

Fall TouchLine

November 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Players and Parents:

I certainly hope that everyone has had a great season so far! The weather unfortunately did not cooperate in October, which is often typical.... let's hope our remaining week is OK! I have made every attempt to schedule games that have been rained out. Unfortunately a Saturday rainout takes four weeknights to make up, and we only have permits for Wednesday and Thursday and an occasional Tuesday. All but two games have been scheduled as of this writing. I will try to get these in as soon as possible.

I believe we have had another good season, especially with our continuing soccer education program on Saturdays for our 4 year old D7 players. Special thanks to Jeannette Ramsey from NJ Select Soccer Camps for donating her time and for running our coaches' clinic each Saturday this season—I have been told by a lot of coaches that this was very valuable for them. We will be looking into other programs for coaches in other divisions for next season. We believe that this education for our coaches will further improve our already successful program.

You all hopefully noticed some work going on at the fields that in fact delayed our season start by one week. The fields are in need of a lot of improvement and the first stage will be completed by the Spring season with the completion of the irrigation project by Howell Township. This will help us greatly to improve the grass at the facility in the long term.

You probably also noticed that there have been problems with the lighting at the fields during evening games. The problem has been the electrical panel that controls the lights. As part of the irrigation project, the town will be replacing that light panel and the lights should then work properly. Again, we hope to have this all completed before the start of the Spring season.

The season is just about over, the trophies have been ordered and we are looking forward to another fun **Trophy Night at Middle School North on Saturday, November 17th**. The sessions are now scheduled and I ask that you check the times in this newsletter or with your coach. You can also find the schedule on our web site and on signs posted around the fields. Please plan on attending and have a fun team party! Unfortunately the Fall season does not allow us to have an outside event as we do in the Spring.

I would like to thank our many volunteers who stepped forward to coach, to work the fields, staff the snack bar, do mail-outs and help with registration: we cannot run such a large organization without the help of our volunteers. I ask that those of you who have **not** stepped forward yet please do so as there are still many things that still need doing....remember, this is **your** club for **your** kids, and your commitment to help is a condition of accepting your child's registration. So please get involved! I have been disappointed with the snack bar volunteer turnout for our makeup games ...**we need your help**, if only for an hour, and sometimes even less!! Please step forward and help **your** club!

We will be holding our annual elections to the Board of Directors at Trophy Night (which is also our annual **Meeting of Members**), and I encourage you to consider running for a Board position. If there is some special talent you can bring to the Board or if you just have a general interest in seeing kids have fun, please consider running it is personally rewarding to see our kids have fun and succeed on and off the field from skills they have learned at the Pinelanders. If you are interested in running, please see myself, our Board Secretary **Bob Hoenig**, or any other Board member at the fields.... **we need you!** If you are interested in an appointed position to the Board we would also be glad to have you, please let any of us know if you are interested.

Please remember to register early for the Spring season....we cannot continue to do a last minute scramble to accommodate your children... you need to do this early!

See you all at Trophy Day!

Sincerely,

— *Ken Kinelski, President, Ken.Kinelski@pinelanders.com*



Trophy Night & Annual Meeting

Trophy Night and the Annual Meeting of Members will be held at **Howell Middle School North**, Squankum Yellowbrook Road, on **Saturday November 17th**. See below for the times for each division.

Elections for the Pinelanders Board of Directors will also be held at this event.

Time	Divisions
3:45PM to 5:15PM	D7, D6G
5:30PM to 7:00PM	D6, D5G
7:15PM to 8:30PM	D5, D4, D4G
8:45PM to 9:45PM	D2, D3, D3G

This is an opportunity to have a team party, so please bring some snacks and have fun. Players should wear their team shirts.

We'll also have a registration desk for the Spring season and for our Winter Indoor program, so please remember to bring your check book.

WINTER INDOOR SOCCER

Our Indoor program is held in the Middle School North gym each Friday evening in January and February. It is open to players who played in our outdoor program in either the preceding Spring or Fall, and who will be in D5 or above in Spring 2008 season. Parents of eligible players may play in our adult session at 10pm. This program is just for fun, and costs only \$5 for the season (\$10 for adults). Eligibility rules are strictly enforced.

You can sign up beginning at Trophy Night, and forms will also be available on-line.

TOURNAMENT TEAMS

Congratulations to our tournament teams for their hard work and dedication this season. Pinelanders sponsored 4 teams this season:

- The **U11G Strikers** won their flight at the Manalapan Funfest.
- The **U9G Wildcats** had a great showing in the Berkeley Tournament in October.
- Our two youngest teams, **U8G Storm** and the **U7G Voltage**, also had a great time at Berkeley and Manalapan.

This is a great learning experience for everyone involved. A big "thank-you" to the coaches, players and parents who put in the extra time to make this so successful!

We will continue to sponsor up to one team per division. Any coaches who are interested in participating, please contact me before the Spring season.

—*Kim Brown, Tournament Coordinator, Kim.Brown@pinelanders.com*

BOARD ELECTIONS & PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE

Now that the local elections are over, it's time to vote for candidates for the Pinelanders Board of Directors. The election will be held at the Annual Meeting of Members, November 17th, 2007 (Trophy Night). Six seats are available, and seven candidates are running: **Scott Frueh, Mario Guarino, Lou Haggar, Bob Hoenig, Lynn Hoenig, Tony Valenziano, and Lon Zonis**. Please be sure to exercise your family's right to vote.

