

FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF DKATGARA@BIZJOURNALS.COM

From the South Florida Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/southflorida/news/2024/07/08/ftltud-soccer-stadium-nova-southeastern-university.html>

SUBSCRIBER CONTENT:

Sports Business

Nova Southeastern University stadium to host new pro soccer team, undergo \$7M renovation

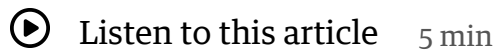


Image: FTL United

Rendering of the new women's soccer stadium

FTL UNITED

By [Dina Katgara](#) - , South Florida Business Journal
Jul 8, 2024



Fort Lauderdale United FC, a new professional women's soccer team, is planning a \$7 million upgrade to the stadium on Nova Southeastern University's campus.

The team is one of eight founding teams in the inaugural year of the USL Women's Super League. Tampa also will have a team in the new national first-division league.

Trending: [Beachfront restaurant in Broward files for bankruptcy](#)

Before the first season starts in August, Fort Lauderdale United FC is partnering with Stadium Structures, LaBella Associates architecture and Craven Thompson to expand the old [Miami Dolphins](#) training facility from 2,000 to almost 7,000 seats, according to Fort Lauderdale United FC Founder and Chairman Tommy Smith.

"We're developing the space and bringing an exciting environment to the town of Davie," Smith said. "We're really supporting the players, especially the younger players, to grow into professionals."

Smith, who is the president of Coral Springs-based All Year Cooling, is funding this phase of the project. NSU previously contributed approximately \$3 million to the initial renovation of the stadium for the university's soccer teams, according to Associate Athletic Director for External Operations John Sung. He added that the team is [leasing the stadium from the university](#), and all stadium upgrades are considered donations to NSU.

"Having a professional-level stadium on our campus will have a big impact on recruiting and fan experience," Sung said. "We are hoping that with the completion of this project, we can see soccer programs elevate in national rankings and give the community an area to gather to support the Sharks."

The stadium is anticipated to be ready before the United FC's first home game Sept. 29. Smith said that the team, whose partners include [Nike's](#) the Jordan Brand and Sheraton Suites Plantation, has a 25-year agreement with the NSU for the land.

Irrigation work began last month and vertical construction will begin on July 15, according to Stadium Structures Managing Partner Brian Mishkin. The natural grass field will be surrounded by three grandstands, with the east and west sides covered by canopies. Upgrades include an LED scoreboard and perimeter board, a fan engagement area, and a cutting-edge press box made of Lego-like modular pieces.

There will be space for food trucks and a built-in concession stand for local vendors, Smith said. He added that other organizations or teams can rent the stadium to host shows and events, including FIFA potentially using the stadium as a 2026 international base camp.



New stadium on NSU's campus

FORT LAUDERDALE UNITED FC

Smith said he is expecting about 5,000 to 7,000 visitors per game and an overall ticket revenue of \$3 million. The first-year revenue is expected to be about \$4-6 million, he added. More economy activity will be generated from visitor local spending.

The facility will create temporary construction jobs and an additional 25-30 jobs supporting the team, Smith said. He said that in two to three years, they will enter phase

II of construction to add a training facility on the main stadium site, which will bring the project's total funding to \$10 million.

Smith, who has three daughters, is excited to unite the community and uplift women in sports. The new league's start comes after a surge in viewership for women's soccer, as the National Women's Soccer League saw 95% increase in total viewership from last year. The National Women's Soccer League, also a U.S. first-division professional women's league, first kicked off in 2012 and has one Florida team, Orlando Pride, which joined in 2016.

"Women's involvement in sports are reaching unprecedented levels," Alissa Rogers, the team's associate head coach, said. "They are starting to get the recognition that they rightfully deserve. It's about time."

Each of the 24-30 signed players will be paid a minimum salary of \$39,000 plus medical and housing in NSU's new [Modera Academical Village](#), Smith said. He added that they are working with NSU to support players' education by earning course credits. The team also has access to innovation programs at the [NSU Broward Center of Innovation \(Levan Center\)](#), where the team's offices reside.

John Wensveen, NSU's Chief Innovation Officer and Executive Director of the Levan Center, said that they will combine resources to create technology, innovation and entrepreneurship programs to empower athletes.

"Together, we are committed to making South Florida a leading destination for women's soccer, driving economic growth, and promoting a culture of inclusion, technological advancement, and entrepreneurial excellence," Wensveen said.

Sign up here for the Business Journal's free morning and afternoon daily newsletters to receive the latest business news impacting South Florida. [Download](#) the free South Florida Business Journal app for breaking news alerts on your phone.

T H E L I S T

South Florida's Sports and Entertainment Venues

Seating capacity

Rank	Prior Rank	Venue/URL
1	1	Hard Rock Stadium
2	2	Homestead-Miami Speedway
3	3	LoanDepot Park
View This List		