



# La Finca Futbol Club

## Program Description

updated for 2023

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La Finca Futbol Club is the team-based side of our futbol training program. Like all La Finca programs, the Club is designed to support individual player development first.

Our Club program is for high-level young players looking to develop their expertise and love for the game in a highly competitive environment.

We offer boys U8, U9 and U10 divisions, exclusively (girls and others welcome). Starting in U11, we create appropriately-leveled pathways to select partner clubs.

**Jump to Player Selection & Registration on p.5 for details**

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### The Unique Design of La Finca Futbol Club, *Why only to U10?*

LFFC is an ambitious early youth development program for players hoping to play for MLS Next or ECNL clubs starting in the U13 division. Our pathway involves strategic partnerships with premier clubs in our area, and we are committed to growing this network<sup>1</sup>. All LF Club players and their families will be well informed about what it takes to qualify for a premier league team and the process of application. Qualified young players will be afforded exclusive opportunities for evaluation by staff from these clubs. (For example, a current player on our 2013 team also plays with the NY Red Bulls pre-academy team.)

Our partners include clubs that are large enough to field at least 2 teams per division to help ensure continued playing opportunities for all of our club players.

### Our Approach to Early Youth Training

We believe there are three key qualities to develop in players under 12 years old: technique, tactical awareness and game understanding, in that order. We focus almost exclusively on technique up until the U10 division, when we introduce basic tactics and modest game understanding. Our training and game coaching consistently support these aims. (To learn more about our soccer philosophy check out my free newsletter. Search for "Jed Tucker Substack.")

### The DNA of La Finca Futbol Club

1. **Coaching style.** Our training staff for all teams includes licensed, professional trainers and pre-professional trainers/players learning our club philosophy. All coaches subscribe to a style of play emphasizing technique, speed of play, creativity and an attacking mindset;

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<sup>1</sup> This network currently includes: Quickstrike, Pathfinders FC, FC Westchester, World Class FC, Cedar Stars, NY Soccer Club, NYCFC and the Red Bulls.

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2. **Training structure.** Our club program will (1) favor training small-sided, especially in the younger divisions U8 & U9, (2) offer skill-based, rather than age-based, training opportunities, and (3) all players can be invited to different teams throughout a season according to what is best for their individual growth;
3. **Roster size.** As a competitive program, playing time in games is not guaranteed; rather, it will depend on a combination of player commitment, effort throughout the week and current level. Nonetheless, we maintain purposefully small rosters in order to maximize playing time for everyone;
4. **League selection.** Every team in our program will compete in the [New York Club Soccer](#) league (the Northeast division of EDP), or equivalent. Importantly, this league supports our commitment to dual-rostering.

### Training and Game Commitments

#### U8/U9

All players are expected to attend 2 team trainings every week. These will be Mondays and Wednesdays for the fall 2023 season. We encourage an optional 3rd day of training, on Thursdays, consisting of up to 90 mins of lightly coached, mixed-age, small-sided matches (included in the registration cost).

Each season consists of five home and five away games and 1 team tournament minimum (included in the registration price). Most games will be played on Saturdays, and away games are 45 - 90 minutes from exit 18 on i87.

#### U10 & Above

All players are expected to attend 2 team trainings every week and a 3rd day of match-based training.

Each season consists of five home and five away league games + 3 EDP League Cup games and at least 1 EDP tournament per season. Most games will be played on Saturdays, and away games are 45 - 90 minutes from exit 18 on i87.

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### Coaching Staff

#### Head Trainers

- **Alan O'Keefe**, FAI 1&2 (Football Association of Ireland), USSF C and UEFA B licenses. Home club: La Finca
- **Rob Esposito**, FAW/UEFA C and Advanced National Diploma. Home club: Quickstrike. Assistant Head Coach Marist College

#### Junior Trainers

- **Modou Badjie** Home club: La Finca
- **Imari Harris** Home club: La Finca
- **Dantae McDonald** Home club: La Finca
- **Anthony Mendez** Home club: La Finca

### Family Commitment

Our Club program is designed for players dedicated to building a future with soccer. We understand that our players have other commitments, but they are expected to prioritize weekly training, league games and tournaments in the event of a conflict. Please consider this commitment when choosing to register with a La Finca team.

We also expect you to share our understanding that development is a shared responsibility. Team training develops tactical awareness and game understanding; players are primarily responsible for their skill development. As such, we encourage all players to self-train for a minimum of 2 hrs a week. [Ask us for suggestions about how to build an effective self-training program.](#)

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### Player Selection & Registration

Player offer letters are sent out in July for the upcoming season.

All interested new players must either attend a try out, offered in May and June every year, or request an individual evaluation. Email us for details.

### Fall & Spring Season Costs

- U8/U9 \$750 total for fall & spring. Winter is an additional \$300.
- U10 and Above \$1550 includes fall, winter and spring

\*Partial and full need-based scholarships available upon request

\$150 kit costs are a separate expense, and are purchased annually in most cases. Kit includes: a home and away shirt, shorts, socks and tracksuit sweatshirt. Additional teamware is optional.

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### FAQ

#### Where do you train and play?

Our indoor training facility, where we hold 90% of sessions, is in Esopus and our outdoor facility is the Rosemary Nardone Sports Complex in Highland NY, also the site of our home games.

#### Is small-sided training sufficient for competitive training?

We think so. Because our focus is young player development, 2 - 9 years olds, and we believe technical excellence is the foundation of all high level players, small-sided training is the optimal training tool. It's not so much a question of, Can you do everything with small-sided play?, as What's the best way to develop highly technical players? We are constantly experimenting and looking to refine our answer to this question.

There's also a lot more to small-sided training than just playing in tight spaces with fewer players. It's true these qualities mean more touches on the ball. The play is also much quicker in small spaces where the playing surface is typically perfectly flat. The ball moves faster and therefore, players have to make faster decisions. In short, we have found that this is the best structure for our unique training program.

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