

The Kicker

NOTES FROM THE COMMISSIONER

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Saratoga is one of the best AYSO Regions in the American Youth Soccer Organization.

This is a reflection of the dedicated support of the many volunteers who freely provide their time. All of our volunteer positions are critical to a well-organized, smooth-running league. If we are to continue to offer a quality program to our kids, we need everyone to put in that extra effort to not only assume the responsibility for a position that needs to be filled, but also to perform that position to the very best of their ability. Please make sure you do the job you volunteered for!

REGISTRATION

We tried a new registration process this year. First, we signed up coaches and referees and then limited the registration of players to the number of teams we had coaches for. It worked very well. As with all programs, there is room for improvement, but the league did have a good turnout of coaches and referees and we eliminated the problem of coachless teams. Soccer is a BIG DEAL in Saratoga! Over half our elementary school children play AYSO Soccer. Sadly, some of our late registration children will not get to play this year because we

don't have enough room for them. If you want your child to play next year, register on time!

FIELDS

Over the past few years, Saratoga AYSO has grown to the point that we can no longer accommodate all the children who want to play. There simply aren't enough playing fields in our town for our practices and games. The City's Congress Springs Park has only five soccer fields and we have twelve hundred AYSO players on ninety-four teams this year. Because they know how valuable team participation can be, the Saratoga School District allows us to use their school fields as well. Please help us take care of these fields. Pick up any trash you see. Tell your school administration "Thank You." We would not be able to have Saratoga AYSO without the partnership of our schools.

CONGRESS SPRINGS

As most of you know, Saratoga AYSO uses Congress Springs Park for practice, games, soccer camps and soccer training during the soccer season. I'd like to share some of the problems involved in the use of this city park. Saratoga AYSO, along with Saratoga Little League, puts in a lot of volunteer hours and a lot of money trying to maintain this park for the children of Saratoga. Currently, the City of Saratoga charges AYSO \$1,500 a year to use the soccer fields at Congress Springs. The City is now asking to raise our fee to \$15 per player. This would increase our annual fee from \$1,500 to \$18,000. So far the AYSO Board has been able to stop this increase, but we will eventually have to negotiate a new amount. Unfortunately, the City is not offering to do more for this additional cost. They have, in fact severely

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reduced field maintenance. The fields are in very poor condition due to lack of care and water. As the Regional Commissioner and as a parent, I am asking for your assistance. Please write to the City Council and let them know how important this park is to the children of Saratoga!

THANK YOU

I want to thank all of the Board Members and their staffs and committees for putting in the enormous effort which is making this season possible.

I want to extend a special thanks to Mark Linsky, who stepped down from the position of Regional Commissioner this year after more than seven years on the Board.

Fortunately for me, Mark has stayed involved as a consultant to the Board, and has provided invaluable assistance preparing for this season. Next year, Mark will return as Regional Commissioner and I will be back as Assistant Regional Commissioner.

For those on the outside, putting the season together may seem like a simple task. When you consider the things that need to be planned and executed, however, it is no less than what a private company would have to accomplish to get started. Only, in this case, we are talking about an unpaid company of volunteers whose only reward is the pleasure they get from having a well-run, fun and safe activity for their children.

Thanks again for all the hard work and wonderful results. To those parents who have ongoing and upcoming commitments to AYSO, please help your children and the entire Saratoga AYSO family by keeping the promises you have made to them.

BOARD ON THE FIELD

The Saratoga AYSO Board is going to make an effort to have a Member at Congress Springs during regular games. Most of them will be wearing black "cowboy" hats so you can identify them. Please contact them to ask questions and to provide feedback!

Common Courtesy Reminder

The opening weekend Tournament went very well. From all indications, everyone had fun at our nice start to a great season. Following are a few concerns we need to pay more attention to and work together on.

1. NO SMOKING OR CONSUMPTION OF

ALCOHOL. This is a City Park; however, during the AYSO soccer season the field belongs to AYSO. The Board has agreed that during AYSO activities both smoking and the consumption of alcohol are forbidden. This past weekend, I noticed several people smoking and there were a lot of beer cans in the garbage container next to field four.

2. HONOR HANDICAPPED PARKING.

The **HANDICAPPED PARKING** is reserved for those who have handicapped parking permits. I noticed during the tournament that there were several vehicles in these reserved spaces without a permit. This prevented people with permits from using these spaces.

NOTE: We will contact the sheriff to come and cite any vehicle found in these spaces without a permit. The snack shack workers will be helping keep an eye on this situation.

3. GARBAGE CONTROL.

Please help by using the garbage cans provided--this keeps the area clean and helps control yellow jackets.

4. PETS. Pets are allowed to come with their families. Please keep all pets on a leash and PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PETS.

