



## Why our REC program plays 5v5 soccer?

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First off, we want you to know that our club has been aware from both information from reputable sources and from our own experience, that many kids drop out of soccer after they reach 13.

Even IYSA has discussed this before with affiliated clubs and US Youth Soccer (USYS) has also brought up this reality. This USYS article on this topic is based on research and I think it would be worth while for you to take a look if you have time. It is called "[Why They Stop](#)"

One of the main reasons why kids stop playing is because they do not have fun.

As a technical director, I am always trying to find ways to make it fun for the kids so they embrace the sport for life. The training plans we provide to coaches must include fun activities related to the curriculum we follow, for example.

The playing format is huge too in order to achieve a more fun environment. We were one of the first clubs around, if not the first, when in 2015 we embraced the USYS developmental system for U4 through U8 using no goalies and playing in smaller fields with less numbers.

I wanted this new program to be fun and at the same time instructional. I am very familiar with smaller side soccer, as in Spain, where I come from, we play a sport called Futbol Sala (or internationally called Futsal). This is played by little kids to Professional players. There is even a Futsal World Cup and is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. Most schools in Spain have a futsal court. That is all I played in my recesses when I was a kid. Futsal is played on a basketball size court, 5v5 (including the goal keeper), with goals that are 6 X 9 feet, and on fast surfaces (asphalt, cement, wood etc).

Even though what we are doing with the Rec program at Real and Futsal do not share some rules nor the fast surface, the 5v5 format is common to both and that is something that if you give us time with it, you will see your kids loving it, getting more confidence and progressing faster. **This 5v5 format allows 600% more touches than regular soccer. Players participate more and develop faster.**

If you want to do some reading on Futsal please go to:

[Idaho Football Federation \(IFF\) | Path to Pro, ID Camps, Beach Soccer, Futsal, Indoor Soccer, Outdoor Soccer & Street Soccer \(IDAHO\)](#) and click on the futsal menu for 5v5 soccer info.

Now for REC teams that progress well under our curriculum and want to play 9v9 (U11-U12) or 11v11 (U13-U15) as applicable, we can always play in the Outback League which is an IYSA rec league with those formats but we would need to really consider it because throwing kids that are not ready at those larger fields does not make sense to us and it will not be as fun. It will be too much running and no touches on the ball hardly. We want first to see how the first few seasons go on 5v5 with your kids and also see your feedback and coaches feedback.

For us, this type of street soccer we are playing in our REC program, call it community or backyard soccer if you want, is amazing. Bringing REC soccer to Real SC, it is a great opportunity for us to be immersed in a street soccer type of environment where creativity and improvisation are developed together with our technical, tactical, physical and psycho-social objectives per the USSF curriculum discussed on our coaches meetings and reflected in the biweekly training plans we send to coaches.

In short, as a technical director and coach, one who started coaching when I was 14 in Spain, I am confident the 5v5 format will allow your kids to have a blast, develop faster and do not stop playing this beautiful game, which at the end of the day, given the statistics, will be a remarkable achievement if we together can keep this amazing youngsters in it. I am not saying it will be perfect. Coaches would need to embrace a possession style game instead allowing kicking the ball randomly. It is a process.

If any of your kids wants to experience the next level, we have a competitive program as well, the oldest in this area, and teams play 7v7 (U10), 9v9 (U11-U12) and 11v11 starting at U13, in the IYSA ISL or Idaho Soccer League. Tryouts are always around the first week of June but we are always assessing new players through out the year and adding new players if there are spots any time of the year. Let me know if any of your kids think is ready and we will assess them. Coaches can also ask me if they think they want their team to play in the Outback League or even competitively.

I would love to hear from you and your thoughts so far about our REC program!

Vamos Real!

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