

Island Sports

Players, coaches prepare for spring soccer

By Adrienne Downing

The ground has thawed just in time for the Jamestown Soccer Association to kick off the spring competitive season.

JSA has entered 10 teams in the Super-Liga this year, the highest number of teams in 10 years. They are also hosting a U16 girls premier team that has been part of the University of Rhode Island development program.

This past weekend, coaches and volunteers lined the Eldred Avenue fields in preparation for the March 31 opener. Steve Froberg, the U10 head coach and a certified coach trainer, held certification classes for youth modules I and II that included coaches from Jamestown and around the state.

The classes included information on fundamentals of coaching, a code of conduct for coaches, direction on how to set up drills and other information key to running a successful team. Coaches for the competitive season are required to have the certification.

"We are very fortunate to have some of the people that we have volunteer in this program. For instance, because Steve Froberg

is certified he was able to offer the training class here on the island and it was a lot easier for the coaches to fit the classes in," Paul McDermott, head of the competitive program, explained. "If he had not been able to offer the class here, the coaches would have had to go elsewhere in the state to take them."

"We have a very good soccer population here. We have people that have coached at the college level, the high school level and have been standout players at several levels," McDermott added. "We even have someone who has played at the professional level."

It is not an easy task to coordinate all of these talented volunteers, but Jay Sisson, JSA president, was recently recognized for his role as the head of the association, as well as his other volunteer soccer endeavors.

Sisson received the Joseph Racca Memorial Volunteer of the Year Award. The award is voted on by Soccer Rhode Island and is awarded to the person who best exemplifies the definition of a youth soccer volunteer.

"It is a great honor to even be



Mike Bradley, coach of the U12 team, gives instruction to Dustin Page during an indoor pre-season practice.

Photo by Adrienne Downing

mentioned in the same sentence as Joe Racca," Sisson said. "I knew him and he was a great man."

Sisson, besides serving as president, is also head of the referees and conducts all of the referee and facilitator training.

Youth referee-facilitators are essential to the program, but Sisson says that they also benefit from

the training and work that they do.

"It is a great leadership opportunity for them. They really learn to be assertive, demonstrative, emphatic and for a lot of them it is their first job," Sisson explained. "There really is a certain level of responsibility and accountability to be the manager of a game and it really helps them mature."

The facilitators must be at least 11 years old, take a course and pass a 100-question test. Sisson is offering a course on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Upon certification, the youths are assigned to age and skill-appropriate games. The positions are paid and anyone interested in joining the class should contact Sisson for more information.

The teams did not wait for the warm weather to arrive before starting on their training. Most teams have conducted indoor training on the weekends at the Lawn Avenue school to sharpen their skills and get in top shape.

There are some changes that will be noticed in the program this year. Most noticeably, the format of the U10 and U12 games has been modified.

"The U10s will be playing six versus six, down from eight versus eight last year, and the U12s will be eight versus eight, instead of 10 on 10," McDermott pointed out. "This will give the players more touches with the ball and more playing time."

The players will also be wearing new warm-up jackets provided to the league by Ali's Run.

"They approached us and offered them to us and we are thrilled," McDermott said. "It is in keeping with their goals, one of which is supporting local athletics."

McDermott notes that the community can play an important role in supporting the teams and the program.

"The Eldred fields are a great place to come out and watch a game. There is plenty of parking and it is a great way to spend a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. They can enjoy the sun and it is great for the teams as well," he concluded.

For more information on Jamestown Soccer Association programs or games, contact Jay Sisson at 423-1341 or by email at pansion06@cox.net.

Frostbiters enjoy lively day of sailing

Sunny skies, 40 degrees and 10 mph northwesterlies provided such a good day for the frostbiters that racing finally ended when race committee members Dick Allphin and George Rice announced that they had run out of room on the score sheet.

Eight races were held and it was a busy day of over-earlies, 360 degree penalty turns, bumping, tie-breakers, ducking. Five boats also overlapped on one finish.

Despite a short course there was no winning way to approach the

windward mark because of light shifty winds in close to the beach. This resulted in four to five boats approaching the mark from opposite directions at the same time. Sailors with a puff of wind were going fast, while nearby other sailors were barely moving.

This meant more port-starboard fouls and more 360 circles for those without the right of way.

In addition to the sailing fun, the fleet also learned boat handling, some rules and when to quickly do circles when they get caught with-

out the right of way. After eight races, the standings were close in the middle of the fleet, including a tie-breaker for third. John Horton won the day with four first-place, two second-place and one third-place finish for 12 points. Martin Keene was second with 29 points; John Quinn, who won the tiebreaker, was third with 32 points; Henry Siegal was fourth with 32 points; Winston Knight was fifth with 39 points; Joe Logan was sixth with 40 points; and Terry Jones was seventh with 42 points.

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- Frank Nobile, PGA Golfer

Dates announced for annual Soap Box Derby

The 12th Annual All-American Newport Lions Soap Box Derby will take place on Saturday, May 12, 2007, at Easton's Beach, Newport. The rain date is Sunday, May 13. The race begins promptly at 9 a.m.

"Sponsors" of a Soap Box Derby car will give a youngster the chance to experience the thrill of racing a car in the derby and the potential opportunity to represent Rhode Island in the National Soap Box Derby held in Akron, Ohio on Saturday, July 21.

The derby is sponsored by the Newport Lions Club, with the generous help and support from the Viking Riders and Rockwell Amusements. This year's Derby will be covered live by WKTK Radio. The Cardi Brothers and Cabot Cheese will also be a part of this great event.

The deadline for applications to drive in this year's derby is Friday, April 20.

This year we have added a fourth division, "Super Kids". This new and fantastic division is reserved exclusively for kids ages 8 to 17 with special needs. Special cars will be supplied that hold two people. A driver will also be supplied to assist with the handling so that the child can experience the thrill of competing without injury.

There are three additional divisions of race cars; Stock Division, car and driver total 200 pounds; Super Stock Division, car and driver total 230 pounds and the new Masters Division, car and driver total 255 pounds.

Boys and girls between the ages of nine and 16 years old are invited to participate.

Call and sign up for the clinic and learn how to build and race a car in the derby. The only clinic date this year is Saturday, April 21, at 10 a.m. The clinic will be held at the home of Johnny Gomes, 7 Farnum Terr., Middletown.

For further information and to sign up for the upcoming clinic, please contact Dave Dittmann, at 848-5884 or by email at ddittmann@cox.net.

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