



KICKS FOR KIDS
COMMUNITY SOCCER LEAGUE
FOR U8 –U14

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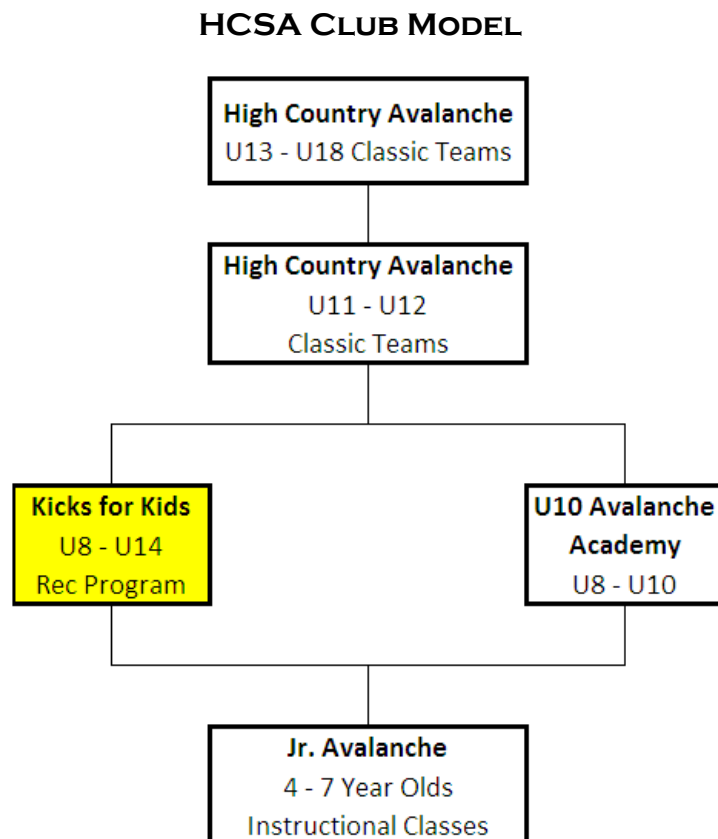
INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2010, the High Country Soccer Association established Kicks for Kids to fill the need for a spring recreational youth soccer opportunity in the High Country. Kicks for Kids was created from an innovative concept based on a new era philosophy of player development at the recreational level. Kicks for Kids is a hybrid recreational program combining a recreational soccer league with a NCYSA Youth Academy coaching philosophy. In its inaugural year, Kicks for Kids was an overwhelming success based on participation, player development, and parental feedback. All Kicks for Kids events are held at the Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex, the premier soccer facility of western North Carolina. The establishment of this program is a significant step in the growth and development of the HCSA. HCSA is very excited about the foundation that was set for this program and is enthusiastic about growing our recreational soccer league, Kicks for Kids!



WHO SHOULD PLAY?

Kicks for Kids is for the U8-U14 beginning or intermediate player interested in a fun recreational soccer experience. Kicks for Kids is a great experience for beginning players with no previous soccer experience but also continues to challenge and develop those with a few seasons of soccer experience. Kicks for Kids provides players with a solid foundation of soccer skills so those who wish to progress in the HCSA Club model to either the U10 Avalanche Academy (for U8-U10 players) or the HCSA Classic teams can do so with confidence.



PHILOSOPHY

The Kicks for Kids philosophy for player development at the recreational level addresses the common shortcomings of recreational soccer leagues in the United States. The greatest shortcomings of recreational youth soccer programs are unevenness in the quality of coaching, an overemphasis on winning versus player development, and the failure to create a positive learning environment that fosters player creativity. The Kicks for Kids model seeks to address each of these shortcomings to lay the foundation for the total development of the youth soccer player.

The Kicks for Kids philosophy was partially adopted from the NCYSA Academy Program philosophy on player development and age appropriate training versus match results. Kicks for Kids also borrowed the pool training philosophy from the Academy Program as a tool to benefit player development. Pool training is training in a group setting where two or more teams train together and players may be redistributed into groups with players of similar ability to maximize the developmental benefits of all players.

