

NRASL NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 21,2011

Present:

Jedlicka,PanagiotouMilner,Fox,Milner,Grau,Murra,Vanover,Jackson,Albers,Leigh,Schnell,W.Smith,D.Schuster,Fry,B.Asp,Hassler,Graham,Tina Sharp,Palache,Derrick Cope

Called to order: 8:30pm

Ballots filled out and counted for new positions:

Vice President: George Panagiotou

Fundraising: Holly Schnell

Commissioner: Wayne Fox

Field Manager:Pat Graham

Girls Travel Director: Bret Smith

AASL Rep. : Debi Schuster

President: Jeff Grau-

Winterizing of Fields: 20 yards of soil,500lbs. of seed were used. The nests are down and the City has shut park down. Pat would like to go the 1st week of December and clean the brush and move goals.

Friday Night Training: Players wanting to do Friday night training that are on the waiting list may do FSA training from 6-7pm. Jeff would like an agenda as to what the Coaches should be teaching at the sessions. Everett to provide that.

Brian Asp: Approached by the Sportsplex and has a meeting November 22 about a program geared toward Rec. players. Would be a 6 week training program. We would only pay the field rental fee, but is up to us what to charge after that.

December meeting will be a President's Breakfast at Jeff Grau's house. Details to follow.

Girls Travel Director: Bret Smith- No report

Web Master: J. Hassler- No report

Fundraising: Holly Schnell- Will be looking into new ideas for the Spring Fundraiser.

PR: Jim Leigh- No report

Registrar: Cindy Jackson: Will be reserving the library time for February registration

Secretary: J. Vanover- No report

Boys travel Director:Greg Fry-Will send info for Spring registration home from the schools the 3rd week of February

Treasurer: J. Jedlicka- We will need to increase the Travel fees for next year. Amount to be discussed.

Coach/player Dev.: Everett Palache- Coaches clinic will be Jan 8,2012 from 4-6pm. Field Cost will be \$150.00.

Vice President: George Panagiotou

Goal Proposal: George met with Bill Greene. We are ok to go ahead for the fields for 1 year. Insurance aspect : we have to abide by a goal safety policy as does the school i.e.: mowing, moving goals. Has a meeting Nov.22 regarding insurance aspects/liability. Jim Leigh would like clarification as to the Error and Omissions Policy and each Board members liability. Jeff to check with OYSAN.

Tournament Update:

Tournament Committee:

Leigh,J. Vanover , Panagiotou, Smith, Jedlicka,Asp.

\$150.00 OYSAN ins. to host tournament

We will have a professional website created. Cost approx. \$950.00

There will separate committees formed in charge of different aspects: Fields, Concessions/Medical etc. There will need to be 5 volunteers from each team to help and 20 High School Players

Voted unanimous to go forward with the tournament: THANKS TO GEORGE FOR ALL OF THE HARD **WORK AND DEDICATION YOU HAVE ALREADY PUT INTO THIS!**

Tournament Proposal below:

As the North Ridgeville Amateur Soccer League (NRASL) continues to grow, our need to support the league through new training, equipment, and facilities grows. In addition, our city, its schools, and its businesses are in need of financial support. One of the fastest and most effective ways to help with both issues is by hosting a soccer tournament in the city of North Ridgeville.

In addition to providing fantastic opportunities for competition to our teams, the tournament provides awesome advertising for our up and coming program. It provides an opportunity for our high school players to get involved with our program to give back while earning money to support their own program. It also draws in a substantial amount of money and future business for our city.

TOURNAMENT BASICS

We have chosen to host the tournament over the Corn Festival weekend. This is for several reasons. First, the fields will be in optimal condition for us, having a full summer to heal from the abuse of the spring season and before the wear and tear of the fall season. Victory has all six fields available for us if needed. It is the weekend before the AASL season begins and does not conflict with the LCSL or NOGSL seasons either. Whether public or private, this date is before school begins so there are not school conflicts or transition concerns for families. Finally, it is a fantastic weekend to bring in attention because of the Corn Festival, which will provide tons of entertainment before, during, and after the tournament!

