



SSA SAVANNAH UNITED

ACADEMY HANDBOOK



3rd Edition
June 2016



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**“SUCCESS IS NO ACCIDENT. IT IS
HARD WORK, PERSISTENCE,
LEARNING, STUDYING,
SACRIFICE AND MOST OF ALL,
LOVE OF WHAT YOU ARE DOING
OR LEARNING TO DO.”**

Pelé

MISSION & VISION

CLUB MISSION STATEMENT

SSA Savannah United will promote the growth of youth soccer in Savannah, GA as well as the surrounding communities of Wilmington Island, Tybee Island, Pooler, Bloomingdale, Richmond Hill, Effingham County, Beaufort and Hilton Head by providing high quality soccer programs, for players of all ages and ability levels. Savannah United will strive to develop each and every participant's soccer skills, character, and self-esteem to his or her fullest potential in a safe, enjoyable, competitive atmosphere.

ACADEMY VISION STATEMENT

The Academy Program strives to:

- Provide quality soccer instruction.
- Develop well rounded, skillful, intelligent and competitive soccer players.
- Push every player to progress as far as they can on our Player Development Pathway.
- Reinforce non-soccer specific skills such as: teamwork, communication, leadership, time management, responsibility, discipline and respect.
- Create a style of soccer for all of our teams that enhances possession of the ball through all departments of the field at a degree which is highest for all levels of play.
- Create a positive and nurturing environment.
- Sustain and enhance an SSA Savannah United club culture that involves interaction between all members.
- Ensure staff work together with professionalism and enthusiasm.
- Provide staff with continual coaching education and development opportunities to keep their soccer knowledge and skills current.
- Educate parents on our club and program philosophy.

HISTORY

CLUB HISTORY

Over the Spring of 2013, the respective staffs of Savannah Celtic FC and Coastal Georgia Soccer Association held discussions on how they could potentially join forces for the betterment of youth soccer in Savannah. As a result, the area's newest, largest and most competitive youth soccer club was created, SSA SAVANNAH UNITED! The new club will have a partnership with Chelsea FC, recent UEFA Champions League & UEFA Europa League Champions, as the club's official development partner. This aids the club's coaching curriculum and training programs, providing overall technical development and playing opportunities that are unattainable in many other youth soccer organizations across the country. Savannah United is partnered with Savannah Soccer (the adult league) to offer a comprehensive soccer experience for players from 30 months on into adulthood. Your entire family can join UNITED and become part of the club!!

NOTABLE ACADEMY GRADUATES

SSA Savannah United has a Tradition of Elite Player Development. Some exceptional players have been developed through our Academy Program, including a number of standouts listed below:

Girls

Morgan Brian (Houston Dash / US Women's National Team)
Sh'nia Gordon (ECNL / West Virginia Mountaineers)
Sha'Nya Stephens (ECNL)
Grace Kiser (ECNL)
Sarah Duckworth (ECNL)
Erin O'Hearn (ECNL)
Jaelyn Gadson (ECNL)

Boys

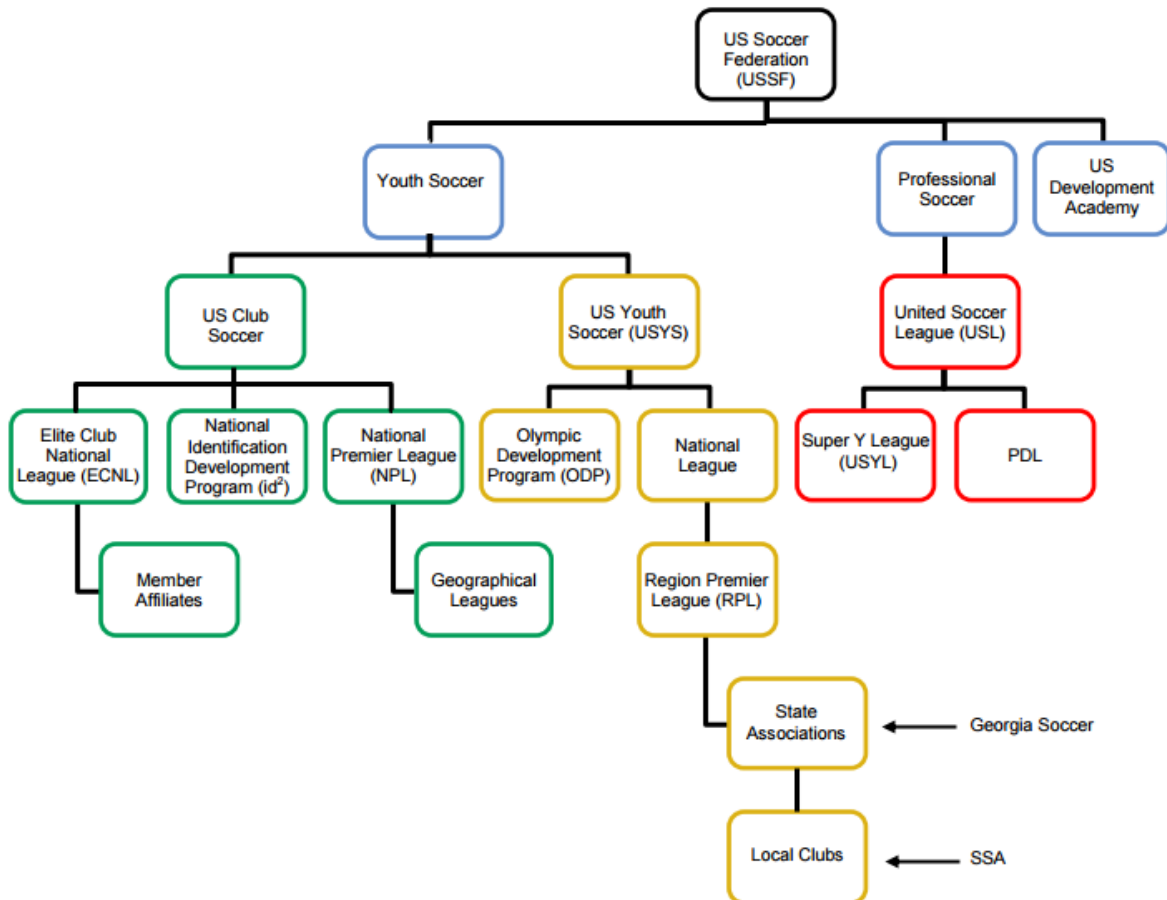
Indiana Vassilev (US Dev Academy / U14 Boys US National Team)
Nico Rittmeyer (US Dev Academy / UNC Tar Heels)
Jack Rittmeyer (US Dev Academy)
Paolo Alcocer (US Dev Academy / U15 Boys Bolivian National Team)
Ben Jones (US Dev Academy)
Winter Jones (US Dev Academy)
Erik Ulloa (US Dev Academy)
Jesus Ulloa (US Dev Academy)

ORGANIZATION

CLUB AFFILIATION

SSA Savannah United is a Southern Soccer Academy Club, the largest youth soccer club in Georgia. As one of the largest representatives of this renowned organization, SSA Savannah United's players will have access to teams competing at an ELITE level Regionally, as well as Nationally. Southern Soccer Academy has sent dozens of players to play NCAA Division 1 soccer, and many more have taken their talents to other NCAA Divisions, NAIA, as well as NCCAA. Currently there are several alumni who are now playing professionally both domestically and overseas.

