



FALL 2025



FALL 2025 COACHING MATERIALS

Welcome to the fall soccer season!

We are excited for another season of soccer and are grateful to have your help in creating the best experience for our players and families. FC Exeter's mission is to "support the development of happy, healthy and productive children in our six towns through competitive soccer." We measure our club's success by the robust participation across our six communities, by the positive feedback from our families and by the on-field progress and development of our players and teams.

FC EXETER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Maria Proulx: President

Patrick Garrity: Vice President and Fields Coordinator

Jennifer Young: Treasurer

Jason Faria: Secretary and Director of Coaching and Player Development

BOARD MEMBERS

Ben Bailey

Shane Bradt

Scott Craig

Cathy Golden

Matteo Taormina

Brian Keane

Eric Kelley

Joshua Johnson

Jon Fagan

Michael Hill

COMMITTEES & ROLES

- **Coaching & Academy:** Jason Faria (chair), Ben Bailey, Matteo Taormina, Eric Kelly, Jon Fagan, Cathy Golden
- **Team Formation and Evaluations:** Ben Bailey (chair), Jessica Costa, Shane Bradt, Scott Craig, Michael Hill
- **Equipment:** Cathy Golden, Michael Hill
- **Fields:** Patrick Garrity (chair), Eric Kelley, Joshua Johnson, Brian Keane
- **Tournaments:** Scott Craig (chair), Shane Bradt, Jessica Costa, Jon Fagan
- **High School Division Director:** Matteo Taormina

(Find board member contact email at <https://www.fcexeter.com/board>)

STAFF

Laura Skaal: Club administrator (admin@fcexeter.com)

Jennifer Sherman: Registrar/coach certifications/rosters (registrar@fcexeter.com)

FALL 2025 SEASON OVERVIEW

FC Exeter will field 32 teams with 392 registered players ranging from U9 to U15. All the club's teams will compete in the New Hampshire Soccer League, many in the Coastal Division, which is concentrated in the Seacoast and southern Maine.

Our teams train twice weekly during the fall season and typically have league games scheduled on Saturdays, though there may be instances when playing on weeknights and/or Sundays is necessary. All age levels participate in a midseason tournament during Columbus Day weekend. The season concludes with end-of-season playoffs for ages U11-up.

What the club provides: FC Exeter forms teams, recruits/assigns coaches, offers uniforms for purchase, provides equipment and assigns/maintains home fields for training and games.

What the league provides: New Hampshire Soccer League (soccernh.com/nh-soccer-league) manages game scheduling between clubs, assigns referees, oversees standings and governs postseason tournaments.

IMPORTANT DATES

Aug. 23: FCX Kickoff event at Exeter Rec

Aug. 25: Preseason training begins

Aug. 25: NHSL fall schedule released

Sept. 6: NHSL fall season begins

Sept. 24: NHSL roster freeze. No roster changes will be accepted after this date

Oct 11-13: Capitol Cup tournament

Oct. 26: Final day of NHSL regular season

Nov. 1-3: NHSL Playoffs (U11 and older)

COACHING AND TEAM MANAGEMENT

COACH CERTIFICATION

US Youth Soccer requires SafeSport certification, concussion protocol and background checks. ALL coaches **MUST be certified to before** engaging in practices and be present on the sideline at games and be included in game rosters.

EXPECTATIONS

The club is very grateful to you for your time and commitment to making the season a success. FC Exeter complies with the U.S. Youth Soccer Code of Conduct Policy (found on www.fcexeter.com). We also ask and expect all coaches to agree to the following:

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

- Prioritize individual and team skill development over winning.
- Foster a positive, growth-oriented learning environment.
- Encourage creativity and decision-making on the field.

TEAM MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP

- Communicate effectively with players, parents, and club officials.
- Set clear team goals and expectations for behavior and effort.
- Promote teamwork, respect, and sportsmanship.
- Lead by example with professionalism and integrity.

