



Arkansas Premier Clubs (APC) Official Members



FOUNDING MEMBERS

A game changer for Arkansas Soccer

FAQ

What is the APC?

Several leading clubs in Arkansas are making a bold move by joining forces to develop innovative player-centric programming for all APC members focusing on higher quality services, organizational effectiveness and expanded opportunities from a player, coach and referee development perspective. All programming will be sanctioned by [US Club Soccer](#).

MISSION: APC is a member-based organization founded in 2018 to enhance the developmental experience of the youth soccer players in our region through:

- Improving the competitive environment through creation of a quality competitive leagues with multiple flights;
- Improving the process for identifying talented soccer players for US Club's ID2/ODP and collegiate programs through a systematic scouting and identification program based on league competitions; and,
- Improving the daily training environment of APC member clubs through developing best practices and training and organizational guidelines for its member clubs.

GOAL: The mission of the APC is to provide innovative, player-centered programming with a constant focus on raising standards and enhancing the player experience in all aspects of the game.

IMPLEMENTATION: The APC is led by a Board comprised of Technical and Coaching Directors of the founding member clubs.

The APC has four primary platforms:

- The Competition Platform
- The Player Identification Platform
- The Club, Coach and Referee Development Platform
- The Players First Platform (Player Health and Safety as part of US Club)

Why the APC?

The leaders of these clubs looked at the current and future direction of Arkansas soccer and determined that for us to be able to *Raise the Game* to a level that is needed for player success, radical change was needed. APC feels that clubs develop players and therefore should be empowered to shape programs that they feel is best for long-term player development. As leaders in the soccer community, these forward-thinking clubs have decided to combine forces by taking the major step of creating an innovative new platform for the betterment of the game in Arkansas and the surrounding region. The platform we've created is a well-thought out vision and plan that will allow the game to take a major leap forward for today's and tomorrow's generation of players.

Who will govern the APC?

APC will be led by the Technical and Coaching Directors of the Member Clubs so that strategic decisions regarding everything impacting player, coach and referee development will be made by soccer professionals.

Does this mean the APC member clubs will no longer be in ASSA/USY? Why?

APC will be the primary competitive platform for their teams, coaches and referees (including their affiliates) so that the programming formats and calendar can be better coordinated from a player development perspective. APC programming will also bring the clubs more closely in alignment with US Soccer Development Academy and ECNL standards and recommendations. We will remain member clubs of the ASSA so that any teams can play in whichever league suits their developmental needs.

We understand the majority of leading clubs will be in the APC but we also notice some missing. Can you explain?

APC is not meant for everyone. The goal for these leading Arkansas clubs is to provide a cutting-edge platform that enhances opportunities for players by unifying the soccer community amongst like-minded clubs around common development standards, philosophies and methods. Interested clubs may apply for membership. Clubs will be selected based on the criteria outlined below.

Is this happening only in Arkansas or in other parts of the country as well?

Around the country and as close as Oklahoma and Texas, there is a trend of like-minded clubs coming together to develop programming sanctioned by US Club Soccer. (View www.usctx.org or www.okpremierclubs.com as an example.) These APC clubs decided now is the time to be forward thinking and take the lead in unifying the soccer community around a common platform. ([View other Premier Leagues.](#))

What will the league format be like?

Teams will be placed by Clubs' Directors in leagues that make the most sense for their development. Multiple divisions for ALL levels possible offering a variety of competitions and development tools will be utilized such as Club Player Pass and playing up. The schedule will also minimize weeknight matches, manage around travel time and coach conflicts, and employ a coordinated calendar. The league will utilize regulation and promotion in between the league divisions to ensure that each is team competing at the proper level.

What about a State Cup and Regional Competition for those that earned it?

APC will offer a year end State Cup for multiple levels with advancement opportunities to US Club's post season competitions including National Cup/Regional Cup (Team Based) and NPL Playoffs (League Based).

Will APC have an "ODP" program?

ODP will be offered as part of US Club's ID2/PDP ODP programs.

