

STRIKERS U8 - U14 TRYOUT Q & A FOR 2010-2011

1. Strikers' Approach to Soccer

Q: What are Strikers club goals?

A: Very simply: (1) Have fun; (2) Develop high-quality soccer players, emphasizing long-term development instead of the "win now" mentality favored by some youth sports clubs; (3) Compete at high levels of play as teams get older.

Q: What do you mean by long-term development?

A: We don't want kids to peak in soccer at age 11 or 12. Long-term development is enhanced by keeping things fun, rotating players to new positions, and teaching core soccer skills such as playing possession soccer instead of "longball" or "kickball." Focusing on these skills may cost the team some wins at young ages, but will pay off as players mature into outstanding teenage and adult soccer players.

2. Tryout Time and Place

Q: When and where are tryouts?

A. Friday, June 4, 2010 for next year's Boys and Girls U11 thru U14 teams, at OPRF High School Lake Street Field or Taylor Park

Saturday, June 5, 2010 for next year's Boys and Girls U8 thru U10 teams, at OPRF High School Lake St. Field

Soccer Age	Birthdate Is Between	Date	Time	Field
Girls & Boys U8	8/1/2002-7/31/2003	Saturday, June 5	4:00 - 5:15 PM	Lake St. Field
Girls & Boys U9	8/1/2001-7/31/2002	Saturday, June 5	4:00 - 5:15 PM	Lake St. Field
Girls & Boys U10	8/1/2000-7/31/2001	Saturday, June 5	5:15 - 6:30 PM	Lake St. Field
Girls & Boys U11	8/1/1999-7/31/2000	Friday, June 4	4:00 - 5:30 PM	Lake St. Field
Girls & Boys U12	8/1/1998-7/31/1999	Friday, June 4	5:30 - 7:00 PM	Lake St. Field
Girls & Boys U13	8/1/1997-7/31/1998	Friday, June 4	4:00 - 5:30 PM	Taylor Park
Girls & Boys U14	8/1/1996-7/31/1997	Friday, June 4	5:30 - 7:00 PM	Taylor Park

Q: What about rain?

A: Tryouts will be held in rain unless there is lightning. Please check www.oprfstrikers.com if weather is severe (or email office@oprfstrikers.com or call 708-434-5950).

3. More Tryout Information

Q: How do tryouts work?

A: Basically, the kids play soccer in small-sided games, and the trainers evaluate athletic ability, technical soccer skills, decision-making, positive attitude, and potential.

Q: Why have tryouts and “cuts” at all?

A: League rules require open tryouts and capped roster sizes. We hate cuts and try to avoid them entirely, but if 17 players try out at an age where the league caps the roster size at 14, we have no choice.

Q: Are the tryouts really open to new players?

A: ABSOLUTELY YES! Teams form anew each year, and no favoritism is shown to returning players. The tryouts are run by impartial professional coaches who are highly trained in the fairest evaluation methods.

Q: My child hasn't played traveling soccer before. Is that ok?

A: Yes! We are looking for any and all players with ability, positive attitude, and passion for soccer.

Q: What should players wear?

A: Shinguards and socks, soccer shoes with plastic/rubber cleats, and shorts. Be sure to bring a water bottle and soccer ball.

Q: The tryout form mentions a pre-numbered Navy Strikers T-shirt. What does this mean?

A: All players wear a pre-numbered Navy T-shirt so they can be evaluated anonymously by number, not by name.

Current Striker players must write their Navy T-shirt number on the registration form and must wear their numbered T-shirt to the tryout (or purchase a new T-shirt).

New players will receive a free Navy T-shirt at the tryout site. Shirt is free if the registration form is mailed by May 15, 2010 - May 1, 2010 for high school girls.

Sorry, but there is a \$20 fee for walk-ups and returning players who don't wear their numbered T-shirt.

Q: What if I cannot make the tryout?

