



# Player's Handbook

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## Welcome

### Congratulations & Welcome to Villarreal Virginia Academy!

Dear All,

Firstly, Welcome!

This has been a dream of mine for years, to welcome players living in the United States the opportunity to have a European Club in their back garden. To train under a watchful eye from a professional club. We are not in Spain however Villarreal CF is coming to us, with the Staff and their methodology. Providing opportunity to every member in our club that we had only dreamed of before. A true pathway for players, families and coaches now exists here.

Villarreal Virginia Academy (VIVA) is dedicated to providing consistent, comprehensive and quality development for all of the individual players within our program. This handbook will answer many of your questions and provide guidance on administration, training and how our Club will operate over the season.

Remember, your coaches and trainers will give 100% effort in order for you to succeed as soccer players.

I challenge you as student athletes to give your teammates **the best of “you” at all times**, recognizing that you are now part of a competitive team where the needs of the team, as well as the player, is the guiding priority.

Bo Amato  
Executive Director  
*Villarreal Virginia Academy*  
<http://villarrealvirginia.com>

## Club Rules

### 1) RESPECT

***I will treat my fellow players, opponents, technical staff and administrators with the same respect I deserve myself.***

- a. I will never disrespect a team mate; they are my family on the field.
- b. I will play within the spirit of the game at all times.
- c. I will treat our opponents, regardless of the final score, as players who have sacrificed just like me.

### 2) DISCIPLINE

***I am part of an elite competitive team. I recognize my individual actions impact not just me, but the overall success of the team.***

- a. I will arrive on time and be prepared for all team activities.
- b. I will be attentive and execute everything I am challenged with at 100%.
- c. I will communicate my schedule and conflicts in advance to ensure the team has time to plan.
- d. I will wear the prescribed uniform, training kit and gear; they are symbols of my commitment.

### 3) COMMITMENT

***I am here to grow! I will not let short term challenges destroy my long term passion for the game.***

- a. I will always remember that Soccer is a journey!
- b. I will not allow parents or spectators to distract me during matches or training activities.
- c. I will do my part to always ensure a positive environment.
- d. I will always give my best mentally, physically and emotionally.

## VIVA Philosophies

### **“Excellence”**

We will always be accountable for our actions and recognize that **average is not acceptable**. We will always try to work harder than our opponents. I will embrace my role as a Villarreal CF Virginia Soccer player and recognize my commitment will propel me to the next level.

### **“Be a positive role model in your community”**

We will strive at all times to represent ourselves as a positive role model within our community. We recognize that as student athletes we are also leaders who embody high standards of behavior and civic responsibility.

### **“Volunteer your time to those less fortunate”**

Our character is defined by what we do. We will seek to aid those who can not and recognize that we grow in life and the game by espousing service to others as a standard.

### **“Act professional”**

We are elite athletes and recognize the success of the team is only as strong as the players who cooperate in it. Adopting a professional mind set, I will help the team achieve and myself achieve its goals by staying focused and disciplined.

### **“School is your foundation to life”**

Education and learning are the keys to achieve unlimited goals and to break through boundaries. I will strive to not only be the best player, but the best student in my academic pursuits. I can not achieve without investing in my future.

### **“Remain humble”**

A humble athlete recognizes his limitations. We all come with divinely imposed limitations—limitations meant to humble us. The humble athlete welcomes critique and correction from coaches and teammates. If we're humble, we realize that we have weaknesses, so we welcome correction. If we're humble, we know we need to improve, so we want others to show us where and how. The humble athlete acknowledges the contribution of others. No athlete accomplishes anything alone.

### **“Sportsmanship”**

We will support and believe in fair play and respect everyone; regardless of our opponent's behavior.

### **“Gratitude”**

I will never forget that I am blessed to be allowed to pursue my dreams and passion!

## Uniforms

All VIVA soccer players must purchase required uniforms and gear. This includes all home, away, third kit, training gear and warm-ups. *NOTE: Due to security concerns, no last names are authorized to be on the back of the jersey.*

Every player should wear the prescribed attire to all non-match activities and training sessions. **Players should bring both HOME & AWAY kits to official league matches or tournaments in case there is a uniform color clash.**

**Please contact Springfield Soccer for Uniforms: 6230 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA 703 866-4625**  
**Please Note** – Only Yellow Kit and Ball is purchased – Tracksuit top is optional – Cost approx. \$130  
You need to place your order soon.



Figure 1 VIVA Kit 2018-2019

## Communication

Communication is extremely important for any organization so be successful and this is the same with a youth soccer club, in fact it may actually be more important!

