

Friday April 10, 2026



Azzurri MLS Next Info Meeting

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Mission Statement
- Game Model
- MLS Next Technical Standards
- Seasonal Calendar
- Costs
- Tryout Schedule
- Q&A

Introductions

Mission

Azzurri Storm Soccer Club is a **non-profit organization** which serves the community by helping young people fulfill their human potential through soccer

Azzurri Game Model

Training Environment:

Present Game Realistic Situations to
create autonomous decision makers

Ball/Opponent/Teammate

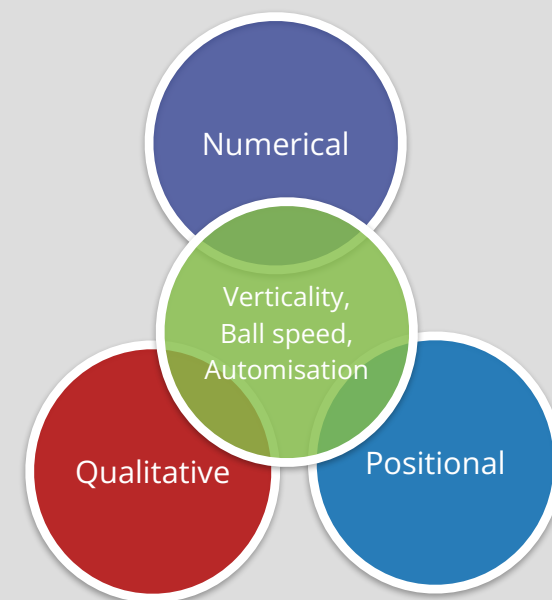
Training Environment

- MLS Next Team Head Coaches have US Soccer C License or higher
- Training 3x per week
- Typically at least half field for MLS Next Teams
- Win during the week to have success on the weekend!



Game Model: ATTACKING

PHASE	OBJECTIVE	PRINCIPLES	TACTICAL INTENT	Player Actions
<p>In Possession</p> <p>Occupation of Space (all 5 vertical channels) in order to create numerical (overloads/rotations), positional (positional advantage between lines), and qualitative(1v1, 2v2, etc.) superiorities with the use of ball velocity, verticality, in order to penetrate and score</p>	<p>Progression to Advance</p> <p>To Find a "Free" Player facing forward and in time and space to advance the ball</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provoke to penetrate -Playing into gaps and Between lines -Combination Play (Link up actions with 2-3 Players) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Play the highest options 1st -+1 in build line (can include GK) -Rotations triggered off 6/Holding Mids -Widest Players on different lines while maintain full width -Free or Open player must drive/att the space! -Ability of highest line to help AND stretch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribbling Passing Shooting Scanning Supporting/Positioning Adapting Body Shape
	<p>Unbalancing Objective</p> <p>Player running in behind or at the last DEF line while keeping balance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Playing a running player in behind lines or last line -Combination play with numerical superiority to destabilize -Switching channels after fixing defense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Options to penetrate over, through, around- trigger is free player facing forward -Numbers up -Players must try to pick up speed/stretch from different lines -Resting/Construction Shape- 3-2-5 or 2-3-5 shape (+1 in back) 	
	<p>Finishing Objective</p> <p>To create space in box and score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Get open to deliver/pass or finish (Organized Defense) -Get open to deliver/pass or finish (Unbalance defense) -Fixing and eliminating to shoot -Adjust and re-adjust to finish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Runners to create space with and without the ball in order to score from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -1v1s -Combination Play -Crosses/Cut-backs 	





Game Model: DEFENDING

PHASE	OBJECTIVE	PRINCIPLES	TACTICAL INTENT	Player Actions
Out of Possession To organize defensively and regain possession of the ball with vertical + horizontal compactness with individual/group pressure and team shape	Establishing the Block/ Reduce Space To take away the center of the field in order to force OPP to play into a trap/ pressure pocket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Close, make compact the DGC + organize marking -Read body language to create collective pressure based on timing of the pass -Anticipate and defend the depth when ball carrier is not under pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ball orientated press -Compactness -Closest Player/Individual pressure to ball w/direction -Potential interchange of positions to pressure, man-mark, or cover gaps -Create pressure pockets via trapping -Protection of space behind when OPP not under pressure -IND/Group/Team recovery to get behind the ball -Re/establish the block to repress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercepting Pressing Challenging Delaying Block the shot Scanning Adapting Body Shape Covering Marking
	Protect the Goal To prevent the OPP from scoring/shooting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Direct and organize collective pressure based on timing of the pass -Protect the goal when your defense is unbalanced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cut gaps between DEF -Tracking/Organizing Runners -Individual/Group/Team recovery/denial of space -Sprint to shift 	



Age Group

Dear Azzurri Families,

In the rapidly evolving landscape of elite youth soccer, maintaining a competitive edge requires more than just on-field talent—it requires a structural framework that optimizes player development. After extensive evaluation and in alignment with the latest directives from the **MLS Next Academy Division, US Youth Soccer (USYS), US Club Soccer, and the Florida Youth Soccer Association (FYSA)**, we are writing to announce a strategic shift in our organizational structure.

Beginning this upcoming season, The club is **transitioning from a birth-year model to a school-year (grade-based) system, with the understanding that this structure serves as a guideline, not a limitation, as we prioritize placing players in environments that best support their long-term development.**

Why This Change Matters

The "Birth Year" mandate of years past often created artificial barriers between a player's athletic and academic lives. By realigning with the school year, we are prioritizing the holistic development of our athletes:

- **Eliminating the "Trapped Player" Phenomenon:** This shift ensures that teammates move through the high school recruitment and graduation cycles together. This prevents players from being left without a team during their crucial senior spring or freshman fall due to age-group discrepancies.
- **Social & Academic Synergy:** Aligning with the academic calendar allows players to compete alongside their grade-level peers, fostering stronger chemistry and reducing the logistical friction between school commitments and club expectations.
- **Competitive Standardization:** As our primary leagues move toward this model, this transition ensures that Azzurri teams are competing in the most age-appropriate and strategically sound environments available.

