

Pafos Academy — Same Blueprint, Different Builders

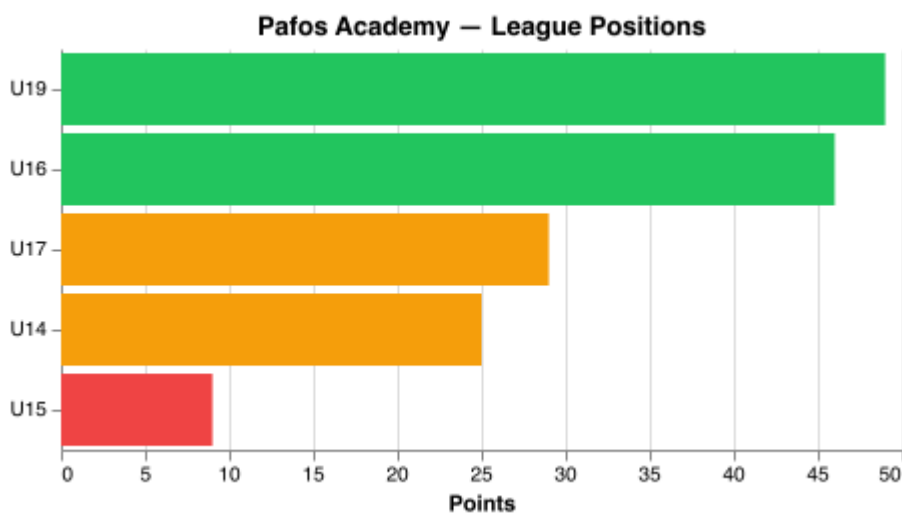
Cyprus League Division 1 — All Age Groups | Season 2025/2026 5 teams: U19, U17, U16, U15, U14

<p>U19</p> <p>1ST — 49 PTS</p> <p>16W 1D 1L</p>	<p>U16</p> <p>1ST — 46 PTS</p> <p>15W 1D 1L</p>	<p>U17</p> <p>6TH — 29 PTS</p> <p>9W 2D 6L</p>	<p>U14</p> <p>9TH — 25 PTS</p> <p>8W 1D 9L</p>	<p>U15</p> <p>14TH (LAST) — 9 PTS</p> <p>2W 3D 13L</p>
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Executive Summary: Pafos has a clear academy identity — central build-up, high possession, patient tempo. Every age group ranks in the top 4 for passing volume in their league. Every age group builds 73–80% of attacks through the centre. The system is consistent from U14 to U19. But the outcomes could not be more different: two league champions (U19, U16), one mid-table control team that can't score (U17), one mid-table side living on borrowed conversion (U14), and one bottom-of-the-table team that possesses without purpose (U15). The difference isn't the blueprint — it's the quality of execution. Where pass accuracy reaches 82–84%, the system dominates. Where it drops to 69–71%, the system collapses.

