



# Altitude FC Small Sided and Birth Year Update



# Altitude FC: USSF Changes

- The changes that are happening is a USSF mandate.
  - USSF 2016: Best practices
  - USSF 2017: Mandatory for everyone



# Altitude FC: USSF Changes

- Colorado Soccer Association.
  - CSA 2016: All clubs will change to birth year mandate August 2016.
  - CSA 2016: Small sided mandate will change in August 2016



# Altitude FC: Current Landscape

- The playing and coaching environment needs to improve for all players.
  - Too much emphasis on winning at the expense of individual development.
  - The priority is developing individual skills.



# Altitude FC: Changes

- Long-term development of players is the number one priority.
  - No 10 year old has ever been on a World Cup winning team.
- Need to put players in the best possible environment to succeed.
- There are no short cuts.
  - Long term approach and commitment.



# Altitude FC: Starting Point

- Key initiatives
  - Small sided standards.
  - Birth year registration.
- Rationale
  - Develops individual skill and intelligence, which impacts creativity and confidence.
  - Aligns with individual capabilities.
  - Unifies the environment across the country.



# Altitude FC: Small Sided Standards Objectives

- Provide age appropriate environment
- Develop skills on the ball
  - Increases number of touches and control.
  - Improve confidence.
- Develop intelligence
  - Promote faster decisions and better awareness.







# Altitude FC: Small Sided Team Organization

- 7v7 – U9 and U10 players
  - 7v7 formations promote a good distribution of the players on the field and provide a versatile framework to introduce simple tactical elements at an early age.
  - Formations are focused in the development of attacking elements of the game.
  - 2-3-1 formation is designed to develop passing and movement off of the ball.
  - 3-2-1 formation is designed to promote forward runs and 1v1 situations.



# Altitude FC: Small Sided Team Organization

- 9v9 – U11 and U12 players
  - On a bigger field are ideal to keep developing attacking elements of the game and introduce basic defensive concepts.
  - 3-2-3 formation is designed to provide space in the mid-field and to provide multiple attacking options up front.
  - 3-3-2 formation is designed understand basic defensive organization and promote build up play.



# Altitude FC: Small Sided Development Rules

- 7v7 – Build Out Lines
  - The build out line is used to promote playing the ball out of the back without initial pressure.
  - When the GK has the ball, either during play (from the opponent) or from a goal kick, the opposing team must move behind the build out line.



# Altitude FC: Small Sided Development Rules

- 7v7 – Build Out Lines
  - Once the opposing team is behind the build out line, the goalkeeper, can pass, throw, or roll the ball to a teammate (no punting).
  - After the ball is put into play by the GK, the opposing team can cross the build out line and play resumes as normal.



# Altitude FC: Birth Year Registration



# Altitude FC: Birth Year Registration

- Objectives
  - Align with the international standard.
  - Combat relative age effect.



# Altitude FC: Birth Year Registration

- Relative Age Effect
  - There is a selection bias towards players born earlier in the year because they more physically mature than their peers.
  - A balance of players born throughout the year is recommended.
  - Allows for the continued development of players that have yet to mature physically.



# Altitude FC: Birth Year Registration

- Playing Up
  - Altitude FC will look at this by a case by case basis.
  - There will be some players allowed to play up a birth year.
  - NO players will be allowed to play down a birth year.





# Altitude FC: Birth Year Registration Chart

Birth Year	Age Group
2013	U4
2012	U5
2011	U6
2010	U7
2009	U8
2008	U9
2007	U10
2006	U11
2005	U12
2004	U13
2003	U14
2002	U15
2001	U16
2000	U17
1999	U18



# Altitude FC: Implementation

- Small Sided Standards
  - Altitude FC will implement the small sided standards Fall 2016.
  - Colorado Soccer Association has set the standard that all clubs playing within a CSA league will move to the small sided standards.



# Altitude FC: Implementation

- Birth Year Registration
  - Altitude FC will implement the birth year registration Fall 2016.
  - Colorado Soccer Association has set the standard that all clubs, playing within a CSA league, will move birth year registration.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Why are these changes being made?
  - The current landscape is inconsistent and not as successful as it could be when it comes to player development. Through these initiatives Altitude will develop players with more individual skill, intelligence, creativity and confidence. These changes also provide a consistent approach across the state and country while challenging the status quo of our soccer landscape by focusing on the development of the individual versus the success of a team. Parents can also have a better understanding of exactly what they should expect from a soccer program for their children.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Who is required to follow these initiatives?
  - All of U.S. Soccer's membership is required to put these initiatives into place no later than August of 2017. This includes, but is not limited to, all youth members and respective competitions: State Associations, US Youth Soccer, US Club Soccer, AYSO, SAY, etc.
  - CSA has decided to implement these changes by August 2016.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- What is the purpose of including quarters and thirds at certain age groups instead of halves?
  - The transition from 4 periods (quarters) to 3 periods to 2 periods provides a gradual evolution to the full game from the physical and cognitive development perspectives of the player. The multiple intervals also provide increased opportunities for a coach to manage substitutions and explain changes to the players in a more controlled environment during the break in play. This should also reduce over-coaching during the periods of play.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Are the build out lines mandatory for 7v7 play?
  - Yes. The build out lines are required for 7v7 play at the U9 and U10 age groups. The build out line is used to promote playing the ball out of the back in an unpressured setting.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Are the formations listed required for 7v7 and 9v9 play?
  - The formations shown in the presentation are recommended, but not mandated. For the 7v7 game model, the recommended formations are 2-3-1 or 3-2-1. For the 9v9 game model, the recommended formations are 3-2-3 or 3-3-2.





# Altitude FC: FAQ

- When does offside come into effect?
  - Playing with offside begins at the U9 age group, along with the 7v7 game model.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Why is birth year registration going into effect for all levels of play and all age groups?
  - Having players train and play according to their age and developmental stage supports the objectives of the small sided standards by focusing on the physiological and developmental needs of the player. This change is meant to better safeguard the development of youth players at all ages and levels.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Why can't there be different standards for recreational and competitive teams?
  - There is no universal definition of what separates recreational from competitive soccer. In addition to supporting the overall objectives of player development this would provide a consistent approach across the soccer landscape. Players should also be provided the opportunity to develop to best of their abilities regardless of the level of play they are participating in.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Is my son or daughter still going to be able to play with his or her friends and classmates?
  - The answer to this depends on a variety of factors. Playing on a team with all of your friends isn't always a reality in the current environment. This is similar to not having all of your friends in the same class or classes at school. Another factor is that the age cutoff used for school registration varies across the country. This means that there are already a variety of unique player age and grade combinations.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- Don't you realize that you're breaking up my existing team?
  - We recognize that making these changes can impact existing teams in the short-term. However, players joining and leaving teams is something that already happens regularly. There are a variety of factors that require teams to evolve and adapt including players maturity rates, moving away, focusing on new interests or their soccer abilities differentiating from their peers. Again, both small sided standards and birth year registration support the development of the individual player as a priority over a team success.



# Altitude FC: FAQ

- How does this change fix “relative age effect”?
  - The player development initiatives do not claim to fix this issue. However, having players grouped by birth year does make it easier to understand for parents and coaches.