



# **LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT**

*A Club Coach Guide to LTPD*

# CONTENTS

<b>FOREWARD</b>	<b>3</b>
SYSI Player Development Vision	
Developmental Age	
<b>TRAINING PHILOSOPHY</b>	<b>5</b>
Early Specialization	
Multilateral Program	
Initiation Stage (6yrs-10yrs)	
Athletic Formation (11yrs-14yrs)	
Specialization (15yrs-18yrs)	
High Performance (19yrs +)	
Technical Development	
Tactical Development	
<b>CSA LONG-TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
Stage 1: Active Start	
Stage 2: FUNdamentals	
Stage 3: Learning to Train	
Stage 4: Training to Train	
Stage 5: Training to Compete	
Stage 6: Training to in	
Stage 7: Active for Life	

## FOREWARD

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Simply put, Long Term Player Development (LTPD) is a framework to maximize a player's potential and long-term involvement in sport over the course of their life. This document sets out a vision for Saskatoon Youth Soccer Inc. (SYSI) that takes advantage of the history and culture of the game to increase participation and to lay the foundations of success long into the future.

Research has concluded that it takes a minimum of 10 years or approximately 10,000 hours of 'deliberate' training for an athlete to reach elite levels (Starkes and Ericsson, 2003). For a player and coach this translates into slightly more than 3 hours of training or competition daily for 10 years. But where do youngsters develop the skills of the game? Evidence would suggest that the number of games played by youngsters in Canada slows the overall development of the individual player. It is a fact, that in a game of soccer lasting 90 minutes, a player may be lucky to spend as much as a total of 3 minutes with the ball in his/her possession. We can therefore conclude that, in order, to get just one hour of quality work in the practicing of the basic skills of ball control, dribbling, passing and shooting approximately 20+ games would have to be played.

The Saskatoon Youth Soccer Inc.'s mandate is to create a model for development that not only improves the quality of our players but, also one that helps to influence the improved performance levels of the sport in Canada and gives our athletes a high probability of achieving success in domestic and international competitions.

There is much that is good about soccer within SYSI but, we need to continue to work to create sustained success into the future. The challenge is to build a consistent approach to player development.

What we need to do, in order, to improve player development:

- *Focus on supporting the complete athlete not just the athlete training and competition. In the formative years recommend other sports, cross training methods to get away from soccer and avoid burn out.*
- *Remove the focus of games and/or winning and replace with a focused application to training at all levels and ages.*
- *Remove geographic and cultural differences to develop a common directional, leadership and athlete development framework consistent in the philosophy of player development.*
- *Introduce Technical skills and physical literacy in a systematic and timely way.*

The following pages clearly define our Club model for long term player development, which falls in line with the over-riding guiding principles of the CSA "Wellness to World Cup" & LTPD.

Within this model, you will find implementation information that clearly outlines what activities are appropriate at each stage of development. Recommended actions are introduced so that whether you are a player, parent, coach or administrator you understand your role in developing a soccer player within SYSI.

The ultimate vision for the SYSI Long-Term Player Development Program is:

*To be a leading soccer organization in the Province of SK; recognized for providing exemplary programs, achieving performance excellence, upholding the Laws of the Game and shaping productive Canadians.*

### ***Growth, Maturation, Chronological Age - What Does it All Mean?***

The terms "growth" and "maturation" are often used together and sometimes synonymously. However, each refers to specific biological activities.

**Growth** refers to observable step-by-step changes in quantity and measurable changes in body size such as height, weight, and fat percentage.

**Maturation** refers to qualitative system changes, both structural and functional, in the body's progress toward maturity such as the change of cartilage to bone in the skeleton.

**Development** refers to the inter-relationship between growth and maturation in relation to the passage of time. The concept of development also includes the social, emotional, intellectual, and motor realms of the child.

**Chronological age** refers to the number of years and days elapsed since birth. Children of the same chronological age can differ by several years in their level of biological maturation.

