

The Second Year Was Great!

That's right. The North Alabama *FUTSAL* League is now over two years old with four seasons, winters and summers, a total of six 8-week sessions, a youth futsal player camp, an adult futsal player clinic, and two futsal referee clinics conducted, all of which enjoyed by over 100 youth players, over 160 adult players, and 20 futsal referees! Weekly team standings led to announcing division winners including INTER Huntsville, M.A. Real Madrid, Bro-kin-toe, The Expendables, and Laces FC. Congratulations to all.



While these are very impressive numbers to report they are also very ironic. In many other countries youth play futsal while waiting to get their chance to play outdoor soccer. This reverse priority should be seriously considered by US soccer clubs in order to rapidly increase the speed of youth soccer skills development. But don't take the opinion of the authors of this newsletter, take the opinions of Pele, Ronaldo, Zidane, Ronaldino, Vieira or Falcao, and the most recent great Lionel Messi who credit playing futsal during their youth for giving them their accomplished skills in their professional soccer careers.

Locally, this past summer season included two "firsts". A youth futsal academy was organized and conducted for the first time this summer to the benefit of the participants. An adult "house" team was formed for the first time this summer, which allowed more players to participate in the great game of futsal than otherwise. On top of that, a Golden Boot Award was tracked and awarded to the highest scoring adult player in the summer season.

1st

Teams who have enjoyed playing in the North Alabama *FUTSAL* League thus far include:

- Youth Teams -

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| AC Huntsville | M.A. Bayern Munich |
| Huntsville Rovers | M.A. Liverpool |
| INTER Huntsville | M.A. Real Madrid |

- Adult Teams -

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| A-Team, | Herrricanes, |
| Asian Assassins, | Laces FC, |
| Bro-kin-toe, | Manchesthair, |
| Challengers, | Melting Pot, |
| Dublin em Dois, | Triad, |
| The Expendables, | Wang Chung |

Futsal Venues

North Alabama *FUTSAL* has enjoyed using the gyms at Ed White Middle School, at The Launch Pad (home of Rocket City Volleyball Club), Providence Elementary School, Liberty Middle School and Oakwood University. The league will continue to rent/adapt basketball gyms while permanent futsal courts are being built in the Huntsville area. Yes, there ARE such being planned to be built in the near future. A replacement for the Joe Davis Stadium in Huntsville is currently being planned in detail and will have futsal courts marked concentric with basketball courts. The Madison Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2014-2025 states the need for at least two futsal courts in a multiple-purpose indoor recreation building. So today the participants in the North Alabama *FUTSAL* League are the pioneers of much more to come.

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About Futsal

Futsal is a fast paced version of soccer played on hard surfaces with small sided teams. The action is non-stop and high scoring, encouraging exciting individual and team play that thrills spectators. It is one of the world's fastest growing sports, and it is now taking off in Huntsville and the surrounding areas.

Futsal, short for futbol de sala, first gained popularity rapidly throughout South America, particularly in Brazil, and is now played throughout Europe, North and Central America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia – in every country considered to be a soccer power.

Great soccer superstars such as Pele, Robinho, Zidane, Ronaldino, Falcao, Ronaldo and Messi grew up playing futsal and credit it with developing their acquired skills.

Local Player's Experience Playing Futsal

When I found out that there was a new futsal league starting, I knew I had to be a part of it. I had played futsal previously at Virginia Tech and enjoyed it immensely. Futsal is basically a fast-paced, short field, soccer variant. It demands quick thinking and great foot skills for success. The short field usually results in lots of shooting and high scoring. The clock stops for outages/fouls like basketball during the last two minutes of each half which can lead to big score changes in the last part of each half. Subbing is on the fly, like hockey, but thankfully not like hockey in that player to player contact is limited to more like basketball. The fast-paced nature is great for increasing individual quickness. The indoor venues keep the games going even during inclement weather.



I've been playing in the North Alabama *FUTSAL* League since its inaugural season. I started on a team named Bro-Kin-Toe, but now have my own team, The Expendables. Every season has been a blast. The venue has changed, but the games have stayed the same. My team has been league champions several times. For next season we are planning to add a few more players and then divide into two teams so the league will have more teams.

For me, futsal is more than just a great way to keep in shape in the off seasons. It's also great fun.

