



2010-2011 Academy Prospective Member Guide & Training Program Overview

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What is BSA?

Soccer (or "Football" as it is called in the rest of the world) is a beautiful game when played with skill, passion, and intelligence. At the **Blake Soccer Academy (BSA)** we are committed to creating an environment where our academy members can develop these qualities and experience all the joy that soccer has to offer them.

Our club mission statement is.....to provide instructional and competitive soccer playing opportunities through specific programming designed for the individual development of our players regardless of their level of play. In order to accomplish our overall mission, the Blake Soccer Academy offers a variety of training programs, each with specific objectives and philosophies. The programs have been organized within a "pyramid" (refer also as Tier Levels) of player development under the leadership of our full time Director of Player Development and Academy Services, Billy Blake. This "pyramid" model serves to illustrate the complete integration of our training programs, all of which share the common goal of assisting players to excel at any given level of play, as well as to make successful transitions from one level to the next.

The Blake Soccer Academy is a member of US Club Soccer and is designated as US Club Soccer Academy. We are also seeking affiliation with the US Soccer Development Academy, which is the national program that supports the Olympic Development program and US national teams.

Tiered Player Development System

BSA is a three tiered **Total Player (Footballer) Development** program that starts with individual player training and progresses to premiere team participation. Our player development tiers include:

Tier I, Academy Training- This is open to all players regardless of skill level. The Academy training is designed based on US & UK age group training curriculums. We focus on individual technical skill development with basic tactical understanding. In this Academy we focus on providing technical skill development to all players regardless of current skill level and physical attributes. Our current Tier I Academies include: ***3 & 4 yr Mini-Academy, 5-7 yr Mini Academy, 8+ Developmental Academy.***

Tier II, Academy Pride Team Membership- This is the next progression, where players enter into our 360° Training program as members of the Pride teams. The Pride Team members participate in year-long advance academy style training in addition to competitive match play such as winter indoor soccer leagues, futsal, and regional competitive tournaments. The Pride members participate in academy training, team training, invitation scrimmages, league

play and tournaments. Pride members are selected during competitive tryouts every June and remain on the team's roster until the following June.

Tier III, Premiere Academy- This is the elite division of BSA, where Pride teams from Tier II have progressed in their team and individual skill level to an elite competition level. This tier is composed of Pride members that have proven success at Tier II (competitive). Tier III Pride members will participate in elite and premiere tournaments regionally (i.e. State League and State Cup) and nationally. It typically takes up to one year before a Tier II Pride members progress to Tier III.



Our **Premiere Academy (Tier III) Training Program** offers the highest level of coaching and training within the club's "pyramid" of player development. The coaching staff for this program consists strictly of independent (non-parent), professional, nationally and internationally licensed coaches, with few who are former collegiate and pro level players.

The Premiere Academy Training Program is designed for players who have developed a true passion for the game, a strong desire to learn, want high level professional coaching and instruction, are willing to work at improving their play, and are ready to learn what it really means to compete in athletics.

Our current Tier III Academy team includes the **Pride 97 (U12) team**. This team was formed via competitive tryouts in June 2009 and composed of the many original members from the inaugural Fall 2008 members. Over the past year the Pride 97 team has achieved regional success in invitational events, indoor league, and tournaments. We have expanded our competitive schedule to include state wide competition starting June 2010.



This Overview summarizes the goals, objectives, philosophy, and expectations for players and parents participating in the Premiere Academy Training Program, both on and off the field.

Note to Parents

If your child has been identified by the club's professional coaching staff and/or selected at our June tryouts for participation in our Premiere or Elite Academy Training Program, please make sure that both you and your child read this program "overview" carefully. Players and parents need to know what will be expected of them as members of the program.

Academy Training Program Philosophy



Our 2009-2010 Pride 99 & 97 Academy Members

Values:

We feel that the values of respect, discipline, commitment, effort, pride, trust, unity, and developing a true love of the game are vital to the long-term success of our players and our academy. BSA is committed to developing all of these qualities in our young players. We strive to develop not only brilliant young footballers on the field, but responsible young people off the field.

Approach: “Academy/Club” Based versus “Traditional Travel Team” Based Approach:

The BSA is designed and structured to be a true professionally run youth football academy (training) and club (competitive match play). Our model is similar to top European youth football clubs from all over the world, and very unlike most youth sports organizations in the United States. We place a strong emphasis on club unity, and this theme is reflected in all academy programming.

Our Director, Billy Blake, spent years participating in both UEFA and the Manchester United FC (UK) Youth Academy training courses to truly understand the European club based training method. BSA is modeled after these infamous academy programs and the European professional training modules.

In our Premiere and Elite Training Programs in particular, we do ***not*** operate as a group of loosely connected teams following separate and individual agendas. Instead, we believe in adhering to a single, academy-wide playing philosophy and style, which is defined by the Director of Academy Services and Player Development, and rigorously implemented by all members of the club coaching staff. This helps to create a consistent learning environment throughout the program for all our players. We feel there are great advantages in developing individual players within a true “academy” environment.

Our emphasis on academy unity will be evident in everything we do, including:

- Consistent use of our club logo and colors, ***royal blue, gold, and white***
- Uniform appearance of all players and staff at training sessions and games
- Players are considered members of our “academy” and not any particular “team”
- Players are trained collectively by age group, with movement of players from group to group
- We are one academy, one academy name, one family of footballers
- All academy training sessions and match play activities take precedence over other activities (i.e. player’s other soccer clubs or sports)

What is a professional staff or trainer:

A professional coach or trainer is an individual who maintains professional credentials from various coaching associations, both national (US) and international (UK). The national based coaching associations include United States Soccer Federation (USSF), US Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), and National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA). International associations include Union of European Football Associations (UEFA).