Kicks for Kids players will be assigned to teams, with each team being assigned a parent/volunteer coach and a professional HCSA staff trainer. The role of the HCSA staff trainer is to run and manage the training sessions with the assistance of the parent/volunteer coach. This model serves as an opportunity for the HCSA staff coach to also educate and develop the parent/volunteer coach while leading practice for the team. By bringing in a professional HCSA staff trainer for each team the HCSA aims to create equilibrium in practice sessions. All teams will receive equal and qualified coaching and follow a consistent age appropriate curriculum. The curriculum, or training topics and activities, are predesigned by the HCSA Directors of Coaching. The practice curriculum is designed to teach age appropriate technical and tactical skills through fun activities and small-sided games. The Kicks for Kids matches will be coached and managed by the parent/volunteer coach without the HCSA staff coach present.

TRAINING & MATCH SCHEDULE

The Kicks for Kids season will begin in mid March and last through the end of May. Team's will have a weekly training session falling on the same day each week. Training sessions will be 75 minutes and held in a pool training format once a week throughout the season. Kicks for Kids League matches will take place once a week generally on Saturday mornings, but weekdays may be scheduled as well.

MATCH FORMATS & TEAM FORMATION

Skill development in soccer occurs by how frequently players touch the ball. Kicks for Kids will emphasize maximizing each player's opportunity to have touches on the ball in matches and will follow the United States Youth Soccer Association's recommendations for small-sided games in the following formats:

U8 - 4 v 4 with maximum rosters of 8 (no goalkeeper)

U10 - 6 v 6 with maximum rosters of 12

U12 - 8 v 8 with maximum rosters of 14

U14 - 8 v 8 with maximum rosters of 14

Teams will be formed in the above age groups. Criteria for forming teams will be age, gender and skill level. Separate boys and girls divisions will be made in age groups where participation numbers allow. To the extent possible, Kicks for Kids will strive to create teams of equal ability to maximize the benefits to all players. Every effort will be made to honor player and coach requests for team placement; however, maximizing player development and success will be the main priority.

COACHING AND FEES

The cost of Kicks for Kids is \$45 per season. The cost includes NCYSA registration fees, HCSA administrative fees, referee fees, professional HCSA staff trainer fees, and a home and away uniform shirt. Practices will be coached by professional HCSA staff trainers with the assistance of the team's parent volunteer coach. Games will be coached by the team's parent volunteer coach.

Kicks for Kids sponsorship opportunities are available and your child's fees may be waived if you have a business available to sponsor. For more information on sponsorship opportunities check our website (www.hcavalanche.org) or contact the HCSA Office Manager (hcsoccer@hcavalanche.org).

KICKS FOR KIDS VS U10 AVALANCHE ACADEMY

We are often asked what the difference is between these two programs and which is more appropriate for a U8-U10 player. While the two programs share many similarities in their philosophy they are designed for different levels of ability and commitment. In general Kicks for Kids is designed to be a fun recreational program that teaches basic techniques and skills. Kicks for Kids is a great program for beginning or less experienced soccer players and players looking for a more flexible commitment level. U10 Avalanche Academy is designed as a more challenging program that teaches more advanced techniques and skills for an advanced player and a player looking for a more competitive commitment level.

Kicks for Kids will practice 1 time per week for 1 hour, 15 minutes.

U10 Avalanche Academy will practice 2 times per week for 1 hour, 15 minutes.

Kicks for Kids will play 1 game per week.

U10 Avalanche Academy will play 2 – 3 games per week, though often on the same day.

Kicks for Kids games are played at TMSC, in house against other Kicks for Kids teams.

U10 Avalanche Academy plays some in house games but also plays against other club's Academy teams, some travel is involved but is optional.

Kicks for Kids practices are designed to be fun, less demanding, and teach basic techniques.

U10 Avalanche Academy practices are designed to be fun, more demanding, and teach advanced techniques.

SUMMARY

HCSA is very enthusiastic about the future for player development in the High Country with the establishment of Kicks for Kids. We feel the Kicks for Kids community soccer program and its innovative philosophy are in the best interests of player development at the recreational level and will benefit your child while fostering a lifetime enjoyment in the game of soccer.

If you have additional questions please feel free to e-mail HCSA Director of Coaching Kiki Wallace (doc@hcavalanche.org) or Kicks for Kids Program Director Kevin Lawrence (kladoc@hcavalanche.org).