Cleaning up the fields and the surrounding area is a big task, and I can tell you first hand, it is not pleasant having to clean up after someone's pet.

5. THIS IS AN ALL VOLUNTEER

ORGANIZATION. The vast majority of volunteers are fulfilling their commitments, but when one volunteer fails to follow through, someone else has to fulfill their responsibility for them. Families who do not meet their commitment are ordinarily asked to fill another job. As we have all jobs filled this season, the expectation is that these families will then fulfill their obligation as a league sponsor. I have requested that I be notified of all those who fail to perform their volunteer commitment. A Board Member will then contact these families with their league sponsor assignment. If you already know that you will need to switch to sponsor, please mail your \$250.00 check to our Treasurer, Ann Stein, at 19520 Farwell Ave., Saratoga, 95070. We will be notified when the arrangements are completed.

I know that most of you are not involved in these matters, but maybe if we all work together and give helpful reminders we can improve our common courtesy and make Saratoga AYSO soccer better for everyone!

Larry Fine
Saratoga AYSO
Regional Commissioner

San Jose Clash Presents AYSO Day!

On Sunday, September 28, 1997, the San Jose Clash are dedicating their game to AYSO. AYSO players may wear their uniforms and march into Spartan Stadium along with their teams, and they can even carry their team banner! The entire day is dedicated to AYSO. Many prizes will be handed out to AYSO participants. The fee for the day is \$9.00 of which \$2.00 goes to Saratoga AYSO. We would like for all players and their parents to attend. For more information, contact Larry Fine at 867-7910.

Rules Changes

There have been numerous rule changes this season. The entire document of changes will soon be available for you to review on the AYSO web page at www.saratoga-ayso.org. In the meantime, if you have any rules related questions, contact Srinivas Sukumar at 867-3193.

TOO TINY SHOES? LAST YEAR'S SHIRT? RECYCLE!

On game days you can stop by the fields at Congress Springs to drop off your used uniforms, including shorts, shirts, shoes, and shin guards. There are very low income leagues in AYSO with whom we have arranged to make donations if we get enough equipment.

SARATOGA AYSO IS ON-LINE

Saratoga AYSO now has its own web page! Eventually, we will be able to post the game scores and team standings weekly on the web. Please check it out! www.saratoga-ayso.org

Snack Shack Scene

One of the most popular places at Congress Springs is the Snack Shack. You may notice a few changes this year.

In an effort to help the volunteers working inside and to make it easier for all players to be served, this year there will be two lines formed with an entrance on both sides and the exits down the center. Please help our players remember to use the lines properly.

Also, as a way to thank our coaches and referees for their hard work, they are to go to the head of the line by entering through the exit. Their drinks are on the house.

The snack shack offers hot, fresh coffee as early as 7:30 a.m. every Saturday morning. They also stay open until the last game of the day is finished!

For a limited time, purchase a quarter-pound, all-beef Oscar Mayer hot dog and get a free wiener whistle. The barbecue experts will be serving hamburgers and new this year: GRILLED CHICKEN BREAST SANDWICHES!

The parents inside the snack shack are serving soda pop, candy, nachos, pretzels, those famous otter pops and **Country Time Lemonade--a full 8 oz. is only 25 cents!** Thanks go to Kraft for a generous donation!

Please support the snack shack and be kind to the parent workers inside. Your purchases are a major source of income to Saratoga AYSO, helping keep the cost of all our children's fun down as low as possible.

Opening Season Tournament Results

All teams in Divisions 4, 5 and 6 participated in the Opening Season Tournament on September 6 & 7. Standings were not kept for Division 6.

Congratulations to the following teams that placed and were awarded pins in Division 4 & 5.

Division 4 Boys

Place	Team	Points
1st	Sharks	35
2nd	Hornets	32

Division 4 Girls

1st	Bumblebees	29
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Division 5 Boys

1st	Blue Rocks	31
2nd	Cobras	27
3rd	Piranhas	19

Division 5 Girls

1st	Panthers	31
2nd	Eagles	22

Coaches Just Keep Getting Better!

Congratulations to the 43 coaches who completed the AYSO Youth Soccer course during August! Saratoga coaches who earned the AYSO Youth Coach badge include: Steve Akimoto, Jim Atwell, Ray Azzi, Soheila Baniani, Larry Burgess, Dennis Capowilla, Bill Cooper, Doris Cooper, Jim Crotty, Jeff Doty, Bob Eulau, Kamiar Fariba, Dale Ferrario, Greg Finley, Greg Hansen, Bert Haugen, Mike Hayden, Earl Heinlein, Lori Hibbett, Olex Hnojewyj, John Knill, Cathy Lamont, Sam Ma, Phil McCarthy, Chris Morris, Keith Mueller, Janet Naghavi, Ralph Patton, Wiren Perera, Valerie Publicover, Milan Radosavljevich, Kevin Skelly, Doug Smucker, Robin Stoffers, Allan Strong, Paul Strudwick, David Trager, Michael Vaggione and Bob Williams.

