introduced higher development expectations than most programs. Things like player duties, regimented travel responsibilities, and communication expectations have become commonplace. We know these things not only help them as players but as people.

At age 15: We transition from pure development to striving for success in our competitive events. We continue developing technical skills and tactical awareness through age 18.

8. **College Outlook:**

As players start to become interested in collegiate possibilities, we continue to prioritize development that ties directly to “life” knowing a collegiate program may range from being an overwhelming part of a player’s life to having marginal impact on their college experience.

- Over 80% of Minnesota soccer players that play college soccer, do so less than 400 miles from home.
- Most MN soccer players playing in college play at a D3 (75%), D2 (20%), or D1 level (>5%).

- Of the D1 players, only 25% finish all four years with roughly 30% of those quitting entirely before Year 2.
- Of the D2 players, 60% finish all four years; while 65% of D3 players finish their college soccer careers.
- A sizable number of players will not play college soccer, or quit playing college soccer at some point along their college path. We hope the development skills we’ve helped instill are valuable to them outside of soccer.
- You will not see us promote players who entered a college soccer program any more or less than we would a player receiving an academic scholarship. To us, they are one in the same.

9. **Blast Collegiate Development Goals:**

We fully accept and support our players who have no interest in playing college soccer. However, for those interested in college soccer, our goals are simple:

- Provide development (training) necessary for players to compete at any college level. But when they get there, we want them to PLAY, not sit a bench.
- Use our soccer experience to provide the Discipline and Responsibility skills necessary for players to be competitive off a soccer field (classroom, job). Help them understand how solid efforts and positive attitudes can motivate teammates, co-workers, partners and friends.

- Remind players it is up to them to engage with college coaches. As coaches, we don't pave your college futures or "get you a scholarship". It is up to players achieve these goals. They do the work.
- We will still hold our players that want to play college soccer who are "juggling a lot" to uphold their commitment to soccer and their Blast teammates. We hold them accountable because we know any college program will do the same.
- We are certain whatever competitive path we choose will provide opportunity for players interested in college soccer to be challenged as they continue to develop their skills in order to be most attractive to programs they feel best fit their academic expectations first, and their athletic dreams second.

10. **Rough Blast Season Timeline:**

Our youngest players not in high school; along with our older players not playing high school soccer, will start training in late August; some in early September.

Fall Competition and our events will start mid September and run through mid to late October.

Our younger teams will go on break while older teams train as high school season end (mid to late October) to prepare for SGSL event in early November. High school players in the State final will likely not be able to attend.

All players will be on break through November. We ask they actually put away their shoes, unpack their bags and truly rest. Take a break. Paint a picture, read some books. *(Yes, we know you hate stopping! ;)*

In December, we begin with some light training. For older teams potentially doing a January trip, we will have more regimented training.

Training amps up in January and February where we begin preparing for our event season (see [Tourney Plan for 2022/23](#) for estimated events).

After that, the training will be focused around our events and competitive season, depending on several factors such as teams event commitments any other development plans we have.

We hope this has outlined at least some of the things you knew, maybe thought you knew, or even wondered about the Blast program.

There are other things people will want to know. Those that know us, know we are as open as it gets about this club and our plans for development. So please, ask away and we will get you answers.

We wholeheartedly value our families and all the players that have been part of the Blast development plan. It's not easy, but who these players become and the results they achieve show the rewards of hard work.

We also welcome those who have never been part of our program with open arms. Change comes hard, but know we believe very much in what we have to offer and are highly confident in our ability to help players find success.

Thank you.

—
NOSC BLAST