

**2023**  
**NORTH CAROLINA COURAGE**  
**MEDIA GUIDE**



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**TWO-TIME NWSL CHAMPIONS: 2018, 2019**

**THREE-TIME NWSL SHIELD WINNERS: 2017, 2018, 2019**

**2018 WOMEN'S ICC CHAMPIONS**

**2022 NWSL CHALLENGE CUP CHAMPIONS**



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\*Consist of those who were under contract with the Courage as of March 20, 2023. Updated player bios will be available in game notes and on the team website at [www.nccourage.com/roster](http://www.nccourage.com/roster).



# 2023 NC COURAGE SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Venue	Kick (ET)	Broadcast
<b>March 25 (SAT)</b>	<b>KC Current</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>2:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
April 1 (SAT)	at San Diego Wave	Snapdragon Stadium	10:00 PM	Paramount+
<b>April 15 (SAT)</b>	<b>Washington Spirit</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
April 19 (WED)	at Orlando Pride*	Exploria Stadium	7:00 PM	Paramount+
April 22 (SAT)	at NJ/NY Gotham	Red Bull Arena	7:30 PM	Paramount+
April 23 (FRI)	at Houston Dash	Shell Energy Stadium	8:30 PM	Paramount+ / TSN+
<b>May 3 (WED)</b>	<b>NJ/NY Gotham*</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
<b>May 6 (SAT)</b>	<b>Portland Thorns</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+ / TSN+</b>
<b>May 14 (SUN)</b>	<b>OL Reign</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>3:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+ / TSN+</b>
<b>May 20 (SAT)</b>	<b>Angel City FC</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
May 27 (SAT)	at Louisville	Lynn Family Stadium	8:00 PM	CBSSN
June 3 (SAT)	at KC Current	Children's Mercy Park	8:30 PM	Paramount+
June 10 (SAT)	at Chicago	SeatGeek Stadium	TBA	Paramount+
June 14 (WED)	at Washington*	Audi Field	7:30 PM	Paramount+
<b>June 17 (SAT)</b>	<b>Orlando Pride</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
<b>June 24 (SAT)</b>	<b>Racing Louisville</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
<b>July 1 (SAT)</b>	<b>Houston Dash</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+ / TSN+</b>
July 9 (SUN)	at Angel City FC	BMO Stadium	8:00 PM	Paramount+ / TSN+
<b>July 22 (SAT)</b>	<b>Washington Spirit*</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
<b>July 29 (SAT)</b>	<b>Orlando Pride*</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
August 5 (SAT)	at NJ/NY Gotham*	Red Bull Arena	7:30 PM	Paramount+
August 20 (SUN)	at Portland Thorns	Providence Park	10:30 PM	Paramount+
<b>August 27 (SAT)</b>	<b>Chicago Red Stars</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>2:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
<b>Sept. 2 (SAT)</b>	<b>NJ/NY Gotham</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
Sept. 17 (SUN)	at Orlando Pride	Exploria Stadium	7:00 PM	Paramount+
October 1 (SUN)	at OL Reign	Lumen Field	8:00 PM	Paramount+ / TSN+
<b>October 7 (SAT)</b>	<b>San Diego Wave</b>	<b>WakeMed Soccer Park</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Paramount+</b>
October 15 (SUN)	at Washington	Audi Field	5:00 PM^	Paramount+
October 22 (SUN)	NWSL Quarterfinal	TBA	TBA	TBA
November 4 (SAT)	NWSL Semifinal	TBA	TBA	CBSSN / TSN
November 11 (SAT)	NWSL Championship	TBA	TBA	CBS / TSN

**Bold - Home**

\* UKG Challenge Cup

^ Decision Day

**FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION: [WWW.NCCOURAGE.COM/TICKETS](http://WWW.NCCOURAGE.COM/TICKETS)**



# CLUB FRONT OFFICE DIRECTORY

## **EXECUTIVES**

Steve Malik.....Chairman/Owner  
Francie Gottsegen..... Club President  
Curt Johnson..... Chief Soccer Officer

## **LEADERSHIP**

Jorge Acuna ..... VP, Broadcast Operations  
Nicole Blake-Crigler..... VP, People & Culture  
Fred Demarest..... VP, Marketing & Communications  
Rob Erwin..... VP, Ticketing  
Frank Fitzgerald..... VP, Operations  
Bobby Hammond ..... Sr. VP, Player Personnel  
Santiago Lucio ..... VP, Corporate Partnerships

## **TICKETING**

Rob Erwin.....Vice President, Ticketing  
Erica Tillman..... Director, Ticket Operations  
Jay Harrill ..... Ticket Operations Coordinator  
Elizabeth Martin..... Business Intelligence Analyst  
Courtenay Carruthers..... Fan Relations Manager  
Brian Kapusta .....Senior Account Manager  
Gary White.....Senior Account Executive  
Rachael Kelly ..... Account Executive  
Abigail Ponce-Angeles..... Account Executive  
Maria Cardeno ..... Account Executive  
Patrick Horn..... Account Executive  
Rachel Bilenki..... Account Executive

## **CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS**

Santiago Lucio ..... VP, Corporate Partnerships  
Hana Williamson..... Director, Corporate Partnerships  
Jake Williams..... Director, Corporate Partnerships  
Kelsey Chan ..... Manager, Corporate Partnerships  
Scott Spickard ..... Coordinator, Corporate Partnerships

## **MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**

Fred Demarest..... VP, Marketing & Communications  
Jake Levy..... Director, Communications  
Marie Davis ..... Manager, Communications  
Adam Dreyfuss..... Manager, Communications  
Madeline Goodman ..... Director, Community  
Abbie Skladan ..... Manager, Community  
Damian Foley ..... Director, Marketing  
Marissa Montgomery..... Manager, Marketing  
Morgan Lee ..... Creative Lead  
Peter Roberts..... Manager, Video Content  
Ella Thompson ..... Coordinator, Video Content  
Sam Haidemenos..... Graphic Designer

## **MERCHANDISE**

Erin Murray..... Director, Merchandise  
Sara Alsous..... Coordinator, Merchandise