Firstly, you must check your registration account and make sure that the email addresses in your registration match the email you wish to receive communication from. You may add multiple email addresses if this is needed.

Secondly, please download the teamsnap app on your mobile device. This can be downloaded from the app store or Google Play for free.



Please be advised that we will be user instructions will be placed on the website.

Lastly every team will have a team manager, treasurer and tournament coordinator. Emails will come out from the managers and they will also be listed on the Website.

## League Information

### VA Premier Soccer League - ECNL Regional League – ECNL-RL



## ECNL Regional League

**BOYS** - The 2021-2022 season will feature ten Regional Leagues: Carolinas, Florida, Heartland, Northeast, Northwest, Ohio Valley, SoCal, Southeast, Texas and Virginia. Each ECNL Boys Regional League is structured slightly differently, reflecting the unique needs and desires of the participating clubs, geography, and more.

ECNL Boys Regional Leagues are operated and managed so as to ensure a consistent environment and level of professionalism across all leagues, facilitating more club connectivity between levels of play and providing a path for more players within each Member Club to reach their fullest potential. Each league allows for coordination and collaboration between the teams of different levels within ECNL clubs, or opportunity for teams and players in other clubs to develop through regular high-level competition.

The ECNL Boys Regional Leagues will offer a pathway to the ECNL Boys Regional League Finals, held in conjunction with the ECNL Boys Playoffs in San Diego, CA.

**GIRLS** - The 2021-2022 season will feature thirteen Regional Leagues: Florida, Heartland, New England, North Atlantic, North Texas, Northwest, Ohio Valley, Southwest, South Atlantic, Southeast, Texas, USC and Virginia. Each ECNL Girls Regional League is structured slightly differently, reflecting the unique needs and desires of the participating clubs, geography, and more.

ECNL Girls Regional Leagues are operated and managed so as to ensure a consistent environment and level of professionalism across all leagues, facilitating more club connectivity between levels of play and providing a path for more players within each Member Club to reach their fullest potential. Each league allows for coordination and collaboration between the teams of different levels within ECNL clubs, or opportunity for teams and players in other clubs to develop through regular high-level competition.

The ECNL Girls Regional Leagues will offer a pathway to an ECNL Girls Regional League Post-Season, featuring two stages. The ECNL Regional League Championship Series will consist of four regional events held across the country to qualify into the ECNL Regional League Finals along with additional

automatic qualifiers from ECNL Regional Leagues, which will be held in conjunction with the ECNL Girls Post-Season.

- Focused on long-term player development.
- For the country's top soccer clubs, allowing consistent, meaningful high-level games appropriately scheduled with higher training-to-game ratios.
- That allows players to be scouted and evaluated by U.S. Soccer National Staff Scouts, and Technical Advisors.
- designed and structured by the clubs, based on the needs of the clubs; and
- meaningful matches provide an avenue for qualification for the NPL Finals.
- Properly structured youth soccer clubs are the vehicle through which player development occurs in the United States.
- Clubs should play in leagues that provide meaningful games, allow establishment of the proper training-to-game ratio, and eliminate calendar congestion.
- NPLs, as well as the best clubs, should be integrated in US Club Soccer's id2 National Identification and Development Program, include Player Development Programs (PDPs) in select local markets, and work closely with U.S. Soccer staff regarding player identification, and player and coach development.

The targeted destination for all NPL teams, and the culminating event each season, is the NPL Finals (formerly known as the NPL Champions Cup), where NPL national champions are determined. The NPL Finals feature qualifiers in U-13 through U-18 boys and girls age groups from every NPL across the country in a true "champions league" competition.

## Elite Clubs National League (ECNL) – Regional League Virginia



ECNL Regional League – Virginia will become the newest competition platform in the ECNL this August, providing a new competitive pathway [to the ECNL Open Cup](#) for clubs across Virginia.

The VPSL Currently includes 11 clubs competing from U11 to U19 in the NPL. The league hosts the US Club Soccer Virginia State Championship and annually provides a variety of coaching education opportunities for its clubs. These and other league programs will continue in their current form as the league transitions to the ECNL Regional League platform.

## Virginia Premier Soccer League – VSPL – US Club Soccer



Virginia Premier Soccer League is a club to club model focused on player development in a competitive and structured environment. It is a platform

that is the Virginia ECNL-RL that leads to showcase, state cup, regional and national championships.

## National Capital Soccer League (NCSL)



The National Capital Soccer League (NCSL) is the primary League for Virginia, Maryland and Washington DC on a team v team schedule. All games are local and against similar level teams based on seasonal promotion and relegation.



