

FC Bucks ECNL Program FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

About FC Bucks being members of the Elite Clubs National League

The following "frequently asked questions" are provided to give basic information about the FC Bucks ECNL Program, and are grouped into seven basic categories:

- Section 1
 - FC Bucks and the ECNL;
 - FC Bucks ECNL Team Competition Structure;
 - FC Bucks ECNL Coaching Staff;
- Section 2
 - Background of ECNL;
 - Player Development in the ECNL;
 - the ECNL Player Identification Program;
 - Collegiate Recruiting and the ECNL;

For more information about the ECNL and the FC Bucks, please feel free to contact us at anytime at CoachingDirector@CRUSA.net

Section 1

FC Bucks and the ECNL

Why did FC Bucks join the ECNL?

The FC Bucks girls division of CRUSA joined the ECNL as part of the continued natural progression of our club developmental process. The ECNL provides a competitive developmental structure that closely mirrors the structure and function of the Developmental Academy and Pre-Academy programs on the boy's side. Over the past several years the girls program from a training standpoint as moved very closely to being equal with the Strikers Boys Developmental Program and for the Girls Program the ECNL now brings the competition structure and balance onto equal terms.

In brief terms what other advantages does the ECNL provide?

The ECNL provides:

- Better training to games ratio
- More competitive training environment
- Clear pattern of competition structure that includes all areas from league play to tournaments to showcases
- Increased quality and competitiveness of all games and all events
- Provides an even greater exposure to college coaches and US National Team coaches and staff

How will the FC Bucks ECNL program be the similar to the past FC Bucks team program

The majority of the program will remain the same as it has been the last couple years.

- Training will remain 2-3 days a week
- Teams may choose to play in a local league
- Teams may choose to participate in non ECNL tournaments
- Weekly Combined Age Group Training
- Quality Coaching and Training Staff
- Players will still be allowed to participate in other sports throughout the "non-traditional" season

How will the FC Bucks ECNL program be different from the past FC Bucks team program

The following briefly outlines simple differences in the new ECNL program:

- Longer Training period for greater developmental progression
- Increased Roster Sizes for greater roster flexibility and Competition amongst team. Increased numbers also gives equal playing possibilities for different levels of competition allowing all players to develop at their equal levels.
- Expanded Travel allowing players to be exposed to different parts of the country
- Teams will travel predominately as a team providing financial cost savings and providing player unity and personal development skills.

Why are the roster sizes larger?

- Allows for better performance for multiple game weekends
- Allows for more competitive training environment
- Allows for flexibility due to injury or sickness
- Allows for flexibility with non-traditional sports participation

FC Bucks ECNL Team Competition Structure

U14 competition structure:

- Fall – Home/Away with conference opponents = 7 games
- Spring – Home/Away with conference opponents = 7 games
- Local League- Fall and Spring Seasons = 14 games
- ECNL National Championship Event- June

U15 competition structure:

- Home/Away with conference opponents = 12-16 games
- Home or Away with cross-conference opponents = 4 games
- 2 ECNL National Events
- ECNL National Championship Event - June

U16 & U17 competition structure:

- Home/Away with conference opponents = 12-16 games
- Home or Away with cross-conference opponents = 4 games
- ECNL National Championship Event – June
- 3 ECNL National Showcase Events

U18 competition structure:

- Home/Away with conference opponents = 12-16 games
- Home or Away with cross-conference opponents = 4 games
- ECNL National Championship Event – June – only if finish in top 8 nationally
- 2 ECNL National Showcase Events

FC Bucks ECNL Coaching Staff

U14's Chris Fehrle –

U15's Rich Finneyfrock-

U16's Christie Welsh -

U17's Tim Keddie –

U18's Ed Leigh -

Girls Director of Coaching – Dan Manella

Section 2

Background of the ECNL

What is the Elite Clubs National League (the "ECNL")?

The ECNL is a national youth soccer league founded in 2009 for U15, U16 and U17 girls for the purpose of providing the highest level of competition and the best developmental environment for American female youth soccer players, as well as an identification program for identifying players for US Soccer Youth National Teams.

Why was the ECNL founded?

The ECNL was founded by many of the best female youth soccer clubs throughout the country based on the belief that elite female player development in the United States needed a structure that would reduce the total number of games on the schedule and increase the number of meaningful, quality games. The ECNL sets forth a vision that provides a clear path to that goal: a national competition schedule and a national identification program linked to that competition, and an organization in which best practices in player development can be shared throughout the country.

Who plays in the ECNL?

In 2011-12, the ECNL will consist of 62 of the best female youth soccer clubs from across the country. For a complete list of member clubs, please go to www.usclubsoccer.org or www.eliteclubsnationalleague.com Each member club will have 1 team in the U14, U15, U16, U17 and U18 divisions of the ECNL.

Why should I play in the ECNL?

The ECNL was formed with one driving purpose: to improve the developmental environment for elite female soccer players. In order to accomplish this, the ECNL has several specific objectives: (i) increase the frequency with which the top players in the country have the opportunity to compete against each other; (ii) decrease the number of

uncompetitive games for the top players in the country so that these players can train more frequently; (iii) increase the collegiate recruiting exposure for top players; and (iv) provide an alternative identification program for these players to be identified for US Soccer Youth National Teams.

