

Did you Know What Goes Into HYSA Tryouts?

The Helena Youth Soccer Association has fielded questions from a variety of sources over the years regarding our tryout processes. We have worked hard in recent years to improve and increase our members' knowledge about tryout procedures and thought it would be helpful to explain some of the key details of tryouts for those wanting to know more.

First and foremost, HYSA tryouts are one of the most labor-intensive activities that we do at HYSA. With between 14-16 teams formed for any given season, and 230-250 players participating in tryouts, the process requires a tremendous amount of coordination as well as a number of volunteers who must not only be willing to help out but who must also possess higher level knowledge regarding the game of soccer in order to provide the insights on each individual player that we need to ensure a fair, impartial tryout process.

The key components that we strive to incorporate in each tryout, regardless of age or gender, include:

1. Use of an assessment process that assesses each player using the following “four pillars” of youth soccer development adopted by U.S. Soccer, using a 1-5 range with 5 representing mastery for the age and gender:
 - a. Technical
 - b. Tactical
 - c. Physical
 - d. Mental
2. Development of the tryout format by our Executive Director and Director of Coaching to ensure a standard tryout format for each age/gender. Each tryout includes a combination of technical drills, small-sided activities and games and full-sided (or as close thereto as possible, depending on the number of players participating in tryouts) scrimmages. Our tryout format contemplates sessions of 1.5-2 hours each and includes either 1 or 2 separate tryout sessions, based on schedules and available fields and volunteers.
3. Use of as many assessors as we can manage to recruit to participate in the assessments, in order to ensure as many separate data points as possible for each area assessed for each player. While we strive to have 4 assessors for each age and gender and do our best to include volunteers without prior knowledge of the players, that goal is often impossible to meet with available volunteers and as a result, we do the best we can with the volunteers we are able to recruit to participate in any given tryout session. We also assign a lead assessor among those participating in the tryout who is responsible for ensuring the tryout process follows the outline and who collects, compiles and delivers the assessments from the tryouts to the HYSA Executive Director.

4. The HYSA Executive Director and Director of Coaching take the compiled assessments from tryouts and compare the results to a separate individual assessment for each player who has previously played for an HYSA team, using the same assessment form used by the assessors, completed by the coach from the most recent season completed immediately prior to the date of the tryout. All assessments are averaged, providing equal weight to each individual assessor's scores (including the coach's assessment) for each player.
5. The HYSA Executive Director then analyzes the compilation of assessments from the tryout sessions and the coach's assessment to develop a compiled/average individual ranking for each player participating in the tryout session. The individual ranking for players is used by the HYSA Executive Director working in collaboration with the HYSA Coaching and Team Formation Committee to form teams for the next MYSA season. Where there are two teams formed in an age group, the separation between the first and second teams will vary according to team needs, clear breaks in assessment scores from one player to the next and minimum and maximum roster sizes under both HYSA and MYSA rules.
6. Other Details:
 - a. The HYSA Coaching Committee is appointed by the HYSA Board of Directors and includes a combination of members of the HYSA Board and current and former coaches and others with familiarity regarding HYSA.
 - b. Each individual participating as a volunteer for tryouts typically gives between 8-12 hours of his or her time, including time spent familiarizing themselves with the tryout format, setting up and tearing down cones, balls, etc., conducting the tryout and finalizing their assessment forms.
 - c. Players participating in tryouts are assigned a number and assessors are provided with numbers, not names of players, on their assessment forms.
 - d. When a player has registered for tryouts but is unable to participate due to injury, illness or unavailability due to plans scheduled before tryout dates were announced, placement of such players is in the full discretion of the Coaching Committee working in collaboration with the HYSA Executive Director and Director of Coaching and will typically be based on previous seasons' coaching assessments, and previous starting roles and team placements.