**Developmental age** refers to the degree of physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional maturity. Physical developmental age can be determined by skeletal maturity or bone age after which mental, cognitive, and emotional maturity is incorporated.

Long term player development requires the identification of early, average, and late maturation, in order, to help to design appropriate training and competition programs in relation to optimal trainability and readiness.

The beginning of the growth spurt and the peak of the growth spurt are very significant in LTAD applications to training and competition design.

## TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

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Sports can be classified as either early or late specialization. Early specialization sports include artistic and acrobatic sports such as gymnastics, diving, and figure skating.

These differ from late specialization sports in that very complex skills are learned before maturation since they cannot be fully mastered if taught after maturation.

Most other sports are late specialization sports. Soccer is a late specialization sport. If physical literacy is acquired before maturation, players can select a late specialization sport when they are between the ages of 12 and 15 and have the potential to rise to international stardom in that sport.

Specializing before the age of 10 in late specialization sports like soccer contributes to:

- One-sided, sport-specific preparation.
- Lack of ASK's, the basic movement and sports skills.
- Overuse injuries & Early burn-out.
- Early retirement from training and competition.

Early involvement in the FUNdamentals stage is essential in late specialization sports.

***Young athletes should not specialize in any sport, including soccer, too early! A multilateral program, which encourages children to participate in all sports and athletic endeavour, will lead to more successful performances at a later stage of development.***

Following the development, launch and implementation of the Canadian Soccer Association's "Wellness to World Cup" and Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) model, SYSI members & stakeholders can be assured that your Club is adopting the correct philosophical and practical approach to ensuring the best possible development of our players.

Coaches at all levels are expected to adopt, follow and implement this philosophy.

### **EARLY SPECIALIZATION - NOT RECOMMENDED**

- QUICK PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
- BEST PERFORMANCES ACHIEVED AT 15-16 YEARS BECAUSE OF QUICK ADAPTION • INCONSISTENCY OF PERFORMANCE IN GAMES
- BY AGE 18 MANY PLAYERS ARE BURNED OUT AND QUIT OR DRIFT INTO OTHER INFLUENCES • PRONE TO INJURY BECAUSE OF EARLY ADAPTION

### **MULTILATERAL PROGRAM - RECOMMENDED**

- ✓ SLOWER PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
- ✓ BEST PERFORMANCES AT 18+ (MATURATION) • CONSISTENT PERFORMERS IN GAMES
- ✓ LONGER PLAYING CAREER
- ✓ FEWER INJURIES

## INITIATION STAGE (6YRS-10YRS)

- EMPHASIZE UNILATERAL DEVELOPMENT - WIDE VARIETY OF SKILLS AND EXERCISES (RUNNING, JUMPING, CATCHING THROWING, BALANCING, ROLLING, ETC.)
- PRAISE COMMITMENT AND SELF DISCIPLINE
- PRAISE SKILL DEVELOPMENT
- ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF FLEXIBILITY, COORDINATION AND BALANCE
- SWIMMING IS EXCELLENT FOR DEVELOPING CARDIORESPIRATORY SYSTEM WHILE MINIMISING THE STRESSES ON JOINTS, LIGAMENTS AND CONNECTIVE TISSUE.
- ENCOURAGE CORRECT TECHNIQUE
- MODIFY PLAYING AREAS AND EQUIPMENT TO SUITABLE LEVEL
- DESIGN DRILLS GAMES TO ENABLE ALL PLAYERS MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION
- ENCOURAGE TO BE CREATIVE AND IMAGINATIVE
- SIMPLIFY RULES
- SHORT SESSIONS
- ENCOURAGE CONCENTRATION
- EMPHASIZE ETHICS AND FAIR PLAY MAKE SURE THE KIDS HAVE FUN
- ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN AS MANY SPORTS AS POSSIBLE

