

BUSA and HFC Announce Strategic Partnership!

May 13, 2013

Birmingham United Soccer Association and Huntsville Futbol Club have agreed to create a strategic alliance to better serve soccer players in Alabama. This partnership is designed to create player development opportunities for players in both BUSA and HFC.

The alliance will start this May, 2013 and will commence with the spring ECNL and USYS tryout period in the coming weeks. The primary benefit for players in the first year will be access to the ECNL, the highest level of soccer offered for our female players in the United States. The alliance will also allow access to more player development opportunities in other areas of both organizations, which are highlighted in the attached FAQ link.

Starting in 2014-2015 all ECNL teams will be known as Alabama FC and wear the Alabama FC uniform kit. This will mirror both clubs relationships with Alabama FC semi-pro teams that will also operate under the Alabama FC name. These programs are the apex of soccer in Alabama and exciting ways for our players to continue to set the bar for excellence, and raise the level of play in Alabama.

Huntsville Futbol Club Director of Coaching Marty Clark says, "At Huntsville FC, we follow a model of Total Soccer Development. What that means for us is that any player at any level is given the opportunity to achieve their goals through soccer. This alliance with BUSA is a perfect example of expanding our program so our girls can participate in the most competitive environment possible. Knocking down walls and creating these alliances are critical to ensuring the players of Alabama get what they deserve!"

BUSA Executive Director Andrew Brower says, " As someone who has lived in Alabama my entire life and been involved in the game most all of those years, it is so exciting to see two of the most successful clubs in Alabama join forces for the betterment of soccer in Alabama. Our two clubs share a similar vision, and by creating this strategic alliance between our two clubs it will allow for a variety of ways to better the soccer experience for all of our players. This is an exciting day in Alabama to see clubs working together to create the best soccer environment possible for our players, and we hope to see more clubs joining forces for the betterment of soccer in the near future."

For more information go to www.birminghamunited.com or www.huntsvillefc.org

Andrew Brower

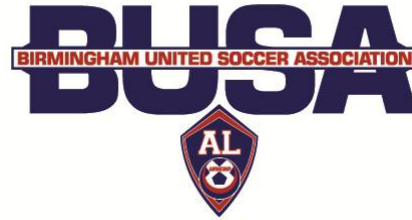
Executive Director

Birmingham United Soccer Association

Marty Clark

Director of Coaching

Huntsville Futbol Club



FAQ's

Frequently Asked Questions About
Alabama F.C

i What is Alabama FC?

Alabama FC creates a partnership between Birmingham United Soccer Association and Huntsville F.C. The goal of the club is to provide strategic soccer opportunities that would not exist without the two clubs working together for the betterment of soccer in Alabama. The club will serve as a connection between BUSA and HFC and allow both clubs to continue to run and operate in the exact same day to day manner as they operate now, but allows access for the two clubs to work together to provide the best soccer experience for our players.

Our ECNL Program (starting in Fall of 2014) and Semi-Pro Women's and Men's Teams will operate under the name Alabama FC.

i Will BUSA and HFC continue to exist?

- o Yes, BUSA and HFC will continue exactly how they run and operate today and there should be no noticeable change except the two clubs have access to work together at multiple levels within the organization.
- o Please note that teams will continue to operate as they do today and teams will not be practicing or training outside of their normal practice venues.

i Will Alabama FC have a Board of Directors?

- o Yes, the current Executive Directors of both HFC and BUSA, along with current presidents of both HFC and BUSA, and ECNL Director of BUSA will serve as Board of Directors for Alabama FC.

o Who can participate in Alabama FC?

In order to participate in Alabama FC, players must be registered, and a member in good standing with either BUSA or HFC.

o What are some examples of how Alabama FC might help my child?

One of the many great things about creating this club is that it creates a bridge that can lead to multiple opportunities between the two organizations, and allows both clubs to do some things we have never been able to do in the past. Some examples of benefits by uniting the two clubs can be found below:

- o Access to play in the ECNL (Elite Clubs National League, the country's # 1 Women's League)

- Opportunity for our players to take part in semi-pro soccer with the WPSL (Women in 2013) and Men's program (to be started in 2014). The program is designed solely for our college playing alumni from both organizations.
- Creation of Tournament teams/Showcase teams between BUSA and HFC.
- Opportunity to combine older age group teams together when applicable

i Will all teams be merging together?