YOUTH SOCCER STRUCTURE



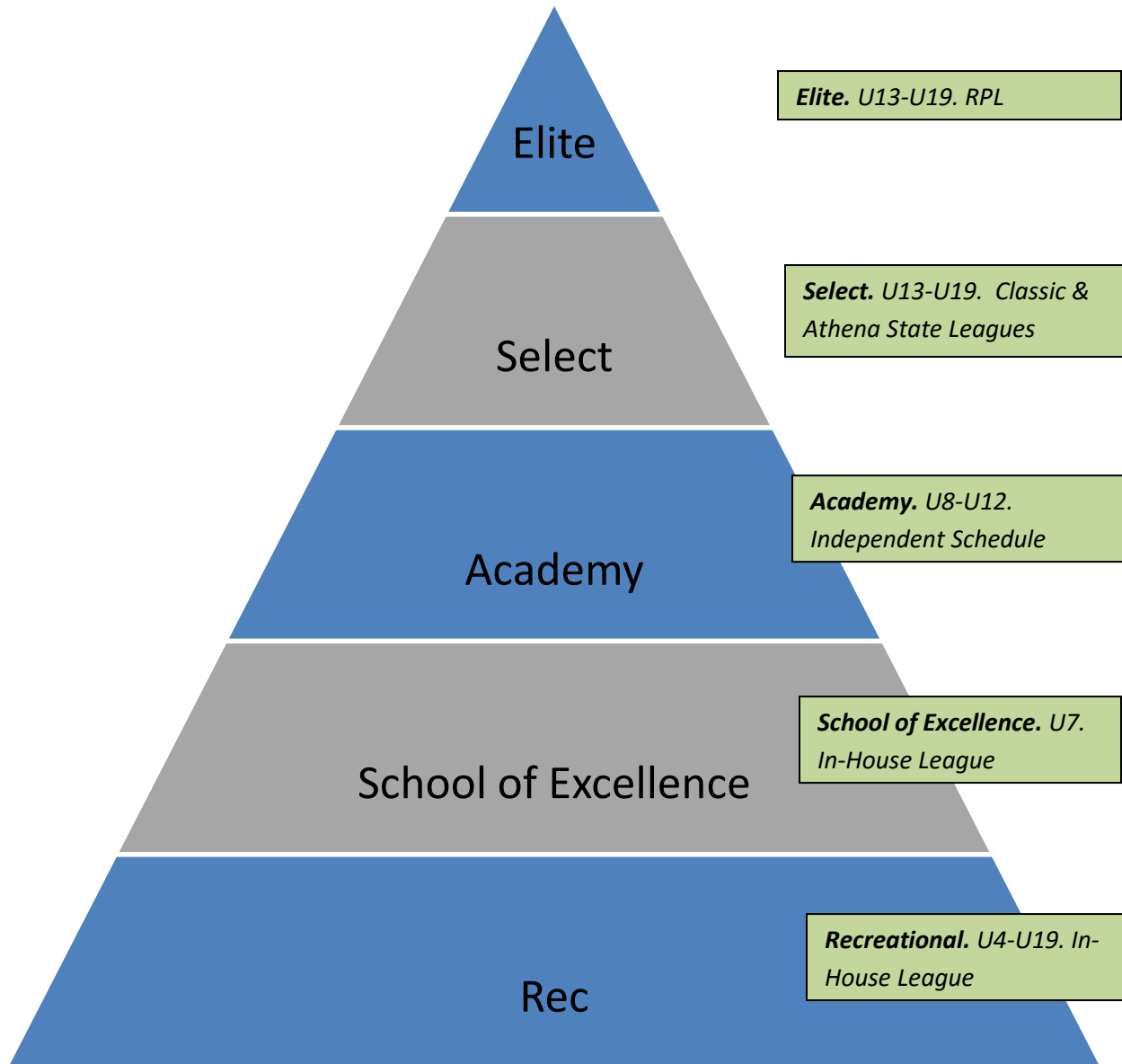
ORGANIZATION

REGIONS WITHIN US YOUTH SOCCER



ORGANIZATION

SAVUNITED DEVELOPMENT PYRAMID



ACADEMY PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Keith Gunn

Technical Director
Academy Program Director
k.gunn@savannahunited.com



Coaching Credentials:

- * BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching & Development
- * NSCAA Premier Diploma
- * NSCAA Director of Coaching Diploma
- * NSCAA Goalkeeper Level 2
- * USSF 'D' License
- * Scottish FA Level 3
- * Head Coach, District Training Center 'DTC' (2010 - present)
- * Staff Coach, PDP (US Club Soccer)
- * Georgia Soccer Coach Education Staff
- * Georgia Southern University Camp Coaching Staff 2012
- * University of Notre Dame Camp Coaching Staff 2013
- * University of Michigan Camp Coaching Staff 2014

Keith lived in the North East of Scotland for 18 years, but it was during a 6 year spell with his parents in Africa as a young boy where his passion for the game was ignited. Upon return to Scotland, he was selected for his local select team and was 1 of only 3 players who graduated out of the club's youth program and into the Senior Men's team, a semi-professional squad which participated in the Scottish Juniors League. During that time, Keith was selected to play in a regional squad which competed against youth academies from the Scottish Premier League. After a few successful years in the Juniors, he continued to play in various Scottish Amateur Leagues before leaving for American soil.

Keith has a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Sports Coaching & Development obtained from the University of Abertay, based in Dundee, Scotland. During that time, he was hired as a community coach for Dundee United's Junior Academy Program, a Scottish Premier League side. Shortly after graduation he decided to relocate to the United States in the pursuit of a full time coaching career. After a brief spell with Coastal Georgia Soccer Association, Keith decided to introduce another youth soccer club to the area and Savannah Celtic F.C. was born in the summer of 2006. He was a co-founder and helped grow Celtic from 150 players in its inaugural season, to over 1000 players and Savannah's largest youth soccer club in just 6 years. In the Spring of 2013, discussions took place between Celtic and CGSA about working together, as one club, for the betterment of Savannah soccer.

In addition to club duties, Keith is part of the Georgia Soccer coach education staff and runs USSF license courses for local area coaches. He is the head coach for the District Training Center in Richmond Hill and the Girls DTC All Star team that participate in Region Camp over the summer. Under 'US Club Soccer', Keith has been a staff member of the Player Development Program or 'PDP', which brings together some of the best young talent from South Carolina, Georgia and Florida 4 times a year. He is involved in local area camps as well as out of town camps including past assignments at Georgia Southern University, University of Notre Dame and University of Michigan.

