

THE BENEFITS OF  
**FUTSAL.**

NSA  
PREMIER



## A NOTE FROM THE YOUTH DIRECTOR

NSA,

As we step into the winter I would like to give you a little more information about where we are going and why.

We will be introducing Futsal into our curriculum. Why? If we are to produce truly technical advanced or "gifted" players, we simply have to do more! What we are planting in the upcoming winter will be the seeds of development, which will grow in the coming years.

These efforts are paramount to the future success of the players and the club.

We will be adding a mandatory Futsal practice session (Monday's) along with teams added to a Futsal league. Most of the top clubs in the Chicago are entered into these leagues and it will be very competitive season.

Last year was the first time the idea of futsal was provided to a small section of the club and it was optional. This is not something that has been being offered for years in the past. This year we are fully immersing our youth players in this mandatory, player development, component of the NSA experience.

We would have included this program in the fees up front, but did not have the cost break down for the rental of the facility when we sent out our acceptance letters. Next year we will include this in the costs. The day of the week is completely random and subject to the availability of the facility. We are asking all youth teams to treat this as a tournament expense and as such, all members pay, even if they can't attend the event. It is a mandatory component of the curriculum.

Please keep in mind we are do everything possible to develop the best soccer players and adding futsal to our curriculum will yield huge dividends.

Sincerely  
Kieren Keane  
Youth Director



## INTRODUCING **SPARQT**

AFTER managing S.P.A.R.Q. training for top clubs all over the country along with the US YOUTH national teams, I will also be introducing our S.P.A.R.Q.T. program.

- › SPEED
- ›› POWER
- ››› AGILITY
- ›››› REACTION
- ››››› QUICKNESS
- ›››››› TECHNIQUE

This program will be combined with the Futsal programs on Monday. We want to give our players the advantage technically while also having an advantage physically. "Better athletes make better soccer players!"

The time is now. Let's take advantage of this opportunity today so we excel and are prepared for the outdoor season and years to come.




## WHAT IS FUTSAL?

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Although Futsal is very much a game in its own right, there are also a number of benefits for soccer by encouraging young people to play Futsal as part of a balanced training program to improve their overall technical development. The game of Futsal creates an environment that allows young people to simulate and develop many skills and proficiencies that are transferrable to a bigger game.

The nature of Futsal with the smaller confines of the pitch, which makes it harder to find space, the line markings that prevents easy escape from tight situations, and the smaller heavier ball, which supports closer ball control and manipulation supports, the technical development of young players in a multitude of ways. "Research indicates that individual's playing Futsal receive the ball six times more often than they would do when they are playing 11-a-side soccer, allowing players to perform more individual techniques

such as passes, controls, fakes, feints, dribbles and runs with the ball." As well as touching the ball more often, players will often receive the ball under pressure from opponents developing their confidence on the ball particularly in pressurized environments. Futsal as a game naturally brings players into regular one-on-one situations with their opponent, encouraging players into quick decision making, as to how they overcome these scenarios; this could be through beating the opponent with a skill, or through clever passing to a team-mate. One of the core attributes Futsal teaches young players is the importance of ball retention, due to the threat of an immediate counter-attack. Confidence on the ball, receiving a pass under pressure, decision-making in 1v1 situations, and ball retention are all important fundamental skills that we look to develop in young soccer players that are practiced regularly within a game environment in Futsal.



*"Futsal is an extremely important way for kids to develop their skills and understanding of the game. My touch and my dribbling have come from playing Futsal."*

**Ronaldinho, FIFA World Footballer of the Year 2004 & 2005**

*"As a little boy in Argentina, I played Futsal on the streets and for my club. It was tremendous fun, and it really helped me become who I am today"*

**Lionel Messi, FIFA World Footballer of the Year 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012**

# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PLAYING FUTSAL?

