We’re continually working on developing the newsletter to make it more informative to what’s happening in the club, from games and tournaments our club’s teams are involved in, to other activities those involved in our club are participating in. We also plan to update or reintroduce you to players with FFC times who are now playing in college, minor leagues or professional league.

If you think of something you’d like to see in the newsletter, let us know and we’ll see whether it’s something we’d be willing and able to add. You can email ideas to tleiss@fredericksburgfc.org.

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**Feature Story**

SUCCESSFUL ST. PATRICK’S DAY TOURNEY HAS FFC EXCITED ABOUT EVENT’S FUTURE

BY TOM LEISS
FFC Social Media / Communications / News Director
Email: tleiss@fredericksburgfc.org
Twitter: @TomLeiss
FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (Friday, March 30)—The first-ever St. Patrick’s Day Invitational, hosted by Fredericksburg FC, turned out to be a great success for the club and the teams that participated.

I talked with Tournament Director Mayowa Owolabi about the event and some of the highlights and things that were learned that will help in future events hosted by the club.

In all, the tournament maxed out its number of teams with 74 in attendance—split into 12 divisions for both boys and girls in U9-U15 age groups—from Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia and even as far away as Michigan.

Owolabi said for most tournaments teams are looking for certain things like quality competition, beautiful game fields, staying on schedule, good referees and quality trophies. The event “hit all of those needs right on the head,” according Owolabi.

“The tournament went off very well in my eyes and I received a lot of positive feedback. Keys to people’s positive feedback were that they loved the facility. FFC Park is like no other in the area and the playing surface is one of the best grass facilities that you can play on in the state, let alone the region. The schedule was sent out well in advance, so people knew their schedules and could plan accordingly, and our live score updates were lightning fast. All games went off as scheduled so that helped the tournament go off without missing a beat.”

Wonderful fields definitely make a tournament enjoyable, but so does the off-the-field environment created.

While all seven FFC Park fields were being used for both days of the tournament, there was also a personalized T-shirt and hoodie vendor, a soccer gear pop up shop vendor, a Girl Scout troop selling Girl Scout cookies and a fully stocked concession stand. It all allowed for families to spend numerous hours at the park with multiple things to do to stay entertained between games.

Steve Chaffin, the coach of Michigan Revolution 04 Stars FC, said he chooses a tournament out of the state every year so his squad can see some unfamiliar competition. In the past, his teams have attended tournaments at Disney, as well as in Chicago, South Bend, Ind., and Memphis, Tenn., among others.

He had many good things to say about several aspects of FFC’s event itself and how it was run, along with its proximity to other tourist destinations in the region.
“The atmosphere and communication was probably the best I've ever had with a tourney leading up to our arrival. Mayowa and his staff did a fantastic job running the tourney and keeping it all organized. This is definitely a tournament I would return to in the future,” Chaffin expressed. “The venue was well maintained with no trash and or debris left around after games or during. The fields were really impeccable to our normal with what looked like hardly much wear to them. For the first year of this tourney, Fredericksburg FC did a great job organizing and running what we thought was a very fair, competitive and fun tournament to be part of.

“The families also really enjoyed the proximity of the venue to the Washington, D.C., area and the ability to take in the sites of our nation's capital,” he continued. “Most of my players and families have only seen it on TV so it was pretty cool to see their faces when actually being in the city as well as Fredericksburg itself.”

Owolabi was quick to point to all the aforementioned staff involved that made sure the first-time event went off without a hitch.

“I would like to thank all of the tournament volunteers, which were all club members,” said Owolabi, who also serves as FFC’s Technical Director of Coaching. “We had former and current players, parents of players and other family members volunteer their time to help as field marshals and park staff. Without the volunteers this tournament would not have ran as smoothly.”

The success of the tournament also spurred the club on for bigger and better things for the event in the future. Now, with a whole year to plan for the second edition, Owolabi is excited about the potential for the future of the event.