TEAM INFORMATION

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Each team will comprise of a Head Coach, an Assistant Coach (in most cases) and a Team Manager. From time to time, we will have professional guest coaches work with the teams.

TEAM MANAGERS

Every team ***must*** have a team manager. The team manager is an essential part of the SAVUTD infrastructure. All of the team administration is handled by the manager including: player registration, additional fee collection, uniform coordination, tournament applications and registration. The team manager must delegate specific duties to parents on the team. A team manager must be very organized, have strong communication skills and be personable. If a team manager is not already in place from a past season, the club will recruit someone. If you are interested in helping out with your son or daughter's team in this capacity, please contact David Shuman, the Academy Program administrator.

PLAYER SELECTION

To be eligible for the Academy program, all players must attend the official tryouts or arrange for another evaluation process to be considered. No tryout process is perfect. The club does the best it can and tries to have as many coaches evaluate the players as possible. Coaches evaluate multiple age groups/teams so there is more than one opinion given for every player. We ask the evaluators to be explicit in detail when making their notes, which helps with the decision making process. All team placements are made by the Academy Program Director with the help of the evaluators when needed. It is rare that a team placement will change after the results are posted, however we understand it is possible for a player to be overlooked from time to time. Because of this, we continue to evaluate a player's progress throughout the season. By registering with the club and for the program, you are entrusting us with your child's soccer development as soccer experts and therefore we expect your full support and cooperation in any decision made in this regard.

COMMITMENT TO THE CLUB

The soccer year runs August 1st through July 31st. Following a successful tryout, if a player registers in the Academy Program for Fall 2016, they are committed to the club until the completion of the Spring 2017 season. We expect all players to honor their commitment. In the rare occurrence that a player wishes to join another Georgia Soccer Member Affiliate during the year in which they are registered with SAVUTD, the club is well within its rights to deny this request. The club is not obligated to grant a transfer to any player through Georgia Soccer Rules & Regulations. We realize there may be mitigating circumstances that lead to such a request. So long as all fees owed to the club are paid in full, we will take a request into consideration. For example, if a player is participating in the Fall season and requests a transfer before the start of the following Spring season, the Spring training fees must also be paid less tournament and travel expenses in order to be considered.

RULES & POLICY

PLACEMENT ON AN OLDER TEAM

SAVUTD has a very simple policy towards being permanently rostered on an older team. A player may only be considered if that player is deemed capable when considering each of the 5 game attributes: technical, tactical, physical, psychological and social. The player must also be considered as a 'top' player for the team they are looking to play up with. There will be exceptions, of course, from time to time. We want to avoid putting players into an environment which is too challenging and sees their playing time diminish. All decisions on this matter are made by the Club Director and Academy Program Director and that decision is final.

TEAM CREATION

SAVUTD will form the most competitive teams possible in each age group. Because of this, there is no guarantee that a returning player will automatically make the team and by the same token, should a player show disdain or laziness during the course of the season, that player may be moved from the team (without financial refund) and be replaced by another player. SAVUTD will likely have a large pool of players in every age group. Therefore, we will create additional 'developmental' teams if the players meet the criteria to play at the Academy level. The opportunity for players to move up or down within teams permanently is possible, however changes like this are rare during the course of a season. This creates a highly competitive environment for the players in the program. Savannah will be the only location offering 'academy' and 'select' teams at this time.

PLAYER MOVEMENT

From time to time, throughout the Fall and Spring seasons, Academy Players will be moved onto different team rosters for the benefit of their soccer development. Not all players will be moved. Some players may only be moved once. Other players will be moved multiple times. Player movement will generally only take place during festivals or friendlies in less results oriented environments. For tournaments and the bigger festival events, we will look to keep the teams in their original form, with the exception of 'guest players' in the event of absences / injuries, especially if the roster is short of players.

Your child may be moved for a number of reasons.

- * *Will allow the player to gain more playing time*
- * *Will give the player a better chance to play in new positions*
- * *Will allow the player to have a greater influence in the games*
- * *Will test the player's ability in a higher pressure environment*
- * *Will showcase the player's ability in a lower pressure environment*
- * *Will allow the player to build their confidence*

Player movement decisions are made by the Academy Director with the help of feedback from each player's team coach. These decisions are final.

TRYOUTS

Academy tryouts are held once per year following the Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday night following Memorial Day. Players must attempt to attend all 3 nights if they wish to be considered for the program.

TRYOUT PROCESS

The tryout cost is \$35 per player. Returning players must also pay this fee to be eligible. This fee goes towards a tryout t-shirt, tryout number, coaching fee and a club administration fee. If a player cannot attend any of the tryout nights they must attend one of the SAVUTD summer elite camps or arrange alternate means of evaluation with the Academy Director.

TRYOUT RESULTS

Tryout and Evaluation results will be posted approximately 7 days following the tryouts. The results will be posted on the club's website www.savannahunited.com

ROSTER SIZE

U8 JR Academy: 5v5 = 7 players minimum / 10 players maximum

U9: 7v7 = 9 players minimum / 14 players maximum

U10: 7v7 = 9 players minimum / 14 players maximum

U11: 9v9 = 11 players minimum / 16 players maximum

U12: 9v9 = 11 players minimum / 16 players maximum

U13+: 11v11 = 14 players minimum / 18 players maximum

PRACTICES

Academy teams U8 - U12 have 2 x 90 minute mandatory practice sessions per week, but we encourage the players attend a third session in the form of 'Open Training'. In Savannah, the mandatory sessions usually take place on Monday & Thursday or Tuesday & Thursday at the Jennifer Ross Soccer Complex (7200 Sallie Mood Drive, Savannah, GA 31404).

Coaches and team managers take attendance records every week and failure to attend consistently will reduce a player's playing time.

PUNCTUALITY

The coaching staff would like all the players to be at practice and games on time, however we understand that on occasion, unforeseen circumstances may lead to parents running late. The coach will designate what time to arrive for games, however we recommend no later than 40 minutes prior to kick off (regardless of game format) to ensure ample warm up and preparation time. We expect the players to be picked up promptly once practices or games are over.

DROP OFF & PICK UP

It is highly recommended that parents escort their child/ren to and from the field for practices and games for the purpose of their safety. However, parents are not expected to have to stay at the fields during the entire course of a practice or game as long as they communicate this to the team manager and coaching staff. Coaches will not be held responsible for the players' safety before practice officially starts and following practice officially ending. However, coaches will not allow players to leave a practice or game until a parent or guardian is present. We take the safety of the players very seriously.

GUEST PLAYING

As highlighted in the 'Player Movement' segment of this Handbook, many players will be given the opportunity to guest player with other teams. These opportunities could be offered due to a number of reasons and will be decided on by the Academy Director. The Director's decisions are final.

PRE-ELITE TRAINING

Every Fall & Spring season, SAVUTD will offer Pre-Elite Training, held once per week on Wednesday nights. Pre-Elite Training is invitational. The program will function in a similar fashion to the State run DTC program, where the players are split into groups based on ability. The staff will be Nationally Licensed and the curriculum will focus primarily on technique, skill & general ball comfort.

