



MOUNT PLEASANT

Junior Academy Handbook



Junior Academy Leadership

David Jordan serves as the Junior Academy Boys Director of Player Development and Christi Rostin serves as the Junior Academy Girls Director of Player Development. David and Christi work with Club Director of Soccer Programming Kian Brownlee to create and oversee the implementation of club curriculum.

Club Mission & Vision

The mission of United Soccer Academy Mount Pleasant is to help foster young players' physical, mental and social growth so they can reach their potential in life through their participation in soccer. The club will provide quality staff, facilities, the environment and curriculum to give players the tools to succeed.

The Club's vision is to develop a reputation for producing well-trained athletes and gain respect of the nation soccer community as a true soccer academy. College coaches, national coaches and professional coaches will recognize the standards of excellence embodied by the club and expect those who graduate from the club to be quality players with a solid soccer foundation and good citizens.

Mission of the Junior Academy

The ages of 6-12 are often referred to as the "Golden years of Development". That is why it so important for us to place each child in the appropriate environment for their individual success. The U.S. Soccer Federation quite clearly states, "The most fundamental skill in soccer is individual mastery of the ball and the creativity that comes with it. This should be a priority in training and games, especially in the early years. As this skill is mastered, the rest of the game becomes easier — both to teach and learn. Practices should be built around facilitating the development of the skills necessary to move and control the ball well." The education of the players is truly our top priority.

Program Goals

- **Enjoy the Game:** Most importantly it is our goal for the players to have fun and enjoy playing the game of soccer. We strive to make every aspect of our program enjoyable for all players.
- **Live the Game:** We want our players to have the desire to play on their own, watch soccer on TV, attend live soccer games and to read about the game.
- **Emphasize Individual Development:** We want players to take responsibility for their own development. We believe this to be the key to success.
- **Motivate Players to Play:** Our Academy players graduate with the desire, attitude and tools needed to become a successful player in our select program.

Parent Goals

The Practices

- I will ensure that my child is punctual, properly equipped with shin guards, inflated ball, water bottle and correct training attire (United Soccer Academy Mount Pleasant training shirt, shorts and socks).
- I will inform the coach if my child is going to be absent from training.
- I will let my child's coach know about any concerns or problems that might affect his/ her behavior or performance (i.e. injury, illness, behavior).

The Games

- I will ensure that my child is punctual, properly equipped with shin guards, ball, water bottle and proper uniform.
- I will not interfere with the job of the coach.
- I will not coach. I will not give instructions to the players.
- I will remember that the priority for players in the academy is individual development and this sometimes super-cedes team goals and priorities.
- I will support my child, their coach and their team regardless of the outcome of any game.

The Referee

- I will not yell at the referee.
- I will not approach the referee after a game to question his/her decisions.
- I will be a role model of sportsmanship.

The Program

- I will attend scheduled parent meetings.
- I will volunteer when needed.
- I will follow due process with concerns.
- I will pay all fees when they are due.
- I understand that my child's team is part of a larger program that may sometimes use players from different teams for development and number purposes.

Description of Junior Academy Program

- The program is comprised of players' age 8-12 who desire becoming United Soccer Academy Mount Pleasant Select players.
- There are five age groups within the Junior Academy program U8, U9, U10, U11, and U12.
- Players play within their own gender.
- The focus of the program is player development.
- Professional youth coaching staff oversees all aspects of player development.
- There is a specific curriculum for all academy age groups.
- Teams compete against region III youth soccer clubs in non-results oriented format. (Friendly weekends)
- Teams do compete in tournaments in a results oriented format.
- Teams do compete against local teams in the SCYSA Coastal league.
- Teams do compete in-house vs. other USA/MP teams.
- Teams do compete in the SCYSA state league.
- There is a fall and spring season commitment expected. The fall season runs approximately from the first of August until the middle of November. The spring season runs approximately from the middle of January until the middle of May.

Junior Academy Evaluations

Players interested in joining a Junior Academy team need to attend the Junior Academy evaluations held in May.

Additional evaluation information will be posted online at www.usamountpleasant.com

Players who move into Charleston during the season are eligible to be evaluated for placement by contacting their age/ gender Director of Player Development.

Junior Academy Coaching

The needs of our players are met by an outstanding professional youth coaching staff and a dynamic player development curriculum. We have individuals with experience coaching in youth clubs, high school and college teams. We also have individuals who played at every level of the game and who bring their experience and passion for the game to our players.

Junior Academy Staff Coaches

Complete staff will be listed online at www.usamountpleasant.com

Team Managers

Each Junior Academy team will have a parent volunteer that serves as a team manager. The team manager works closely with the teams' coach, the Director of Coaching and the club Business Manager. The team manager attends monthly meetings during the season. The team manager registers the team for tournaments, books hotel rooms, prepares the team budget and collects team fees.

Junior Academy Training Goals

TECHNIQUE: Ball mastery with all parts of the body. We will work to develop basic technique in:

- Ball Control
- 1v1 Attacking
- Passing
- Receiving and Turning
- Shooting
- Heading

TACTICAL: Ability to read the game, think ahead and create solutions. We will work to develop game sense in the following:

- 1v1, 2v2, 3v3 and 4v4 situations
- Principles of attacking and defending
- Runs and role of all positions played in the 6v6, 8v8, 11v11 format.

