



# **ISC Player Commitment Expectations for Advanced Level Players**

## **2023-2024 Season**

### **The expectations below apply only to the 9U-10U ISC Players in our Advanced Year- Round Program**

#### **Background:**

The ISC supports and encourages all of our 9U-10U players to be active in other sports, activities, and organizations. We do our best to offer our year- round programs in such a way that our year- round players on the 9U-10U teams have the flexibility to pursue the other activities that they want to be involved with even as our program runs throughout most of the year. We strive to offer both an elite soccer experience for our year-round players and to maintain a child centered approach by respecting the kids as kids and appreciating the fact that they want to do lots of activities at this age. However, the advanced year-round level is our highest level of commitment and participation in the program is optional. Therefore, a certain level of commitment is required. We have expectations and rules that we require the year- round players to commit to for each child to maintain their position in the 9U-10U advanced year- round program. If, after reading these rules, you find this commitment to be more than your child is ready for, please consider one of our other program levels within the ISC.

**The commitment rules outlined in this document serve 3 main purposes.**

- 1) We must ensure that our 9U-10U teams will be able to field players for the events that we participate in throughout the year.
- 2) Second, it is imperative that all of our players in the 9U-10U age group meet some basic standards of commitment given the fact that the year-round competitive teams are our highest level of soccer commitment at this age of participation.

We need to make sure that we are grouping kids by interest level and matching kids together that have a high interest for the game of soccer in our advanced year- round program at 9U-10U. While we DO NOT select players by ability for our year-round program until the 13U season, we offer the year-round program as our highest level of commitment, and it is geared for kids that love soccer and want to be grouped with other kids who are highly enthusiastic about the sport.

We are driven by the belief that kids develop at vastly different times and that early selection by ability at 9U-12U does not account for the rapidly changing developmental growth of soccer players. We do not believe in tryouts that group kids into “A” and “B” teams for kids until the 13U season because our experience has proven to us that there is so much growth made in terms of development from 9U-12U that the process of trying to group kids into “A” and “B” is not an effective means to build a strong team or age group

for the long term. For the past 26 years, we have delayed the “tracking” of kids into “A” and “B” teams until the 13U season and we are confident that this process has been successful both in terms of keeping kids in competitive soccer longer and in terms of helping develop high level soccer players.

We welcome any 9U-10U player who wants to join the ISC Advanced Year- Round teams, but they need to be players who share the interest and desire to make a commitment that is comparable to their teammates.

While we do NOT select by athletic ability and soccer ability at 9U-12U, players MUST be willing to meet our commitment expectations, show a willingness to learn, a willingness to work hard, and a willingness to be a good teammate. Moreover, players in the year- round program must either meet our financial obligations or qualify for financial assistance. Finally, all players in the year- round program must comply with all provisions of our ISC Code of Conduct to remain in good standing in the ISC.

We believe that we are probably the strongest advocate for the “late developing” athlete in the Iowa City area. We want to give the kids who join a little later or those who might be considered to be a “late developer,” the opportunity to take part in our program, but all players must meet the same requirements so that we are grouping kids with a similar focus together on the same teams. **In sum, our priority is to group players by commitment level not by ability level at this age.**

- 3) Finally, in our expert opinion, we believe that the 9U-10U years are probably the most critical years for skill development. Our Director of Coaching, Assistant Director of Coaching, and our main full time staff coaches regularly work with all of the 9U-10U players each year because we believe that if you receive poor coaching at this age it is more of a setback to player development than at any other age. Therefore, we feel the need to set some practice requirements in place to make certain that the young soccer players in the 9U-10U age groups are committed to our comprehensive developmental program to build the proper foundation for growth and improvement. We expect our 9U-10U players to be in attendance at practice to take full advantage of the teaching and coaching we offer to help players improve in what is often considered the “golden age of learning” for soccer players.

### **THE ISC PHILOSOPHY OF PLAYER DEVELOPMENT**

In the ISC, WE HAVE PROVEN FOR OVER 26 YEARS that it is possible to run a professionally coached and developmentally focused, competitive program without implementing tryout procedures that “cut” young kids or group players on “A” and “B” teams based on their ability during the 9U-12U years of competition.

