



**DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY
MEMBER**

Dear Parents and Players:

We are excited to introduce you to a new opportunity coming to La Roca FC — US Soccer Girl's Development Academy (USSDA). Unlike any other program in youth soccer, the US Soccer Development Academy is the culmination of years of planning, improvements, and investments by US Soccer to enhance player development in the sport we love.

This program is special because we now proudly offer it in Utah. La Roca is the only Academy member club located in Utah and surrounding states. Beginning in 2017, La Roca will have three US Girl's Development Academy teams participating: (U-14/15, U-16/17, and U-18/19). Our players, who seek the very highest levels of commitment, play, and development opportunities will continue to receive them from La Roca FC with an additional level of support from US Soccer.

It is particularly rewarding that US Soccer chose La Roca FC in Utah to implement its Academy program and vision based on the quality of our coaching staff, their track record of excellence and player development, our unique training program, as well as our soccer leadership and professional club management. All of us together—US Soccer, La Roca FC, and you as part of the Utah Soccer community—have a unique opportunity to further elevate your soccer development while playing at the highest level possible in US Soccer.

We appreciate that many of you have questions about the USSDA and La Roca FC Academy's role and responsibility in delivering this exciting new program. We encourage you to read through this information, visit the US Soccer Development Academy and La Roca FC Academy websites, and contact us with questions. We hope that interested players and families will educate yourselves about what an amazing soccer development opportunity this program represents and make up your own minds if this could be a great fit for your soccer player.

Sincerely,

Adolfo Ovalle
Technical Director, La Roca FC



DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY
MEMBER

US SOCCER GIRL'S DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

- **HIGHER LEVEL OF COMPETITION**
- **HIGHER QUALITY TRAINING**
- **ACCELERATED, IMPROVED DEVELOPMENT**
- **MORE MEANINGFUL GAMES**

WHAT IS US SOCCER DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY?

U.S. Soccer started the Development Academy Program to improve long-term player and coach development. After studying player development models domestically and internationally, U.S. Soccer collaborated with elite soccer clubs across the nation to create a program to provide the proper environment by emphasizing quality training and limited meaningful competition.

The Academy Program focuses on positively impacting everyday club environments to assist in maximizing youth player development across the country. The Academy values individual development of elite players over winning trophies and titles. The Academy sets the standard for elite environments for youth soccer clubs nationwide and is a part of U.S. Soccer's global leadership position in youth soccer, affecting thousands of players.

WHY IS US SOCCER CREATING A GIRLS DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY?

We want to provide a player-centered program that is focused on the development of the individual without bias, distractions, self-interests and financial gains that compromise the optimal everyday environment. We also believe this is needed so we continue to set the standard for world-class players.

WHY CHOOSE A US SOCCER DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY?

The U.S. Soccer Development Academy program provides education, resources, and support to shape everyday club environments in order to develop world-class players.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PLAYING FOR A US SOCCER DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY?

The Development Academy Program features combined age groups where identified players can "play up" within the club structure, as encouraged by U.S. Soccer Technical Staff. The Academy will have three teams, combining six age divisions (U-14/15, U-16/17, and U-18/19). For example, the U14/15 team will include players born in 2003 and talented players born in 2004, who can play up. In addition, the Academy uses player pool rosters that allow for multiple teams (e.g., 23) in order to allow coaches to experiment with combinations and matches in order to foster the best learning and development environment.

CONSISTENT TRAINING ENVIRONMENTS

Development Academy clubs are required to train a minimum of four (4) days per week and rest one (1) day per week during the Academy season. The DA's 10-month Program allows for a greater opportunity to institute style of play and implement a system according to U.S. Soccer's Development Philosophy. It also gives teams increased opportunities for younger kids in their club to "play up" against older players in both training and matches, thereby accelerating their development.

FEWER, MORE MEANINGFUL GAMES

Each Academy team plays approximately 25-30 league games, including 6-9 games played at Showcases. Teams that advance from the Academy Playoffs could expect to play up to three (3) additional games. Academy clubs can expect 15-20 away matches in a given season. La Roca will play Academy clubs located in Seattle, Portland and the San Francisco Bay Area. Our game-to-training ratio ensures our players are getting adequate rest. Teams may have one (1) or two (2) games per weekend based on travel, with no more than one game per day. Each Academy player must start a minimum of 25 percent of regular season games.

