

2009 President's Message

As President of the Clarence Soccer Club, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate all the children who participated in our Travel and House League programs as well as our First Touch Academies. Your passion and enthusiasm for the game makes the work by the parents, coaches, and Board of Directors of our Club both a source of real gratification and pleasure.

The Club Treasurer, Scott Sutherland reports that the club remains in good financial position. Together with strong merchandising championed by Director Stacey Funk, a successful Clarence Classic Tournament lead by Director Mike Wander and our sponsorship of the Kick-It regional 3v3 tournament, the Club has been able to meet its obligations and continue improvements at our facility. A defibrillator has recently been purchased and will be available in the Club House should an emergency occur. Thanks greatly to the leadership of our Executive Director, Sherry Frost, the By-Laws were revised in 2008. The new by-laws provide for a stronger chain of leadership through the succession of the first and second Vice Presidents to the President's position in the third year of their terms. Mike Kuper has recently been elected to that new 2nd Vice President position. We are so appreciative of the work done by Carolyn Hartzell, who is indispensable as the Board's secretary.

Under the leadership of Facilities Director Rob Waters, we have secured and installed safety nets for fields 2, 1, 5 and the west end of 6, and purchased and relocated new flagpoles. Contracts for drainage on the north side fields were approved and work on that should begin in the spring. In addition, during the 2009 season we hope to complete a field signage project that should continue to help defray costs for the club. Plans under development include a sunshade gazebo and partnering with the Town, the Rotary Club and other sports groups to secure a playground at Memorial Park.

Our Travel Teams showed great success at all levels in 2008. Of the 23 teams in BWNY, we had 5 first place finishes: Boys U11 Cheetahs, Boys U12 United, Boys U14 Eagles, Boys U17 Cougars and Girls U12 Condors. The Boys U16 Stallions came in first in the Upstate Premier league. Travel League Director Michele Letina reports that for the 2009, we have 456 participants with up to 28 teams after tryouts. The 2008 Clarence Classic Tournament went very well. We had 97 teams with a strong showing from our friends in Ontario. The 2009 Tournament is scheduled for July 25th and 26th. Our sponsorship of the Kick-It 3v3 Regional Tournament is very successful and provides our Club with great exposure throughout the northeast region. Under Director Tommy Tompson, our House League remains a strong coed fall program and the in-door league over the winter remains a popular activity.

Volunteer Director Helen Sollenberg has developed a strong Volunteer program that ensures parents in both House and Travel leagues all share equally in the responsibilities of the running our club. The Club remains dependent on our parent volunteers for making our club the successful. Projects from preparing the grounds for play in the spring and closing them up in the fall, running the snack bar during our tournaments and during House League, as well as coaching and managing our teams, are just some of the areas that we depend on our parent volunteers

Development Director Lou Vitello oversaw a tremendous year for the development of the players and coaches of the Clarence Soccer Club. Over 90% of the travel league coaching staff has earned their NSCAA Advanced Regional Diploma or higher, and over 80% of the house league coaching staff earned their NSCAA State Diploma or higher. In addition, the coaching staff attended training sessions sponsored by the club held both at the Epic Center and at the Soccer Center. For the 2009 season, all of the coaching staff will have their respective diplomas as well as certification in CPR/AED.

Two very successful player clinics and a highly attended summer camp were held in 2008. Over 220 of our players took advantage of these programs. In addition, goalkeeper training sessions were held for all interested club members, and team training sessions led by the Clarence Soccer Club Academy Training Staff

were given to all travel teams as well as division III house league teams. In 2009, the team training program will continue to be expanded.

The First Touch Program, run in conjunction with Dave Stephan, continues to grow. Both sessions were completely filled this year. This program, which focuses on basic skill development for the younger players of the club, has made a tremendous impact on the quality of the club.

The continued success of the Clarence Soccer is Club is evident in the success of the children who have come up through the strong developmental style of our programs. In 2008, The Clarence High School Girls Varsity Soccer team was the Section V champions. The Clarence High School Boys Varsity Soccer team had a 23-0-1 season, losing only in the State Finals to a team ranked by ESPN as the number one high school team in the country. My sincere thanks go out to all the volunteers, committee members, Board of Directors, our Executive Director Sherry Frost, our business sponsors and the Town of Clarence for all their efforts at making our club one of the finest.