



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Ironbound Soccer Club and Sport Club Portuguese Announce Historic Merger of Senior Soccer Programs

Newark, NJ – September 12, 2024 – Sport Club Portuguese (SCP) and Ironbound Soccer Club (ISC) are excited to announce the merger of the Ironbound SC senior soccer program with SCP's soccer program, uniting two of the most respected senior soccer programs in the region. This collaboration marks a new era for soccer in Newark's Ironbound community, strengthening our commitment to developing talent and celebrating our rich soccer heritage.

A Legacy of Soccer Excellence in Newark's Ironbound Community

Sport Club Portuguese, established in 1921, has been a cornerstone of the Portuguese community in Newark's Ironbound neighborhood. Founded by Portuguese Americans who sought to create a soccer team to compete with local clubs, SCP quickly became a symbol of cultural pride and athletic achievement. For decades, the club's semi-professional team, Newark Portuguese, was a dominant force in local and regional competitions, leaving an indelible mark on the history of soccer in New Jersey.

Walking through SCP's historic location at 55 Prospect Street, visitors are surrounded by the legacy of soccer excellence, where the walls tell stories of past victories, legendary players, and a community united by its passion for the game. This merger signifies not just a union of clubs, but a continuation of a tradition that has defined generations of players and fans alike.

Honoring the Ironbound's Heritage and the Immigrant Experience

Ironbound SCP is a tribute to the Ironbound neighborhood itself, a vibrant and diverse community deeply shaped by waves of Portuguese immigration throughout the 20th century. The Ironbound has long been the heart of Portuguese culture in Newark, a place where immigrants found a home away from home and where soccer became a powerful connection to their roots. These teams pay homage to the hardworking spirit of the Portuguese immigrants who built this community and found solace, joy, and pride in the beautiful game. Soccer fields in the Ironbound have witnessed the dreams and struggles of countless families, and this seeks to honor that history by continuing to provide a space where culture, community, and sport come together.

Uniting for a Stronger Future

Ironbound Soccer Club was founded with a mission to develop youth players capable of earning college scholarships and advancing to professional careers. The club has been instrumental in fostering talent, instilling values of character, self-esteem, confidence, and sportsmanship. Its competitive youth programs have achieved success on state, regional, and national levels, producing numerous players who have gone on to professional soccer careers.

With the merger, Ironbound SC's senior program will now operate under the banner of SCP Soccer. This merger unites the two premier senior soccer programs in the Ironbound, creating a powerful platform that will continue to provide a home for soccer excellence in the community.

Continuing the Tradition of Youth Development

While the senior programs will now merge, all youth soccer operations will remain under Ironbound Soccer Club. SCP will serve as the social home for Ironbound SC, fostering a sense of community and belonging for players, families, and fans. This partnership ensures that the legacy of both organizations continues to thrive, with a clear path from youth development to senior competition.

This fall, the newly combined Ironbound SCP senior program will feature several teams competing in the Garden State Soccer League. These teams will carry forward the proud traditions of both clubs, representing the Ironbound community at the highest levels of competition.

A Vision for the Future

"The merger of our senior soccer programs is a historic moment for both Sport Club Portuguese and Ironbound Soccer Club," said Jack Costa, General Assembly President of Sport Club Portuguese. "This partnership not only preserves our rich history but also sets the stage for an even brighter future. Together, we are stronger and better equipped to support our players, celebrate our community, and continue our shared legacy of excellence on and off the field."

Albert Coutinho, President of Ironbound SC, added, "This merger is a natural progression for two clubs that have long shared the same values and commitment to our community. By combining our senior programs, we are not only preserving our traditions but also creating new opportunities for growth and success. SCP has been a pillar of soccer in the

Ironbound, and we are thrilled to join forces to further enhance the soccer landscape in Newark. Our vision is to provide the best pathway for our players, from youth development through to senior competition, while fostering a strong community bond.”

Sergio Nobre, lead of this Ironbound SCP program indicated that “This merger marks a pivotal moment for soccer in our community. By bringing together the strengths of both SCP and ISC, we are creating a stronger foundation for the future. Our players, our community, and our traditions will all benefit from this collaboration. I am proud to lead this effort and look forward to the new heights we will reach together.”

We invite all members, supporters, and the wider community to join us in this exciting new chapter. Together, we will continue to honor our past, celebrate the present, and build a future where soccer and community go hand in hand.