“Next year, we are hoping to double in size. Potentially spread the tournament over two weekends if we can create the interest in participating,” he contemplated. “We will start marketing the event much sooner and now with our first year completed, we now know how to operate a bit better.”
The U12 Boys Black team saying at Thursday’s practice before the tournament that they were going to win for Coach Ryan Zinkhan! Then going into OT and then PKs, winning the championship and then handing Coach Ryan the trophy!!

Also having players and parents from other teams cheering on other teams!! It really displayed the culture that we have at FFC! It’s more than a club, it’s family!!

—From Jenny Buzzell-Parker on Facebook

My highlight was when the u12 boys went to PK’s for the finals and @futbolr_t made a brilliant save to win the championship!

—From @badrebel on the FFC Instagram

FOR MORE INFO OR TO REGISTER, CLICK HERE OR VISIT THE FFC WEBSITE

ZINKHAN NAMED ASSISTANT COACH AT OREGON STATE

Press Release By Tom Leiss
FFC Social Media / Communications / News Director
Email: tleiss@fredericksburgfc.org
Twitter: @TomLeiss
FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (Wednesday, March 28, 2018)—Oregon State recently announced the addition of Fredericksburg native Ryan Zinkhan as an assistant coach for its men’s soccer program under first-year head coach Terry Boss.

Zinkhan joined the staff at Fredericksburg FC in January 2015 after graduating from the University of Virginia following a four-year career that included winning the NCAA Division I National Championship in 2014. He coached many different teams and filled various other staff rolls with FFC, most recently as the club’s Boys Director of Coaching.

The 25-year old said his time with FFC, as a coach and player, will most certainly help him going forward with this new coaching opportunity.

“While at FFC, I was fortunate to have been mentored by some very talented coaches,” said Zinkhan, who was also part of the FFC franchise’s National Premier Soccer League National Championship team in 2013. “Working for such a professional organization in FFC has helped me grow both professionally and personally and I am excited to bring this experience to OSU.

“I've also been very fortunate to have gotten loads of coaching experience from various teams within the club. These teams varied from all ages and levels, and having to adapt and tailor my coaching towards a specific team has allowed me to grow in many ways. Working for FFC has been invaluable for me and I am excited to take this experience to the West Coast.”

His time playing in college helped spark the idea of coaching at the collegiate level and an opportunity last year helped solidify that desire.

“I've [wanted] to coach in college since my playing days at UVA. When I was offered the opportunity to assist the University of Mary Washington women's team in the Fall of 2017, it only reinforced my eagerness and excitement to coach at the collegiate level full time,” he expressed, adding that being a head coach one day also isn’t out of the question. “I would certainly love to be a head coach, although I’m not thinking too far ahead. I am very content and excited right now to grow at OSU and help contribute to their successful program.”

For the full Oregon State press release announcement, Click Here.
Team Of The Month

For “Team of the Month” we hope to talk to one of our teams each month. To be featured here, your teams doesn’t necessarily have to win every game it plays. We want to feature those teams, as well as teams that represent the club well with how they play and train, support the community, improve from game to game and practice to practice, support each other and the club. If you know an FFC team that would be good to recognize here, email tleiss@fredericksburgfc.org.

FFC 99 BOYS BLACK

The FFC 99 Boys Black team is the Team of the Month for March. They are finishing up the Jefferson Cup Showcase tournament this weekend so we are holding off on doing a write-up about the team until they finish the event . . . Also, so their coach - Ryan Zinkhan, who you read above is leaving for Oregon for his new coaching position - can have a chance to thoughtfully answer questions about the this great bunch of kids he had been coaching.

Please click the link below to check in and see what he has to say about the squad once it's been posted. Sorry for the delay, but we want to be able to do the kids justice for their hard work.

There were several other outstanding FFC teams in contention for this month's award as well, but making it hard focus to make a decision on this just shows how hard all the players and their families, and their coaches, are working! Keep up the good work!

We're also going to start giving recognition to the other teams that earn consideration each month by listing Honorable Mentions, because we know how hard everybody is working and would like to give recognition to more than just one team. March's Honorable Mentions are:

- FFC 04 Girls Black
- FFC 06 Boys Black
- FFC 06 Girls Red

All teams . . . KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!!

