



Welcome! Rush Union Update

Hello everyone,

Happy New Year!

We would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year. We are very excited about 2021 and the great things ahead for our programs and organization. We hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday period.

The end of 2020 brought a great deal of success for us. We had many teams make tournament finals in several local events and our own Rush Cup 2020 was a big success. We have highlighted some of those tournament successes below. Our Rush Cup hosted a record number of teams, showing a growth of 45% from our previous year's event and was hosted at 6 different locations. A very well done to all those involved with the organization and execution of the event.

We have been conducting our winter programs throughout December and January. The programs have been going very well and we have been able to implement several new options at Brook Run Park including a winter 7v7 league, and a winter Recreational Program. We have been able to provide playing opportunities to over 1200 youth and adult players this winter. High School Soccer is just around the corner for many of our players and to help support the local High School Programs, we held three High School Prep Camps this month. We had over 100 players attend the three camps to help prepare for their High School Tryouts.

Beginning this month, we will be starting our new 8v8 Adult League at Brook Run Park. The program will run on Wednesday evenings and more information can be found [here](#). This is our Third Adult Program as we already offer Adult Indoor at Stars Athletic Complex and Adult Outdoor play at the City of Milton's Cox Road Facility.

All of our Spring Recreational Registrations are open. We are very excited about the growth of our Recreational Programs in Dunwoody and Milton respectively. For more information on our Recreational Programs please select the location you are interested in: [Brook Run/Pleasantdale](#) or [Milton Location](#)

On the back of our previous tournament success, we have decided to host a Spring Tournament. The new event will be called the **Rush Union Spring Cup** and is open to all teams U8-U15. The tournament will be played on February 27-28, 2021 at our facilities or local complexes. We are also very excited to announce that Capelli Sport has signed on as our title tournament sponsor for all our 2021 events. For more information and to register for this event please visit our tournament website: [Rush Union Spring Cup 2021](#)

January 2021

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We have applied for the Georgia Tech Spring Consulting program and hope to hear back on this application shortly. The program will provide us access to MBA students at Georgia Tech who take on a specific project to help improve our organization in a designated area. We were fortunate to be participants of this program in the Summer of 2020, and it proved to be very beneficial.

We are going to be participating in the SCCL Summer League during June and July. We are very excited about being in the program. Tryouts will be held at Brook Run Park on February 6 and more information including registering for tryouts can be found on our website: [SCCL Summer League Information](#)

Finally, please look out for this month's publication of the Milton Neighbor. Rush Union Soccer is featured in their new sports section including an article focusing on the journey of a youth player. Please check out that article below in this newsletter also.

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

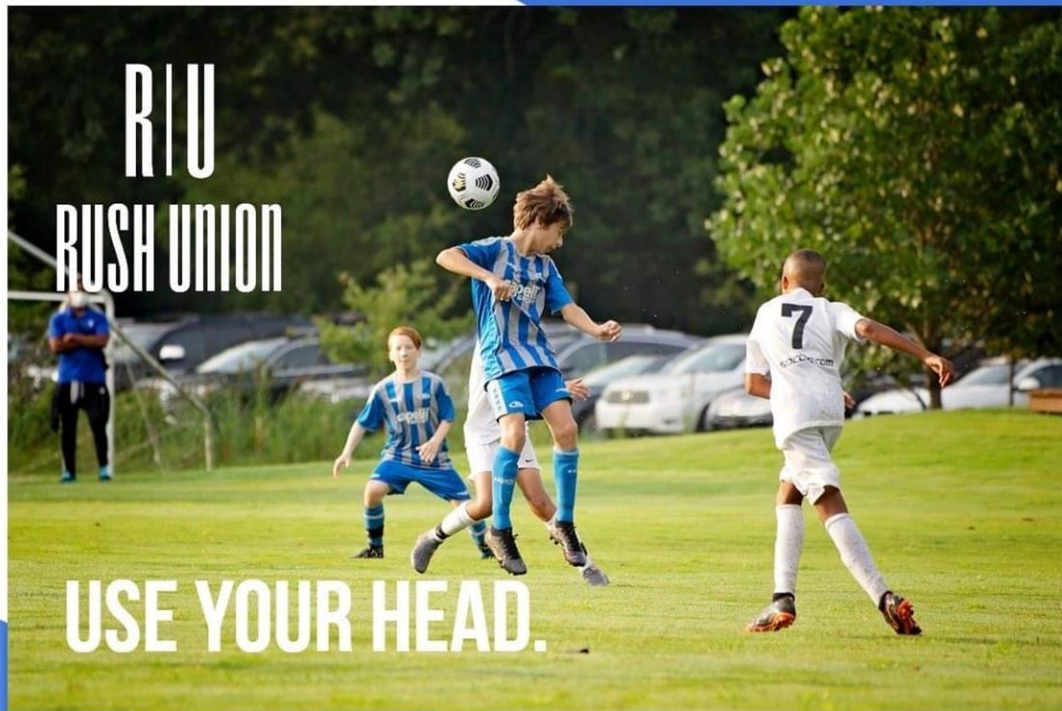
R|U Ready?



