



Baltimore Union SC (the Club) believes that players will develop better at their age appropriate level than at an age level above. However, the club recognizes that, although rare, some talented players may exist that are physically and psychologically ready to be considered for the next age level within the club's competitive team structure.

Stage 1: Parent letter, Playing-Up Application Form, Playing-Up Consent Form

The athlete and parent/guardian must initiate the consideration for Playing-Up status. The Director of Coaching (DOC) must receive new requests prior to tryouts.

The player and parent/guardian must complete the **Playing-Up Application Form** and the **Playing-Up Consent Form** found on the club website (See Forms). The forms must be complete with all required information.

Along with the Playing-Up Application Form and Playing-Up Consent Form, the parent must include a note stating the reasons why the player should be considered for Playing-Up status. The letter must be received with the two Playing-Up Forms prior to the tryout dates. The Age Group Coordinator (AGC) and DOC will make the decision if the player is allowed to try out at the next age group. Information included in the request and input from former and current coaches may be used to make this determination. Players will be notified prior to tryouts. If the request is denied the process ends here. If the request is approved the process continues to the Team Tryout Stage.

Stage 2: Team Tryouts

The DOC and the age appropriate coaches will evaluate the player. The player must try out with both the next age level group and the age appropriate team.

The coaches will observe the player at tryouts to determine if he/she is among the prospective starters for the next age level team, and one of the strongest players of the age appropriate team. If the athlete is **not** evaluated as a prospective starter on the next age level team and one of the strongest players on the age appropriate team, then the process ends here. If the athlete is evaluated as a prospective starter on the next age level team and one of the strongest players of the age appropriate team, then the process moves on to the Team Impact Stage.

Stage 3: Team Impact

If the player has gotten this far, then he/she has been approved by the DOC and has met the expectations required to play on the next age level team. However, the following considerations must still be met for the player to be invited to play on the next age level team:

1. If an underage player will displace a promising age appropriate player, the player will not be approved to play on the next age level team, even if the under aged player is a more skilled soccer player. An age appropriate player that shows promise as a developing soccer player cannot be displaced by the underage player. In this case, the underage player will be invited, and required, to play at their age appropriate level.
2. If by playing up in the next age level, the player leaves the age appropriate team without sufficient numbers to field a viable team, the underage player will be invited, and required, to play at their age appropriate level.

(If it is determined that an underage player was approved to play at the next age level, but was ultimately not permitted under either part 1 or 2 of the Team Impact criterion, then the Club will look at the possibility of ‘duel registration.’ A duel registration allows the player to be registered to both teams. It further requires the player to play and practice with the age appropriate team first, but will permit them to play and practice with the next age level team as scheduling permits.)

Baltimore Union SC Discretion

Baltimore Union SC reserves the right to move players when it will be in the best interest of developing the player and to maintain a team at a particular age group. This discretion is NOT bound by any of the guidelines in the Playing-Up consideration process. The Club reserves the right to build teams based on, but not limited to, the following considerations:

1. There are some situations where the club will ask a player to play up if it makes the overall numbers for the team more favorable.
2. An underage player may be asked to play on the next age level team when it is deemed he/she has clearly demonstrated exceptional play on the age appropriate team the previous season.
3. A player may be asked to play up when team continuity becomes threatened. The Club will always attempt to field a team at each age group and keep as many kids playing as possible.
4. In the event there is not a team in a particular age group and a team is formed combining two age groups, the younger players will not be considered “playing up” for that year.
5. If, after tryouts, a team is still not full, the team’s coaches may consider younger players for their team ONLY if the age appropriate team is full. Their players can only be considered with the approval of the DOC. The following year, all players will be required to try out for their appropriate age group and/or request to try out for the next level age group, following the policy outlined above.