If you would like to serve on the Board, eight additional seats are filled by appointment each year. To apply for one of these seats, e-mail me with your name, address and phone number; and tell us what you can bring to the Board table.

At the Annual Meeting the Board will also propose a change to the Club's bylaws. The change must be approved by a vote of our members in order to take effect.

The background to the proposed change is that at Board meetings it is frequently difficult to conduct business because of a lack of quorum. The current quorum requirement is that a simple majority of the current Board membership must be present, which usually requires 11 members. We propose to change this section to require at least 40% of the current Board membership to be present (rounded up to the nearest whole number above), and that at least one of the President, Secretary or Treasurer be present. Your Board asks you to consider and vote on this important matter.

—*Bob Hoenig, Board Secretary, Bob.Hoenig@pinelanders.com*

END-OF-SEASON AWARDS

You can still nominate someone for one or more of our end-of-season awards. Please tell us who you think should win:

- **The Joe Parato Award for Sportsmanship**, presented to a member who exemplifies the spirit of sportsmanship the club stands for.
- **The Tony Valenzano Coach of the Season**, given to the coach who teaches players to be good sports while instilling a love of the game.
- **The Referee of the Season**, awarded to the adult or youth referee who helps the kids learn and have fun while doing an outstanding job of officiating.
- **The Olivia Zonis Award for Courage**, which we give every once in a while to a member who shows courage in the face of adversity.

To nominate someone please send me an e-mail, or if you don't have access to the Internet leave a note in the wooden report box in the Office. Include the name of the person you're nominating, his/her connection to the club, which award this nomination is for, and a few sentences explaining why your nominee should win it. All nominations must be signed. The deadline for nominations is **Saturday, November 10th**.

—*Bob Hoenig, Board Secretary, Bob.Hoenig@pinelanders.com*

REGISTER EARLY: HELP US TO GET IT RIGHT!

Before the start of the Fall season we had to make some key decisions about the viability of fielding teams for co-ed 14-18age-group and for the girls in the 11-13 and 14-18 age groups—all of which had critically low registrations.

In the end, after checking with parents, we decided to go ahead with a combined four-team division for the girls, which we called D3G. A number of the older girls elected to move to the co-ed D2 division, which helped to make that division viable, but with only two teams.

The solution was only partially successful: several players dropped because they didn't want to participate in a combined division, and D3G continued to struggle with low numbers for the entire season.

It's highly likely we will have to make similar decisions again in the Spring, and there's just no way of knowing whether we're making the right decision until well into the season, when the stragglers have all registered.

This is a very undesirable situation for everyone, and we'll continue to evaluate the options over the winter. In the meantime there is one thing you can do to help us to get it right across **all** the divisions: if your child wants to play soccer, **get your registration in early!** If you don't, not only **your** child but children across his or her age-group may suffer.

—*Jem Treadwell, Registrar, jem@pinelanders.com*

FEEDBACK SURVEYS

Over the course of the season we've conducted three separate surveys via My Pinelanders:

- A survey of D7 parents about the changes to the D7 program.
- A survey of all members to solicit feedback about the season.

- A survey of all coaches to get their perspective on our program.

Two of these surveys are still open, and we ask you to use them to provide your feedback. The number of responses received so far is very encouraging—244 members have completed the season feedback survey as of November 4th, and the range of topics raised is very broad.

We will summarize the results and comments on-line over the next couple of weeks, and try to address any issues raised before next season. Please keep your comments coming—they're very valuable. Also if you'd like to add to or change your response you can do that at any time until the survey closes.

VOLUNTEER REPORT

I'm pleased to say that we have had a good response to the various calls for volunteers this season, and as of the end of Week 9 we're down to 53 members still with "red" status. Because we had a lower registration this season, though, we've still had a number of slots that were not filled, particularly, as Ken mentioned, during makeup sessions.

If you haven't yet volunteered please be sure to sign up for one of the remaining slots—remember that our policy is to suspend your children from playing in the next season you register if you exit this season without fulfilling your obligation.

If you **have** completed an activity please consider helping out again—we *will* be short-handed, and we can't open the snack bar if we don't have volunteers to staff it.

Thanks as always for your support!

LAST CALL FOR PINELANDERS WEAR

Trophy Day will be your last chance to get Pinelanders Wear this season. The table will be open most of the evening. Drop by to pick out your favorite items—they make great holiday gifts! The selection includes jackets, sweatshirts, sweatpants, and many other items.

—*Lynn Hoenig, VP, Lynn.Hoenig@pinelanders.com*

E-MAIL AND TEXT MESSAGES

We're aware that a number of our members don't receive our e-mail messages, most likely because some service providers block our messages because spam has been sent through our servers in the past. I'm working on several improvements to our system that should improve the situation significantly in the future.

We've also heard via the survey that we sometimes send too much information, and we'll be addressing that too.

This season we experimented with sending text messages to notify parents about game cancellations. The feedback we received was very positive, and we plan to develop the infrastructure and make better use of this in future seasons. You'll be able to opt out if you prefer not to receive messages this way.

Watch for details as we get closer to the Spring season.

—*Jem Treadwell, jem@pinelanders.com*

PLEASE KEEP YOUR INFO CURRENT

If you've moved or changed your phone number, or if you aren't getting e-mail from us, please check your information on your My Pinelanders "My Family" page. Please use the Change buttons to let me know of any changes or errors.

—*Jem Treadwell, jem@pinelanders.com*