## US Youth Soccer National League

The US Youth Soccer National League competition is for the nation's top teams in the 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 18U boys and girls age groups. The 14U and 15U divisions consist of a total of 16 teams per gender age group, while the 16U through 18U gender age groups feature 32 teams each. The National League offers additional exposure to collegiate, professional and U.S. National Team coaches and offers the highest level of competition in the country as each team must earn their place in the league. National League teams continue play in their respective US Youth Soccer Regional Leagues and State Championships to complete their competitive calendar.

Teams play a seven-game schedule over two weekends, facing each team within its age group division one time. The League consists of three weekends of play per gender, with each team playing two of the three weekends. The top teams from each division advance to the US Youth Soccer National Championships, the oldest and most prestigious youth soccer national championship in the country. The four National League representatives will join the four Regional Champions in the 14U through 18U age groups to play for the National Championship.

## USL Super-Y League



The Super Y-League is a youth soccer summer league with teams from the United States and Canada. Founded in 1999, the Super Y League is dedicated to the progression of future professional players and has steered the course for development of elite clubs, players and coaches. Affiliated with U.S. Soccer, the Super Y League has opened countless doors for players to be identified for U.S. National Team programs. The Super Y League contains the youth academies of Major League Soccer, United Soccer League and Premier Development League clubs. The league also serves clubs looking to develop the game from the ground up.

## Players First Club

players, which emphasizes the development of each individual to his or her full potential, and helps parents make better choices about where their children should play. In order to help members adopt Players First, US Club Soccer is

providing a suite of best-in-class resources, which add value to clubs, coaches, parents and players.

Players First was founded on five pillars:

- **Club Development:** Soccer clubs are the foundation on which American soccer will maximize growth and long-term success on the field. Players First provides an array of resources to aid in the growth and development of clubs.
- **Coaching Development:** Clubs should encourage their coaches to continually seek out new educational opportunities, and Players First provides resources to help coaches to grow.
- **Player Development:** Players First provides tools to clubs and coaches to encourage their players to individually invest in their own development.
- **Parent Engagement & Education:** Players First provides a framework for parents to understand how to value their child's soccer experience, replacing the reliance on match outcomes, which has served to hinder proper player development methodology.
- **Player Health & Safety:** Players First provides resources to help clubs and coaches better ensure the health and safety of their players.

## Player Development Program

US Club Soccer's National Premier Leagues (NPL) is not only designed to provide top-level competition for participating clubs, they are also created to help improve the long-term player development environment for participating players and teams. Each NPL provides multiple avenues for players to be scouted and evaluated by U.S. Soccer National Staff and Technical Advisors and US Club Soccer id2 Program staff.

This scouting process is operated through the id2 National Player Identification and Development Program and Player Development Programs (PDP), each of which is sanctioned as an Olympic Development Program approved by the United States Olympic Committee and U.S. Soccer Federation. Beyond this event-based objective scouting process, players can also be recommended for the id2 Program and PDP by participating coaches based on their performance in NPL competitions.

US Club Soccer's id2 Program provides an opportunity for the country's elite youth soccer players to be identified and developed, while also being scouted for inclusion in U.S. Soccer's National Team programs. A comprehensive national scouting and recommendation program is used to form a player pool from which top players are invited to attend an id2 Program Training Camp. There is no cost to the player to be recommended or scouted for the id2 Program or PDP events.

Centered on the NPL, PDPs are regionally-based identification and development programs conducted within the id2 Program. PDP invitations are based upon scouting within the hosting NPL, scouting of NPL clubs and other nearby clubs, as well as recommendations from Directors of Coaching. From this scouting and recommendation process, top players are invited to attend PDP events, which are one way for players to advance into an id2 Program Training Camp, as id2 Program scouts are on-site at all PDP events to scout players for potential inclusion.

For more information on the id2 Program, [click here](#).  
For more information on PDPs, [click here](#).



## Club Operations

## Training

Villarreal CF Director of Methodology, Julio Salinas, will implement the VCF training methodology here in the Villarreal Virginia Academy. Julio and Villarreal CF staff will work with the players and coaches on successfully implementing this methodology in Virginia in order to continue the long tradition of excellence here in the United States. This will involve working with the coaches on a daily and consistent basis over the year. As a player centric program, Julio has made it very clear to our Directors that individual development is important and is a continual experiential process.

We will start informal training the week of July 16, 2018. The reason this is informal is because many families are still on vacation and we do not want players to miss sessions, so please understand that these sessions are informal.

