



PLAYER & PARENT HANDBOOK

ALPINE FC VISION, MISSION & CORE VALUES

Vision

Alpine FC will distinguish itself as the preferred local soccer Club, providing an exemplary program for our community's players.

Mission

The core mission of Alpine FC is the development of our players. The Club provides appropriate levels of competition, outstanding complementary programs, and recruits, develops, and retains the highest quality coaches and officials.

Core Values

- Player-centric
Coaches and volunteers place the needs of the player first.
- Personal responsibility
Players, coaches, and volunteers embrace their responsibilities as members of the club and their team.
- Sportsmanship
Players, coaches, and parents consistently demonstrate exemplary sportsmanship and personal integrity.
- Teamwork
Players, parents, and volunteers work cooperatively to achieve team and club goals.
- Open communication
Decisions by club volunteers, coaches, parents, and players are transparent.
- Pride
Alpine FC creates a sense of pride in our players, coaches, parents, volunteers, and greater community.

INTRODUCTION

A value vital to fulfilling our mission is clear and consistent communication between the Club and its teams, coaches, players and parents. Players and parents, please take the time to read and discuss this document together so that we may establish shared values and expectations.

THE CLUB, THE TEAM AND THE INDIVIDUAL PLAYER

The Board of Directors of Alpine FC is elected during the annual meeting (each director serves a two year term and terms are staggered) and its purpose is to enforce and interpret the Club's By-Laws. The Club's managers meet monthly to discuss club-wide issues of interest or concern; the Club's Board also meets monthly to discuss more specific fiduciary or governance issues. More information about the Club's organization is available on the website: AlpineFC.org.

Alpine FC is a “player-centric” (not team-, coach-, or parent-centric) club. The highest priority in the Club’s decision-making is “what is best for the player(s).” Decisions by the Board, DOC and team coaches will be objective and based on their best evaluation of the relevant facts.

Alpine FC is a non-profit educational institution; we strive to operate in a manner similar to your child’s school:

<u>School</u>	<u>Alpine FC</u>
Student	Player
Parent	Parent
Teacher	Coach
Room Parent	Manager
Principal	Director of Coaching (DOC)
School Board	Board of Directors



NEW TEAM FORMATION and TEAM SELECTION

When new teams are formed at the youngest ages (U8-U10), every effort is made to create enough roster positions for all interested and committed local players (the “tryout” will gauge interest and ability). In cases where we have more than a full team but not enough for another full team, every effort will be made to create the opportunity for interested local players to practice with Alpine FC team(s) or in a class or Academy format (Alpine Attack).

The core mission of Alpine FC is the development of our players. To fulfill our mission, the primary criteria for team selection will be the Director of Coaching and Head Coach's assessment of the skill level of the player. In this way, the coach can concentrate on developing each player and each team at an appropriate pace to ensure players learn the necessary skills and develop a passion for the game.

Players will be placed on one of three teams: Red (highest skilled players), Blue (next level of skill) and Gold (third level of skill). All players in the age group will be offered opportunities to train together, utilizing our “side-by-side” training concept. During the season, players may be “shared” between teams. In this way we will foster camaraderie between teams as well as encouraging the fullest development of each team and each player. Children develop at vastly different rates, so players will have the opportunity to move between teams based on the coaches' evaluation.

The club will endeavor to place each team in the appropriate competitive league with teams with similar skill. The club will also endeavor to have the same coach for all of the teams in an age group so that every player is receiving the same coaching. Ultimately we would like to have 3 teams per age group/gender playing 8-a-side and 2 teams per age group/gender for teams playing 11-a-side.

Player performance will be evaluated by observing the player during open tryouts, practices, scrimmages and games. The Club’s DOC, team coach, and, in some cases, independent professional coach evaluators, will conduct player evaluation and selection. Although player and team selections are inherently subjective, they are by no means arbitrary. Players will be evaluated in the following four areas:

- Mental Strength (player focus, attitude, and effort)
- Physical Ability (speed, athleticism, agility, endurance, etc.)
- Technical Competence (ball skills)
- Tactical Awareness on offense and defense

Decisions on player selection are based on the player’s current ability and potential in these four areas. If you have any questions about the meaning of these terms, please ask the coaches. Creating a good soccer team requires selecting various types of players who are able and willing to play specific roles for the benefit of the team. Different positions require strength in different areas. We hope it goes without saying that club or community politics, friendships, personal relationships and financial contribution to the Club or team will not enter into player and team selection.

