



YMCA OF COLUMBIA COMBINES EFFORTS WITH COLUMBIA UNITED FC TO CREATE ONE OF THE LARGEST RECREATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

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COLUMBIA, S.C. --- Emphasizing more families, more fun and more soccer, the YMCA of Columbia, the area's oldest youth soccer program, has combined efforts with Columbia United FC, Columbia's largest non-profit youth soccer club, to form the Columbia United YMCA Recreational Youth Soccer League.

Open to recreational youth players ages 3–19, the new program will operate its recreational youth soccer league by way of four "Community Divisions" located throughout the Midlands. The Lexington Family YMCA will be serving the West Columbia and Lexington areas; the Northwest Family YMCA and Ballentine Park will serve the Irmo, Dutch Fork, Ballentine and Chapin areas; Owens Field will serve the In-town Columbia and Southeast Columbia areas; the Polo Road Soccer Complex and the Jeep Rogers YMCA in Lake Carolina will both serve the Northeast Columbia area.

"Columbia United FC and the YMCA of Columbia will use this program to emphasize fun while developing life skills including teamwork, sportsmanship, respect and responsibility through the sport of soccer," explained Bryan Madden, YMCA of Columbia CEO. "Additionally, with the price of gas where it is, combining efforts seemed like the most logical choice our two organizations could make to benefit the parents of the thousands of children involved in recreational soccer through the Columbia YMCA and Columbia United FC. Parents will no longer need to drive from Owens Field to Lexington or from Ballentine Park to Polo Road for a fun-filled quality recreational youth soccer match on Saturdays."

The new program will offer both a fall and spring recreational soccer season each comprised of 10 matches per season. Single age teams will be formed with female players having the option of playing on a co-ed team or an all girls team. All players will become registered players of Columbia United FC and the South Carolina Youth Soccer Association. Small teams will be formed in the U4 to U12 age groups to provide players with more touches on the ball, more scoring and more fun. All coaches will receive certified training from Columbia United staff trainers pursuant to guidelines of the United States Youth Soccer Association.

"At Columbia United, providing children with a positive, healthy environment for personal growth through soccer is truly what we are all about and thus we see our missions as the

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same...helping to build strong families, strong children and strong communities throughout the Greater Columbia area,” said Tripp Miller, Co-Director of Soccer for Columbia United FC.

Registration for the upcoming Fall 2008 season is now available online at www.ColumbiaUnitedFC.com or www.ColumbiaYMCA.org. Applications are also available at any Columbia YMCA Branch, at Soccer Plus located at 8502 Two Notch Road in Northeast Columbia or at Corner Kick, Etc. located at 7001 St. Andrews Road in Irmo.

About Columbia United FC

Columbia United FC (“Columbia United”) is a non-profit youth soccer organization founded and run by Greater Columbia Community members whose mission is to serve every child throughout the Greater Columbia area who desires to play soccer at a level commensurate with his or her individual abilities and commitment level regardless of his or her race, religion, gender or socio-economic background, and thereby provide each child a positive environment for growth, cultural understanding and lasting friendship through participation in youth soccer.

For more information, contact Tripp Miller, Co-Director of Soccer, Columbia United FC toll free at 1-866-946-2832 or at tmiller2@sc.rr.com. Also visit the website at www.ColumbiaUnitedFC.com.

About the YMCA of Columbia

The YMCA of Columbia has been a community-transforming institution, not only in the Midlands, but also in the entire United States. The YMCA has impacted thousands of lives for Christ each year, from its inception in 1854, through wartime and peace, through depression and economic boom.

For more information on the recent alliance of the YMCA of Columbia and Columbia United contact Bryan Madden at 803.799.7159 or at BryanMadden@columbiaymca.org. Also visit the website at www.columbiaymca.org.

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