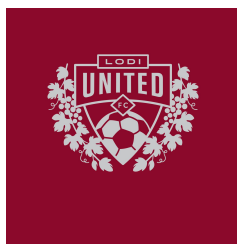


Long Term Player Development

The club's primary mission is geared for educational results as opposed to win record results. Our player development philosophy is a player-centered approach. The implications of this distinction are profound, as an educational institution LUCF is structured and managed differently than those organizations designed primarily to compete. At the macro level, our educational organization measures itself in terms of the quality of its processes, as opposed to the purely competitive organization that focuses on the quantity of its outcomes. Coaching education and parent education is critical to the success of LUFC's player development program. At the micro level, our educational program looks at the outcomes for individuals; this is in stark contrast with purely competitive programs that focus on the outcomes of teams and groups. LUFC's educational program has a published and progressive curriculum for players, parents and coaches. This curriculum has multiple layers of complexity, starting with an overview of the learning outcomes expected for each age group, each year, and provides a set of specific progressive lesson plans, standard training schedules, and standard competitions that will be employed to implement this curriculum. LUFC's player development curriculum provides guidance regarding those topics that will not be taught, and sets parameters regarding competitive formats or venues that will not be permitted at each stage of the curriculum. The focus on education over win records is especially acute at the youngest age levels of what USYS refers to as Zone 1, ages 6-12, and this focus should remain the dominant perspective at the intermediate levels of what USYS refers to as Zone 2, ages 13-18. The NSCAA has similarly grouped ages into five stages, and in conjunction with these stages has developed a five stage Competency Matrix that will be employed by LUFC to aid the club, coaches and parents in their understanding as to when a player is expected to be introduced to a concept/skill and when they should demonstrate competency of that concept/skill.

The curriculum provides clear answers in the following areas:

- How teams will be formed
- How practice sessions will be organized
- When to group players by ability?
- Which leagues to participate?
- The number of tournaments our players are expected and permitted to play in per season
- The expected and permitted number of formal practices and games per season
- When position specialization should begin



Player Development Curriculum

The following top-level player development curriculum was adapted from several sources, including a progressive topics timeline originally prepared by the US Youth Soccer Director of Coaching Education, US Soccer’s “Best Practices for Coaching Soccer in the United States”, the NSCAA’s recommended player development plan and curriculum, the US Club player development initiatives. The Player Development plan for Lodi Unified FC is an amalgamation of the models and recommendations from these universally respected organizations. As players grow and mature, the curriculum adjusts in terms of the recognized technical, tactical, physical, psychological and social components of the sport. This is accomplished by matching the appropriate physical, cognitive, and social attributes of the players. Since this is an overarching progressive plan, sessions are based upon progressive practice session models and are furthered in function by ensuring every aspect of play that is taught at one age will be reinforced at the next age. The progressive practice plans place heavy emphasis on utilization of small-sided games to help create well-rounded, game savvy players. Topics taught at the youngest levels are repeated and reinforced at every successive level of play. Abilities acquired by players in a younger age group must be refined at the next age so that players can be successful when challenged by more skillful, more athletic, or more aware opponents and teammates. If an older player is lacking in some element introduced at a younger stage, this must be addressed before that player can advance to the next stage of the curriculum. Parents will be notified and educated as to each player’s progress, and advised on any possible methods and means to help elevate that particular player’s competency level in areas he/she lacks. Older players are expected to take personal responsibility for maintaining and improving their physical fitness as well as addressing any specific technical deficiencies. Additionally, every topic, at every level, is introduced, taught or trained to achieve symmetry of ability; Lodi United FC knows that a player must be able to succeed with a given topic using both the right and left sides of the body.

This curriculum is subject to revision and renewal as understanding and technology advance in the field of soccer.



Age U4-U6

Fitness

- Tumbling
- Balance
- Running
- Jumping
- Turning/Spinning

Technique

- Stopping rolling balls with the feet
- Dribbling
- Ball striking

Tactics

- Field orientation (which goal to attack, and which goal to defend)
- Understand basic rules of play
- Introduce communication, learning players by name and calling for them
- Introduction of first attacker and defender work

Psychology

- Fair play
- Emotional control
- Imagination
- Courage

Training

- 40-90 hours per year (Academy-style preference, 30-45 minutes/practice)
- Majority of training activities include a ball for each player
- No activities with more than 4 players per ball
 - 12 players
 - One player assessment per year

Competition

- 3v3 to small goals (no goalkeepers)
- 25-30 friendlies per year (“street-soccer” style, with “New Ball!” rule used instead of throw-ins or kick-ins)
- Informal games
- No tournaments
- No practical practice to game ratio



Age U7-U9

Fitness

- Agility
- Eye/foot and eye/hand coordination
- Continued refinement of gross motor development
- Introduce concepts of warm-up and cool-down

Technique

- Bounce juggling and ball-lifting (with the feet)
- Change of direction (using pullbacks and basic cuts)
 - Introduce fakes and feints
- Receiving ground balls with inside, outside, and sole of the feet
- Push pass
- Block tackle
- Shooting (ground balls, with inside of the foot and with the instep)
- Introduce basic throw-in (two-footed)
- Introduce full volley (from hands)

Tactics

- 1v1 attacking (courage to dribble toward the goal and at defenders)
- 1v1 defending (seek to win the ball)
 - Introduce second attacker
- 2v1 (wall pass)
- Recognition of open space
- Always control the ball on the first touch (No Boot Ball)
 - Recognition of transition
 - Communicating when to ask for the ball from a teammate
 - Introduce names of positions on the field
 - Introduce visualizing thirds of the field

Psychology

- Working in pairs
- Sharing
- Sportsmanship
- Creativity



Training

- 100-120 hours per year (Academy-style preference, 45-60 minutes/practice)
- Majority of training activities have 1-2 players per ball
- No activities with more than 6 players per ball
- 12-15 players
- 2 player assessments per year
- 4:1 practice to game ratio

Competition

- 3v3 to 5v5 to small goals (no goalkeepers)
- 10-15 friendlies per year (“street-soccer” style, with “New Ball!” rule used instead of throw-ins or kick-ins)
- 10-15 games per year, which may be part of an organized jamboree/festival (using approved U8 rules, no reported scores/standings)
- No tournaments



Age U10-U11

Fitness

- Endurance
- Flexibility (range-of-motion)
- Consistent warm-up and cool-down routines

Technique (Field Players)

- Running with the ball
- Dribbling moves to beat a defender 1v1 and escape from pressure
- Push passes to feet across short and intermediate distances (0-20 yds)
- Shielding
- Juggling (feet, thighs, and head)
- Receiving bouncing balls with the instep, sole, inside, and outside of the feet
- Receiving air balls with the chest and thigh
- Full volleys, half volleys, and push volleys (bouncing balls)
- Instep drive
- Throw-ins (split stance)
- Introduce heading (held balls, bouncing balls)
- Introduce chipping and crossing
- Shoulder charge
- Poke tackle

Technique (Goalkeepers)

- Ready stance
- Basic catching (“W” grip above the chest, basket catch below the waist)
- Introduce high balls (no pressure)
- Basic footwork (lateral movement, stepping to the ball)
- Developmental diving (from sitting and squatting positions)
- Distribution (throwing, bowling, punting, introduce drop kick)
- Goal kicks

Tactics

- 1v1 attacking (change of pace, change of direction, acceleration to penetrate with the ball)
- 1v1 defending (angle and distance of pressure, channeling, restraint)
- 2v1 attacking (overlapping runs, takeovers, fakes/takes, support)
- Introduce second defender work
- 2v2 defending (pressure, cover)
- Man-to-man defense
- Quick transition
- Principles of width and depth on attack and defense
- Introduce basic systems of play (learn names of positions, experience)



playing in all roles)

- Introduce set plays (basic attacking and defending roles, short restarts, direct vs. indirect free kicks)
- Introduce Third attacker and defender

Psychology

- Working in groups of 3 or 4
- Sensitivity (winning and losing gracefully)
- Cooperative competition
- Sustained focus on task (ability to focus for one entire half of play)

Training

- 150-320 hours per year (Academy-style preference, 60-90 minutes/practice)
- Majority of training activities have 2-4 players per ball
- No activities with more than 8 players per ball
- 12-15 players
- 3 player assessments per year
- 3:1 practice to game ratio

Competition

- 8v8 to 9v9, with goalkeepers
- 10-15 friendlies per year (using approved U10 rules)
- 15-20 games per year, up to half of which may be part of an organized (using approved U10 rules, scores/standings only as appropriate)
- Limited to no formal tournament play, with a jamboree/festival style “tournament” per season



Age U12-U13

Fitness

- Strength
- Speed
- Aerobic exercise

Technique (Field Players)

- First-touch turning with the ball (feet, thighs, and chest)
- Advanced feints, cuts and turns with the ball (performing moves in series)
- Passing with the heel, sole, and the outside of the foot
- Passing across long distances (20+ yards)
- Crossing to near post, far post, and slot targets
- Chipping to pass or score
- Volleys (to score, to clear)
- Introduce headers
- Introduce the slide tackle technique