Neil McNab Jr.
CEO Rush Union



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Singular
social
platforms
coming in
Oct.



Like.
Share.
Follow.

Social Media

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram & Twitter

Rush Union

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

Instagram: @RushUnion

Twitter: @Union_rush

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***Rush Cup 2020 was a huge success, above are some of our teams who advanced to tournament finals.
Congratulations to everyone for a great event.***

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We are looking forward to our NEW Spring Tournament, The Rush Union Spring Cup!



EXPERT CONTRIBUTOR

The Evolution of a Player



BY NEIL MCNAB,
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, RUSH
UNION SOCCER
CLUB



PHOTOS BY RUSH UNION



The journey of an athlete through youth sports can bring about many challenges, successes, and often a large amount of growth. Many children are entering youth sports such as soccer at 3 or 4 years of age. This gives the possibility of a youth career spanning 14-15 years. That is, if a crazy coach, overzealous parent, or many of the other obstacles littered throughout the journey do not get in the way first.

Every Athlete will have a unique experience through youth sports and we must accept that each individual child is different, and their evolution from young child, to pre-teen, to teen player is going to vary depending on environment and the contributing factors that our youth organizations can provide. Let us focus on the key contributors to the evolution of a player. Those in my mind are the Parent, the Coach, and of course the Player. Each of these people has important roles to play and different amounts of impact during the journey.

The importance of the coach stays quite consistent throughout the evolution of the player. The most critical item for any coach to be aware of is the needs of the players they are working with. These vary greatly when dealing with a 5-year-old versus a 15-year-old

for example. It is important that the organization have the right coaches working with the right players. Many organizations have volunteer coaches with their youngest entry-level players. In these cases, it is vital that the club provide training, equipment, and resources to those coaches to help them create a nurturing environment for the player. At the early stages, it is important that the coaches can help build a love for the sport and engage players in an environment full of fun games and simple challenges. As the players grow coaches can introduce more complex technical activities and tactics. This is where many organizations seek out certified coaches beginning with players 7-8 years old. Between 8-12 years old players are training to learn the game, 13-15 years old they are learning to compete, and the oldest youth levels players are fully engaged in the competition. During all these phases it is important that the organization continues to support the coach with ongoing education both formally and informally. This should include regular meetings and a review process for the

NOW & NEXT LEVEL SOCCER

MILTON, DUNWOODY, ATLANTA

REC | ACADEMY | SELECT | ELITE

MEMBER SCCL PREMIER; GEORGIA SOCCER

WWW.RUSHUNIONSOCCKER.ORG
INFO@RUSHUNIONSOCCKER.COM

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coaching staff. Although the role of the coach changes with each stage of development their importance is constant for the player's continued growth.

The role of the parent changes the most of any during the evolution of the player. In the early stages of development will often see the parent playing a critical role in some of the basic logistic surrounding the training and game environment. Quite simply, they are responsible for dressing, driving and in many cases coaching players at the youngest levels of play. As players become more self aware of their surroundings and start to take on a larger role in their own development the parent goes through a transition to more of a supporting role in the background. Between the ages of 5-12 the parent may be the lead communicator for their child with the coach. As the player enters into their teenage years we often see the players themselves taking on more responsibility much like we would see in an Academic environment. During early

grade school parent-teacher conferences are just that, a discussion between the parent and the teacher. By Middle School (if not before) these conferences are often student lead. This transition allows for the child to take ownership of their own development. This can present a real challenge for the parent, who is used to being in charge and is now being asked to take a back seat. It does not in any way diminish the importance of the parent's role and there are still many items growing players will need help with. Supporting the player through challenges, helping them balance their schedules, and of course, being their biggest fans! Ultimately, we want our children to grow up to be independent adults. Youth Sports provides a great opportunity to support this evolution.

Players grow at different rates and require the right amount of support from their parents, coaches, and organizations along their journey. As players evolve from mini kickers to developmental players, to competing athletes they become more self-aware of their own needs. It is important that we allow the players to drive their own experience at every level. This may be allowing them to experience moving their bodies at the rudimentary levels to allowing them to lead the college recruiting process when that time comes. Ultimately soccer and youth sports provide a great opportunity for players to fail again, and again. With supporting parents, engaging coaches, and an organization that cares enough to invest in all three we can really help the evolution of the player.

Oh, and it is a fun journey, so don't forget to stop and watch the soccer along the way!

Featured in the Milton Neighbor in their January edition...



SUMMER LEAGUE TRY-OUTS

We are very excited to be part of the SCCL Summer League, tryout information is available now on our website www.rushunionsoccer.org

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Thank you to everyone who has helped keep our facilities safe and open during the COVID 19 Pandemic.



ONSITE SAFETY PROTOCOLS

To keep you and your player(s) safe, Rush Union will abide by these onsite safety protocols at all our locations.



Check temperature before arrival (coaches and players)



Wear masks when not playing soccer



Bring hand sanitizer and use often



Maintain 6-ft. social distance

**LET'S STAY SAFE
NOW SO WE CAN
GET CLOSE LATER.**

NO

Player high-fives
Parents on the field
Large group congregation