



MARCH 2021



# MONTHLY UPDATE

## What a Kick!



**GET YOUR MLSA INFO FAST & RUN WITH IT.**

### No Foolin': Travel Signups Start on April 1st!

Hello MLSA!

We are back and excited to kick off the spring season with you! Our travel teams are practicing, the spring goalkeeper training has started, RT 19 is playing, the birds are singing and the SDP is ready to go. It feels great to be back!

Our next signup is right around the corner:

#### Travel Registrations Open Up for Fall/Spring 2021/22 Soccer on Thursday, April 1st!

- Boys and Girls Travel Teams
- Eligible Grades: U9 - U17/18 (Birth Years 2013 - 2005+, see site for more info. since boys and girls are different birth years)
- Dates: Tryout Dates Coming Soon! Season runs Late August/Early September - November and March - June (again, see site since girls is different this year)
- These competitive leagues are part of PA West. We usually play local teams like USC and Bethel Park, and occasionally as far out as Wheeling.

Register on [MLSA.org](https://mlsa.org) through May 12th (for Girls) and May 21st (for Boys).

#### Read on in the newsletter for some exciting announcements on the girls side!

And also very important—please take a minute to familiarize yourself with our [Return to Play Guidelines](#) and NEW Mandatory Mask Rule, which is also on the following pages.

See you on the fields!

Overall program questions? Email [info@mlsa.org](mailto:info@mlsa.org)

### AWESOME UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Travel registrations for 2021/2022 start on 4/1 at [MLSA.org](https://mlsa.org)
- MLSA for Girls! Announcing our exciting new programming! **Save 4/27 at 7pm for a Zoom introduction**
- Party on the Pitch Clinics continue!
- Return to Play & Masking Info.
- Upcoming FREE referee recertification & training information
- Something's always happening on social. Click our icons above to check in!
- Spotlight your player!
  - 1. Complete the form <https://forms.gle/UaKrAf29joEBv9w18>
  - 2. Send a player photo (action) in Lebo Gear with name in subject to [social@mlsa.org](mailto:social@mlsa.org)

Watch your email & check [MLSA.org](https://mlsa.org), our social media and [school newsletters](#) for all updates!

# INTRODUCING MLSA FOR GIRLS

## WITH RE-IMAGINED PHILOSOPHY & PROGRAMS

Dear MLSA Families,

As you know, the MLSA just celebrated our 50th year. We have always been an organization dedicated to Lebo children, and we are so proud to uphold this tradition.

Recently, we recognized the need for some new programming to keep our girls engaged and happy. So we've spent time talking with parents and coaches as well as looking at the latest research for the best ways to accomplish this.

Meet MLSA for Girls. We have re-imagined this branch of the MLSA to deliver programs steeped in a culture and philosophy more customized and attuned to the needs of girl players.

Here is what the overall framework will look like:

- A renewed philosophy specifically tailored to girls' needs
- Re-designed development initiatives and a development committee just for girls
- A re-envisioned culture incorporating what's important to girls' development and a culture committee to oversee it
- Female pro-trainers as often as possible
- Girl-focused goalkeeper training run by female goalkeepers
- Mentoring programs and events
- A re-invigorated and strengthened high school girls soccer team partnership
- Added flexibility in the travel program, with options to play one season or two seasons, as well as other specific changes

On **Tuesday, April 27th, we'll host a 7pm zoom presentation** to provide even more details. Please join us to learn about these exciting changes and take advantage of the opportunities for your young player.

We also want to welcome and thank our new team that will be overseeing the girls program. We will also introduce the specific program directors at our Zoom meeting:

**Development Directors:** Create and oversee curricula for all age groups

- Seth Young, Mt. Lebanon High School Girls Varsity Coach
- Kelly Mehalko, Mt. Lebanon Middle School Girls Coach
- Shelly Saba, former Duquesne Women's Coach and Mt. Lebanon Girls Assistant Varsity Coach

**Culture Directors:** Foster and steward girl-focused culture

- Liz Peer, MLSA Coach and Board Member
- Sarah Moore, former College Goalkeeper
- Megan Tappe, MLSA Coach and Board Member

**High School Liaison/Club Opportunity Director:** Jodi McKeever, MLSA Board Member

### Love the Game

This is a big change and it's going to open up a world of opportunities for our girls. With everything we do, we're focused on fun, teamwork, development and unity. Our goal is to make soccer an enjoyable, competitive and fulfilling experience for all — and for the girls to love this beautiful game and play with us for years to come.

