



# Emerald City Football Club Philosophy

## **The Emerald City Experience: Soccer for Life**

“Emerald City FC is dedicated to creating a positive and dynamic learning environment where players not only desire to succeed, but become enthused by the experience to contribute to the success of others.”

We are more than a soccer club, we are more than a life experience.... We are ‘Soccer for Life’

### What makes the Emerald City Experience so different?

- ✓ We have some of the most gifted, talented & qualified coaches in the state.
- ✓ Our coaches actively seek to connect the lessons from the game to lessons in life. We want to teach our players to become respectful, hard-working citizens who can compete, persevere, and be encouraging and supportive teammates.
- ✓ Our coaches are not pressured to ‘win’ at the expense of development. Coaches and teams are not assessed on their win/loss record, allowing coaches to make decisions about what is right, instead of what is ‘right now’.
- ✓ We do not sacrifice the long-term development of our players for short-term gains. Our curriculum is developed to create rounded players over the long-term, not simply ‘Bigger, Faster, Stronger’ over the short term for instant gratification.
- ✓ We are more than a club, we are a community. We are a ‘family’ and as such both understand and appreciate the need for family time during the course of the season / year.
- ✓ We believe that multi-sport athletes create the best-rounded individuals and thus we support players who choose to do so.
- ✓ We believe in teaching the FUNamentals of soccer. There is no need to choose between having fun and successfully improving as a player—both together works best.

Emerald City has a long history of player development and excellence in Seattle since 1979. We continue to be at the forefront of talent development graduating players from our programs into Academy Programs, College, MLS, USMNT. Despite all our successes and achievements on the field over the years, the true test of our ‘Soccer for Life’ philosophy is measured by the impact we have had on our players as people. As testament to this we currently have 6 Emerald City Alumni players in coaching positions within our programs (5 Head Coaches, 1 Assistant Coach), all of whom pride themselves on ‘giving back’ to the community that helped shape them. Our philosophy is more than just words, we live it.

### ***Parents of Seattle Sounders MLS Cup Winner Aaron Kovar:***

*The Kovar family can look back with fondness at all the years with ECFC. I look back at my kid’s soccer skills and know where they developed..... I am (speaking) to acknowledge to Emerald City FC the huge role the club has played in his development.”*

R.Kovar

We are committed to helping players become the best they can be, both on and off the field. It is our goal to fuel your player’s passions for a lifetime and we are committed to this service and all the work it will take to make it happen. We hope you can be part of it too.

## Youth Development – Early Learning

A select or premier soccer experience for families and young players in Seattle should be about more than just soccer. It simply has to be. With all the time, money, and effort spent on a year of soccer, it had better be a quality soccer experience, and it better be more than that, too. Players need to enjoy it, look forward to it, and learn life lessons from it!

So what does true development in select soccer look like?

- All players play and contribute to games. No one sits out in order to give a team a better chance to win. We win with the players we have and are committed to developing.
- Players in the younger age groups will play in more than one position over the course of the season in order to learn the game from different perspectives and find their strengths.
- Young players need to practice and play enough to learn and grow, but not get burned out. They need to enjoy it and the time together with teammates.
- We will teach players and teams to play correctly for the sake of development. Here's a small example. When we teach young players to play a ball back to the goalkeeper rather than play it out of bounds, we know they will make mistakes, sometimes leading to an opponent's goal. Players know that we will praise them for trying to do what is right, rather than admonishing them for making a mistake. We have to let young players experience situations, learn from them, refine them, and become more confident.
- Players are constantly told to be excited to make plays, to try things, to be unafraid of making mistakes. When they do, it builds their confidence as athletes and as people.

There needs to be a place for young players and families in Seattle who want these things. Ideally there will be many such places! But at Emerald City FC, we are committing to helping young players become the best players they can be and, more importantly, to give them lessons that help them grow into quality people. When they are older, we want them to look back on their experiences positively, to appreciate and love the game, and to have memories that make them feel it was all worth it!

We are committed to this service and the work it will take to make these things happen. We hope you can be part of it, too.