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Source: Valentine Odongo, director of coaching, Tuscaloosa United Soccer Club, 678-517-5023

NEW "TOPSOCCER" PROGRAM ORGANIZING

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – Tuscaloosa United Soccer Club announces an organizational and informational meeting to organize a TOPSoccer program. The meeting will be on February 7 at 2 p.m. in the PARA Building's 2nd floor conference room, located at 614 Greensboro Avenue in Tuscaloosa.

TOPSoccer is a community-based program designed to meet the player development needs of children and young adults with physical and/or intellectual disabilities.

"TOPSoccer provides an often overlooked population of athletes access to the game," said Valentine Odongo, director of coaching, TUSC. "It is organized by ability and game comprehension, not by age," he said.

The meeting is open to potential coaches, volunteers, parents, players and supporters.

Coach Odongo started playing professional soccer at the age of 15 with Gor Mahia Football Club, the premier continental African league, and was on the team when it won the Mandela Cup. After suffering career-ending knee injuries, he moved to the coaching ranks. Recently, he was director for Forsyth Fusion Soccer Club, now United Football Club, the largest soccer club in the state of Georgia.

Odongo has successfully coached youth teams that have won numerous state, regional and national titles including Disney, Super Y League and the Region III Premier League. He has coached approximately 35 players who went on to play at the NCAA college level and additional players now in the professional ranks.

In addition to directing TUSC, Odongo coaches in the United States Soccer Federation Youth Academy working with the 15 and 16-year-old age group for Birmingham United Soccer. He is a 15-year veteran educator who has been a teacher of students with disabilities and a science teacher.

Youth soccer in the Tuscaloosa area was brought together under one umbrella with the recent formation of the Tuscaloosa United Soccer Club. It is a super league of sorts that partnered PARA, YMCA and independent teams.

For more information about TOPSoccer, please visit the following links: <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/programs/TOPSoccer.asp>, <http://www.cook-imaging.com/LYSA/index.htm>, and <http://www.mnyouthsoccer.org/programs/topsoccer.cfm> and click on the video.

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