



# The Storm Watch

VOLUME 11 ISSUE 9

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## Board of Directors

- President: Mike McGonagle
- VP: Kevin Murtha
- Treasurer: Brian Lundy
- Secretary: Ann Fuller
- Directors:
  - Susan Eaton
  - Toby Gutierrez
  - Les Hatter
  - Kevin Koegel
  - Mark Miller
  - Gran Roe
  - Matt Shelton
  - Steve Snow
  - Lynn Spadaccini
  - Stephen Spira
  - Nick Walker

## Staff

- Director of Coaching: Scott Armstrong
- Director of Academy: Rob Dinnie
- Junior NPL Director: Dean Flexton
- Administrator: Marisa Whisel

## Members Elect New Directors to the Board

At the board meeting on March 30, the Board of Directors certified the election results from March 16th. Toby Gutierrez was re-elected for a three year term, and Susan Eaton, Les Hatter, Matt Shelton and Stephen Spira replaced out-going Directors, Danica Blanchard, Lisa Cerrato, Jeff Etrick, and Jeff Leonard. Later in the meeting, Lynn Spadaccini was appointed by the board to replace a vacancy created by Lew Storum's recent resignation.

The newly installed board held officer elections with the new Executive Committee being comprised of Mike McGonagle President, Kevin Murtha Vice-President, Brian Lundy continuing as Treasurer, and Ann Fuller as Secretary. They represent several combined decades of experience and volunteerism at Space Coast United. We welcome our new Directors and look forward to a year of high energy and dedication to continued pursuit of the Club's mission to offer high quality programming that provides the opportunity to play soccer at all skill levels for children ages three to nineteen in Brevard County, Florida.



Left to Right: Brian Lundy, Ann Fuller, Kevin Murtha, and Mike McGonagle.

Space Coast United would like to express our deepest gratitude to the departing Directors for their years of service. Thank you for your work on behalf of the Club!

## U16 Girls Undefeated at Jefferson Cup

Coach Armstrong's U16 Girls traveled to Richmond, Virginia for the weekend of March 20-22 to compete in the Girls Showcase of the Jefferson Cup. The girls did very well coming out of the tournament with three draws against extremely tough teams. The players also got exposure to and interest from scouts at top soccer schools around the nation.

Their first game on Friday against the PDA Blues from New Jersey resulted in a 1-1 draw. On Saturday, they faced South Carolina United FC, the number one team in the state, and held them to a 0-0 draw. Sunday's results were similar with a 1-1 draw against Seacoast United, the top team in New Hampshire.



Coach Armstrong felt this was a great weekend for his squad. "We played three excellent teams of which two were state champions and played great soccer." Emphasizing the importance of building relationships on and off the pitch, he added, "As a team we grew thanks to a fun time spent developing our relationships in leisure activities such as go-carting and laser tag. The event gave the girls lots of time to bond as a group."

## Coach Moon's U14 Girls progress to Round 2 of State Cup!



## Mark Your Balls!

If you're new to youth soccer, you might be frustrated by how many balls are lost during practice. If you're a veteran parent, you may have invested in a baker's dozen to get your child through the year.

Sometimes it feels like either an invisible ravenous monster is devouring them at an astonishing rate or they are being sucked into a black hole that exists somewhere to the northeast of every soccer field on earth.

This is not unusual given the number of children, balls, and simultaneous practices at the fields on any given night. Many balls look alike, so when they get kicked onto a neighboring practice area they can easily be absorbed into that team's activities.

The best single thing you can do to help retrieve a missing ball is to print not just a name, but also a contact phone number on the ball in bold permanent ink. Check regularly to make sure the ink is not wearing away and re-print as needed.

County employees, SCUSC staff, and your kind fellow members will call if they find a ball that has a clear contact number on it. This is the Voice of Experience talking!

# Armstrong and Flexton Attend World Football Academy Conference

Director of Coaching, Scott Armstrong, and Junior NPL DOC, Dean Flexton, spent the weekend of March 6-8 at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. At the conference, football expert Raymond Verheijen presented the what, why, when and how of 'Football Periodisation.' Coaches Armstrong and Flexton attended so they can introduce the principles to Space Coast United's coaching staff.

Coach Armstrong said, "The periodization course gave me an insight into preparing our teams in such a way that I truly believe we can turn the inches we are looking for as advantages against the metropolitan markets into feet. This will not be an overnight solution, however; it will be something we adapt and change over time as a club."

With an immaculate track record and extensive background in football Raymond Verheijen is recognized as the global leader in football conditioning and has introduced his unique football specific approach successfully throughout the world. The course details how to develop fitness through football games, avoid accumulation of fatigue, maximize player freshness and remain injury free by concentrating on:

- Football Conditioning Exercises and Games
- Periodisation Model
- Team and Individual Periodisation

According to Coach Flexton, "It was a great experience and without doubt one of the best courses I have ever attended. I strongly believe it will improve me as a coach and I will implement and adapt the ideas to my position as U13/U14 DOC going forward."