PHYSICAL: Players must be able to control the ball according to the demands of the game. We will work to develop the following physical traits with and without a ball:

- Coordination
- Balance
- Agility
- Power
- Speed
- Quickness

Junior Academy Handbook

PERSONALITY: Players must display the right attitude in order to perform at their best. We will work to develop the following personality traits:

- A positive attitude and effort to accomplish any given task or problem.
- Confidence to play your best by being prepared.
- Belief in abilities and potential as a person and player.
- Belief in teammates and team.
- Respect for teammates, coaches, referee, opponents, and parents.

Extra Training

United Soccer Academy offers numerous additional training opportunities for our Junior Academy players. Information on these training opportunities is listed below.

- **Passport Program:** The United Soccer Academy Mount Pleasant Passport Program is our player identification and development program that pushes the top players from each team by allowing them to train the first session of each week, which should be emphasizing the technical aspect of the game, with the next team up. Each week the team coaches and our Directors of Player Development may identify 0-3 players that would benefit by training with the next level team in their age, or an age up.
- **Technical Training Camps:** Vary in cost based on the number of days and half day or full day options. Camp sessions are winter camp, spring break camp, and a summer camp. United Soccer Academy Mount Pleasant directors, staff, and college coaches staff the camps. Information for the training can be found online at www.usamountpleasant.com
- **Winter/ Summer Academy:** The winter and summer academies are staffed by United Soccer Academy Mount Pleasant directors and staff. The academy sessions run for various time periods and vary in cost reflecting those time periods. Information for the training can be found online at www.usamountpleasant.com

Player Assessments

Each player in the Junior Academy program will receive a player assessment form at the conclusion of the spring season. The evaluations will be based on the level at which the player plays not the entire age group. For instance, players on the second U11 team will be evaluated in relationship to the level of opponents they face playing during the season.

Each player assessment will include rating in the following areas dribbling, passing, receiving, heading, speed, agility, strength, and attitude.

Junior Academy Games

When do we play GAMES?

Saturday is the primary junior academy game day for league games. Sunday is scheduled occasionally always after 1pm for games. Tournaments and Friendly weekends include games on Saturday and Sunday (before 1pm).

Who will be my child's COACH for games and practices?

Coaches will be assigned to work with a specific team throughout the season to provide consistency. A complete list of our coaching staff and their team assignments will be listed online prior to our May evaluations each year.

How many TOURNAMENTS will my child play?

The Director of Coaching and the Coaching Staff will decide tournaments. It will be discussed ahead of time with the parents.

- U9: 1-3 Fall & Spring
- U10: 2-3 Fall & Spring
- U11: 2-4 Fall & Spring
- U12: 2-4 Fall & Spring

Not all of the players/ teams will necessarily attend the same tournaments. Tournament decisions are made on the number of teams, number of available coaches and the level of each team compared to the level of the tournament.

Philosophy on....

Philosophy on WINNING

For ages 8-12, we believe that winning is:

- To give you're best!
- To have FUN playing the game!
- To play quality soccer using skill and creativity.
- To perform new individual and team skills.

Philosophy on PLAYING POSITIONS

During the Junior Academy experience, there are so many games played that each player will have the chance to experience each position. In order to maximize individual development as well as team development we will:

- Put players in a position that suits their strengths.
- Put players in position to give the team success.
- Put players in a position in order to teach the role of the position.
- Put players in a position according to the players on the team.

Philosophy of PLAYING TIME

We will work to ensure that all players get to play at least half of each half.

Philosophy of EQUAL PLAYING TIME

Junior Academy Handbook

The Junior Academy is a Select Development Program thus we believe that players earn "extra" playing time based on ability, effort in training, and performance in games. Therefore players do not automatically receive equal playing time.

Tournament Guidelines

Hotel Behavior:

- 1) No running in hotel lobby, halls or parking lot.
- 2) Players are to wear shoes or flip-flops at all times when out of their room or car.
- 3) No players are to enter the hotel workout room until the conclusion of their last game and even then an adult must accompany the player.
- 4) No player is to enter the swimming pool or spa (hot tub) until the last game of the day.
- 5) Cleats are not to be worn inside the hotel.
- 6) No soccer balls out in the hotel lobby, halls or parking lot.
- 7) Players are to greet other guest in the hotel respectfully.

Wake up:

- 1) Players should be out of bed 2 hours before the scheduled start of their game. For instance 8am game, 6am out of bed moving around, getting breakfast and starting to prepare to play.

Financial Commitment

- Uniform: Approximately \$150.00 to \$200.00
 - Nike uniform changes every two years. Our new uniform cycle begins this year. Uniform package includes, home jersey, shorts and socks, away jersey, shorts and socks, training shorts and training jerseys.
- Coaching/ Training Fees: visit our website at www.usamountpleasant.com for updated fees.
- Registration fee: visit our website at www.usamountpleasant.com for updated fees.
- Team fee: Based on number of tournaments and out of town events. Cost varies from team to team. Approximately \$100.00-\$400.00 per season.

Process for Concerns by Parents

DO NOT ADDRESS THE ISSUE BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER A PRACTICE OR GAME.

- Contact the coach by phone or email.
If a satisfactory solution is not found then;

Junior Academy Handbook

- Contact the Director of Player Development, Christi Rostin (Girls) & David Jordan (Boys) by phone or email. If a satisfactory solution is not found then;
- Contact the Executive Director, Matt Job by phone or email. If a satisfactory solution is not found then;
- Contact the Booster Club President by email. Contact information online at www.usamountpleasant.com