- No, teams will not be merging together, and will continue to train at their local fields. The only time teams would merge completely together, would be when needed due to player numbers and or advised upon based on both Executive Director's request. Those would be unique and special situations and another exciting advantage of the new partnership between the two clubs.

i Will there be a cost increase?

- The goal of Alabama FC is to create programs that are consumer friendly and keep fees as low as possible. For those players who are dual registered there will be one flat fee paid into Alabama F.C. to cover the difference between a standard USYS /AYSA rostered player. For questions on ECNL fees for full time and or dual rostered players can be directed to ECNL director Joel Person at joel@birminghamunited.com

i What does it mean to be a dual rostered player?

- A Dual rostered player is someone who plays on a USYS/AYSA team and also plays on an ECNL team
- Players that are dual rostered will play games with both teams (local BUSA/HFC teams) and also on Alabama F.C. ECNL teams
- Schedule conflicts will be minimal as the ECNL schedule is set well before AYSA schedules are developed. The Directors of Coaching will work diligently to insure there are no and or minimal schedule conflicts. In case of schedule conflict the Director of Coaching from both HFC and BUSA will advise players on which team they would play for that day.
- Dual Rostered players will pay team fees for any and all events they attend with either "home" club team and Alabama FC team
- If a player chooses to only play on their "home team," that is perfectly ok
- If a player chooses to only play ECNL, that also is at the choice and discretion of the player. There may be unique situations where in which the Directors of Coaching ask players to play on a "home based team," when and where needed.

- Any player that is dual rostered will be allowed to play in state cup with their current home based team
- If there is a schedule conflict between an ECNL game and state league the norm is that the ECNL game will take priority, however, Directors will work to make sure to evaluate all variables in the rare occurrence of schedule conflicts.

i What is the ECNL?

- ECNL stands for Elite Clubs National League, and is the highest level of soccer offered to Women's Soccer in the United States. The league consists of 68 clubs from across the country that are split into conferences for regional play and national showcases. The league only takes the top clubs in the country and it is not a mechanism for individual teams to partake in, as it is only for clubs, not individual teams.
- At present BUSA is the only club in Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana.
- The majority of all current college players come from ECNL clubs.
- For more information about the ECNL, please visit their website, www.Eliteclubsnationalleague.com

i What is the name of the ECNL Program going to be?

- It will retain the BUSA/Alabama FC name for 2013/2014, but will solely be referred to as Alabama FC starting in Fall of 2014.

i What teams do the ECNL teams play?

- Our teams will play in the Southeast Conference of the ECNL.
- The league consists of home and away matches between the following clubs, Charlotte SA (NC), CESA (SC), Atlanta Fire (GA), GSA (GA), Concorde Fire (GA), Orlando City (FL), and VSI West Florida (FL).
- You play each team home and away which guarantees you have home games at your home fields, which cannot be said of other leagues including R3PLC
- Teams also participate in National Showcase Events.
- All ECNL based players are expected and required to attend all ECNL games and showcase events.

i Who can participate in the ECNL?

- Any girl can tryout from either HFC or BUSA. The ECNL consists of 5 teams in the U-14, U-15, U-16, U-17 and U-18 age groups.

- Each age group can have a larger roster than USYS teams and because of that it creates a larger player pool for all ECNL teams.
- 26 players may be rostered at U-14 through U-17 and you can roster up to 30 players at the U-18 level.
- All players must attend tryouts, trials, and or be registered under Alabama FC, HFC or BUSA to take part in the program. You cannot participate in the program unless you are a part of these organizations. The only exception is the Discovery Player clause where in which each team is allowed 2-4 players who do not play in their club to be able to be dual-rostered with another outside club/organization and outside of the Alabama FC umbrella.

i What are National Showcases?