OPEN TRAINING POLICY

As part of their membership, SAVUTD Academy players also have the opportunity to supplement their training sessions with their assigned teams, by training with other Academy teams within the club using our open training policy. Players may train up or down 1 year based on their age group, not their assigned team's age group. Here are some reasons why a player may want to attend another team's session/s:

- * *They missed their own team's session*
- * *They want to develop at a faster rate*
- * *They want to train at a higher level*
- * *They want to be a mentor to a younger player*

The SAVUTD Academy open training policy has the following guidelines:

1) The player/parent MUST contact the **coach** PRIOR to each session that they want to attend. No player can simply show up to another team's practice. If you are not sure who to contact please send an email to the Academy Director k.gunn@savannahunited.com or the Club Director g.wright@savannahunited.com. This communication is necessary to verify that:

- * *The session is appropriate for the player's age and ability*
- * *The session time / date has not changed*
- * *The session is not completely team specific (i.e. team tactics, set plays etc.)*
- * *The coach has room in the session and does not have any concerns with the player attending.*

The Club Director and Academy Program Director have the final word on whether a player may attend another team's session or not and you should be prepared for situations when it will not be permitted.

2) When attending a session as a guest, the player is expected to:

- * Continue and consistently attend their own assigned team's training sessions
- * Be disciplined and not distract from the goals of the training session
- * Be able to effectively participate and contribute to the session - if a session keeps breaking down because of a guest player, then the player may be asked to try another team's session.

PRIVATE TRAINING POLICY

If you are interested in receiving private or small group training from one of our qualified staff coaches, please contact the Technical/Academy Director, Keith Gunn:

k.gunn@savannahunited.com

GAMES

There are 4 types of game formats a SAVUTD Academy player will take part in over the course of a season. Some are low pressure and some are high pressure environments. We believe that a mixture of game formats provides the best possible development potential. If players are exposed to high pressure environments, they will learn how to manage and succeed under stress, anxiety and failure at a younger age. In turn, this will help them with future sporting ventures as they get older, as well as develop important life skills for use in the workplace, social situations etc. Each of the 4 game formats are listed below.

In-House Events: The SAVUTD Academy Program exposes players to a number of different styles of soccer such as Beach Soccer, 3v3, 4 goals and Futsal where possible. There are usually 2 or 3 in-house events scheduled per season and all the players in the program attend and play together, which helps build camaraderie between the players and teams.

Friendlies: Friendly games are essentially 'unofficial' matches used as preparation for a bigger game or event coming up or simply for developmental purposes. The result of the game is not important. The performance of the team and the individual players is the main focus during a friendly. If a friendly game is listed on the schedule it will usually only involve playing a single game against local competition. Friendlies exist to provide players with a low pressure playing environment in the hope that players will take more risks, utilize the things they have learned in training and develop further in the process.

Festivals: Festivals are where a team will play multiple friendly games, usually 2 in a day. These games will likely be a little more competitive, but team and individual player performances are still the main focus. SAVUTD will host festivals in Savannah and we also travel to a few during the course of a season. Most common destinations are Macon, Jekyll Island, Richmond Hill, Augusta, Columbia, Charleston & Jacksonville.

Tournaments: A tournament is the most competitive game format an Academy player will face during the season. Results are equally as important as team and individual player performance. Coaches are encouraged to monitor how the players handle the pressure and anxiety that come with a highly competitive atmosphere.

TOURNAMENTS

SAVUTD Academy teams participate in at least 3 soccer tournaments per season. 2 of these are usually local and 1 of these is based out of town. A 4th or 5th tournament will be offered as optional. The Academy Director will work closely with the head coaches to ensure that all teams are placed in tournaments appropriate to their playing level. For older teams we may be more selective to ensure they attend only reputable events, such as showcase tournaments for those who have ambitions of playing at college and wish to be seen. Most academy teams U9 - U12 will attend the same tournaments because the events we choose can often accommodate the needs of each age group and it helps us with organization and logistics. It is also a great deal of fun and helps us to travel in force and put our great club and great City on the map!

When teams travel to tournaments, every member, whether it be the parents, players or coaches are representing the Savannah United Academy program, the Savannah United organization and the City of Savannah. We expect everyone to be on their best behavior. We understand it is a very exciting atmosphere for the players and at times they can be distracted and lose sight of the main purpose for traveling. We have some tournament policies in place as well as player expectations that will help them focus on the event so they give their best performances. They are as follows:

FAILURE TO ATTEND

By signing up for The Savannah United Academy Program you are making a commitment to the program and the team your child is placed on. One of those commitments is attendance to all practices and games. Absence by just one player affects every player and therefore affects the team greatly. If a family cannot attend an out of town festival or tournament they must still pay their portion of the team fees.

PLAYER CURFEW

We highly recommend academy players U9 - U12 are in their hotel rooms with lights out by 10pm each night before a day of tournament games. For select players U13+, we recommend no later than 11pm. It is essential players get 8+ hours of quality sleep so they can perform at their highest level the following day.

NUTRITION

Tournaments take a heavy toll on the player's bodies. They are sometimes expected to play 4 games in a weekend and the intensity levels of games are always high. For this reason, it is crucial players eat and drink appropriately. We recommend staying away from fast food restaurants and greasy/fatty foods. Foods high in carbohydrates (primary fuel used by exercising muscle), such as pasta are important to maintain exercise and performance. When considering drinks, it is extremely important that players are hydrated before a soccer game and try to replenish fluids lost through competition. Soda is not an appropriate drink for sports performance. A balance of water and drinks containing electrolytes such as Gatorade/Powerade are the best choices to delay the onset of fatigue.

PLAYER ARRIVAL

Responsibility and time management are some of the other lessons we teach the players in the program. Players should look to arrive at the field no less than 30 minutes prior to kick off. This allows the coach to prepare the team appropriately, making sure they are warmed up and focused. Some coaches may ask players arrive earlier than 30 minutes prior to kick off depending on a team's age and discipline. The consequence for failing to arrive at the

field within the timeframe set by the coach may lead to losing the chance to start the game and a reduction in playing time. This decision will be made at the coaches discretion. We understand that sometimes unforeseen circumstances can lead to parents being late.

FUNDRAISING

If you are interested in fundraising for your team please contact Allison Vlassis
allisonvlassis@gmail.com

PLAYING TIME

Playing time will be determined by a player's work ethic (during practices and games), attendance at practice, timeliness, general progress, attitude and ability. The coach will make this determination. Please understand there may be times where you may not understand or agree with a coach's decisions, but you have entrusted your coach as a soccer expert with these matters. Playing time will also be affected by the conduct of the parents. If parents break any part of the code of conduct, the coach may be forced to pull out that parent's child until the matter is resolved.