Goalkeepers

- Advanced footwork (footwork patterns, drop-back steps, distinct movements in series, field awareness/vision while in motion)
- Reaction training
- Low diving (from feet)
- Angle play
- High balls (played forward into the penalty area, limited pressure)
- Dealing with crossed balls (on the ground, in the air)
- Introduce 1v1 breakaway saves
- drop kick
- Introduce deflecting (punching, boxing, tipping, parrying)
- Saving penalty kicks

Tactics

- 1v1 defending (defensive feints)
- 2v1 and 2v2(-1) defending (delay/deny penetration, immediate chase)
- 2v2 attacking (combination play, reading defensive shape—flat versus deep)
- 3v2 and 3v3(-1) attacking (man-up) and defending (man-down) roles
- Vision (body shape and eye contact with teammates)
- Field player communication (“Man on!”, “Turn!”, “Time!”, “Switch!”, “I go!”, “Ball!”, etc.)
- Basic goalkeeper communication (“Away!”, “Keeper!”, “Step!”, “Drop!”, “Pass!”)
- Attacking and defending set plays (long/direct and short/indirect options)
- Half-time analysis and implementing half-time adjustments



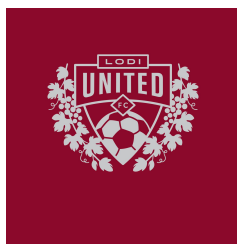
- Psychology
- Teamwork
- Confidence
- Desire and intrinsic motivation
- Competitiveness
- Self-analysis of performances and abilities

Training

- 150-320 hours per year for select-level players (mix of team and Academy-style training, 90 minutes/practice)
- 10 hours per year for grass roots/recreational play (Academy-style, 90 minutes/practice)
- Separate functional training for goalkeepers (25-35 hours/year)
- Majority of training activities have 2-6 players per ball
- Very few activities with more than 10 players per ball
- 4 Player assessments per year
- 12-18 players
- 3:1 practice to game ratio 50-20

Competition

- 8v8 to 11v11, with goalkeepers
- 5-10 friendlies per year (using approved U12 rules)
- 25-30 games per year, up to half of which may be part of organized tournaments or jamborees/festivals (using approved U12 rules)
- 2-5 tournaments including jamborees/festivals and State Cup competition



Age U14-U15

Fitness

- Power
- Acceleration
- Anaerobic exercise
- Cardio respiratory and cardiovascular training

Technique (Field Players)

- Headers and chest traps to win the ball in the air (off punts, goal kicks, etc.)
- Heading to pass (including flick-on headers)
- Bending balls (inside/outside of the feet, on the ground and in the air)
- “Dummying” the ball and “dummy runs”
- Clean first touches away from pressure
- Speed dribbling

Technique (Goalkeepers)

- Diving saves for medium and high shots
- Advanced deflecting (in motion, in traffic, second saves)
- Saving the 1v1 breakaway
- Dealing with back passes
- Throwing to distribute over long distances (30+ yards)

Tactics (Field Players)

- Introduce 11v11 systems of play (4-4-2, 3-4-3, 4-3-3) with some functional specialization (playing 2-3 positions instead of all positions)
- Switching the point of attack
- Playing out of the back
- Transition, counterattacking and speed-of-play
- Finishing 1v1 breakaways to goal
- Attacking runs (third-man runs, checking runs)
- Switching positions (roles) during the run of play
- Role of the 3rd defender (tracking runs off the ball)
- Concentration/compactness in defense (especially in the middle third)

Tactics (Goalkeepers)

- Command of the penalty area (communication with field player teammates)
- 2v1+GK breakaway (stay-or-go decision with a defender in the play)



- Supporting the attack within the penalty area

Psychology

- Overcoming adversity
- Positive self-talk
- Assertiveness
- Emotional management and self-control
- Individual and team discipline
- Focus on task (full match)

Training

- 150-320 coaching hours per year for select-level players (mix of team and functional/specialized training, 90 minutes/practice)
- 150-200 coaching hours per year for grass roots/recreational play (mix of team and Academy-style training, 90 minutes/practice)
- Separate functional training for goalkeepers (25-40 hours/year)
- Majority of training activities have 4-8 players per ball
- Very few activities with more than 12 players per ball
 - Four player assessments per year
 - 12-18 players
 - 3:1 practice to game ratio

