



## LOWER MERION SOCCER CLUB

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*Providing each and every child with a fun filled experience in a soccer environment*

## ATOMS & NEUTRONS DIVISIONS PROGRAM INFORMATION

Welcome to the Lower Merion Soccer Club. We would like to take a few minutes to introduce you to our Atoms and Neutrons Divisions and discuss how the divisions work. Hopefully this information will answer many of the questions that you have.

LMSC has over 2600 players, ranging in age from 3-18. This fall, we will again have over 1300 players in the Fall Intramural Program and over 850 in the very prestigious Travel Team Program.

### DATES AND TIMES FOR THE SEASON

The Atoms & Neutrons Divisions will play every Saturday from September 9 through November 5th. We will use November 11 and 12 as makeup dates, if needed. All games will be at the Gladwyne Playground (Merion Square Road in Gladwyne).

**\*\*\* For players observing the holidays on Saturday, September 16, we will be offering alternate sessions on Sunday, September 17. The girls' makeup session will start at 2:15, the boys' makeup session will start at 3:30 PM.**

### CHANGING TIMES OR CHANGING TO A DIFFERENT AGE GROUP

If you feel that your child is struggling in the Atoms or Neutrons Division, you may move your child to the younger Pee-Wees Division which plays on Sundays at Gladwyne Playground.

If you feel that your child is too advanced for the Atoms or Neutrons, you are welcome to move him / her to the older age groups, where players are placed on teams of 12 players for the season and compete against other teams within the division. To move your child to the older Bantams Division (boys) or Microns Division (girls), please e-mail LMSC President Biff Sturla at [soccer@lmsc.net](mailto:soccer@lmsc.net)

Players signed up for the Atoms or Neutrons Division may only switch time slots if they plan to switch to an afternoon division. As stated, the morning time slots for the Atoms and Neutrons Divisions closed out in early August and will not accept additional players.

### THE DIVISION COMMISSIONERS

The Pee-Wees Divisions will be headed up by Franky Carrozza and Henry Farr. Henry is an LMSC travel team coach, assistant coach for the Harrilton High School Boys varsity and played in the LMSC Travel Team Program for many years, leading his team to two state championships. Franky is a former division one college athlete and has been a teacher for very young children for well over 10 years.

Each week, our staff will be in charge of organizing the players, coaches and referees. If you are interested in coaching, please talk with a member of our staff. **We are always in need of more coaches.** Most of our coaches are parents of the players. We are highly dependent on having parents volunteer to coach.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMS

The primary objective of the younger intramural programs is:

**"To provide each and every youngster with a fun filled experience in a soccer environment."**

We want each child to have fun and learn to love the game. Winning and losing is NOT a high priority, and we expect parents and spectators to act in this manner also.

## **EQUIPMENT, SOCCER BALLS AND JERSEYS**

Players will receive their LMSC jersey when they arrive for their first practice. Please check in at the registration table, give them your child's name and get your LMSC jersey. Your child will wear that each session during the fall season. Please be sure he / she comes dressed each week in that jersey.

As per the regulations of the United States Soccer Federation (which we are a part of), ALL players **MUST** wear shinguards to practices and games. Soccer shoes are highly recommended over sneakers as they will provide much more traction and will lead to fewer injuries. Shinguards and soccer shoes can be purchased at most any sporting goods store. Players should wear navy or black gym shorts and white soccer socks, worn **OVER** the shin guards. In cold weather, players should wear loose fitting sweat pants, but not blue jeans or pants.

Players in these age groups will use a size 3 soccer ball (much smaller than the size four balls used by 8-12 year olds and the size five balls used by players ages 13 through adults). All players are strongly encouraged to bring a size 3 ball to soccer each week, but please be sure that your name is written on it in magic marker.

We will sell LMSC soccer balls at the field while supplies last. We will also carry LMSC game shorts, shin guards and soccer socks.

## **HOW THE ATOMS AND NEUTRONS DIVISIONS ARE RUN**

Franky and Henry will help our volunteer coaches and our referees lead the players through a variety of FUNdamental soccer activities. All players will have their own soccer ball to work with during this time. The basic skills of the game will be stressed in a fun filled soccer environment

About twenty minutes into each session, we will organize the players into small sided soccer games. Players will be divided into small teams of about four players each. The children will be randomly divided, they will not be placed on set teams for the season (the format used for our players six years of age and older). One of the primary reasons for this "pick up soccer" philosophy is to keep parents from talking about "undefeated seasons" and "beating some other team that they don't like." We must emphasize that we greatly expect parents and spectators to behave in a mature fashion. Failure to comply could result in your child being removed from the program. This is stated up front because of what we have seen from a select few individuals in previous years at LMSC.

It is very important that players show up **promptly** so that they do not miss the beginning of each session. The skills sessions will be run by our coaching staff, with help from the coaches and referees. Please plan to arrive 10 minutes early each Sunday.

The referees for our younger divisions will be 11-13 year old players in our Travel Team Program. Many of these youngsters got their start in our 4 or 5 year old divisions. These referees have been involved in soccer for many years and have played in several hundred soccer games (travel team players play as many as 60 games a year). Please do not give the referees a hard time. The referees have been told to take orders only from the Division Commissioners and the LMSC Officers, **not** from the parents of players or other spectators.

## **ATTENDANCE DURING THE SEASON**

At these younger divisions, attendance is optional. Since they are not on set teams for the season, they will not be letting their teammates down by not showing up. We do ask that if you are going to show up, to please be **prompt**. In the older ages, players are expected to try to make every game and practice so as to live up to their part of being a member of a team.

