

Fond du Lac Soccer Association Annual Meeting – State of the Association September 8, 2019

Agenda:

- Introduction and Thank You to Board Members
 - Welcome and thank you to Marian University for the use of your facilities for our annual meeting and our monthly board meetings all year.
 - This meeting concludes my 8th year as a member of the Board of Directors and my 7th year as an Executive Officer, and want to thank you everyone who has been an asset along the way. While it is a tremendous amount of work, and quite stressful at times, knowing the difference we are making in the community makes it all worthwhile.
 - Introduction of Board Members
 - Thank you to all the board members who volunteered their time this past year to provide a great experience for players, parents, coaches, refs, and the community.
 - Luke Newman: I especially want to note a couple individuals who continually go above and beyond. First is Luke Newman who leads our Recreation League Program. Our Rec program is a monster of a program and Luke volunteers hundreds of hours each season both at the complex and behind the scenes to make sure this program is a great experience.
 - Andy Gill: Second is Andy Gill as our Complex Director. Andy ensures that the 53 acre complex is looking good and ready for soccer each week during the year. This oftentimes means lining and setting up fields before and after work. Your efforts are very much appreciated.
 - Bob Van Kirk our Treasurer
 - Dan Gerred – who has been with me for everyone one of these past 8 years and is the man in charge of Concessions.
 - Diane Riley – Diane has taken our marketing, communications, and social media to another level.
 - Dr. Byran Henslin – Without Doc we wouldn't have an Adult League that has continually grown over the past few years and extended the game of soccer in our community beyond just our youth.
 - Josh Rieder, who has only been on our board for a year but coaches both Rec and Select and organized our Rec League Tournament this year.
 - Jillian Saiberlich, also new to the board this year. Jillian is the head women's coach at Marian University and assists us with Select Tryouts, our Pre-Season Select Camp, our Academy Program, and has been a training coach for our Select program.
 - Justin Szatkowski who coaches at both our Rec and our Select Levels
 - Ryan Hilbert, the coach of our U15 Girls Select Team
 - Dr. David Hammes who has served on the board for the past 4 years
 - And Lawrence Foster, a rec league coach who has served on the board for the past 2 years.

- Reminder FDLSA is 501c3 and we do not receive any funds from the school district, the city, or the county. The complex is run completely based on the effort of the Fond du Lac Soccer Association, our programs, and local sponsorships. So any donations are welcome to keep advancing our programs forward.
- **Programs:**
 - **Select League**
 - The current Select League Director is Chad Collett who has overseen this program for the past 3 years. The Fond du Lac Select program continues to grow and strengthen. We continue to see more and more players drawn to Fond du Lac and our program from surrounding communities. This fall we have 12 select teams. New this year is a U11 Developmental team which is made up of players born in 2010, which is essentially a U10 team, but by creating this developmental team will prepare them to enter Southeast Classic League play – essentially, it is taking an Academy Team one step further. We have one team per gender at U11, U12, U13, and U14/15. For our High School girls teams we have 3 teams. A U15-17 SECL team, a U18/19 SECL team and a U17 State League Team. We will be holding a 2nd tryout for the HS boys season in October to form teams for the 2020 spring season. We anticipate 2 teams at the HS Boys level with a chance of a third team. With our select program we continue to place an emphasis on player development and competitiveness as they grow in the program. Nearly every team is at max roster capacity and we had several cuts at all levels from tryouts. This season numbers were way up to attend our Pre-Season Training Camp and we went from about 150 a year ago to nearly 200 attending this year. All our teams participated in the FC Green Bay Tournament here in town at the end of August, and will play at least one more tournament this fall each. This past weekend kicked off the regular season for Southeast Classic League and teams will be wrapped up by the end of October.
 - We continue to offer opportunities for our players to continue touching the ball over the winter season with indoor trainings held at Marian University, the YMCA, and any indoor space we can find.
 - Recruiting Select coaches continues to be a constant concern but we have a great group of dedicated coaches. Fond du Lac continues to be one of the lowest cost programs in the region for select soccer and we thank all those who support and help grow this program. We continue to encourage all our coaches to seek additional coaching education and reimburse them for coaching certifications achieved. This year we also passed a new motion to increase the pay for our select coaches based on license level to hopefully encourage coaches to seek additional education which will ultimately benefit our players. Our Director of Coaching position is currently empty and is something that we plan to address in the coming year to help guide our program.
 - This season we also made the uniform switch from Admiral Sports to Adidas and Soccer.com as our supplier. This past year with Admiral we saw a decline in the quality of the uniforms, delays in shipping, and poor customer service. Soccer.com provided a great online portal for tracking who ordered uniforms,

ability to send reminders and great company store options. Additionally Soccer.com and Adidas provide funds back to the club based on orders we can use towards equipment and financial aid uniforms.