## **OPERATIONS**

Frank Fitzgerald.....VP, Operations  
Riley Tennant ..... Manager, Game Day Ops and Events  
Nicole Lengel.....Manager, Facilities  
Jonathan Cortina ..... Manager, Game Day Operations

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Nicole Blake-Crigler.....VP, People & Culture  
Lindsey Shawver .....HR Generalist/Office Manager

## **FINANCE**

Brian Dobosh ..... Controller  
Shonda Mitchell..... General Accountant

### **Mailing Address**

North Carolina Football Club  
801 Corporate Center Dr. STE 320  
Raleigh, NC 27607



# *ABOUT THE COURAGE*

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The North Carolina Courage is a professional women's soccer team that plays in the NWSL (Women's First Division). The NC Courage are two-time NWSL Champions and three-time NWSL Shield-winners. On January 9, 2017, the North Carolina Football Club announced it had entered into an agreement to acquire the rights to the NWSL 2016 Champion Western New York Flash. The club was then renamed the North Carolina Courage. Steve Malik, owner of the North Carolina Courage, announced his intent to secure the awarding of an NWSL team on December 6, 2016 and achieved that objective in only one month's time.

The North Carolina Courage crest is a nod to the history of women's professional soccer in North Carolina, incorporating a stylized lion, a major component of the old WUSA Carolina Courage logo, while retaining the brand identity of the club's parent organization with the signature North Carolina Football Club star and the separated triangle. Additionally, the colors mirror those of the men's side, uniting the two teams under the North Carolina Football Club umbrella, while maintaining their individual identity.

In their inaugural season, the North Carolina Courage won the NWSL regular season, bringing the NWSL Shield home to North Carolina. The team also advanced to the NWSL Championship game. The NC Courage had two league award winners: Abby Dahlkemper (Defender of the Year) and Ashley Hatch (Rookie of the Year).

In 2018, the NC Courage were the NWSL Champions and Shield-winners breaking the NWSL record for the most wins in a season with 17. The team also broke the record for most points (57), fewest losses (1), most goals scored (53), fewest goals allowed (17), lowest goals against average (.71), and largest goal differential (+36). The Courage defeated the Portland Thorns, 3-0, on September 22, 2018 to win the NWSL Championship. Jessica McDonald was named the NWSL Championship MVP.

In 2019, the Courage won their third-consecutive NWSL Championship before becoming the first NWSL team to win the NWSL Championship on their home turf. In the Courage's 4-0 NWSL Championship win over the Chicago Red Stars, Debinha was named the MVP.

In a shortened 2020 season due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NC Courage participated in the 2020 NWSL Challenge Cup and the NWSL Fall Series. In 2021, the Courage went 9-9-6 in the regular season. They clinched a spot in the playoffs, where they fell to the eventual champions, Washington Spirit, 1-0 in the 2021 NWSL Playoff Quarterfinals.

The team returned to their winning ways in 2022, capturing the Challenge Cup championship. The Courage never lost in the group stage, earning three wins and three draws to win the East Division. The Courage, seeded third in the knockout stage, took down the Kansas City Current, 2-1, in the semi-finals then beat their fellow East Division Washington Spirit, 2-1, for the title. Debinha was named the Challenge Cup MVP, scoring five goals throughout the tournament.

After a rocky start to the regular season, the Courage went on a heavy playoff push, controlling their own fate on the final weekend of the regular season, but a draw at San Diego left the Courage in seventh place of a six-team playoff bracket. The Courage finished with 32 points, going 9-8-5. They ranked second in goals, goals per game, assists and goal differential for the regular season. Debinha and Carson Pickett were NWSL First XI while Kerolin Nicoli and Diana Ordonez were Second XI.



# NC COURAGE EXECUTIVES

## STEVE MALIK – OWNER AND CHAIRMAN



A visionary entrepreneur with three decades of health information technology experience, Steve Malik has served as the chairman and owner of North Carolina Football Club since 2015. Since joining the club, Malik has ushered in a new era for soccer in North Carolina. He oversaw a full rebrand of the club in 2016 before securing the arrival of the North Carolina Courage and the birth of an historic partnership with North Carolina FC Youth in 2017, creating the largest youth-to-pro club in the country. Touted for his business acumen and leadership ability, Malik serves on the U.S. Soccer Federation Board of Directors and is Chairman of the NWSL Executive Committee, where he helps shape the future of both men's and women's soccer in the U.S.

Currently, Malik heads Greenlight Health Data Services, a patient-initiated health data retrieval company. The founder of the Cary, N.C.-based Medfusion, Malik began the company in 1996 and re-acquired it in 2013 before selling again in November 2019. A 2010 finalist for the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year, Malik helped Medfusion grow from a medical website development company to the leading provider of enhanced healthcare communication solutions.

The son of a chemical engineer, Malik was born in Swansea, Wales, and moved to Kinston, N.C., at the age of four, where he grew up before attending the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Malik graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration with honors from UNC-Chapel Hill. Malik resides in Raleigh with his wife, Kathleen, and their four children. In his free time, Malik enjoys soccer, fishing and sailing.



**Francie Gottsegen**  
*Club President*

Francie Gottsegen was named President of the North Carolina Football Club in January 2022. A Durham resident and alumna of Duke University, Gottsegen brings a wealth of business development and sports marketing experience to the club, as well as a valuable perspective on sponsorships and relationship building. Most recently, Gottsegen served as the Chief Executive Officer of Sports Systems, a TicketManager Company, delivering guest management and accreditation solutions to numerous Fortune 500 companies. Prior to working at Sports Systems, Gottsegen served as the Senior Vice President of Sports and Entertainment Marketing at JP Morgan Chase, which followed a similar role at Wells Fargo. Gottsegen has also worked at notable professional sports organizations including the PGA of America, the National Basketball Association, and Major League Soccer.



**Curt Johnson**  
*Chief Soccer Officer*

Johnson, a Raleigh native, played soccer locally with CASL, Ravenscroft School and NC State. As a defender for the Wolfpack, Johnson started 72 games in four years and as a senior captain, helped lead his team to the 1990 ACC Championship and NCAA semifinals. After graduating in 1991, he returned to NC State as a volunteer assistant coach.