- i The ECNL has select events only for its member clubs called National Showcases. These events take place in Orlando, FL, New Jersey, San Diego, Dallas, and other cities and provide maximum exposure for our players who want to play college soccer. Games are played against national opponents and it is not uncommon to play teams from California, Colorado, and New York in these events.
 - U-18's will play in one showcase in 2013
 - U-17's will play in three showcases in 2013/2014 plus the ECNL National Championships
 - U-16's will play in three showcases in 2013/2014 plus the ECNL National Championships
 - U-15's will play in two national showcases in 2013/2014 plus the ECNL National Championships
 - U-14's will play in two inner Conference Showcases in 2013/2014

- i Last winter one team had 142 college coaches attend and watch one of our teams at one event! This is the best way to be seen and get seen by college coaches and it brings out a virtual who's who in college soccer!
- i With college coach's schedules being very busy and hectic, it is now known that college coaches make sure to attend all ECNL showcases, as most current college players are coming from ECNL rosters.

i What is the difference between the ECNL and AYSA and R3PLC?

- The ECNL is a National League playing against the best teams in the country. The league contains the best women's soccer clubs in the United States. The organization and competition make it a far better option than R3PLC as all games are against excellent competition in a much more structured environment.
- The ECNL is affiliated with US Club Soccer and is not associated with AYSA/USYS thus allowing for greater player development opportunities at the highest levels of the game.
- Travel for the ECNL is similar to R3PLC with one major exception, you are guaranteed half of our conference schedule will be played at home at your home fields.

i How will Tryouts work?

- i All players trying out for an ECNL team will need to attend a tryout
- i All players will be informed if they have made an ECNL team by May 31st, so that they can make plans for their home based clubs tryouts.
- i Directors of Coaching and Club Coaches will recommend players for tryouts, however any player is welcome to attend tryouts.
- i Tryouts will take place on May 29th and May 30th in Birmingham. All players are strongly encouraged to attend both sessions.
- i All tryout participants will need to pre-register on the BUSA home page, www.birminghamunited.com on the tryout registration link.
- i Each session will last close to two hours and following the May 30th tryout we will have a BBQ cook-out and then watch the inaugural WPSL Alabama FC play their first home game!

i Is there a cost for trying out for ECNL teams?

- i No, all tryouts are free to anyone who comes out to the tryout session.

i Who will be coaching the Alabama FC ECNL teams?

- i U-14 00 ECNL= Joel Person and Andrew Goodwin
- i U-15 99 ECNL= Andrew Brower
- i U-16 98 ECNL= Joel Person, Henry Mpagi
- i U-17 97 ECNL= Andrew Brower, Joel Person, Henry Mpagi
- i U-18 96 ECNL= Andrew Brower, Henry Mpagi, Kevin Laux

i If I make an ECNL Team what is a typical practice schedule and when does practice begin?

- i Out of town U-15 through U-18 players are encouraged to come to training twice a week in Birmingham and attend any and all weekend sessions. The game schedule will always predicate the training schedule as some times out of town players will only come down to training once a week if we have had a heavy travel load in previous weeks.
- i Out of town U-14 players will only be expected to come down to training once a week to avoid burn out at younger ages.
- i Local ECNL players will continue to train at home on Wednesdays.
- i Any players who is a dual rostered player and or a full time rostered player will have ample training options at home with their home based club team
- i Primary ECNL training nights are Tuesday and Thursday. Wednesday always serves as a local night for home based players.
- i Fall Practice starts with Team Camp on August 1st and will continue to the Sanford, FL showcase event in late December
- i Teams will reform after high school season has concluded to attend two prestigious showcase events. Training will always begin the week after the high school state championships, but players are welcome to attend sessions as soon as their respective high school season has concluded.

Do ECNL players attend Team Camp?

- i Team Camp takes place from August 1st through August 4th in Birmingham. The older ECNL teams will also play friendlies against local Division II, III and NAIA schools during the pre-season stages of their schedule.

If I make an Alabama FC ECNL team, am I allowed to play high school soccer?

- i Yes, we encourage any player to play for their school, but we do offer spring soccer options for those players who choose not to play high school. These players who do not play high school soccer, play against college teams, and attend spring showcase events.

If I have questions about the ECNL or Alabama FC, who can I contact?

- i ECNL Director Joel Person Joel@birminghamunited.com 205-977-9038
- i HFC Director of Coaching Marty Clark Marty@huntsvillefc.org
- i BUSA Executive Director Andrew Brower Andrew@birminghamunited.com