



Academy Teams

Focused on skill and tactical development of younger players

Why Academy?

Academy is a development tool recommended by the United States Soccer Federation. Its goal is to focus on skill and tactical development of younger players. The Academy format is used by most other countries. They take younger pools of players and have them train and play competitive/non-counting games. This means they do not have standings for this approach. It is not focused on winning or losing, but rather, it is focused on the player development aspect. The USSF has wanted to go this route for many years for younger players to develop them as players rather than coaches being concerned with results.

Their belief was that we get too hyper competitive at the younger ages and we burn our players out as they progress. The Academy's goal is to develop young and compete later.

What is the difference between Challenge and Academy?

It does not change our training. Academy must have a certified National Youth License Director. We will have two. Sarah Currie and Tyler Kettering will be moving to this role. They will co-direct the Academy. Both are the full time assistants for the Runnin' Bulldogs and will direct the academy.

- Training will be two times a week
 - Tuesdays will be a total skill session
 - Thursday will be broken into more tactical work
- Matches are the big difference.

We will schedule matches against other Academies. We will set our schedule and the matches will not be counting. There are no standings. This is to encourage players to play rather than worry about a result. This will enable coaches to play all players rather than limit time for weaker players.
- Tournaments are now festivals. The festivals are handled much like matches where there are not champions, just matches played in a weekend.
- Certified Directors – we will have two.
- FUNdamentals – This will be a higher level for player development, but we want players to experience the FUN of development.
- Interactive Curriculum – we will offer parents an interactive curriculum. This means we will give you our skill sheet so that you can take it and work on it with your child. You will know what our focus is so that you can be more involved in the development. As we get more competitive as they age up this will be important that you have a base understanding of what your child is doing.
- Home games will be at GWU

We are excited about this new format – It will take some time and effort, but in the long run, we will benefit from this new concept.

Sarah Currie is a former collegiate standout from Shelby. Tyler Kettering is a former pro who played with the Chicago Fire. They are great coaches who have a passion for the game. They will be co-Directors for the Academy.