



ISC Player Commitment Expectations for Advanced Level Players and the ISC Player Development Philosophy Document

2025-2026 Season

The expectations below apply only to the 9U-10U ISC Players in the ISC 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.

Our goal for 9U-10U players is to group kids by interest level and match 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 ISC 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. 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” teams is not an effective means to build a strong team or age group for the long term. For the past 28 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. However, we do feel that it is very important to group kids by interest and commitment level. The rules and policies outlined here are a guide for kids and families to choose whether or not this is the appropriate level of commitment for their soccer interest.

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 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. 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 attend 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 28 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 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 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.

ISC COMMITMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR 9U-10U PLAYERS

Summary of requirements:

- Outdoor Game attendance requirements for fall and spring seasons.
 - Indoor League Game attendance requirements.
 - Practice Requirements.
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Summary of Game Attendance Requirements for all ISC 9U-10U Advanced Year- Round Players:

Fall 2025 Season - Must play in 9 Fall 2025 Outdoor Games.

Winter -Must play in 9 indoor league games.

Spring/Summer 2025 Season-Must Play in 9 Spring/Summer 2025 Outdoor Games

Total=27 Games

DETAILS RELATED TO GAME ATTENDANCE FOR ISC 9U-10U Advanced Year- Round Players:

Fall 2025 Season - Must play in 9 Fall 2025 Games.

- The 9U-10U teams will likely have close to 16 games scheduled in the Fall 2025 season when considering their league games and the two tournaments that they will play in during the time period from early August 2025 through October 2025. Therefore, the

ISC Advanced Year-Round player in the 9U-10U age group must play in 9 of the 16 outdoor games.

- All 9U-10U teams will play in 5 league dates for the Fall 2025 season. On each league date, the teams will play 2 games per day. This means that all 9U-10U players will have the opportunity to play in 10 league games in the fall 2025 season. All league games are played only on the weekends.
- All 9U-10U teams will play in 2 tournaments in the fall and 3 tournaments in the spring season. The tournament games are held over both Saturday and Sunday on the weekends. Usually, all teams will play 3 games in each tournament. This means that all 9U-10U players will have the opportunity to play in 6 tournament games in the Fall outdoor season. All tournament games are played only on the weekends.
- To meet the required number of 9 games, players can count both the tournament and league games to meet the minimum number of 9 games.
- There is a game withdrawal fee that applies to both league and tournament games. When a player withdraws from either a league game or tournament game for reasons other than injury, illness, or family emergency, the per game withdrawal fine will be per \$35 game. More details related to the withdrawal fee tournaments can be found at the end of this document.

Winter -Must play in 9 indoor league games.

Spring/Summer 2026 Season-Must Play in 9 Spring/Summer 2026 Games

- The Spring season is very similar to the fall season. However, the main difference is that the kids may only have 8 league games, but they will likely have 3 tournament options in the spring season.

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

All ISC Advanced Year- Round Players must register for at least 1 of the 2 sessions of the ISC Intra-Club Indoor Soccer 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 games played on Sunday afternoons. All indoor games are played in the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Center, HTRC, in Iowa City at 2820 Prairie Meadow Drive, Iowa City.

The ISC website has more information on the ISC indoor leagues. Each player signs up on their own and this is an additional cost which is NOT covered by your monthly fees. Last year the fee was \$110 per session for 11 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.

Although we only require the 9U-10U players to play in one of the two indoor sessions during the winter, regular practice attendance is required even during the indoor session when your 9U-10U player may not be playing games.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What happens if a player does not meet the outdoor game attendance requirement for the Fall 2025 or Spring 2026 season?

If your ISC 9U-10U Soccer player does not attend and participate in at least 9 outdoor Fall 2025 matches, (games can be a combination of both league games and tournament games), they would not be allowed to register for the FIRST SESSION OF THE ISC INDOOR LEAGUE for their age group. If they do not meet the requirement during the Spring 2026 season, they would not be allowed to register for the FIRST SESSION OF THE ISC INDOOR LEAGUE in the following year.

In addition, if a 9U-10U player does not meet this requirement, the player may not be guaranteed their roster position with the Advanced Year-Round program when the clinics are held for the next soccer year. The ISC Director of Coaching will determine whether the roster position will be offered based on the information provided by the player and their family regarding why the player did not meet the requirement.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What happens if a player does not meet the indoor league game commitment requirement for the winter season?

