

## RUSC Travel Program Information

What is Travel soccer?

Travel soccer is a program where players are given the opportunity to train and play at a higher pace of play than Intramural soccer. The level of intensity is higher for both competition and each player's development.

Travel soccer is the main gateway to future soccer success. It can be a year-round training program or it can be a primary season training program depending on your family/player's level of commitment. Our most successful players tend to lean in to the year-round model in some manner. We currently have alumni of our program playing in college and active players playing for multiple area high schools, middle schools, CYO, and other clubs.

The primary season for Travel soccer teams in Pennsylvania is the fall but our teams offer training and games throughout the year. The preseason begins with training and tournaments in August, followed by a fall season, and several fall tournaments. The cost for the preseason and fall season are included in the registration fees for each travel team. When the fall ends, teams switch in to a pay to play model where opportunities are offered, such as a winter season, and indoor season, a spring season, off-season tournaments, and off-season training.

Ridley Travel teams typically play in the Central League with more than 60 other clubs and programs. Divisions in the CL are based on two categories. First, competitive level of play, which takes into account both club strength and team strength. And second, geography. Schedules are designed with the idea that no team will average more than 30 minutes of travel over the course of the season.

In the fall games are on Saturdays for boys and Sundays for girls, with optional winter, indoor, and spring seasons varying.

Travel teams are based on birth year and typically segregated by gender.

Team size is based on age with the youngest; U8(2017), U9(2016), and U10(2015), playing 7v7--6 field players and 1 goalkeeper---with a roster size of 12. The next age group; U11(2014) and U12(2013), play 9v9---8 field players and 1 goalkeeper---with a roster size of 15. And the oldest kids; U13(2012), U14(2011), U15(2010), and U18 (2009-2007), play 11v11 on a full-sized soccer pitch---10 field players and 1 goalkeeper---with a roster size of 18 for game days and 22 for game day flexibility.

Playing time varies by age. Our youngest teams---U8, U9, U10, and U11, give equal playing time so all of the kids have an equal chance to develop fundamental technical and tactical abilities in game play. U12, U13, and U14 are where the teams have partially weighted playing time but coaches should be trying to get everyone at least half the game whenever possible. And our oldest levels have fully weighted playing time where the better players are given the greater amount of playing time. At any level, starting, playing time, and position are decided by the

coaches based on performance in practice. All players at all levels will receive equal opportunity to prove themselves in practice.

Our teams play, on average, 3 tournaments during the fall season. Though usually local, teams can choose, as a group, a sleepover tournament.

Registration is open to every birth date between January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2017.

U8 through U11 games are refereed by one center referee. U12 through U18 are refereed by a 3 person crew of 2 linesmen and 1 center referee. Referees are professionally certified and have varying degrees of qualification. Teams pay for their own referees.

Our Travel teams practice, in season, at least twice a week. Each practice is roughly 90 minutes long. Most practices are designed around the European training model which can basically be described as immediate touches, followed by warm-ups, then technique building drills, technique usage drills, and then game play. Occasional scrimmages between teams both within and without the club can also be a part of the training process.

Our coaches are all volunteers, and most are family, with one or more players in the club. We do have a small number of long-term volunteers who have had their kids age out of the club and they are still helping as coaches when called upon. Occasionally teams have hired professional coaches, as well.

Coaches, especially for new teams, are usually picked by the club from the available pool of volunteers. While we do favor coaching experience, coaching licenses, and playing experience, not every coach in our system will have all or even any of these qualifications. When that happens, we encourage coaches to use our Philadelphia Union affiliate resources to help their players continue to develop technically and tactically. On occasion teams have requested coaching changes and the club will work with those teams to help in that situation.

Our affiliation with the Philadelphia Union training academy provides a wealth of resources for our coaches and opportunities for our players. We use professional Union academy trainers to help supplement our Intramural players training for those who are too young for Travel, so that they can enter the Travel program with a fundamental technical understanding. In addition to that our Travel teams have access to preseason camps (required through U12) and in season trainers who can help plan and run practices sessions at a significantly lower cost than a fully professional coach. One further advantage of our affiliation is our placement within the Union Player Pathway Program. The PPP is the Union's entry level development program for athletes who may someday be invited to join their academy.

