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Austin FC Academy to launch in 2019; U14 head coach and interim facility named

AUSTIN, Texas—Austin FC's development academy, Austin FC Academy, will formally begin play in August by introducing the Under 14 (U14) team, which will compete in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy 2019-20 season. Players born in 2006 or later will be eligible. Tyson Wahl, named Austin FC's Academy's general manager on January 4, will oversee Academy operations.

"Austin FC Academy will aim to create the best developmental platform and professional pathway for the most-talented youth soccer players throughout the region, regardless of socioeconomic status or where they live" Wahl said. "Our goal is to build the most successful academy program in the United States, and our long-term vision is to make Austin proud by eventually adding countless Austinites to our MLS roster as "homegrown players."

Wahl played 11 years in Major League Soccer, was an All-American at Cal Berkeley, and was a member of the U17 US Residency and Youth World Cup team. Most recently, he was the Youth Development Director for the Austin Texans.

Austin FC Academy will be a fully funded program that removes the burden of registration, uniform and travel fees for players and their families who are accepted to the academy. All Major League Soccer clubs are mandated to operate developmental academy teams that compete at the highest level and offer top-tier training, development, and coaching for aspiring young soccer players.

Junro Narita, the technical director at St. Stephen's Soccer Academy and a former professional, US Development Academy, and Japanese League coach, was named head coach of the Austin FC Academy U14 team. Narita, who holds a USSF A license, USSF National Youth license and USSF National Instructor license has successfully guided many local players and coaches across his 12-year coaching career.

"Austin FC Academy will establish a clear playing identity that is attack-minded, possession-oriented, intelligent and creative," Narita said. "My personal belief is that soccer provides an outlet to youth to instill life lessons and values, and I look forward to starting a new journey with the most talented young players in the region."

Austin FC also announced that the U14 Austin FC Academy team will train and play competitive matches at St. Stephen's Soccer Academy on an interim basis until it moves to Austin FC's permanent training facility.

"Austin FC Academy is proud to have formed a strong partnership with St. Stephen's Soccer Academy where our players will have access to the best fields, indoor spaces and gyms in the greater-Austin area," Wahl said.

Interested and qualified potential players born in 2006 are encouraged to complete a recruiting form at <https://www.austinfc.com/#academy>. Austin FC Academy will hold invite-only player identification practice sessions in April and May to establish the U14 Academy team. After the U14 team is selected, Austin FC Academy will also begin the Center of Excellence training program for players born in 2007 and 2008.

This program will identify and develop potential players for future Austin FC Academy teams and age groups, and it is important to note that players invited to participate within the Center of Excellence training program will not be asked to leave their current youth club.

The Center of Excellence program will consist of training sessions once per week for two 9-week cycles for both the Fall and Spring. Austin FC Academy staff will also closely scout 2004 and 2005 age groups for potential team formation for the 2020-2021 Academy season.

The Austin FC Academy recruiting form is open to birth years 2004-2009, and Austin FC will actively scout players in that age range who demonstrate talent and a high degree of moral character.

Austin FC does not have plans to form recreational or select level teams.

For more information about Austin FC Academy, please visit our [website](#) or follow us on Twitter at [@AustinFCAcademy](#).