1. Academy Snapshot

League Positions

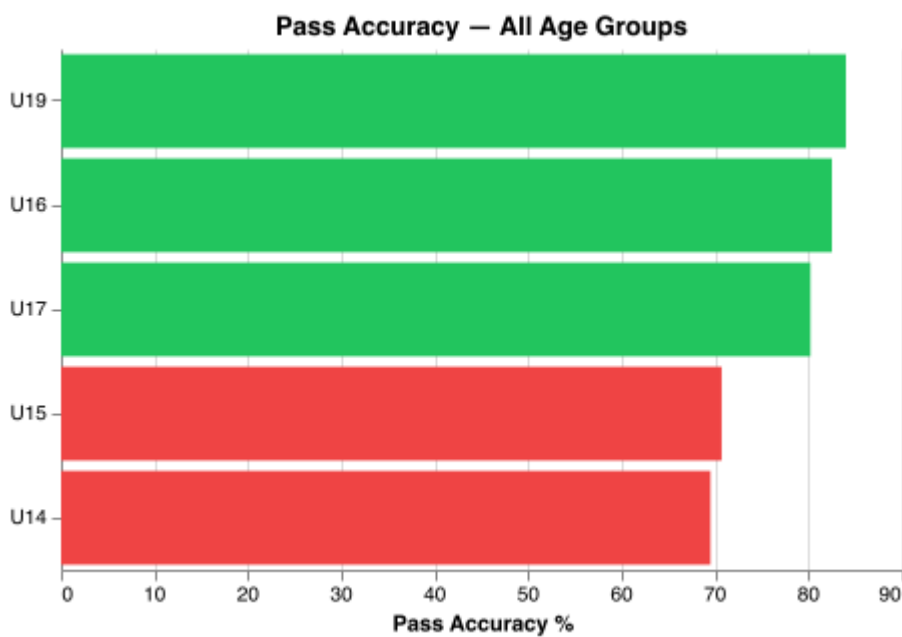


Team	Pos	Pts	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD
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U19	1st	49	18	16	1	1	63	11	+52
U16	1st	46	17	15	1	1	58	9	+49
U17	6th	29	17	9	2	6	38	26	+12
U14	9th	25	18	8	1	9	34	32	+2
U15	14th	9	18	2	3	13	23	53	-30

The academy splits into two tiers with a chasm between them. U19 and U16 are the joint-best teams at their respective age levels — combined 31W 2D 2L with a +101 goal difference. U17 are competitive but underachieving. U14 and U15 are the academy's development challenge, with U15 last in their entire league.

Key Metrics Comparison



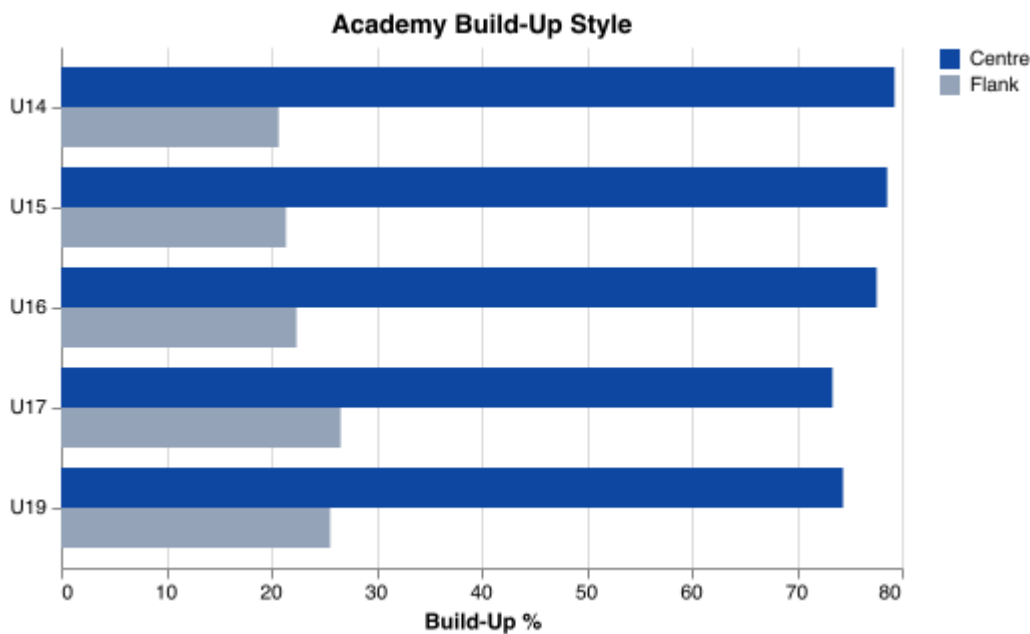
Metric	U14	U15	U16	U17	U19
xG/M	1.56 (4th)	1.36 (9th)	2.87 (1st)	1.96 (7th)	2.50 (1st)
xGA/M	1.60 (10th)	1.97 (13th)	0.71 (1st)	1.18 (2nd)	0.79 (~1st)
Passes/M	280 (4th)	333 (4th)	421 (1st)	434 (1st)	434 (1st)
Pass Accuracy	69.5%	70.7%	82.5% (1st)	80.2% (2nd)	84.0% (1st)
Shots/M	10.1 (8th)	10.6 (12th)	22.8 (1st)	14.4 (7th)	18.9 (1st)
Conversion %	21.2% (1st)	11.5% (12th)	13.2%	16.5%	16.5% (4th)
Deep Comp/M	5.0 (12th)	7.7	12.6 (1st)	10.4 (4th)	9.5 (2nd)
Box Rec/M	5.8 (11th)	6.4	19.1 (1st)	11.1	15.3
Cross Success	23.2%	16.2%	35.1% (1st)	27.5% (12th)	35.8%