TRAINING & GAME PREPARATION

- Plan structured, engaging, and progressive training sessions. Practice plans are available from our partners at Seacoast United.
- Arrive prepared and on time for all practices and games.
- Understand and implement proper warm-up routines.
- Ensure all players receive appropriate playing time.
- Adapt tactics to suit the developmental needs of the team.

PARENT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Foster open and respectful communication with parents.
- Educate parents about the priority of player development over team success.
- Encourage positive sideline behavior from parents and spectators.
- Notify a club board member or staff member immediately with any conflicts among parents or opponents.

YOUR SEASON

IN THE PRESEASON

- Go to fcexeter.com and sign into your SportsEngine team management page.
- Get familiar with communication tools in SportsEngine.
- Download the SportsEngine app on your phone so you can manage the team there, too.
- Contact your team through SportsEngine and introduce yourself.
- Confirm practice days and locations with Patrick Garrity, the club's field coordinator.
- When schedules are released on Aug. 25, go to the NHSL website to view your game schedule. Enter practice times and games into the SportsEngine app.
- Plan to hold a parent meeting prior to or following the first practice so you can set your expectations for the season.

GETTING READY TO PRACTICE

- **Confirm practice participants** through SportsEngine. Knowing how many players to expect will help you to plan your training session.
- It is critical to **have a plan** going into each training session. If you need ideas, please ask Jason Faria, director of coaching. Our partners at Seacoast United offer age-level practice plans, as well, and every board member has experience planning training sessions.
- Read on for **some principles of a successful training session**, as adapted from the U.S. Youth Soccer Coaching Manual.
 - Make sure the activity is developmentally appropriate, and the instruction is clear, concise and correct. How instructions are given is crucial when dealing with children. Too much information overwhelms them, and too little information doesn't give them enough to get started. Provide enough information to get them started and then add new challenges.
 - Simple to complex. Are the activities presented in a way that allows for ongoing modifications and new challenges to meet the players interests and abilities? Start simple and progress as you go.
 - Promote decision making. Are there opportunities for the players to make decisions? Where to run or pass the ball. When to pass or run with the ball? Continually steering players on the field may seem logical, but it will only delay their development. You'll never stop steering.
 - Create game-like scenarios and situations. The activities presented in a training session must in some way reflect the demands a player faces in the game. Connect the activity to a scenario they may see on Saturday and explain how the activity will apply in the game.
 - Don't bang your head against the wall. Planning is important. So is adjusting. If an activity does not meet your expectations, or if the players do not seem to be embracing your objective, adjust the plan.
 - Eliminate lines, laps and lectures. Having players stand in lines waiting for their turn is a recipe for boredom and disinterest. Running laps, especially without a ball, is a waste of time and not a lot of fun. Long lectures should be left for the classroom. It also is not productive to design activities that focus on determining a winner. These activities typically involve elements that lead to players being eliminated from the activity — and thus, not playing. Design activities that keep all players engaged throughout the length of the activity.

- End each session with a small-sided game. Even if you only have 4 or 5 players per side, a “real” game to close the session will provide your players an immediate outlet to put into action your instruction from the day.
- The U.S. Soccer Learning Center has excellent resources. Go to <https://learning.ussoccer.com/>.

CANCELING PRACTICE

Coaches can cancel training at their discretion. The club will only cancel training if the fields are deemed to be unplayable or if training will compromise the field for upcoming games.

