

Frequently Asked Questions

East Lake Soccer Association / Palm Harbor Nighthawks Soccer Club

1. How will this merger affect my child?

- For most players and families, the immediate effect will be minimal as we strive to transition in a manner that ensures stability for the player, family and club.
- The most immediate benefit will be the ability to field more teams in each age group, at a variety of levels. This will provide each player the opportunity to train and play at the level appropriate to his or her ability, commitment and desire.

2. Who will be coaching my child's team?

- We expect most coaching assignments to remain the same so as to provide as much consistency and stability for our players as possible. The coaching assignments will ultimately be determined by the Technical Director & Director of Coaching, based upon player background, experience and education.
- Just as we seek to provide each player with appropriate playing/training opportunities, we also look to place coaches in appropriate coaching situations. The staff will be a combination of professional and volunteer coaches.

3. What team will my child play on?

- Player placement will be consistent with our desire for stability during the transition. Therefore, players will be aligned with teams that best support their individual need, whether that be stability of teammates, coaches and locations or a desire to align with a focus on skill level.
- The Head Coaches from both organizations, along with the Technical Director & Director of Coaching and technical staff, will make decisions on player placement.

4. How many teams will there be in each age group?

- This is one of the many areas which members will see a benefit from the merger. The resulting club will be able to support two teams in most age groups with some age groups having three teams.



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- During tryouts, our head coaches and the technical staff will be able to address the team composition and number of teams as registration is the primary driver in this area.

5. My child has been or should be playing up an age group.

- Again, stability is the core tenet for the transition period. Therefore, the Technical Staff will work with the head coaches and member families to help them make the best decision for each individual player during the tryout period.

6. Where will my child's team practice?

- A detailed training plan is being structured based on the existing teams, coaches and trainers. The majority of players and families will now have options based on the number of teams fielded and the varied level of teams in each age group.
- Recreation Programs will continue to exist at each park.
- Academy players will play closest to where they live.
- Competitive teams will train based upon field availability, coaching assignments and common sense.

7. How much will this cost?

- Based on the findings of our financial subcommittee, we do not see the merger of the two clubs increasing the cost of player fees. However, player fees are projected to increase based solely on the increased expenses such as field maintenance, user fees, etc. regardless of the merger.
- The MLS affiliation does have an associated cost to the merged club. The Merger Steering Committee is working on options to ensure that players' fees will not increase due to the affiliation with the Colorado Rapids during the base year.
- We are focused on structuring cost offsets for any and all associated costs through sponsorships and fund raising opportunities. Note that many of these opportunities will be derived from the MLS affiliation.



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8. How do you envision the cost structure for the club?

- The goal is to establish tiered player fees that are in line with our current fee structures and will cover estimated expenses based on forecasted costs of the same goods or services leveraged during our prior year.
- Please note that the exact cost per age group has not been set and is being worked by the financial subcommittee. Due to the tiered age group structure, members may see their player fees decrease, remain close to the same, or increase due to the age group in which they are playing.

9. Will I need to buy new uniforms?

- As we will be changing colors, new uniforms will need to be purchased. However, the new uniforms may be used for two years, thus reducing the annualized cost.
- We are also working with Adidas to obtain deeper discounts and some form of offset, but do not have this finalized.
- The uniform subcommittee has a sample uniform. If you would like to see it, contact a subcommittee member or plan to attend the town hall meeting.

10. Will my local recreational program still exist?

- Yes. The resulting club will maintain local recreational soccer programs at each location.
- The recreational subcommittee has worked through the programs offered by both clubs and believes that benefits and enhancements will be realized by both groups without combining them into one program.
- Benefits and enhancements include things such as interclub games, coaching and player development, Academy Select (a transitional program designed for younger recreational players).