Keeper Save %	69.2% (9th)	54.7% (14th)	77.8%	72.5%	79.5%
Ball Losses/M	110.3	114.9	95.5	106.7	92.5

2. The Central Column — Academy DNA

The single most consistent pattern across all five age groups is the build-up profile. Every Pafos team builds predominantly through the centre:

Team	Build-Up Centre %	Build-Up Flank %
U14	79.3%	20.7%
U15	78.6%	21.4%
U16	77.6%	22.4%
U17	73.4%	26.6%
U19	74.4%	25.6%



73–80% central build-up across every age group is an unmistakable academy philosophy. This is not random — it's coached. Every team plays through central midfield, building patiently rather than going wide early. The consistency from U14 to U19 means players graduating between age groups will immediately recognise the playing style. This structural coherence is a genuine competitive advantage for player development.

The system is complemented by a heavy emphasis on underlapping runs over overlapping:

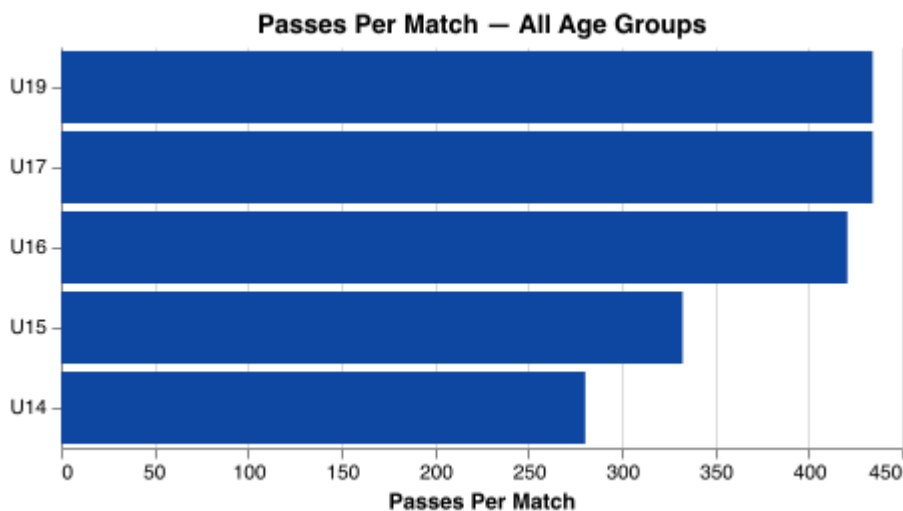
Team	Underlapping/M	Overlapping/M	Ratio
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U14	54.9	13.5	4.1:1
U15	55.9	14.1	4.0:1
U16	142.7	33.9	4.2:1
U17	89.1	23.0	3.9:1
U19	108.3	40.3	2.7:1

All age groups favour interior movement over wide overlaps, consistent with the central build-up philosophy. The U19 have the most balanced ratio (2.7:1), suggesting the older players develop a wider range of attacking movement as they mature.