GETTING READY FOR THE GAME

- **Confirm your roster:** Early in the week, be aware of planned player absences. Should you need to supplement your game-day roster, NHSL allows teams to implement “club passes” of between 3 and 5 players per game. Players can only “play up” in division or age, not down. Reach out to the FC Exeter coach in the lower division at your age level. If a lower division team is not available, reach out to the coach of a team at the next age level. Do not reach out directly to players or families. Add the names of the guest players at the bottom of your roster AND bring a copy of the player’s original team to the game as well as your own
- **Check the NHSL website master schedule** the day before the game to confirm time and location. The league will not notify individual teams of time or site changes.
- **Print three copies of your up-to-date roster.** The league requires each team to provide a roster to the referee and the opposing team’s coach prior to each game.
- **Remember your coach ID.** Coaches must wear their IDs during all games.
- **Check email** to see if the field coordinator or club administrator has sent updates about your game.
- **Ask your players to arrive at least 30-45 mins ahead** of game time for warmups. Players MUST have proper footwear and shin guards to be allowed to compete. Players should always bring both red and blue shirts to games.
- **Plan a proper stretch** and pre-game warm-up activities.

PREPPING ON GAME DAY

- **Game balls:** If you are the home team, provide 2-3 properly inflated game balls.
- **Uniform kit:** In case of a shirt color conflict, the home team must change colors, so always have your players bring both the red and blue shirt to all games.
- **Field prep:** Move the goals into place and retrieve the corner flags from the respective storage shed. The league requires corner flags for game. Pop-up canopies will also be available at many locations to cover home-team bench areas should you choose.
- **Introduce yourself** to the referee and opposing coach to go over field conditions, weather concerns and to talk about whether you’ll be using the 7v7 buildout line for U9-U10 games.
- **Goal differential:** Be aware that NHSL considers goal differentials of more than eight (8) goals in a match to be excessive. In the event a match results in a final score where the final score exceeds an eight- goal difference, both the specific team that exceeded the eight-goal differential AND their member club will be issued a warning. This warning may also be accompanied with a fine or sanction as deemed appropriate by the League Director.

- **Certified coaches only:** Remember that no non-certified personnel are allowed on the team sideline or in the bench area. Spectators should be on the opposite sideline.

COACHING THE GAME

- Establish your **points of emphasis** for the game.
- **Choose a formation** (see options in the appendix for more) and try to avoid too many changes of that formation during the game.
- Balance instruction with **allowing for creativity** and decision-making by the players.
- Ensure every player receives **appropriate playing time**.
- **Have fun!**

AFTER EACH GAME

- Line up the team for handshakes with the other team.
- **Thank the referees.**
- If you have the last game of the day at one of our home fields, follow field instructions below.
- Ask players to remove all trash and belongings from the bench area.
- If you are the home team, **report the score** on the league's website. All scores must be entered within 48 hours of the completion of the match. <https://soccernh.com/nh-soccer-league/score-reporting/>

GAME POSTPONEMENTS & RESCHEDULING

Weather postponements may be made by the field coordinator due to unsafe conditions or inclement weather. **If postponement is required, the field coordinator of the home club will notify all parties by email and text.** Once a game is postponed, the coach MUST:

- Notify his or her players immediately.
- Connect with the opposing coach to discuss rescheduling. If you're the home team, discuss available times, dates and locations with Patrick Garrity, fields coordinator.
- **GAMES MUST BE RESCHEDULED WITHIN 72 HOURS OF THE SCHEDULED GAME.**
- Notify Patrick Garrity, Field Coordinator, and Laura Skaal, Club Administrator, of agreed upon rescheduled game.

REQUESTING A GAME CHANGE

The league has set a high bar for clubs to reschedule games. Clubs are charged a fee of \$35/per game to reschedule — and \$100 if the game is changed within 72 hours of the scheduled date. If you foresee an insurmountable conflict on your schedule — home or away — that will preclude your team from playing, contact Patrick Garrity, Field Coordinator, prior to reaching out to the opposition. Please note: Coaches postponing games without location manager/league approval, or lack of communication with the league, will be made to forfeit and the responsible club will incur a fine of \$300.

OUR FIELDS

FC Exeter borrows or leases field space from town recreation departments, the school district and other partners in our communities.

TRAINING

Space has been procured for weeknights and Saturdays beginning Aug. 25 and continuing through the season. We continue to seek options to give you as much flexibility as possible.