-- Written by Mike Trice, Adult Player

Benefits of Playing Futsal

- Develops better ball control and technical skill
- Develops better possession, more precise passing and shooting
- Develops quick reflexes and decision making skills
- Small courts help develop offensive and defensive skills.
- Small spaces result in proper timing of runs to create space for the attack
- All of the above are transferrable to the outdoor game

A Coach's Perspective on Playing Futsal

"Dad, can I play futsal this year?" It was the second year in a row that my 9 year old son, Ethan, wasn't going to get to play futsal. He was bummed. As coach of River City United Soccer Club (RCUSC) Monrovia 05 team, we were trying for the second season to play. There just weren't enough teams registered with the league in this age group. As a U.S. Futsal Federation referee in previous seasons, I watched an older youth team divide-up each night to play futsal against themselves. I was amazed at how the player's skills and their team-play were refined in only those 2-3 short seasons. Still, our young team didn't have enough players to break-up and play amongst ourselves and for yet another season these kids would be side-lined.

In a last ditch effort, I approached Darrell Schmidt, President of North Alabama *FUTSAL*, about an academy-style futsal session for U9-U11. He was excited about the possibility. We drafted a plan for the first ever North Alabama Youth Futsal Academy. Now, we've all seen 2-5 day camps/clinics that cost anywhere from \$100-\$300 per player. I'm not saying those camps/clinics aren't good or aren't worth the cost, but it was important to us that cost was not an issue for youth players to come and play this beautiful game. Darrell and I worked diligently for several weeks: phone calls, emails, in-person visits, trying to find low cost locations, equipment, supplies, etc. We even modified the facility ourselves. In the end we got cost down to \$38 per player for the 6-week academy, including an academy T-shirt at no additional cost! At



the end of registration we had more than double our original estimate of players, mostly from my RCUSC Monrovia team and Rocket City United Development Academy (RCUDA). We were ready to play!

June 23, 2015, we launched the first night North Alabama Youth Futsal Academy. We had formed a curriculum for each night focused on instruction, drills/skills, and small-sided games. A lot was learned in the first four weeks: 4-seconds to kick-in (not throw-in), substitutions on the fly (much like hockey), futsal nuances for goal keepers, 5 fouls then penalty kick from the 2nd penalty mark ...did you say 2nd penalty mark? Players also observed and practiced foot-work skills made famous by players such as, Zinedine “The Wizard” Zidane, Johan Cruyff and Cristiano Ronaldo. One of the most important things players learned in this academy is how to play the game in a “Total Futbol” environment that is propagated when playing futsal. “Total Futbol” is a tactical theory of play in which any outfield player can take over the role of any other outfield player on the same team during dynamic play.



The initial 4 weeks built up to the climactic event, a two week tournament of 3 teams, Bayern Munich, Liverpool, and Real Madrid. As the old saying goes, the game is the best teacher! We were amazed as we watched these players incorporate what they learned in the first four weeks and display some beautiful skill, team-play, combination passes, and shots. Some highlights replay in my mind even as I write this article. I’m not saying that this 6-week Academy made a “Falcao” out of each of these players, but if you saw them at the beginning and fast forwarded to the end, I know you would also be amazed.

It’s my hope that this is only the early stage of youth Futsal in North Alabama and that more players, teams, and clubs will play futsal the right way, according to the laws already in place. I know these kids gained a deeper passion for a game that they finally got to play. As for me, I was rewarded with seeing the game played in its purest form, by children, for fun, incorporating their own creative style of play. These were the greatest moments of the academy I was privileged to witness.

-- Written by Benjamin Senior, Coach of Youth Team

About North Alabama FUTSAL

Based on values of safety, excellence, player development, passion and enjoyment, North Alabama FUTSAL is a sport league dedicated to the growth of the game of futsal in the cities of North Alabama. We began in Huntsville by organizing seasons of futsal games for both youth and adult teams, hosting futsal referee clinics, and conducting futsal player camps. We plan to expand to do the same in other cities in North Alabama in addition to hosting futsal tournaments and futsal coach clinics soon. Our ultimate goal is to establish futsal as its own sport and, through the benefits to players from playing futsal, see great improvement in individual skills of soccer players from North Alabama and their reputation across Alabama.

Options for Playing Futsal

- With existing facilities, teams and schedules, North Alabama FUTSAL can provide referees for your games.
- With only a facility, North Alabama FUTSAL can help form your teams, create schedules, provide referees, maintain standings and provide awards to the winners or participants.
- With nothing more than players with their player gear (uniforms, shinguards, shoes), North Alabama FUTSAL can provide everything else.