Before heading up the RailHawks (now North Carolina FC) in 2011, he was GM with the Richmond Kickers from 1997-1999 and the Kansas City Wizards from 1999-2006, a club he helped guide to a 2000 MLS Cup and Supporters' Shield as well as a 2004 Lamar Hunt US Open Cup. Following the Wizards, Johnson returned to the Carolinas where he worked briefly for the Carolina Hurricanes of the NHL and US Club Soccer in Charleston, SC.



# ***SOCCKER AND TECHNICAL STAFF***

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## **TECHNICAL STAFF**

Sean Nahas ..... Head Coach  
Nathan Thackeray ..... Assistant/Goalkeeper Coach  
Emma Thomson ..... Assistant Coach  
Fabrice Gautrat ..... Assistant Coach  
Victoria Boardman ..... Assistant Coach

## **SOCCKER OPERATIONS**

Curt Johnson ..... Chief Soccer Officer  
Bobby Hammond ..... Senior VP of Player Personnel  
Charlie Naimo ..... Technical Advisor  
Kathryn Page ..... Director, Player Experience and Soccer Operations  
Matt Holmes ..... Team Administrator  
Jessica Segalla ..... Equipment Manager  
Lexi Stewart ..... Team Operations Coordinator

## **MEDICAL & PERFORMANCE**

Dr. Milan Digiulio ..... Chief Medical Officer  
Dr. Piper Fitzpatrick ..... Medical Director  
Brian Maddox ..... Head Athletic Trainer  
Katie Rosenthal ..... Athletic Trainer  
Mike Young, PHD ..... Performance Director  
Austin Both, MS ..... Assistant Strength Coach  
Jason Winegar, MS ..... Sport Scientist



# TECHNICAL STAFF BIOS

## HEAD COACH - SEAN NAHAS



Nahas begins his second full season as head coach of the Courage in 2023, bringing nearly two decades of coaching experience to the sideline. Nahas led the Courage to the 2022 Challenge Cup championship in his first season at the helm and was a member of the coaching staff that led the team to their NWSL Championships in 2018 and 2019. He has valuable US National Team coaching experience, including assistant coaching positions with the U20 USWNT and U14 Youth National Team and serving as a US National Team Youth Scout. He has held several leadership positions with CASL (now NCFC Youth), including Director of Girls Classic Soccer, ECNL Director, and Director of CASL Player Development. As ECNL Director, he helped CASL reach its highest ranking in USYS of No.7 nationally in 2010-2011.

## ASSISTANT COACH - NATHAN THACKERAY



Thackeray enters his sixth season on the Courage staff in 2023. He was a member of the 2018 and 2019 NWSL Championship coaching staff. He started his coaching career in 2011 after playing with England's Bradford City from 2003-2006 and William Woods University from 2006-2010. He worked with Young Harris College in Georgia, and then became the Head of Goalkeeping at the Houston Dynamo Academy in 2012. Thackeray is a USSF licensed coach.

## ASSISTANT COACH - EMMA THOMSON



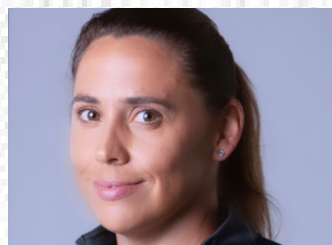
Thomson begins her second season as a full-time assistant in 2023. She spent six prior years with George Mason University, while also coaching with FC Virginia in the DA. She holds a USSF A license and is also on staff with the NC Courage Girls Academy. She grew up playing in the FA Women's Premier League and represented England at youth levels. A two-time captain for Penn State women's soccer, Thomson helped the Nittany Lions to four NCAA Tournament appearances, collecting four Big Ten Championships and one Big Ten Tournament Championship.

## ASSISTANT COACH - FABRICE GAUTRAT



Gautrat begins his first season with the Courage in 2023. He spent the prior three seasons with the Chicago Red Stars, including full-time in 2022. He also worked with youth club Chicago FC United from 2018-22, taking over as academy director in 2020 to lead the program through a transition to the Girls Academy. He coached in the USYNT camp in June of 2019. The Santa Clarita, California native played for the University of San Diego from 2006-07 before playing professionally through 2015. He also spent time as an assistant in the Olympique Lyonnais academy.

## ASSISTANT COACH - VICTORIA BOARDMAN



Boardman begins her first season on the Courage staff in 2023, joining the team in February. She was on the first-ever staff of the San Diego Wave, helping the team to a playoff berth in their first season of competition in 2022. Prior to joining the Wave, she was a head coach for BEACH Futbol Club in California for over four years. She earned her USSF A license in 2018 and achieved her UEFA B license in 2021. She graduated from Long Beach State in May 2020 with a degree in kinesiology and exercise science.





# PRESEASON PLAYER BIOS



**#0 KATELYN ROWLAND | GK | 5-11 | DOB: 3/16/94 | NWSL EXP: 9th Year**

"KATE-linn ROW-lind" | **HOMETOWN:** Vacaville, CA (USA)

**COLLEGE:** UCLA

*Acquired via trade with the Kansas City Current prior to 2022 season (Lynn Williams)*

- Started four regular season and eight Challenge Cup matches in 2022
- Starting goalkeeper on back-to-back NWSL Shield winning Courage teams in 2017-18
- Originally drafted by FC Kansas City 17th overall in the 2015 NWSL College Draft
- Four-year starter at UCLA, set NCAA records for career shutouts (55) and single-season (19)



**#1 CASEY MURPHY | GK | 6-1 | DOB: 4/25/96 | NWSL EXP: 5th Year**

"KAY-see MURR-fee" | **HOMETOWN:** Bridgewater Twp., NJ (USA)

**COLLEGE:** Rutgers

*Acquired via trade with OL Reign prior to the 2021 season (Crystal Dunn)*

- Started 18 matches in 2022, recording six clean sheets in 1,620 minutes
- Recorded 11 clean sheets in 2021, matching the NWSL single-season record
- Member of the United States Women's National Team since 2021 with 12 clean sheets
- Played collegiately at Rutgers where she was a two-time B1G Goalkeeper of the Year