- **We ask that you work together and share space when needed.** Half of a pitch is suitable for a well-organized training session.
- **The club has liability insurance** for our practice and game fields. Do not schedule a training session on an unsanctioned field. If you have access to another space, notify Field Coordinator Patrick Garrity and/or Club Administrator Laura Skaal, and they will work with you.
- **ONLY game fields will be lined.**
- **Some other things** to know about our practice fields:
 - All “Academy” teams (U9-U10) will train concurrently on Tuesdays and Thursdays at a selected field.
 - Exeter Rec storage shed combination: 1-9-6-5
 - Brentwood Rec storage shed combination: 2-2-5-5
 - Stevens Park storage shed combination: 1-6-1-3 or 1-6-1-5

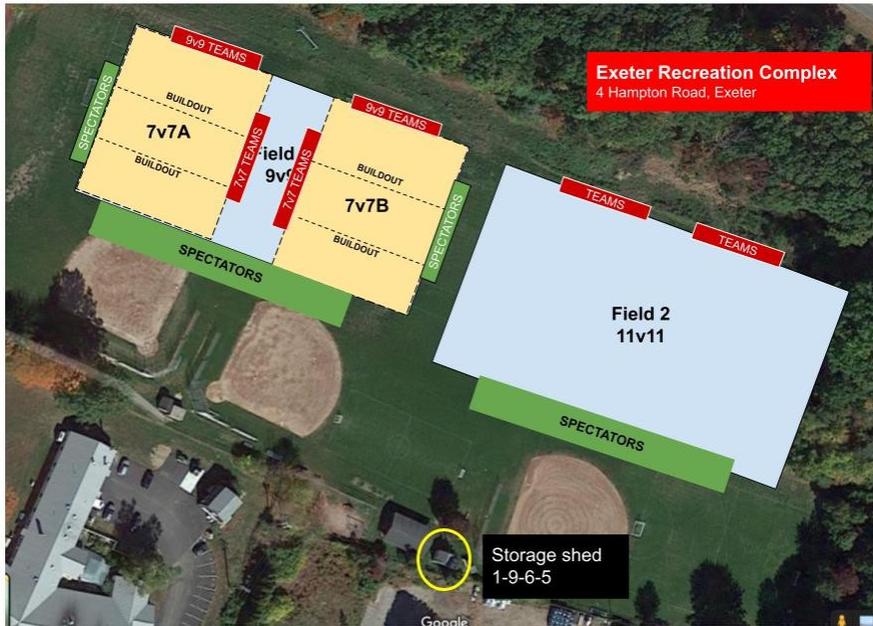
GAMES

Most games will be scheduled on Saturdays starting Sept. 6, though there may be a need to schedule or reschedule make-ups for weeknights and/or Sundays.

- **If you are the first game of the day:** Move the goals into place and retrieve the corner flags from the respective storage shed. The league requires corner flags for game. Pop-up canopies will also be available to cover home-team bench areas should you choose.
- **If you are the last game of the day:** Return corner flags and pop-up canopies to the shed.
- **If you are playing at Exeter Rec:** All goals must be moved off the fields after the final game. The Rec Dept. will designate locations where we need to store the goals.
- **Clean up the field when you leave.** Even if the water bottle or athletic tape ball is not yours, please leave the fields cleaner than you found them.

EXETER REC COMPLEX

Exeter will feature four pitches on two fields, with Field 1 serving as a hybrid with a 9v9 pitch and two 7v7s.



