

# **NSCAA Diploma & Course Descriptions**

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## **Parent Coach Diploma**

The Parent Coach Diploma is a 2 ½-hour course for coaches of players 5-8 years of age. The course deals with coaching young players who are playing the game for the first time. The course content includes philosophy of coaching youth, risk management strategies, organization of practice sessions and activities appropriate to players of this age. There is no testing in the Parent Coach Diploma. All candidates must be at least 14 years of age at the time of application. If a candidate is under 18 years of age, an adult must accompany him or her for the duration of the course.

## **Youth Diploma**

The Youth Diploma is designed for the youth coach working with players in age groups U-6 through U-8. The overall objective of the course is to help coaches create the optimal learning environment for players at this developmental stage. Emphasis is placed on the basic methods of coaching youth and understanding the physiological and psychological differences between coaching young children and coaching adolescents or adults. The course teaches coaches how to utilize the game of soccer itself as the teacher and encourages the coach to fulfill the role of facilitator of players' growth and development. The curriculum also focuses on the organization of a practice session, teaching proper technique through activities and games appropriate for U-6 and U-8 players, working with parents, helping players develop ball mastery, dribbling and striking the ball skills, and using small-sided games as teaching exercises and vehicles for player development.

The Youth Diploma is a 13 hour course held over two days, featuring both classroom presentations (theory) and on-field instruction (praxis). The course utilizes demonstrators in the targeted age groups for most field sessions. There is no testing involved in the course, though coaches are afforded an opportunity to be assessed on a practical demonstration and receive feedback from a staff coach. Each person completing the course is awarded the Youth Diploma.

All candidates must be at least 14 years of age at the time of application. Candidates under 18 years of age, must be accompanied by an adult for the duration of the course. no prerequisite for this course is required, though candidates will find previous coursework, such as the NSCAA Parent-Coach and State Diplomas and/or the USSF "F" and "E" licenses, to be helpful in processing the contents of this course

## **Advanced Youth Diploma**

The Advanced Youth Diploma is designed for the youth coach working with players in age groups U-9 through U-12. The overall objective of the course is to help coaches create the optimal learning environment for players at this developmental stage. Emphasis is placed on the basic methods of coaching youth and understanding the physiological and psychological differences between coaching children and coaching adolescents or adults. The curriculum focuses on numerous important aspects of coaching the targeted age groups: assisting participants in the development of a coaching philosophy; introducing the progressive teaching method and the coaching in the game teaching method; reviewing the organization of a practice session; teaching essential components of the techniques of dribbling, passing, receiving, tackling, goalkeeping, heading, and shooting/finishing; reviewing important safety issues; providing instruction in the principles of attack and defense and addressing the application of those principles in on-field tactical coaching; and providing structured discussion time to address contemporary coaching issues such as that of developing a soccer culture.

The Advanced Youth Diploma is a 21 hour course held over two and a half days (customarily beginning early Friday evening and concluding late Sunday afternoon), featuring both classroom presentations (theory) and on-field instruction (praxis). The course utilizes demonstrators in the targeted age groups for most field sessions. There is no testing involved in this course. Each participant receives an opportunity to conduct a practical field demonstration and receive feedback from a staff coach on that session. Each person completing the course is awarded the Advanced Youth Diploma.

All candidates must be at least 14 years of age at the time of application. Candidates under 18 years of age, must be accompanied by an adult for the duration of the course. no prerequisite for this course is required, though candidates will find previous coursework, such as the NSCAA Parent-Coach and State Diplomas and/or the USSF "F" and "E" licenses, to be helpful in processing the contents of this course.

The NSCAA Youth Diploma addresses the coaching of U-6 through U-8 players and therefore completing that course is not a requirement to take the Advanced Youth Diploma. Coaches who have taken the Youth Diploma will find that course and the Advanced Youth Diploma to be mutually complementary.

## **National Youth Diploma**

The National Youth Diploma is designed for the youth coach working with players age 5-12. The overall objective of the course is to help coaches create the optimal learning environment for players at this developmental age. Emphasis is placed on the basic methods of coaching youth and understanding the physiological and psychological differences of coaching children. The course emphasizes the game of soccer as the teacher and the coach as the facilitator. The curriculum focuses on the organization of a practice session, teaching proper technique, team management, basic concepts of attack and defense, small-sided games and understanding the Laws of the Game. Information about safety, prevention and care of injuries also is provided.

The National Youth Diploma is a 21-hour course held over three days, featuring both classroom lectures (theory) and on field instruction (practical). The course utilizes appropriate age group demonstrators for most field sessions. There is no testing involved in the course, although coaches are allowed an opportunity to conduct a training session with feedback from the staff. Each person completing the course is awarded the National Youth Diploma certificate.

All candidates must be at least 14 years of age at the time of application. If a candidate is under 18 years of age, an adult must accompany him or her for the duration of the course. Previous coaching certification, such as the NSCAA State or Regional Diploma, and/or the USSF "E" or "F" license, is strongly suggested. A waiver of previous coaching certifications will be considered on an individual basis if the applicant has been coaching for a number of years.

