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RUSH UNION

Welcome! Rush Union Update

We've had a very busy, but extremely fun and productive summer. Our Summer Programs and Camps have concluded. There was a great turn out in all programs, and many of the group camp photos are shared in this newsletter. Based on your feedback, we offered more Summer Program options than ever, and it was exciting to see the response.

For the third year in a row, we walked in the Dunwoody July 4th Parade. It was easily the wettest parade we had participated in, but everyone involved had a wonderful time and we are looking forward to participating again next year. Thank you to Dunwoody Homeowners Association, The City of Dunwoody and What's Up Dunwoody for the opportunity to show our Rush Union Spirit.

We are extremely excited for the start of our fall programs. Our Recreational Programs are close to record numbers, and our competitive programs have really kicked off the season in style with a packed Pre-Season week including Mental Health Workshops a visit from Rush Nationals College Advisory Program Director, Josh Tyler, TOCA sessions and more. We are proud to update you that Rush Union will also be offering a Futsal Program in the fall season. More information will be released shortly on this exciting new program. For more information on our programs please visit our website: [Rush Union Soccer | Home](#)

Providing more opportunities for our players is just one area we are continuing to focus on. In addition to the player education around College and Mental Health, we are also hosting more parent education meetings than ever before. We are holding Program Orientation meetings throughout August and have a Parent Workshop that will be hosted by our partners at Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) on August 30th.

Rush Union will host four USSF Grassroot Courses for Coaching during August and September, more than any club in the area. Our continued effort to support our coaching staff does not end there, our coaches are going through their own group meetings, 1-1 meetings and are all on the Rush Way License Pathway to support their ongoing educational needs.

Our long-awaited indoor renovation project is almost complete. There are some amazing photos included in this newsletter. Look for more information shortly on the grand reopening. We can't wait for everyone to have the opportunity to play in the newly renovated facility very shortly.

Our B2011 Milton player traveled to Port St Lucie in mid-July to participate in Rush Fest. Rush Fest is an event only offered to the rising U13 players at the end of their U12 year. It is a fantastic event that attracts Rush teams from all over the country and is the entry point for many players into the Rush National Player Pathway. Look for photos below of the Rush Fest event in Port St Lucie, Florida. For more information on Rush Fest please visit the Rush Fest website: [Rush Fest - Rush Soccer](#)

August 2023

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Speaking of Rush National events and Pathways, we have recently nominated over 65 players from our own teams based on coach feedback into the Rush National Select Program. The Select Program offers Regional, National, and International playing opportunities for players from all over Rush. We look forward to many of our players receiving invitations to a Rush Select event soon. To learn more about Rush Select please visit this website: [Rush Select - Rush Soccer](#)

Although we are just getting our fall season started, planning for our November Rush Cup began a long time ago. We are looking forward to making our November event the biggest and best Rush Cup yet. We look forward to hosting teams from all over Georgia and the Southeast on November 11-12 of this year.

Early this summer, I wrote an article titled "Missing the Point" that was published in the Milton Neighbor. The article describes how the landscape has continued to move away from a family first environment with the addition of more travel leagues, tournaments, and programs. I hope you enjoy the article also featured below in this newsletter.

We had previously mentioned in an earlier newsletter that we have partnered with The Collective Global, a consulting group who is leading Rush Union Soccer through a strategic planning process. In the coming weeks and months this process will engage more members in the form of surveys and focus groups. We already have two focus groups called "Local Committees" that meet periodically to discuss ways we can improve our organization and the families experience. If you would like to get more involved in Rush Union, please reach out to us.

If you have any questions about Rush Union, our programs or anything soccer related please reach out to our staff at any time.

Thank you for being part of our Rush Union family. We look forward to seeing you back on the field soon.

R|U Ready?



Neil McNab Jr.
CEO Rush Union



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The Dunwoody July 4th Parade was a lot of fun in the rain!

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Social Media

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram & Twitter

Rush Union

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Instagram: @RushUnion

Twitter: @Union_rush

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Our summer programs were a big hit, and the attendance in a variety of programs was based on feedback we had received!



Indoor Renovation Update!!!

Rush Union is excited that the major renovations have almost concluded at the Milton Indoor facility. A complete remodel of the indoor field has taken place and will be completed very shortly. The renovation included replacement of the turf, lighting, repair of the ceiling, and walls. New doors and locks have been installed at the facility.

In addition to the Indoor field remodel, we have successfully negotiated an extension of our lease for the Milton facility. We are really excited about the long-term future of the facility and the programming possibilities this brings to our community for both youths and adults.

As always, we thank you for your support of Rush Union and are looking forward to what the future brings for our players, families, staff and the community as a whole.



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EXPERT CONTRIBUTOR

MISSING THE POINT



BY NEIL MCNAB,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
RUSH UNION
PHOTOS BY RUSH UNION



These days, every time you turn around you hear about a new travel league, and layers of competition that are being offered in youth soccer. Organizations are reeling people in on the promise of “next level play” and “exclusive opportunities.” Though newer to soccer parents, it’s a reality in all youth sports now. Leagues, tournaments, clinics, camps, private training, ID programs... you name it, there’s an offer out there that promises (and costs) more than what you may actually get out of it.

I work full time in youth sports that has become a multi-billion-dollar industry over the last decade. Instead of streamlining a process for player development, the landscape has become more fragmented with varying layers of competition being offered. Predatory in some ways. Many of these come at a higher cost, including further travel, and missed days of school. For what benefit? And, more importantly for whose benefit?

Families are being sold on the premise that to play at the highest level, and to play beyond the youth level, their child needs to be playing in these “special” leagues. “This is where the college coaches will be scouting” is something I hear all the time. The harsh reality is that only 1.5% of high school athletes make it to the college level and fewer make it at the professional level.

