

January Player Assessments for U14 and Below

This outlines PGYSA's process and justification for January player assessments for U14 and below. These assessments serve as a key developmental **checkpoint**, helping the club plan effectively for the outdoor season, and maintain alignment with our curriculum and coaching standards. The assessments will be **rubric-based** and directly connected to the curriculum that development-team coaches are teaching. This methodology ensures consistency, fairness, and clarity across all age groups.

1. January Assessments Provide a Critical Development Snapshot

For players U14 and below, development is multi-faceted and continuous. With this said, we know that a single annual evaluation does not give coaches or families an accurate picture of a player's growth.

However, a January development snapshot allows coaches to:

- Measure progress from the fall outdoor phase,
- Observe changes in decision-making, movement, and execution.
- Assess adoption of the club's shared references (Diamond, PMDS).
- Set meaningful, individualized goals for the next period of development.

January is a natural midpoint in the indoor year, making it the ideal time to document progress.

2. January Assessments Help the Club Plan Effectively for the Outdoor Season

January assessments give the club early and reliable information about:

- Player interest in the Development Pool for the outdoor season.
- Projected Development Pool and potential roster sizes.
- Allows the clubs to register for tournaments and book hotels (these must be done months in advance - Now November and Slurpee Cup spots have just been secured for May)
- Coaching assignments and staffing requirements.
- Facility and field scheduling.
- Development team and travel team viability at each age group.
- Training group composition.

Without this January touchpoint, planning is reactive. With it, planning becomes proactive, organized, and transparent. January is the first point where families make clear decisions about outdoor involvement, making this assessment essential for club-wide planning.

3. January Assessments Will Be Rubric-Based and Curriculum-Aligned

3.1 Why Rubric-Based Assessments Matter

Rubric-based assessments allow for:

- Consistency across coaches.
- Clear expectations for players.
- Transparency for families.
- Fair and objective evaluation (as objective as possible).
- Meaningful tracking of growth over time.
- Alignment between training, feedback, and development steps.

Rubrics reduce subjectivity and increase the chance that every player is assessed through the same lens.

3.2 Direct Connection to the Club Curriculum

Every January assessment will be tied directly to the curriculum taught within the development pool.

This ensures the assessment is not random or subjective coach experience dependent. It is systematic, connected to the Club's philosophy, and directly aligned with what players learn weekly.

3.3 Development-Pool Coaches Use the Same References

Because development-pool coaches teach from this curriculum:

- January assessments reinforce what the Club is already asking coaches to deliver.
- Players experience consistent language and expectations from their coaches.
- Coaches receive a clear picture of how well their work is being applied.
- Technical leads can support coaches where needed.

The rubric becomes both a player-development tool and a coach-development tool.

4. January Assessments Improve Grouping and Training Environments

With small-to-medium age groups, January assessments better help technical staff:

- Group players by appropriate challenge level.
- Balance training environments.
- Understand each player's readiness and learning needs.

- Maintain sustainable development pools.
- Identify emerging leaders or players needing additional support.

5. Final Considerations

The club should conduct January player assessments for U14 and below that are rubric-based and directly connected to the club's curriculum.

This approach ensures:

- Accurate developmental snapshots and meaningful player feedback.
- Early planning for the outdoor season.
- Alignment across coaches.
- Transparency and fairness for families.
- Stronger training environments.
- Clear performance and learning expectations.

This is essential to building a predictable and developmentally aligned youth pathway. This approach strengthens the Club's identity, the standards, and the commitment to long-term player development.