The preseason Union camp and an in-season Union trainer for our youngest teams, U8 and U9, are paid for by the club to help the new players and coaches hit the ground running.

Registering for our tryout process is free and does not represent any commitment on the players part, beyond attending the tryouts to be evaluated. Our registration is a two-part process, the first part, for the tryouts, is free and the second part, to join a team, will have fees included.

Tryouts will be held at the Woodland Avenue field behind Grace Park Elementary School. Please do not use the Notre Dame de Lourdes parking lot. It is reserved for the local CYO track and field team for training.

Our teams are selected through the tryout process, which is a multi-coach evaluation of the players and their technique in game like scenarios such as drills and small sided play. Our evaluations are based on a series of factors, such as technical ability, tactical awareness, speed, strength, leadership, and general athleticism. The kids are given a score by the evaluators and the scores are tallied to decide which players have the greatest ability.

Each age level has two tryout dates over a two week period, beginning on Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, for the youngest teams. It is recommended that prospective players attend both tryout dates to give themselves a maximum number of chances to be seen by our evaluators. Exceptions and waivers are possible for players who are recovering from an injury.

#### 2024 Tryout Schedule (subject to change)

Boys born in 2016 and 2017 - Monday, April 15, and Monday, April 22, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2016 and 2017 - Monday, April 15, and Monday, April 22, from 6-7:30pm  
Boys born in 2015 - Monday, April 15, and Monday, April 22, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2015 - Monday, April 15, and Monday, April 22, from 6-7:30pm

Boys born in 2014 - Tuesday, April 16, and Tuesday, April 23, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2014 - Tuesday, April 16, and Tuesday, April 23, from 6-7:30pm  
Boys born in 2013 - Tuesday, April 16, and Tuesday, April 23, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2013 - Tuesday, April 16, and Tuesday, April 23, from 6-7:30pm

Boys born in 2012 - Wednesday, April 17, and Wednesday, April 24, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2012 - Wednesday, April 17, and Wednesday, April 24, from 6-7:30pm  
Boys born in 2011 - Wednesday, April 17, and Wednesday, April 24, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2011 - Wednesday, April 17, and Wednesday, April 24, from 6-7:30pm

Boys born in 2010 - Thursday, April 18, and Thursday, April 25, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2010 - Thursday, April 18, and Thursday, April 25, from 6-7:30pm  
Boys born in 2007, 2008, and 2009 - Thursday, April 18, and Thursday, April 25, from 6-7:30pm  
Girls born in 2007, 2008, and 2009 - Thursday, April 18, and Thursday, April 25, from 6-7:30pm

Rain Dates - Friday, April 19, and Friday, April 26, from 6-7:30pm

Players should wear shin guards and cleats to all tryout sessions. They should also bring a water bottle and an appropriately sized ball (size 4 for players born between 2017-2013, and size 5 for players born in 2012 or earlier).

After the evaluations are complete and depending on the number of players available we begin to invite players to join a roster. Whenever possible we will try to incorporate as many teams at each age level as the numbers allow, i.e. A sides, B sides, C sides, etc.

The majority of our invited players will be offered a spot on an age-appropriate roster but there are exceptions with younger players “playing up”. The club considers “playing up” to require a next level degree of talent so to be considered for that a boy or girls would need to qualify as one of the top three players in the A side for that age group. “Playing up” will also be considered to help bolster B sides with physically appropriate personnel from the younger ages when it is in the best interest of both the player in question and the team involved.

Once a player is invited, they will be asked to accept or decline their invitation within a certain period of time. For age groups with enough players for more than one team, the A sides are invited first so that if anyone declines their invitation the invitation can be extended to the next player on the list. Once A sides are finalized, B sides receive their invitation, and so on.