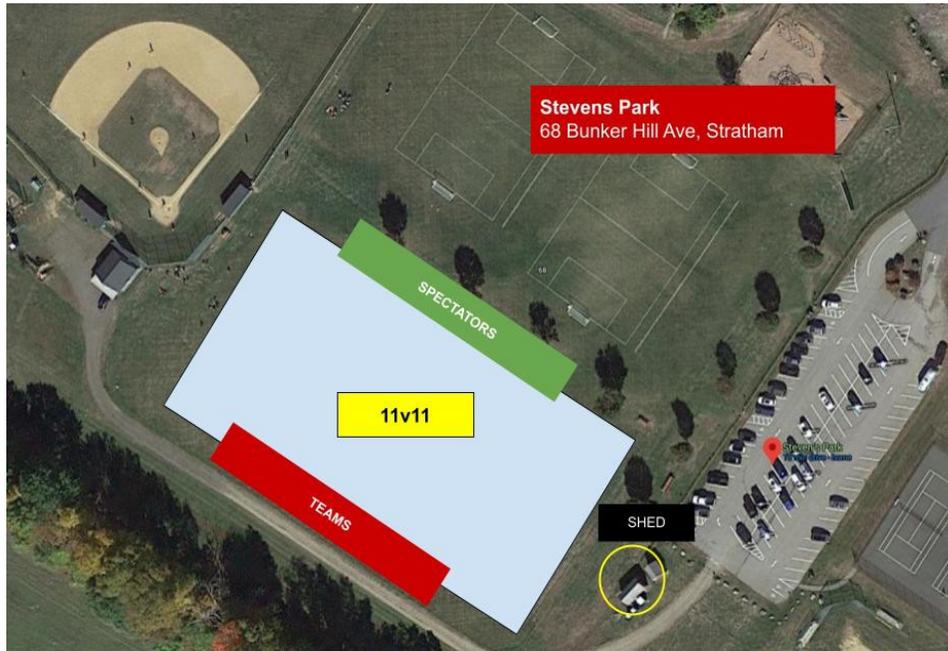
BRENTWOOD REC COMPLEX

We will have a 7v7 and a 9v9 pitch at Brentwood.



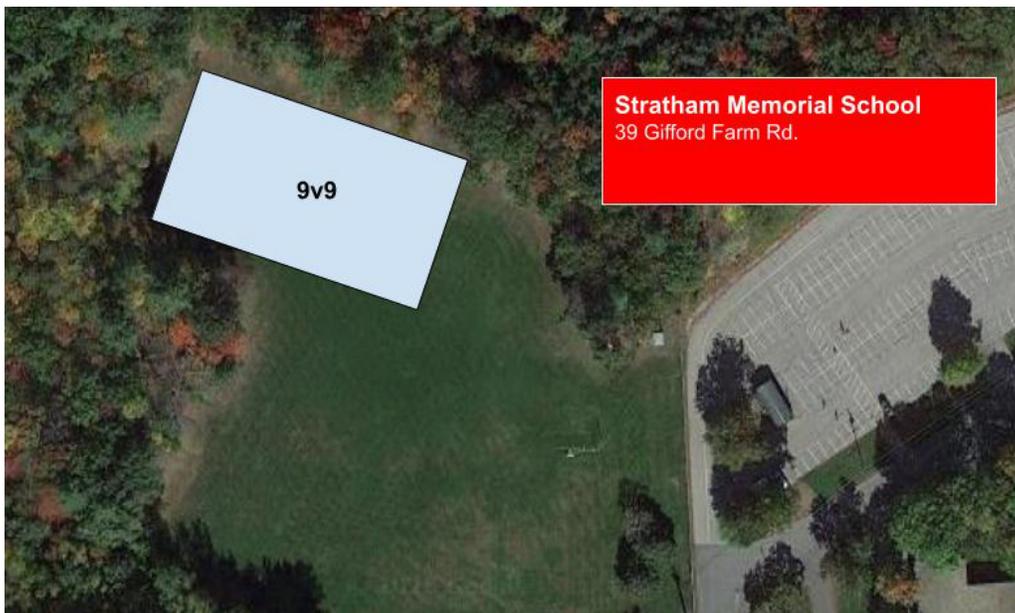
STEVENS PARK, STRATHAM

Stevens will have an 11v11 pitch.