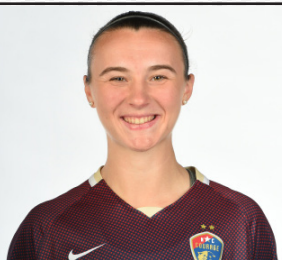
**#3 KALEIGH KURTZ | DEF | 5-8 | DOB: 9/9/94 | NWSL EXP: 6th Year**

"KAY-lee KURTS" | **HOMETOWN:** Greer, SC (USA)

**COLLEGE:** South Carolina

*Signed with the Courage ahead of the 2018 NWSL Season*

- 2022 Iron Woman, playing every minute of the regular season
- Scored first three career goals during the 2022 campaign
- Appeared in all eight Challenge Cup matches in 2022 to help Courage win title
- SEC Defender of the Year as a senior for the University of South Carolina



**#4 EMILY GRAY\* | MID | 5-4 | DOB: 10/5/00 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"Emily Gray" | **HOMETOWN:** Sewell, NJ (USA)

**COLLEGE:** Virginia Tech

*Drafted in the first round (3rd overall) of the 2022 NWSL Draft*

- Appeared in three regular season and four Challenge Cup matches as a rookie in 2022
- Has been invited to six U.S. WNT training camps throughout her youth career
- Scored nine goals with eight assists in her senior season at Virginia Tech
- Highest draft pick in Hokies' history and third overall ever drafted out of Virginia Tech



**#5 HALEY HOPKINS | FWD | 5-10 | DOB: 12/21/98 | NWSL EXP: Rookie**

"HAY-lee HOP-kinz" | **HOMETOWN:** Newport Beach, CA (USA)

**COLLEGE:** Virginia

*Drafted in the first round (11th overall) of the 2023 NWSL Draft*

- Two-time All-ACC selection and 2022 All-Region honoree at Virginia
- Led the Cavaliers with 14 goals in her senior season
- Appeared in 104 collegiate games and made 100 starts between UVA and Vanderbilt
- Scored 56 career goals and had 26 assists with 21 game-winning goals



**#6 NARUMI MIURA | MID | 5-1 | DOB: 7/3/97 | NWSL EXP: 1st Year**

"nah-ROO-me me-OR-uh" | **HOMETOWN:** Kawasaki, Japan (JAPAN)

*Acquired via transfer from WE League's Tokyo Verde Beleza prior to 2023 season*

- Has 23 appearances for the Japanese National Team (JFA), including 2020 Olympics in Tokyo
- Has been a member of Japan's top domestic league, WE League, since 2016
- Signed a two-year agreement with the Courage upon completion of her transfer
- Courage now have seven players that have served on six senior national teams

\*Placed on season-ending Injured Reserve on March 20



# PRESEASON PLAYER BIOS



**#7 MALIA BERKELY | DEF | 5-8 | DOB: 2/13/98 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"mah-LEE-ah BIRK-lee" | **HOMETOWN:** Liberty Twp., OH (USA) | **COLLEGE:** Florida State

*Acquired via transfer from FC Girondins de Bordeaux*

- Appeared in 16 regular season and seven Challenge Cup games in 2022
- Appeared in 10 games across two professional seasons for Bordeaux from 2020-22
- Two-time ACC Defensive Player of the Year (2019, 2020) for Florida State
- Three-time ACC Champion and 2018 NCAA Champion



**#8 BRIANNA PINTO | MID | 5-5 | DOB: 5/24/00 | NWSL EXP: 3rd Year**

"BREE-ah-nah PIN-toe" | **HOMETOWN:** Durham, NC (USA) | **COLLEGE:** North Carolina

*Acquired via trade with NJ/NY Gotham FC prior to the 2022 season (Allocation Money)*

- Appeared in 22 regular season games and started 17 with a goal and two assists in 2022
- Originally drafted third overall in the 2021 NWSL Draft by Gotham FC out of UNC
- Member of USYNT U-23 team (2022-23); 2019 U.S. Soccer Young Female Player of the Year
- 73-career appearances for the Tar Heels; 2021 MAC Hermann finalist



**#9 KEROLIN NICOLI | FWD | 5-5 | DOB: 11/17/99 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"KEH-row-leen NICK-oh-lee" | **HOMETOWN:** São Paulo, Brazil (BRAZIL)

*Signed ahead of 2022 season (allocation money to buy out contract with Madrid Club de Fútbol Femenin.)*

- Played 1,117 minutes across 13 regular season NWSL games in 2022, scoring six goals
- Scored once in five Challenge Cup appearances in 2022
- Brazil National Team member since 2018, youth teams since 2016
- Has made 28 international starts for Brazil (Through 2023 She Believes Cup)



**#10 DENISE O'SULLIVAN (C) | MID | 5-4 | DOB: 2/4/94 | NWSL EXP: 8th Year**

"deh-NEECE OH-SULL-uh-vin" | **HOMETOWN:** Cork, Ireland (IRELAND)

*Signed off of waiver wire on July 28, 2017 (Houston Dash)*

- Named the second captain in the history of the North Carolina Courage prior to 2023 season
- Has appeared in 146 NWSL matches across all competitions with four goals and 12 assists
- Started 18 of 19 matches played in 2022, recording 1,583 minutes
- Two-time FIA (Ireland) Player of the Year, led Ireland to first-ever World Cup in 2023



**#11 BRITTANY RATCLIFFE | FWD | 5-4 | DOB: 2/7/94 | NWSL EXP: 8th Year**

"BRITT-nee RAT-cliff" | **HOMETOWN:** Washington Twp., NJ (USA) | **COLLEGE:** Virginia

*Signed as Discovery Eligible Free Agent prior to the 2021 NWSL Season (Utah Royals)*

- Scored twice in 10 appearances in 2022
- 79 appearances across all NWSL competitions, six goals scored
- Drafted 17th overall in the 2016 NWSL Draft by the Boston Breakers
- Two-time All-ACC performer for Virginia with 14 goals and 12 assists in 49 career games