We are excited and we know the girls will be too!

Thank you for joining us on this journey,

Tracy Adams  
MLSA for Girls Coordinator



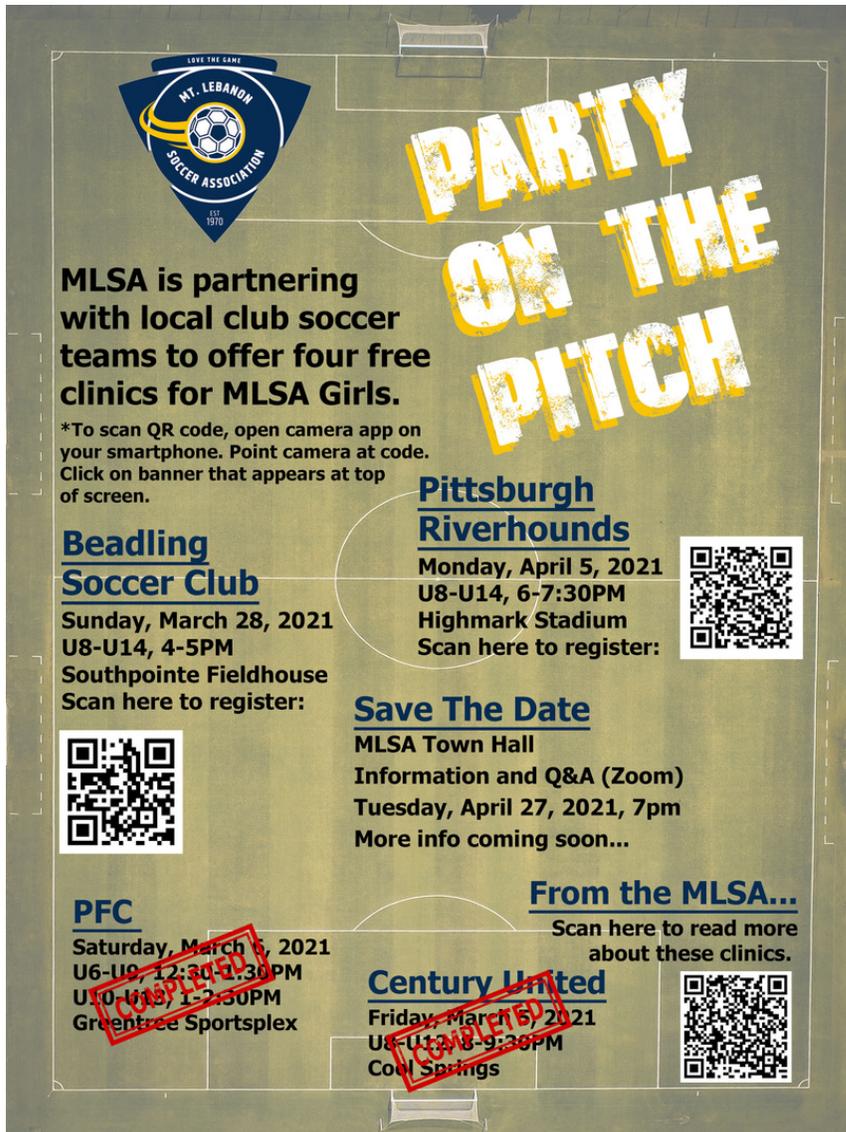
# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Free Soccer Clinics for Girls: Party on the Pitch

Our first two Party on the Pitch Clinics were a huge success with over 20 girls attending each. Thank you to Century United and PFC for hosting us! Also a big thanks to Coach Seth and the MTLG Coaching staff for being there. There are still two more clinics:

**Beadling Clinic Registration:** Go to [Beadling.com](https://www.beadling.com), click the blue register button in the top right & create a free Sport Connect account. Once you enter your daughter's age, the option for the MLSA free clinic will appear.

**Pittsburgh Riverhounds Registration:** [Click here](#). If you don't have a Sports Engine account, you'll need to create one!



 LOVE THE GAME  
MT. LEBANON  
SOCCER ASSOCIATION  
EST. 1970

**MLSA is partnering with local club soccer teams to offer four free clinics for MLSA Girls.**

\*To scan QR code, open camera app on your smartphone. Point camera at code. Click on banner that appears at top of screen.