A schedule will go on the website in less than the first week of July.

## Standard Practice Etiquette

- Arrive to practice on-time (*15 minutes early*) and be ready to play. This includes wearing all required training gear and kit.
- Notify coaches ahead of time if player will miss a practice, game, or scrimmage.
- Play as hard, or harder, in practice as you do in a game. 100% philosophy applies.
- Check the team website or email for any rainouts or changes, weather permitting. We will practice or play in most weather...except lightning.
- Work on soccer skills, alone or in groups, while waiting for practice to start.
- Be mindful and respectful of coaches and other players. This includes paying attention to the instructions of the coaches.
- Players are expected to help clean up the practice area, leaving the field as we found it.

Remember, you should come to training sessions with an alert mind to learn new things! The attitude to try new skills and techniques is very important to become your best. You will be challenged at training to push yourself by your coaches and your teammates. Take on that challenge and you'll find your game getting better and better.

## Standard Game Etiquette

- Arrive to games 30 minutes (or as directed) before start-time ready to play, including all required gear. Be prepared to focus on the activity at hand.
- Notify coaches ahead of time if player will miss a game, or scrimmage. Line-ups may need to be altered.
- Play hard, play safe, and have fun! 110% philosophy applies.
- Play the position the coaches assign to you without complaint. Show respect for the decisions of the coaches in regard to team and player development.
- Bring both home and away jerseys to all games, tournaments, and scrimmages.
- Substitutions will occur during games according to the rules set forth by that league. Coaches and staff will determine playing time and substitution schedule.
- Players and parents will be respectful and mindful of other players, other parents, staff, and officials.
- Parents will be mindful not to "coach" their child from the sideline or interfere with the match or flow of the game. Parents instead are encouraged to cheer and support players with positive comments

- No taunting Opponents, No laughing at Opponents, No arguing with Referee.
- Act Classy
- No Moaning

## Player Safety

Having a safe and injury free season is the number one goal of your coaches! No sport or athletic activity is worth causing serious injury or long-term harm to a player.

**NOTE: It is critical that any chronic or seasonal medical conditions are identified to coaches prior to participating in strenuous activity.**

### Injuries

The season can be very demanding. Injuries can happen and players should be honest with coaches and parents about being injured. If a player sustains an injury or is experiencing some discomfort, he should see the coach or their parent immediately.

Please inform the coaches if before, during or after any practice or game activity if discomfort or pain is experienced by the player. Concussions as an example are a serious issue for youth soccer players! Constant, open and honest communication is critical to avoid injuries.

### Nutrition

Taking care of one's health as a player is paramount. One of the ways the athlete can do this is **to eat right and get enough rest**. Players should make sure they have the proper amount of fruits, vegetables, carbohydrates and proteins in their diet. They should stay away from energy drinks, candy, and other food high in sugar.

IMPORTANT - Since players often eat lunch early in the day, they are very hungry by practice or game time. They should plan for this and bring a snack, such as a piece of fruit, mixed nuts, energy bar, etc so that they are properly fueled for an afternoon of activity. Too often, their performance will suffer because they have run out of fuel.

**All players are required to bring sufficient amounts of water to remain hydrated throughout practices and games. It is critical all players hydrate adequately at least 20 minutes before and after all activity!**

### Concussions

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION? A concussion is a temporary disruption of brain function caused by a sudden force transmitted to the head. We worry about concussions for a few reasons. The first is the rare chance that another blow to the head, even a mild one, while the brain is still vulnerable from the first injury could lead to severe brain swelling. Secondly, there is concern that multiple concussions could eventually add up to permanent problems with thinking and memory. Finally, even if they are short-lived, concussion symptoms can interfere with learning and social interaction during a crucial period of development in a young person's life.

To help recognize a concussion, Refer to the following signs & symptoms:

#### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

##### SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)

##### SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy

An athlete should never return to play or even exercise while experiencing any concussion symptoms. In fact, anyone suspected of having suffered a concussion should not play again that same day even if symptoms clear up quickly. Remember the adage “when in doubt, sit it out”.

An athlete with a concussion should be evaluated by a medical doctor who can rule out other serious problems and then guide the gradual return to sports. The road back requires several days and should always be taken even more slowly with kids because young, developing brains may be more vulnerable. A general plan consists of a period of physical and mental rest followed by a trial of aerobic exercise such as running then solo soccer drills. If each step is performed without any symptoms or problems with brain function, it’s time to progressively reintroduce heading.

## Points Of Contact

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