






Bethpage Soccer Programs Comparison

April 30, 2026



Youth Soccer League Tiers

Combined Tier	Platform/League	Gender	Typical Ages	Notes
Tier 1 & 2 	MLS NEXT, Girls Academy (GA), Elite Clubs National League (ECNL), MLS NEXT 2 ECNL Regional Leagues (ECRL), Elite 64, USL Academy, Aspire	Boys & Girls	U13–U20 (varies)	Top national and high regional leagues offering pro pathways, college preparation, and deep college exposure; Aspire is for girls only.
Tier 3 	National Premier Leagues (NPL), USYS National League Conferences, DPL	Boys & Girls	U13–U19	Strong regional and national competition below ECNL/MLS NEXT in prestige.
Tier 4 	State/Regional Leagues (EDP, SCCL, etc.)	Boys & Girls	U8–U19	High-level regional travel leagues, stepping stone to national levels.
Tier 5 	Club/Local Travel Leagues	Boys & Girls	U8–U19	Community-based competitive play with varying quality.
Tier 6 	Recreational Leagues/Grassroots	Boys & Girls	U5–U18+	Developmental focus, non-select teams, all skill levels.

Long Island (Nassau+Suffolk) Landscape

For 2025-2026 year:

Elite National Tier

MSL NEXT Homegrown - only club on Long Island for U13+ is LISC

Girls Academy - only club on Long Island for U13+ is LISC

ECNL - only clubs on Long Island for U13+ are SUSAs, East Meadow, East Coast Surf

Second Elite Tier

MLS NEXT Academy - only clubs on Long Island for U13+ are LI Slammers, LISC, Atlantic United

NAL - only clubs on Long Island for U13+ are Barca, LI Slammers, Albertson, LISC, Hota

ECRL - only clubs on Long Island for U13+ are LI Slammers, NY Surf, SUSAs

National Premier

NPL - only clubs on Long Island for U12+ are NY Surf, East Coast, Long Island Slammers, SUSAs, Brentwood

USYS National - multiple clubs on Long Island for U13+ varying per age group

Regional Premier

EDP/NYCS - U8+ multiple divisions based on level, each division covers Brooklyn, Queens, and Long Island

Travel

LIJSL - U9+ multiple divisions based on level, younger divisions are specific to Nassau, unless Premier which is Long Island

Recreational

Interleague/Intramural - U8+ one or two divisions for towns along the Rt 135 Seaford/Oyster Bay Expressway

Comparison

	Interleague (Recreational)	Travel	BUFC Academy (Regional)
Commitment	Practice once a week during Fall and Spring Sunday games, mostly mornings	Practice twice a week during Fall and Spring Saturday games, mostly mornings Tournament(s) Optional Winter season	Additional practices on top of Travel Saturday or Sunday games Additional Tournament(s) Winter training
Training	Mostly parent volunteers	Most have paid trainers out of pocket	Trainers with fees covered at registration
Grouping	Parent requests, school, 2 grades Bethpage only No tryouts, multiple teams per age group, as many teams as there are players to form	Ability based, 1 school year (can play up 1 year) Bethpage priority Tryouts, multiple teams per age group, as many teams as there are players to form	Top tier players, 1 school year (can play up 1 year) Players from anywhere Tryouts, 1 team per age group
Coaches	Parents	Parents with required coaching licenses, most have trainer	Parents with required coaching licenses as manager, trainer as coach
Referees	Unlicensed older youths	Licensed paid adults	Licensed paid adults
Competition	Neighboring towns along RT135 Not ability based	Any town in Nassau Ability based divisions	Any town in Nassau, Suffolk, Queens, Brooklyn Ability based divisions
League	No standings and scores kept No forfeit fees No disciplinary actions	Standings and scores reporting Forfeit fees Yellow and Red cards (suspensions, hearings)	