As with any good tournament, it requires a good name and logo. We have chosen the North Ridgeville Cornfest Kick-Off! It highlights the points we want to advertise most: It is a North Ridgeville soccer tournament, it is the perfect tune up opportunity to "Kick Off" their new fall season, and it is co located with a fantastic, family oriented festival, with plenty of entertainment available before, during, and after the tournament! Keeping those points in mind, each piece of the logo will be included to best represent what we are trying to show, while providing an attractive image to represent our tournament.

The target audience for our tournament at the beginning stages will be the Travel level players and below, but we will NOT turn away teams that are interested in what we have to offer. Most age groups in the NRASL Travel program offer an A or B division team along with an E or F division team. Our upper bracket teams are certainly able to compete with club level teams while our lower bracket teams will provide comparable competition to LCSL and other lower level teams. As the tournament grows and our facilities and reputation improve, we will be prepared to handle teams of any bracket and provide appropriate levels of competition for each team entered. With the increase of fields through the addition at the schools, along with the resource of Victory Park, we will be able to add whatever areas necessary to adequately accommodate any number of teams in each age bracket for our tournament. Those locations and amounts will be decided closer to the time of the tournament and be a direct reflection of the teams registered to prevent over or under estimating our needs.

TOURNAMENT SELLING POINTS

We have many great things to use as selling points for our tournament. One great point is our date. It provides a wonderful way for teams to “Kick-Off” their season and make final adjustments before their fall regular season games begin. The Corn Festival sharing the weekend is another big seller, with multiple things going on before, during and after the tournament all weekend long. Also, we provide a fantastic level of competition with our program for most clubs and cities. We are able to match most any group with one of our teams in almost all age groups.

But the success of our tournament will depend not only on our dates and level of competition, but all the little things we provide as well. The conveniences and communication with teams and leagues, the advertising and time spent before the tournament to make it great, the sponsorships we get and the ability to front funds to provide for the “nice to have” pieces of a tournament that so many new tournaments are just not able to provide. It also depends a great deal on the flaws of other tournaments around us and our capitalizing on those mistakes to make our tournament even better. We must focus on the intangibles as well as all tangible aspects of the tournament. Remembering every issue we’ve had in past experiences, we have identified many things that we will attempt to rectify to improve the experience for our guests and teams. Many of these items are listed below:

- Quality fields with cut grass and clear, white lines (redone each day if needed)
- Full, age appropriate times for games, not shortened
- Clear, defined, traditional rules for appropriate ages (No surprise tournament specials)
- Lots of conveniences and amenities (bathrooms, concessions, vendors, etc.)
- Four easily accessible locations with ample, convenient parking
- Each location within a mile of fast food, restaurants, and gas
- Affordable tournament fees and vendor/merchandise prices (sympathetic to families as the target audience)
- Convenient, detailed paperwork and maps for easy travels and locating specific needs (*Sponsors)
- Easy points of contact through phone or email for quick answers to any questions or concerns
- Corn Festival information
- Each team and parent organization will be rostered for the ability to research their competition, have contact info and available for special offers from vendors/sponsors etc.

(Example)

U10	North Ridgeville Rebel Rangers	George Panagiotou	coachgeorgep@yahoo.com	(440)867-5309
Blue	North Ridgeville Amateur Soccer League	North Ridgeville, OH	NRASL1@yahoo.com	www.NRASL.com

We must advertise these points in a manner that shows others we have identified these deficiencies in other locations and are taking the proper steps to prevent those problems for our guests. We must show our potential competitors that we are able to provide an appropriately competitive tournament with fun and convenience for players, coaches, and families, and we are all about improvements in what we do. If we do all of these things and do them well, the growth of our tournament is immeasurable!

SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING

Advertising our tournament as early and aggressively as possible is a huge part of our success this coming year. Upon approval from our board, the Tournament Committee will submit the required paperwork to the OYSAN for their approval. All must be completed and submitted by Jan 1, 2012. Once we receive the approval from OYSAN, we will immediately move into advertising.

