

Dear Members,

As we near the end of 2018, I wanted to provide you with a few updates we think will be exciting to learn about for 2019.

As you know, United DFC's mission is to promote and grow the sport of soccer in our communities. We hold ourselves accountable to creating pathways and opportunities for players and volunteers to be involved in soccer for life. This means working with community partners to grow the game - and the opportunities to play it!

It is with this mission in mind that we have been working hard to improve our winter training facility options.

Indoor Training Facilities

For some time, member clubs for United DFC have struggled with providing beneficial winter training environments for our members. With a reliance on local gyms of various sizes, it was difficult to create a training program that would easily allow soccer skills and knowledge to translate from the gym to the indoor turf where games are played.

Location of current facilities has been an issue as they require our members to either travel to Halifax during peak traffic or up to 45 minutes outside of the district. With the construction of the Newbridge facility, conditions improved such that teams that typically trained in gyms or outside of area were now able to train on turf in Dartmouth, but still there was a facility shortage.

What's New and Exciting?

As you may have heard, East Coast Varsity are constructing a full-sized indoor facility in Woodside, on the grounds behind the Bowles Arena (15 Ragus Road, Dartmouth). In August of this year, United DFC entered into a contract to provide access to ample turf time in this facility. Access to this second facility in Dartmouth will provide significant advantages to all our members (parents, players and volunteers) which include:

1. Flexibility in program offering to create a positive, player-centered and quality environment for our members; one where there is a combination of turf and/or gym during the winter season.
2. Reduced travel and achievable training schedules; saving you time and money.
3. Provides our Technical Staff with the opportunity to create training sessions that are age and developmentally appropriate for our players by being able to utilize a 1/3, ½ or full field as deemed necessary.

What are the next steps?

Our contract with East Coast Varsity is set to begin in January 2019. As occasionally occurs with new construction endeavors - they are behind schedule. However, we do have an interim plan and schedule for the month of January. This alternate schedule will have teams travelling to East Hants, hosting second practices in gyms and/or sharing existing turf times at Newbridge. Alternate schedules will be released next week.

We ask for your patience and support as we await the completed construction of this exciting new facility. When East Coast Varsity are ready, we will switch to our 'January to March' schedule as currently distributed. If there are further construction delays, we will advise on another schedule for February, likely the same as the interim schedule currently being prepared. We look forward to this relationship and for the benefits this new facility will offer United DFC families and the greater sports community. We eagerly await its opening!

If you have any questions, please reach out and let us know.

On behalf of the Board & Staff,

Robert Gillis

President