

NEBRASKA FIERCE INAUGURAL SEASON PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nebraska State Soccer Announces Nebraska Fierce, WPSL Team

[OMAHA, NE] - Nebraska State Soccer is pleased to announce our acceptance of an invitation to join the Women's Professional Soccer League (WPSL) U21 starting in 2024. To fulfill this invitation, NSS has effectively started Nebraska Fierce, a female soccer organization committed to a holistic soccer experience for young women that will play in the WPSL U21 Central Conference.

Nebraska Fierce will be a women focused, and women- led, soccer team committed to the mental, physical and social well-being of its athletes. Mary Matthews has been named General Manager of Nebraska Fierce and Anne Leboo has been chosen to lead the team on the field as Head Coach.

"As the General Manager of the Nebraska Fierce team, I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to offer elite women athletes a platform to excel in soccer during the summer months with Nebraska State Soccer. Our aim is not just to foster competitiveness but to provide a fun and enriching experience that prepares these athletes for their collegiate seasons ahead," said Mary Matthews, "Soccer holds a special place in my heart, serving as the cornerstone for building lasting relationships both on and off the field over the past 15 years. It has connected me with my daughters, their friends, and fellow parents, forging bonds that extend far beyond the game itself. With this new endeavor, we are confident that our community will rally behind our team and the broader initiative. Together, we are ready to make a meaningful impact in the realm of women's sports!"

When asked how she was feeling about her role on the team, Head Coach Anne Leboo said, "I am honored to be asked to lead this team in its inaugural season. I'm looking forward to the challenge of putting together a competitive team and participating in the WPSL for the first time. This is a huge opportunity for our community, and an incredible privilege to be able to provide our home-grown female players a chance to compete at a new level and further prepare them for their collegiate season. I'm incredibly grateful to Nebraska State Soccer and Mary Matthews for this new opportunity for both myself, and the players in Nebraska!"

Players from various schools and colleges can come together for additional games, training and fitness during the summer where they can continue to work for their current and future soccer careers. The Nebraska Fierce program will include two trainings a week, mental health training and support from our partner groups, the US Center for Mental Health and Sport and ED Care, along with up to eight games during the 7-week program. Tryouts will be hosted at Tranquility Park May 18, 21 & 22 with a team media day and official team meetings beginning May 23rd.

WPSL has announced Nebraska Fierce will be starting off the inaugural season at home on May 31st at 7pm vs Sioux City Sol at Tranquility Park! Full Schedule will be released in the coming days.

About the WPSL:

Since its establishment in 1998, the WPSL has been the pinnacle platform for advancing player development in the United States at the amateur level. Through its 25-year history, the WPSL has grown into a leading advocate for women's soccer by creating multiple avenues for developmental opportunities, including the WPSL International Combine and the WPSL U21 league.

As of 2023, the WPSL is still the longest-active women's soccer league in the United States and with a membership of over 130 teams, it's also the largest women's soccer league in the world. Its national footprint stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific and down to the Gulf with teams in 31 of the 50 U.S. states.

The WPSL launched WPSL U21 in 2021 as part of its commitment to building a player-pathway structure within its historical organization. The 2023 WPSL U21 season will open in May, marking the third season of play.

About Nebraska State Soccer:

Nebraska State Soccer is the premier governing body for soccer in Nebraska, dedicated to promoting and developing the sport at all levels. As an affiliate of the United States Soccer Federation (USSF), United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA), and United States Adult Soccer Association (USASA), Nebraska State Soccer oversees leagues, competitions, coaching education, and player development programs. With a mission to provide opportunities for all individuals to enjoy the game, Nebraska State Soccer strives to foster a positive soccer culture that inspires our over 22,000 players, coaches, referees, and administrators across the state. Nebraska State Soccer is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

About Nebraska Fierce:

Nebraska Fierce was established in 2024 as a program of Nebraska State Soccer Association. With a focus on female leaders and athletes we prioritize a holistic approach to our players soccer career with team offerings including an emphasis on mental health and recovery. Nebraska Fierce is passionate about our connection to our community in our soccer community and the local business community, as well as many sponsor and membership options to support our cause.