## ATHLETIC FORMATION (11YRS-14YRS)

- PROGRESSIVELY INCREASE THE VOLUME AND INTENSITY OF TRAINING
- DESIGN DRILLS THAT INTRODUCE PLAYERS TO FUNDAMENTAL TACTICS AND STRATEGIES AND REINFORCE SKILL DEVELOPMENT
- REFINE AND AUTOMATE THE BASIC SKILLS
- LEARN SKILLS THAT ARE MORE COMPLEX
- IMPROVE FLEXIBILITY, COORDINATION AND BALANCE
- PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO COMPETE AT A CHALLENGING LEVEL
- INTRODUCE EXERCISES FOR GENERAL STRENGTH THESE EXERCISES SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON 'CORE' DEVELOPMENT. USE OWN BODY WEIGHT OR LIGHT EQUIPMENT
- CONTINUE DEVELOPING AEROBIC CAPACITY
- INTRODUCE MODERATE ANAEROBIC TRAINING AT 14
- DO NOT PERFORM EXERCISES THAT PUT TOO MUCH STRESS ON THE BODY IMPROVE CONCENTRATION BY INTRODUCING MORE COMPLEX DRILLS GAMES SHOULD ALLOW PLAYERS TO APPLY THE VARIOUS TECHNIQUES AND TACTICS
- DE EMPHASIZE WINNING. SUCCESS SHOULD BE JUDGED ON THE CORRECT APPLICATION OF INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SKILLS TACTICS AND STRATEGIES PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS FUN TO BE PART OF.

## SPECIALIZATION (15YRS-18YRS)

- HIGH PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CHOSEN SPORT CLOSELY MONITOR THE PLAYERS DEVELOPMENT
- *CHECK FOR PROGRESSIVE IMPROVEMENTS IN SPECIFIC SOCCER MOTOR ABILITIES; **SPEED, POWER, AEROBIC/ANAEROBIC CAPACITY, COORDINATION AND DYNAMIC FLEXIBILITY***
- GRADUALLY INCREASE TRAINING VOLUME AND INTENSITY INVOLVE PLAYERS IN DECISION MAKING
- ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF TRAINING AND PLAYING INCREASE STRENGTH TRAINING BUT AVOID MAXIMUM STRENGTH TRAINING (LESS THAN 4 REPS) HIGH PRIORITY ON INCREASING ANAEROBIC CAPACITY.

- INCREASE THE VOLUME AND INTENSITY OF ANAEROBIC TRAINING (INCREASE PLAYERS TOLERANCE TO LACTIC ACID BUILD UP)
- IMPROVE AND PERFECT THE PLAYERS SKILL AND TECHNIQUE IMPROVE INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM TACTICS
- WINNING BECOMES MORE IMPORTANT BUT DO NOT OVER EMPHASIZE IT
- PLAYERS SHOULD BE INTRODUCED TO MENTAL TRAINING: **CONCENTRATION, ATTENTION CONTROL, POSITIVE THINKING, SELF DISCIPLINE, VISUALIZATION AND MOTIVATION.**

### HIGH PERFORMANCE (19YRS +)

- A TRAINING PLAN BASED ON SOUND PRINCIPLES OF LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT 6YRS - 19+YRS WILL LEAD TO HIGH PERFORMANCE
- EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE DURING THE JUNIOR YEARS DOES NOT CORRELATE WITH HIGH PERFORMANCE AS A SENIOR!!!
- MOST PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS REACH THEIR PEAK AFTER ACHIEVING FULL MATURATION.

### TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

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#### 1. LEARNING BASIC SKILLS 6-12 YEARS

#### 2. AUTOMATION 12-16 YEARS

Automation means to learn a skill so well that a young player can perform it naturally at a consistently high level without apparent thought or effort.

#### 3. SKILL PERFECTION 16+ YEARS

Perfection can be defined in this context as skills of high difficulty performed fast, with great finesse and with maximum efficiency.