	No roster verification Informal cancellation/makeup policies	Player passes for roster verification Strict cancellation and rescheduling policies	
Playing Time	Equally distributed across all players	No guarantee of playing time nor equality, but coaches should have players play at least 40% of game time.	
Costs (2025-2026)	\$285 - registration fee \$75 - uniform	\$390 - registration fee \$137 - uniform Up to \$700 - trainer fee 1 tournament mostly included additional tournaments and winter optional, extra cost	\$2500 - registration fee \$350-\$400 - uniform Training, 2 tournaments, winter training included

What Interleague Soccer Is

- Recreational, casual play.
- Teams based on classmates and carpool efficiencies
- Don't feel like going because it's raining
- Players play all field positions

What Travel Soccer Is

- Players looking for more serious soccer experience, but still recreational soccer
- Individual development
- Team development - dedication to team to make practices and games
- Goal of playing school soccer together
- Players play a few different positions
- Bethpage residents priority
- Volunteers and non-profit

What Academy Soccer Is

- The most serious and dedicated players
- Goal of playing in college or professionally
- Team winning percentage is more important
- Players learning to play specific positions
- Out of town recruitment
- Single sport/team dedication
- Paid trainers with performance in mind

Roster Size

The recommended roster size:

- U9/U10 (7v7)
 - 10-12 players for Travel
 - 10 players for Academy
- U11/U12 (9v9)

- 12-14 players for Travel
- 12 players for Academy
- U13 and higher (11v11)
 - 16-18 players for Travel
 - 16 players for Academy

More players will result in upset parents wanting more playing time for their child. Less players run the risk of shortages due to special occasions (birthdays, baseball, etc.). Keep in mind that you can always borrow players from other teams (as long as age appropriate). Players not Academy or Travel ready will always have interleague play where they can better develop, with larger size rosters.

Tryout Details

All players must participate in at least 2 tryout sessions to be eligible for Academy or Travel consideration. Any families on vacation would need to coordinate with coaches (if the coaches allow it) for additional session(s) to meet this requirement.

1. Age group (birth year) tryout
2. Registration required, free registration
3. Must attend 2 of 3 sessions, mid April for Academy, mid June for Travel
4. Club managed
5. Coaches evaluate, decide on rosters, not player choice
6. Immediate acceptance and registration after tryout results notification
7. Interleague always available to all
8. Tryouts for reassessment each year

Parties Involved

All must follow COVID-19 guidelines, protocols and responsibilities.

Party	Overall Responsibilities
Bethpage Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides tryout equipment (pinnies, cones, paperwork, etc.) ● Oversees tryout process ● Creates and approves the tryout activities ● Advise/secondary player assignment decision making
Coaches (Trainers for Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Player evaluation during tryouts ● Primary player assignment decision making ● Makes phone calls to notify every parent of results
Trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Helps create and run tryout activities ● Advise/secondary player assignment decision making
Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dressed with shin guards ● Have water ● Bring ball (size 4)
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bring players to sessions ● Notified of tryout results and immediately responds with decision

Typical Tryout Format

Parent Meeting

Occurs a few days before, hosted by board members, where this document is shared and reviewed. Any questions or concerns should be raised.

Session planning

Occurs a few days before, between **board members** and **coaches**, where this document is shared and reviewed. Any questions or concerns should be raised. The latest registration list can be shared.

Before Session Preparation

15-30 minutes before tryout starts:

- **Board members** provide **coaches** with attendance sheet and players evaluation sheets
- **Coaches** ready to start taking attendance
- **Trainers and board members** set up field (cones, goals, etc.) and lay out numbered colored pinnies

Session Start – Attendance/Check-In

15 minutes

- **Coaches** check **players** in, marking attendance and performing health checks
- **Trainers** distribute numbered colored pinnies to **players**
- As **players** are ready, move to **board members and trainers** who will run ball work activities. This allows ready players to start warming up while waiting for others to complete check-in. Typical ball work including:
 - Dribbling in a bounded area, performing foot skills (toe-taps, tick-tocks, inside/outside cuts, pull backs, juggling, etc.) on demand.
 - Small lines (no more than 5/6 players per line with 2/3 on opposite sides) dribbling then passing to each other while performing foot skills on demand.
- Ends with **coaches** giving a brief introduction of themselves and words of encouragement to **players**