NO OUTSIDE SOCCER COMPETITIONS

To maintain a focus on club training environments, Academy players and teams do not play in any outside competitions without written permission from the U.S. Soccer Development Academy staff. This includes any other leagues, tournaments, State Cup competitions, ODP or All-Star events. In Utah, UHSAA does not permit players to play both club and high school soccer.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

The DA follows international rules of competition developed by FIFA. These include no reentry on substitutions, the January 1st birthday cutoff, and players playing-up with older teams when appropriate.

PROFESSIONALIZED COACHING AND CONNECTIONS TO U.S. SOCCER

Players receive integrated oversight from Academy club coaches and U.S. Soccer Technical Advisors in their local environment. In addition, U.S.

Soccer Coaching Education supports the Development Academy in its initiative to require minimum certification for all technical staff. These requirements can be seen below:

- Academy club directors
 - o USSF 'A' License and must complete the Academy Director's course
- Academy club technical staff
 - o USSF 'B' license (minimum)

TALENT IDENTIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Development Academy offers various talent identification opportunities for Academy players through both league play and at events. Since the 2007-08 Development Academy season, 19 Academy alumni have earned Men's National Team Call-Ups and 1,250 Academy players earned Youth National Team call-ups. Over 160 Development Academy alumni have played in Major League Soccer, with approximately another 50+ alumni at professional environments overseas.

HOW MANY PLAYERS WILL BE ON A ROSTER?

As a combined age group, players are encouraged to play up and clubs will have groups of players they will move up and move freely among age groups within their Academy program. The projected pool would equate to approximately 23 players per age group for a total of 69 full-time players amongst the three age groups (U-14/15, U-16/17, and U-18/19).

HOW MANY GAMES ARE PLAYED AND HOW LONG IS THE ACADEMY SEASON?

Each Academy team plays approximately 25-30 league games, with an additional 6-9 games played at Showcases. Teams that advance from the Academy Playoffs could expect to play up to an additional 3 games. The season will begin in September and end with Championships in July. Clubs will break from league play for periods of rest (including inactivity due to weather), during a winter break (December/January) and/or following the end of the regular season (July).

WHAT LEAGUE WILL LA ROCA PLAY IN?

La Roca FC will play in the Northwest Division, made up of eleven (11) teams from the Pacific Northwest and Northern California regions.

LEAGUE PLAY AND EVENTS

The Academy connects National Team coaches directly with Academy clubs to develop and identify players and coaches for future Youth National Teams. Each Academy club is evaluated by a member of the U.S. Soccer Scouting Network at least ten (10) times each year. U.S. Soccer scouts attended over 50 percent (2,100+) of DA games in the 2014-2015 season. And Development Academy events and showcases (for U13 and older) are premier scouting venues for players to be identified for U.S. Soccer Training Centers and Youth National Teams as well as college coaches.

WHAT COSTS CAN A PLAYER EXPECT?

La Roca has established a fee of \$3,500 to cover the following costs of the program: Registration, referees, tournaments, training, indoor and outdoor fields, equipment, uniforms, coach travel costs and other items. In addition, clubs are responsible for all team travel expenses to their league games and events.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Scholarship Program is designed to provide opportunities for full-time Academy players who require financial assistance to participate in the Development Academy Program.

SPORTS MEDICINE

The Academy provides various resources related to sports medicine, including mandatory concussion testing, requiring medical personnel at each Academy competition, providing U.S. Soccer Heat Guidelines, and offering secondary insurance coverage.

HOW PLAYERS JOIN AN US SOCCER DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY?

For players to join the Academy, they must first join one of our member clubs. Anyone interested in joining an Academy club will need to contact the club directly for specific information regarding the tryout process. To see which clubs are in your area, please visit our site and view club maps based on your age group: U-14/15, U-16/17 and U-18/19. After selecting a club in your area, click on "Club Staff" for the club's contact information. We encourage interested players to contact the manager and/or administrator of the club. Currently, La Roca FC is the only Development Academy program in Utah.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Please visit: www.ussoccerda.com/overview

Please call La Roca FC: 801.825.6040, or visit: www.larocafc.com/development-academy