



COLUMBUS CREW SC

PRESS RELEASE

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COLUMBUS CREW SC ANNOUNCES FORMAL YOUTH PLAYER DEVELOPMENT AFFILIATION RELATIONSHIP WITH SPORTING COLUMBUS

***Beginning with tryouts for the 2018-2019 Player Development season,
Sporting Columbus to become Official Player Development Partner of
Columbus Crew SC;
Crew SC Academy operations remain unchanged***

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Contact: Tim Miller, 614-447-4176

COLUMBUS – Columbus Crew SC today announced that it has entered a formal affiliation relationship with Ohio based youth player development group Sporting Columbus who will serve as the Official Crew SC Player Development Partner beginning with tryouts for the 2018-2019 youth club season which will be held in May 2018. All programming for the remainder of the current 2018 Crew SC Player Development Spring Club Season remains as scheduled. Crew SC will continue to directly operate a series of youth development camps throughout the region. This partnership does not affect operations of the Crew SC Academy, which continues at the highest boys' level in Ohio under the guidance of Sporting Director and Head Coach Gregg Berhalter and competes as scheduled in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy via teams in the Under-12, U-13, U-14, U-15, U-16/17 and U-18/19 levels.

The newly formed affiliation will transition the management and fulfillment of Crew SC's Player Development team business to Sporting Columbus which shall include the operation of youth teams and associated retail at the Boys/Girls Age 6-18 and Pre-Academy Boys/Girls Ages 11-18 age ranges.

As part of this affiliation, Sporting Columbus will become the exclusive player development partner of Crew SC. Crew SC will receive the right to sell and implement sponsorships related to Sporting Columbus' youth system, and Crew SC will also continue to promote ticket offers to Sporting Columbus players and families. Crew SC and Sporting Columbus will co-host events, including the Crew SC Fall Classic which will take place on September 22-23, 2018.

"The local soccer community has, for several years, urged Crew SC to consider a change in the way which we operate youth programming, and the opportunity to partner with a group that will be led by a trusted committee of current Crew SC Player Development employees provides a seamless transition for our players, families, coaches and corporate partners as our business evolves to meet the needs of the youth soccer marketplace," said Crew SC President of Business Operations Andy Loughnane.

Sporting Columbus aspires to be the finest youth sports organization and an integral part of player development, on and off the field. By promoting player development and sportsmanship in an enjoyable environment, Sporting Columbus encourages a healthy lifestyle and love of sports in players of all skill levels and backgrounds throughout the Columbus area. Sporting Columbus is led by Jeffrey Warren, Dave Merrick and Geoff Starks, who have all worked together over the past 20 years and have spent the last seven years with Crew SC within the club's Player Development side of the business.

“We are excited to begin this affiliate partnership with Columbus Crew SC and we look forward to a successful 2018-2019 club season,” said Jeffrey Warren of Sporting Columbus. “Our goal is to provide the same quality programming that the current Crew SC player development families presently experience and we look forward to delivering on that objective.”

Parents with athletes currently registered in Crew SC Player Development programs have been contacted with additional information and more information on Sporting Columbus can be found at (www.SportingColumbus.com). Tryouts for 2018-2019 Player Development teams, under the guidance of Sporting Columbus, will begin Tuesday, May 29 with sign-up information available in the near future.

NOTE TO MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA COVERING COLUMBUS CREW SC

When discussing the organization and the team, please reference the club as “Columbus Crew SC” on first reference as “Crew SC” is an appropriate secondary reference. Both references are singular subjects, while the tertiary reference “Black & Gold,” with the ampersand, is plural. Please note: we no longer use “Columbus Crew” or “The Crew” in our terminology of the club and “The Crew SC” is also not applicable. Our home venue is now known as MAPFRE Stadium and MAPFRE must be in all caps. (*MAPFRE Stadium is pronounced “MAH-fray Stadium”*). The club’s training facility is the Crew SC Training Center at Obetz. If you have brand terminology or badge questions – or need the updated badge and wordmark for your archives – please reach out to a member of Crew SC Communications.

Website: ColumbusCrewSC.com | Twitter: @ColumbusCrewSC | Instagram: @ColumbusCrewSC | Hashtag: #CrewSC | [Facebook.com/columbuscrewsc](https://www.facebook.com/columbuscrewsc) | Snapchat: ColumbusCrewSC | Google+: +columbuscrewsc | Stadium: MAPFRE Stadium | Training Facility: Crew SC Training Center at Obetz

ABOUT COLUMBUS CREW SC

Columbus Crew SC (Soccer Club) is the first club in Major League Soccer and in 2015, Crew SC was crowned MLS Eastern Conference Champions in the organization’s 20th season. Owned and operated by Precourt Sports Ventures (PSV), it won its first MLS Cup championship in 2008 and also won the 2002 Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup as well as MLS Supporters’ Shield titles in 2004, 2008 and 2009. The 2018 campaign is the Black & Gold’s 20th season at historic MAPFRE Stadium -- the first soccer-specific stadium in the United States. The club was purchased by PSV on July 29, 2013 as part of the privately held investment and management firm’s sports and entertainment business enterprise, and the club has qualified for the MLS Cup Playoffs in three of the four seasons since, including winning the Eastern Conference Championship in 2015.

ABOUT SPORTING COLUMBUS

Sporting Columbus aspires to be the finest youth sports organization and an integral part of player growth (on and off the field). By promoting development and sportsmanship in an enjoyable environment, Sporting Columbus encourages a healthy lifestyle and love of sports in its players. Sporting Columbus is founded by Dave Merrick, Geoff Starks and Jeffrey Warren, partners over the past 20 years in various youth sports ventures including the past seven years as Crew SC player development directors. Each founder brings his own set of skills from coaching to business development that overlap and work well together to set-up Sporting Columbus to succeed at achieving its mission.

Website: SportingColumbus.com | Twitter: @SportingCol | Instagram: @Sporting_Columbus | Hashtag: #Sporting_Columbus | [Facebook.com/sportingcolumbus](https://www.facebook.com/sportingcolumbus) | Phone: 614.284.9746