Is your coach on the list? If so, you can be sure your coach cares enough to spend his or her free

time not only coaching, but also in preparing him/herself to be an even better coach! Watch for the Youth Coach badge on your coach's clothing or equipment bag!

Area 2J Interplay

This year Saratoga AYSO Region 27 Divisions 1,2, and 3 will be interlocking with other Regions in Area 2J. This includes Cupertino Region 35, West San Jose Region 64, North Monterey/Prunedale Region 256, and Pajaro/Watsonville Region 1076. At the end of the season, the top teams in each division will earn trophies provided by the Area. The teams participating are:

Region	1&2 Girls	2 Boys	3 Boys	3 Girls
27	1	2	5	4
35	1	1	5	5
64	2	2	4	2
256	2	2	3	1
1076	0	2	2	1

Unfortunately, there were not enough players to form a Saratoga 1B team or separate 1G and 2G teams.

We apologize for the lateness of the upper division schedules. Many of the regions do not know how many teams will be playing until just before the start of the season. Then the Area Scheduler balances home and away games which require travel. Field availability further complicates schedule development. If you are interested in helping to develop schedules for next season, please let one of the Board Members know.

If you want a chance to see some fairly strong soccer, come out on Saturdays to Redwood Middle School or to Field 4 at Congress Springs Park and cheer for our older teams!

Calendar

9/21	Striker Clinic	2-4:30	Congress Springs
9/27	Picture Day/Sweatshirt Distribution	7:30 a.m.-2 p.m.	
9/28	Midfielder Clinic	2-4:30	Congress Springs
10/5	Defensive Clinic	2-4:30	Congress Springs
10/9	Mid-season Referee/Coaches Meeting	7-9 p.m.	Argonaut School
11/15	Last Regular Season game for Div. 5		
11/22	Last reg. season games Div. 3,4,6 & 7		

Please see the inside back cover of your Roster Handbook for a more complete calendar!

Coaches' Corner

Restarts, like goal kicks and corner kicks, are often a coach's best opportunity to teach elements of strategy to the younger kids. At these times the free flow of the game is interrupted and kids can learn to move to correct defensive and offensive positions prior to the restart. In younger divisions, goal kicks are often the most dangerous defensive plays and the most productive offensive opportunities. Fullbacks must learn to stay in the penalty area until the ball has been safely cleared back into midfield. Pity the poor young goalie who is all alone in the goal area staring out at 10 hungry attackers all waiting for her goal kick! Remember that any player on the team can take a goal kick, not just the goalie, and it's often a good practice in very young divisions to have your strongest kicker take goal kicks, even if she then follows the ball back to her normal position as a halfback or forward. In Divisions 5 and 4, you can have your strongest fullback take goal kicks.

Notes From the Safety Commissioner

1. Please clean up after your pets. I shouldn't have to elaborate on this.
2. Please take all you bring on to the field off or put it in a trash container.
3. Don't leave pieces of rebar used to hold up banners on the field. It breaks the lawnmowers if we don't find them.
4. The storage areas in the snack shack building are not to be used for storing any personal or team material or equipment.
5. The line painting crews will be working every Sunday, please move your activities, if needed, to accommodate the line painting process.
6. Please instruct kids not to climb on the goals at Redwood.

Hank Coles
Saratoga AYSO
Safety Commissioner

NEARLY 1200 REGISTER FOR AYSO!

Even though the registration process changed a little this year, we had another banner year for enrollment. We asked for coaches and referees to register early so we could plan our teams and assure each player of a dedicated coaching team. What a success! Towards the end of the summer we had waiting lists in every division (except 7) - a first for our league, but each child who registered had a team assignment with a coach willing and ready to be trained and certified. Plan now for early job selection and advanced registration next spring. **YOU'LL FIND MORE INFORMATION IN THE WINTER KICKER!**

Nominate Someone Special

Areferee who also team reps? A coach whose husband does nets? A buyer who started a new program? Besides the members of the board, many families do much more than their share to make Saratoga AYSO a wonderful program. We'd like to mention some of them in our upcoming newsletters. If you've got a nomination, please send it, along with a brief description of the person or family's contribution to the Kicker editor, Jan McCreedy at: mccready6@juno.com or 13671 Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road, Saratoga, 95070. Watch future Kickers to learn more about these hard workers.

HOT SOCCER TIP! IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CHECK IN YOUR ROSTER HANDBOOK FIRST! YOU'LL FIND LOTS OF GREAT INFO!