3. The Possession Identity

Every Pafos team ranks in the **top 4 for passing volume** in their respective league. This is the academy's non-negotiable:



Team	Passes/M	League Rank
U19	434.3	1st
U17	434.3	1st
U16	420.8	1st
U15	332.6	4th
U14	280.5	4th

Three league leaders in passing and two top-4 teams. Pafos's possession identity is embedded from the youngest age group. The progression from 280 passes at U14 to 434 at U17/U19 reflects players learning to hold the ball longer, find more options, and recirculate more patiently. This is a development pathway producing technically accomplished footballers.

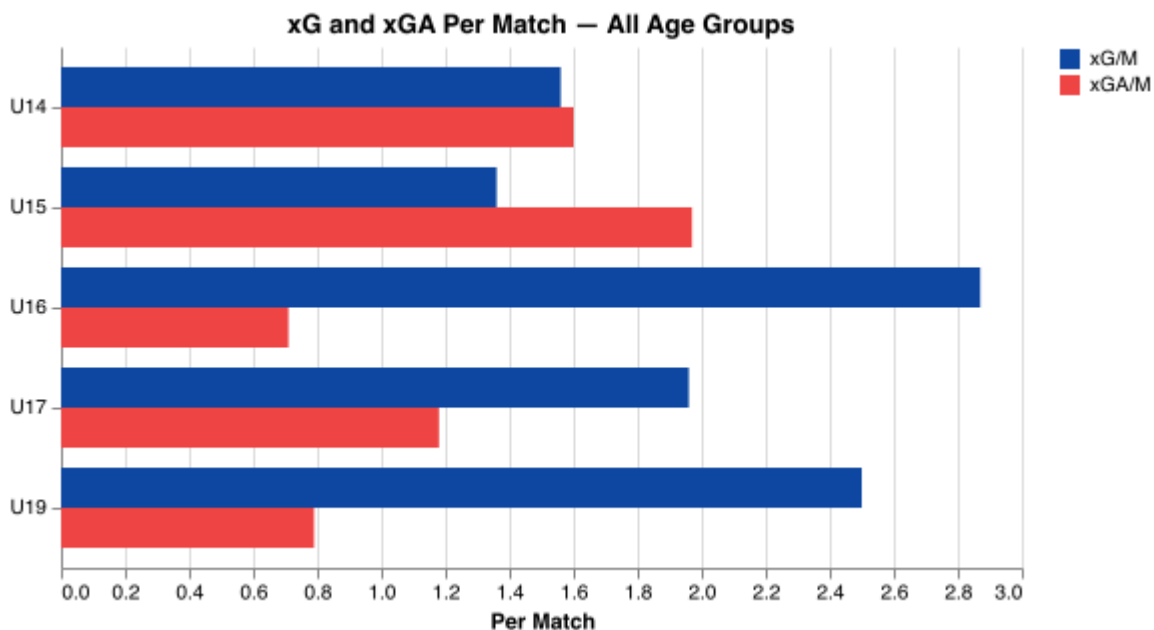
But possession volume means nothing without accuracy. This is where the academy splits:

Team	Pass Accuracy	Outcome
U19	84.0%	1st in league
U16	82.5%	1st in league
U17	80.2%	6th in league
U15	70.7%	14th in league
U14	69.5%	9th in league

The 13-percentage-point gap between U19 (84.0%) and U14 (69.5%) is the execution divide. At 82%+ accuracy, the possession system creates chances and suffocates opponents. Below 75%, it becomes purposeless recycling that tires the team without threatening the defence. The U15 and U14 have the system's structure but lack the technical quality to make it work. Improving pass accuracy at U14/U15 level is the single highest-leverage development priority.

