

***WHATCOM FC Rangers Parent’s Primer***

**How did we come to be?**

The WHATCOM FOOTBALL CLUB (FC) organization was started during the mid 1980’s with three boys’ teams. With the tremendous growth of the game and a desire for players in our region to test themselves against the very best in the state, the Rangers program was formed. We are now an organization consisting of 53 teams with over 800 players.

**PREMIER AND SELECT LEVEL
How are the teams organized?**

The teams are first organized by gender and then by age. There are up to three teams (Gold, Blue, White,) in each age group for each gender. Teams may roster up to 18 players but average 15-16 players.

Age groups are organized in an “under” age grouping. The child’s age group is determined by their age prior to August 1st of the competing year. For example, an athlete that is 14 years old on May 1st, would compete in the U15 age group. They remain in this age group throughout the competitive season.

**How are the teams formed?**

Each year the state governing body, the Washington State Youth Soccer Association (WSYSA), dictates when tryouts for each age group are held. They typically run from March thru May.

Each age group will go through a two day review. It is mandatory that the athletes participate in at least one of these days, though attendance at both tryout days is strongly recommended. Special arrangements can be made to accommodate players who are injured, ill, or unable to participate due to extraordinary circumstances.

Overseen by our Technical Director, Rangers coaches, and at times impartial evaluators from outside of the club, the tryouts are conducted to evaluate each player. Within this group a consensus is formed and the athlete is placed on the team where it is felt they will have the best chance of success. Our policy is that we find the spot that is best for the child, not what is best for a particular team.

**How are our coaches selected?**

The Club’s Technical Director is responsible for recruiting, assessing, and matching the coaches and assistant coaches with teams. All of our premier and select coaches are paid employees of the club. There is a 7 criteria protocol used to calculate the coach’s stipend. Stipends range from $2,000 to $11,000 per year. The assistant coaches are valued on a 4 tiered program with stipends ranging from $0-2000 per year. Our fees are comparable those being offered within the state.

**Who do we play?**

The majority of the Ranger’s teams play in the Regional Club League (RCL). This league is populated by the top 21 select soccer clubs in the state. The Rangers are ranked in the “Top Ten” among clubs in Washington. Within each gender and age group, there are up to five divisions with each division ideally comprising 8 teams but sometimes up to 12 teams.(the top divisions contains the 8 most competitive teams in the state, the second division contains the next 8 teams, etc.) Thus, the teams each Ranger team plays could potentially hail from anywhere in the state. Travel will depend on which teams end up in your division. In general though, gold and blue teams tend to require more travel than white teams.

Summer tournament competition is dependent on what other teams decide to participate in the tournament. Tournament participation is decided based upon input from the coaches, parents and Technical Director. All tournaments chosen must be approved by the Technical Director.

**Costs**

Club soccer is an expensive undertaking. It is the very real concern of the Board of Directors to look at and contain our cost where ever possible.

The cost of the program for the 2014/15 season breaks down as follows:

**Registration: $450.00**

**Uniforms: Approximately. $400.00**

Under the current terms of our uniform contract, each player is required to purchase a full uniform strip (shirt, shorts, socks, backpack, ball, training jacket & pants) every three years. We are currently in the 1st year of this three year uniform cycle. ALL players will need to buy a full uniform strip and will get three seasons of use before we restart our cycle.

 **Head Coaches’ stipend $2,000-11,000** (cost to be shared by each member of the team) the coach’s stipend is based on a criteria that includes, coaching/playing experience, licensing, history, and club ethos.

**Assistant coaches’ stipend $0-2,000** (cost to be shared by each member of the team). Not all teams will have a paid AC. The AC stipend is determined by a similar set of criteria as the coaches.

**Team fees / other $1500 – 2000 (per player)**

This covers other expenses the team will incur throughout the year, including field rental fees for practice and games, coach’s travel, food, and lodging expenses for away events. Tournament entrance fees, and any other additional travel expenses for the individual family are not included. In general, the younger teams stay closer to home for tournament thus minimizing the need for overnight stay in hotels and purchased meals.

**Scholarship**

We have a scholarship program set up to help families with some of the expenses for this program. Our current scholarships cover the registration and a portion of the uniform costs. Eligibility is based on the criteria used by the State for admission into the free school lunch program. Our scholarship funding comes from our registration fees, dedicated fundraising, and corporate sponsorship.

**PARENT EXPECTATIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES**

We want you to be the best advocate/supporter for your child. This includes being a good role model for your child and his/her teammates. In youth soccer, unlike some other sports, verbal outbursts, especially referee abuse, is not tolerated. Both team and coach may be penalized for the behavior of their poorly behaved supporters. Offending spectators may be ejected from games by the referee for offensive behavior. As a member of the Whatcom Rangers we ask that you behave in a manner that adheres to the values of the club. From a technical perspective we ask that you refrain from giving your child or other players instructions from the sideline. Although we can appreciate that we may have knowledgeable soccer parents, the instructions you are giving the players, might in fact contradict what the coach has asked them to perform. Thus leading to the player losing focus and confidence while playing.