### TACTICAL DEVELOPMENT

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#### 1. SIMPLE INDIVIDUAL TACTICS 10-12 YEARS (MOST POSITIONS)

#### 2. INDIVIDUAL TACTICS WITHIN THE TEAM SETTING 13-16 YEARS (SEVERAL POSITIONS)

#### 3. SPECIALISED / COMPLEX TACTICS BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM 16 + (FOR SPECIFIC POSITIONS)

## **STAGE 1: Active Start** **U4 to U6 males/female**

At this introductory level, the objective is to get children moving and to keep them active. At daycares, schools, clubs, recreation centres and home small children can be provided with early opportunities to learn basic soccer elements. No competitive games should be played – the objective is for adults and children to play together informally.

The physical curriculum provides for learning basic fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing, and catching. The technical requirements are nothing more than encouraging children to enjoy playing with the ball one-on-one with an adult, practicing dribbling, kicking, and shooting.

Player success is encouraged. While the adult should challenge the child player, they should allow the child to “score” goals and “beat” the adult opponent. Adults are advised to discontinue play when the child has lost interest.

At this stage, players should participate in a variety of additional activities. Swimming and well-structured gymnastics programs are recommended to enhance the full range of basic movement skills and physical literacy.

- **WHERE** - Home, Daycare, Schools, Clubs, Community, Parks and Rec centres.
- **WHY** - Provide early opportunities for children to learn basic soccer elements.
- **WHO** - Technical leaders, parent coaches, parents, educators, caregivers.
- **COACHING** - SK Soccer Community Coach – Active Start Course.

**Physical** - Provide the environment for learning proper fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching.

**Technical** - The player and the ball dribbling, kicking and shooting.

**Tactical** - NONE.

**Mental** - Fun, fascination, and passion for play.

**Game Structure:** No competitive games- adults and child play together informally.

**Recommended Session Times:** 30 to 45 minutes

**Season Length:** 4 to 16 weeks Winter/Spring/Summer, indoor and or outdoor.



## STAGE 2: FUNdamentals

### U6 to U8 females / U6 to U9 males “FUN WITH THE BALL”

At this stage, coaches and teachers should create a stimulating learning environment where the atmosphere is “Freedom & Fun.”

The physical curriculum emphasizes the ASKs of movement:

Agility, Balance, Co-ordination and Speed, as well as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching.

Technical instruction is introduced through movement exercises and games that promote a feel for the ball. This includes gaining ball control in receiving passes, dribbling, passing less than 25m, kicking the ball forward, and shooting on goal.

Keeping in mind that small children are naturally egocentric, basic tactical concepts involving basic cooperation between players can be introduced. Playing situations work best for teaching understanding of the game and building basic game intelligence and decision making.

Game formats should progress from 3v3 to 5v5 as the children grow through this stage, and the season should range from 12 to 20 weeks. In order to help de-emphasize competitiveness between coaches and parents, no league standings should be kept. A basic league fixture schedule can be created, but it is basically an extended jamboree format, and the emphasis is clearly on FUN.

All players should play equal time and try all team positions, including goalkeeping, and equal time should be allotted to both practices and games. Children should continue to participate in a variety of additional activities. Swimming and well-structured gymnastics programs are recommended, along with ball sports.

- **WHERE:** Home, School, Clubs.
- **WHY:** Provide opportunities for children to learn basic soccer elements.
- **WHO:** Physical education teacher, parent coach, team coach, club head coach.
- **COACHING:** SK Soccer Community Coach - Fundamentals Course.

**Physical** - Develop the ASKs of movement: agility, balance, co-ordination and speed as well as running, jumping, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching.

**Technical** - Movement exercises/games developed to promote a feel for the ball: gaining ball control in receiving passes, dribbling, passing less than 25m, kicking the ball forward, and shooting on goal.

