



# Chicago Empire FC Club Newsletter



— November 2025 —



## Fall Season Highlights

**Congratulations to all of our teams that finished at the top of their group this fall!**

- 2018/19 Gold 1 Girls – 2nd Place – IWSL B
- 2016 Blue 1 Girls – 1st Place – IWSL D West 2
- 2016 Blue 2 Girls – 2nd Place – IWSL D Central 2
- 2015 Pre-EA Boys – 1st Place – YSSL 1 South
- 2015 Blue Girls – 1st Place – IWSL D South
- 2015 Blue 2 Boys – 1st Place – YSSL 5 West 1
- 2014 Pre-EA Boys – 1st Place – YSSL 2 South
- 2014 Pre-GA Girls – 2nd Place – IWSL AB South
- 2014 Gold Girls – 1st Place – IWSL C South
- 2013 IWSL Girls – 2nd Place – IWSL D Central
- 2011 Blue Boys – 1st Place – YSSL 4 South

**Thank You, Sponsors!**



**More information to come on  
Empire FC's Annual Pizza Night!**



**Jan Morel - Real Estate Agent**

Jan Morel  
(630) 624-6100  
jan@morelhomes.com



**Firewater BBQ**

Matt Weil  
mweil@firewaterbbq.com



**Stonehaven Mortgage**

Kyle Ernst  
(312) 493-7981  
kyle.ernst@stonehavenmtg.com

## **Empire Plus - Register Now!**

### **Winter Skills Training Sessions**

Join us this Winter for Empire Plus,  
our additional skills program!

**Birth Years: 2019-2013**

**Sundays @ Darien Sportsplex**

Girls - 2:00 - 3:00 PM

Boys - 3:00 - 4:00 PM

**[\\*Link for Information & Registration\\*](#)**



**Session 1:** November 16 - January 4

**Session 2:** January 11 - February 8

**Session 3:** February 16 - March 16

**NEW!**

## Players First Recreational Soccer



Did you know that Players First, the area's new premier recreational soccer program, launched this past Fall right here in Oak Brook? Players First Recreational Soccer is powered by the same leadership team that brings you Chicago Empire FC!

Players First offers recreational programming in the Fall and Spring for Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys and Girls. The **K-5 Kickers** participate in a weekly practice and compete in a weekly game on Saturday mornings – all at the Oak Brook Sports Core Soccer Fields.

Do you have an aspiring soccer player in preschool? Players First also offers a program for boys and girls ages 3-5. The **First Kickers** participate in a weekly session on Saturday mornings with a combination of skill work and small-sided game play.

This Winter, Players First is also offering a **Winter Skills Academy** at the Darien Sportsplex on Saturday mornings, open to recreational soccer players in Preschool - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade.

### Winter Skills Academy

Saturdays @ Darien Sportsplex

January 10, 17, 24, 31

February 7, 14, 21, 28

#### Preschool First Kickers

8:00-8:50 AM

#### K-5 Kickers – Girls

8:50-9:40 AM

#### K-5 Kickers – Boys

9:40-10:30 AM



### Spring 2026 Season

#### Preschool First Kickers

Saturday Mornings

April 11, 18, 25

May 2, 9, 23, 30

June 6

#### K-5 Kickers

Practices: Wednesdays or Fridays

April 8/10 - June 3/5

Games: Saturday Mornings

April 11, 18, 25

May 2, 9, 23, 30

June 6



For more information and registration: [playersfirstrec.com](http://playersfirstrec.com)

# Save the Dates

**December 29-31, 2025**

**Chicago Empire's  
Holiday Camp**

**Sign-Up on PlayMetrics Now!**



**June 28 - July 1, 2026**

**Summer Residential Camp  
at University of**

**Wisconsin-Whitewater**

**Sign-Up Opens on Dec. 1st!**



## Fall Season Spotlight



**Shoutout to our 2011 Empire Girls  
competing in the Girls Academy!**

**Kaitlyn Pergande and Eloise Berger were  
selected to attend US National Team ID  
Centers this fall. They are now the 7<sup>th</sup> and  
8<sup>th</sup> girls from Empire to be selected for ID  
Centers over the last 2 seasons!**

***Keep up the great work, ladies!***

**Congratulations to the 2015 Pre-GA  
Girls who recently went undefeated  
and won the Lou Fusz Junior  
Championships in St. Louis. They  
have raised their national ranking to  
inside the top 30 teams in the  
country!**

# Great work this fall, Empire Nation!



## Commitment Alert!

Congratulations to Audrey Raymond [2008] on committing to continue her soccer career as a student-athlete at Millikin University! We look forward to seeing Audrey compete for the Big Blue in the CCIW next fall.

# Coach's Corner

## Teammates – TOVO Academy

I often ask coaches to list the traits of an ideal footballer.

Invariably, words like dedicated, skillful, intelligent, respectful and ambitious fill the page. And more often than not, one characteristic that pops up is “being a good teammate.”

On this term I dig a bit deeper for understanding. More specificity. What does that mean in tangible and practical terms? How is “being a good teammate” manifested on the field or within the locker room?

So, as always, it got me thinking.

There will be moments when a good teammate holds you accountable even when you prefer not to be.

There will be moments when a good teammate is your greatest advocate.

There will be moments when a good teammate leads by example.

There will be moments when a good teammate takes charge on the field and plays their role to perfection.

And there will be moments when a good teammate recognizes that you are not at your best and stands beside you as you struggle. When you need to regroup and gather your strength, that teammate is there by your side.

Kicking a ball is important. Preferably in the right direction or into the back of the opponent's net. But that is a small fraction of time spent together at training, on road trips, at team gatherings and at tournaments. So many hours are spent as humans, not just footballers.

We all know of that companion who gets it. That takes the time to see you, hear you and be there when it matters most. Coaches alone cannot be everything to everyone. That much we know. There is a dynamic between peers that coaches can nurture but not control. Coaches can create an environment in which positive relationships flourish. Where being kind and courageous is the norm. However, each player is an autonomous being with the freedom to express themselves. And the “good teammates” seem to express themselves with others in mind.

I am lucky to have “good teammates” in my life well beyond soccer. They are called friends. And when it matters most, they show up.

May we all have such good teammates and even perhaps be one.