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WORLD FUTSAL CHAMPIONSHIPS TO HOST FIRST REGIONAL QUALIFIER SERIES

22 Qualifiers from across the world will help place the teams in the 2019 tournament

RALEIGH, N.C. (20 September 2018) – United Futsal Association, an organization dedicated to promoting the game of futsal (a sport similar to soccer played mainly indoors with five players per side) around the world, today announced that the first-ever World Futsal Championships Regional Qualifier Series will be held in conjunction with Global Premier Soccer and the United States Specialty Sports Association.

The series of tournaments will serve as a pathway to define the field each year in the AAU World Futsal Championships located at the ESPN Wide World of Sports complex in Orlando, Fla., each July. The partnership with GPS ensures quality competition and tournament organization at each of our International Qualifiers while sanctioning through USSSA will ensure each domestic qualifier is sanctioned officially to the US Soccer Federation, run according to FIFA standards and each athlete and coach are insured for the duration of the competition.

The 2014 World Futsal Championships featured 50 youth teams and 12 adult teams. Five years later, the tournament has doubled with over 100 teams from around the world. The 6th Edition will feature a United Futsal Association International Futsal Coaching Symposium and a Referee Certification Course, all against the backdrop of the Disney World theme park.

GPS National Tournament Director, James Hamblin, says “We are thrilled to be partners with both U5A and USSSA to provide a national platform of competitive futsal qualifiers that leads into the World Futsal Championships. We feel these qualifiers will bring the best futsal teams together in the US who will eventually compete with international teams as they qualify for the main event at Disney.”

The AAU World Futsal Championships will again be held in front of famous coaches, international scouts and professional futsal players from around the world, eager to see the top futsal teams in the world compete. In previous editions, FC Barcelona, CR Flamengo, and world famous futsal players Falcão and Ricardinho have featured at the event.

“This partnership is the perfect storm between leaders in their respective industries,” said Rob Andrews, President of the United Futsal Association. “It will lead to more opportunities for more players in more locations around the world than ever before, and that is great news for futsal.”

Futsal is a variation of the game of soccer with five players per side. The game is played primarily indoors on a surface without walls or boards that is slightly larger than a basketball court. Unlimited substitutions are allowed during a match and there is no penalty for offsides. In futsal, a goal is scored every six minutes and a shot is taken an average of every 43 seconds.

Futsal was created in Uruguay in the 1930’s. It is the only indoor soccer game recognized by FIFA, and is played by more than 180 of the federation’s 209 member associations. The sport has a large and passionate following worldwide, with many top professional soccer players such as Pele, Ronaldo and Messi crediting their experience playing futsal with helping to develop their footwork, ball control and decision making.

“Over the past 15 years we have facilitated growth for the game of Futsal throughout the country” stated Craig Scriven, Vice President of USSSA. “We’re excited to now work with U5A and GPS in continuing to grow the game and provide a quality product both on and off the court.”

For more information on the Road to the World Futsal Championships, please visit <https://worldfutsalchampionships.com/qualifiers>

About United Futsal Association

United Futsal Association is an organization dedicated to connecting Americans to the world’s fastest-growing sport through education, events and experiences that foster awareness, understanding and a passion for the game of futsal. Learn more at www.unitedfutsal.com

About Global Premier Soccer

Global Premier Soccer (GPS) are one of the largest and most successful soccer organizations in North America, providing player development programming in twenty-six States across the USA as well as Puerto Rico, Canada, England and Spain. Learn more at www.globalpremiersoccer.com

About United States Specialty Sports Association

USSSA is the largest multi-sport sanctioning body of sports in the country, with over 4.5 million members, and a member of United States Soccer Federation. The organization mission is to develop and expand the game of soccer and Futsal in the United States. Learn more at www.ussa.com

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