One piece of the package being approved is our tournament fliers. This flier will have our tournament logo and name along with pricing, location and surroundings info, level of competitive play, Corn Festival info, and many of the listed points above to create the attraction. These fliers, upon approval, can be immediately sent out to our surrounding clubs and communities, posted in schools, and aggressively moved by every member of the NRASL and beyond to get the word out. There are also several locations through OYSAN that we can choose to utilize as channels of advertisement, such as their newsletters, programs, and such. Media outlets and our city will be contacted to help spread the word and generate positive attention for the program including for our first annual soccer ball drive beginning this year. In addition, we will create signage and banners to post around the community, schools, and willing businesses to get the word out.

Our last and most important piece will be our tournament website and monthly newsletter. The website, courtesy of Mr. Jeff Hassler, will contain many features highlighting several pieces of our tournament as well as our encouragement for early registration for our tournament and incentives for teams doing so. The monthly emails will be sent to those inquiring about or already slated to participate in our tournament. These newsletters will just be reminders of deadlines, team adjustments, schedules, and other tournament relevant information. It provides information to the teams and clubs about what is going on, reminds them of key stages and deadlines, and keeps our tournament fresh in their mind.

Our sponsorship, being headed up by Mr. Jim Leigh, consists of four different levels available for interested parties. The levels are broken down by financial amounts or levels of equivalent financial value in merchandise, supplies, equipment, etc. Each level is listed below:

- Bronze - \$250 – the name of this business will be listed in our fliers and programs and will be shown on our maps as location near our fields with its address and phone number
- Silver - \$500 – They will receive two vinyl 3' x 6' signs posted at the Root Road Complex and a school with their business' name, information, image, etc.
- Gold - \$750 – The business may choose a field being used for the tournament and name that field for their business. Two additional banners will be placed on the back of the goals facing outboard (Examples: Panera Field, Aces Field, McDonalds Field, etc.)
- Platinum - \$1000 – The business will be listed on back of our tournament t-shirts in a color, 2" block

Each level of sponsorship receives the benefits of the level below it as well. Jim will manage and account for each business being contacted for sponsorship and by whom, along with refusals,

conditions, requests, and of course willing, sponsoring parties. A specific letter and approach will be used for businesses to obtain this sponsorship and will be explained and coordinated by Mr. Leigh once we have been approved and the process of advertising has begun.

WEBSITE AND INTERNET/MULTIMEDIA CHANNELS

One of the best ways we will be able to generate positive attention to our program is through a high class, clean, convenient, website. The design should be original and attractive to the eye yet simple to navigate and locate any needed information with ease to a non-computer savvy parent or administrator. An example of this would be a screen with our tournament logo in the middle, surrounded by small, labeled soccer balls with specific headings. The website must contain the most relevant information to the tournament, but the more info it holds and the more convenience it provides our potential competitors, the better chances of their participation. Some of the necessary headings are listed below:

1. Tournament Invite
2. Tournament Sanctioning
3. Rules
4. Forms
5. Directions, Maps, Pictures of Fields and layouts
6. Schedules & Standings
7. Advertising of Sponsors
8. Advantages of our tournament - diversity of teams, quality of fields, businesses in area, lodging, etc.
9. Local Information and Contacts (Conveniences) – quick contacts, emails, Hotels / Business listings categorized by need (restaurants, gas stations, entertainment, etc.)
10. Tournament Check In procedures
11. Tab for Volunteers to Signup / Volunteer Schedules
12. Pre-Order Merchandise from Tournament
13. Bulletized Flier (Ages, Brackets, Locations, Contacts, Costs, Dates and Times, Website, etc.)
14. Links to other locations (ex. NRASL, AASL, NOGSL, OYSAN, etc.)
15. ****Registration link (Focusing on EARLY registration, timelines, and incentives)

In addition to the website, we must use other avenues of communication to reach today's target audience and make their access to our information as convenient as possible. Many tournaments now use Facebook and Twitter as well, updating their pages and Tweets often to keep their tournament fresh in the participants' minds and making things convenient and fun for them. We must also set up a specific tournament email address so that we can keep things separated and address tournament specific issues quickly and appropriately without them disappearing into a cluttered mailbox, filled with

field closings and practice changes. This also provides many people to access these emails to stay abreast of issues and to respond to certain situations without waiting on someone else to forward an email or explaining an issue. Rapid and effective responses to our concerned parties will be a huge positive in winning and keeping teams.

OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT

The preparation, operations, and support of this tournament will require a great deal of focus on many specific areas to be successful. So many pieces of this puzzle require a great deal of attention from more than one person. Because of this, the tournament areas of concern have been bracketed and broken down into five separate sections for five separate committees. While many of these areas will overlap, specific groups focusing on these areas will benefit us more and make things run more smoothly. The overlapping issues can then be dealt with between the two committees for additional support.

The first of these is the Administrative committee. This committee will be responsible for the creation and upkeep of the tournament website. They will create and disperse a monthly email to registered teams, teams expressing interest, past patrons, and potential teams to join our tournament. This email will contain updates to the tournament, new pictures of fields and facilities, information on new teams and competition, and other relevant information. It will be used to keep parties informed on the current events of the tournament and to keep the tournament constantly fresh in their minds. This committee will also process and keep track of all required paperwork, records, and registrations and fees of our tournament.

The second committee will be the Resource committee. This committee will handle all vendors and games for the tournament. This will include recruiting, set up and placement, financial agreements, and supervision. They will also order and manage the sale of all tournament related merchandise and concessions at each of the locations. Finally, this committee will be responsible for the order and purchase of all awards and trophies given for the tournament games.

The Marketing Committee will be responsible for locating and organizing all sponsorships, creating signage for the fields, city, and tournament advertisement, responsible for the directions and Map

creation, and will compile and submit to the Admin Committee any necessary information that must go into the monthly newsletter and the website. The Marketing Committee will also network with local and regional media to get as much publicity as possible for the tournament and program. Lastly, this committee will be responsible for posting and taking down all signage used for the tournament around the fields, city, and surrounding communities.

The Fields Committee will be responsible for the preparation and weekend maintenance of the fields in use. They will also be responsible to make sure the fields are marked and flagged properly, advertising banners are in place and securely fastened, and the goals are secured properly. They are also responsible for the scheduling of all games and referees for each of those games to ensure even field use and times and coverage. They will coordinate with the Referee Captain to ensure all information is being passed and each game is covered.

The final committee is the Support Committee. This committee is responsible for the order and maintenance of the bathrooms. They will ensure a medical tent is set up at each location and medical and law enforcement personnel are readily accessible if needed. They will also manage all volunteers and high school players including creating the schedule to be worked by all. Finally, they will be overall responsible for the "Support the Sport" ball drive.

- VOLUNTEERS:

With multiple locations, at least 80 different teams to facilitate, and so many different areas needing support, volunteers will be a huge necessity for the successful operation of the tournament. Each of the 22 North Ridgeville teams WILL participate in the tournament and will have 5 volunteers from each of those teams to provide enough people outside board members and coaches to make this happen. 22 teams at 5 volunteers per team will provide us with 110 volunteers to fill in at specific locations during specific times. These volunteers will work with the 20 high school players to help run the tournament along with a few key players from the tournament committee and board to ensure everything is moving smoothly. Board members may not be included in the 5 volunteers per team. We (the NRASL) will still be manning the Corn Festival booth and completing our ball drive, which will require their attention as well. The ultimate goal should be to slowly remove board members from key billets of the tournament and eventually turn this project over to its own committee, operating under a tournament director from the board. Coaches, board members, and additional volunteers will be welcomed in addition to the

requirements above and scheduled and placed accordingly. Time schedules, hours of work, and their locations will all be scheduled as conveniently as possible, considering other conflicts and children's game schedules. Volunteers may identify times preferred and times that will definitely not work for their schedules so they may be factored into the schedule's creation. Obviously, the more volunteers received, the fewer amounts of hours required by each to cover. These volunteers will be needed in multiple locations including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Parking
2. Each field's maintenance, team check in, referee accountability, score collections
3. Score keeping, Statistics, and scheduling
4. Concessions and merchandise tent
5. Awards and Trophies
6. Public interaction: directions, escorts, general assistance as needed
7. Medical Tent
8. Referee Tent