○ **Academy League**

- The current Academy Program Director is Chad Collett. Our Phoenix Training Academy continues to see strong numbers. Unlike some other clubs who are in academy game leagues, our focus is on training and gaining technical abilities to prepare them for select league. This fall, we have over 70 players in our Academy program that trains on Sunday afternoons. These are great numbers considering we had a number of 2010 girls and boys that made the early jump to select league. Players are separated by US Birth year so this fall our youngest players are born 201/2013 and then the older group is 2010/2011 players. The Fondy Phoenix Academy Program focuses on:
 - Technical: Develop skill, accuracy, and speed in all aspects of ball control (dribbling, passing, and receiving, shooting).
 - Tactical: Emphasis on improving attacking principles and basic defending
 - Physical: Improve speed, agility, coordination and balance
 - Psychosocial: Develop and grow a passion for the game of soccer as they learn to cooperate with teammates in collective tasks and assume more responsibilities.

We continue to see the results of our Academy training in our U11 teams and how we compete out of the chute. We look forward to continuing to evolve this program.

○ **Recreation League**

- Luke Newman is the Rec League Director and has done an amazing job with this program. In 2019 we had 120 teams and over 1300 players from U5 all the way to our High School leagues. This season we very well. New this year we utilized our new registration program “Demosphere” which we implemented in the summer of 2018 for our Select League. With new software, registration was streamlined, provided additional reporting capabilities and also provided us one spot to manage both our volunteer coaches and players. The benefits of the tool (behind the scenes) were tremendous in helping Luke and Chad to build teams and manage teams and coaching staff. In addition this year it provided every parent with an online portal/app to communicate with their team and coach, see practice dates/times, see game times, dates, opponents, and more. This created great visibility for our parents and coaches and made live so much easier for Chad Collett, our rec league game scheduler.
- Big thanks to Josh Rieder for organizing our End of the Year Tournament which went very well and was extremely well organized.
- We want to thank all our great team sponsors this year and in fact we actually sold out on our team sponsorships before the season. This is the first time I can

remember this happening in my time on the board. We hope to continue this trend into the future.

- NEW THIS FALL is a U5-U8 Little Kickers fall program. This is a one day commitment for kids that want to keep playing in the fall. This program is Saturday mornings and run from 9am till about 10am. We have 100+ players this fall in the program – 8 U5/U6 coed teams and 6 U7/U8 Coed teams. Each Saturday they start out with a 25 minute practice and then roll into a 30 minute scrimmage consisting of two 15 minute halves. This is something new we are trying and after the first week I think the kids really enjoyed it so we look forward to expanding this new program next year.
- **Adult League**
 - The Adult League continues to grow in popularity. This year we had 14 teams who participated. Organized by Dr. Bryan Henslin, this past season ran very smooth and had very limited issues – we continue to see this summer program growing and there has been some interest in starting up a fall season as well. Currently the Adult League runs from end of June through early August.
- **Referees:**
 - Referees are run differently for our rec league than our select league. The club has a third party ref assignor we utilize for all our home select games and that has gone well. There were some issues this past year as WYSA got new software so Chad Collett worked closely with our ref assignor to ensure we had refs for games. There continues to be a shortage of refs so we do the best we can to fill each game.
 - For our Rec League, Chad Collett is ref assignor and we had a very successful year with refs taking games, showing up, being professional and responsible.
 - Overall our refs in Fond du Lac are young and inexperienced, but putting them on the field for rec to start will give them that experience. We did hear a lot of very positive feedback this spring/summer on our refs and how they handled themselves. The biggest hurdle in refs doing older games and continuing to ref is getting abused verbally by coaches and parents so we need to continue to make this spotlight to keep our refs. They will only get better with experience.
 - The Fond du Lac Soccer Association also hosts 3 ref courses with the State each year. We did 1 new ref course, and 2 ref re-cert courses. Thank you to the Fond du Lac High School for allowing us to use the school for this over the winter.
 - Due to referee turnover, fees continue to rise for referees across all programs. Fees for the select league are set by the state.
- **Soccer Complex:**
 - With 53 acres and 30+ fields to maintain, it is a full time job just to make sure the complex is ready to go for all our programs during the year. Andy Gill, Complex Director does a great job and has two part-time people employed via SEEK that assist us in Field Setup.
 - Updates: This year the complex saw some significant investments. Hopefully everyone has seen the new signage around the complex. We installed 20 new Field Marker Signs,