## **State Diploma**

The State Diploma is a five-hour course directed toward the person newly involved in coaching soccer. It is designed to help coaches working with players in the 5- to 10-year age range. Special emphasis is placed on understanding the physiological and psychological differences of coaching children.

The course is designed to emphasize that the game itself essentially is the teacher and the focus of the coach at this level clearly is as facilitator. The curriculum focuses on the organization of a practice session, using small-sided games to enhance knowledge and fun, basic understanding of the Laws of the Game and information about the care and prevention of injuries. There is no testing in the State Diploma. All candidates must be at least 14 years of age at the time of application. If a candidate is under 18 years of age, an adult must accompany him or her for the duration of the course.

## **Regional Diploma**

The Regional Diploma is a 13-hour course designed for the coach working players 11 to 18 years of age. An emphasis is placed on learning to work with the developing player within both an individual and team concept.

The curriculum outlines how technical and tactical concepts can be applied in the development of players. The focus is placed on the basic methods of coaching, teaching proper technique, the theory and application of offensive and defensive tactics and understanding team management. There is no testing in the Regional Diploma. All candidates must be at least 16 years of age at the time of application. If a candidate is under 18 years of age, an adult must accompany him or her for the duration of the course.

## **Advanced Regional Diploma**

The Advanced Regional Diploma is a 21-hour course designed as a supplement to the Regional Diploma, adding eight hours devoted to technical and tactical uses of small-sided games, the study of systems of play and a practice teaching component.

Participants are given an opportunity to conduct a training session on an assigned topic and are assessed by the course instructor. All candidates must be at least 16 years of age at the time of application. If a candidate is under 18 years of age, an adult must accompany him or her for the duration of the course.

An eight-hour option is available for groups who have taken the Regional Diploma and are interested in the additional hours provided in this course. The course is an excellent preparatory course for the National Diploma.

## **National Diploma**

The National Diploma is a 50-hour course designed to meet the needs of the more experienced coach, particularly those coaching at the high school level and above, or youth coaches with previous certification and a number of years working with the developing player. It is strongly recommended that candidates complete the NSCAA Advanced Regional Diploma or USSF "D" license prior to the course. Some USYSA affiliates will only recognize the NSCAA National Diploma if they have completed the state association's USSF "C" license. Please check with your state association for details.

The overall objective of the National Diploma is to acquaint the coach with the needs of the American soccer player and provide an organized and progressive methodology of coaching those needs. Basic technical and tactical knowledge is the central theme of the course in a 6v6 model. The course includes sessions on the teaching process, psychological skills training and Laws of the Game. Participants receive a curriculum that outlines the course content and includes valuable resource material. Testing includes oral, written and practical (coaching) evaluations. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.

NSCAA has partnered with the National Center for Sports Safety (NCSS) to offer its members a comprehensive online sports safety course, which is known by the acronym of P.R.E.P.A.R.E. The course covers everything from minor injuries like blisters, nose bleeds and ankle sprains all the way to serious head and neck injuries and is good for coaches at every level of the game both as a source of critical new information and a solid refresher opportunity for more experienced coaches.

NSCAA recommends that candidates for the National Diploma spend three hours taking the on-line safety course. For a cost of just \$28, you will have access to outstanding information to help you prepare for the immediate treatment of your player's injuries. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. For more information or to register, click on the NCSS logo on the right side of this page.

## **Advanced National Diploma**

The Advanced National Diploma is a 50-hour course designed for the experienced coach working with the advanced player. The emphasis is on training those players within a team concept designed to produce a successful environment. The 8v8 model is the main focus.

Candidates receive a curriculum which outlines the course and includes valuable resource material. The curriculum includes team organization and training, advanced methodology, analysis and understanding systems of play, a focus on tactics within thirds of the field, technical position overviews, match analysis and the psychological aspect of coaching. Testing includes oral, written and practical (coaching) evaluations.

Acceptance into the course requires an NSCAA National Diploma, the USSF "B" or an English UEFA "B" license. A minimum of 10 years of coaching experience at an appropriate level also is suggested.

## **Premier Diploma**

The Premier Diploma is the pinnacle of the Residential Academy offerings. It is a 50-hour course designed to teach advanced methodology with full-sided soccer (11v11) as its focal point.

Coaches are provided a course curriculum. The course content includes a thorough examination of different systems of play, including: technical and tactical implications; 11 v. 11 topics, including coaching in the game, phase play and shadow play; nutrition; sportsmanship/ethics; and a leadership component including team management, personal development and the coach's role in game development in his/her community.

Eligibility for the Premier Diploma requires the applicant be an NSCAA member and have the Advanced National Diploma, the USSF "A" License or English UEFA "A" License. Candidates with a "Distinguished Pass" in the NSCAA Advanced National Diploma will automatically qualify for entrance into the Premier Diploma. Additional factors, such as coaching and playing background, community leadership and contribution to the game, are considered. Applications are screened by the Director of Coaching and enrollment is limited for each course.