4. Attack — Two Champions, Three Questions

xG and Chance Creation



The attacking output correlates directly with pass accuracy and final-third penetration:

Team	xG/M	Deep Comp/M	Box Rec/M	Shots/M	Cross Succ %
U16	2.87	12.6	19.1	22.8	35.1%
U19	2.50	9.5	15.3	18.9	35.8%

U17	1.96	10.4	11.1	14.4	27.5%
U14	1.56	5.0	5.8	10.1	23.2%
U15	1.36	7.7	6.4	10.6	16.2%

U16 and U19 lead every attacking metric. But the patterns of their superiority differ. U16 creates through volume (22.8 shots, 19.1 box receptions, 12.6 deep completions per match — all league-leading). U19 creates through quality (84% pass accuracy, 35.8% cross success, fewer but higher-quality chances). Both produce xG above 2.50.

The U17 paradox is instructive: they pass 434 times per match (same as U19) but generate only 14.4 shots — one shot every 30 passes. U19 generate one shot every 23 passes. The U17's build-up is elite, but final-third execution — crossing (27.5%), shot selection (38% long shots), and penetration (11.1 box receptions vs U16's 19.1) — prevents the system from delivering goals.

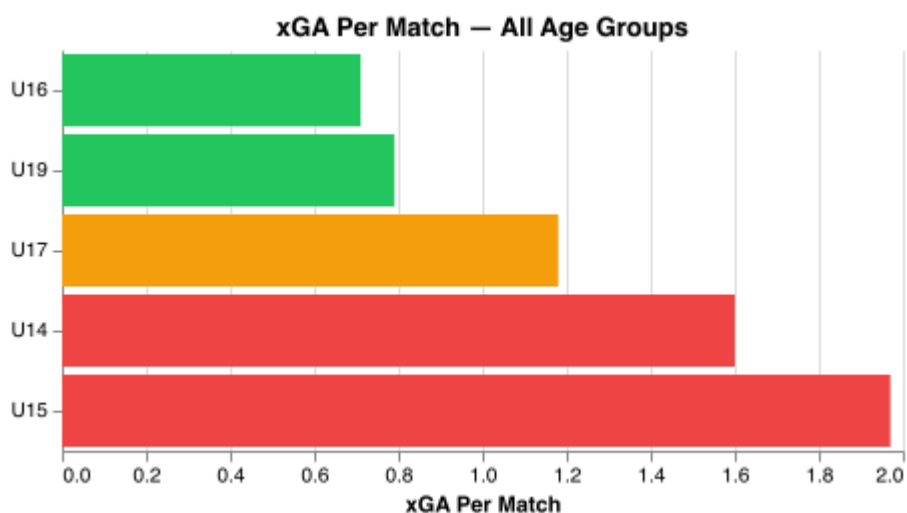
Conversion

Team	Conv %	Goals/M	xG/M	xG Surplus
U14	21.2%	2.13	1.56	+8.62
U17	16.5%	2.36	1.96	+4.36
U19	16.5%	3.13	2.50	+9.47
U16	13.2%	3.00	2.87	+1.95
U15	11.5%	1.21	1.36	-2.14

Conversion tells two cautionary tales. U14's league-leading 21.2% is driven by one player (Eleftheriou, 37% personal conversion in 10 apps) and is already regressing late-season. U15's 11.5% compounds their creation problems — they generate little and finish even less. The sustainable models are U16 (13.2% from high volume = reliable) and U17/U19 (16.5% from medium volume = efficient).

5. Defence — The Dividing Line

The defensive data separates the two champions from the rest:



Team	xGA/M	GA/M	Clean Sheets	Keeper Save %	Ball Losses/M	BL Own Half %
U16	0.71	0.53	11/15	77.8%	95.5	20.2%
U19	0.79	0.53	10/15	79.5%	92.5	18.0%
U17	1.18	1.27	2/11	72.5%	106.7	31.5%
U14	1.60	1.60	5/15	69.2%	110.3	34.2%
U15	1.97	3.07	2/14	54.7%	114.9	31.8%

U16 and U19 have nearly identical defensive profiles: sub-0.80 xGA, ~0.53 GA/M, 10-11 clean sheets, 78-80% keeper save rates, and sub-20% own-half ball loss rates. They defend by keeping the ball (92-95 ball losses per match) and by rarely giving it away in dangerous areas. This is what the Pafos system looks like when executed at the highest level.