CLICK HERE to learn more about this month's team and past Teams of the Month.
In Case You Missed It . . .

CCL Pro23 COACHES AND IMPORTANT DATES

FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (Friday, March 23, 2018)—Recently, there have been updates to the coaching ranks for the upcoming 2018 Club Champions League (CCL) Pro23 season.

Grover Gibson will be the top man in charge of the Men’s Program with the assistance of Marcello Mitchel Alves. Ken Krieger will be in charge of the Women’s Program with his main assistant yet to be determined.

“I’m excited to focus on our largest generation of players who will represent FFC at the adult/collegiate level,” Gibson said. “These players have come up through our new FFC programming over the past four years, and all the hard work is finally coming together.”

“I will be looking forward to working with the Pro23 team as I feel I can help players get to the level they will want to achieve and will put meaningful training sessions together that will ultimately raise the level of every player involved with the Pro23 program,” Krieger added. “I’m really looking forward to working at this level!”
The club has also released tryout dates for both teams as follows:

- Wednesday, April 11 - 8:00-9:30 p.m. - at VYSA Turf Fields
- Saturday, April 21 - 9:00-11:00 a.m. - at FFC Park

The following are other important dates that should be noted:

- Training begins: Wednesday, May 2
- Tournament and friendlies begin: Friday, May 25
- Regular season begins: Saturday, June 2
- Playoffs: Saturday-Sunday, July 14-15

The training schedule for both teams will run on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 8:00-9:15 p.m., from April 30-June 3, and then Mondays, Wednesdays and one additional day, from June 4-July 15. All training will take place at FFC Park or the VYSA Turf Fields.

Along with contests against other CCL teams, the club has also scheduled friendlies for the Men’s Program against the Reading United and D.C. United Reserve squads. Friendlies for the Women’s Program are yet to be determined. All home games will be played at FFC Park.

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MARCH TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Of the results I was able to find, here’s a list of FFC teams that finished as champions or runners-up in tournaments during March, along with their record and the tournament participated in.

For more 2018 tournament results, visit [www.fredericksburgfc.org](http://www.fredericksburgfc.org); go to the “TOURNAMENT” Tab and click on “2018 TOURNAMENT RESULTS.

**FFC 08 BOYS BLACK (3-1-0, 18 GF / 8 GA)**
- FFC St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - Runners-up

**FFC 07 BOYS BLACK (4-0-0, 29 GF / 2 GA)**
- FFC St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 06 BOYS BLACK (4-0-0, 17 GF / 6 GA)**
- FFC St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 05 BOYS BLACK (3-1-0, 22 GF / 6 GA)**
- FFC St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - Runners-up

**FFC 09 GIRLS (4-0-0, 17 GF / 6 GA)**
- FFC St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 08 GIRLS (4-0-0, 15 GF / 1 GA)**
- FFC St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 06 GIRLS RED (4-0-0, 13 GF / 3 GA)**
- FFC St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 03 BOYS BLACK (3-0-1, 13 GF / 3 GA)**
- Stafford Soccer St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 99 BOYS RED (3-0-0, 13 GF / 1 GA)**
- Stafford Soccer St. Patrick’s Day Invitational - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 04G GIRLS BLACK (4-0-0, 8 GF / 1 GA)**
- Jefferson Cup Girls Weekend - CHAMPIONS

**FFC 99 BOYS BLACK (3-0-0, 8 GF / 1 GA)**
- Jefferson Cup Boys Showcase - CHAMPIONS

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, CLICK HERE OR VISIT [WWW.FREDERICKSBURGFC.ORG](http://WWW.FREDERICKSBURGFC.ORG)**

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**Getting To Know . . .**

Along with meeting some of our player, we also want you to get to know our Fredericksburg FC staff better. In this series, we hope to talk to one member of the FFC staff, be it a coach, an administrator, a volunteer, etc., so that you can get to know the people you may regularly see or talk to, but may never have learned much about.
MAYOWA OWOLABI

A.K.A.: Coach
Age: 28 (Born: Nov. 11, 1989)
Hometown: Woodbridge, Va. (moved to Stafford in 5th grade)
Title(s): Technical Director of Coaching, Academy Director, Tournament Director
Started with FFC: January 2018
Coaching credentials: USSF Senior A License; USSF Youth License; UEFA C License; London FA Youth; NSCAA Premier Diploma.