## **WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF RAIN**

The fields that we use are owned by the Lower Merion Township and the Lower Merion School District. They will close their fields if the fields are in bad shape due to weather. It is possible that the fields will remain closed even after it has stopped raining, if the fields are saturated.

If the fields are closed, LMSC will post a notice on the LMSC web page, [www.lmsc.net](http://www.lmsc.net), stating that the fields are closed and therefore not playable. LMSC will attempt to post this message no later than 8:00 AM. We will also send out an e-mail to everyone on our e-mail list. Please do NOT call the LMSC Officers, Division Commissioners or coaches for this information. Please check your e-mail and check the LMSC web page.

## **WE NEED COACHING VOLUNTEERS**

All parents are asked to please give consideration to coaching. The success of the program depends on parents volunteering to coach. Since we know many of you don't have a significant soccer background, we will gladly provide you with lots of youth coaching material. We provide coaches with several different coaching manuals and coaches handouts. These materials are provided to our coaches so that more adults will be confident enough to step up and volunteer to coach. If you enjoy working with kids, PLEASE help us out by volunteering.

## **REST ROOMS AT GLADWYNE PLAYGROUND**

Only the township can open the rest rooms in the building located next to the large radio towers. The rest rooms will usually be open during September and October. The township however will sometimes need to close the rest rooms at their discretion. They usually shut them down starting in early November so that the water pipes do not freeze and burst.

## **WHAT TO DO IF A FRIEND WANTS TO SIGN UP**

Unlike most divisions in the LMSC program, the Atoms and Neutrons Divisions do NOT close enrollment. If you know of someone who wants to join, have them show up in proper soccer attire to one of our afternoon sessions. They should plan to arrive ten minutes early to register at the field. Please note that the morning sessions will NOT accept walkup registrations. Only the afternoon sessions will accept walk up registrations.

## **PARKING AT GLADWYNE PLAYGROUND**

All parents are asked to NOT park in the upper circle of the Gladwyne Playground parking lot. It is clearly marked "NO PARKING." Each week, police come by and ticket people. This is our ONLY warning to you, I guarantee that the police will ticket people regularly up there, they have been ticketing cars there for years.

## **OUR SPRING INTRAMURAL PROGRAM**

We will post information about our Spring Intramural Program on our web site in December. The program runs on Sunday afternoons. Divisions will be formed for children ages 4-12. The program runs from mid-April through mid-June. All players currently in the program have been placed on our e-mail list. We will send out notices about the Spring Intramural Program to all players who we have a valid e-mail address for.

## **FUTURE FALL INTRAMURAL PROGRAM SEASONS**

Next year, most of the players in these age groups will play in the Bantams Division (boys) or Microns Division (girls). The players are placed on set teams of 12 players each and have games every Saturday against another team in the same division. Each team also has one practice a week (either on a weeknight or on Sunday afternoon) during the season. In order for us to make fair and even teams, we need to start working on team assignments in mid-August. Our registration deadline is August 10 for the older divisions. After that date, we begin making team assignments. Players who register after that will not be guaranteed of being placed on a team. It is VERY important that players mail in their registrations in a timely manner.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL TRAVEL TEAM ACADEMY**

One of the primary objectives of the LMSC Intramural Program is to develop the more talented and enthusiastic players for the very prestigious Travel Team Program.

Each year, we organize the **Developmental Under Academy**. Tryouts are held in late April and May. The program runs from July through April. This year's teams are comprised of children **born in 2017**. Each team will take a maximum of 20 players. This year, we had over 40 boys tryout and over 25 girls tryout for the Developmental Academy. The program offers a high level of coaching. A much higher level of commitment from the players is expected. The Developmental Academy has two practices per week, as compared with the intramural program which has one practice a week.

Each team trains together during the fall season under the direction of the LMSC Coaching Staff. The teams continue during the winter, practicing in local area gyms and playing in local area indoor leagues. We strongly encourage our more talented and enthusiastic players of the proper age to tryout for the Developmental Academy.

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

Thank you again for enrolling in LMSC. As a former player in the program (a LONG time ago) and a coach at LMSC for the past 41 years, I am confident that you will enjoy the program. We have developed a lot of high quality players over the years.

Since 1989, our club has had over 80 travel teams win state championships. Many LMSC alums gone on to play at the college level when they get older.

LMSC has had several former players make it to the professional ranks in soccer including Daniel Lovitz of the USA Men's National Team and the Montreal Impact. Also, former LMSC player Matthew Real is on the Philadelphia Union.

Former LMSC player Ben Olsen played for the USA in the World Cup in 2006 in Germany as well as the Olympics in Sydney, Australia in 2000. He later served as head coach for D.C. United of Major League Soccer, our nation's top professional league, for over 10 years.

Former LMSC player Jon Conway played in the MLS, our country's top professional league, for twelve years. Jon was an All American selection at Rutgers in 1999. Former LMSC player Suzie Grech was a member of Spain's Under 18 National Team. Former LMSC player Will Kohler started for the USA Under 17 National Team in 1991. In 2006, Max Kurtzman was a member of the Under 15 National Team. LMSC alums Greg Cochrane and Jimmy McLaughlin both played in the MLS up through 2015. Former LMSC player Derrick Jones also played in the MLS for several years.

We hope you like our program and will stick with soccer for many years.

Soccerly,



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