## A New Generation of Soccer Players Takes the Pitch

Each spring and fall we have the pleasure of introducing the sport to a new group of youngsters, and it is an absolute joy to watch them fall in love with the game. The objective of our Microkicker and Minikicker programs is to replicate the back garden environment in which most young players are introduced to soccer by helping to educate parents on activities that can be used at home. The sessions involve both the parent and their own child participating within the practice.



First day of Spring '15 Minikickers at Wickham

The activities are designed to utilize the child's imagination to create a positive, exciting, and fun soccer environment free from pressure in order to support skill development. At the end of the activity, the players are presented with some fun activity to complete at home. Each practice session lasts between 45-60 minutes.

It is incredibly rewarding to see former Micro/Minikicker participants grow to become recreational and competitive players and parents inspired to coach teams in the higher age brackets.

# Uniforms Often at the Top of Parent Complaints

In youth sports there seems to be no end to the list of things parents can and do complain about; unfair playing time, inconvenient game schedules, lack of field space, etc. One concern that consistently climbs to the top of the list in every sport is uniforms. They can quickly become the bane of a Board of Directors' existence. Here's why.



**Cost:** The price of uniforms is a very common complaint. Boards are sensitive to members' budgets (they're parents too!), so they try to source reasonably priced uniforms. Dirt cheap is just not an option in this industry.

**Quality:** The cost issue raises its specter here. Reasonably priced uniforms are typically a decent quality intended to last a few seasons, but they are not top of the line. Some parents have unreasonable expectations and would experience severe sticker shock if a youth sports organization required professional quality kits or be appalled by what you get for "dirt cheap." Also, it always seems some parents have trouble with numbers adhering to jerseys while most others do not have the problem. Sometimes this is due to the way jerseys are laundered and sometimes it is just a mystery. As odd as it sounds, it is usually not an indication of a quality problem.

**Sizing:** Some kids are simply proportioned such that a standard uniform doesn't seem to fit them as well as it does others. Unfortunately, there just isn't much that can be done about that except wait for the next growth spurt and hope for the best.

**Style:** No club can ever please every single member. Someone is inevitably going to hate the look of a uniform whenever a new style or supplier is introduced to the club. Uniform suppliers also change styles, usually on a two or three year cycle, forcing change whether a club wants to make it or not. Clubs like ours do look to adopt a style that will allow for at least two years before parents need to purchase another uniform, although a child's growth patterns can result in a new uniform purchase being necessary sooner.

**Availability:** Clubs provide their uniform distributor with projected quantities based on registration numbers. But in direct order situations like our select team uniforms with soccer.com, the club cannot control how many uniform pieces each player actually orders and in which sizes. For example, our red team jerseys went into a back order status last summer when members ordered three or four for their child rather than the anticipated two and one size proved to be more commonly ordered than anticipated. (Hoop jersey back order was a delay in production from PUMA.)

**Gender:** Some uniform pieces are available in boys and girls styles while others are not. Most clubs attempt to accommodate their female players to the extent possible, but inevitably run into pieces that are simply unavailable in anything but a "unisex" cut regardless of whom they choose as their uniform partner. (cont. page 6)

## Meet the Coach: Tim Michaud

Coach Tim Michaud has been at Space Coast United for four years and currently coaches a U12 Girls Rec team in Viera. He had never played soccer before coaching as it wasn't an option when he was a kid. He plays now to more fully understand the game and appreciate what the girls experience on the field.

He loves coaching and says his favorite thing is "watching different skills click with the kids in the game. When I congratulate them about it and they did not even know they had done it. The players get the biggest smiles on their faces and realize everything we did in practice really works." Tim also feels fortunate to make new friends with the parents and his fellow coaches.

Coach Michaud's coaching philosophy is to practice like it's a game and play hard every second. He does not want the girls to ever finish a game thinking they could have played harder. But he also does not want the girls to worry about the outcome. If they played well and the results weren't what they wanted, it's okay. They should just keep trying and the results will come.

His goal for the team is for each player to improve individually in both offense and defense. He wants the girls to be able to play more than just one position, developing as both well-rounded soccer players and teammates. He says, "If we can do that, regardless of wins or losses, the season will be a true success."

Coach Michaud is truly thankful YDP and Academy Director, Rob Dinnie, convinced him to volunteer. He said, "I am very glad that Rob has had patience with me over the past few years while I was learning and truly appreciate his passion for the game." He believes this is a very rewarding experience. "Having the opportunity to coach my daughter, Riley, and actually have her want me to coach the team year after year has been a wonderful experience."