**Tactical** - Small children are egocentric – playing the ball is the most important objective; however, they now need to be introduced to co-operation between players. They gain understanding of the game through playing situations.

**Mental** - Basic awareness of environment to build game intelligence and decision making.

**Game Structure:** Ranges from 3v3 to 5v5

GAME FORMAT	SQUAD SIZE	GAME DURATION	BALL SIZE	FIELD MIN/MAX WIDTH	FIELD MIN/MAX LENGTH	GOAL SIZE (NO LARGER THAN)
*3v3	Max 6	2 x 15 min	3-4	18 to 22m	25 to 30m	5f/1.52m x 8f/2.44m
*4v4	Max 8	2 x 15 min	3-4	20 to 25m	30 to 36m	5f/1.52m x 8f/2.44m
*5v5	Max 10	2 x 15 min	3-4	25 to 30m	30 to 36m	5f/1.52m x 8f/2.44m

**\*with or without goalkeeper- when no GK reduce goal size**

**Recommended Training Times:** 30 to 60 minutes

**Season Length:** 12 to 20 weeks, indoor and/or outdoor

**STAGE 3: Learning to Train**  
**U8-U11 Female / U9-U12 Male**

The effect of the role-model is very important at this stage. Children begin to identify with famous players and successful teams, and they want to learn imaginative skills. Skill demonstration is very important, and the players learn best by “doing.” Players move from self-centered to self-critical, and they have a high stimulation level during basic skills training.

This is also an important time to teach basic principles of play and to establish a training ethic and discipline. Repetitions are important to develop technical excellence, but creating a fun and challenging environment is still essential for stimulating learning.

- **WHERE:** Clubs, academies, district development centers, schools.
- **WHY:** Player development and talent identification.
- **WHO:** Coaches, technical leaders, physical education teachers.
- **COACHING:** SK Soccer Community Coach – Learning to Train Course.

**Physical** – This is an optimal window for trainability of speed, flexibility and skills.

**Technical** – Building a greater repertoire of soccer related movements; technical skills are developed in training and within the context of basic soccer games.

**Tactical** – Developing environment awareness and encouraging decision-making: simple combinations, marking and running into space.

**Mental** – Golden age of learning; intrinsic motivation is developed by the Fun and Enjoyment that foster desire to play; imagination, creativity, increased demands, discipline.

**Game Structure:** Ranges from 5v5 to 8v8.

GAME FORMAT	SQUAD SIZE	GAME DURATION	BALL SIZE	FIELD MIN/MAX WIDTH	FIELD MIN/MAX LENGTH	GOAL SIZE (NO LARGER THAN)
U8 – 5v5	Ideal 8 Max 10	2 x 20	4	20 to 25m	35 to 40m	5f/1.52m x 8f/2.44m
U9 – 6v6	Ideal 9 Max 12	2 x 25	4	25 to 28m	40 to 45m	6f/1.83m x 12f/ 3.66m
U10 – 7v7	Ideal 10 Max 12	2 x 30 min	4	28 to 32m	45 to 60m	6f/1.83m x 12f/ 3.66m
U11/U12 – 8v8	Ideal 11 Max 14	2 x 30 min	4	42 to 55m	60 to 75m	6f/1.83m x 18f/5.49m

**Recommended training times:** 45 to 70 minutes.

**Season Length:** 16 to 20 weeks, indoor and/or outdoor.

**Recommendations:**

- Small leagues provide game fixtures, but no league standings are recorded.
- Players and game formats are organized to support the basic playing experiences.
- All players play equal time and try all team positions, including goal keeping.
- The game structure progresses between ages from simple to more complex.
- The training to competition ratio should be 2 to 3 training sessions for every game.

## STAGE 4: Training to Train

### U11 to U15 females / U12 to U16 males

At this stage, elite soccer groups may express interest in recruiting talented youth players. Care must be taken to recognize and protect the long-term interests of each player. Risks and issues can be avoided by ensuring that the development model remains “player centered.”

