

General HFC and Club Soccer FAQ's

What is the HFC's philosophy on player development?

Player development is our main concern. Each level offers different stages of expectations. Our program for U9 through U11 age groups consists of a heavy demand on personal skill development. Winning is not our main concern. Developing a love for the game, having fun, and creating well-rounded players are key components. U12 age groups and above become more competitive and eventually there must be a balance with development and success. With proper training, this is a natural course. HFC employs some of the top coaches in Alabama and all Directors have a National Level Coaching Licenses. The Directors are responsible for communicating a player development curriculum which will fully develop our youth players under the HFC "Total Soccer Development" philosophy.

What are the qualifications of the HFC coaching staff?

We have assembled some of the finest coaches in the Southeastern United States. Our General Manager and Director of Coaching Operations for Div. I is Marty Clark. Our Deputy General Manager and Director of Coaching Operations for Div. II – IV is Mo Khodabandeh. The Directors are Henry Mpagi, serving as the Assistant Director of Coaching Curriculum (ADOCC) and Sean Cooper, serving as the Youth Training System Director. We employ many staff coaches with exceptional abilities and credentials. Credentials of these coaches include semi-pro players, national team players, college players, ODP instructors, and numerous player and coaching awards and honors. Individual coach qualifications are available on line.

How much does club soccer cost?

The cost varies with each team and the number of players on the team. Division I - IV have different costs associated with each level. Costs usually include club fees, uniforms, league fees, coaching fees, referee fees, and tournament fees. Other costs may be added to specific teams based on their needs, such as camps and equipment. Budgets are provided to all players and expenses are listed for clear justification.

What additional training is available during the summer?

The Directors hold several player clinics during the season that teach the club curriculum and provide skill/tactical progression. Teams may be offered based on need/availability of staff and will be announced on our web site.

When does the season start and end?

The official fall season start date for practices is July 15 for most teams. However, coaches may start earlier with approval from the General Manager. For most teams, the season will end with the State tournament in early to mid November. Division I and II teams may play into December to finish their State obligation. HFC is committed to a full year of programming so teams are offered opportunities to play through the winter and spring seasons at all ages and levels.

Where are practices?

The Club Administrators will secure a practice location and time. The HFC does not own or operate a set of fields. As such, we work with the city, schools, and local parks to secure a practice field. We strive to secure a practice field that is convenient for the team. Throughout the year, we have fund raising opportunities whereby parents can offer a few hours of their time. One of our main goals behind this fund raising is to secure/build our own facility.

How often are practices and games?

Teams will practice at least twice a week with at least one game per week during the season. Preseason might contain at least three practices per week before games start. The older and more competitive teams will train as necessary to compete at their level. Practice and game activity is handled at the team level with minimums set by the DOCO.

How much travel is involved?

Travel commitments are assigned by the Directors. The HFC encourages all teams to participate in their respective State Tournament. Teams in the U10 and below ages typically attend tournaments within 100 miles. Older teams will typically travel 2-3 times with overnight stays and distance will be determined by competitive goals. Our top teams within the older age groups will travel as necessary to find the level of desired competition.

What if my child plays multiple sports in the fall? How do the coaches view this?

Alabama has determined that Soccer is a fall sport. As such, coaches do not expect any conflicts during this time. Any indoor or spring season for younger teams is secondary to the prominent sport(s) at that time. Coaches should have understanding in these off-season opportunities to continue soccer and still allow play of the primary sport of that season. Older teams will expect a higher level of commitment, and your long-term interest in the game of soccer will weigh into the decision forming teams.

Is there a spring season?

Spring leagues are available and encouraged for U14 and younger age groups. Older age groups are consumed in their High School leagues and the State forbids any play for a school and club at the same time. Middle school players could be affected as well if their school offers a program and the player elects to participate in their school program. HFC also offers a special opportunity for the top players at U15 and above to compete on a College Prep team. This team typically plays colleges, select friendlies, and college showcase tournaments in an effort to expose our players to college coaches and the opportunity to play soccer in college.

Is there a winter season?

Indoor seasons are available for U14 and younger age groups. This is a great time to improve on your personal touch and small-sided game tactics. Indoor is on a volunteer basis and many times we combine teams to allow all those interested an opportunity to play.

What is the expected attire for team practice?

If you want to be a player then you must look like a player. As such, the HFC will provide training shirts with your initial uniform. These shirts are used for practice shirts along with navy blue shorts. Some of the younger teams may even elect to use them as alternate uniforms. Shirts are to be tucked in at all times.

What equipment does a player bring to practice?

All players are required to wear the HFC training shirt, cleats and shin guards. Players will also need to bring a properly inflated soccer ball and water.

Do the Goal Keepers receive individual training?

Yes, the HFC keepers have their own trainers and HFC offers keeper training all year. Our keepers are clearly a cut above the rest, and this specialized training is the key to our future success.