What is your coaching experience?
Assistant Women's Coach at Johnson and Wales University; Head Coach of LA Premier FC’s United State Soccer Development Academy (USSDA) team; National Premier Soccer League (NPSL) Assistant Coach with Miami Fusion FC; Director of Soccer Soccer 5 Miami; ODP Staff Coach for Virginia and Florida; Executive Director at Nigeria Rush Soccer; Programs Director with Prince William Soccer Inc. (PWSI); Director of Youth Development at Norfolk United Soccer Club.

What is your playing experience?
Played Division 1 youth soccer with Stafford Soccer, PWSI and Premier AC clubs, Played high school soccer at North Stafford and Forest Park, receiving All-Met honors his senior year. After high school, he played for the club soccer team at Old Dominion University for four years while beginning his coaching career.

What made you first get involved in soccer?
With my family being from Nigeria, soccer is in our culture. I grew up following my older brother from field to field and continue to find myself still on the field.

What made you want to start coaching?
Being able to help players develop and it kept me playing the game.

What would you say was the biggest thing that helped you during your playing career?
Playing with my friends. Soccer teammates really become family and when you are with family everything becomes fun and stress free.

Who is the biggest influence in your playing career?
My mom. She has always supported my love for the game and as a kid got me around the country to play on various teams.

Who is the biggest influence in your coaching career?
My buddy Dave Scruggs took me under when I first started coaching in Norfolk, Va., and showed me a lot about the coaching pathway.

What’s your favorite drill and why?
5v2 or 6v3 transition game. This is my favorite activity because it covers all aspects of the game and you can add so many layers to vary its objectives. Click Here for an example of a version of this drill.

What is your best memory from your playing days?
Never forget, scoring a volley outside the box Senior Year of HS playing for Ken Krieger at FP. It was a great finish with the outside of my right boot in the upper 90 but its a best memory because at half time Ken gave a good talk and he had a saying back then "99.9 percent of the time I'm always right". After my goal all I hear is "see like I said 99.9 percent of the time I'm always right" At halftime he told me to shoot and that I would score, this was my first shot of the second half about five minutes in.

What is your best memory from coaching?
My 2015 season with Miami Fusion we won the [NPSL’s] Sunshine Conference Championship. We lost the Regional Championship to Chattanooga FC but played in front of a crowd of 12,000 so the environment Chattanooga created was something I never experienced before and we closed out the year playing a friendly against the US U20s as they had training camp in Miami. It was great to coaching against the likes of Tab Ramos, Cobi Jones, Marcelo Balboa. In addition, this year two of my former Virginia ODP players were in camp so it was cool to catch up with Lucas Mendes and Eryk Williamson.

Who’s your favorite professional player (past and/or present) and why?
Jay Jay Okocha (Video) - A Nigerian Legend who had a sense of class but a lot of flair when he played. He also played at top clubs in Europe.
Messi - Just so everybody know who I’m voting for when the best in the world question comes up.

Who’s your favorite professional soccer team and why?
Chelsea FC . . . Became a Blues Supporter early and then when Jose Mourinho came he sealed the deal for me.

What’s your favorite food?
Seafood.
What’s your favorite kind of music?
Hip hop.

What’s your favorite movie?
Man on Fire, Denzel killed it.

What do you like to do other than soccer?
I can’t get enough of the beach and traveling.

If you got shipwrecked on a deserted island, what 3 things would you want with you?
Food, Family and a toolkit.

If they did a movie about your life, what act would play your and why?
Eddie Murphy, I think he’s almost as funny as me.