**VOLUNTEER ROLES**

1. Each team must fill the following positions:

**i)** Manager-This person is a critical component to a successful team. They coordinate all communication between the club, coach, and team. During the season they will be responsible for arranging hotel and travel plans and communicating with opposing managers to coordinate game times.

**ii)** Treasurer-This person is responsible for managing the team’s finances. They are in charge of the team bank account and manage and document the flow of money. They work hand in glove with the manager.

**iii)** Advisory Committee Representative-Each team shall supply one parent to attend the Advisory Committee meeting (held once every two months). This committee is the connection between the board and parents. It is responsible for electing 4 of the 10 board positions.

**iv)** Fundraising/volunteer coordinator-This person coordinates the fundraising for the team and acts as the liaison between the team and the Club for fundraising events (see below).

2. Club fundraising-The club has two major fundraising events during the year. It is expected that all players and families will participate. Funds raised allow us to keep fees down and offer the chance for families to use sweat equity to lower costs. Our two big events are:

i) Car wash. Each family is asked to be responsible for selling seven $9 car wash tickets. This is done in the early summer. There is a buyout option (should you not wish to participate) which is approximately $35. This money is earmarked for scholarships and coaching development. We usually raise about $10,000-12,000 per year.

ii) The Bellingham Bay Marathon. This is a major event that is sponsored by the Rangers and the Bellingham Bay Swim club. Other local sports teams participate as well. Every team is expected to participate in some manner. The bulk of the volunteer work has occurred in the days just before and the day of the marathon, however there is an increasing need for help though out the year. Each team’s volunteer coordinator would be asked to help figure how the team would participate.

Each team may organize their own additional fundraising opportunities providing it’s been approved by the board.

**Ranger Development League (RDL)**
The RDL program is a select program for U12 players made up of 78 players of each gender placed into 6 equal teams per gender. The season is an 8 week season in the Fall and Spring with games played against each other locally at NWSP. Tryouts for the RDL program are in May of each year. U11 players are able to tryout. Cost is $275.00 for a year, $150 for the first season (Fall) which includes a jersey and a ball and $125 if you choose to play the second season (Spring).

**Ranger Competitive Program (RCP)**
The RCP is designed for players U14-U18 who are either not placed on or choose to play on a premier or select team. The season is an 8 week season in the Fall and Spring. U13/14 games are played against each other locally at NWSP. U15/18 teams will play in a combined league with Skagit Youth Soccer. Games will be played at NWSP and Skagit River Park in Burlington. There are not tryouts for this program. (Cost is approx. $80 per season)

**Governance**

The club is governed by a Board of Directors. There are ten directors and 4 executive members. All members of the board are volunteers.

Voting members:

President: Keri Snodgrass
Vice President: Darrel Lutton
Secretary: Molly McAtee
Treasurer: Rob Fix
Premier Coach Rep: Dave Miller
Select Coach Rep: Suzanne Griffith
PAC Rep: Laurie Mueller
PAC Rep: Teri Harley
PAC Rep: Carrie Lanham
PAC Rep: Damian Kirby

WCYSA Rep: Eric Mittet

WCYSA Rep: Kirk Kamrath
WCYSA Rep: Brad Swanson
WSC Rep: Chris Fowler

Non-voting members:

Technical Director: Hubert Busby Jr Whatcomfctd@shaw.ca

Administrative officer: Charleen Wallace Charswfc@comcast.net
Past President: Mike Diehl

The board meets once a month, or more, and is responsible for running the club. The board monitors the financial health of the club, sets policy, and organizes and oversees the various sub-committees.

Currently there are sub-committees working on sponsorship, fundraising, and parent advisory.

The Technical Director oversees the Technical Coordinators- We currently have two. One for each gender. These are a group of our higher level coaches who mentor and assist in the development of our coaching staff. The TD also oversees our Goal Keeping Director.

**FAQ**

**What is the Ranger policy on “other interests”?**

The goal of Ranger’s is to help our local soccer youth develop into healthy, mature, contributing adults. We encourage our athletes to be well rounded and have interests in all facets of life. Specifically in regards to school it is our policy that school activities, both academic and other, takes a priority. It has never been a Ranger’s policy to limit or restrict our athletes from participating in other activities. However, Rangers soccer is a year round commitment. Practice and game schedules can change frequently and without much advance notice due to circumstance beyond our control (i.e. other teams training schedules when fields are available, weather, opposing teams’ schedules, etc.). We realize and recognize that it might be difficult for your child to fully participate at various times due to other commitments. Please communicate with your child’s coach any concerns or questions you might have.

**What are the options for “playing up”?**

Playing up is when an athlete plays for a team in an older age group. Our current policy is that any child may try out for an older age group team. It is strongly recommended that they participate in their proper age group try out as well. In general, in order to make an older teams’ roster the “playing up” athlete should be in at least the top 5 of the older team. Players may choose to "play up" to their grade in school without any team or placement restrictions.

**Where can I get more information?**

The Ranger’s website is in the process of being updated. In the near future this will be an invaluable link to the Rangers.

For direct communication, WFCrangersinfo@yahoo.com can be a good starting place for any questions. However, most any board member would be available to answer any questions. Their contact information is available on the website.