The optimal window of trainability for stamina begins with the onset of Peak Height Velocity (PHV), more commonly known as the adolescent growth spurt. The demands of skill training as well as training loads should increase, thus provoking improvement in mental toughness, concentration and diligence. Awareness of tactics within the game becomes an important facet of the learning process. Players tend to be self-critical and rebellious, but they have a strong commitment to the team.

Physical training emphasizes flexibility, disciplined warm-up and cool down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, balance, and core strength and stability. Players are also introduced to nutrition and proper diet (pre-game, post-game, tournaments), prevention and care of injuries, and the importance of rest and recovery. Coaches may be required to design personalized training programs, in order, to respect the growth spurt.

Technical instruction introduces advanced techniques to those players who are capable, and the skills are presented within a more complex environment with position-specific emphasis. Tactical training emphasizes teamwork, including developing tasks per unit (defence, midfield, and forward units) and positional awareness through small-sided games and large-sided competitive matches.

Mental training introduces a pre-competition routine, mental preparation, goal setting, and coping with winning and losing.

Game formats should progress from 8v8 to 11v11 as players grow through this stage (game transitions to 11v11 at U13 age), and the season moves toward year-round play that includes appropriate rest and recovery periods. Off-sides are introduced at the beginning of this stage.

There must be an appropriate ratio of training, competition, and rest throughout the year. Periodized planning is critical to ensuring players healthy and performing to their potential. The training to competition ratio should be between 5 to 10 for every game.

Soccer is now the player’s primary sport, but complimentary sports are encouraged which support movement and athleticism suitable to soccer (e.g. basketball, track & field).

- **WHERE:** National Teams, NTCs, high schools and clubs.
- **WHY:** Player Development and talent identification.
- **WHO:** Club head coaches and team coaches, Provincial and National team coaches
- **COACHING:** CSA A License, National and Provincial B License, SK Soccer Community Coach - Soccer for Life Course.

**Physical** - Flexibility, disciplined warm up and cool down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, core strength, and stability, balance, nutrition and proper diet (pre-game, post-game, tournaments) prevention and care of injuries, importance of rest recovery. Personalized programs needed, in order, to respect the growth spurt.

**Technical** - Introduction of advanced tactics to those who are capable, technical acquisition in a more complex environment and position specific skills.

**Tactical** - Team work: development of tasks per unit (defensive, midfield and forward unit) and positional awareness through small-sided games and large competitive matches.

**Mental** - Pre-competition routine, introduction to mental preparation, goal setting, coping with winning and losing.

**Game Structure:** Ranges from 8v8 to 11v11. (Game transitions to 11v11 at U13 age)

<b>GAME FORMAT</b>	<b>SQUAD SIZE</b>	<b>GAME DURATION</b>	<b>BALL SIZE</b>	<b>FIELD MIN/MAX WIDTH</b>	<b>FIELD MIN/MAX LENGTH</b>	<b>GOAL SIZE (NO LARGER THAN)</b>
8 v 8	Ideal 11 Max 14	2 x 30 min	4	42 to 55m	60 to 75m	6f/1.83m x 18f/5.49m
11 v 11	Ideal 16 Max 18	2 x 35 min	5	FIFA Reg	FIFA Reg	8f/2.44m x 24f/7.32m

**Recommended training times:** 60 to 75 minutes

**Season Length:** As player's progress through this stage, they move towards year-round play that included appropriate rest and recovery periods.

## **STAGE 5: Training to Compete**

### **U15 to U19 females / U16 to U20 males**

Athletes who are now proficient at performing basic and soccer specific skills are working to gain more game maturity as they learn to perform these skills under a variety of competitive conditions. Fulfillment of each player's potential depends on their own efforts, the support of teammates, and the unselfish guidance of the coach. They must be exposed to quality playing and training environments which extend their mental, physical, tactical and technical capabilities to their limit. Players must have a sound understanding of soccer principles and concepts, and they should show emotional stability when confronted with pressure situations.