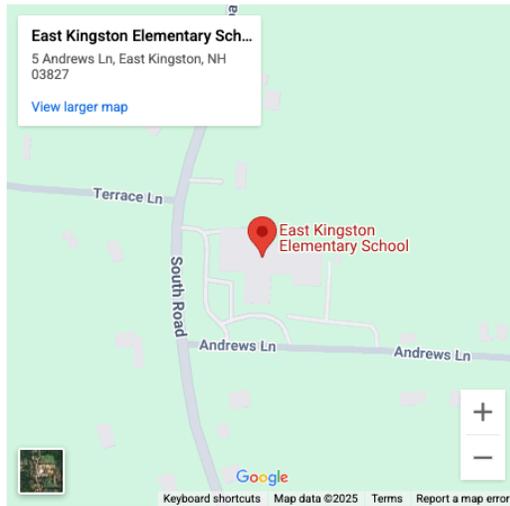


STRATHAM MEMORIAL SCHOOL

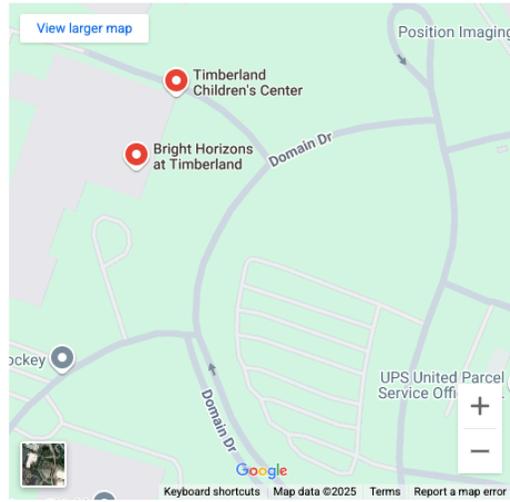
SMS will feature a 9v9 pitch.



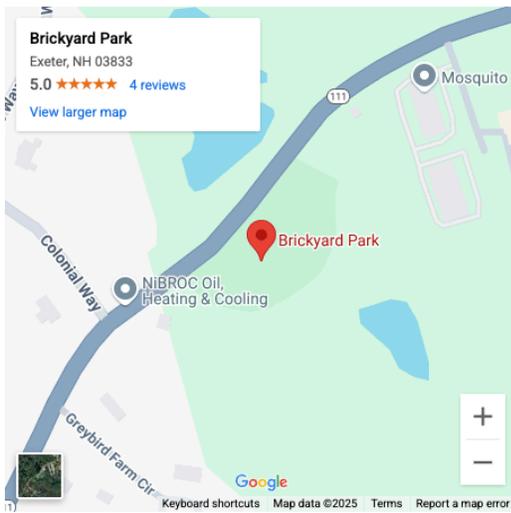
EAST KINGSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



TIMBERLAND



BRICKYARD PARK



FC EXETER CONTACT INFORMATION

Maria Proulx, Club President mmproulx@yahoo.com

Laura Skaal, Club Administrator admin@fcexeter.com

Jason Faria, Coaching Director medfica@gmail.com

Patrick Garrity, Field Coordinator pjgarrityvt@gmail.com

Jenn Young, Treasurer treasurer@fcexeter.com

Jen Sherman, Club Registrar registrar@fcexeter.com

LEAGUE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Find the most up-to-date New Hampshire Soccer League rules at <https://soccernh.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2022-League-Policies.pdf>

POTENTIAL FORMATIONS

7v7: 2-3-1

Establishes paired center backs, use of field width and wing play



9v9: 4-3-1

A progression from the 2-3-1 with outside backs still moving into attack on the wings and midfielders embracing hybrid role of attacking and defending.



9v9: 3-2-3

Attacking formation played best with two strong central midfielder



11v11

There isn't a single "best" formation in soccer, as the most effective formation depends on the team's strengths, the style of play, and the specific tactics employed.

3-4-3



3-5-2



4-3-3



4-4-2



4-2-3-1