A special form is available in the January/February and May/June issues of Soccer Journal and is required for application to the Premier Diploma. No applications are accepted after established deadlines.

## Director of Coaching Diploma

The Director of Coaching Diploma is a 21-hour course designed to address the issues confronting the Director of an American club. The curriculum has been created in cooperation with US Club Soccer. It examines the technical, conceptual, leadership and administrative skills of future and current Directors of Coaching for youth soccer clubs for the purpose of developing the American soccer player. This is accomplished through a curriculum rich in application and theory and will focus on organizational structure, methods of coaching, leadership theory, evaluation and development of coaches and players and fiscal, legal and moral responsibility. Candidates will understand each of the individual units of the club as well as the interrelationship of those parts to achieve the specific goals and objectives of a youth soccer club.

Acceptance into the course requires:

1. NSCAA National Diploma or USSF "C" license
2. Letter of support from either:
  - i. Club Board Member - The letter must be submitted with the application form.
  - ii. NSCAA State Technical Coordinator
  - iii. NSCAA Regional Technical Director

## High School Diploma

The High School Coaches Diploma is a 21-hour course dealing with managerial issues and practice and game strategies specific to coaches of boys and girls high school teams. The course is designed to address the many issues and responsibilities unique to high school coaches in this country. The course curriculum examines the distinctive role high school coaches play in the personal development of young players.

Some of the issues the course will deal with are:

1. Developing a coaching philosophy
2. Team management (Pre-season training, team building, game day preparation issues, out of season play, ODP and club relationships, team rules, choosing captains, parental issues etc.)
3. Methods of coaching high school players
4. Risk management for high school coaches
5. College recruiting issues and helping high school players move to the next level
6. Match analysis
7. Practical field sessions

It is recommended that coaches attending the course should have an NSCAA Advanced Regional Diploma, but there is no testing. The recommended length of the course is Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, although the structure of the course is flexible. It is recommended that persons wishing to host a High School Coaches Diploma organize it in conjunction with a high school game or a club game featuring high school-age players. There is no testing in the High School Diploma.

**College Credit:** The University of Colorado has agreed to offer either graduate (500 level) or undergraduate (400 level) college credit for the NSCAA High School Coaches Diploma. You can receive two semester hours of credit for \$150 tuition cost. You must have a college degree to receive graduate level credit. If interested you need to read and complete the following:

## **State Goalkeeping Diploma (Level I)**

The overall objective of the State Goalkeeping Diploma is to explore some of the myths and mystiques surrounding the goalkeeping function. The six-hour course is directed towards the team coach - not the specialist goalkeeper coach. The object is to empower the coach with knowledge and practice methods that will enable the coach to evaluate a goalkeeper in game situations and then design an appropriate practice program for goalkeepers in and outside of team practices. The course includes lecture (theory) and field (practical) sessions.

## **Regional Goalkeeping Diploma (Level II)**

The overall objective of the Regional Goalkeeping Diploma is to create an optimal learning environment for this specialized position. The twelve-hour course is geared towards the specialist goalkeeping coach and the team coach looking for in-depth information surrounding the coaching of goalkeepers. The course includes both lecture (theory) and field (practical) sessions. An NSCAA State Goalkeeping Diploma is a prerequisite for this course.

## **National Goalkeeping Diploma (Level III)**

The overall objective of the National Goalkeeping Diploma is to explore the tactical components of goalkeeping and the specifics of training and developing goalkeepers. The emphasis of this eighteen-hour course is on the tactical role of the goalkeeper within the team framework. All candidates wishing to take the National Goalkeeping Diploma must have the State and Regional Goalkeeping Diplomas or equivalent (NSCAA Level I & II or NSCAA/USSF Level I and Level II Diplomas).

## **Advanced National Goalkeeping Diploma**

The newest course addition to the Goalkeeping Institute, the Advanced National Goalkeeping Diploma builds on the National Goalkeeping Diploma under the guidance of Tony DiCicco, Director of the NSCAA Goalkeeping Institute. A 50-hour residential course, the Advanced National Goalkeeping Diploma will be one of the most comprehensive goalkeeping courses for coaches wishing to improve their ability to coach and train goalkeepers. Lectures on all aspects of positioning, communication, goalkeeper psychology, fitness and the methodology of training goalkeepers will be addressed. There will also be field sessions dealing with the following topics:

- Basic to advanced handling, including how to coach & train goalkeepers to make diving saves
- Resolving the through-ball and breakaway saves
- Dealing with all aspects of flank attacks
- Commanding the penalty area and the space behind the defense
- Training the team on backpass situations and goalkeeper distribution
- Training goalkeepers to cover the space behind them
- Coaching coaches to teach goalkeepers how to read the game, how to organize the defense and how to control game tempo