# Alumni News

## An Interview with Jane Alukonis



**When did you play for Space Coast United?** I played for Space Coast Surf around age 9, then Space Coast Storm around age 10. I played for Scott Armstrong's Three Lions from 11 to 16, moved to Dallas for a year, and came back to play for Space Coast United my senior year of high school.



**What are some of your fondest memories of playing at Space Coast?** I had great teammates and coaches. We are a small club compared to those in big cities, allowing for more individual attention and development. My coaches accommodated my requests to be put in more challenging environments allowing me to train with the boys and with older age groups, which was extremely important to my development. People think larger clubs have more to offer, but I was able to succeed at SCU because the small club allowed more individual attention.

**Where else did you play?** I played for Duke University as well as on the U16 and U17 National Team.



**What has soccer meant in your life?** It has been much more than a game for me. I learned the importance of dreaming big and putting in the work to achieve your dreams. Soccer taught me resilience, leadership, and confidence. Soccer was always my outlet - I loved every second spent on the field. Most importantly, it introduced me to some of my best friends and mentors. There are so many people who have greatly impacted me as a player and a person, and they will always feel like family to me.

**What are your personal goals in the sport at this point?** Coach Armstrong was extremely influential in my life. He taught me how to set goals and work relentlessly until I achieved them, to be confident in myself and believe in my dreams. My goal right now is to be able to influence youth players in a positive way like my coaches did for me. I want to give back what my mentors gave me by teaching players everything I know about the game and helping them believe

in their ability.

**What advice would you give to current Space Coast players and/or their parents?**

**Players:** If you want to play at the top levels, you need to work harder. Make up your mind what you want to accomplish, and then do anything in your power to make it happen. Trust me - you will not just stumble into the top colleges. Train more on your own. Put yourself in the most competitive and quick environment you can. If you're the best, quickest, and strongest player on the field in your training session, you're doing something wrong. Train with an older team when your team is off. Female players, train with the boys. All too often, I have individuals telling me they want to play at a Duke, or a UNC, or a top school in Florida, but do not spend any time training outside of practice. If you want to play for a top program, you will need to put in multiple hours a day towards your development.

**Parents:** Make your child well aware of the work it will take to achieve their goals in the sport, and then let them dictate their own path. I am very thankful I had parents who were hands off and let me decide my path. I read an article a while back that said the most helpful thing you can tell your athlete is, "I love watching you play." This takes out judgement of their performance, and lets them know that regardless of how they play, you love watching them.

**Is there anything else you would like our members to know about you?** There are two people whom I could not have succeeded without; Scott Armstrong, my coach, and Beth Rosenbloom, our team mom. The two of them selflessly helped me every step of my journey. Also, I spent the last three years teaching in inner city Baltimore, through the teaching program Teach for America. The majority of my students did not have the opportunity to play organized sports. This realization really grounded me and made me see how fortunate we are to have a great club and outstanding coaches. It helps me to be thankful each time I step on the Space Coast United fields.

## Spring Break Camp: Another Successful Year

Around 40 boys and girls participated at the camp that ran Monday—Thursday mornings during Spring Break. Our coaching staff kept them busy with plenty of fun games and activities to maximize their touches on the ball and keep them engaged while they developed their essential soccer skills. On Wednesday they even got to try a little yoga to help with their conditioning. We'd like to thank [Downtown Yoga](#) for that special treat, and of course express our appreciation to our teenage volunteers for coming out and giving our coaches a hand.



## U14 Girls Win Region Cup!



The U14 Girls White won the Region B Cup on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> in an exciting overtime and PK finish at Palm Bay Regional Park. They first defeated Maitland in their Final Four single-elimination round on Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, then with a score of 3 - 2, they beat South Orlando to take the championship. Coach

Alyssa Esposito's team now advances to the President's Cup.

Coach Esposito raved about her team saying, "the girls have worked hard and truly earned every bit of success they have had in their undefeated Region Cup play. We are beyond excited to continue into President's Cup." They face the Bay United Sharks in the semi-final round on April 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in Auburndale.

## USSF "F" License is Worth the Investment



The "F" license is a 2-hour course produced by the U.S. Soccer Federation. It is conducted entirely online, and is intended for **all** parents and coaches of youth players. Although the content is focused on the 5-8 year old age group, it is a fantastic resource for understanding US Soccer's and Space Coast United's commitment to providing a fun, positive, and safe learning environment for all of our members.

The course is well-organized and very easy to access. You can do it in one sitting or return to the modules to finish over several days. The course does require registration and costs \$25, but is worth the investment in both time and money. We highly recommend it, even if you have no intention of ever coaching the sport. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Soccer at the Cinema

In the previous issue of *The Storm Watch* we shared a few soccer books we've read or heard a lot about, so now we will turn our attention to soccer on the big screen. The sport has provided a backdrop for just about every movie genre with the possible exception of horror. Unless you're from England and then "The Game of Their Lives" would probably fit into that category quite nicely.

