

FREDERICKSBURG FC EXCITED TO HOST 2ND ST. PATRICK'S DAY INVITATIONAL

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FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (12/5/18)—The FFC St. Patrick's Day Invitational is back for its second go around after a highly successful inaugural tournament last March.

The first edition of the event boasted 75 teams—40 girls and 35 boys—which was right about at maximum capacity that it can

host. The number of applications is expected to grow to at least 90 for the 2019 event at FFC Park, which means the competition on the field should be even stronger.

"I'm extremely excited to kick off the second FFC St. Patrick's Day Invitational event. Last year, we hit our target for teams signed up and I am looking forward to attracting more teams this year," Fredericksburg FC Technical Director and Tournament Director Mayowa Owolabi said. "We already have teams signing up and I'm expecting a great competitive turnout from returning and a few new clubs during the 2019 event."

There were also teams from other states—one from as far away as Michigan—at last year's tournament, something that Owolabi hopes will increase as the tournament continues to grow.

"I have reached out to teams in West Virginia, North Carolina and also Maryland so I am hopeful that not only do we bring in top competitive teams from Virginia, but from out of state as well," he said. "Bringing out of state teams is attractive for all teams involved with the event. For the out of state teams, they get to see new completion, and for us Virginia teams, we also get to see and experience teams from a different area."



Getting to see some FFC teams win championships was of course a great highlight of last year's tournament for Owolabi, but just as exciting was the competitiveness of the tournament as a whole.

"Championship Sunday was a great environment throughout the park" Owolabi expressed. "We had a few games go into overtime and penalty kicks, so when the competition is that tight it keeps the energy around

the park amazing, so I am hoping to have some great competition once again in 2019.”

Of course after every inaugural event there are tweaks that need to be made to continue to make it better for all involved. One of the things Owolabi has worked on for the 2019 event in a way to improve it for the referees. After speaking with referee assignors and assessors, a goal is to have assessors on site this time around.

“This will allow our tournament to be used for ref evaluations, which is similar to what VYSA State Cup and CCL Showcase events have done in the past. It helps ensure that refs are on their ‘A-Game’ and that always helps make sure games are played with less errors,” Owolabi said. “Every moment in soccer is a learning and teaching moment, so if we can get good refs out there working hard and working together to improve, all parties, players, coaches and refs, will benefit from this environment.”

Of course, taking advantage of the club’s excellent facilities at FFC Park is also something that will always be an important feature for any event it hosts. It allows all games to be played at one place on top-quality fields so coaches and players don’t have to travel to different locations for games.

“We are always excited to be able to showcase our beautiful facility,” Owolabi said, continuing, “Players loved the competition and trophies that were up for grabs. . . . And I can't forget everybody loved what the concession stand had to offer. We plan on bringing back Chick-Fil-A and tons of Chick-Fil-A sauce!”

FFC will also be adding a second event that will take place later in 2019. On August 16-18, the club will host its first showcase event, the FFC Virginia Summer Showcase, at FFC Park. It will be a chance for boys and girls teams in the 2000-2010 age groups to show what they’ve got against elite competition.

For more on either of these tournament, visit www.fredericksburgfc.org.