The U15 goalkeeper crisis (54.7% save rate — last in their league) is the academy's most urgent problem. They concede 3.07 goals per match despite an xGA of 1.97, meaning the keeper is letting in more than expected. The difference between the U15's 54.7% and the U16's 77.8% is approximately 15 additional goals conceded per season from goalkeeping alone.

Ball Security by Age

A critical metric: what percentage of ball losses occur in the team's own half?

Team	BL Own Half %	Risk Level
U19	18.0%	Low
U16	20.2%	Low
U15	31.8%	High
U17	31.5%	High

U14	34.2%	High
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The 14-percentage-point gap between U19 (18.0%) and U14 (34.2%) means the younger teams lose the ball in dangerous areas nearly twice as often. Given that all teams play out from the back through central areas, this is a systemic risk — the same build-up philosophy is far more dangerous at U14/U15 level where the technical quality to execute it safely doesn't yet exist.

6. The Set-Piece Void

Across 70 event-tracked matches, Pafos teams won **225 corners** and scored **14 goals** from corner sequences (6.2%). Only U16 (5 from 39 = 12.8%) and U19 (4 from 39 = 10.3%) show meaningful set-piece output. The other three age groups are barren:

Team	Corners	Corner Goals	Conversion
U16	39	5	12.8%
U19	39	4	10.3%
U14	49	3	6.1%
U17	41	1	2.4%
U15	57	1	1.8%

The U17 and U15 combine for 2 goals from 98 corners (2.0%). This is an entire attacking dimension that produces nothing. The U17, who have the 2nd-best air duel win rate in their league (57.5%), should be converting from set pieces. The U15, with 57 corners (most in the academy), manage just 1 goal. Set-piece coaching at U15 and U17 level would add 3-5 goals per season at no tactical cost.

7. Pressing Profile

The pressing approach varies more than the build-up style:

Team	Pressures/M	High Press %	Low Press %
U19	68.0	20.2%	79.8%
U16	51.1	18.5%	81.5%
U15	69.8	15.5%	84.5%
U14	56.2	13.5%	86.5%
U17	73.4	9.3%	90.7%

The U17 have the highest pressing volume (73.4/M) but the lowest high-press rate (9.3%) — they press in their own half, relying on possession to defend rather than actively hunting the ball. The U19 are the most aggressive high-pressers (20.2%). The U14 and U15 sit deep, consistent with their defensive vulnerabilities.

The pressing profile reflects a deliberate choice, not a weakness. Pafos defend through possession — the teams that lose the ball least (U16: 95.5, U19: 92.5) don't need to press high. The U17's 9.3% high-press rate works because they lose the ball only 106.7 times per match (2nd-lowest in their league). The problem is when less technically capable teams (U14, U15) adopt the same passive approach without the ball retention to sustain it.

8. Discipline Escalation

Team	Fouls/M	Yellows	Reds	Profile
U14	7.7	1	0	Cleanest in academy
U16	9.6	8	0	Controlled
U17	9.6	11	0	Controlled
U15	10.1	7	1	Average
U19	15.3	27	1	Most in their league

Fouls double from U14 (7.7/M) to U19 (15.3/M), and yellows escalate from 1 to 27. The U19's 27 yellow cards leads their entire league. While the physical demands increase with age, this trajectory suggests a growing reliance on tactical fouling that needs monitoring. The U14's near-zero card record is excellent for development. The U16 and U17 maintain discipline at 9.6 fouls per match — a healthy balance.