If your child does not register and participate in at least one ISC indoor league session for 9 indoor games, that player may not be guaranteed their roster position with the ISC Advanced Year-Round program when the clinics are held for the next soccer year. The ISC Director of Coaching will determine whether the roster position will be offered based on the information provided by the player and their family regarding why the player did not meet the requirement.

DETAILS on Tournament Attendance and Differences between tournaments and league games.

When an ISC player commits to a tournament, they are committing to all of the games of the tournament and therefore, withdrawal from one game of the tournament is considered a full withdrawal from the tournament.

However, we do allow ISC players more flexibility with league date commitments. If your child's team has more than one game per day for league games, they will be allowed to participate in the games that work for their schedule and are not obligated to play in all games during the weekend when participating in league games. The main reason for the stricter policy for tournaments is due to the fact that the club has much less flexibility with rosters for tournaments as opposed to league games.

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.

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. In addition, 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 extended period during the year when the 9U-10U player attends 2 practices per week.)

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

Our soccer season generally starts in the month of August. For the 2025-2026 season, practices will start the week of August 4, 2025. However, the required practices in August do not start until the week of August 19, 2024. 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. 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 second week of March –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.
- For the first 3 weeks after spring break, each 9U-10U team is offered 2 indoor practices per week.
- 2nd 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 25, 2025
- 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 any 9U-10U ISC Advanced Year-Round Player reaches a total of six weeks without meeting their practice requirements at any time from August 25, 2025-May 22, 2026, they will be removed from the ISC Advanced Year-Round Program from the roster unless they have communicated the following to the ISC's Director of coaching:

- Family Emergency
- Documented Injury-Medical Notes must be provided.
- Documented Illness-Medical Notes must be provided.

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:

If 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 2025-2026:

When you commit your child to the tournaments, he/she will be required to attend all games in the event. Almost all tournaments 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 2025-2026 Season. This schedule is subject to revision.

Fall 2025 Tournaments

- Mid to Early August 2025 - Tournament at TBK Complex-Bettendorf, Iowa
- Mid-September 2025 : FC United Fall Classic Tournament -Marion, Iowa-North of Cedar Rapids-At Tuma Soccer Complex

Winter Tournaments

- ISC Bubble Blowout-January 2026 -Iowa City, Iowa. Held in Iowa City at the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Center.

Spring/Summer 2026 Tournaments Boys and Girls

- Mid to late April-CRSA CHILLOUT- Hiawatha, Iowa-North of Cedar Rapids-At Tuma Soccer Complex
- Early May-Another Tournament Option in Eastern Iowa
- Mid-June-Cedar Valley Moonlight Classic-Cedar Falls, Iowa

2025-2026 Tournament Commitment Policies ISC Advanced Year- Round Players

All players on the ISC advanced year-round teams are given the option to commit to play in tournaments during each season. Once you commit to a tournament through our online tournament commitment form, you will need to honor your commitment to that tournament for all games in the tournament. Tournaments, unlike league games, are played over both days on a given weekend. This means that when you commit to a tournament, you are committing to playing in games on both days of the weekend. In order to protect the players on the teams and the integrity of the club at each event, we will assess a fee if a player pulls out of a tournament for reasons other than one of the excused reasons that are listed below. Withdrawing from even one game of the tournament is considered as a full withdrawal from the tournament.

The fee for withdrawing from a tournament game is \$35 per game. This is the same fee assessed when a player withdraws from a league game. However, once you withdraw from one game of a tournament, your child will not be included in any other games in the event. Therefore, the withdrawal fee of \$35 per game is assessed for all games of the tournament. Please note that for most tournaments the team will play in at least 3 games, so the total fee assessed will likely be at least \$105 for the withdrawal from the event.

Families need to look carefully at their schedules when they are choosing and selecting the tournament events that they commit their children to in each season. If a player withdraws from 2 or more tournaments per soccer year, the ISC player may not be guaranteed their roster position with the Advanced Year-Round program when the clinics are held for the next soccer year. The ISC Director of Coaching will determine whether the roster position will be offered based on the information provided by the player and their family regarding why the player did not meet the requirement. Players will not be allowed to participate in any other tournament or league game with the team until the fee is paid.