Playing Up and Player Movement Within the Club:

Should both team’s coaches and the DOC agree that a player has developed to the point where he/she is capable of competing for a starting position on a more competitive team within the Club, the player may be offered the opportunity to make such a move. It is preferable that movement between teams take place between seasons, but the DOC is ultimately responsible for this decision and will work with the family and team coaches on the timing.



PLAYER GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

The primary soccer league season is the fall, and Alpine FC teams begin practice sometime between mid-July and mid-August. Note about League Level: our teams play in either CYSA league (Class 1/Abronzino or Class 3 Redwood) or NorCal Premier (gold/silver/bronze divisions). In general, Gold equals Class 1 (Abronzino League) and Bronze equals Class 3 (Redwood League). Silver falls between the two. A description of the leagues is attached.

Age	League Level	Fall Start	Fall End	Spring Start	Spring End
U8-U9	All	Mid-Aug	Mid Dec	Mid March	Early June
U10-U11	Bronze/Class 3	Mid-Aug	Mid Dec	Mid March	Early June
U10-U11	Gold/Silver/Class 1	Early Aug	Mid Dec	Mid March	Early June
U12-U14	Bronze/Class 3	Late July	Mid Dec	Mid March	Mid June
U12-U14	Gold/Silver/Class 1	Late July	Mid Feb	Mid March	Mid June
U15-U18	Bronze/Class 3	Early Aug	Nov 1	Late Feb	Mid June
U15-U18	Gold/Silver/Class 1	Late July	Nov 1	Late Feb	Mid June

- Most Alpine FC teams take a summer break from early-to-mid June until the start of the fall season practices.
- During the summer there are lots of opportunities for additional practice and skills training (camps, small groups, or age-group trainings).
- During the winter, we encourage players who are interested to play indoors or participate in small group or other age-group training.
- During the primary Club soccer season (fall), players are expected to make their commitment to Alpine FC their first recreational activity priority. To be clear, this means that if a player chooses to play another sport or activity and a conflict arises, the player understands that his or her commitment to the Alpine FC team takes precedence, regardless of the relative importance of the two conflicting events. During the “alternative season” (which for younger teams is spring), players are expected to attend soccer practice and games if they don’t have a conflict with another recreational activity.

Your commitment to the Club and the Club’s commitment to you are for one full soccer year and at the end of each year, you *may* be asked to try-out again. The DOC, in consultation with the team’s coach, will decide if tryouts are open (every roster spot is open) or only to add players and this process will be communicated to the team.

Team Goals

Our youngest teams have the following goals:

- Establish fundamentals of good technique through repetitive training
- Express learned technique in game situations
- Develop a passion for learning and playing the game of soccer
- Develop good training habits

As they mature and learn, the team will begin to think about:

- Tournaments (fun and experience)
- League and tournament results

Player Evaluation, Starting Positions and Playing Time

It is Alpine FC's policy that playing time is earned and not a given. Player performance during the season will be evaluated by observing the player in training, scrimmages and games. In general, Alpine FC players are guaranteed an average of 1/4 to 1/2 of each game throughout the season. This can be adjusted to a lower amount if the player is late or misses practice or games.

Exceptions: In a single elimination game, tournament, or for a league championship, players may not get the minimum playing time. However the coach should have prepared for this and played players more in other (less competitive) games.

Coaches will base decisions on starting lineup, player positions and the amount of playing time on the four areas of evaluation mentioned above as well as other factors such as attendance at practices/games and coach's priorities for a particular game. Should you have any questions, please talk with your team coach. Once each season, players will receive a written evaluation; this is a great opportunity for your child to reflect on his or her improvement during the season and on areas that need additional attention.

Attendance at Practices and Games

Players are expected to make as many practices and games as possible. We understand that there will be times when conflicts cannot be avoided due to family, religious or school events. If you do need to miss a practice or game, please notify your team coach and manager as soon as possible so he or she can plan around your absence. It is also important that players arrive on time for both games (usually one hour before) and practices.



Before, During and After Games and Practices

From the designated arrival time at all practices and games, players are expected to concentrate on soccer. Players should arrive, ready to practice or play, on time with appropriate equipment and clothing. Since practicing and playing their best requires the players' undivided attention, we ask that there be no visiting between players and parents, family, or friends from the start of the warm-up until dismissal by the coach. Of course, we expect that players will have proper rest, hydration and nutrition to support a rigorous athletic program. Learning to be "ready" to play is an invaluable life skill that translates into every area of a player's life and carries forward into adulthood. Please let us help your child learn this lesson.