**#12 EMILY FOX | DEF | 5-5 | DOB: 7/5/98 | NWSL EXP: 3rd Year**

"EMILY FOX" | **HOMETOWN:** Ashburn, VA (USA) | **COLLEGE:** North Carolina

*Acquired via trade with Racing Louisville prior to 2023 season (Abby Erceg, Carson Pickett)*

- Won 58% of both tackles and duels in 17 games for Louisville in 2022
- First overall selection in the 2021 NWSL Draft and Rookie of the Year finalist
- 27 appearances for the USWNT, including every minute of the 2023 She Believes Cup
- Three-time All-ACC performer and two-time All-American at UNC-Chapel Hill



# PRESEASON PLAYER BIOS



**#13 RYAN WILLIAMS | DEF | 5-8 | DOB: 2/23/96 | NWSL EXP: 6th Year**

"RY-in WILL-yumz" | **HOMETOWN:** Centennial, CO (USA)

**COLLEGE:** Texas Christian

*Drafted 40th overall in the 2018 NWSL Draft*

- Appeared in 18 games, playing 988 minutes with a 75% tackle success in 2022
- Has seen increase in total games and minutes in every season as a pro (all with Courage)
- Has made 53 career appearances across all NWSL competitions
- Played in 80 matches across four-year career with Texas Christian University



**#14 TYLER LUSSI | FWD | 5-7 | DOB: 1/26/95 | NWSL EXP: 7th Year**

"TIE-lurr LOO-see" | **HOMETOWN:** Gibson Island, MD (USA)

**COLLEGE:** Princeton

*Acquired via trade with Angel City FC prior to the 2023 season (Merritt Mathias)*

- Acquired by ACFC in trade with Portland in 2022. Appeared in 20 regular season games
- Appeared in 56 matches across all competitions for Portland from 2017-2021 before trade
- Princeton all-time scoring and points leader among both women's and men's players
- Two-time Ivy League Offensive Player of the Year in 2014 and 2015



**#17 RIKKE MADSEN | FWD | 5-8 | DOB: 8/9/97 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"REE-kay MAD-sin" | **HOMETOWN:** Varde, Denmark (DEN)

*Signed as an International Free Agent in August of 2022*

- Appeared in four games in 2022, making one start and recording one shot
- Joined the Courage midseason from Madrid CFF (12 appearances and one goal)
- Has 19 appearances for the Danish National Team (Through Feb. 2023 INTL window)
- Three seasons with Vålerenga (Norwegian Toppserien League) 47 games, f5 goals, 6 assists.



**#18 SYDNEY COLLINS | DEF | 5-4 | DOB: 9/8/99 | NWSL EXP: Rookie**

"SID-nee COLL-inz" | **HOMETOWN:** Beaverton, OR (CAN)

**COLLEGE:** California

*Drafted in the first round (8th overall) in the 2023 NWSL Draft*

- Played 85 games, with 84 starts, across a five-year career at California Berkley
- Two-time All-PAC 12 performer and earned all-region plaudits in her fifth-year campaign
- Led the Golden Bears in minutes played in her final season
- Trained with the Canadian National Team during the 2023 She Believes Cup



**#19 FRANKIE TAGLIAFERRI | MID | 5-7 | DOB: 1/18/99 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"FRAN-kee TAH-lee-uh-FERRY" | **HOMETOWN:** Colts Neck, NJ (USA)

**COLLEGE:** Rutgers

*Acquired in discovery exchange with OL Reign (rights to Alyssa Malonson)*

- Made five appearances in the 2022 regular season
- Five-time All-B1G performer between Penn State and Rutgers, two-time All-American
- Led the B1G in points in 2020 (29) with 10 goals and nine assists
- Led Rutgers to College Cup Semifinal appearance in lone season with Scarlet Knights



**#20 OLIVIA WINGATE | FWD | 5-7 | DOB: 1/20/00 | NWSL EXP: Rookie**

"OH-liv-ee-uh WIN-gate" | **HOMETOWN:** Wilmington, MA (USA)

**COLLEGE:** Notre Dame

*Drafted in the first round (6th overall) of the 2023 NWSL Draft*

- Made 95 appearances with 74 starts for Notre Dame in five-year career
- Scored 26 goals in her career, including 14 in her final season
- Earned United Soccer Coaches All-America status in final season
- Two-time All-ACC performer: third team in 2021 and first team in 2022



# PRESEASON PLAYER BIOS



**#22 MILLE GEJL | FWD | 5-7 | DOB: 9/23/99 | NWSL EXP: 1st Year**

"MEE-luh GUY-ul (rhymes with dial)" | **HOMETOWN:** Denmark (DEN)

*Signed as an international free agent prior to the 2023 season*

- Seven goals in 23 int'l caps for Denmark, including three in 2021 World Cup Qualifiers
- Scored 43 goals in 104 club domestic league matches for her career
- Spent the past two seasons with BK Häcken in the Damallsvenskan (top division in Sweden)



**#23 KIARA "KIKI" PICKETT | DEF | 5-0 | DOB: 4/30/99 | NWSL EXP: 3rd Year**

"KEE-ARR-UH 'KEE-KEE' PICK-it" | **HOMETOWN:** Santa Barbara, CA (USA) **COLLEGE:** Stanford

*Acquired as part of a package trade with Kansas City Current (Samewis)*

- Appeared in four regular season games and five Challenge Cup games in 2022
- Drafted fourth overall in 2021 by the KC Current; made six appearances
- 2021 PAC12 Defender of the Year for Stanford; Two-time National Champion
- Has represented the USWNT at the U17, U20 and U23 levels



**#24 ESTELLE JOHNSON | DEF | 5-6 | DOB: 7/21/88 | NWSL EXP: 9th Year**

"ESS-tell JON-SON" | **HOMETOWN:** Fort Collins, CO (CAM) **COLLEGE:** Kansas

*Signed as an NWSL Free Agent prior to the 2023 season*

- Played and started 15 games in the 2022 season with 1,288 minutes for Gotham FC
- Spent 2020-2022 with Gotham FC; 2015-2018 with Washington Spirit; 2013 with WNY Flash
- Has appeared in 11 matches for Cameroon, including four at 2019 World Cup
- Played for Kansas Jayhawks from 2006-09, twice earning All-Region honors