**"Bend it Like Beckham"** 2002 (PG-13) *Parminder Nagra, Keira Knightly, Jonathan Rhys Meyers*  
The daughter of orthodox Sikh rebels against her parents' traditionalism by running off to Germany with a football team.

**"Fever Pitch"** 1997 (R) *Colin Firth, Ruth Gemmill*

Based on Nick Hornby's novel, English teacher Paul Ashworth believes his long standing obsession with Arsenal serves him well. But then he meets Sarah... (A U.S. remake featured Jimmy Fallon, Drew Barrymore and the Boston Red Sox)

**"Gregory's Girl"** 1981 (PG) *John Gordon Sinclair, Dee Hepburn, Clare Grogan*

In his Scottish New Town home, gangling Gregory and his school-friends are starting to find out about girls. He fancies Dorothy, not least because she has got into the football team - and is a better player than him.

**"Kicking & Screaming"** 2005 (PG) *Will Farrell, Robert Duvall, Josh Hutcherson*

Family man Phil Weston, a lifelong victim of his father's competitive nature, takes on the coaching duties of a kids' soccer team, and soon finds that he's also taking on his father's dysfunctional way of relating.

**"Ladybugs"** 1992 (PG-13) *Rodney Dangerfield, Jackie Harry*

To climb the corporate ladder to success, a guy agrees to coach the company's all girl soccer team with the help of his secret weapon; his fiancée's son.

**"Mean Machine"** 2001 (R) *Vinnie Jones, David Kelly*

The ex-England captain is thrown in jail for assaulting two police officers and leads a group of inmates in a match against prison guards. (If this sounds like "The Longest Yard", it's because it's a remake of that Burt Reynolds' classic.)

**"Play for Keeps"** 2012 (PG-13) *Gerard Butler, Jessica Biel, Dennis Quaid*

A former sports star who has fallen on hard times starts coaching his son's soccer team as a way to get his life together.

**"The Game of Their Lives"** 2015 (PG) *Wes Bentley, Gerard Butler, Gavin Rossdale*

Based on a true story, this film tells the tale of the 1950 US soccer team who, against all odds, beat England 1 - 0 in the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

**"Victory"** 1981 (PG) *Sylvester Stallone, Michael Caine, Pele*

As allied POWs prepare for a soccer game against the German National Team to be played in Nazi-occupied Paris, the French Resistance and British officers are making plans for the team's escape.

These movies are available through the Brevard County Public Library, Netflix, Amazon and other movie distributors. So what's your favorite soccer movie? Tell us about it on our [Facebook page!](#)





Established in 1984, Space Coast United Soccer Club is a non-profit run by volunteers dedicated to families who wish to enjoy the sport of soccer and to provide opportunities to play at all levels from ages three to eighteen with the highest quality of programs available in the State of Florida.

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Website: www.spacecoastsoccer.org



## Our Programs

Micro/Mini-Kickers  
Ages 3-5

Youth Development and Academy  
Ages 4-11

Competitive: Select/NPL  
Ages 9-19

Recreational  
Ages 13-18

Goalkeeper Academy  
Ages 9-19

TOPSoccer  
Ages 4-19

# Uniforms (cont. from page 3)

**In House Distribution:** Many clubs order their uniforms in bulk and distribute them internally like we do with our YDP and recreational uniforms. Complaints abound when a team receives their bag of uniforms and some pieces are missing or the wrong size. It's usually corrected very quickly, but the initial disappointment generates discontent. This problem occurs because the volunteers who sort the uniforms are only human, and quite often there are not enough people pitching which leads to exhausted staff and volunteers sorting uniforms late into the night.

**Uniform Partner:** Whether we're talking about the manufacturer or the distributor, they all have strengths and weaknesses. Clubs have to weigh the pros and cons when deciding which companies to use and given that human factor already mentioned, do make mistakes. We probably only have to whisper the word "Kelme" to make that point. Uniform partners often provide incentives to clubs to sign with them such as scholarship uniforms and equipment like balls and tents, but never kickbacks to clubs or board members. The PR nightmare if a practice like that was made public would not be worth the risk.

If you find you are consistently complaining about uniforms, the best remedy is to volunteer to assist the club in this area. It is always more rewarding to be part of the solution, and your input and effort can help improve processes for everyone's benefit.

**Shop at AmazonSmile**  
and Amazon will make  
a donation to:  
Space Coast United Soccer Club

Get started

amazon smile

It's not just for uniforms!  
Click through to  
Soccer.com's [Storm Gear store](#) to order spirit wear  
such as t-shirts, hats, and

Do your shopping on Amazon through the [Space Coast United AmazonSmile link](#) and your purchase will benefit the club.



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