**Beadling Soccer Club**  
Sunday, March 28, 2021  
U8-U14, 4-5PM  
Southpointe Fieldhouse  
Scan here to register:



**Pittsburgh Riverhounds**  
Monday, April 5, 2021  
U8-U14, 6-7:30PM  
Highmark Stadium  
Scan here to register:



**Save The Date**  
MLSA Town Hall  
Information and Q&A (Zoom)  
Tuesday, April 27, 2021, 7pm  
More info coming soon...

**PFC**  
Saturday, March 6, 2021  
U6-U9, 12:30-1:30PM  
U10-U13, 1-2:30PM  
Greentree Sportsplex

**Century United**  
Friday, March 5, 2021  
U8-U14, 8-9:30PM  
Cool Springs

**From the MLSA...**  
Scan here to read more about these clinics.

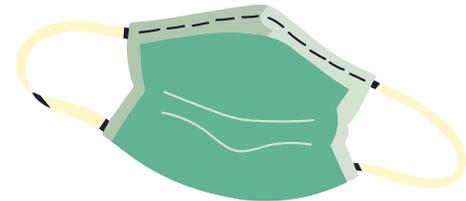


**COMPLETED**



# MUST READ

## Return to Play Guidelines & NEW Mask Mandate



As we safely return to the beautiful game, there are some new guidelines and mandates we all must be aware of. Please read the [Return-to-Play Guidelines](#) and make sure you're familiar with them before your child steps on the field.

**Please also review the following NEW mask mandate FAQs:**

### **Why are masks required on the field of play?**

The Commonwealth of PA issued a masking order on November 17, 2020 and revised it on November 23, 2020 that requires all Pennsylvanians to wear a mask when indoors or outdoors and not with the members of their household and they cannot sustain the appropriate physical distance.

### **What is sustained physical distance?**

Sustained physical distance means the practice of staying at least six feet away from others to avoid becoming a close contact. On October 21, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its definition of close contact to "someone who was within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period." The guidance goes on to note that there are additional factors to consider when defining "close contact." DOH recommends using 15 consecutive minutes of exposure at a distance of six feet or less as an operational definition for "close contact." However, there are circumstances when someone should be considered a close contact of a case after being within six feet for fewer than 15 consecutive minutes. Additional factors that should be considered when assessing close contacts include but are not limited to close proximity to an infected person, infected person exhibiting symptoms, and environmental conditions like crowds or inadequate ventilation.

### **How long will masks be required?**

Masks will be required until the Commonwealth of PA removes the requirement for athletes to wear masks while on the field.

### **What happens if I don't wear a mask?**

The wearing of a face covering, such as a mask, helps us as a society to limit the spread of COVID-19 and successfully combat this pandemic; therefore, it is in everyone's best interest that all Pennsylvanians comply with this Order. As this is a legal Order under the Disease Prevention and Control Law, law enforcement officers are authorized to issue warnings or citations to anyone who does not comply with the Order. The Department of Health can also issue warnings and citations to businesses, persons, facilities, and organizations that do not comply.

### **Does the Order apply to athletes and sports activities?**

Yes. Everyone who participates in sport activities including coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception in Section 3 of the Order.

**Indoors:** Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings, when indoors and where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, etc.

**Outdoors:** Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings if they cannot maintain sustained physical distance from persons outside of their household. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. If sustained six-foot distancing can be maintained, face coverings may be removed when outdoors.

### **How will it be enforced at the game?**

Masks will be considered part of a player's mandatory equipment to participate like matching uniforms, shin guards, and appropriate footwear as checked by the referees during pregame.

### **What happens if a player isn't wearing a mask?**

Players not wearing a mask will not be permitted to participate.

### **Can an athlete remove their mask during play?**

If an athlete is at a sustained distance from the other athletes, the player may lower their mask until play approaches leading to an elimination of sustained distance.

### **Can an athlete remove their mask during play if the mask causes a medical condition, including respiratory issues that impede breathing?**

Yes, the Order provides an exception in section 3 that provides that if wearing a face covering would either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition or a disability. The order indicates all alternatives to wearing a face covering, including the use of a face shield, should be exhausted before an individual is excepted from this Order. Using football as an example, wearing a mask in addition to a mouth guard and a helmet would likely create a medical issue for the athlete whether the athlete is a professional or youth player even if a previous medical issue was not present. For example, the CDC says that "wearing a mask with these types of protective equipment is not safe if it makes it hard to breathe." There are other sports where there are similar concerns that a mask would create a medical issue where one would otherwise not exist in an athlete. For example, it should also be obvious that wearing a mask while swimming presents an imminent health issue.

