



Welcome! Rush Union Update

We hope you are enjoying your summer so far. It has been a busy time at Rush Union with the conclusion of the Spring Season, Fall 2022 Tryouts, and multiple summer programs beginning.

First, we would like to congratulate our teams on their Spring post season tournament successes. We had numerous teams competing in and making the finals in multiple tournaments including the AFU Elite Academy Cup, AFU Elite Select Cup, Atlanta Peach Classic, GSA Revolution Cup, and the NTH Adidas Select Cup. Many of the teams are highlighted in this newsletter below. Great job to everyone for finishing out the spring season so strongly and representing the organization well!

Our Fall 2022 Tryouts were held in late May and early June. We had record numbers attending across our locations, especially in the younger age groups. We are very excited about the future of our competitive programs. Due to the growth of the program, we are in the process of hiring additional professional coaches to make sure we are managing the growth appropriately. If you missed tryouts but are still interested in the program, please reach out to us directly.

We have a wide variety of summer programs, many of which are underway already. Starting in June we have Recreational Camps, Summer Technical Training, a 7v7 league, and our SCCL Summer League teams all beginning. We still have room in many upcoming programs that will continue to be offered all summer long. Please visit our website www.rushunionsoccer.org for details on the programs in your specific location or if you have any questions about any of our programs contact us directly.

Rush National's Rush Fest is held annually in mid-July for U12, rising U13 competitive players, and is being held in Denver, Colorado this year. Rush Union will be well represented with 2 teams and 4 coaches in attendance. Our 2010 Boys and Girls are attending to represent Rush Union where they will play against other Rush teams from around the country. This year's event has a record number of teams already registered, and we are looking forward to the experience this event will bring to our players and coaches. For more information on Rush Fest please visit this link: <https://rushsoccer.com/rush-fest/>

We are very excited to be invited to walk in the Dunwoody 4th of July parade again this year. We had many families, coaches, and players take part last year. Rush Union Soccer is a large part of the communities we serve and participating in these events is both fun, and an example of our community spirit. If you are interested in joining us this July 4th please visit this link to sign up: <https://m.signupgenius.com/#/showSignUp/30e084eacaa2ca0fa7-dunwoody1>

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Our Fall 2022 Recreational registration is open at both of our locations, and we are proud to add more parent and coaching education opportunities to our programs. All our Recreational Programs will have parent orientation meetings, parent education webinars, and comprehensive coaching education available at no additional cost to our membership. Rush National is releasing a Rush Way Coaching education course aimed at providing additional training to our Recreational Coaches. The Course will be available online this summer. I have already taken the course in Beta form, and it is well put together and will be extremely beneficial to new and returning Recreational Coaches. Look for more information as we start our fall programs.

The Referee Program continues to be a big focus for our organization. Our Jr Referee Program is supplementing our referee pool with over 50 graduates. The addition of the Jr Referees now enables us to successfully fill most games with competent referees. We are continuing to invest in our Jr Referee program, and I have been part of a larger Statewide program which will provide additional funding for referee development and mentorship as we go into the Fall 2022-Spring 2023 seasons. As part of an initiative with Georgia Soccer, and my role on the Board of Directors for our State Association I am very excited to be part of growing and educating our referees.

We conducted a membership survey in April, and the staff and I have been working diligently to formalize plans for improvement in a variety of areas. We will be sharing more specific information later this summer as we prepare for the fall season. However, one such area that will see the organization making improvements will be in our facilities. Pleasantdale Park is scheduled for a second community input meeting in late June, and our aim is to continue to push the county along with long term plans for a full renovation of the park. Our long-term lease of the Milton facility was extended this spring and we are investigating initiatives to improve the fields, building and surrounding areas. We will need community support for our plans, and we will update everyone on ways you can get involved to help Rush Union, and our facilities.

We had several players honored over the last month. We would like to recognize Ellie Driskell and Josh Blahnik for being selected for the "All Rush Team 2022." Both Josh and Ellie have been long time Rush Union members and are part of our 2022 Graduating class. The All Rush Team is a selection of players who exhibit the core values of Rush Soccer. Players from all around the country were nominated for the award. Special congratulations to Ellie and Josh. We are excited to watch you both continue to have success on and off the field.

A new program that Rush National has implemented this year is the CAP Leadership Award. The program allows each Rush organization to select two players each year to receive \$1000 scholarships towards college tuition in the future. The scholarship is renewable each year for the recipients of the award. This year we would like to congratulate Giuliana Meese and Austin St. Amour. Both Giuliana and Austin have proven themselves to be leaders on their respective teams, good role models to younger players, and we are thrilled to be able to present them with this award. Congratulations again to both Austin and Giuliana.

Rush has a large reach across the country, and this was shown in a small but impactful way in early June. Cole Sutton, a member of our 2010B Rush team, traveled with his family to Hawaii to visit family and enjoy a vacation. During the trip Cole was able to train with Hawaii Rush! No other club in the country has a network that can provide this type of opportunity to players so easily. We hope Cole enjoyed his

Summer 2022

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experience with Hawaii Rush. If you or your family are traveling and want a similar experience, please reach out to us so we can connect you with a Rush Club in the area you may be visiting.

