

MYS SWEEPER

McLean Youth Soccer Association

MAY 4
2008

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MYS web site will have
a new look!

Check out
www.mcleansoccer.org

Calendar

Date	Event	Location	Time
May 6	MYS Cup Annual Langley/McLean High School Varsity Girls and Boys Soccer Matches. Wear your jersey and get in free!	McLean High School	5 p.m. Girls 7 p.m. Boys
May 17	McLean Day	Lewinsville Park	11 a.m. -5 p.m.
June 28-29	3 rd Annual Ambassador Cup	Lewinsville Park	

MCLEAN DAY IS AROUND THE CORNER-SATURDAY MAY 17th

MYS is looking for a few good volunteers to help promote McLean Youth Soccer at McLean Day on Saturday, May 17th. Volunteers are needed from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. We welcome all members to come out and promote the club and all of its various programs. This is a great community service project for teens - we will gladly schedule you and your friends together. If you are interested, please contact Maureen Dalbec at vicechair@mcleansoccer.org.

So mark your calendar and come out and test your soccer skills at the *MYS Dribble, Shoot and Score* game at McLean Day (located inside the baseball outfield.)

MYS GIVES BACK ON MCLEAN DAY

Bring your old cleats and soccer balls to McLean Day and help two worthwhile causes.

Roll Out for Joy: For the past six months MYS has been participating in the Roll Out the Joy program. This program collects soccer balls and distributes them to the military stationed in war-torn areas to bring a little "joy" to the children of the area. Clean out your closets and garage and donate your used and outgrown soccer balls and donate them to this worthy cause!

Physicians for Peace: MYS will be collecting soccer cleats for kids ages 7-18 years old U-8 in the African country of Eritrea. There are over 2,000 boys playing soccer there barefoot or in sandals. The fields the young players are on are all rock and dirt. Physicians for Peace is a cause supported by a group of physicians who provide short term medical relief and teaching in the capital city of Asmara.

FIELDS UPDATE: MYS PLANS TO BUILD 10 ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELDS

MYS is embarking on an unprecedented field development initiative. The plan is to convert up to ten fields from grass to artificial turf over the next three years.

Over the past few years, MYS has successfully built two premier fields - LP2 and the MYS field - and worked with a community partner, Capital One, to gain partial access to two other premier fields. These fields are great assets for the club, and there is no question that practicing and playing on better surfaces significantly enhances the experience, regardless of

the level of play or the player.

The majority of our grass playing surfaces are, however, in dreadful condition. The poor condition of these fields detracts from the enjoyment of the game and the ability to master the skills. Also, uneven surfaces put our children at a higher risk of injuries to ankles, leg muscles and knees. Players who fall on these fields are more susceptible to abrasions and other injuries.

MYS spends a great deal of money every year on maintaining and improving its grass fields. Nevertheless, without irrigation systems, without the ability to control the usage of the fields, and without access to the number of fields needed to periodically rest and restore deteriorating fields, the fields are ravaged by droughts, soil compaction, over usage, and damage from inappropriate play after rain storms. No amount of determination, effort or money can overcome these challenges. Experience has taught us that it is a losing battle.

As a result, the MYS Board has determined to make the creation of artificial turf fields the club's number one priority for the next few years. This is a bold and ambitious undertaking and will require the support and involvement of the entire club. We believe, however, that it is a necessary step if we are to effectively serve the needs of our members, and it will increase the enjoyment of every player in the club.

NEXT ISSUE: Learn how your registration fees will support this effort!

NEW MYS WEB SITE LAUNCHED

This week MYS launches its new web site www.mcleansoccer.org. The site was designed to be more user friendly and informative for club members. Special thanks to Webmaster George Romanowski, Nathan Ward and Juan Aguilar for their critical role in the site development and launch.

LEAD IN THE FIELDS?

You may have seen news stories over the past two weeks about several artificial turf fields in New Jersey that were closed after high levels of lead were detected. We take the safety of our players very seriously and immediately contacted Fairfax County and our turf vendors to ensure our fields were safe. The fields in New Jersey that supposedly contain lead are limited to a specific type of turf containing short nylon fibers which are not present in.

Says Fairfax County Park Authority, "We currently has 17 synthetic turf fields installed or under construction. In response to concerns about high lead levels found in older, nylon synthetic turf fields in New Jersey, the Park Authority has solicited information about lead content from the manufacturers of all synthetic turf fields installed by the Park Authority which are made of a newer generation of polyethylene synthetics. They confirm local fields contain only trace amounts of any heavy metals, well below international environmental standards (including the DIN 18035-7 standard, that governs environmental compatibility). Based on information received from the industry we continue to believe that fields in Fairfax County do not pose any hazard to the public."

COMPETITION FOR YOUNG PLAYERS: WHEN ARE THEY READY?

By Neal Bowes, Certified Sport Psychologist (AASP, CC)

One of the most commonly asked questions amongst parents is - "when is my child ready to play competitive soccer?" The reality is that children are ready for competition from as young

as 5-6 years. Children of this age like to compete. What this means however, is that children are ready for a *child version of competitive soccer* from a young age. What they are not ready for, cognitively or emotionally, is adult versions of competitive soccer.

What do we mean by adult versions of competitive soccer? Clearly adults are cognitively and emotionally more mature than children. For example, adults have better memories, understand longer term consequences, and have more advanced coping systems (to deal with pressure for example) than children. Children do not see the world like adults or think like adults. They, for example, have shorter memories (see how quickly they can get over a loss with a good snack!), they don't understand why messing up is really such a big deal, and they get anxious and confused when put under pressure to perform consistently.

The biggest risk to exposing children to adult competition is they just don't cope. Practice and games stop being fun (remember this is the number one reason they started playing) and winning/losing, pleasing others and fear of mistakes are constant sources of worry and anxiety. Over 85% of children quit all forms of organized sport by the age of 16. Over competitiveness of the program and parental pressure are the top two cited reasons for discontinuation.

Signs that soccer is too 'adult competitive' for young players

- They don't want to go to practice
- They are nervous about making mistakes
- They look to the sidelines for guidance/acceptance of what to do
- They over react to winning, losing, being substituted, etc
- They worry about messing up
- They are afraid to make their own decisions
- They 'hide' in games, especially 'important' ones
- Their confidence is based upon winning and losing

All coaches and parents should therefore work hard to ensure that they allow young children to be exactly that. We have to let them learn, be creative, mess up, pick themselves up in their own way and ultimately have some fun. They have plenty of time to be adults! There are many myths that lead parents and coaches to push adult competition on players - the reality is however than players who were encouraged to have fun, had high emphasis on individual development and creativity, and were allowed to learn from their mistakes, play longer and at a higher level.

10 top tips for creating a child competitive soccer environment

To create a child competitive soccer environment parents/coaches are encouraged to:

- make soccer as fun as possible (always think to yourself - "if I were in the session, would I think it was fun?")
- emphasize player development over winning (always)
- talk to players about their improvements and strengths
- praise players primarily for effort and learning
- allow players to make mistakes and learn from them
- help players develop their confidence based upon their improvements
- never remove players from games or practices for making mistakes
- refrain from constantly telling players what to do
- allow players to be creative
- actively review how much they are emphasizing competition and winning/losing to players and ensure the emphasize is always on player development