Each year we help kids develop and grow into some of the top players in Eastern Iowa without following the procedures of many other sports organizations that “cut” young athletes without giving these kids the chance to prove that they will develop and grow over time. Our experience has proven to

us that kids develop at vastly different rates and times. Therefore, rather than grouping kids by ability from 9U-12U, we group players based on their commitment and interest level during the 9U-12U years.

The kids are not selected or “tracked” by coaches at 9U-12U into an “A” team, or “B” team. The kids and parents decide how much time they are willing to commit and then if they choose the “year-round program,” we give the kids an opportunity to develop into competitive players from 9U-12U.

However, we will speak candidly with parents if their kids do not demonstrate a willingness to learn, willingness to work hard, and a willingness to be a good teammate at the clinics. We will give all kids an opportunity to join our 9U-12U program if they will make the time commitment outlined in this document and if they demonstrate their commitment to the 3 W’s mentioned above.

### **3 W’s Required of ISC 9U-12U Players**

- 1) Willingness to Learn
- 2) Willingness to Work Hard
- 3) Willingness to be a good teammate.

By delaying the “A” and “B” selections until the 13U season, more players have a longer period of time to improve, grow, and enjoy the game before they have to focus on tryouts for “A” and “B” teams.

## **SUMMARY**

The ISC Advanced Level year-round program for 9U-10U soccer players is open to players of all ability levels who have a high interest and enthusiasm for competitive soccer. We will accept all kids in the 9U-10U program if they commit to the rules in this document, adhere to our code of conduct, work hard to commit to the 3 W’s outlined above, and agree to meet their financial obligations with their team and the club. (Please note that we may be able to provide financial assistance to those families who qualify.)

Please note that if your child is interested in joining after the clinics have passed, we may not have roster positions available and parents should inquire with our administrator at [registrar@iowasoccerclub.com](mailto:registrar@iowasoccerclub.com) to check if there are still spots in the age group. All kids who join during the JUNE REGISTRATION period will be given an opportunity to be considered for the year round program. Returning year-round players are always guaranteed a position in the age group for the next year if they meet our requirements.

Please carefully read through our commitment requirements below.

If you make a commitment to our program by following the rules below, we will provide playing time guarantees to all players for all for all league games and tournament games.

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## ISC COMMITMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR 9U-10U PLAYERS

### Summary of requirements:

- Tournament Game attendance requirements
  - League Game attendance requirements
  - Practice Requirements
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### Summary of Tournament Attendance for all ISC 9U-10U Advanced Year-Round Players:

Fall 2023 Season - Must attend 1 of 2

Winter -Must make every effort to attend the ISC Indoor Bubble Blowout Event

Spring/Summer 2024 Season-Must attend 1 of 2

**Total Required for 2023-2024 Season= 2 OUTDOOR TOURNAMENTS**

**(With the hope everyone plays in our own indoor tournament in January of 2024, the ISC Bubble Blowout.)**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

**What happens if a player does not meet the tournament commitment requirement for the Fall 2023 season?**

If your child does not attend at least one tournament in the Fall 2023 season, they would not be allowed to register for the FIRST SESSION OF THE ISC INDOOR LEAGUE for their age group.

**What happens if a player does not meet the tournament commitment requirement for the Spring 2024 season?**

If your child does not attend at least one tournament in the Spring 2024 season, they would not be allowed to register for the FIRST SESSION OF THE ISC INDOOR LEAGUE for their age group during the following seasonal year.

**What happens if a player is unable to meet the tournament commitment in both the fall and spring season during the same seasonal year?**

If a player does not meet the expectations for tournaments in both the fall and spring season of the same year, the player would not be offered a roster position with the ISC for the following year.

**Summary for League Game Requirements for All ISC 9U-10U Year -Round Players:**

Fall - Must attend 50% of all Fall League Games with assigned team.

Winter – All Advanced Year- Round Players must register for 1 of the 2 sessions of the ISC Intra-Club league known as BAGILITOS. Session options are the November-December option or the January-March option. The leagues are set up so that for each session the kids play 10-12 indoor games with 2 games played on each night. All indoor games were played in the HTRC in Iowa City.

Players must attend 50% of all indoor league games.

Spring/Summer -Must attend 50% of all Spring League Games with assigned team.

(Please note that if a game is rained out and you committed your child to playing in that game, that commitment is counted toward your 50% requirement.)