When a player accepts their invitation, the family will be asked to complete the second part of the registration process which ends with the setting up of payment options. Team fees for Travel are higher than Intramural but the level of activity and benefits for the player are equally higher.

Model 2023 budget

Girls U12 Revolution		Ridley United Soccer Club							
		Team Budget for 2023/2024							
<b>CLUB FEES (non-refundable)</b>				<b>FEE</b>					
Club Registration Fee - Includes state player passes.				\$325.00					
<b>TEAM FEES - (Budget Based on 13 Player Roster)</b>									
Event	Event Dates	Estimated Fee	Actual Fee	Est. Tot. Team Fee	Act. Team Fee Collected	Act. Team Fee Spent	Fees Unspent	Refund/Player	
Union Camp	Jul. or Aug.	\$1,200	\$1,200						
Est. Referee Fees*	Sept. through Nov.	\$522	\$512				\$208(10AR,1R)		
Est. Tournament 1	WU Bah	\$850	\$825						
Est. Tournament 2	JWT Oct.	\$850	\$570						
Est. Tournament 3	HSC WC Nov.	\$850	\$645						
*EPYS Referee Fee Estimate Based on Roughly 10% Increase from 2022 8 Game Season Total									
**Per Player Team Fee Rounded Up to Help Cover Unexpected Cost Overages									
GRAND TOTAL BUDGETED TEAM FEES (Based on Pre-Season Est.)				\$4,272	/13				
EST. TEAM FEE PER PLAYER				\$329.00					
EST. TEAM FEE PER PLAYER (Rounded Up)**				\$340.00		X13			
EST. TOTAL COST: PLAYER FEE & CLUB FEE				\$665.00					
TOTAL FEES UNSPENT						\$4,420	\$3,752	\$668	
								\$876	/13
								\$67.38	

As you can see from the model above a typical Travel team budget is based on the costs for a combination of camps, referee fees, and tournaments. That cost is then divided by the projected number of players on the roster to get the team fees. The team fees are then added to the club fees, which cover the additional expenses of a fall season, field upkeep, insurance coverage, volunteer exemption fee, and governing body registration, rostering, and carding. Those two numbers together equal the registration fee per family. Fees per family varied from as low as \$425 to as high as \$700 last year based on number of players and level of activity. Note that costs are estimated upwards and as a result most teams end up with at least a small surplus that can be refunded or used for off-season activities. Please also note that the registration fee is projected based on the number of players who are expected to join a roster. If lesser or greater number of players join a roster the amount in the team account would be affected leading to several possibilities, such as a modified level of activity, a need for additional funds to be

collected to maintain the expected level of activity, or refunds that can be returned as either credits for off season activities or end of the season payouts in the late spring.

Uniforms are not included in the registration cost. Historically the cost range for new kits is in the \$100-\$200 range. Kits are redesigned, roughly, every three years. Kits that match the current design can be worn for as long as it fits.

Payment plans are available to help spread the registration cost over the playing year.

Financial assistance is available for families that need a little help. Contact the Travel Director, Chris Deisler, for more information or to start the process for your family.

Our U18(2009-2007) or high school age teams are a new addition to our program. We have fielded with limited success teams in the high school age range before but this is the first time we are targeting that community as a single age group. We intend to offer this team as Tournament team of sorts. Initial costs will be as low as possible, \$25, to encourage participation but there will be no included event costs. It will be a pay to play program. We will roster as many qualified players as possible and then periodically offer them playing opportunities. If enough players are interested the team will be entered in the event and the cost will be split between those participating. We will also offer training in the weeks before the events to give the players a chance to get to know each other before taking the field.

And finally, as mentioned earlier, our program is almost entirely volunteer and as such the club rewards volunteers for their participation. Coaches receive a discount/refund in the amount of their child's club fees (last season that was a \$325 credit/refund). And general volunteers receive a refund as well (last season that was a \$75 refund).

All returning players need to register for tryouts.