Physical training further develops flexibility, correct warm-up and cool-down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, balance, and core strength and stability. Players continue to learn about nutrition and proper diet (pre-game, post-game, tournaments), prevention and care of injuries, and the importance of rest and recovery.

Technical training emphasizes the refinement of core skills and position specific-skills, and advanced techniques and skills are introduced as appropriate. Tactical instruction teaches decision making tactical awareness, game appreciation, game analysis, productivity, and competitive proficiency.

Mental training works to increase player concentration, responsibility, discipline, accountability, goal setting, self-confidence, self-motivation, will-to-win, mental toughness, and a competitive mentality in practice and games. Players are taught the importance of being educated in the game, and they are encouraged to watch games on TV and National team games.

The game format is according to strict FIFA rules for 11-aside soccer, and the season is built on year-round play that includes appropriate rest and recovery periods.

There must be an appropriate ratio of training, competition, and rest throughout year. Periodized planning is critical to ensuring players healthy and performing to their potential. The training to competition ratio should be between 5 to 12 for every game, and players should play regularly in highly competitive professional and international matches. Soccer is the player's primary sport.

- **WHERE** - Clubs, Provincial & National Teams, NTCs, semi-pro teams, pro teams, university programs.
- **WHY** - Player development and talent identification for late developers.
- **WHO** - Club head coaches and team coaches, Provincial and National team coaches, Pro' team coaches & university coaches.
- **COACHING** - A License and National B License.

**Physical** - Further develop flexibility, correct warm up and cool-down, agility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance, strength, core strength, and stability, balance, nutrition and proper diet (pre-game, post-game, tournaments), prevention and care of injuries importance of rest and recovery.

**Technical** - Refinement of core skills and position specific- skills; continued development of advanced techniques and skills.

**Tactical** - Decision making tactical awareness, game appreciation, game analysis, match coaching, productivity and competitive proficiency.

**Mental** - Increased player concentration, responsibility, discipline, accountability, goal setting, self-confidence, self motivation, will-to-win, mental toughness, competitive mentality in training and games; satisfy players urge to compete; importance of being educated in the game (watch games on TV and National Team Games).

**Game Structure: FIFA Rules**

<b>GAME FORMAT</b>	<b>SQUAD SIZE</b>	<b>GAME DURATION</b>	<b>BALL SIZE</b>	<b>FIELD MIN/MAX WIDTH</b>	<b>FIELD MIN/MAX LENGTH</b>	<b>GOAL SIZE (NO LARGER THAN)</b>
11 v 11	Ideal 16 Max 18	2 x 40	5	FIFA Reg.	FIFA Reg.	8t/2.44m x 24f/7.32 m

**Recommended Training Times:** 75 to 90 minutes.

**Season Length:** Year around play that include appropriate and recovery periods.

## **STAGE 6: Training to Win**

### **U18+ females / U19+ males**

The majority, if not all, of the player's physical, technical, tactical, and psychological qualities are now fully established, and the focus of training has shifted to optimization of performance. They may still require additional tactical experience in high pressure games to develop consistency. The focus is on the maximization of all capacities.

Physical training emphasizes an individual fitness program for maintenance and improvement. However, work and recovery must be well monitored; periodized planning is critical to ensuring players healthy and performing to their potential.

Technical training looks at further development of advanced techniques and skills, refinement of general skills and individual positional skills, and game related technical repetition under pressure. Tactical training is designed to stimulate a high degree of decision making, leadership, and game analysis skills. Players must be able to adjust game plans and adapt playing strategies to suit changing demands on the field.

Mental training aims to increase concentration, leadership, discipline, accountability, goal setting, responsibility, self-confidence, self-motivation, will-to-win, mental toughness, and a competitive mentality. Players develop an established pre-practice and pre-game routine.