Accepted Excuses for withdrawing from a tournament:

Medical or family emergencies are excusable reasons for pulling out of a tournament. You will not be fined if you withdraw from a tournament for medical reasons or if you are dealing with some family crisis or emergency. Family emergencies may be a funeral, a very ill family member, or some other family crisis that you feel must be attended to immediately. In addition, if your child is injured or sick, we will not impose a fine for withdrawing from the tournament. As was mentioned above, we will also grant a family a religious exemption for playing games on Sundays provided that this request is communicated to the Director of Coaching, Jon Cook, prior to the start of the season.

The club is not authorized to make exceptions to the withdrawal fine for parents who commit their child to a tournament and then the parents realize that they have a family event planned for that weekend, such as a wedding, graduation, or reunion. These events, while very important to your family, do not fall into the category of family emergencies. We ask that you look very carefully at the dates for these events and our tournaments before you commit to the tournament. While we certainly strive to be "family friendly" in the ISC, we also have to safeguard the health and safety of our players that commit to a tournament and if we have less than the minimum number arrive at a tournament, player injury becomes a very big concern.

While it may sound like this part of the overall tournament commitment policy seems unfair or too strict for youth sports, let's be clear why we have these policies in the first place. When an ISC team attends a tournament, we honor all games that our teams are scheduled to play in for the tournament. This clause protects the kids that want to play in all games in the event. Moreover, it protects the kids from half of the team leaving the second game of the day for another sporting event, music event, etc. This policy also protects the kids from injury or overuse injuries. Finally, this policy protects the kids from an embarrassing situation where the team does not field a full team for a particular game in the tournament.

What happens if I need to withdraw my child for only one game of a tournament that I committed them to?

If you notify the Director of Coaching and your team manager that your son or daughter can no longer participate in a tournament that they had committed to, you will be notified that your child will be removed from the roster for all games. In some situations, parents notify us that their child will only miss one of the games of the tournament that they had previously committed to all games. Our policy is clear that tournament commitments require participation in all games of the event. Even if your child will only miss one game, they will not be included on the roster for any of the other games for the tournament and they will be fined for all games that the team was scheduled to play in at the tournament.

Please read the other related ISC policies below:

1) Players commit to the ISC club for the tournament.

We typically take a large number of ISC teams from the club to any event that we recommend. Sometimes we must move some players "up" to an older team to maximize the participation of the entire ISC membership to meet our player development goals. We want everyone to clearly understand that if you commit to any tournament, you may be placed with another team in the ISC. Your commitment is to the ISC club for the weekend. You will be fined if you pull out of the tournament even if your reason for pulling out is due to the fact that your child was assigned to play with a different team in the ISC other than their own team.

If you are certain that your child will not play with another team in the ISC other than their own, you might not want to have your child play in tournaments. This is a player development club focused on ALL of our players. The coaching staff believe in the value of developing all of our players in the ISC on all teams. We cannot develop our players in this club if we do not have the flexibility to move players from a certain age group that might have too many players for the roster for a particular tournament to another age group that might need a few more players in order to field a full team. If we cannot move players in these circumstances, we are forced to tell certain players that they cannot play in the tournament.

Moreover, the coaching staff firmly believe that there is significant value from a player development perspective when giving your child challenges by playing with new players from time to time. This policy does not mean that we would force girls to play with a boys' team. However, we may ask girls to play on a boys' team from time to time, but we will not require girls to play with a boys' team.

2) Once the tournament commitment deadline passes, we will not accept any more players for an event unless we contact you.

Do not e-mail the parent manager, team coach, or the Director of Coaching if your schedule changes and your child becomes available to play in a certain event after you have committed as a "no" for the event in question. If we need more players to make the numbers work, we will contact you to inquire with you if your child's availability has changed for an event. The reason for this policy is that we cannot possibly even come close to keeping up with all of the requests for changes in status for the weekends. While on the one hand this might sound inconsistent with our mission to develop all of our players, there is also a limit on our administrative capacities as an organization.

3) If you pull out of a league game or tournament, please follow the procedure below:

- 1) Email the director of coaching, your team manager, and the ISC accountant.
Director of Coaching: jon.cook@iowasoccerclub.com
ISC Accountant: accountant@iowasoccerclub.com
- 2) The ISC accountant will contact you back with instructions in regard to how to pay the fine.
- 3) Once the fine is collected, the process is complete.

Thanks for taking the time to read these policies. For those of you who are new to the ISC, all of this can be overwhelming, but I assure you that over time you will find that these policies are essential to ensuring the quality experience that we want for all ISC year-round players.

Thanks,
Jon Cook
ISC Coaching Director