



## GALAXY ALLIANCE SOCCER CLUB

# HOW TO SELECT A SOCCER CLUB & TEAM

This document is designed to help parents evaluate a soccer club/team if they are new to club soccer or if they are considering changing clubs.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE JOINING A SOCCER CLUB

Mission Statement/Philosophy: What is the club's goal? Is it consistent with what you're seeking for your child? The mission statement should be on the website and/or any documents that are given to new parents.

Reputation: Is the club well-respected in the community? Ask parents with players in the club as well as at other clubs of their experiences and/or impression of the club you are considering joining. Does the club focus more on either the boys or girls side of club soccer?

Track Record: How have the club's teams performed? At what level do they play in Coast Soccer League, e.g., how are the club's teams distributed between the various divisions (Bronze, Silver, Silver Elite, Gold, Premier). Check out the following link to the "Clubs" section of the Coast Soccer League website, where you can see an entire club's team roster and their records. <http://www.coastsoccer.com/clubs.php>

Financial Transparency: How does the club manage its finances? Are the club/club dues in line with other clubs in the area? What is included in the annual dues (e.g., coach salary, tournaments, uniforms, etc.)? Does the club/team provide a breakdown of how the dues are determined / how they are being spent? Is the club a non-profit (501c3) concern or does it exist to generate income for its owner/manager(s)?

Fields / Facilities: Field space is a critical component to a soccer club's success and is scarce commodity in the Southern California area, in particular on the Westside of Los Angeles. Does the club have a consistent location for both practices and games? How often has the team you are considering had to cancel or move practices over the past season? Are there plans for the team(s) to relocate to different practice or game fields in the foreseeable future? Do any of the clubs' teams play home games on the opponents' fields due to lack of home field space/availability?

Leadership & Management: How is the club managed? Who is on the board of directors? Who is the Director of Coaching (if they have one), and what is his or her reputation? Have you met anyone from the club / has anyone communicated with you?

Organization: Does the club seem to "have its act together"? Does it seem well-organized and put forth a consistent image? Does the club have a well-crafted "player-parent agreement" or similar contract that lays out the expectations and details of the club experience for the coming season?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE JOINING A SPECIFIC TEAM

Coaching: Is the coach experienced in club soccer and well-qualified? What is his background/credentials? Has he been successful in developing kids and/or creating strong teams in the past? Does your kid get along with him, and visa/versa? Do you get along with him? Have you seen how he works with the kids, not just in practices but in games? Coaches can have very different personalities and styles in games, particularly in competitive games that “matter”.

Team “Charter”: How “intense” and “competitive” is the team? How committed do the players, parents and coach seem to be? Is there another team in the club at the same age division, and is the team you’re thinking of joining the “A” or the “B” team? Does the team’s charter match what you and your player are looking for?

Management: Who is the team manager? What is the team manager’s role on the team, and how good a job has the manager done (ask parents on the team for their opinion)? Is the team manager a good leader, or just an administrator? Where is the team manager’s kid on the roster, i.e., is he/she an “impact player”, “on the bench”, or somewhere in between? (which may have an effect on how he/she tries to influence the team’s direction).

Team Roster/Other Players: How does your kid compare to the rest of the roster? How committed, focused and talented are they? Does your player get along with them? You should ask the coach how your player would fit in on the team, how much playing time could be expected, what position(s) he/she might play, what specific positions the coach is trying to fill, etc.

Financial Considerations: What are the annual team dues, when are they due and what do they include/not include? Does the team have an annual expense budget and is it available for review? If there are “scholarship” players (non-full payers) are on the team, how are they impacting the dues and what are the criteria for a player qualifying for a scholarship?

Team Character / “Vibe”: How the club and team “feels” is an important but less quantifiable factor to consider. How is the team “chemistry” between the players on the field, the parents on the sideline, and with the coach? Are the other players respectful to your kid and/or do they make an effort to help him integrate? Does it seem like the team has fun together?

In general, before making a selection of which club/team is best suited for your player, you should check out all the clubs in your area that have teams in your players’ age division. Be sure to evaluate the coaches and the teams both in a practice environment and during games. And let your player train with the team/coach for an extended period (many sessions) to see if the kid’s enthusiasm is maintained for the duration - until the “newness” wears off and the routine settles in. You should not feel “pressured” by a coach or club to make a quick decision - the most important consideration is to do what is right for your own kid.

For more information about **Galaxy Alliance Soccer Club**, please visit [www.galaxyalliance.org](http://www.galaxyalliance.org).