Every member club of the ECNL is dedicated to accomplishing these objectives. By coming together into the ECNL, ECNL member clubs can help to make the changes necessary to accomplish these objectives far more quickly, efficiently, and effectively.

Player Development in the ECNL

How is the ECNL different from other female soccer leagues in maximizing player development?

Competition: First, the ECNL provides the opportunity for the best female youth soccer players in the country to compete against each other - one of the requirements for maximizing player development. Because the ECNL only includes the best clubs in the country, every ECNL game is exceptionally competitive and played at a significantly higher speed with more physical, psychological, technical and tactical demands on the players than the "average" game. The consistency of this competition and the demands it imposes creates more skillful, intelligent, and focused players. Second, in order to maximize the competitive level of each ECNL game, the ECNL only schedules 1 ECNL game per day per team, and no more than 3 days of ECNL games in succession. This aids in reducing burn-out and fatigue from game-to-game.

Substitution: The ECNL will be using limited substitution during ECNL games. The exact rule is still being determined by the league. However you can expect something on the lines of the substitution rules for state cup games.

Roster Rules: The ECNL allows a flexible roster of up to 26 players per team, and allows players to be rostered on multiple teams within their ECNL club. In addition, the ECNL allows players to move from one team roster to another from day-to-day, allowing players to play in different age groups in the same event. (A player may only play in 1 ECNL game per day.) This allows talented players to "play-up" against older players when a club determines it is in the best interests of the player to do so in order to maximize challenge and learning.

Relief of Calendar Congestion: By guaranteeing member clubs with the opportunity to play the best clubs in the country on a regular basis, and by providing an additional identification program within these games, the ECNL schedule allows member clubs to reduce the total number of games played by their teams and players each year. This provides each member club with more time for training to develop each player, and provides players more time for recovery and rejuvenation over the course of the year.

Standards and Recommendations: The ECNL provides a recommended set of minimum standards and expectations for players and staff of ECNL member clubs to create a more professional soccer environment. In addition, the ECNL provides member clubs with the opportunity to share best practices in player development and club

organization and administration to improve the daily experience of the players.

The ECNL Player Identification Program

What is the ECNL Player Identification Program?

The ECNL has created a unique identification program in conjunction with US Club Soccer's id2 identification program to provide another alternative for players to be identified for US Soccer National Teams. The ECNL player identification program identifies the best players in the ECNL through a combination of independent scouting and coaching recommendations. Players identified in this program will be invited into a special ECNL / id2 National Camp in March, where they will be evaluated and trained by US Soccer National Team coaching staff.

What is the cost of the ECNL player identification program?

The ECNL player identification program comes at no cost to ECNL players. ECNL players will be scouted and identified in their regular team environment, without the added time and expense of multiple try-outs or mini-camps. Additionally, the cost of participation in the ECNL / id2 National Camp for those players selected will be covered by the ECNL, US Club Soccer, and Nike; the only cost for selected players will be travel to and from the camp itself.

How is the ECNL player identification program different than other identification programs?

The ECNL identification program is different and has several unique components compared to than other identification programs. First, there is no charge to the player to be identified; there is no try-out fee. Second, the player is identified in their natural team environment; there is no try-out or try-out camp. Third, the ECNL identification program does not add additional events to the calendar for identification; the players are identified in their natural environment while competing in ECNL events. Fourth, the only cost for the player for participation in the ECNL / id2 National Camp is the cost of travel to and from camp. All other costs (hotel, food, ground transportation, facility usage, coaching, etc.) is subsidized by the ECNL, US Club Soccer, and Nike.

Can a player that participates in the ECNL also participate in the USYS ODP program?

Yes. The ECNL player identification program is one of several different identification programs provided by different organizations for the elite youth soccer player to be identified for US Soccer Youth National Teams. The ECNL is not imposing restrictions on players to prevent them from participating in any other identification program. Many players that participate in the ECNL will participate in USYS ODP or other identification programs, and some players that participate in the ECNL will not participate in USYS ODP or other identification programs. These choices will be made by individual players according to their own interests and desires.

College Recruiting and the ECNL:

How will the ECNL change college recruiting?

The ECNL brings together the best female soccer clubs in the country to compete against each other. However, for the first time ever, the competitive schedule for these games for the entire year is determined at the beginning of the year. As such, college coaches can more easily plan their recruiting calendar to insure that they see all players in which they are interested - and see them competing against the best players in the country.

How will ECNL games be played at collegiate showcases?

To insure maximum exposure for ECNL players, all ECNL games will be played at adjacent fields and at similar times at all ECNL events. ECNL games will be played on their own independent site. The ECNL is working with each showcase to insure that the ECNL games are provided maximum exposure, and that the "drawing power" of every ECNL club is combined to increase attendance of college coaches for all teams.

Why should I play in the ECNL if I intend to go to college close to home?

NCAA Division I, II and III college soccer programs recruit nationally, and opportunities to play in NCAA Division I tend to go to players from nationally competitive teams. Elite players maximize their opportunities to be recruited for college and to be identified for the national team by playing against the top talent from around the country at the best college showcases. The ECNL guarantees you with the opportunity to play the best players, at the biggest showcase events, every year.