Communication With Your Coach

Honesty, reliability and direct communication are a foundation of our program. There will inevitably be times during the season when players will be confused by the coach's instructions or decisions; players are encouraged to talk with their coach so they can gain a better understanding of why decisions are being made and what is expected of them. If you have issues or concerns such as the amount of playing time, position, etc., please do not hesitate to speak with your coach. Any problems with other players should be brought to the coach's attention immediately.

Once a season, the club solicits your input in an anonymous survey; this is a great opportunity to provide feedback on the club, coach or manager. The Board depends on these surveys to develop our teams and programs and appreciates your honest feedback (both positive and negative).

Team Communication

Good communication is the key to a great club soccer experience. You can expect timely communications from your coach and a manager and they should expect the same from you. Sometimes changes are made at the last minute; please check your email the day of practice or game (especially if it has been raining). If a player is going to miss a practice or game (or arriving late or leaving early), please notify your coach and your team manager as soon as possible. The coach carefully plans practices and games and a change in the makeup of the players attending can impact the quality of the experience for the remaining players.

Uniforms and Equipment

Please bring a ball, cleats, shin guards and water to all practices and games. For practice, you should wear your Alpine FC practice t-shirt (if your team has one), dark soccer shorts and dark socks. Players should not wear any part of their game uniforms to practice except warm-ups. You must bring ALL of your Alpine FC uniform (white and striped) to every game.

PARENT GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

Parental support and involvement in Alpine FC are essential! If your child chooses to commit to Alpine FC, your commitment is also necessary. Specifically, parents should be sure:

- Players arrive on time for all club and team activities and are picked up promptly.
- If there are unavoidable conflicts, notify your coach and manager as soon as possible.
- If the player is going to be late to a team activity, notify the coach and manager.

In addition, parents are expected to:

- Remain current on all team scheduling.
- Participate in any club or team fundraising activities.
- Volunteer to help with team and Club activities; **each team will have at least two parents serving in volunteer roles for the Club.**
- Follow all applicable club and league rules. **In particular, parents are not to contact schools or towns to obtain field space for the team or individual training; please ask your manager contact the Club's Director of Fields.**
- With over 350 players and more than 20 teams, the club's volunteers are both necessary and greatly appreciated. Please be respectful of the volunteers' time and efforts on behalf of the club; we know we cannot please everyone, but we do try our best to provide the highest quality program, including: fields, equipment, uniforms, communication, tryouts and new team formation. If you are unable to volunteer your time to the club, the club-wide anonymous survey is often the best forum for suggestions about our programs.



Decisions on scheduling (start and end of season, day, time and location of practices and games, selection of tournaments) will be made by the team coach or DOC after careful consideration needs of the club and individual teams.

We request that parents treat their child's team coach with the same respect as their child's classroom teacher; Alpine FC coaches have many years of experience as both players and coaches. First, assume good intentions. Second, ask questions in an appropriate tone and at an appropriate time (right after a game is often not the best time; email or call the coach to ask for a meeting in person or by phone when you both can devote sufficient time to the discussion). Email is often not the best way to communicate about sensitive issues such as playing time or position as it does not allow give-and-take. You and the coach may not ultimately agree on such matters but you will both have a better understanding of what needs to be done to resolve the situation. Ultimately, if your questions and concerns are not answered, you may contact the DOC.

Sideline Coaching and Behavior

- Alpine FC supports the Positive Coaching Alliance and encourages every parent to take the online positive parent course (positivecoach.org).
- After games or practices, ask your child if he or she had fun; please don't dissect the game. A good question might be, "what was the best part of the game for you?"
- Parents are not allowed on the player sideline or behind the goal during games or scrimmages (this is a league rule as well as a club rule).
- There will be no coaching by parents. "Go" or "Shoot" or "Send it" are interpreted as instructions and are not helpful to the team or the player. Your positive encouragement is welcome after good play by either team ("Go team").
- In order to learn effectively, players must not be distracted. For this reason, the Club requests that the coach, assistant coach and DOC be the only coaching "voices" during games and practices.
- Please do not criticize or express disappointment (groan) when players make mistakes. The players are well aware of their mistakes, and we teach our players that learning from mistakes is integral to improvement.
- Please respect every player on the team; do not make critical remarks to others about specific players on your team. Negative comments overheard by the players or their parents are hurtful and foster an unhealthy team environment.
- Please respect your team coach and do not make negative remarks to others about coaching decisions. There will be times coaches make decisions and players are instructed to do things parents will not understand. Team and player development will be given a greater priority than winning, especially in the years prior to high school.
- Encourage your child to communicate for him- or herself with the coach; this is an important learning opportunity for your child.
- Parents, as always, feel free to communicate any questions or concerns with the coach; it helps if you ask your child first (even our youngest players will understand coaching decisions and can explain them to their parents).
- Please respect the officials; they are an integral part of the game and at the younger ages, important teachers. Many of our referees are players in our club. The coach is the only person who should make any comment to the officials.
- Please be respectful and courteous to the opposing team's parents and players. You will have games against the same teams for years to come; please model appropriate behavior.