The game format is according to strict FIFA rules for 11-aside soccer, and the season is built on year-round play that includes appropriate rest and recovery periods. There must be an appropriate ratio of training, competition, and rest throughout year. The training to competition ratio should be between 5 to 12 for every game, and players should play regularly in highly competitive professional and international matches. Soccer is the player's primary sport.

- **WHERE** - National Team program, semi-pro & pro teams.
- **WHY** - High Performance.
- **WHO** - National Team coaches, semi pro & pro team coaches.
- **COACHING** - A License.

**Physical** - Individual fitness program for maintenance, improvement; work and recovery must be well monitored. Periodization is critical.

**Technical** - Further development of advanced techniques and skills; refinement of general skills and individual positional skill; game related technical repetition under pressure.

**Tactical** - High degree of decision making, leadership and game analysis skills; ability to adjust game plan and adapt playing strategies to suit changing demands.

**Mental** - Increased concentration and responsibility, leadership, discipline, accountability, goal setting, self confidence, self-motivation, will-to-win, mental toughness, competitive mentality, establish pre-practice and pre-game routine.

**Game Structure:** FIFA rules.

Recommended Training times: 75 to 90 minutes

Season Length: Year-round play that includes appropriate rest and recovery periods.

## **STAGE 7: Active for Life**

### **Any age females and males**

At any stage in the LTPD model, players may choose to play soccer as a purely recreational activity regardless of their level of ability or disability, and soccer can certainly be enjoyed as part of a lifelong wellness plan. Players of all ages and abilities sometimes stop playing due to other interests, lack of success, shortage of playing opportunities, poor leadership, or other reasons. The LTPD model promotes personal success to ensure they remain enthusiastic and choose to stay involved in soccer and sport in general.

LTPD also addresses the needs of latecomers to the game, as soccer attracts new players at all ages. Some start playing past the age of critical development because their son or daughter is involved in soccer, while others simply want to try a new sport. LTPD encourages these latecomers to learn new skills in a fun and safe environment where they can remain healthy and have fun.

Apart from the benefits of lifelong wellness through soccer, adult recreational players can also become active in the coaching and administration of the sport. LTPD encourages the recruitment and retention of players, coaches, referees, and administrators as a means of supporting the ongoing development of both grassroots and elite soccer in Canada.

Elite soccer players are a special target for recruitment in this regard. After they retire from elite competition, elite players should receive support to pursue soccer careers as coaches, sport science specialists, mentors, referees, or administrators. Soccer and its governing bodies will benefit if suitable elite players are formally identified and retained within the fabric of the game.

Physical training in the Active for Life stage follows appropriate guidelines in the areas of endurance, strength, and flexibility training to promote continued activity among participants. Technical training may present new skills, or it may simply focus on maintaining skills already acquired. Basic tactics are sufficient to enjoy the game, and the mental focus is on having fun, stress release, and maintaining a fitness discipline.

The game format can be adapted to suit the level of play, number of players, and available space. The playing season may continue year-round with appropriate rest and recovery periods. There should be access for players of all ages, genders, and abilities, and costs to players should be minimized to ensure maximum participation.

- **WHERE** - Clubs, communities, universities, and wherever the game is played.
- **WHY** - For the development of the game; for the right to play despite ability, age, or gender; for the joy of learning a new sport at any age.
- **WHO** - Coaches of all ages and genders.
- **COACHING** - SK Soccer Community Coach Soccer for Life Course.

**Physical** - Follow appropriate guidelines in areas of endurance, strength and flexibility training to remain active.

**Technical** - Learn new skills or use and maintain skills already acquired.

**Tactical** - Basic tactics are sufficient to enjoy the game at a recreational level.

**Mental** - Focus on having fun in addition to stress release and fitness discipline.

**Game Structure:** Adapt the game structure to suit the level of play, number of players, and available space.

**Recommended training times:** 75 to 90 minutes.

**Season Length:** Play can continue year around with