



OFFICIAL MEMBER

BOYS ECNL FAQs

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ELITE CLUBS NATIONAL LEAGUE OVERVIEW

What is the Boys Elite Clubs National League?

Mission

Boys Elite Clubs National League, Inc. ("ECNL") is a 501(c)(3) non-profit member-based organization founded in 2017 to improve the daily environment for boys youth soccer players through a collaborative club-based development program featuring competition, player identification, and coaching and club development platforms.

Goal

The goal of the Boys Elite Clubs National League (ECNL) is to change the landscape for elite male soccer players in the United States through innovative, player-centered programming and to enhance the overall experience by creating a better, more enjoyable, and more successful player, coach, and club development model.

A Board of Directors elected by the member clubs leads the Boys ECNL. The Boys ECNL Commissioner manages day-to-day operations. The Boys ECNL has three primary platforms:

1. The Competition Platform;
2. The Player Identification Platform;
3. The Club and Coach Development Platform

What are the benefits of playing ECNL?

The primary benefits for joining the league benefit the top-tier male athlete with:

1. Increased level of competition;
2. More meaningful matches;
3. Quality coaching; and
4. Greater exposure to college coaches (see Section VI: College Recruiting)

AGE GROUPS, TEAMS, AND COACHES

What age groups are participating? What leagues will non-ECNL teams participate in?

Loudoun Soccer will field a Boys ECNL team in each of the following age groups for Fall 2019-Spring 2020: 12U (Pre-ECNL), 13U, 14U, 15U, 16U, 17U and 19U.

Who are the ECNL team coaches?

Coaching assignments for Loudoun Soccer ECNL teams will be updated on the Boys ECNL Staff page. They will be highly qualified, committed, and licensed coaches.

Loudoun Soccer's ECNL program is led by Maurice Hughes.

Additional support will be provided by assistant coaches, speed/agility trainers, and goalkeeper coaches.

How does the ECNL coach interact with the Travel coaches in the age group?

The ECNL coach and Age Group head coach (Red team coach) collaborate to manage entire age group, specifically:

- Player development and progression
- Dual Rostering
- Club Passing
- Cross-team training (e.g. Red players train up with ECNL, Black train up with Red, etc.)

ROSTER SIZES, TRYOUTS, SELECTIONS, & UNIFORMS

How many players will be selected for each team?

Anticipated roster sizes for ECNL teams are:

U12-U14: 16-18

U15: 18-20

U16-U18/U19: 18-22

Larger player pools may be carried U15-U18/19 to account for increased commitment, injuries, and high school play; this is similar to most top-tier Travel teams currently roster more than 18.

Only 18 may dress per game. Players selected to ECNL are expected to receive opportunities in ECNL matches – otherwise we will look to club pass from the Red team to ensure playing time.

Club-pass opportunities may occur for Red (CCL) team players for ECNL matches or events (similar to current structure within Travel)

The maximum roster size per ECNL team is 30.

How are ECNL teams formed?

ECNL teams will be formed via Identification (ID) sessions, which will take place before the traditional tryout period in May/June. These ID sessions are open to all players via Talent ID Centers. Players must first register for these ID Centers AND be invited to attend a specific session, which is used to ensure a high-performance playing environment.

Families of players interested in ECNL must be patient during this process, as it is different than the traditional Travel tryout schedule. Most if not all players registered for ECNL Talent ID Center will be invited to attend at least one. Current Loudoun Soccer players will continue to be assessed within their current team and age group. Invitations to join an ECNL team will be extended on a rolling basis.

Are boys allowed to play-up in ECNL?

Playing up (playing on an older team) is permitted in ECNL, as it is in Loudoun Soccer. However, Loudoun Soccer believes a talented player should only play-up an age group if they excel at that level; players who compete or merely survive while playing up often fail to develop to their fullest potential, because certain elements of their game are compromised in a bigger, faster environment.

Given the competitive environment ECNL teams are expected to create in training and experience in competition, most if not all team members will play in their age group. Families who wish for their child to play-up must first receive approval from Maurice Hughes, Loudoun Soccer Boys ECNL Director.

What happens if my child tries out for an ECNL team but is not selected?

All players who try out for ECNL but are not selected are strongly encouraged to attend the club’s Travel tryouts in May and June for potential selection to our Red team that competes in Club Champions League.

Will ECNL teams wear different jerseys?

Boys ECNL teams will wear the same jerseys as the rest of the Travel teams in the club, but will have an ECNL patch on their sleeve. Additional items exclusive to ECNL players may be added to the existing uniform package.

GAME, EVENT, AND TRAINING COMMITMENT

What is the game and event schedule going to be?

ECNL competition includes a combination of league schedules and event (tournament) play. Certain age groups include post-season competition in June and possibly July if they advance. Please review the chart below to read the expected competition formats for each age group.

Age Group	Conference (League) Schedule	ECNL Event Schedule	ECNL Post-Season Schedule
U13	Traditional league schedule in Fall (Sept-Nov) and Spring (March-May)	One showcase per year	None – season concludes in May
U14	Traditional league schedule in Fall (Sept-Nov) and Spring (March-May)	One showcase per year	Top teams in each conference qualify for ECNL Champions League event in June
U15	Traditional league schedule primarily in Fall (Sept-Nov) with potential matches in Winter (Dec-Feb) to minimize conflicts with High School season in Spring.	Two showcases per year	Top teams in each conference qualify for ECNL Champions League in June with winners advancing to ECNL Finals in July; or for ECNL North American Cup or Showcase Cup in June.