- Alpine FC teaches players the benefit of having mental toughness and intense focus during soccer games. We will instruct your child to ignore adverse conditions such as questionable referee calls, bad sportsmanship by opponents or opposing parents and coaches, foul language, rough play, poor weather or field conditions. **We expect our parents and coaches to have this same mental toughness.**

THE TEAM COACH AND CLUB DIRECTOR OF COACHING (DOC)

Alpine FC coaches are instructed to conduct themselves first as teachers and second as soccer coaches. You can expect our coaches to conduct themselves as positive role models and display appropriate behavior at all times. When representing Alpine FC (on the field or at team events), coaches expect our players to be polite, well behaved and respectful.

Players and parents can expect honesty, clear communication, consistency and reliability from the coach. The DOC and other club coaches are responsible for creating an environment where players are given the tools and skills necessary to enable them to become as good as their ability, desire, commitment and effort take them. The foundations for success in the development of individual players and teams are:

- fostering a love and passion for the game of soccer
- maximum concentration and effort during practices and games
- continually striving for excellence in individual skills and team play.

Do not expect excessive praise from the coaches. Sometimes coaches are quiet in order to allow players to begin to think creatively and problem solve during the game. Sometimes coaches are critical and sometimes coaches will praise lavishly. In combination, this will help the players achieve their goals.

Often two or more Alpine FC teams share the same coach. All such coaches are expected to attend all team training sessions and will attend as many games as the schedule permits. However, there may be times when conflicts occur and, in those situations, another coach will cover one of the games or



practices. The decision as to which team is covered by the head coach will be determined solely by the head coach and DOC. In addition, during the season the DOC will attend as many games as possible for each Alpine FC Team in order to help develop the team, the players and the coaches.

The DOC will be responsible for recruiting, evaluating and developing the club's coaches. Teams may request a change in coaching or the DOC may decide to change a team's coach. However, the Club's DOC is responsible for making the final coaching decisions (not the parents).

DOC Owen Flannery

PLAYER DUES

Each Team is financially supported through seasonal player dues; some of the fees fund club expenses and some are specific to the team.

Club fees fund:

- Field use fees (including payments to schools and towns, goals, nets and lining)
- Director of Coaching salary
- Club Goalkeeper Coach salary
- Tryouts, coaching education, selected clinics, player development activities, and other club-wide events and services deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors
- Basic coach salary

Team fees fund:

- Coach's salary in excess of the basic salary (third practices, extra tournaments)
- Additional fees for tournaments or team camps (entry fee, coach's expense, etc)
- Referee fees
- Individual team equipment (soccer balls, team bench, etc)
- Individual player uniforms (usually every two years)
- The amount of player dues for each team may vary and will be determined based upon the number of players and the proposed team budget set forth by the team manager; **in general fees are between \$700-\$900 per season** (excluding uniform cost).
- Since league and player registration fees, pre-season tournaments and other team costs are payable prior to or in the beginning of each season. The Club *suggests* the following payment schedule (but teams may adopt a different payment calendar):
 - 25% (or \$200) on or before June 1st (for the following season)
 - 50% of the remaining amount on or before September 1st
 - The remaining balance is due and payable no later than October 1st
- The suggested spring season payment schedule is:
 - 25% (or \$200) on or before January 15th (for the following season)
 - 50% of the remaining amount on or before April 1st
 - The remaining balance is due and payable no later than May 1st.
- We understand that there may be times when individual exceptions need to be made to the above schedule. Your team manager may define a different payment schedule (and payments on a monthly or quarterly basis). However, such arrangements must be made in advance and may not inhibit the team from meeting club and league payment deadlines.