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

**What happens if a player does not meet the league game commitment requirement for the Fall 2023 season?**

If your child does not attend at least 50% of the league games for their assigned team during the Fall 2023 season, they will not be allowed to register for the FIRST SESSION OF THE ISC INDOOR LEAGUE for their age group.

**What happens if a player does not meet the league game commitment requirement for the Spring 2024 season?**

If your child does not attend at least 50% of the league games for their assigned team during the Spring 2024 season, they would not be allowed to register for the FIRST SESSION OF THE ISC INDOOR LEAGUE for their age group during the following seasonal year.

**What happens if a player is unable to meet the league game commitment in both the fall and spring season during the same seasonal year?**

If a player does not meet the expectations for league attendance in both the fall and spring season of the same year, the player would not be offered a roster position with the ISC for the following year.

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**Summary of Practice Attendance for all ISC 9U-10U Year-Round Players:**

1 Per Week for what is about a 10 month Period

(There are a few months when we only practice part of the month.)

(Please note that if practice attendance is not met, your child will not play in the games on the weekend. For example, if your child does not attend at least one practice per week, they are NOT eligible to play in the games on the weekend. If a player is sick or injured and that prevents your child from attending at least one practice per week, they are not eligible to play in the games that weekend. Even if we do not have scheduled games on the weekend, the players must attend 1 practice per week during the required practice months.)

(We highly encourage the 9U-10U kids to attend 2 practices per week during at least one of the three seasons per soccer year. We do not require this, but based on our experience, very few kids have success at club soccer if there is not some period during the year when the 9U-10U player attends 2 practices per week.)

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**DETAILS on Requirements**

**Tournament Requirement Details:**

All players must commit to at least 1 full weekend tournaments in both the fall and spring/summer seasons. This means that the player must be in attendance for all of the games for 1 tournament in the fall season and 1 tournament in the spring/summer season. Tournaments usually last two days, but there are some tournaments that are only one day long. A complete schedule of fall and spring tournaments for 9U-10U teams can be found at the end of this document. This schedule may be subject to revision.

**Winter Tournament Season:**

All ISC 9U-10U Advanced year- round players must make every effort to commit to the ISC Bubble Blowout held in January at the HTRC.

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## **League Game Requirement Details for all 9U-10U ISC Players:**

### **Fall and Spring Season:**

All ISC 9U-10U players play league games in both the fall and spring each year. Games are only played on the weekends. Games could be played on Saturdays or Sundays. Game sites may be in Iowa City, Muscatine, Cedar Rapids/Marion, Bettendorf, Cedar Falls, or Dubuque. There are no games during the week for outdoor season. All games are held on the weekends.

Each team will have 8-10 league games in the fall season and 8-10 league games in the spring season. Players **do not need to attend all of the league games** with their team in each season. We want players to have flexibility to play other sports or miss some weekend games due to other activities that arise.

However, each player must make at least 50% of all league games in the fall season and 50% of all games in the spring season. Most players will attend more than this, but our minimum requirement is to attend 50% of all league games. We ask that all parents on the team fill out all league game polls to notify the team manager if they intend to make or miss a league game so that we are aware of how many players will be in attendance for each game. There are 2 league games per day for each league play date, so at a minimum, each player would have to play in both games for 2 league dates to meet their league requirement. To reiterate, the league games are generally only played on 4-5 dates with 2 games per day.

### **Winter Season:**

Our website has more information on the ISC indoor leagues. Each player signs up on their own. Last year the fee was \$100 per session for 10 indoor games on indoor turf. Games are played on the weekends in Iowa City in the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Center, known as the HTRC. All kids need to play in 1 of the 2 indoor sessions each winter. The indoor league fees are not a part of your monthly club fees.

Once again, players must attend at least 50% of all indoor league games. As was mentioned above though, the kids only need to attend 1 of the 2 sessions. They are always welcome to play in both sessions, but they only need to play in 1 session and then play in 50% of those league games.