**#25 MEREDITH SPECK | MID | 5-3 | DOB: 2/1/93 | NWSL EXP: 8th Year**

"MERR-ih-dith SPECK" | **HOMETOWN:** Rockville Centre, NY (USA) **COLLEGE:** Yale

*Signed with the Western New York Flash during the 2016 season*

- Has appeared in 99 NWSL games across all competitions, making 37 starts
- Made 19 regular season appearances and eight Challenge Cup appearances in 2022
- Has three goals and four assists in NWSL career
- First Yale Eli to play in the NWSL. Started 24 of 25 matches played over two seasons



**#26 CLARA ROBBINS | MID | 5-7 | DOB: 9/12/98 | NWSL EXP: Rookie**

"CLAH-RAH ROB-inz" | **HOMETOWN:** Stafford, VA (USA) **COLLEGE:** Florida State

*Drafted in the first round (9th overall) in the 2023 NWSL Draft*

- All-time leader in games played (110) at Florida State University
- Ranks 19th in Seminole annals in goals scored
- Two-time ACC Tournament MVP, three-time ALL-ACC selection
- Won two National Championships with Florida State



**#28 TESS BOADE | FWD | 5-4 | DOB: 2/3/99 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"TESS BOE-dee" | **HOMETOWN:** Highlands Ranch, CO (USA) **COLLEGE:** Duke

*Signed with Courage on March 17, 2021 after trialing with club during preseason*

- Played five games, with four starts, in 2022 and scored twice with an assist
- Originally drafted 40th overall by Sky Blue, but chose to use final season of NCAA eligibility
- Five-year player at Duke University, starting in 67 of 93 games played
- 2021 first team All-ACC and second team All-Region performer



# PRESEASON PLAYER BIOS



**#29 MILLIE FARROW | FWD | 5-6 | DOB: 6/3/96 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"MILL-EE FERŌ" | **HOMETOWN:** Portsmouth, England (ENG)

*Signed as an international free agent in August of 2022*

- Joined Courage in 2022, did not appear in a match
- Six seasons in the FA Women's Super League with Chelsea, Reading and Bristol City
- Published a book in winter of 2023, "Brave Enough Not to Quit"



**#44 MARISA BOVA | GK | 6-2 | DOB: 8/6/00 | NWSL EXP: 2nd Year**

"MAH-RISS-uh BOE-vah" | **HOMETOWN:** Hartland, WI (USA)     **COLLEGE:** Purdue

*Drafted 45th overall in 2022 NWSL Draft*

- Part of Courage roster in 2022, did not make an appearance
- Captain for Purdue in 2021, making 113 saves - first Boilermaker with 100+ in a season
- 0.91 GAA and a .807 career SV%, collecting 21 shutouts through four seasons
- All-Big Ten Second Team and the Academic All-Big Ten

## FULL PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

- |    |                                     |    |                        |
|----|-------------------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 0  | Kate-linn Row-lind                  | 23 | KEE-KEE PICK-it        |
| 1  | KAY-see MURR-fee                    | 24 | EH-stell JON-son       |
| 3  | KAY-lee KURTZ                       | 25 | MERR-uh-dith SPECK     |
| 4  | EM-ih-lee GRAY                      | 26 | CLAH-rah ROB-inz       |
| 5  | HAY-lee HOP-KINZ                    | 28 | TESS BOE-dee           |
| 6  | nah-ROO-me ME-OR-uh                 | 29 | MILL-ee FERŌ           |
| 7  | MAH-LEE-AH BURK-LEE                 | 44 | mah-RISS-ah BOE-vah    |
| 8  | BREE-ah-nah PIN-toe                 |    |                        |
| 9  | KER-OH-LEEN NIH-COLE-EE             |    | HC: SHAWN NAY-HOSS     |
| 10 | den-EECE OH-SULL-uh-vin             |    | AC: FAH-breece go-TRAW |
| 11 | BRITT-nee RAT-cliff                 |    |                        |
| 12 | EM-ih-lee FOX                       |    |                        |
| 13 | RYE-in WILL-yums                    |    |                        |
| 14 | TIE-lurr LOO-see                    |    |                        |
| 17 | REE-kay MAD-SEN                     |    |                        |
|    | DANISH: RAY-guh MESS-in             |    |                        |
| 18 | SID-NEE COLL-ins                    |    |                        |
| 19 | FRAN-KEE TAH-lee-uh-ferry           |    |                        |
| 20 | OH-liv-ee-uh WIN-gate               |    |                        |
| 22 | MEE-luh GUY-ul (rhymes with "dial") |    |                        |



# COURAGE NUMERICAL ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Ht	DOB	Hometown (Citizenship)
0	Katelyn Rowland	GK	5-11	3/16/94	Vacaville, CA (USA)
1	Casey Murphy	GK	6-1	4/25/96	Bridgewater Twp., NJ (USA)
3	Kaleigh Kurtz	D	5-8	9/9/94	Greer, SC (USA)
4	Emily Gray (SEI)	M	5-4	10/5/00	Sewell, NJ (USA)
5	Haley Hopkins	F	5-10	12/21/98	Newport Beach, CA (USA)
6	Narumi Miura	M	5-1	7/3/97	Kawasaki, Japan (JAP)
7	Malia Berkely	D	5-8	2/13/98	Liberty Twp., OH (USA)
8	Brianna Pinto	M	5-5	5/24/00	Durham, NC (USA)
9	Kerolin Nicoli	F	5-5	11/17/99	São Paulo, Brazil (BRA)
10	Denise O’Sullivan	M	5-4	2/4/94	Cork, Ireland (IRE)
11	Brittany Ratcliffe	F	5-4	2/7/94	Williamstown, NJ (USA)
12	Emily Fox	D	5-5	7/5/98	Ashburn, VA (USA)
13	Ryan Williams	D	5-8	2/23/96	Centennial, CO (USA)
14	Tyler Lussi	F	5-7	1/26/95	Gibson Island, MD (USA)
17	Rikke Madsen	F	5-8	8/9/97	Varde, Denmark (DEN)
18	Sydney Collins	D	5-7	9/8/99	Beaverton, OR (USA)
19	Frankie Tagliaferri	M	5-7	1/18/99	Colts Neck, NJ (USA)
20	Olivia Wingate	F	5-7	1/20/00	Wilmington, MA (USA)
22	Mille Gejl	F	5-7	9/23/99	Denmark (DEN)
23	KiKi Pickett	D	5-0	4/30/99	Santa Barbara, CA (USA)
24	Estelle Johnson	D	5-6	7/21/88	Maroua, Cameroon (CAM)
25	Meredith Speck	M	5-3	2/1/93	Rockville Centre, NY (USA)
26	Clara Robbins	M	5-7	9/12/98	Stafford, VA (USA)
28	Tess Boade (IR)	F	5-4	2/3/99	Highlands Ranch, CO (USA)
29	Millie Farrow	F	5-6	6/3/96	Portsmouth, England (ENG)
44	Marisa Bova	GK	6-2	8/6/00	Hartland, WI (USA)

