



CHICAGO FIRE NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Diana Lopez, 708-496-6726, Dlopez@chicago-fire.com
John Koluder, 708-496-6725, Jkoluder@chicago-fire.com
Chris Bailey, 708-496-6724, Cbailey@chicago-fire.com

Chicago Fire Youth Development Program Update

Chicago Fire Juniors – Mississippi Announce 24 Players Commit to Play Collegiate Soccer
CFJ – Mississippi Midfielder Christopher Williams Spends Week Training With Fire First-Team
Two Fire Juniors – West Michigan U-15 Girls Train With National Camp Pool in California

BRIDGEVIEW, IL (Thursday, August 17, 2006) – Even though the Chicago Fire Youth Development Program's competitive playing season is not yet in full swing, the club's four affiliates have continued to groom some of the nation's top young soccer talent across the summer months. The Fire Juniors have their eyes on the future as a player from the Chicago Fire Juniors – Mississippi side recently completed a week-long training stint with the Chicago Fire's first-team, while two U-15 Girls players from the CFJ – West Michigan were invited to train with the U.S. Women's National Team camp. In addition, 24 student-athletes from the Fire Juniors – Mississippi have recently committed to playing soccer at the collegiate level, while 26 complete teams will represent the Mississippi satellite after a productive tryout period.

Chicago Fire Juniors Player Makes Move With the Senior Side

Current Chicago Fire Juniors player Anel Bajrektarevic has recently joined the Chicago Fire's first-team for regular training. With the continued professional training experience, he hopes to make the jump to the professional ranks soon. Anel has been with the CFJ since he was 15 years old and is the first youth player to come through the Chicago Fire Juniors ranks to begin full-time training with the first team.

Two West Michigan U-15 Girls Train at U.S. National Team Camp

In yet another series of firsts during the past twelve months for the West Michigan Fire Juniors, the club recently sent the first group of players to train with a U.S. National Team squad. Not only do they have their first player, but their second player as well. Lauren Gagnon and Anne Steinlage, both teammates on the WMFJ U-15 Girls squad, were both selected recently to the Region II Regional Team. The Regional team is made up of players from 14 Midwest states and was selected after an exhaustive camp, which was recently held in Dekalb, IL. The players selected then traveled to Southern California on July 30 to attend the U.S. National Team Training Camp. This is the first time that two players from the West Michigan area have been selected to train in the U.S. camp.

CFJ – Mississippi Sends Prospect to Train in Chicago

In the first-ever player swap arranged between the Chicago Fire Juniors – Mississippi and the Chicago Fire's first-team, 16-year old midfielder Christopher Williams spent six days in Chicagoland to train at the team's facilities in late July. Williams, who plays for both the CFJ – Mississippi and in the Olympic Development Program, has helped his Pearl High School Pirates squad claim consecutive Class 4A state titles. He scored 17 goals and broke the MHSAA single-season assist record with 39 in 2005.

Fire Juniors – Mississippi Announces 24 Collegiate Signings

Chicago Fire Juniors – Mississippi is proud to announce the following 24 student-athletes who have committed to playing at the collegiate level. The following have committed/signed: Andrea Harrison (Mississippi State University), Ashley Curtis (Air Force Academy), Avery Allen (University of Texas), Bethany Frazier (Mississippi State University), Brandon Amacker (Mississippi College), Courtney Alexander (University of Miami), Hannah Tyler (Mississippi State University), Hannah Weatherly (University of Mississippi), Hunter Evans (Mississippi College), Hunter Flynt (Holmes Community College), Katelyn Graben (Mississippi State University), Katie Lynn Harden (Mississippi State University), Lauren Egger (Duke University), Lauren Host (Mississippi State University), Leanna Baldner (Mississippi State University), Lydia Rice (Birmingham Southern), Janet Self (University of Alabama Birmingham), Mallory Coleman (University of Mississippi), Nikki Bush (Louisiana State University), Perryn Tyler (University of Mississippi), Rachel Givan (University of North Carolina), Samantha Breland (Northwestern Louisiana State University), Scotty Beatty (William Carey College), and Trey Nichols (William Carey College). Congratulations to all the players that will make the collegiate jump in September.

West Michigan Fire Juniors Send Two More Players to ODP

Congratulations to the recent additions to the growing number of Olympic Development Program players plying their trade for both the West Michigan Fire Juniors and the ODP. McKenzie Doda of the '91 Girls and Nick Heyboer of the '91 Boys join the Michigan ODP system for the first time. This is in addition to the many other players who are already in the system.

CFJ - Mississippi Completes Highly-Successful Tryouts

The first-ever Chicago Fire Juniors – Mississippi tryouts were held throughout the months of June and July. The tryouts were a huge success, with the Fire Juniors being able to field 26 teams and, for the first time since the inception of Mississippi United Soccer Club, were able to field a complete team in every age group and gender.

CFJ U-18 Girls Go Undefeated at College Search Kick-Off Classic

In one of the premier college showcase events in the Midwest, the College Search Kick-Off Classic, held in Muscatine, IA on Aug. 3 and 4, the Fire Juniors U-18 Girls side defeated three of the top teams in the Midwest to begin their fall season in convincing fashion.

www.Chicago-Fire.com

www.ChicagoFireJuniors.com

www.WestMichiganFire.com



980 North Michigan Avenue Suite 1998 Chicago IL 60611
Phone: (312) 705-7200 Fax: (312) 705-7393