A: Although we cannot guarantee a make-up, please contact us in the event of illness, injury or serious conflict at office@oprfstrikers.com or 708-434-5950 and we will try to find a solution. A local baseball or softball game is not an excused absence; please ask your coach to respect your desire to try out for Strikers.

4. Tryout Results and Registration

Q: How will we learn the results?

A: For U8-U14 ages, you will be notified by phone by the Monday after tryouts.

Q: Will my child get a written evaluation?

A: Sorry, but we cannot provide individual evaluations with almost 500 players trying out. For players who make a Strikers team, a detailed written evaluation is provided at the end of the fall season.

Q: What happens after my child makes the team?

A: Mandatory registration for 2010-11 teams will take place on Thursday, June 10, 2010 at River Forest Community Center for next year's U10 through U14 age teams. Newly-formed U8 and U9 teams register on Tuesday, June 8, 2010, from 6:30 - 8:00 pm at Andersen Center in Oak Park. Registration for HS girls (U15 through U19) is on Wednesday, May 19 at Andersen Center. If you miss the registration (or do not make alternative arrangements in advance), your spot will likely be given to another player.

Q: Does Strikers provide financial assistance?

A: Yes! We have never lost a player for economic reasons. See our Financial Assistance Policy on our website, www.oprfstrikers.com. Current Strikers must apply for financial aid by May 15, 2010.

Q: Can I get a refund if I register my child to play Strikers but change my mind later?

A: No. Registering for the team is a one-year commitment that we expect families to honor, so the club has a strict no-refund policy. Exceptions will be considered in unusual circumstances such as a family move.

5. More Info About Strikers

Q: Who are the Strikers?

A: Oak Park-River Forest Strikers is a not-for-profit parent cooperative that has fielded youth teams in competitive traveling leagues since 1979.

Q: What age teams do you have?

A: Youth level: Boys and girls from age Under-8 (mostly kids entering second grade in the fall) through Under-14 (mostly kids entering eighth grade in the fall). We also field strong high school age teams for age U15 through U19 boys and girls. Our U19 girls' team has competed at the A or AB level for the past ten years and in top tournaments, and has produced more than a dozen college players in recent years.

Q: Do you have any no-cut, non-travel programs?

A: Yes! The ACORN Academy for U6 through U11 boys and girls provides professional skills training and scrimmaging for youth players. Please see our website for more information (www.oprfstrikers.com).

Q: Who coaches the teams?

A: Practices and games are coached by professional soccer trainers. Many played professional or semipro soccer in England or Scotland; all are immersed in proven, age-appropriate teaching methods. Our coaches emphasize positive instruction and long-term development.

Q: What does the soccer year consist of?

A: Five soccer programs (for youth players up to U14):

- (1) weeklong camp every August, the week before school starts
- (2) 10-game fall season (Sept. to early November) with twice-weekly practices
- (3) one tournament (date and location TBA)
- (4) weekly indoor practices January through March
- (5) 8- or 9-game spring season (April to mid-June) with twice-weekly practices

In addition, some teams play in additional tournaments and/or indoor leagues (extra fee, participation optional). And Strikers sponsors goalkeeping clinics and "free play" scrimmages during the fall and spring seasons.

Q: Who are Strikers' opponents?

A: We play in competitive traveling leagues against other club teams throughout the area: boys compete in the Northern Illinois Soccer League (www.northernillinoisoccerleague.com) and girls compete in the Illinois Women's Soccer League (www.iwsl.com).

Q: When and where are games?

A: Games are typically (not always) played on Sunday afternoons, lasting 60 minutes for younger players and up to 90 minutes for high school age players. Half of the games are played at home, half on the road.

Q: Can kids with August birthdays play with their school classmates?

A: Yes. Please note that the age cutoffs set by traveling soccer leagues (August 1 birthdays) are out of synch with the age cutoffs followed by most school districts (September 1 cutoff). Players with August birthdays are given the option of trying out for Strikers with their school classmates (e.g., an eighth grader who is U13 soccer age is allowed to try out for the U14 team).

GOOD LUCK!!!

4/26/10 Rev