- REFEREES:

Referees will be scheduled and briefed on their schedule as soon as the schedule is created. Each referee planning to be utilized will be forwarded a copy of the tournament rules and bulleted specifics will be created to ensure all referees are on the same page. There will be one referee to manage and disseminate word to the full staff. Each location will provide a referee tent with complimentary drinks and food, with areas for notes and information to be passed to one another to ensure a quality experience for all.

VENDORS, MERCHANDISING, AND CONCESSIONS

Vendors and merchandising along with our concessions will be a huge money maker for us, but also must reflect our consideration for our audience's need for variety, preferences, budget, and needs of the appropriate time (ex. Gatorades, water, other light hydrating drinks to combat the heat of mid August games.)

1. Food Vendors: Italian Sausage, Cheese Steak Sandwiches, Fried Veggies, Fries, Etc.
2. Drink Vendors: Lemonade, Soda, Slushies, Ice Cream, Etc.
3. Merchandise: T-Shirts, Patches, Bag Tags, Balls, Soccer supplies
4. NRASL Concessions to include bottled drinks (water, Gatorade, soda, etc.), hot dogs and hamburgers, and snacks like chips, cookies
5. Raffles (Example: Raffle for free open goal midfield kick for a prize)

Another attraction for our tournament would be the inclusion of soccer oriented games. These games would be like soccer skills related to any other fair games, but relying on soccer skills to accomplish them. These games/stations could be set up near the vendors' area outside the playing fields on the edges of the parking lot or concentrated at our larger areas of open space, such as Root Road or Liberty etc. Examples of these games could be:

1. Compete in Goalie Punt for distance
2. Compete in Distance Kicks
3. Guess Speed of Kicks
4. Kick the ball through different holes

ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS

There are two basic areas of paperwork that must be created. The first of these is the registration paperwork that teams must fill out to register for the tournament. Each of the forms must reflect the rules and guidelines of the OYSAN tournament policy. The forms must also request any information we may need to appropriately bracket the teams or address any concerns of the teams. The second area of paperwork is that which will be sent to the teams upon successful registration. It serves as a confirmation of their registration and provides useful information about the tournament and surrounding community to encourage their use of our businesses and the Corn Festival!

REGISTRATION PAPERWORK:

1. Registration Form
2. Roster (Team plus any guest players)
3. Skill level / Team history (Tournament play, division of play, etc.)

PAPERWORK TO BE SENT TO TEAMS:

1. Rules of Tournament
2. Tournament Invitation

3. Letter from NRASL President, Mayor
4. Sponsor/City Map with list of sponsors and a list of convenient local lodging, restaurants, gas, shopping, and entertainment around each field location including the Corn Festival

CLOSING

In closing, the immediate return on this tournament will not be seen in the financial return for the NRASL after its first year more than likely. This may hold true for the next few years, especially in comparison to the amount of work required by our volunteers to make it happen. The returns can, however, be measured in money immediately contributed to our high school program for its support, to our players for the opportunity to play in a well run, competitive tournament in their own back yard, and in the growth of the name and reputation of the North Ridgeville Amateur Soccer League. Each subsequent tournament should make things that much easier and that much more profitable. We will continue to work toward the superb goal of emulating Brunswick's success, and 7 years from now, we could be bringing our city an estimated \$1,000,000 in revenue! Imagine how much that also means for our program and the program of our high school! This tournament is an investment in our city, an investment in our league, an investment in our kids, and an investment in our future. We urge you to look at this tournament with broad horizons and try to see the potential for the future of this initiative.