APC Scouting Network comprised of coaches from all APC member clubs will be created where a Player ID process will be implemented as part of the everyday natural environment of the player.



Elite players have the opportunity to be selected for inclusion in US Soccer National Training Centers, US Club's ID2 ODP Regional/National program and the potential for a Pro Development Academy.

What will the league schedules look like?

The schedule will be planned for the year and will utilize the GotSoccer platform that most people are used to using. Schedules, procedures, policies and play dates will all be posted.

APC will operate under a collaborative Master Calendar. APC also believes for player development reasons there should be 2-3 quality training sessions per every meaningful game therefore weeknight matches will be minimized.

Will players/teams be allowed to play up?

Players and teams will be allowed to play up with the decisions coming from each respective Club Technical Director/ Director of Coaching.

Will we still play at our home complex?

APC Leagues will employ a home-and-away model so your home league matches will continue to be at your home complex. APC member clubs have control and access to the best and largest home club complexes in Arkansas.

How will this affect our participation in tournaments?

APC Member hosted tournaments will be sanctioned through US Club Soccer and be completely open and fully insured for all US Youth, USSSA or US Club teams to participate. APC member teams will continue to have the option of participating in any open sanctioned US Club or US Youth tournament. Another added benefit is that there is no travel permission required for any APC member teams to participate in any sanctioned tournament or out-of-town event.

What coaching development opportunities will APC offer?

Coaches will continue to have opportunities to enroll in USSF National License courses. An added benefit will be exclusive coach development initiatives through [US Club's La Liga partnership](#) and other APC planned coaching courses.

Will referees be able to get certified and have development opportunities?

Referee certification courses will be offered.

Will the players be covered under insurance?

APC Member Clubs will be certified through [Players First](#) program through US Club Soccer. Extensive Risk Management process through US Club soccer. Supplement Medical Insurance Coverage covers all programming.



What age groups and levels will the new leagues offer?

League programming will be offered for Boys/Girls U11-U19 with multiple divisions that allow for roster flexibility and “playing up” for development. Clubs will operate around a *coordinated calendar* with proper periodization and year round leagues. (Potential to include U9-10 programming and/or partnerships with Oklahoma Premier Club (OPC) Teams).

Can other clubs join APC?

APC is a club-based platform where members must meet certain standards. Interested clubs wishing to become a member may apply. Clubs are selected by the APC Technical Leadership Board using the following criteria:

- 1) APC must be their primary competitive platform
- 2) Quality of facilities
- 3) Size of club, quality of Competitive teams and Juniors/Academy programs
- 4) Quality of leadership and coaching staff
- 5) Administrative capabilities
- 6) Club structure, vision and development philosophy
- 7) Geographic consideration
- 8) Impact to existing APC club members

How does a coach/team apply for APC?

The tremendous excitement of the APC will undoubtedly generate a lot of interest from coaches and teams

wanting to join. To ensure the level of quality remains high, the APC will only consider clubs that meet the criteria outlined above. ***Individual teams or coaches wanting to participate would need to join an APC member club.***

Are the APC member clubs merging?

APC Member Clubs are collaborating to raise the bar in programming and will continue to explore opportunities on how we can partner further for the benefit of soccer in Arkansas. Having said that, each club will continue to operate independently as they do today.

Does this have any impact on the clubs' recreational programs?

The scope for the APC is on the competitive platform. Therefore, there would be no impact in affiliations or programming for each of the respective club's recreational programs for the 2018-2019 season.

Looking forward

The coalescence of the state's top clubs and leaders under one banner, the creation of a platform that empowers and encourages diverse thought, ideas and vision, and the support of and respect for grass roots leaders reflected in every aspect of the league's structure and governance will create a better environment for change, growth and success. The creation of this platform for ALL levels of competitive soccer makes it even more powerful.

We are excited about the future, and we are thankful for the opportunities that we have before us. Thanks to all the players, parents, coaches, referees, volunteers and supporters for your vision and courage, to stand by us as we work toward taking the steps necessary for the benefit of the next generation of the game!