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Futsal is an exciting, fast-paced small sided soccer game that originates from South America in the 1930s. It is widely played across the world, and is the small sided football format that is officially recognized by both UEFA and FIFA. The nature of the game places a large emphasis on technical skill and ability in situations of high pressure, and is subsequently an excellent breeding ground for soccer competencies that can be translated into the 11-a-side format of the game. Many of the top world class soccer players played Futsal in their youth and credit it with supporting their soccer development. Players of the calibre of Pele, Zico, Ronaldinho, Kaka, Lionel Messi to name but a few of the South American legends all played and enjoyed Futsal. But Futsal has not just helped produce South American soccer stars, on the European stage Cristiano Ronaldo, Iniesta, Xavi, Fabregas amongst many others have played Futsal to develop their skills. Futsal began in Uruguay and Brazil where the large crowded cities and a shortage of playing pitches forced a soccer mad populace to play small sided football and in 1936 the first rules emerged. Futsal was the name chosen by FIFA, which is simply a combination of the Spanish words for 'hall' (Sala) and 'football' (Futbol): hence 'Futsal'. Futsal is a five-a side game, normally played on a flat indoor pitch with hockey sized goals and a size 4 ball with a reduced bounce. It is played to touchlines and all players are free to enter the penalty area and play the ball over head-height. Games are 20 minutes per half, played to a stopping clock (similar to basketball) with time-outs permitted. There are a number of differences to our traditional version of small sided football, but the dominant elements are the absence of rebound boards and amendments in the laws that encourage and foster skilful, creative play.

Futsal also supports young player development in other ways. The speed and fluidity of the game supports players in understanding and improving their skills in the transition (counter-attacking) phase. In Futsal, teams are often either defending a counter-attack or in the process of launching one after breaking down their opponents. This is recognized in modern soccer as

a vital component for young players to understand and apply. This ebbing and flowing of the game also results in all players being required to feel comfortable in both a defending and attacking situation.

Due to the limited space on a Futsal court, the game intrinsically encourages movement and rotation from players as well as a sense of innovation and creativity to unlock defences and to create some space for yourself or team-mates. In many ways it replicates what is required from attacking midfielders and forwards in the 11-a-side game when trying to break through opposition in and around the 18 yard box.

The emphasis in Futsal is very much on skill and technique over physicality, and this is particularly reinforced by the 5 foul rule (committing 6 fouls results in a penalty). But Futsal is also fun for young players who get to touch the ball with greater frequency in a variety of different positions. The fact it is played indoors means that it is a perfect alternative in the winter months when outdoor matches are regularly cancelled due to inclement weather.

Futsal is by no means the magic cure for developing a more technically competent soccer player, but as illustrated above Futsal can support and play an important role in improving the technical qualities of the future generation of 11-a-side players. Futsal aligns closely to NSA's coaching strategy which provides a blueprint for how NSA would like to see young players being developed in order to succeed at the highest level. At NSA we aim to embrace more small sided games at younger age groups for many of the reasons as mentioned in this document. Futsal can play an integral part in helping to realize the aims and ambitions of developing more proficient young soccer players through the delivery of the NSA Futsal and S.P.A.R.Q.T.

*"No time plus no space equals better skills. Futsal is our national laboratory of improvisation."*

Dr Emilio Miranda, Professor of Soccer at University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

*"Futsal was important in helping to develop my ball control, quick thinking, passing.... also for dribbling, balance, concentration.... Futsal was very, very important, no doubt"*

Pele, World Cup Winner: 1958, 1962 & 1970

*"During my childhood in Portugal, all we played was Futsal. The small playing area helped me improve my close control, and whenever I played Futsal I felt free. If it wasn't for Futsal, I wouldn't be the player I am today."*

Cristiano Ronaldo, 106 games & 43 goals for Portugal

*"Football & Futsal have a lot in common ... There are different tactics and moves, but there is the same essence of mastering the ball, combining and making quick decisions."*

Andres Iniesta, 6 x winner of La Liga, 3 x winner of UEFA Champions League, 2010 FIFA World Cup Winner



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