

## **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](mailto:tleiss@fredericksburgfc.org).

### **OCTOBER 2018 - FFC 2010 BOYS & GIRLS BLACK**

We talked with both teams’ head coach Mayowa Owolabi, who had a lot to say about the teams and their play this year, their transition from the academy to travel program and how they interact with each other, among many other things.

**Can you tell us about how the teams have done this past month and what events they’ve played in?**

*Both teams have had a fantastic month of October. Neither has lost a match the entire month. We have found a lot of success not only in league play but also in tournament play! Both teams have scored a number of goals and have had major success defending well and keeping their team shape! Both teams attended the Columbus Day Tournament in Virginia Beach and each left as Tournament Champions.*



**What has made them so successful this month, and in 2018 overall?**

*These teams have been so successful this season because they have really become a family. These players attend all training sessions and they do not miss games. With the commitment level that these teams have put forth this season, there is no surprise of the success they have found. They have worked extremely hard to get to where they are now and are definitely fully deserving of the success they have had so far into their travel soccer careers.*

**How have you seen them improve so far this season?**

*It is unique because both teams have improved a lot since the start of the season. Both walked into the CCL ScrimmageFest in August and saw a difficult introduction into travel soccer, but since that first weekend of games both teams have not had any trouble finding positive results on the field. For me, it is a blast watching these teams improve so much daily.*

*I continually am surprised to watch these players improve taking on players in 1-vs-1 situations, connecting their passes with teammates, and maintaining proper team shape.*



*These players enjoy training and I love working with all the players and coaches involved with these two teams.*

### **What makes these team special?**

*There is not one statement that I can make to explain how special these two teams are. These teams have matured and adapted to my coaching style so well! The players can organize and run a match-day*

*warm-up by themselves and just enjoy the game so much. As coaches you always love to see players take ownership in their development and with this group of young players you can see they are all interested in improving and satisfying their teammates, coaches and parents at all times. We work on juggling everyday and I love walking around the field as I set-up for practice and just watching the kids focus and start juggling without me or any of the other coaches having to tell them to do so. These are two teams that can go from 1,000 conversations at the same time, to complete silence and focus on training in a snap of a finger. That type of attention and focus takes time to become normal, but these two group can get after it extremely fast and that to me is extremely special.*

### **What is this team like off the field?**

*These teams off the field are great! I was fortunate enough to take both teams to the Virginia Beach Columbus Day tournament. During this tournament I took both teams to go go-karting and play putt-putt golf and this type of team building/bonding was fantastic. I was able to out race a bunch of kids on go karts and watch the boys and girls interact and just play around and fully enjoy the tournament weekend together! When the boys did not have games at the tournament they watched the girls and likewise, the girls watched the boys play throughout the weekend.*

### **Do you have any fun little stories you could tell us about the teams?**

*I think the funniest story I have for these two teams has to deal with the first practice of the season... This is touching back to August 21. We had the first training sessions with the 2010 Girls Black and one of the players asked, "Where are the boys?" This was*



*hilarious because the players were so used to training with the boys all of the time in the Academy the season before that they didn't recognize that they were going to be on a girls-only team. After I explained to them that they were going to be a girls-only team, they understood right away and we have been on fire ever since!*

**Anything else you'd like to add about the teams?**

*These two teams have been a blast to work with as they are just starting travel soccer. They have adapted to multiple coaches and have not missed a beat. I really enjoy coaching this young age group and the parents are extremely helpful! These groups have trained together, they have trained individually, supported each other at games, went go karting and putt-putt golfing together so it's hard to separate them as two teams. We all recognize they are separate teams, but I find good ways to keep them challenging each other, but also enjoying each other's company. As we continue to build the individual teams, I will continue to develop the relationships between the boys and girls because this will be big for the club culture. A major nod has to be given to Coaches Ben Leduc, Anatoliy Bugg and Kevin Carmichael who have assisted with these groups as well. These teams are a blast to work with and the parents are just as great. I cannot forget to mention coaching U9 Travel Soccer comes with tons of sweet treats, there hasn't been a holiday, let alone a week that has passed where players and coaches didn't leave the field without a few goodies. I left training on Tuesday (Oct. 30) with four Halloween goodie bags. . . What else can a coach with a major sweet tooth ask for!*