Should a player quit or leave the team to join another team after any payments are made, there will be no refunds. Also, any past due player dues will be immediately due and payable. Refunds will only be made in special cases (determined by the team manager in consultation with the team coach) such as when a player is injured for a significant period of time or if a player's family relocates to another area. Failure to pay dues on a timely basis may result disciplinary action. Gently used uniforms may be "bought back" by the team for about 50% of the original purchase price.

Scholarship Policy:

The AFC Board believes every child in our community should have the opportunity to participate in Club programs. We also recognize that a high-quality professionally coached program may not be affordable for everyone who wishes to participate. For this reason, every team is encouraged to award scholarships to the best of their ability. **It is the AFC's position that all scholarships will be funded and administered by individual teams. The club will be exploring club-wide fundraising opportunities. Other clubs fund scholarships through volunteer-intensive programs such as tournaments, bingo, and merchandise (candy, gift-wrap) sales.**

The following information should help parents and teams formulate and implement a scholarship policy.

- The team manager, coach and treasurer should keep all financial aid requests confidential.
- It is strongly suggested that no player be given a "full ride" scholarship. Families should be asked to contribute a comfortable amount (even if this is a token amount) and players should be given options for fundraising (coffee sales, Sees Candy, etc). Players are also encouraged to become referees and the Club Ref Assigner will give priority to Club kids.
- Teams may fund scholarships through tax-deductible donations from families on the team. Checks should be made payable to Alpine FC with a notation as to which team should receive

the funds (Alpine FC XX Red). The Club treasurer will deposit the funds in the Club account and then will issue a check to the appropriate team and provide a receipt to the donor.

- Alternatively, teams may decide to divide the amount of scholarship dollars needed (as determined by the team's manager, treasurer and coach), among the entire team (a budget line item). This method, however, is not tax deductible.
- Teams are encouraged to base player scholarships solely on financial need, not on player ability. Questions regarding player skill should be limited to whether the player is strong enough to be on the team, not whether the player is strong enough to merit a scholarship.

CONCLUSION

This agreement should detail what you can expect from the Club, coaches and team, and what will be expected of you. In order for our players to receive maximum benefit, every coach, player and family must abide by the Club rules, regulations and policies. If you have any questions, please ask your manager, coach, a Board member, or the DOC. Our desire is to work in a positive, constructive way with our players and their families. We will assume good intentions (as we ask you to do so also). The Board of Directors serves as the Club's Discipline Committee, which is the final source of dispute resolution.

The Board and other Club volunteers serve because we believe Alpine FC can and should be a source of community spirit and pride. We also believe soccer is a joyful life-long activity that promotes physical fitness and emotional well-being and teaches our children valuable life lessons.

Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or concerns; we are here to serve the soccer families in our community. Of course, we encourage anyone who would like to volunteer for any club position to please contact us.

Alpine FC Board

Alpine FC Player and Parent Agreement

Our family has read the Alpine FC Player and Parent Handbook. We understand that membership in Alpine FC is a family commitment and the Club has the following expectations of all players and families:

Be prepared to play at practice and games

- Arrive on time (10 minutes early is on time)
- Wear the proper uniform and equipment
- Be properly rested, fed and hydrated and bring a water bottle

During the primary season (usually fall league)

- Alpine FC is the primary recreational activity
- No other sport or recreational activity will take priority in a conflict (regardless of the relative importance of the two conflicting activities)
- Unavoidable conflicts (school, church, family or illness) will be communicated as early as possible with the coach and manager

During the alternate season (usually spring), players will attend soccer practice and games if they don't have a conflict with another recreational activity. Conflicts will be communicated as early as possible.

Players can expect to play a minimum of one quarter to one half of a game during the season. However, this can, and often will, be adjusted if the player is late or misses practices or games.

In a single elimination game, tournament, or for a league championship, players may not get the minimum playing time (but the coach will compensate by adjusting playing time in other games).

Parents will follow all rules and suggestions regarding sideline behavior; Alpine FC coaches are the only "coaching voices" Alpine FC players should hear during games.

Everyone in Alpine FC will demonstrate good sportsmanship and mental toughness by not complaining about officiating, rough play, playing time or position, field conditions or weather.

Parents will treat every coach, official, parent, club volunteer, and player with respect (including the opposition).

Parents will communicate respectfully with coaches (where possible, make an appointment to discuss issues of concern)

Parents will pay dues in a timely manner.

The Club is a volunteer-run non-profit organization with many thousands of hours spent providing the highest quality experience for our soccer-playing families. Each team will provide 1-2 volunteers for club-wide activities (outlined on alpinefc.org structure & volunteers).

Player Signature

Parent Signature