

Spring TouchLine

March 2008

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Players and Parents:

Welcome to our Spring 2008 season! For those of you who are new, we welcome you to the Pinelanders family. This is our 37th year providing a top-quality soccer instructional program here in Howell. We have served thousands of children during our 37-year existence and we hope you have a very enjoyable experience. To those returning players and families, welcome back—we hope you had an enjoyable winter and are ready for another exciting season of warm weather and fun!

Our numbers are down a bit, reflecting the changing demographics in Howell. The upper divisions always present a challenge to us as our youth at that age start to work and have other interests. We've made some creative changes in D2 and D3G, to enable the older players to play in competitive teams, but unfortunately we have not been able to offer an all-girl division for girls 15-18. Our division alignments and sizes are dictated by the enrollment we receive, so they do fluctuate at times.

We have another exciting season planned and your Board of Directors has been hard at work over the winter. Other key dates and events are mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter and on our web site. There are two mandatory coach meetings during the season, so all coaches please check the calendar and plan on attending. Our picture sessions are mentioned in Lynn Hoenig's column on this page. Trophy Day is planned for **Saturday, June 21** at the fields, where we will repeat our tremendously successful club picnic and recognize all of our players. In case of inclement weather, it will be held at Middle School North in the cafetorium. Please mark these important dates on your calendar.

As always, we are in need of volunteers in all categories. Your Board members are all volunteers and we just can't run an organization this large without your help. When you see messages asking you to volunteer please do so cheerfully in support of *your* club. Volunteering is a mandatory requirement for membership and will be enforced! How you can help....we are in special need of people to help in the snack bar and set up the fields—painting the lines before the games on Friday and helping with field configuration on Saturdays. You can sign up for all volunteer activities through your personal My Pinelanders page—please watch for messages on this topic and make sure that volunteer slots are filled each week. Or, if you prefer, please see myself or any Board member at the fields on any weekend.....**we need you!** We are also looking for members who would like to serve an appointed position on the Board, this is a real opportunity to be involved and help with *your* club!

I would like to congratulate **Bryan Chehanske** and **Rein Smit** for making it to the Regional Finals of the **Elks Soccer Shoot-Out** in Maryland earlier this month. We are proud that they were representing the Pinelanders from the shootout we had last year.... great job, we are proud of you both!

I would like to encourage all of you to visit our website at www.pinelanders.com for constant updates on club happenings. I would also like each and every one of you to look at the link on the left navigation bar and select Documents and Forms and download and read the Members' Code of Conduct—this is mandatory for all members. This code has been established by the State of New Jersey and the Township of Howell and everyone is expected to adhere to it.

I hope you all have a very enjoyable season, but please remember our main goal is to teach the game of soccer through skills development, with sportsmanship, *not* winning games by overwhelming scores, being paramount. We all need to be fair and let the children play and encourage them with **positive** comments—too often we hear negative comments from parents and coaches, and we will not tolerate it! Remember, let the coaches coach and let the refs referee and ensure the safety of your child and enforcement of the laws of the game. And remember, if you can't say something nice....don't say it at all....we are all here to have fun and provide for the best positive experience for our children.

See you all at the fields!

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



TEAM PICTURES SCHEDULED

Team pictures will be taken on **Monday, April 14**, and **Tuesday, April 15**, at **Howell Middle School North**. Each team will be given a specific team picture appointment. You may have your child's picture taken with his/her team, and individually. Our photographer offers a number of picture packages, ranging from team picture only to having your child's picture on a Wheaties box or a banner. Your coach will have a price list and order form for you early in the season. Appointment times will be posted on our website. We urge all families to take part in this program. Please e-mail me if you have any further questions.

—Lynn Hoenig, **Vice President**
Lynn.Hoenig@pinelanders.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Pinelanders was one of the first sports organizations in Howell to purchase an Automated Electronic Defibrillator. What? An AED is a device used to help bring back someone whose heart has stopped. We sincerely hope we never need to use it, but in the event it's ever needed our AED is located inside the snack bar. Eleven of our 20 Board members are trained to use it, and to administer CPR.

—Bob Hoenig, **Communications Manager**
Bob.Hoenig@pinelanders.com

DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR KIDS ARE?

Over the winter, an 8-year-old child pulled a fire alarm at Middle School North during one of our adult indoor soccer games. The child's parent was playing in the game, and no one else was watching him. A couple of years ago, a 10-year-old child was climbing one of the trees that line Hoffman Fields. He fell and broke his wrist. His parent was jogging around the fields at the time. There have been other incidents like this over the years.

We can't emphasize this enough: **If your child isn't playing in a game, it's up to you to know where he or she is, and what he or she is doing.**

After the indoor incident, we prohibited parents from leaving their children unsupervised during indoor games. It's hard to do that at Hoffman, but we can tell you that *Pinelanders can take no responsibility for the safety of children who are not actively participating in a game.*

We will make sure your child plays on a safe field, under safe game conditions, but we cannot watch out for your children on the playgrounds, in the spectator areas, or in the parking lots.

In my many years with Pinelanders I've seen kids wandering near cars in the lots, and it scares me every time it happens. I've seen kids tossing footballs and baseballs within inches of an active field, or a group of people watching a game.