Competition

- 11v11, with goalkeepers (8v8 may be used for recreational players)
- No more than 5 friendlies per year (using approved U14 rules)
- 30-35 games per year, up to half of which may be part of organized tournaments or jamborees/festivals (using approved U14 rules)
- Practices and games played outside the club (school teams, guest appearances, etc.) count toward the annual limits for each player
- 2-5 tournaments (including jamborees/festivals), including State Cup competition



Age U16-U17

Fitness

- Plyometrics
- Weight training
- Core/back/abdominal strength
- Interval & sprint-recovery training
- SAQ (speed, agility, and quickness) training

Technique (Field Players)

- Differing headers to score and clear
- Airborne kicking/volleys (scissors, overhead)
- Finishing (power vs. finesse)
- Skill mastery (technical execution under pressure)

Technique (Goalkeepers)

- Backward play (recovery saves, etc...)
- Drop kicks (half-volley distribution)

Tactics (Field Players)

- Attacking runs (withdrawing, penetrating, crossover)
- Collective attacking in the final third
- Attacking down the wings
- Passing on diagonals
- Playing through the thirds of the field
- Introduce zonal defending
- Collective defending in the defensive third
- Recognition of numbers-up/numbers-down situations
- Speed of play and controlling the match tempo (build-up vs. counterattack)
- Tactical adjustments during the run of play
- Post-match analysis (collective and individual)

Tactics(Goalkeepers)

- Initiating the counterattack
- Organizing teammates on defensive set plays
- Supporting the attack beyond the penalty area (including attacking free kicks)

Psychology



- Courage
- Independence and self-reliance
- Personal and collective accountability
- Goal orientation (process and outcome goals)
- Willingness to sacrifice to achieve one's best
- Mental rehearsal and imagery
- Functional specialization (gaining a deep understanding of 1-2 positions with a heightened confidence in the ability to play those positions)

Training

- 150-540 coaching hours per year for select-level players (mix of team and functional/specialized training, 90-105 minutes/practice)
- 150-200 coaching hours per year for grass roots/recreational players (team training, 90 minutes/practice)
- Separate functional training for goalkeepers (30-50 hours/year)
- Majority of training activities have 4-10 players per ball
- 4 Player assessments per year minimum
- 16-22 players
- 2-3:1 Practice to game ratio

Competition

- 11v11, with goalkeepers (8v8 may be used for recreational players)
- 5 or less friendlies per year (using approved U16 rules)
- 30-40 games per year, up to half of which may be part of organized leagues, tournaments or jamborees/festivals (using approved U16 rules)
- Practices and games played outside the club (school teams, guest appearances, etc.) count toward the annual limits for each player
- 3-6 tournaments, including jamborees/festivals, and State Cup competition, with no more than 3 tournaments in any three-month period



Age U18-U19

Fitness

- Fitness testing (standards-based)
- Overload training
- Periodization of training

Technique (Field Players)

- Technical speed of play (all skills rehearsed at match speed and under game conditions)
- Technical-functional training

Technique (Goalkeepers)

- Power diving
- Skill mastery (technical execution under pressure)

Tactics (Field Players)

- Situational tactics (winning/losing by a goal with 10 minutes to play, tactical adjustments for specific opponents, etc.)
- Ability to shift system of play during the run of play
- Zonal and man-marking combinations in defense
- Phase play and patterns of play
- Creativity in attack
- “Total soccer” concept
- Tactical-functional training

Tactics (Goalkeepers)

- Organization of team shape during run of play
- Command beyond the penalty area

Psychology

- Leadership skills
- Playing a role (starter vs. substitute, “piano player vs. piano carrier”)
- Emotional control during matches
- Reducing mental mistakes
- Dedication and commitment to excellence and achievement
- Responsibility for off-field factors that influence on-field performances



- Selflessness (team first mentality)
- Results orientation (wins, championships, etc.)

Training

- 150-540 coaching hours per year for select-level players (mix of team and functional/specialized training, 75-120 minutes/practice)
- 150-200 coaching hours per year for recreational players (team training, 90 minutes/practice)
- Separate functional training for goalkeepers (30-60 hours/year)
- Majority of training activities have 4-12 players per ball
Competition • 11v11, with goalkeepers (8v8 may be used for recreational players)
- No more than 5 scrimmages per year (using approved U19 rules)
- 30-40 games per year, up to half of which may be part of organized league play, tournaments or jamborees/festivals (using approved U19 rules)
- Practices and games played outside the club (school teams, guest appearances, etc.) count toward the annual limits for each player
- 3-6 tournaments, jamborees/festivals, including State Cup competition, with no more than 3 tournaments in any three-month period
- 4 player assessments per year minimum
- 16-22 players
- 2-3:1 Practice to game ratio