new Soccer Complex ID signs including one in front of our pavilion and at the corners of our fields, new restrooms signs, and additional signs around the walking path. This was a \$10k investment from the Fond du Lac Soccer Association with an additional \$7,500 donation from Sign-a-Rama. The old signs were faded, bent, falling down, and had sharp edges which gave us safety concerns. These new signs are colorful and really brighten up the complex. With the new sign install we also renumbered the fields in a way to make the sequence flow around the complex.

- Walking Path Upgrade: This year, the FDLSA became responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the walking path and areas outside of it which had been maintained by MPTC for the past 25 years. This was a requirement of our new lease agreement with them. With that, we invested \$3500 (on top of a nice donation from Country Touch) to improve the quality of the path that is used by many.
- Concession Stand Expansion: As you may see from the construction zone at the soccer complex we are in the process of expanding our concession stand to provide additional space to serve those at our complex. This is all made possible by a generous donation from the National Exchange Bank Foundation. This expansion is set to open in the spring. Over the years we have seen a tremendous increase in traffic to concession during games and are looking forward to providing shorter lines, additional food options, and a better experience overall. This fall and winter we will also be launching a sponsor brick sale which will line the ground in front of the new concession area.
- Finally, we are continually patching our fields as they have a lot of activity all year long. In addition to our own programs, teams that play at our Soccer Complex annually are the Fond du Lac High School, WLA High School, UW-Fond du Lac, FDL Christian School, Homeschool League, Redeemer, and the Fond du Lac Express to name a few. We also host a Select League tournament in August in partnership with FC Green Bay that draws 60+ teams to Fond du Lac for a two day soccer tournament. Finally, the Soccer Complex is home to 5-6 soccer camps each year that draws hundreds of participants.
- With that, fundraising is also underway to bring a Turf Field to our Fond du Lac Soccer Complex. Thank you to Andy Gill for getting this \$1M fundraising drive going. More information will be coming out and we hope everyone can help in spreading the word and securing sponsors.
- **Volunteers:**
 - Thank you to ALL the volunteers who help out during the year. Without your assistance we could not operate all our programs. Our volunteers take care of so many things including coaching, concessions (lots and lots of hours of concessions), program assistance, ref check-in, complex clean up including trash, weeding, bathrooms, and more. This list goes on but we appreciate all the help we do get. For each hour that someone volunteers to help, that is one less hour one of our Directors has to volunteer. The work has to get done either way and many hands make light work. So THANK YOU.
- **Concessions:**
 - Concessions has continued to grow over the years and for the past 7 years has been run by BOD Dan Gerred. Dan has done a wonderful job in operating the concession stand. Profits from the concession stand allow us to replace equipment, install the new

lighting, install upgrades in the restrooms like electric hand dryers, led lights, and auto shut-off faucets.

- **Scholarship Winners:**
 - This year we are awarding our annual scholarship of \$250 each to four deserving high school seniors who graduated this past May. Typically we select one boy and one girl each year but these young applicants are all very deserving so the board voted to award to 5 individuals this year. (1) Katerina Newman (2) Shea-Lynn Gerred, (3) Abby Ruplinger, (4) Blake Czyzewski, (5) Bradley Leach

- Before I turn the financials over to our Treasurer to report, I do also want to let everyone know of a directive that I have been passionate about since I joined this board. We know that participating in youth sports can be expensive - all relative to each family and their resources. This is why it is our goal that any child that wishes to play soccer, can play soccer, regardless of financial resources. Annually we assist families and provide discounted fees across all our programs and some full scholarships and free uniforms. Annually we provide between \$5,000-\$7500 worth of financial aid for families. So, if you ever hear any family say they cannot play soccer due to financial constraints, please tell them to reach out to us and we will work with them to ensure that child has every opportunity possible.

- Financials - Covered by Bob Van Kirk, Treasurer

Overall, the program has been very successful over this past year and we continue to focus on improving every program, coaches, referees, and the complex. If anyone would like to help out, or is seeking more info on what we do, please ask any of our board of directors – anytime.

Thank you,

Chad R Collett
President
Fond du Lac Soccer Association