GUEST PLAYING

Guest players are simply players from another team or club that are brought onto a team's roster temporarily for a single game or tournament weekend. They are never permanently on the team's roster. Guest players help if a team is short of players or if they need someone with a high ability level to compete against stronger opposition. Guest players will usually always be SAVUTD players helping another SAVUTD team. It is rare that we will ask a non-SAVUTD player to guest play and it is rare that we will allow an SAVUTD player to guest play for a non-SAVUTD team. However, through our affiliation with Southern Soccer Academy, opportunities may become available for SAVUTD players to guest play with their high level teams. SAVUTD players are expected to be fully committed to their team and their schedule before anything else.

SKILLS TESTING

Skills testing will be conducted at the early and latter stages of each season for every academy player. They will be held during normal practice days and times. The tests are simple and help to track each player's progress in different aspects of the game. In addition, they will motivate players to try and reach a higher skill level. The activities have been designed so that the players can easily set them up and practice on their own. Standings will be posted on our website so parents and players can review the scores.

PLAYER OF THE MONTH

Every season, we will give out a player of the month award. Coaches select one player from their team each month who has exhibited excellent work ethic, skill on the ball, sportsmanship etc. One player be drawn at random from all of the nominations and the winner will receive a prize and certificate as well as a mention in our monthly newsletter.

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Parents should never approach the coach during a practice or a game. This is extremely disrespectful to the coach and takes his/her focus away from the players. It is acceptable to approach the coach following a practice or game, but they may not wish to discuss team matters at that time. A more appropriate method of communication is to call or email away from the field.

Communication policy (outside of practice and games) is as follows.

Parent - Coach - Academy Director - Club Director

OR

Parent - Team Manager - Academy Director - Club Director

The coach and/or team manager will try to resolve any issues, but if the issue cannot be resolved then parents are encouraged to contact the Academy Director directly.

24 HOUR RULE

Soccer is a game of emotions! Parents, Coaches and Players may not always be in the best frame of mind following a practice session or a game. This is why Savannah United is adopting a '24 hour' rule. Quite simply, if you have an issue with the team / coach in regards to something that happened at a practice or game i.e. playing time, please wait 24 hours to address the matter with the coach. This will ensure both parties can have a civil discussion about the issue at hand. It is unlikely that coaches will respond prior to a 24 hour period.

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

We intend to provide an environment in which players, parents and coaches are proud to be associated with our organization. We believe in open communication and try to ensure that everyone has fun, works hard and enjoys each season. Our objective is to provide our players and parents with an extremely positive experience while building strong soccer players and playing competitive soccer. Each season we will strive to improve each and every player to their fullest potential and provide them with the tools to reach as far as they can on our player development pathway, which has already proved to be very successful.

PLAYER EXPECTATIONS

The environment for Savannah United Academy players will be challenging, motivating and fun. It will require a serious commitment from them and parents must be prepared to support their child's commitment. Our goal is to prepare our players for the future, both on and off the field. We teach them the fundamentals of soccer such as ball control, passing, receiving, shooting etc. These skills are stressed to the players over and over again because they are critical for success in all levels of play. We also reinforce non-soccer specific skills such as communication, teamwork, time management, responsibility, leadership, discipline and respect. Our goal is to grow our players both as individuals as well as soccer players.

We want our players to not only make a commitment to the program, but to the game of soccer as a

whole. Players should work on their game as much as possible in their spare time. No soccer player has made it to the highest level by simply showing up to soccer practice twice a week! Players who work on their game in their own time develop at a much faster rate. It is very important that our players are 'soccer savvy' and try to learn the intricacies of the game at a young age. So much can be learned and inspired from by watching professional games on the TV. ESPN, FOX Soccer Channel, BEIN Sport and Gol TV are all available to you and these packages are surprisingly inexpensive. We would encourage players to pick a favorite professional team and support them, no matter which country they hail from. They should get to know the players, the coaches, the club culture and their rivals etc. Following the game at a professional level gives the players' role models to look up to and imitate. It also broadens their knowledge and understanding of the game.

It is important that Savannah United Academy players respect their team mates, the coaching staff and most importantly the club. Every member of United is an ambassador of the organization as well as the City of Savannah. Players should be aware that their conduct at home or away greatly reflects on them and therefore we insist that their behavior is at the forefront of their mind.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Parental support and involvement in the program are essential. If your child is selected and chooses to commit to the Savannah United Academy Program, your commitment is also necessary. If players are to make a quality commitment to the club and their team, parents must see to it that players attend all possible club and team functions (practices, meetings, games etc.). We understand there will be time conflicts that cannot be avoided and other more important events may occur. The club requires your communication, planning and understanding so we can minimize conflicts. It is the club's responsibility to present a periodic schedule to allow time for your planning. When parents or players have an unavoidable conflict, the club expects timely communication to see if the club or team can make any necessary adjustments. The Academy Director or team coach will make the final decisions on scheduling and adjustments after careful consideration of your needs and those of the club or team.

There will be no coaching by parents. No matter how good your intentions are, we insist there be no shouting instructions to your son/daughter or yelling (complaining) to officials during games. Your vocal support and positive encouragement are welcome after a good play. "GO" or "SHOOT" are considered to be instructions (persistent coaching from the sidelines may result in decreased playing time for your child), and as such are not desirable. It is important that players are not distracted at practices or during games and that players are given only one set of instructions by one voice before, during and after practices and games. For this reason, the club insists the Club Director, Academy Director, Age Group Coordinator or Team Coach be the only voice at all games and practices. No one other than those listed on the official game roster may sit on or near the team bench before or during games. We ask that you please respect the space and privacy necessary for the Coach and team to carry out their game responsibilities.

The club's primary concern is for the long term growth and development of your son/daughter as a person along with their soccer abilities. There will be times that coaches make decisions and players are instructed to do things that parents will not understand. Club, team and player development will sometimes be given a greater priority than winning especially during friendly games and festivals. However, as a competitive club, we do place an emphasis on competing for results during tournament play. Parents must understand this and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a healthy team environment.

Savannah United believes in, and teaches, players, the benefit of having the proper game mentality to guide their intense focus on the game of soccer. We will instruct your son/daughter to ignore adverse conditions such as bad referees, name calling, foul language, overly aggressive play, cheating, poor weather, negative behavior by parents or opponents etc. We expect our parents to have this same game mentality.

Parents: at the appropriate time, please feel free to communicate and ask questions about your son/daughter. Please also take the initiative to teach your son/daughter to speak up and communicate for themselves whenever possible. Your coaches will express their observations and views of an individual player if needed.

Your support in how you handle disappointment following a tough game or a loss is greatly appreciated. With most children, the negative feelings following a poor performance or result only last for a short time. Usually, once they have been dismissed from the field and start getting their mind on other things, their mood changes and they are no longer as upset about what happened in the game. This ability to 'bounce back' mentally following disappointment is exceptional and is a great habit for them to keep throughout their soccer careers. We would encourage you to think about what is discussed in the car ride home. It is always better to pick up feedback from your child first and listen to what they think about the outcome of a game, before making assumptions.

THE COACH

The coaches at Savannah United are instructed to conduct themselves first as teachers and second as coaches. Nothing positive will come of our efforts if we produce top class players who do not know how to conduct themselves as responsible human beings. In this regard, you can expect Savannah United coaches to conduct themselves as positive role models and display appropriate behavior. Our coaches recognize they are dealing in an important way with young people and cannot overlook the impact they have on players' lives.

Coaches are responsible for conduct of the team on and off the field when the team is together and part of a club event. We insist our players be polite, well behaved and respectful. Players and parents can expect honesty, communication, consistency and reliability from the coach.

Savannah United coaches have been responsible for helping develop numerous state and regional caliber level players, some of whom have progressed into collegiate soccer and received scholarships. Unlike other local programs, the commitment the Club Director and Academy Director make, under no circumstances, guarantees that players will be offered a college scholarship or be considered for regional, state or national teams. However, they do guarantee to give players the tools and skills needed to become as good as their ability, desire, commitment and effort take them.

The Club Director and Academy Director are responsible for creating an environment where you can play quality competitive soccer. The soccer we play will be taken very seriously. We recognize there are things more important in life than soccer. In terms of priority, family and school work come first. However, if the coaches see a player not willing to put soccer above other recreational activities during the season it may affect playing time and status within the club. As a member of the program, we expect players to commit to the sport of soccer and the team during season over any other recreational activity.

Do not expect the coaches to praise everything a player does well. After a period of time, the coach will come to expect certain things from a player. There are times the coach will say very little and times they may yell out instructions. There are times they will be critical of players and other times they will be generous with praise. Players and parents are expected to take constructive criticism along with praise for a job well done and be able to deal with both.

The coach will attend as many games and practices as their schedule allows, but conflicts will occur from time to time. In situations where conflicts do occur, and they will, the Head Coach with assistance from the Academy Director will do their best to designate a coach to cover that particular practice or game.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

To the player: Our attempt with this information manual is to present in clear detail exactly what will be expected of you and what you can expect from the club, the team and the coaches. If you are unsure of what is expected, it is your responsibility to ask one of the coaches. Knowing and understanding these things will help your participation in the club to be positive as you develop your soccer abilities to the highest level possible. We have high expectations of the club, the team, the coaches, and you.

These expectations are essentially the rules, regulations and policies for Savannah United and the Academy Program. So that you and every player in the program can get maximum benefit, we need parents and every player to abide by these expectations. If disciplinary action is necessary, the following steps may be taken:

1) The head coach and/or Academy Director will discuss the problem directly and privately with the player, with the assumption that the problem will be solved and corrected immediately.

2) If the problem persists, the head coach and/or Academy Director will communicate with the player's parents to discuss the problem and lack of response on the part of the player. Parents will have the opportunity to be involved with correction of the problem at this time.

3) If the problem still continues, the Academy Director and/or Club Director may temporarily suspend the player or parent. If the situation warrants, the director/s may decide to remove the player and parents from the club without refund. The director/s will notify the parents of this decision.

Our desire is to work in a positive, constructive fashion with our players. Everyone has problems from time to time and we will make every effort to work with you to help solve the problems you may have. Once we have exhausted all efforts to solve the problem, we will be left with little choice but to enforce disciplinary action as outlined above.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

ACADEMY CURRICULUM

The SavUtd Academy Coaching Curriculum is a combination of Chelsea FC, Southern Soccer Academy and US National Coaching Philosophy mixed with our own personal club approach and beliefs. It is the most comprehensive training program you will find in the area. Quite often, clubs will change their training curriculum and overall philosophy every time a new Academy Director is hired. The SSA SavUtd Player Development Plan is built to last and although small elements may change to meet the needs of our players, the core principles will always remain the same. Many clubs use a cookie cutter approach, focusing only on specific techniques i.e. juggling or tactics in their training programs. This can bring rapid short term success in those aspects of the game. However, the SSA Savannah United Program focuses on every aspect of the game for long term development and so we can produce well rounded soccer players. A training curriculum and club philosophy can only be implemented with quality coaches who are well versed in the program. SSA SavUtd are fortunate enough to have the most experienced and qualified staff in South East Georgia.

CORE PRINCIPLES

We are looking to develop intelligent, athletic, technically gifted and mentally prepared soccer players with the desire to succeed. From a coaching perspective we will encourage players to take responsibility with the ball and have the ability to deal with the ball. That is why we will encourage our teams to play a passing game building it from the back whenever possible.

Our Core Principles are based on the acronym TEAMS:

T = technique, time (at practice) and timing

E = education (soccer), enthusiasm and endeavor

A = athleticism, attitude and attendance

M = mentality, maximize (potential) and manage (lifestyle)

S = social, skill and sacrifice

"Practice is vital to success...the single most important aspect that Eric Cantona introduced to Manchester United was the culture of practice."

Alex Ferguson (1998)



THE SSA WAY - OUR IDENTITY

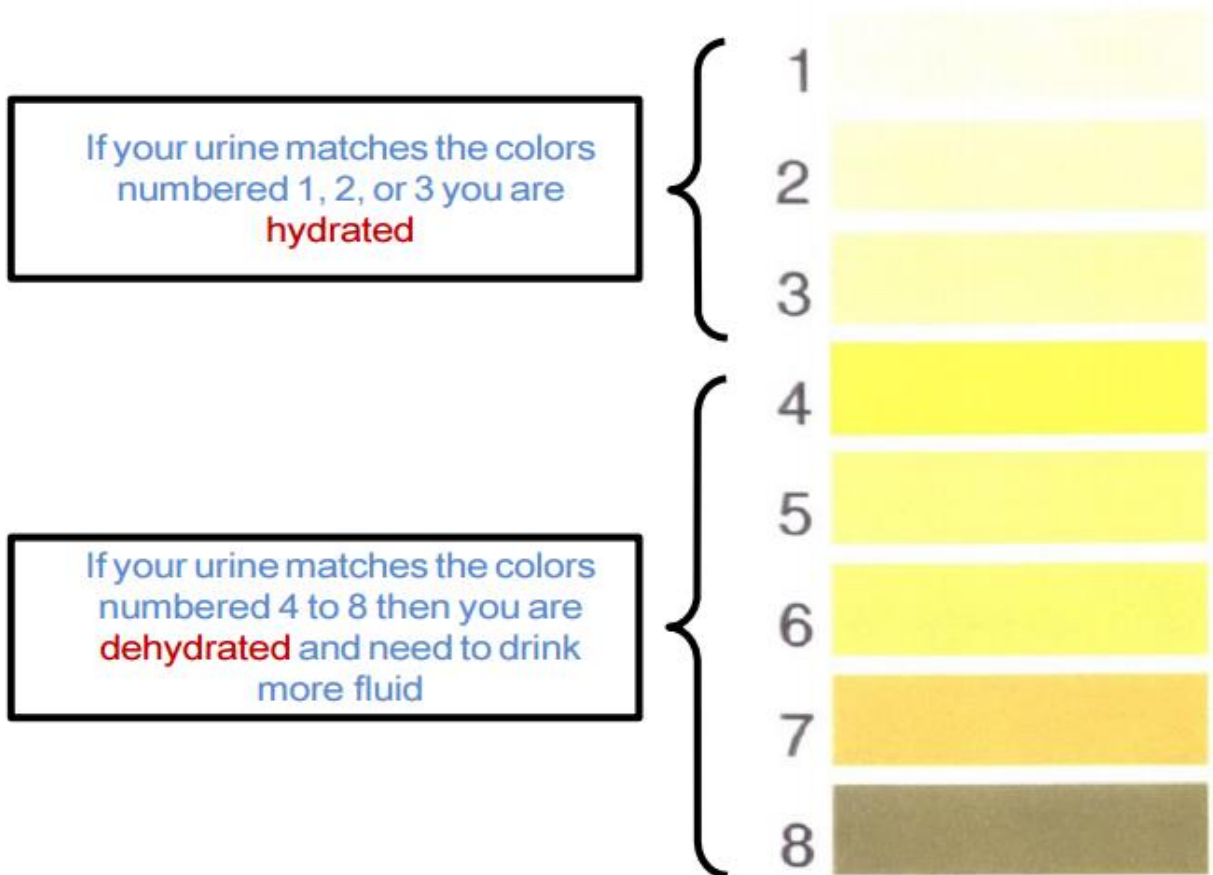
To create an identity at SSA Savannah United, each phase of the Development Plan will implement core rules / guidelines. This will ensure that in years to come we can look and say "That is an SSA Player". The Rules and Guidelines are as follows:

- 1 - Win the ball back early (the 6 second rule).
- 2 - Quick Free Kicks (hand on the ball and play).
- 3 - Build the ball out from the back (whenever possible).
- 4 - Create overloads in the final 1/3 (overlaps & 3rd man runs).
- 5 - Don't refuse a shot or crossing opportunity.

SPORTS SCIENCE

HYDRATION

The color of urine is a good indicator of fluid levels in the body. If the body is dehydrated, the amount of water in the urine is reduced and the color becomes a stronger yellow color. To monitor urine color, we use what is known as a "urine chart". These charts should be situated in changing rooms to enable players to check their hydration levels.



SPORTS SCIENCE

NUTRITION

Never come to a practice, scrimmage, or game without "fuel in your tank".

The pre-game meal is essential for providing an athlete the energy needed to play at their full potential.

Pre-game meal: should be eaten 2 to 4 hours prior to activity. Eating too close to game time causes food to remain undigested and does not allow time for the transformation into energy for the muscles to use. The first muscle impacted is the brain, reducing concentration, making quick decision making impossible, and leading to poor performance and potential for injury.

Portions: 45% whole grains; 35% vegetables and fruits; 15% protein; and 5% fats.

Halftime snack: Young players often can't consume enough pre-game food to provide energy for the duration of a game. Easily digested snacks eaten during the game and halftime can help them maintain energy levels.

Post-game snack: eat a healthy carbohydrate snack and beverage within 30 minutes after the game or practice has finished. During this time muscles will convert carbohydrates to glycogen up to three times faster than if a player waits 1 to 2 hours to eat. If the player has a second game that day, have a small snack after the first game followed by a more substantial meal after the second game.



When players pack their sports bags for the game, be sure to include a piece of fruit, trail mix, sports drink or similar snack.

SPORTS SCIENCE

NUTRITION

Don't Eat or Drink (24 hours prior)	Pre-Game Meal (2-4 hours prior)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Energy drinks▪ Hamburgers or cheese burgers▪ Doughnuts and pastries▪ Fried chicken or fried fish▪ French fries▪ Milk, milkshakes and ice cream▪ Cheese or pepperoni pizza <p><i>Skip high fat, high sugar foods and caffeine on game days</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Plenty of water▪ 100 % fruit juice▪ Cereal and low-fat milk, banana▪ Peanut butter & jelly sandwich▪ Yogurt and granola with fruit▪ Pancakes, syrup, and bananas▪ Scrambled eggs and cheese▪ Pasta, vegetables and a little protein
In Game / Halftime Snack	Post-Game Snack (within 30 minutes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sports drink 10 oz.▪ Fruit with high water content (e.g., orange, banana, grapes, melon)▪ Trail mix▪ Crackers▪ Rice crispy bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Any of the in-game snacks▪ Chocolate milk▪ PB&J sandwich▪ Granola or energy bars▪ Whole grain crackers with cheese▪ Whole grain bagel with cream cheese▪ Smoothie

CODE OF ETHICS

PLAYERS

- 1. I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at all times.*
- 2. I will remember that soccer is an opportunity to learn and have fun.*
- 3. I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco and alcohol: and expect everyone to refrain from their use at all times.*
- 4. I will do the best I can each day, remembering that all players have talents and weaknesses the same as I do.*
- 5. I will treat my coaches, other players and coaches, game officials, other administrators, and fans with respect at all times; regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly.*
- 6. I will concentrate on playing soccer always giving my best effort.*
- 7. I will play by the rules at all times.*
- 8. I will at all times control my temper, resisting the temptation to retaliate.*
- 9. I will always exercise self-control.*
- 10. I will hold myself in accordance with SSA Savannah United rules, SSA Savannah United Code of Ethics & Georgia Soccer Rules & Regulations.*
- 11. While traveling, I will conduct myself properly as a representative of SSA Savannah United.*
- 12. Alcohol, illegal drugs and unauthorized prescription drugs shall not be possessed, consumed or distributed before, during or after any game or at any other time at the field and/or game complex or while traveling as a representative of SSA Savannah United and Georgia Soccer.*

PARENTS/SPECTATORS/GUARDIANS

- 1. As a parent/guardian I agree to pay the fees outlined by SSA Savannah United. Failure to remit due payments on a timely basis may result in suspension from all competitive soccer activities until dues have been paid.*
- 2. SSA Savannah United Academy teams are competitive teams. There is NO guarantee of minimum playing time. The Executive Club Director and/or Technical Director will handle all unresolved disputes between coaches and players.*
- 3. From time to time there will be team expenses above and beyond the club registration fee and uniform fee. These are classed as 'team expenses' and may include tournament fees, extra soccer gear, coaches travel reimbursement, referees fees for non-league games etc. I agree to pay these fees when they are expected from me.*
- 4. The Technical Director will work with each head coach/ team manager to determine the tournaments and programming that will be appropriate for each team and player. All tournament entries and other soccer related activities will be need to be pre-approved by the Technical Director. The decision made by the Technical Director will be final.*
- 5. The Technical Director will work with each head coach on the practice location and time. The decision made by the Technical Director will be final.*
- 6. I understand and support changes to practice due to weather, field availability, daylight savings time and coach availability.*
- 7. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, game officials and administrators at all times.*
- 8. I will place the emotional and physical well being of all players ahead of any personal desire to win.*
- 9. I will support the coaches, officials and administrators working with my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.*
- 10. I will remember that the game is for the players, not for the adults.*
- 11. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, game officials, administrators and fans with respect.*
- 12. I will always be positive.*
- 13. I will always allow the coach to be the only coach. I will not coach from the sidelines or through other forms of communication.*
- 14. I will not get into arguments with the opposing team's parents, players or coaches.*
- 15. I will not come onto the field for any reason during the game.*