Footwork/Skills Assessment

5-10 minutes – optional for 3rd session

- **Board members and trainers** continue ball work activities above so that all **players** get warmed up and can demonstrate basic footwork and following directions.
- **Coaches** evaluate players' ability to following instructions, basic footwork, dribbling, passing and trapping skills

Small Group Activity

10-15 minutes – optional for 3rd session

- **Board members and trainers** explain activity to **players**. Then break into small groups (can be by color). Typical activities at this step are:
 - 4v1 or 5v2 keep away depending on number of players
 - 2v2 with small goals, winner stays on or stay on for 2 shifts format. Groups of 6 players (3 teams of 2 players each).
- **Coaches** evaluate passing, trapping, actions under pressure, defensive tenacity
- Ends with water break

Small Sided Scrimmages

~20 minutes – can be longer for 3rd session

- **Board members and trainers** break **players** into colored teams playing 7v7 games. **Trainers** can fill in as a player if needed OR assign an odd player as neutral. Do NOT need goalies if no one volunteers, instead, adjust size of goals using cones.
- At 10 minutes, water break (optional) and change up teams/colors matchups
- **Coaches** evaluate game situation, shooting, team work
- Ends with water break

Sprints

5 minutes – optional for 3rd session

- **Board members and trainers** explain activity. Typical activities are:
 - Break into multiple teams (can be by color). Relay race across field and back. Winning team is done, losers continue to race, until 2 teams standing.
 - Break into 2 groups and alternate sprints back to back between groups
 - Break into multiple teams and play sprint tic-tac-toe game
- **Coaches** evaluate speed and endurance

Session End

- **Coaches** end session with encouraging words and thanks players for attending
- At the conclusion of the final session, **coaches** gather **parents** (by telling players to get their parents) and explain that parents will get a call from a coach of the results and if selected, their confirmation of acceptance or refusal must be immediate. Coaches cannot wait for a parent to “think about it” as their decisions affect others down the line (see below section).

Player Assignments

Coaches primarily work together to assign players to teams. Coaches can leverage board members and trainers for advice as needed. Assignments must be finalized within 1-2 days and communicated to all parents immediately.

Communication must be via **phone call or in person dialog** and NOT a voicemail message nor email nor text message. This allows the parent to ask any questions and the coach to fully explain the selection process and results. If a parent is unreachable after several attempts, please leave a message, text or email to have them contact you back, providing your contact information. If still no contact after that, notify the soccer board travel coordinator.

Before calling parents, first rank players and call one at a time starting from the highest ranked player. There may be a small chance that a selected player may no longer be interested in Bethpage Soccer and therefore may affect your player assignments. Plan for this possibility and call in sequence.

Parents do NOT have the ability to choose their coach. All player assignments are at the sole discretion of the coaches. If a parent refuses to play for a coach and insists on playing for another coach, explain the process again. If they don't accept, they are forfeiting their position on the team and all Bethpage Soccer travel programs.

Additional information that needs to be mentioned on the all are:

1. Ask for top 3 choices of uniform jersey number. Teams should work together to assign jersey numbers to avoid duplicates across all teams. This way players can switch teams and/or play on multiple teams in the future.
2. Cost breakdown of joining team:
 - a. Bethpage Soccer registration fee (which includes LIJSL fee)
 - b. Uniform cost
 - c. Fro Travel, your team specific cost for trainer, optional winter league, optional tournaments (Bethpage will subsidize \$600 per year for tournaments)
3. Parents must register players immediately, make sure to pick the right team during registration and upload a passport quality headshot photo during the process.
4. Parents must upload the players' birth certificates during the registration process.
5. Parents must upload a passport quality headshot photo during the registration process.

Lastly, communicate the team roster and jersey number assignment to the Academy/Travel coordinator.