9. Per-Team Summaries

U19 — 1st Place, 49 pts (16W 1D 1L) — "Total Dominance"

The academy's flagship and league champion. First in xG (2.50), passes (434), pass accuracy (84%), shots (18.9), and crosses (12.9). xGA of 0.79 with 10 clean sheets. The most complete team in Cypriot U19 football. Getting stronger through the season (late-season xG 2.95, xGA 0.60). **Henry Kurtz Linus** (13 goals from 9.93 xG) and **Torres** (36 crosses, 8 assists) are the standout performers. Main concern: 27 yellows and 16.5% conversion — still room to be more clinical.

U16 — 1st Place, 46 pts (15W 1D 1L) — "The Machine"

Statistically the most dominant team across the entire academy. Leads its league in xG (2.87), xGA (0.71), passes, shots, pass accuracy, crosses, deep completions, and box receptions. 11 clean sheets in 15 matches. **Melinos Kais** (13 goals, 80 shots) is the primary threat, supported by **K. Christofi** (12 assists) as the creative engine. The system is at its most refined here: 82.5% pass accuracy, 35.1% cross success, 95.5 ball losses per match. Only loss: APOEL R2 (2-4), an anomaly in an otherwise flawless campaign.

U17 — 6th Place, 29 pts (9W 2D 6L) — "All Control, No Bite"

The academy's biggest paradox. Passes at 434/M (1st in league), ball losses 106.7 (2nd lowest), xGA 1.18 (2nd), pass accuracy 80.2% (2nd). On these numbers, they should be top 3. But 14.4 shots per match (7th), 38% long-shot rate, 27.5% cross success (12th), and 1 goal from 166 set pieces reveal a team that builds beautifully but cannot convert possession into goals. Dramatic late-season improvement (xG 1.40→2.43, conv 12.5%→18.6%) suggests the problems are being addressed.

U14 — 9th Place, 25 pts (8W 1D 9L) — "Living on Borrowed Goals"

League-leading 21.2% conversion rate masks deep structural issues. +8.62 xG surplus (highest in league) is driven by **Eleftheriou** (10 goals from 4.64 xG in 10 apps, 37% conversion) and **Konikkos** (7 goals from 4.15 xG). Against top-4 opponents: 0W 0D 4L, 10.8% conversion. Late-season xG collapsed from 1.96 to 1.10. The system's execution is the weakest (69.5% pass accuracy, 5.0 deep completions/M, 34.2% own-half ball losses). Clean sheets only against bottom-half teams.

U15 — 14th Place, 9 pts (2W 3D 13L) — "Possession Without Purpose"

The academy's crisis team. 14th and last in the league despite ranking 4th for passes per match. The same central build-up system produces nothing: 10.6 shots from 333 passes (12th for shots), 1.36 xG (9th), 11.5% conversion (12th). The goalkeeper save rate (54.7% — dead last in the league) adds 15+ goals to the tally. Away record: 6 GF, 29 GA in 7 matches. Only 1 goal from 57 corners. The possession identity exists but the quality to execute it does not.

10. Standout Players

Academy Stars

Team	Player	Role	Key Stats	Verdict
U19	H. Kurtz Linus	Forward	13G, 9.93 xG, 53 shots in 15 apps	Clinical high-volume finisher
U19	G. Torres	Creator	36 crosses, 8A, 2.46 xA in 10 apps	Elite delivery, best creator in academy
U16	M. Kais	Forward	13G, 80 shots, 14 apps	Volume shooter, drives the attack
U16	K. Christofi	Creator	12A, 15 key passes, most in team	Principal creator at academy's best team
U17	S. Antoniou	Midfielder	463 passes, 17 KP, 32 deep comp	Creative engine — team flows through him
U14	N. Eleftheriou	Forward	10G from 4.64 xG, 37% conv	Explosive finisher — 62% of team xG surplus
U14	S. Konikkos	Forward	7G, 4A, 12 KP in 15 apps	Most consistent contributor at U14
U14	C. Miltiadous	Midfielder	610 passes, 27 INT, 11 KP	U14 orchestrator — touches everything

Development Concerns

Team	Player	Issue	Data
U14	L. Mavrommatis	xG underperformance	0 goals from 1.79 xG, 7 shots
U17	Multiple	Long-shot waste	60/158 shots (38%) from distance, 5% conv
U15	Goalkeeper	Save rate crisis	54.7% — worst in league by 5pp

11. Development Pathway

What Works

1. The central build-up system is a proven competitive advantage. U19 and U16 — the two teams with the technical quality to execute it — dominate their leagues. The 73-80% central build-up consistency means players moving between age groups don't need to learn a new system. The Pafos identity is clear: patient possession through the middle.