16. *I will wait 24 hours after a game or tournament before I approach my coach about any playing time issues or player concerns I have.*
17. *Neither coaches, parents nor other team supporters may make critical, abusive or offensive comments to the players, coaches or supporters of an opposing team before, during or after a game.*
18. *Games are officiated by referees and their assistants, not coaches, parents or spectators. There is a process and a time for coaches to disagree with calls. Voice your opinion to your coach, not the officials.*
19. *Parents and other team supporters may not approach game officials at any time for the purpose of disputing calls, or making critical, abusive or offensive comments.*
20. *Neither coaches, parents, nor other team supporters may be present behind goals or on the first 6 yards of each sideline beginning at each corner. These 'clear zones' protect goalkeepers and players taking corner kicks.*
21. *The referee may require any person at an SSA Savannah United game to leave the game site. If called upon to leave the game site, I agree to cooperate with match officials.*
22. *SSA Savannah United will prosecute or support the prosecution of anyone who violates any law or ordinance i.e. assault or possession of illegal substances / alcohol.*
23. *Any coach, assistant coach, manager, parent, spectator or player who is dismissed from a game by a referee or an SSA Savannah United official must leave the complex immediately.*
24. *Any coach, assistant coach, manager, parent, spectator or player who is dismissed from a game by a referee or an SSA Savannah United official for fighting must leave the complex immediately. The individual may not return to the complex or field after the game on that same day. The individual is immediately suspended from attending the next two games of that team. Furthermore, the individual may not attend any other game involving SSA Savannah United teams until that two game suspension has ended. Any individual who violates these rules will be suspended for an additional game. These are minimum sanctions. Violations of these standards will result in the ejection of the violator from SSA Savannah United activities temporarily or permanently. Violations by a coach, parent or other family member may also result in the suspension of the coach, the parent, the parent's child or the team from membership with SSA Savannah United or the violator's local association.*
25. *I will hold myself in accordance with SSA Savannah United rules, SSA Savannah United Code of Ethics & Georgia Soccer Rules & Regulations.*
26. *Parents, players and family members of the club will not post defamatory comments on public forums / social media websites that may be damaging to SSA Savannah United or any of its associated members or affiliates. Failure to comply could potentially result in a temporary or permanent suspension.*

GEORGIA SOCCER RULES & REGULATIONS

As a member affiliate of Georgia Soccer, all Savannah United players in the Academy are subject to the following rules and regulations. The Academy is defined as a 'select program' below.

310.2. Select Programs

310.2a. Once a select program player has registered with an member affiliate, the player is bound to that affiliate until the end of the year for which the registration applies.

310.2b Once a select program player is registered with an affiliate and rostered to a team, a transfer is required to move to a team in another member affiliate (inter-affiliate) during that seasonal year; however, a player who is released from his/her team may not transfer to a team in another member affiliate until his/her team's full year commitments are completed, including State Cup, unless the transfer request has been approved by all parties.

310.2c A player may be released from his/her team at any time and will be put on inactive status with Georgia Soccer. In order to be returned to active status during the same seasonal year, the player must go back to his/her original affiliated member affiliate and re-register or initiate a transfer request with that member affiliate.

310.2d Once a select program player is rostered to a team, that player's financial obligation as published by the member affiliate and accepted by the player must be satisfied before a transfer will be approved.

1. Players are limited to one transfer per seasonal year. The Georgia Soccer Registrar may approve an additional transfer in order to allow a player to participate when otherwise the player may not have the opportunity.

310.2e If a player believes he/she has an extraordinary reason to transfer outside of the parameters stated in Rules 310.2b, 310.2c, 310.2d & 310.2d1, then the player must submit written notification of appeal with the rationale for consideration to the Georgia Soccer Registrar's Committee. Extraordinary circumstances could include but are not limited to unethical behavior by any party (to be determined by Georgia Soccer Ethics and Grievance- Youth) or significant change of address.

310.2f Requests for transfers between teams in the same member affiliate (intra-affiliate transfers) will be processed at any time and require a transfer form. (This rule does not override Rule 310.2d.1)

310.2g For tournament purposes, a select program player may play with another team as a guest player within the rules of a given tournament. Invitations to players listed on valid rosters for out-of-league play, such as indoor or guest player, must be initiated by the requesting coach through the player's current coach or it is considered illegal recruiting. Once a coach has been contacted, he/she has the option to approve or deny the request. No player may guest play with another team without his/her current coach's and member affiliate's permission.

1. If a member ascertains that another member of the association has violated Rule 310.2g, that member is entitled to seek redress by filing a grievance with the Georgia Soccer Ethics and Grievance Committee - Youth.

330. Recruitment for Select Program

330.1 Once a youth player has signed a Georgia Soccer registration form or registered online, and that registration information has been submitted to Georgia Soccer by the member affiliate's registrar, no

person may directly or indirectly induce or attempt to induce that player to leave the team for which he/she has registered during the seasonal year, until the Tuesday following Memorial Day or fourteen days prior to the allowed start of tryouts for that age group, without fourteen days' written notice to the player's coach. For Academy players in the U-10 through U-12 age group, no person may directly or indirectly induce or attempt to induce that player to leave the team for which he/she has registered until the Tuesday following Memorial Day.

330.2 No registered player may directly or indirectly contact any other team during the current seasonal year, until the Tuesday following Memorial Day or fourteen days prior to the allowed start of tryouts for that age group, without fourteen days' written notice to his/her present coach. For Academy players in the U-10 through U-12 age groups, no registered player may directly or indirectly contact any other team until fourteen days before the Tuesday following Memorial Day.¹³
Georgia Soccer Youth Rules and Regulations

330.2a If a member ascertains that another member of the association has violated the recruiting rules, that member is entitled to seek redress by filing a grievance with the Georgia Soccer Ethics and Grievance Committee - Youth.

330.3 Recruitment Sanctions: If a coach, team official, player, parent of a player, or anybody acting on behalf of the team is found guilty of illegal recruiting, the sanctions may include, but are not limited to the following: warning, coach suspension, tournament play restrictions, team advancement restrictions, coach dismissal, and team suspension.

Soccer is a game and is for the enjoyment of young people and their families. The overwhelming majority of our community understand what these simple facts mean. The positive examples you provide for your children are valued. SSA Savannah United officials require that the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each player registered read the above code of conduct, Georgia Soccer Rules & Regulations and agree to uphold the guidelines set forth. A player's registration is not complete until an SSA Savannah United Code of Ethics form is completed and added to their file. This form is available on our website and at the SSA Savannah United office.

Thank you for taking the time to read this manual. We appreciate your support of the club and the game of soccer in general. See you on the pitch!