**FFC in the Pros**

**CARROLL CONTINUING TO WORK TO REACH HIS ULTIMATE SOCCER GOALS**

**BY TOM LEISS**

FFC Social Media / Communications / News Director
Email: tleiss@fredericksburgfc.org
Twitter: @TomLeiss
FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (Wednesday, March 28)—Zach Carroll was part of the inaugural season of the Fredericksburg FC franchise’s adult program in 2013 when it was known as RVA FC and played in the National Premier Soccer League.

A sophomore at the University of Virginia at the time, Carroll helped the team win the NPSL National Championship in 2013 before moving on to play with the NPSL’s Michigan Bucks after transferring to Michigan State University at the beginning of the 2014 season.

Though he spent only part of two seasons with the club, the defender said he took away many good memories and lessons for his time working with the team.

“To go through the tough trainings, and me coming from Charlottesville, all the travel . . . to be able to come out on top and at our home field was a lot of fun,” Carroll said of the championship season, adding that other aspects of the experience still stick with him to this day.

“The biggest thing I learned from playing for RVA FC was just the lifestyle of a pro,” he expressed. “[Head coach] Grover [Gibson] expected a high standard from us and had us doing things off the field and on the field that I had never experienced before.”

Carroll has taken all the experiences from those times and is working hard to continue on to his dream of not just being a professional, but of one day playing in Major League Soccer.

At each stop - New York Red Bulls/NYRBII, Orlando City B and now Reno - he has had a chance to expand his game. From playing a very face-pace pressing style in New York, to a more counter-attack style in Orlando and now to a very offensive style in Reno. It's also be fun seeing how each organization and area area of the country is run.

"From Red Bulls I really learned what it takes to be a high-level pro," Carroll said. "I had my rookie year ups and downs, but with Orlando and now Reno I'm putting together consistency.

"I'm looking forward to seeing how far we can go this year. It's the second year of this club and they had some success last year," he went on to say. "From being on a championship-winning team, I know we definitely have the talent and depth to win one this year if we can put it all together."

Learn more about Zach in this Q & A

**NAME:** Zach Carroll  
**Age (DOB):** 24 03/16/1994  
**Country:** USA  
**Hometown:** Grand Blanc, MI  
**Current team:** Reno 1868 FC  
**Position:** Center Back
When did you last played for FFC?

Last played back when it was still RVAFC in the summer of 2014 for the first month before I transferred and finished that summer with the Michigan Bucks. Played full 2013 season for Championship team.

Can you tell us a little more about who you’ve played with so far?

I was drafted by the New York Red Bulls [in 2016] played for the USL Champions Red Bulls II [in 2016]. Played for Orlando City B [in 2017]. And now currently for Reno 1868.

Note: Team ceased operations before the 2018 season.

What did you take from your time with the FFC franchise that has helped you the most?

The biggest thing I learned from playing for RVA FC was just the lifestyle of a pro. Grover expected a high standard from us and had us doing things off the field and on the field that I had never experienced before.

What's your best memory from playing with the club?

It was definitely winning the championship in 2013. To go through the tough trainings and me coming from Charlottesville all the travel to be able to come out on top and at our home field was a lot of fun.

What are your best memories from your playing career as a whole so far?

Winning the championship with Red Bulls II and hearing my name called on draft day. From going from seeing my dream come true and then to having such a successful first year I couldn’t have asked for a better start to my career.

How have your goals for your soccer career changed since when you were younger?

My goals have changed in that as a kid I just wanted to get there and now that I am there I want to push to MLS one day and hopefully stay there for as long as my body will allow.

What advice would you give a player that would best help them pursue or achieve their soccer-playing goals?

My biggest advice I would give is that what you do off the field when no one is watching is 100 percent just as important as to what you do with a ball at your feet in trainings or games. Whether that is eating better or putting in the extra work it all makes you better.
Who has been the biggest influence on your soccer career?

My parents. They’ve been through every low and every high with me and a lot of what I do is for them.

What would you like to do after your playing career is over?

I would love to coach college soccer or even be a teacher.

What’s your favorite professional team and why?

Liverpool. When I first got into watching soccer on television was [Steven] Gerrard, [Dirk] Kuyt, and [Daniel] Agger and I have been a fan since.

