



ODP Tryouts



Since 1977, Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer's Olympic Development Program has identified and trained players at the elite level. ODP provides supplemental training and competitive opportunities for players with the goal of advancement to US Youth Soccer East Region teams and ultimately, national team selections. Through training and regional competition, ODP also provides players with exposure to college coaches.

Tryouts for the 2018-19 ODP season begin September 8-9 and 15-16, with callback tryouts to follow. Teams will be selected following the second callback date. For many players, the ODP tryout experience is a new one. With so many high-level players on the field at once, it can be an intimidating process. To help alleviate the stress of trying out, Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Technical Director Mike Barr put together a list of attributes that the evaluators will look for from potential ODP players.

For all ODP tryout information, visit EPYSA.org/ODP.

10 THINGS ODP EVALUATORS LOOK FOR AT TRYOUTS

- 1. Speed** - Pure speed is a huge benefit in any sport but often in soccer, mental speed—decision-making with and without the ball—allows for players to compensate for a lack of pure speed.
- 2. Touch** – First touch may be the most critical technique for a soccer player. Receiving balls on the ground or from the air swiftly and in preparation for the next decision makes the game easier to play. Balls bouncing in the air from an inside-the-foot collection and balls received in the air with the wrong surface and not moved to space or to feet are areas evaluators examine consistently.
- 3. The use of both feet** in passing and finishing creates more opportunities for every player. Watching a player take extra touches to get the ball to his/her strong foot may result in losing possession. Using the proper foot surface for passing or shooting also comes into play.
- 4. Transition** – Moving from attack to defense and defense to attack quickly, from any position, is a strong indicator of a high-level player. If a coach notices a player who does not seem involved, he or she will obviously be overlooked. A player's movement off the ball in the role of third attacker or providing balance as a defender shows a player who knows the game.
- 5. Determined play on 50-50 balls** (tackles and especially headers) adds to a player's worth in the eyes of evaluators. In tackles, evaluators are looking for players to go in hard and regain possession.
- 6. Overall comfort with the ball**, without a sense of panic, is critical to the ODP-level player. Confidence and enthusiasm are recognized quickly.
- 7. Decision-making**, when to possess the ball or take a player on, especially in the attacking third, is an attribute that will assist a player in making the ODP team.
- 8. Talk from an individual**, especially on the defensive side of the ball, makes the game easier for the entire team.
- 9. Passionate play** within the 18-yard box, whether on attack or defense, brings out notice from the coaches in attendance.
- 10. Pace and endurance** during the tryouts and recognizing when there is time to recover in play are also areas that evaluators look for.

Evaluations in tryouts cannot replace watching a player participate in a significant game. Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer coaches are always looking for players to improve in game settings. Should a player not be chosen for ODP it is not the end of the world. We encourage players to continue with soccer and pursue opportunities as they arise.