## TECHNICAL STAFF

**Head Coach:** Sean Nahas (2<sup>nd</sup> Season)

**Assistant Coaches:** Nathan Thackeray, Emma Thomson, Fabrice Gautrat, Victoria Boardman

**Director of Operations:** Kathryn Page

**Head Athletic Trainer:** Brian Maddox

## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

6 – nah-ROO-me me-OR-uh

HC: NAY-HOSS

AC: GOH-traw

9 – keh-row-LEEN nih-COLE-ee

14 – Tyler LOO-see

17 – REE-KAY Madsen

19 – Frankie tah-LEE-UH-ferry

22 – MEE-luh Guy-el (rhymes with “dial”)

28 – Tess BOE-dee

SEI – Season-Ending Injury

IR – Injured Reserve



# COURAGE ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Ht	DOB	Hometown (Citizenship)
7	Malia Berkely	D	5-8	2/13/98	Liberty Twp., OH (USA)
28	Tess Boade*	F	5-4	2/3/99	Highlands Ranch, CO (USA)
44	Marisa Bova	GK	6-2	8/6/00	Hartland, WI (USA)
18	Sydney Collins	D	5-7	9/8/99	Beaverton, OR (USA)
29	Millie Farrow	F	5-6	6/3/96	Portsmouth, England (ENG)
12	Emily Fox	D	5-5	7/5/98	Ashburn, VA (USA)
22	Mille Gejl	F	5-7	9/23/99	Denmark (DEN)
4	Emily Gray*	M	5-4	10/5/00	Sewell, NJ (USA)
5	Haley Hopkins	F	5-10	12/21/98	Newport Beach, CA (USA)
24	Estelle Johnson	D	5-6	7/21/88	Maroua, Cameroon (CAM)
3	Kaleigh Kurtz	D	5-8	9/9/94	Greer, SC (USA)
14	Tyler Lussi	F	5-7	1/26/95	Gibson Island, MD (USA)
17	Rikke Madsen	F	5-8	8/9/97	Varde, Denmark (DEN)
6	Narumi Miura	M	5-1	7/3/97	Kawasaki, Japan (JAP)
1	Casey Murphy	GK	6-1	4/25/96	Bridgewater Twp., NJ (USA)
9	Kerolin Nicoli	F	5-5	11/17/99	São Paulo, Brazil (BRA)
10	Denise O'Sullivan	M	5-4	2/4/94	Cork, Ireland (IRE)
23	KiKi Pickett	D	5-0	4/30/99	Santa Barbara, CA (USA)
8	Brianna Pinto	M	5-5	5/24/00	Durham, NC (USA)
11	Brittany Ratcliffe	F	5-4	2/7/94	Williamstown, NJ (USA)
26	Clara Robbins	M	5-7	9/12/98	Stafford, VA (USA)
0	Katelyn Rowland	GK	5-11	3/16/94	Vacaville, CA (USA)
25	Meredith Speck	M	5-3	2/1/93	Rockville Centre, NY (USA)
19	Frankie Tagliaferri	M	5-7	1/18/99	Colts Neck, NJ (USA)
13	Ryan Williams	D	5-8	2/23/96	Centennial, CO (USA)
20	Olivia Wingate	F	5-7	1/20/00	Wilmington, MA (USA)

## TECHNICAL STAFF

**Head Coach:** Sean Nahas (2<sup>nd</sup> Season)

**Assistant Coaches:** Nathan Thackeray, Emma Thomson, Fabrice Gautrat, Victoria Boardman

**Performance Director:** Mike Young, PHD

**Head Athletic Trainer:** Bryan Maddox

**Director of Operations:** Kathryn Page

\*Injured Reserve



# WAKEMED SOCCER PARK



**ADDRESS:** 101 Soccer Park Drive, Cary, NC, 27511

**CAPACITY:** 10,000

WakeMed Soccer Park is one of the premier soccer complexes in the United States and is the home of North Carolina FC and NC Courage. It opened in 2002 as the home of the Women's United Soccer Association's Carolina Courage.

The soccer complex consists of a purpose-built, soccer-specific main stadium, two lighted practice fields built to the same specifications as the stadium field, and four additional practice fields. Fields 1 (main stadium), 2, and 3 are all FIFA international regulation size (120 yards x 75 yards).

WakeMed Soccer Park opened in May 2002 as State Capital Soccer Park. It sits on 150 acres on the eastern edge of Cary that the State of North Carolina has leased to Wake County. Money to build the soccer park came from \$14.5 million in county-wide hotel room and prepared food and beverage taxes. The Town of Cary assumed responsibility for operations and maintenance in 2004 from the Capital Area Soccer League.

On January 1, 2008, WakeMed Health & Hospitals, a private, not-for-profit health care organization based in Raleigh, acquired the rights to name the park from the Town of Cary. SAS, a Cary-based software company, previously held the complex's naming rights.

In addition to serving as the home of the North Carolina FC and NC Courage, WakeMed Soccer Park has also been the host of men's and women's ACC soccer tournaments, men's and women's NCAA College Cups, as well as U.S. Men's and Women's national team friendlies. The stadium will play host to the 2023 NCAA Men's and Women's Lacrosse Championships and the site of the newly-created The Soccer Tournament.