What "famous" player would you say your playing style is most like and why?

I would say I play most like Rio Ferdinand (right, playing with QPR). He’s a fearless competitor and organizer who loves a good tackle and is a good ball player out of the back. If I could have even 10 percent of the career he’s had I would be honored.

What's your favorite brand of soccer shoe?

I’m a fan of all cleat types, not picky at all. I just lace em up and play.

What is your favorite food?

My Nana’s Chicken and Dumplings

If you were stuck on a deserted island, what 3 things would you want to have with you?

A bed off the ground, sunscreen and food. Wouldn’t need much else.

What's your favorite music/band?

Sleep on the Floor by the Lumineers or some 80’s rock like Def Leppard or Billy Idol.

What do you like to do most when not playing soccer?

I love to play Xbox and draw when I’m not playing.

What's your favorite movie?

Saving Private Ryan
If they were going to make a movie about your life, what actor plays you and why?

The actor who I would’ve loved to play me would’ve been Heath Ledger; the guy is a legend and everybody loves him.

MORE FROM OUR PRO CONTINGENT

Belmar start 2018 on Fire!

Kharlton Belmar is tearing up defenses in the opening weeks of the USL season. The fourth-year pro has four goals in Swope Park Rangers’ opening two games, two each in wins over Carroll’s Reno side and Sounders FC 2.

Both efforts landed the Sporting Kansas City loanee USL Team of the Week honors and a USL Player of the Week selections after a two-goal, two-assist effort in the 4-3 season-opening victory over Reno.

The 25-year old now had 19 career goals in 31 appearances for Rangers and his 2018 total of four leads the league.

For more on Belmar’s latest honor and highlights of the Week 2 win over Sounders FC2, Click Here.

Camps & Clinics

Spring Break Camp

This camp provides a fun and challenging learning environment for all players between the ages of U6-U14 and all abilities.

The camp focus is on age and developmentally appropriate soccer activities and games.

All sessions will be conducted by our staff of accomplished players and nationally licensed coaching staff.

COST: $125

APRIL 2-5 ~ At FFC Park

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

For more info or to register, visit www.fredericksburgfc.org
The 2018 FFC Camps Series was recently released

The club will be hosting a series of camps throughout the year, camps will vary from Recreational-Level Camp to Travel-Player-Level Camps. All camps will be led by FFC Technical Staff and licensed Coaching Staff.

The camps are open to all players, regardless of club affiliation. We want players who are interested in getting better.

The Fredericksburg FC Camp Series is a Player Development Program focused completely on individual development over the course of the camp. All players are challenged in a fun environment that stresses skills development and creative problem solving. Important habits and skills are developed at an early age and will need to be crafted as players age and our camps follow this philosophy.

Each group will be broken into groups based on age and skill level. These camp sessions are highly recommended for players of all levels.

Click Here for complete info on the FFC website

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**SPRING 2018 PROGRAMS**

*(Registration is always ongoing in most programs. Visit fredericksburgfc.org for more info.)*

Click on the program title for more information.

- **Travel Program**: Season UNDERWAY. Tryouts by appointment. Contact: officeadmin@fredericksburgfc.org.
- **Recreation Program**: Season UNDERWAY. Email officeadmin@fredericksburgfc.org about late registration.
- **TOPSoccer & Buddies Program**: Registration OPEN. Sessions start April 7 (All Saturdays), but you can join at any point while the FREE PROGRAM is being offered.
- **Academy Program (Ages 5-8)**: Registration OPEN. Training Starts April 9.
- **Pre-Academy Program (Ages 3-5)**: Registration OPEN. Training Starts April 9.
- **U4 Minis Program**: Registration OPEN. FREE Session April 14. Sessions Start April 21.
- **CCL Pro23 Men's & Women's Programs**: Tryouts for both programs are Wednesday, April 11 and Saturday, April 21; Training begins April 30; League play begins June 2.
- **College Combine**: Women's will be held May 5. Men's will be held May 12. Registration OPEN! Click link for more details.
- **Futsal I.D. Program**: To be announced.