## **Practice Attendance Requirement Details for all 9U-10U ISC Players:**

Our soccer season starts in the month of August. For the 2023-2024 season, practices will start the week of July 31, 2023. However, the required practices in August do not start until the week of August 21, 2023. All ISC teams in the age range from 9U-10U will receive 70 practices from our professional and licensed coaching staff. The practice sessions are normally completed for the soccer year by mid-June. We guarantee that all 70 sessions/practices are scheduled and completed for your team even for sessions rained out or cancelled due to bad weather. Usually we spread the practice sessions out like this:

- Early August through the end of October-Each 9U-10U team is offered 2 outdoor sessions per week
- November through the first week of April –each 9U-10U team is offered 1 indoor session per week except for the week of Spring Break and during the 2 week period for winter break.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> week of April-Mid-June-each 9U-10U team is offered 3 outdoor sessions per week

Following the format above, all teams will receive their 70 practice sessions per year. To be clear, we ALWAYS make up sessions later in the year for anything cancelled due to weather. So even if a session was cancelled in early August, we may not make the practice up until some other time in the year, but your kids will receive all 70 sessions.

Players are required to attend 1 practice per week in the months listed below. Please note that the teams will receive more than 1 practice per week in the fall and spring, but players are required to attend only 1 practice per week.

### **Required Months when players must practice 1 time per week:**

- August -Starting August 21, 2023
- September through November
- December-Only first two weeks of December are required.
- January and February
- March -except for the week of Spring Break when Practices are not offered.
- April and May
- June –Only first 2 weeks of June required. The first two weeks are the clinics for the next year.
- July –NONE REQUIRED-Usually practices are not held during this month unless we are making up practices.

In each of the required months listed above, each 9U-10U player is required to attend at least 1 practice per week. In the ISC, there is a lot of flexibility for players to attend other sessions within the club if your child's team session is scheduled for a time that your child has a conflict. Players can attend a "super skills" practice or they can attend a team practice with the team one age older.

If you think that your son or daughter cannot meet this level of commitment, we have many other strong ISC soccer programs such as the ISC Academy, ISC Lightning, ISC POP program, or the ISC POPPI programs that are good options.

### **Our Playing Time Guarantee to our 9U-10U players:**

As long as each player meets our minimal standards of commitment outlined above we will provide the following playing time guarantees:

**All players are guaranteed half of the minutes in each half for all outdoor league and outdoor tournament games.** The minutes of guaranteed time per half is played in a block of time. For example, if the half length is 25 minutes long, each player will receive 12-13 minutes of playing time per half. We make sure that the kids play those 12-13 minutes without interruption or substitution. In other words, we



do not sub them in for five minutes in one part of the half and then later for 7 minutes. By playing 12-13 minutes consecutively with no chance of being subbed off during that 12-13 minute period, the actual value of the playing time is far greater than if we broke up that playing time in smaller segments each half. In addition, our focus in the ISC is always on the long- term success of our players, and we believe it is vital to teach young players to play in longer stretches of time without constant subbing.

We still guarantee players playing time in indoor games also, but usually we sub more frequently because those games are fast paced. The playing time guarantee for indoor games still amounts to half of the game.

## **9U-10U Tournament Schedule for 2023-2024:**

When you commit your child to the tournaments, he/she will be required to attend all games in the event. Some of the tournaments are played on only one day, but most have games on both Saturday and Sundays. Please note that if you are making the commitment to participate in the ISC Advanced Year- Round Program, tournament attendance for games on both Saturday and Sundays will be required unless you make it clear that you need a religious exemption on all Sundays. If you need to declare a religious exemption, you **MUST** notify the Director of Coaching, Jon Cook, prior to accepting your roster position with the ISC.

Listed Below is the proposed tournament schedule for the fall, winter, and spring/summer season for our ISC 9U-10U boys' and girls' teams for the 2023-2024 Season. This schedule is subject to revision.

### **Fall 2023 Tournaments**

- Mid August 2023 - Tournament at TBK Complex-Bettendorf, Iowa
- Mid September 2023 : FC United Fall Classic Tournament -Marion, Iowa-North of Cedar Rapids-At Tuma Soccer Complex

### **Winter Tournaments**

- ISC Bubble Blowout-January 2024 -Iowa City, Iowa. Held in Iowa City at the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Center.

### **Spring/Summer 2024 Tournaments Boys and Girls**

- Mid to late April-CRSA CHILLOUT- Hiawatha, Iowa-North of Cedar Rapids-At Tuma Soccer Complex
- Mid June-Cedar Valley Moonlight Classic-Cedar Falls, Iowa