The progression of professional licensure typically includes state level (lowest level, “F license”) to national level (highest, “A license”). There are also several

professional licenses for club directors and executive administrators such as the UEFA Pro License and NSCAA Club Directorship License.

Our Director of Academy services, Billy Blake, maintains both high level international and national level licenses. The training staff of BSA also undergoes licensing to ensure that all of professional staff is credential and trained with current coaching techniques.

Match Playing Style:

Every group of players within the program will be coached and encouraged to play with skill, passion, and intelligence. We will teach a possession-oriented game of football in which we will attempt to build the ball up from the back in order to create attacks and chances to score goals. The club's "brand" of football will be an "indirect style" of play versus the "direct style" of play utilized by most other clubs. In short, we will avoid random (and sometimes mindless) kicking of the ball; rather, we will encourage our players to be creative in facing the multitude of challenges that the game presents at any given time.

Our Approach to Competitive Player Development:

We **do not** believe that players should be placed on a "static" team roster for one year at a time, as is the case with most other travel team organizations and clubs. We feel that players develop at varying rates, sometimes unevenly, and often unpredictably. Therefore, our players are NEVER simply assigned to a fixed team, but instead may be moved from group to group based on how fast they develop and how their growth compares to other academy members at any particular time during the year.

We believe that competitive players deserve to have an independent and professional coaching staff responsible for evaluating them at all times, in order to preserve the integrity of the environment we place them in. We believe that competitive challenges are healthy for players and enable them to grow. We can and will challenge our players by allowing them the opportunity to move from group to group, and also between different age groups, when warranted by their play. Our goal is to create an environment that will stimulate the continued growth of all players (including our highest-level players) by allowing every player in the program the chance to get to the next level of play within the academy. All such movement of players will be done at the sole discretion of the Director of Academy Services and Player Development and the club's professional coaching staff.

We will focus our training and evaluation of our players on the four major components that make up a complete footballer:

- ***Technical:*** A player's individual technique and comfort level on the ball under conditions of limited time, space, and increased pressure.
- ***Tactical:*** A player's ability to make proper decisions with and without the ball, based on an understanding of basic attacking and defensive principles; a player's ability to "read" the game properly.

- ***Physical:*** A player's coordination, mobility, balance, speed, endurance, and strength.
- ***Psychological:*** A player's mindset and motivation; how a player faces problems/pressures encountered both on and off the field of play and how the player chooses to deal with those problems/pressures.

Player Development versus Winning:

While we demand that our players strive to win every time they take the pitch for training or games, winning is NOT the primary objective for the academy coaching staff. Our primary objective is centered around, and driven by, our goal of developing individual high-level players in a competitive environment. To achieve this objective, we must allow players to make mistakes even if we lose games in doing so. This is the only way the coaching staff can analyze those mistakes, help our players correct them, and ask them to try again the next time. In short, if our players are not allowed to make mistakes then they are not allowed to develop.

We believe that winning games will ultimately be a byproduct of our ability to develop well-rounded footballers. Many of academy teams have already achieved success in league play, tournaments and invitational with championships and undefeated seasons. Therefore, winning every game is not our primary objective and will NOT be how we measure our success as a academy or club. However, there are times when winning a particular game may be beneficial for a particular age group/team or the club in general. The academy coaching staff will determine which games, if any, will take on this importance and may, at their sole discretion, field what they determine to be the most effective team in certain games (league playoffs, certain tournament games, etc.) where a positive result could help push the entire age group/team or the club to another level of play. Every effort will be made to balance the good of the individual player versus the good of the entire age group/team and the academy in general.

Director of Academy Services



Our professional training staff is led by

Billy Blake

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Trainer's Biography

- Founded and Directed Blake's High Performance Soccer Training services since 2003
- Professional Licensure include: UEFA B, USSF C, NSCAA, National Youth Diploma
- Over 22 years of competitive playing experience. Former Olympic Development Program player, High School All-America, US Soccer National Team Pool player (U17, U19), three years professional playing experience.
- Over 15 years of professional coaching experience at various levels; youth, high school and premiere.
- Currently the Head Coach of the Women's Soccer at Bishop Hartley HS, Columbus Ohio
- Coached varsity teams two high school state titles in Virginia
- Directed the development and coaching of six premiere, nationally ranked USYS and US Club Soccer teams
- Directed teams to the US Youth Soccer National Championships in 2006 and US Youth Regional Championships, 2007 & 2008
- Coached and professionally trained five teams in the Virginia State Cup (VYSA), securing two state championships and one state runner-up

Come join us at BSA,

Where Champions are developed, trained, motivated, and born!

Upcoming Calendar of BSA events and programs

8th Annual Ohio Blast Camp, June 7-11, 2010

- Tuscarawas County YMCA, Dover Ohio

Academy Team Tryouts June 15-June 17, 2010

Our Pride Team Tryouts will be this June at our training fields in Bolivar, Ohio.

- U8/U9 Players born 8/1/01 to 7/31/03
- U10 Players born 8/1/00 to 7/31/01
- U11 Players born 8/1/99 to 7/31/00
- U12 Players born 8/1/98 to 7/31/99
- U13 Players born 8/1/97 to 7/31/98
- U14 Players born 8/1/96 to 7/31/97

June-August 2010 Summer Academy Team Tournament Tour

- Each Pride team will participate in various summer tournaments throughout the summer.
- Pride 97 will participate in regional tournaments such as the Bowling Green Soccer Challenge, Bowling Green Ohio.

Summer Academy Training Program June to August 2010 (Tier I/ Tier II)

- Mini-Academy 3&4 yr old
- Mini-Academy 5-7 yr old
- Developmental Academy 8+
- Goalkeeping Academy

For more information about any of the above programming or BSA, please email Director Billy Blake at bblake@blakesoccer.com