

THE NEW JERSEY SOCCER GROUP

Press Release



**Blaze U20 Men's Team Proves Worth in Strong League
South Brunswick, NJ--August 2nd, 2011**



The New Jersey Blaze U20 men's team has fought hard in a tough new league to prove that the organization has depth at all levels. Led by head coach Ricky Duggal, the Blaze were crowned champions of last year's Youth Premier Soccer League, though have been faced with a new-look US Soccer National Adult League to test their strength and skill.

With nine points from eight games against strong opposition, the Blaze found the new setting much more challenging in 2011. However, given the development opportunities it offered the young stars of South Brunswick and beyond, it was looked upon very favourably by Coach Duggal. "It was a good season with an expanded league that was a lot more competitive," he said. "We played some great soccer but were sadly plagued with injuries. Still, this isn't an excuse; we still had a squad which was more than capable of getting results."

Duggal explained that the standard of players in the league was extremely high, showcasing the best youth talent of the eastern seaboard. "We were seeing players ready to step up to their respective senior teams in every game," he continued.

Luckily, there were a number of solid performances. "We had a solid unit going forward, though a number of players really stood out. Our captain, Sebastian Carbonell, was full of energy and was a true workhorse in midfield, showing versatility when we needed him." The head coach was also impressed with Tyler Cignerella, who he deemed to be "a great midfielder with height, power and very good footwork". Ryan Brost, to continue his form from 2010, carried on as a great attacking forward. "Chris Lands, our goalkeeper, made tremendous saves and showed he could play with the best when stepping up into the senior team for a couple of games," Duggal added.

The youth team has always been seen by the Blaze organization as a great place to further foster excellent talent, and the coach was extremely pleased with the long-term prospects of his squad. "We want to build on the program's success and look to have two teams once more to compete strongly in each conference," he continued. "The league will only grow, which is a good thing for soccer in NJ and a great thing for the players in it."

Many of the stronger players will, of course, be offered first-team places in the NPSL next season, while many others will be considered after another year at college. Duggal added: "There is a definite case for a good number of players moving up to the senior team and it's something we have spoken about regularly. It's great to see, as we are going to be moving more players to our senior squad. This shows the standard of the Blaze program and not just a single team; we have a lot of strength and ability."

The New Jersey Blaze are members of the National Premier Soccer League and Women's Premier Soccer League, the highest levels of amateur soccer in the United States. They are part of the New Jersey Soccer Group, a management company for a family of soccer based organizations offering a full range of soccer services in New Jersey.

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