# ABOUT THE NWSL

## Commissioner: Jessica Berman

The National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) is a twelve-team Division-I women's professional soccer league featuring national team players from around the world. The clubs are:

Angel City FC (Los Angeles, CA)  
Chicago Red Stars (Bridgeview, IL)  
Houston Dash (Houston, TX)  
Kansas City Current (Kansas City, MO)  
NJ/NY Gotham FC (Harrison, NJ)  
North Carolina Courage (Cary, NC)

OL Reign (Seattle, WA)  
Orlando Pride (Orlando, FL)  
Portland Thorns FC (Portland OR)  
Racing Louisville (Louisville, KY)  
San Diego Wave (San Diego, CA)  
Washington Spirit (Washington D.C.)

More teams are coming to the NWSL with the announcement of expansion teams beginning play in 2024. Based in New York City, the NWSL is supported by Canadian Soccer and U.S. Soccer. For more information about the NWSL and it's members, visit the league's official website: [NWSLsoccer.com](https://nwslsoccer.com).

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

A full breakdown of the updated NWSL Roster and Competition Rules can be found [here](#).

For more on the league's policy on Transgender Athletes, click [here](#)

For more on the league's Anti-Harassment Policy, click [here](#)

## CREDENTIALS

Media credentials and access will be granted only to individuals with a legitimate working function at a game, training session or event. The bearer must be on a specific assignment. Credentials are non-transferable. Any unauthorized use of a credential subjects the bearer to ejection from the stadium. Resale or attempted resale is grounds for seizure and cancellation.

The following actions may result in seizure of credential and/or ejection of its wearer from the stadium or training facility:

- Requesting autographs at any time.
- Taking photographs with players/coaches
- Using credential for family or friends of a working media member
- Conduction of unauthorized interviews
- Unprofessional behavior (Cheering in the press box, consumption of alcoholic beverages, failure to abide by posted rules, etc.)

## NWSL PR Contacts

### Kirsten Brierley

Director, Communications

Phone: (631) 617-7093

Email: [kbrierley@nwslsoccer.com](mailto:kbrierley@nwslsoccer.com)

### Madeline Schachte

Coordinator, Communications

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Email: [mschachte@nwslsoccer.com](mailto:mschachte@nwslsoccer.com)



# *CLUB COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORY*

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## **Angel City FC**

**Lisa Milner Goldberg**  
VP, PR & Communications  
Phone: (440) 225-6696  
Email: lisa@angelcityfc.com

## **Chicago Red Stars**

**Emmanuel Salazar**  
Communications Coordinator  
Phone: (312) 241-5628  
Email: esalazar@chicagoredstars.com

## **Houston Dash**

**Laura Sorto**  
Communications Director  
Email: lsorto@houstondynamo.com

## **Kansas City Current**

**Dani Welniak**  
Executive Director of Communication  
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## **NJ/NY Gotham**

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## **North Carolina Courage**

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## **OL Reign**

**Ryan Perez**  
Communications Manager  
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Email: ryan@olreign.com

## **Orlando Pride**

**Jackie Maynard**  
Sr. Director, Communications & PR  
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## **Portland Thorns**

**Katie Simons**  
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## **Racing Louisville**

**Jonathan Lintner**  
VP, Communication  
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## **San Diego Wave**

**Bernadette O'Donnell**  
Sr. Communications Manager  
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Email: bodonnell@wavefc.com

## **Washington Spirit**

**Sam Pittman**  
Media Relations Manager  
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Email: spittman@washspirit.com



# COURAGE MEDIA POLICIES

## CREDENTIALS

The Courage credential policy follows the NWSL regulations as stated on the previous page. Credential badges are good for the entire 2023 season; however, need to be activated for each individual match. Media members should respond to the RSVP email sent each game week to ensure they are approved for matches they plan to cover.

To request credentials for the 2023 season, visit [nccourage.com/media](http://nccourage.com/media)

## PRESS CONFERENCES

The Courage will routinely host press conferences with coaches and players surrounding NWSL matches and other select events. All home game press conferences will be offered in a 'hybrid' format, allowing in-person attendance for the first time since 2020 while also offering virtual availability. Away press conferences will be virtual only, barring specific requests. Press conference schedules, participants and links will be sent to the NC Courage media list. If you would like to be added to the media distribution list, please email [comms@northcarolinafc.com](mailto:comms@northcarolinafc.com) to request access.

PREMATCH: Match Day -1 or -2 (depending on availability and travel)

POST-MATCH: Following a 10-minute cool off period, coach and players will be made available to the media. Player requests can be made during matches by emailing [comms@northcarolinafc.com](mailto:comms@northcarolinafc.com)

SPECIAL EVENTS: When press conferences and/or media availability around special events are scheduled, the Courage media distribution list will receive advance notice and all pertinent details.

## TRAINING ACCESS AND SCHEDULED INTERVIEWS

The Courage will open at least 15 minutes of every training session to the media. Any in-person interview requests should attempt to be scheduled around training sessions and/or press conferences. In-person or virtual interviews can be **requested by contacting Director of Communications, Jake Levy, at [jlevy@northcarolinafc.com](mailto:jlevy@northcarolinafc.com)**.

## PRESS BOX REGULATIONS

- **ACCESS:** The press box is for credentialed, working media members, Courage and Town of Cary staff ONLY. No guests are permitted without consent of the Courage communications team.
- **PHOTOGRAPHERS:** Must check in with the press box upon arrival to receive a vest and shooting permission instructions. Failure to do so may result in removal of future credentialed access.
- **DRESS:** Professional attire is required at all times while working credentialed events.
- **CONDUCT:** Credentialed members of the press box are expected to treat each other with respect and courtesy. There is ABSOLUTELY NO CHEERING permitted. Please keep conversations at a low volume and in a professional manner.
- **PRINTED MATERIALS:** Printed rosters, lineups, game notes and statistics are intended for media and broadcast purposes only and should not be shared with technical staffs, players or fans.
- **FOOD AND BEVERAGE:** Catered food and canned/bottled beverages will be provided for working media, subject to availability.

Follow the Courage on Social Media: @TheNCCourage

Visit us online: [www.nccourage.com](http://www.nccourage.com)