2. Ball security improves as players mature. Ball losses per match drop from 114.9 (U15) to 92.5 (U19). Own-half ball losses drop from 34.2% (U14) to 18.0% (U19). Players are learning to protect the ball in dangerous areas — a core requirement of the system.

3. Pass accuracy develops steadily. 69.5% (U14) → 70.7% (U15) → 82.5% (U16) → 80.2% (U17) → 84.0% (U19). The 13-point improvement from youngest to oldest shows the coaching pipeline is working. The jump from U15 (70.7%) to U16 (82.5%) is where the system starts to click.

What Needs Attention

1. The U15 requires structural intervention — they are last in their league. 9 points from 18 matches, 54.7% keeper save rate, 1.97 xGA, 43 goals conceded in 14 event matches. This isn't a minor underperformance — it's a crisis. The goalkeeper situation alone accounts for ~15 extra goals. Priority: upgrade goalkeeping, improve defensive organisation, and accept that the possession system needs to be simplified until the technical base improves.

2. Set-piece coaching is needed at U15 and U17 level. Combined 2 goals from 98 corners (2.0%). The U17 have the aerial ability (57.5% air duel win rate) but produce nothing from dead balls. This is zero-cost attacking output being left on the table. A focused set-piece programme would add 3-5 goals per team per season.

3. The U14 is built on unsustainable individual finishing. 21.2% conversion driven by Eleftheriou (37%) will regress. When it does, the team's 1.56 xG/M and 1.60 xGA/M point to a bottom-half team. The U14 needs to develop systemic chance creation (currently 5.0 deep completions/M, 12th in league) rather than relying on individual brilliance.

Academy-Wide Priorities

Priority	Detail	Impact
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1. U15 rescue	Goalkeeper upgrade, defensive organisation, simplified build-up	Immediate — avoid second consecutive bottom finish
2. Set pieces at U15/U17	Dedicated dead-ball coaching, corner routines	+3-5 goals/season per team
3. U14 creative development	Improve deep completions (5.0→8.0+), box receptions (5.8→10.0+)	Sustainable attack beyond individual brilliance
4. U17 shot selection	Reduce long shots (38%→20%), improve crossing (27.5%→32%+)	Convert possession dominance into goals
5. U19 discipline	Reduce from 27 yellows, manage tactical fouling	Avoid suspension risk during title defence

The U16 → U17 Transition Gap

The sharpest quality drop in the academy is between U16 and U17. The U16 leads every attacking metric in their league (xG 2.87, 22.8 shots, 82.5% pass accuracy). The U17 ranks 7th for xG, 7th for shots, despite leading the league in passes. Players graduating from U16 will arrive at U17 expecting a system that creates chances — and find one that dominates possession without producing shots. Aligning the U17's final-third execution with the U16's standard should be a coaching priority.

The U14 → U15 Transition Concern

The U14 sits 9th. The U15 sits last. Players moving from a 9th-place team into a last-place environment face significant developmental risk. The U15's 54.7% keeper save rate and 3.07 GA/M create a demoralising context that no amount of possession can compensate for. Stabilising the U15 is not just about results — it's about protecting the development environment for incoming U14 players.

Report generated from event data across all 5 age groups (70 event-tracked matches total). Standings reflect official league tables. Metrics calculated using label-based event counting per ScienceOfSports methodology. xG values use the model's native expected goals output.