According to Section 3, the athlete would be asked to work through alternatives that would reduce or eliminate the respiratory droplets that would impact others in proximity. If the sport, equipment, or exertion level does not allow for face covering to be worn safely then the athlete should not wear a face covering.

There are no exemptions for specific sports, leagues, teams, or levels. We know that some people don't like masks. We are asking everyone to please give this their best effort so we can continue these activities and others as we all unite to fight COVID-19.

# GIVING BACK

## Lebo Gear Goes to Cameroon

### Thank You, Lebo Families!

Look how far a little Lebo Love can go! For the past five years, we've been working with the organization Open Field to provide new and slightly loved uniforms, cleats, soccer balls and other much needed gear to these passionate and talented players in Cameroon.

To see the looks on their faces here is truly a joy. And we couldn't have done it without your generous donations. Thank you, MLSA family! Here is the letter we got from the grateful program coordinator:

Dear Coach,

On behalf of the Open Field team in Cameroon and the many youth who have benefitted from your donation, I want to say thank you for investing in our work. My name is Timofei Kharisov and I started working with Open Field a few months ago and am supporting programming and partnerships.

Over the past 12 months, we worked with a partner in Maryland to send 3 shipments containing a total of 15 barrels (55 gallon drums) full of soccer gear over to Cameroon. We're talking hundreds of soccer balls, more than 1,000 jerseys, shorts, socks, warm-ups, and coaching gear. This equipment is given out to participants who register in our leagues (nearly 1,000 youth in 3 cities in Cameroon) and also as prizes after each competition for best player, highest goal scorer, and fair play awards. It's difficult to quantify the value of these materials for some kids who often play barefoot or in anything but cleats. They really make a difference!

We couldn't have done this without you and the support from Mt. Lebanon. I am sharing a few photos with you today in hopes that you will help us further spread the word within your club and beyond.

Whenever the time is right for you to do another equipment drive, I will be happy to work with you on that. We welcome donations year-round.

Thank you,

--

Timofei Kharisov  
Program Coordinator, Open Field

c: 304-923-7773  
@openfieldintl



# REFEREE TRAINING

## Get Ready to Ref - For FREE!

Hey Ref!

Online training for 2021 is in full swing. The authoritative source for refereeing info in Western PA is <https://www.wparef.com/>

**Recertification for 2021** remains open for existing referees, **at no cost (it's usually \$50) and 100% online.** Full details at <https://www.wparef.com/2021-recertification-season-has-began/>, or you can go straight to registration at [wparefs.gameofficials.net](http://wparefs.gameofficials.net)

**Entry Level Referee Classes for new referees**--registration now open for online modules, **at no cost!** Full details at <https://www.wparef.com/becoming-a-us-soccer-referee/>.

Now is also a great time to take care of clearances. We hope that by the time warmer weather comes, it will be safe to hold in-person sessions to complete your training.

When they can be scheduled, in-person sessions will cost about \$100.

We need adult referees, so come join in the fun!

Questions? Contact MLSA's Referee Assignor, Brian Auer, [refkeeper@gmail.com](mailto:refkeeper@gmail.com), c 412.608.8676



# Your "Games to Watch" in March

**Download the LiveSoccerTV app for game times and channels.**

## **International Matches:**

Sat 4/3: PSG vs Lille and RB Leipzig vs Bayern

Sun 4/11: Real Madrid vs Barca

Sun 4/18: Atalanta vs Juventus

## Men's Local College:

Sat 4/3, 4:30: Duquesne vs. Dayton (A)

Sat 4/10, 7:00: Duquesne vs. St. Louis (A)

Thurs 4/15, TBA: Duquesne Atlantic 18 Semi-Final

Sat 4/17, TBC: Duquesne Atlantic 18 Final

## **Women's Games:**

### **Local College**

Thurs 4/1, 7:30pm: Duquesne vs St. Louis at Rooney Field

Sun 4/4, 1pm: Duquesne vs St. Louis at Rooney Field

### **Challenge Cup (On CBSSN)**

Fri 4/9, 8:30pm: Houston Dash vs Chicago Red Stars

Wed 4/14, 7pm: Orlando Pride vs Sky Blue FC

Wed 4/21, 10pm: Portland Thorns vs OL Reign

### **USWNT**

Sat 4/10, 1PM: USWNT vs Sweden (Fox)

Tues 4/13, 3PM: USWNT vs France (ESPN 2)

**Grab some friends and watch a game or two!**