Winter 2015/16 Season Plans

This coming winter season should be exciting because of the following activities being planned:

- Winter season league games – youth and adult divisions
- North Alabama USFF futsal tournament in January (MLKjr Day weekend)
- Southeast Regional USFF futsal tournament in February (President’s Day weekend)



PRICE REDUCTIONS

For the summer season 2015, North Alabama FUTSAL offered a 10% team fee discount for paying on time. We’re happy to announce this fee reduction is now being made permanent with an additional 10% discount for paying on time again before this winter season. That’s 10% off followed by another 10% off. This is a significant team fee reduction. For example, in the first three seasons of North Alabama FUTSAL the adult team fee was \$595.00. Now it will be only \$495.00 if paid on time - \$550.00 otherwise. See the Registration / Team Registration Details page on www.nafutsal.org for all divisions’ team fees. Notice while viewing this webpage that there is a Bring Your Own Court (BYOC) option that cuts the team fee in half!

Sponsors

The following companies were sponsors of North Alabama *FUTSAL* in the second year:

- *Gold Level* -

Noble Harber, EdwardJones, Madison, AL

- *Bronze Level* -

Sidelines Family Pub & Grub, Madison, AL

Soccer U.S.A, Inc., Huntsville, AL



Please show your appreciation by visiting these sponsors' businesses. Additional sponsors will help offset the costs to teams to play even further. If you know of a company who would like to have their company name displayed numerous times during North Alabama *FUTSAL* activities, have them view the [sponsor page](#) and contact N. A. *FUTSAL* at www.nafutsal.org/index_files/Page12354.htm to discuss.

Upcoming Events

Some important dates to plan for:

9/21/2015 – Winter Season Team Registration opens

9/24/2015 – **Mandatory Team Captains/Managers Meeting**

10/14/2015 – Adult Team Fee Pymt Deadline for 10% off

10/21/2015 – Youth Team Fee Pymt Deadline for 10% off

11/2/2015 – Adult Division Futsal **Games Begin** this week

11/9/2015 – Youth Division Futsal **Games Begin** this week

All calendar entries can be viewed at

www.nafutsal.org/index_files/Page13323.htm

The Rules Corner

Futsal does not have Goal Kicks as is used in soccer. Futsal uses Goal Clearances a.k.a. keeper throws. In futsal sometimes goalkeepers are whistled for not performing a Goal Clearance correctly. Why? The FIFA Futsal Laws of the Game define the “correct” procedure:

1st, while restarting the game with a goal clearance, all opponents must be outside the penalty area of the team taking the goal clearance until the ball is in play.

2nd, there are requirements for taking a Goal Clearance:

- The ball is thrown from any point inside the penalty area by the goalkeeper of the defending team
- The goalkeeper of the defending team takes the goal clearance within four seconds of being ready to do so
- The ball is in play when it exits the penalty area

So what could go wrong? Here’s what could go wrong:

- The goalkeeper, eager to throw the ball to a teammate, throws the ball before returning to the penalty area. When this happens, goalkeepers are required to perform the goal clearance again.
- The goalkeeper takes longer than 4 seconds to throw the ball. When this happens, the opponents are awarded an indirect free kick from the point on the penalty area line straight out from where the goalkeeper was when 4 seconds expired.
- The ball either does not leave the penalty area or, more common, is touched by a player before exiting the penalty area. In either case, goalkeepers are required to perform the goal clearance again.
- If, after the ball has been properly put back into play, the goalkeeper plays the ball before being touched by any other player, the opponents are awarded an indirect free kick from the point where the goalkeeper played the ball.

The first and second mistakes above are unique to futsal. But the third mistake above is identical to what can happen in soccer during the taking of a goal kick and the ball does not exit the penalty area or is touched by a player before exiting the penalty area. So this is not something a soccer player should have to learn about futsal.



The last mistake above often happens when the goalkeeper forgets he/she is restarting play a missed shot. After making a save the goalkeeper may throw the ball forward and immediately start dribbling it. But he may not do so on a goal clearance. The alternate name “keeper throw” is good to use because it reminds everyone that the ball is to be thrown – not kicked – and thrown by the goalkeeper.

Knowing the proper way to perform a Goal Clearance or keeper throw will make playing futsal more fun.

North Alabama *FUTSAL*’s New Logo

The design of a league logo has been completed. It shows the league name and colors and a Brazilian player over the counties of North Alabama. When you see this logo think of quality futsal:

