



Chicago Fire Announce Inaugural Fire Academy Class

Seven Chicago Fire Juniors players lead first class represented by 13 different clubs
"Original Six" players signed to be introduced at TOYOTA PARK
Academy integrated with and supported by Red Bull North America's **Bullie** initiative

BRIDGEVIEW, Ill. (Sept. 15, 2007) – Chicago Fire Soccer has announced the club's first Fire Academy class this Saturday, Sept. 15, in advance of the Chicago Fire – New York Red Bulls match. Of the 39 overall players announced today, the "original six" players, the first to sign with the Academy, will be introduced to the media today at halftime. Five of the first six players to sign are products of the Chicago Fire Juniors youth development program. The Fire Academy will open play on Feb. 23 and 24, 2008, when they face AFC Lightning (Fayetteville, Ga.) and Concorde (Marietta, Ga.), respectively.

Announced in July of 2007, the Fire Academy is an elite player development initiative designed to identify and develop the best young talent within the Chicagoland area. The program will be fully funded by the Chicago Fire, with no financial responsibility falling on Academy players. The Academy will be limited to 44 players and will field two Academy teams, under-16 and under-18 men, that have been accepted to participate primarily in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy.

The "original six players" are as follows: Logan Spidle (Chicago Fire Juniors), Bart Boguszewski (Rockford Raptors), Robbie LaRocque (Chicago Fire Juniors), Bryan Ciesiulka (Chicago Fire Juniors), Victor Pineda (Chicago Fire Juniors), and Chris Prince (Chicago Fire Juniors). The Fire Academy roster currently consists of 39 players representing 13 different local clubs and 32 high schools from the Chicagoland area. Seven Chicago Fire Juniors players overall have joined the first Academy class.

"We're very excited about the talent level of our inaugural class, said Fire Director of Soccer and Team Development Roland Hahn. "We feel confident that a player from this class will someday become a professional player and we hope that in time this will become the model for future Chicago Fire success."

Full-time training begins Tuesday, November 6, with players training year-round, three to four times per week, and playing approximately 32 games per year as part of the U.S. Soccer Development Academy. The Fire Academy will compete in the Mid-America Conference, which includes: Chicago Magic Soccer Club, FC Milwaukee, Metro United Soccer Club, Scott Gallagher, Sockers FC Chicago, Solar SC, and the U.S. National Team (U-15/16 & U-17). The Fire Academy will be based at TOYOTA PARK, providing access to a number of first team amenities such as practice facilities, weight room, training room, and locker rooms.

Overseeing player selection and all technical instruction and development for the Academy will be former Rockford Raptors Director of Coaching and club co-founder, Louis S. Mateus (pronounced mah-TOOS). Mateus has over 20 years coaching experience, with collegiate head coaching posts at National Louis University (1985-1989), Benedictine University (1989-1996), and most recently Rockford College (1997-2001). He has also been involved in the game at the national and state youth levels, having previously served as an assistant coach for U.S. U-17 National Team (1995-1997) and is currently an assistant with the U.S. U-14 National Team. A former professional player for the Milwaukee Wave, Chicago Shoccers, and the Chicago Power, Mateus has been involved with the game at all levels.

"What a great day for the Chicago Fire organization," said Mateus. "We're very proud of the quality of our initial class and being a part of the beginning of something special here in respect to MLS youth development."

With the launch of the Chicago Fire Academy, the Fire now has player development programs and partnerships at every level, including the Fire Juniors, Super-20s, and the Fire Premier PDL Team. The Academy will be directly tied to the Major League Soccer (MLS) Home Grown Talent initiative. This initiative allows players involved in the Chicago Fire Academy that meet specific minimum training standards to be signed directly by the Chicago Fire without entering the MLS SuperDraft or Supplemental Draft. The rule is designed to provide increased opportunities for local players to realize their goal of playing for their local MLS team, while teams strengthen their connection with the community.

Supporting the launch of the Academy is Red Bull North America and adidas. The Academy will be integrated with and supported by Red Bull North America's Bullie initiative that is committed to help provide enhanced opportunities for under-privileged youths with special soccer talent.

Fire Announce Inaugural Fire Academy Class
 Sept. 15, 2007

Pos	Last	First	Club	City	High School
M	Acosta	Miguel	Magic	Joliet	Lake Forest Academy
D	Almazan	Roberto	CLASA	Cicero	St Joseph's
D	Andrekus	Austin	Raptors	St. Charles	St Charles North
F	Bartzis	Evan	Raptors	Northfield	New Trier
M	Berrini	Enzo	Wind	Homer Glen	Lockport
M	Bober	Kamil	Fire	Chicago	Whitney Young
D	Boguszewski	Bart	Raptors	Rockford	Boylan
D	Brynteson	Aaron	Raptors	Belvidere	CLS
M	Christianson	Ian	CRS - Iowa	Cedar Rapids	N/A
M	Ciesiulka	Bryan	Fire	Naperville	Naperville
D	Clark	Josh	Ela	Palatine	Palatine
D	Cortez	Felipe	FC United	Beach Park IL	Zion
M	Culver	Cody	Raptors	Roscoe	Harlem High School
D	Flores	Jorge	Wind	Summit	Argo
F	Gutierrez	Marco	Wind	Stone Park	St Joseph's
M	Guzman	Emanuel	FC United	Chicago	Lane Tech
F	Heimerdinger	Brian	Ajax	LaGrange	Lyons Township
M	Horton	Brad	Raptors	Sycamore	Sycamore
F	Huftalin	Andy	Raptors	Winnebago	Winnebago
GK	Huftalin	Nick	Raptors	Winnebago	Winnebago
D	Jordan	John	Sockers	Lake Zurich	Lake Zurich
D	Kerr	Jarret	Raptors	Northfield	New Trier
M	LaRocque	Robbie	Fire	Hinsdale	Hinsdale
M	Linden	Tim	Sockers	Libertyville	Libertyville
D	Lunar	Brian	Wind	Oak Lawn	Oak Lawn
GK	Lyon	Charles	Campton U.	St. Charles	St Charles East
F	Marofske	Eric	Arsenal	Elk Grove	Conant
M	McCrudden	Kyle	FC United	Wilmette	New Trier
D	Medina	Luis	FC United	Waukegan	Waukegan
D	Miller	Trent	Raptors	Rockford	Rockford Guilford
D	Patel	Nikhil	Fire	Aurora	Waubonsie Valley
F	Pineda	Victor	Fire	Bolingbrook	Lake Forest Academy
F	Prince	Chris	Fire	Naperville	Naperville
F	Spidle	Logan	Fire	Plainfield	Plainfield South
D	Spoo	Kyle	Magic	Lemont	Lemont
M	Stanley	Jordan	Raptors	Roscoe	Harlem High School
D	Stockley	Seth	Raptors	Earlville	Earlville High School
F	Tovar	Lionel	Husa/Eclipse	Cicero	Morton
M	Wheeler	Trevor	Sockers	Arlington Heights	St Viator