U16	Traditional league schedule primarily in Fall (Sept-Nov) with potential matches in Winter (Dec-Feb) to minimize conflicts with High School season in Spring.	Three showcases per year	Top teams in each conference qualify for ECNL Champions League in June with winners advancing to ECNL Finals in July; or for ECNL North American Cup or Showcase Cup in June.
U17	Traditional league schedule primarily in Fall (Sept-Nov) with potential matches in Winter (Dec-Feb) to minimize conflicts with High School season in Spring.	Three showcases per year	Top teams in each conference qualify for ECNL Champions League in June with winners advancing to ECNL Finals in July; or for ECNL North American Cup or Showcase Cup in June.
U18/U19	Traditional league schedule primarily in Fall (Sept-Nov) with potential matches in Winter (Dec-Feb) to minimize conflicts with High School season in Spring.	At least one showcase per year	Top teams in each conference qualify for ECNL Champions League in June.

Are the substitution rules the same as other leagues?

Once a Boys ECNL Registered Player is substituted in one half of any Boys ECNL Competition, such Boys ECNL Registered Player may not re-enter the game for the duration of the half. Once a Boys ECNL Registered Player is substituted in one period of overtime of any Boys ECNL Competition, such Boys ECNL Registered Player may not re-enter the game. There shall be a maximum of seven (7) substitutions in any half or in overtime of any Boys ECNL Competition.

How does the post-season work?

All Boys ECNL Teams must participate in the Boys ECNL Post Season if they qualify. Upon conclusion of the Boys ECNL Post Season, teams shall advance to the ENPL Playoffs.

Do ECNL teams attend other tournaments?

Yes, ECNL teams may participate in high profile outside events like Jefferson Cup at the discretion of the club. U15-U18/19 teams will participate in the Loudoun Soccer College Showcase.

Will ECNL teams participate in State Cup?

Most likely no. Although there are no rules prohibiting ECNL teams from doing so, the schedule and commitment make participation in USYS State Cup, Regional Championships, and National Championships difficult.

How much travel is involved in participating in the ECNL?

Loudoun Soccer teams will compete in the Mid-Atlantic division, which includes clubs from Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Bus trips may be organized for longer-distance away games to better manage the travel requirements and costs. Saturday-Sunday matches are often coordinated for longer road trips (e.g. two games in South Carolina on one weekend) to better manage the schedule.

Compared to our top-tier boys teams that have competed in USYS National League and various showcase tournaments, the total amount of travel may actually be less.

What is the expected training schedule?

Loudoun Soccer ECNL teams will train three times per week during their competitive seasons.

Training sessions are expected to occur at Loudoun Sports Park, Evergreen Sportsplex, Bolen Park, and area High Schools.

Some training sessions may include sports performance sessions, classroom sessions, and video analysis.

Is this a year-long commitment, or are breaks scheduled in the calendar?

The ECNL commitment is 10-months, similar to the current Travel team commitment. Breaks will be scheduled around the competition schedule to permit appropriate rest and recovery for all players. U15-U19 ECNL teams are expected to have a lesser commitment in the Spring so that players may participate for their high school teams.

ECNL teams will begin informal sessions during the summer months, similar to other Loudoun Soccer Travel teams.

COSTS

What are the costs associated with playing for an ECNL team?

Costs associated with participating on a Loudoun Soccer ECNL team will be similar in structure to Travel teams (club fee, team fee, individual travel fees, uniform fee, etc.). Fees can be seen in full at the Uniforms & Fees page.

Financial Assistance

Loudoun Soccer is committed to ensuring that all potential players have the opportunity to receive the benefits of participation in our programs regardless of race, economic status and/or physical limitations. As part of that commitment, Loudoun Soccer is pleased to offer a Financial Assistance program to help families offset fees associated with the Boys ECNL program. Please see the Uniform & Fees page for more information on how to apply.

COLLEGE RECRUITING

How is participating in ECNL beneficial for college recruiting?

ECNL teams attract college coaches given the level of play associated with this league. Additionally, the showcase events provide a convenient opportunity for college coaches to attend in order to evaluate and recruit numerous players and teams.

The Boys ECNL is comprised of the most competitive clubs across the country. Over the course of the playing season, clubs gather to participate in ECNL National events and a National Playoff event (how many events of the five is dependent upon age group). In order to make life easy for the college scouts and maximize collegiate exposure, games are all scheduled and held at one soccer complex. To further work with the college scouts and their schedules, National Events are hosted from November through June, avoiding conflict with the women's college soccer regular season. The benefits of having the National events scheduled over an eight-month period allow:

- The college coaches the ability to observe and evaluate the players from one region to the next;
- The college coaches to have multiple evaluations throughout the year;
- The clubs to pre-plan their competitive calendar to coincide with their regional calendar and HS calendar; and
- The college coaches to pre-plan their recruiting calendars for the season.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

Where can I find more information?

Parents are encouraged to learn more about the Boys ECNL at the [ECNL website](#).

Families may also contact Maurice Hughes, Loudoun Soccer Boys ECNL Director, at maurice.hughes@loudounsoccer.com.