High level play is enticing to young athletes, and their parents. Imagine the pride seeing your child play at the next level. But don’t get sold. Unfortunately, there are 8-10 leagues that could be named and not everyone can be considered to have that top 1% of players. What this means is that we now have second, third, or even fourth tier teams now paying over-inflated costs to find competition that

quite frankly they can find in their own backyard. Parents and players experiencing FOMO are investing time, energy, and lots of money to ultimately discover their community team may have been the best route to take.

What happened to playing close to home, as part of your neighborhood team or competing with your classmates and sense of community? I think we are missing the point of youth sports if you are truly not in that top 1%. Let’s face it, exceptional athletes are rare and are easy to identify, even outside of the fancy high-priced camps. Development is one thing, but falling prey to scouting, “looks” and promises that come with a high price tag mean missing out on family dinners, community leagues, and local coaching.

When families are searching for leagues and programs to invest their time and resources into, please don’t be fooled into the “travel experience” and sold on “we play in these events” and “your child will get exposure.” Organizations should be able to articulate how they will help your child grow as a player on and off their field.

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SUMMER PROGRAMS

MILTON AND DEKALB LOCATIONS

Including • Recreational Skills • Goal Keeper Training • Pre-Academy Skills Camps & Complete Player Camp

PLAN FOR YOUR ATHLETE NOW AND #KEEPITKICKING ALL SUMMER LONG!

VISIT RUSHUNIONSOCCEER.ORG AND FILTER BY LOCATION

SCCS

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There should always be a focus on what team sports bring to the development of our children. Friendships will outlast a sport, and connection to a team or group can provide a powerful and much needed support system for our children. Teams create bonds that are lifelong and in the teenage years, those teams can help our children get through obstacles that we, as adults, didn't face at the same age.

Team social events and watching our children enjoy their teammates off the field will prove to be just as important as the game that happens on their field.

I was recently reading an article by the Changing the Game Project that highlighted the compromise between development and exposure... and let's be candid, if you are getting exposure but lacking on the player development aspect, players will never reach their potential and be able to advantage of the college or pro scouts who may be watching them.

When looking for a community program to get involved with, families should inquire about the real reasons certain programs are offered. Do they offer programming or support that goes beyond soccer training? An investment in Mental Health? Or College applications? Or Parent education? At Rush Union (and some others), we are proud to keep programming close to home, bring travel expenses to a minimum and allow families to either put that time and resources into additional training opportunities or invest it back into family time. As a parent, are you asking the right questions when looking for the right fit?

After all, youth sports are supposed to be an extension of our community and focus on the development of our children, that is the point!

RU ready to come check us out? Rush Union has programs close to home for all ages and skill levels. For more information, please visit our website www.rushunionsoccer.org



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Rush Fest in Port St Lucie was an amazing experience for our B2011 group, and a big success!

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**UPCOMING GRASSROOTS
COACHING COURSES**

9 V 9 BLENDED COACHING COURSE - DUNWOODY

- August 13, 2023 - 5pm-7pm Virtual
- August 15, 2023 - 5:45pm-7:30pm in person at Brook Run

**4770 N Peachtree Rd.
Dunwoody, GA 30338-5813**

7 V 7 BLENDED COACHING COURSE - DUNWOODY

- September 17, 2023 - 5pm-7pm Virtual
- September 19, 2023 - 5:45pm-7:30pm in person at Brook Run

**4770 N Peachtree Rd.
Dunwoody, GA 30338-5813**

11 V 11 BLENDED COACHING COURSE - ALPHARETTA

- August 13, 2023 - 7pm-9pm Virtual
- August 14, 2023 - 6:30pm-8:30pm in person at Stars

**14295 Birmingham Hwy
Alpharetta, GA 30004**

11 V 11 BLENDED COACHING COURSE - DUNWOODY

- September 17, 2023 - 7pm-9pm Virtual
- September 19, 2023 - 7:30pm-9:45pm in person at Brook Run

**4770 N Peachtree Rd.
Dunwoody, GA 30338-5813**

Register at: U.S. Soccer Learning Center (ussoccer.com)

2023 GRASSROOTS COACHING COURSES

Rush Union is always looking for ways to better education our coaches, players, parents and referees.. there are just some of the initiatives we have put into action...



Mental Health

Workshops & Sessions
A service for RSD+

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Rush Union and The Collective continue to work together to create a strategic plan for Rush Union as we strive to be the best organization we can be!



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Join us in November for our Rush Cup!



As many of you know, Boris Fridman “Coach Boki” passed away in April. Coach Boki was a member of our coaching staff and administrative staff for over 5 years. To honor his memory, we have worked with his family to set up a 529 Education Plan for his daughter, Evelyn. The account was setup through the Georgia Path2 College 529 plan and will help to provide a tax-advantaged program for the family to save for future education expenses.

The program provides an easy way for family and friends to make contributions to the plan through Ugift. If you're considering a gift for Evelyn in the future, we would suggest you consider using Ugift®. It's a free-to-use service that makes it easy to contribute to the 529 plan account at any time.

There are no fees with Ugift; your entire gift will go to Evelyn's 529 account. You can make a secure gift contribution any time you'd like. All you need is the following Ugift code -

Evelyn's Ugift code: 379-W15

To make a gift contribution using Ugift:

1. Go to Ugift529.com
2. Enter the Ugift code: 379-W15
3. Enter your name and the amount of your gift
4. Make your gift via electronic funds transfer or check

Thank you for your support of the Fridman family.

Boris Fridman

JUNE 4, 1990 – APRIL 19, 2023