Please, watch out for your kids. Make sure you know where they are and what they're doing. The best way to do this is to have them with you.

—Bob Hoenig, **Communications Manager**
Bob.Hoenig@pinelanders.com

PARKING AT HOFFMAN FIELDS

For those of you who are new to our club, you should know that there is very limited parking at Hoffman Fields, the park where we play. There are two main parking lots: a small one to the left of the brick building (as you face it from the road), and a larger one to the right.

The smaller lot is mostly dirt. There are a few paved, marked spaces, including a handicapped space. The rest of the area is unpaved. We ask you to park courteously and not block anyone in. If you do, we will stop games until you move your car. This area also contains an opening in the fence, for use by emergency personnel and vehicles in case someone gets hurt. Never block this opening.

The larger lot on the other side is paved, and parking spaces are marked. Park **only** in these marked spaces.

Do not park along the curved driveway in front of the building, or on the grass between the driveway and the road. You will be ticketed by the Howell PD if you do.

And in case there are no parking spaces available, please drive over to Memorial Middle School (the entrance is shared with the adjacent Adelphia School, opposite the end of Fairfield Road) and park in the rear lot. Walk through the field next to the school, and you'll find a gate in the fence by Hoffman Fields.

Never park behind the social services building across the street. Crossing Adelphia Road (a busy county highway) is very dangerous. Always be very careful entering and exiting the parking lots. And finally, remember that this is a kids' program, and kids will be walking in the lots (we hope with their parents). Drive slowly!

—*Bob Hoenig, Communications Manager*
Bob.Hoenig@pinelanders.com

STAY HEALTHY AT THE FIELDS

As a part of the science program for the *Project Plus* class at Memorial Middle School, a group of students from Howell participated in the eCYBERMISSION contest which is sponsored by the United States Army. It is a web-based science, math and technology competition.

The team is attempting to reduce the possibility of exposure to the various bacteria, viruses and parasites that may be present in the bird droppings found on our practice fields, by educating the student-athletes and providing them with some guidelines to follow. These guidelines have been reviewed by an epidemiologist from the Monmouth County Department of Health and a Wild Life Disease Biologist from the USDA to ensure that the information is accurate. Please take a moment to check out the link on our website, www.pinelanders.com to see the recommendations.

Thank you to **Jessie Fifield, Ashley Meagher, Melany DaSilva, and Sal D'Ambrosio** for this very important information.

SURVEY RESPONSES

Thank you to everyone who filled out the end of the season surveys last Fall. While we aren't able to respond directly to everyone, we do read all of the responses and take the recommendations into consideration. In the past, some of our changes have included changing the location of picture night, and the restructuring of the volunteer system. We look forward to your feedback to continue to improve our club. In addition to our surveys that are posted during the season, you are always able to speak with any of the Board Members at the field. If you prefer, you may e-mail me directly with any concerns or questions.

—*Kim Brown, Board Secretary*
Kim.Brown@Pinelanders.com

SAVE ROOM FOR OUR SUMMER SOCCER CAMP!

It's not too early to start planning for summer camp. Coach Wayne Ramsey and his NJ Select Soccer Camp will be returning to Hoffman Fields each evening during the week of **July 21st–25th**. There is a Learn to Play camp

for children 4-5 years old, an Instructional camp for children 6-14 years old, and a Goalkeeper camp. More information and brochures will be available at the fields, but in the meantime, save room on your calendar! E-mail me if you have any questions regarding camp.

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

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

By the time you read this our early-season volunteer schedule should be posted, and we ask every family to fulfill their commitment by signing up for something. Please remember that this is not optional: a lot of people put in many hours every season to make sure your child has an opportunity to play organized soccer, and the small fee you pay is only a part of your side of the deal.

Our volunteer policy is available on our web page, and it requires us to suspend players whose families don't meet their obligation. We have suspended players in the past, and if necessary we'll do so again this season. Please watch for opportunities, and do your part.

If you have a problem doing this please let me know—we'll work with you to find the right opportunity, but don't let the clock run out on the season and then tell us you didn't know or couldn't do it. As Ken says, this is **your** club, and it's **your** responsibility to participate.

And of course, a big thank-you to the many members who not only **do** participate but who often come looking for more things they can do.

—*Jem Treadwell*
jem@pinelanders.com

THE FINAL WHISTLE

I hope by now you've had a chance to take a look at the new *My Messages* page on My Pinelanders. You can use this to find old messages from the Club or from your coach that you may have missed or deleted prematurely. Note that only messages sent to one of our mail lists will be archived there—any message your coach sends directly to you will not go through our server, and won't appear on your My Messages page. Each message has an expiration date after which it will be deleted, so the information you find there won't be too stale.

Early in the season I plan to give you better facilities for managing your e-mail addresses and to implement text-message alerts when games are canceled (we experimented with it last season, but I have more work to do). Watch for details of this.

—*Jem Treadwell*
jem@pinelanders.com

Season Calendar	
Date	Event
Sat March 29 th	Field Preparation Day
Fri April 4 th	Season starts
Apr 14 th & 15 th	Team photographs
Wed May 7 th	Mid-season Coaches' Meeting
Sat June 14 th	Season ends
Sat June 21 st	Trophy Day
July 21 st – 25 th	Summer Soccer Camp (evenings)