

PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Drone Soccer Announces National Launch of Student Leagues

Kickstarter Campaign will Fund Aviation Education in Colorado, New York, and Ohio

Colorado Springs, Colorado — The mission of U.S. Drone Soccer is to make aerospace careers accessible for all students. Drone Soccer is an educational esport that immerses students in aviation skills through classroom lessons and after school leagues for grades 6-12 (ages 12 and up). It is the only competitive student robotics program that is also a recognized international sport by the World Air Sports Federation (FAI), which will demonstrate the sport at the World Games held in Birmingham, Alabama this July.

The game of Drone Soccer is played with flying quadcopters in protective exoskeletons designed for collisions. Five-player teams fly inside a netted arena where they ram and block the opposing team to prevent them from scoring. Students who compete during the academic year must first learn to build, program, and repair their drones as a team.

“The joy of flight is real. When a student flies, but then crashes and makes their first repairs - they’ve become an engineer for life.” says David Roberts, President of U.S. Drone Soccer, who previously took the U.S. Drone Racing Team to two FAI World Championships.

Over a year of testing with students and teachers, a new drone was developed that could withstand the abuses of Drone Soccer and meet the needs of the modern engineering classroom. The resulting Saker DS200 “Bantam” Drone Soccer Ball is affordable, durable, and easily repairable with simple tools. Open-source software allows students to rebuild and reprogram the drone for depth of learning, and professional development courses help teachers find success with no prior experience.

Participation welcomes students into the aviation culture of responsibility. Drone Soccer is growing in partnership with educational nonprofit organizations such as the Academy of Model Aeronautics, who are providing pilot insurance and courses for students to complete The Recreational UAS Safety Test (TRUST) with the FAA.

Student leagues and tournaments will take place in Colorado, Ohio, and New York this year. The first national tournament will be held in Denver, Colorado on April 30th, 2022.

U.S. Drone Soccer is headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado, along with more than 60 national and international sporting agencies. Academic enrollment is now open for schools and summer camp providers. Equipment sales are available through official arena locations, and will only be sold to individuals during a limited Kickstarter campaign through February, 2022. Complete demo bundles including a drone and accessories are available for the discounted price of \$375 (\$410 retail).

More information about this emerging esport can be found at <https://dronesoccer.us/>

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