Finally, I was featured in the Milton Neighbor in their June issue. On the theme of feedback, the article addresses when and how appropriate feedback should be given. I hope you enjoy the article, and that our membership will continue to give our organization feedback.

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 on the field very soon.

R|U Ready?



Neil McNab Jr.
CEO Rush Union



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Rush Union

[www.Facebook.com/rushunionsoccer](https://www.facebook.com/rushunionsoccer)

Instagram: @RushUnion

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Congratulations to our all our Rush Union teams on their end of season success!

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EXPERT CONTRIBUTOR

The Importance of Feedback in a Team Sport!



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

We

Soccer is an invasion game. To score, you must invade the opponent's territory and score in their goal, which also means the ball has gotten past a lot of players—sometimes 3, sometimes 6, sometimes 10. And don't forget about getting it past the keeper, too. Players in soccer can move to any part of the field during attacking or defending play and although we see some individual moments of brilliance that lead to scoring or defending a goal, for the most part, soccer is won or lost by the team—everyone on the team.

So... why do we praise the striker for scoring a goal, or condemn the goalkeeper for letting one in as if they were alone on the field? The scoreboard shows the team score, not the individual score or save. It's good to call out a play and give a player some love, but let's remember, it's still a team sport, moved by a group of players. I've seen keepers come off the field upset that they "lost the game" for their team. Wait... what? Goals scored that involved multiple players being beaten by the opponents in any number of strategic or athletic ways before finally getting the ball past the last line of defense. It makes me think that perhaps we are directing feedback in the wrong way, at the wrong time.

When something goes "wrong" on the pitch, you often hear the blame game start. The referees get blamed for bad calls (truly bad calls are pretty rare); coaches take blame for play calls or positioning that led to poor performance; Mother Nature gets blamed for making the pitch wet or slippery. C'mon. We get to make a choice about how we react to wins and losses in these scenarios. After all, we're talking about youth sports. In hindsight,



it's easy to see that blaming weather, referees, field conditions, or even individuals for what goes on in a team game, a team result, a team performance is not how we should be remembered!

When feedback is given with knee-jerk reactions and emotions, it is very hard to be received by the person to whom you are directing. For example, yelling at a player "what were you thinking?" (chances are good that they weren't thinking of ways to sabotage the W), "why did you let that player past you?"; or at a referee? "Come on ref, are you blind?!" is not going to inspire better performance. One play or player, or ref call, doesn't make the game successful. The team chemistry and combined efforts result in wins... and losses. There's no hero or zero. Someone's got to win and someone's got to lose, but placing blame on a single player or circumstance is just silly.

If you are part of a good sports organization, they have a team that works together to help provide a fun and nurturing environment for our children to play sports. One that rewards individual effort but still focuses on the importance of teamwork

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Summer options at all locations · Adult Leagues · Summer SCCL League · Rec Programming | Summer Training Options, Partnerships with Playmaker, Atlanta United, and College ID

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to drive success. One that can develop strategy and ball movement so that every player on the field feels relevant and needed. And one that can get excited about a bicycle kick goal but recognize that the team helped put the striker in a position for the glory shot. And conversely, when a keeper allows a goal, recognizes that it had to go through 10 other players before it got past the goalie.

Let's think about how we are giving feedback to our players, parents, coaches, and organization. If we want positive change, that feedback must be given at the right time, without emotions, and in a way that the individual or group can accept it. After all, soccer is a team sport, and you do not have to be a player to be part of the team. We are all on the team!

We want your feedback at Rush Union Soccer, RU you ready to join our team?
Please check all our programs on our website www.rushunionsoccer.org

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**FALL RECREATIONAL
REGISTRATION IS OPEN!**

MILTON

Stars Soccer Complex
Ages U4-U19
Reg closes Aug. 7
Practice Aug. 22
Games start Sept. 10

DUNWOODY

Brook Run Park
Ages U4-U14
Reg closes Aug. 7
Practice Aug. 29
Games start Sept. 10

Volunteer
TO BE A COACH!

Registration is open for our fall recreational programs. We are excited about the many great ways the program continues to grow and improve.

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Congratulations to our all our Rush Union teams on their end of season success!

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Our 2010 Boys and Girls will represent Rush Union at Rush Fest 2022. Good luck to everyone who is attending the event.

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SELECTED BY RUSH UNION
FOR DEMONSTRATING THE
RUSH CORE VALUES AND
BEING A LEADER IN YOUR
CLUB!

Congratulations **CAP LEADERSHIP AWARDS**

**AUSTIN
ST. AMOUR**



**GUILIANA
MEESE**

COLLEGE **A**DVISORY **P**ROGRAM

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COLE SUTTON
2010 RUSH TEAM



OUR
SOCCER
FAMILY IS

Everywhere!