Our Commitment to Individual Placement

While organizational structures provide the framework, our philosophy remains centered on the individual. We recognize that development is not linear.

The Azzurri technical staff will continue to utilize a **"Best-Fit" placement practice**. While the school-year model will be our baseline, final placements are determined by a player's unique trajectory. We evaluate:

- Technical and tactical acumen.
- Physical, mental, and emotional maturity.
- The optimal balance of "challenge vs. success" to ensure long-term retention and a passion for the game.

Looking Ahead

We understand that change in a competitive environment can bring questions. We are committed to full transparency during this transition and will be providing further age-specific details in the coming weeks.

Thank you for choosing to be part of the Azzurri family. We are excited to implement these improvements as we continue to set the standard for soccer excellence in Florida.

Age Group

- All Azzurri leagues are using **Seasonal Year** calendar
- Best-fit placement for each individual player
 - Technical/Tactical
 - Maturity
 - Challenge vs Success

Age Group

August 1, 2013-July 31, 2014	U13
August 1, 2012-July 31, 2013	U14
August 1, 2011-July 31, 2012	U15
August 1, 2010-July 31, 2011	U16
August 1, 2009-July 31, 2010	U17
August 1, 2007-July 31, 2009	U19

MLS Next Overview

Season Calendar

April 13-24	Tryouts
April	Teams Formed
May	Team Formation Meetings
July 27	Start of Preseason
September 5	Games
October 18 & 19	Start of Sat/Sun Trainings for U15- U19
December	Travel to MLS Next Fest (Arizona in 2025)
Dec 19, 2026- Jan 2, 2027	Holiday Break
January 2027	Regional MLS Next Cup Qualifier (2026 Sanford, FL)
May 2027	End of League Games Potential MLS Next Cup

Season Calendar

		League	Calendar	Tournaments	Tournaments	Tournaments *	End of Season Cup**
U19	Aug 2007- July 2009	MLS Next Academy	<p><u>July 27-Oct 20</u> 3 Trainings</p> <p><u>Oct 20-Jan 20</u> Sat&Sun Training</p> <p><u>Jan 20-May 31</u> 3 Trainings</p>	MLS Next Fest (Dec 2026)	MLS Next Cup Qualifier (Jan 2027)	NAC IMG (Feb 2027)	MLS Next Cup
U17	Aug 2009- July 2010	MLS Next Academy		MLS Next Fest (Dec 2026)	MLS Next Cup Qualifier (Jan 2027)	NAC IMG (Feb 2027)	MLS Next Cup
U16	Aug 2010- July 2011	MLS Next Academy		MLS Next Fest (Dec 2026)	MLS Next Cup Qualifier (Jan 2027)	NAC IMG (Feb 2027)	MLS Next Cup
U15	Aug 2011- July 2012	MLS Next Academy		MLS Next Fest (Dec 2026)	MLS Next Cup Qualifier (Jan 2027)	NAC IMG (Feb 2027)	MLS Next Cup
U14	Aug 2012- July 2013	MLS Next Academy		MLS Next Fest (Dec 2026)	MLS Next Cup Qualifier (Jan 2027)	NAC IMG (Feb 2027)	
U13	Aug 2013- July 2014	MLS Next Academy		MLS Next Fest (Dec 2026)	MLS Next Cup Qualifier (Jan 2027)	NAC IMG (Feb 2027)	

Technical Standards - U13 : Aug 2013-Jul 2014

U13

3x 25 minutes

2 sub moments per period - unrestricted substitutions

All players must play 1 uninterrupted period

Technical Standards - U14 : Aug 2012-Jul 2013

U14

2x 40 minute halves

3 sub moments per half - unrestricted substitutions

Technical Standards - U15-U19

U15-19

2x 45 minute halves

3 sub moments per half - no re-entry per half

Costs

Player fee includes:

- + MLS Next Individual and League Registration
- + MLS Next League Referee fees
- + Technology fee (Taka subscription with every touch logged, Impact concussion testing for player safety)
- + Training fee - coaching costs and field rental
- + Two events (Dec Fest and Jan Regional event) including referee fees
- + Secondary medical insurance
- + Athletic Trainer coverage during games

Costs

Additional Potential Costs:

- Uniform (2 yr cycle)
- Out-of-state travel to Dec Fest event (flight + hotel)
- In-state travel to Regional Qualifier (car + hotel)
- Any additional tournaments (IMG NAC about \$120 per player)
- Veo/Trace camera (less than \$100 per player for year)

Tryout Schedule



TRYOUT SCHEDULE

NORTH COLLIER
REGIONAL PARK

13-14
APRIL

U13 6:00-7:30PM
FIELD 6

13-14
APRIL

U14 7:30-9:00PM
FIELD 6

16 & 21
APRIL

U15 6:00-7:30PM
4/16 FIELD 8 4/21 FIELD 6

16 & 21
APRIL

U16 7:30-9:30PM
4/16 FIELD 8 4/21 FIELD 6

23-24
APRIL

U17 FIELD 8
4/23 6:00-7:30PM 4/24 5:00-6:30PM

23-24
APRIL

U18/U19 FIELD 8
4/23 7:30-9:00PM 4/24 6:30-8:00PM

REGISTER: WWW.AZZURRISTORM.COM



Takeaway

Questions?

