



## President's View

Welcome to all of our new families and our returning families, as well. We are so pleased to have you as part of our club. We hope you find it to be a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Before the fall season begins, let's take a moment to better understand what it takes to give your child the opportunity to play soccer and to be successful at it. It obviously takes many people and many volunteer hours. So who are these people and what are their responsibilities?

- GVSA (our soccer league). Their responsibilities include registering our kids, coaches and teams with MSYSA (Michigan State Youth Soccer Association). They schedule all of our games, track the game results and post the teams' standings. They are our link with the state organization, MSYSA.
- GRASA. Your Board of Directors runs the club, making sure that our seasons actually happen. They hold tryouts, form the teams, select coaches, register all players and coaches with the league, order uniforms, schedule referees, secure and coordinate game fields, coordinate tournaments, communicate with our membership (newsletters, website, etc.), hold fundraisers, help the team managers and balance the budget! It's a very busy group, and we are always looking for new faces to join in the fun!
- Coaches. GRASA coaches attend continuing education clinics, conduct practices, attend games and tournaments, and work very hard to train and develop our players. They realize the importance of being good role models and citizens as they mentor our kids.
- Parents. The club is dependent upon their help as team managers, tournaments assistants, nets and flags helpers, chauffeurs, and, of course, supporters of the kids. Our parents continue in their efforts to be positive spectators at games, while shouting only words of encouragement. Truly, parents are a crucial part of the equation, and GRASA has the best parents around.
- Players. Needless to say, there would not be a club without the players. They are what we are all about. Their responsibilities include being committed players, supporting their teammates, displaying good sportsmanship and having FUN!

We wish you all a very fun and successful fall season!

Laurie Wilson, LWV920@attbi.com  
GRASA President

## Registrar's Read

*Great Attendance!!*

We would like to thank everyone who worked and participated at the July 17th registration. About 75% of the GRASA players registered that evening. We really appreciate everyone who made the effort to be there, and all the volunteers who helped out. Our organization would not exist without the commitment and dedication of many volunteers. Thanks!

The feedback from the volunteer and questionnaire form is being compiled. We are thrilled that there are so many people willing to dedicate their time and energy. The questionnaire will give GRASA great feedback in helping to make decisions in the future. We are committed to taking that feedback from our members and using it to improve the organization.

A big thanks is due to the Soccer Spot! The use of their facility is much appreciated by all.

Here's to a great Fall Season!

**GO MAGIC!**

Linda Sellman, Boys Registrar, sellmansix@attbi.com  
Laura Bowman, Girls Registrar, Cbls03@aol.com

## Fall Calendar

August 16 – GVSA Fall 2002 game schedule to be available (hint – the schedule is always late!)

September 7-8 – Petoskey tournament

September 7 – GVSA Fall season begins

October 27 – GVSA Fall season ends

Third Monday of each month – GRASA Board meetings are held at East Hills Athletic Club, members are welcome

Coach and manager meetings will be announced on the GRASA website ([www.eteamz.com/GRASA](http://www.eteamz.com/GRASA))

GRASA Annual Membership Meeting is planned for October, with the specific date and location to be announced on the GRASA website

## Player Perspective

Hi, my name is Kaely Schlosser. This is the second year that I will be playing for GRASA. I play for U11 now.

I like GRASA because you get to meet new friends and play soccer with them and do all sorts of fun stuff. GRASA is a very fun club.

The cool thing about GRASA is that no matter what team you're on you will always have a lot of fun. I can assure you of that.

I hardly even knew anyone who was on my team when I started last year. For example .... my friend Madeline Rammal was on my team, and I hardly even knew her at the time but once we had a few practices, I was great friends with Madeline and everyone else on the team!!

Tournaments are so fun!! You get to go play a few games and if you win like 2 out of 3 [at least], you go to the finals. One of the indoor tournaments that we were in we played in Holland, we won, and then we qualified to go on to Columbus and compete against some other really good teams!

See how much fun GRASA can be? I hope that you have as much fun playing soccer as I do because if you do have as much fun, you'll want to play again and again and again.

## TOPSoccer

TOPSoccer, a soccer program for mentally and physically disabled kids, will be starting up again this fall. We meet on weekends at the Soccer Spot in Kentwood, and we have so much fun! We are always looking to extend our program to new players. No soccer experience is required. It is a chance for the kids to get some exercise, learn more about the great sport of soccer, and make some new friends!!

If you want to learn more, please call Craig and Laurie Wilson at 245-6973 or Josh Sheldon at 464-1000.

## Field Changes

Starting this fall, we will be adding two new fields for GRASA home games. Sunshine Church on East Beltline is the site for both a small field (U9 and U10) and a larger field. We hope to schedule games here instead of at Our Savior Lutheran field and Highland Park, which have sometimes been in very poor condition.

## Jerseys

Last year, our players received a blue jersey and also a numbered white t-shirt to serve as the alternate jersey. This was done to keep costs down, as it would have cost about \$40 to \$50 more per player to have two regular jerseys.

As it turned out, there were a few problems with the t-shirts. They had a tendency to shrink. They had a tendency to pick up some types of stains. The players would often forget to bring them to the games, and they didn't have them when they needed to switch to an alternate jersey color. Did I mention that they tended to shrink?

Our jersey style of last year has been discontinued, and we will have a more modern style this year. Instead of the troublesome t-shirts, players will be given numbered scrimmage vests. This approach has worked well for some other clubs. In the event of a color conflict, the scrimmage vests are worn over the regular jersey. Both the scrimmage vest and the jersey must be brought to every game. The vests can also be used in practice.

Anyone with ideas for the selection, purchasing, handling, or distribution of uniforms for next year is invited to participate on the uniform committee. Please communicate your interest in participating to our equipment coordinator Mike Bart at email address [PMSBart@attbi.com](mailto:PMSBart@attbi.com) (or to any other board member).

## Priorities

Following our league games, the winning team is responsible for reporting the game score to the GVSA league office. In the case of a tie, the home team reports the game score. At the end of the season, we find that there are a few games that didn't get reported. When we try to get the game scores, we find that coaches and players seldom remember the game score, and often can't remember who won. That is the reason that game scores need to be reported immediately after the game.

It is interesting to note that these same players, who can't remember much about a game a couple of weeks after it is played, will remember for a Very Long Time if you forget to bring the post game snacks! Take a cue from the players on priorities. As you are watching the game, don't be too concerned with the score, or who is ahead. But if it's your turn to bring the snacks, you had better be real sure that you brought them!

## Coach's Corner

*Is this the state of the game?*

Thursday, August 1, 2002.... Front page of *The Grand Rapids Press*... "Soccer parents will get lesson in sportsmanship."

What? Parents need to be taught about sportsmanship? Are we not the ones to set an example for our children to follow? Are we not the grown-ups, the mature elements in the total picture of the game? Do we really need to "get lessons in sportsmanship?" Apparently so.

Many soccer leagues in Michigan are going to be requiring that parents of any registered player must watch a specially prepared video on sportsmanship before their children can participate. This in itself speaks to the problems nationwide. We may not have any real huge problems here in the west Michigan area, but we certainly could take a look at our sideline actions and see if we can improve them. Part of the required meetings will include a 15 minute video produced by the Florida based National Alliance for Youth Sports in which good sideline behavior and sportsmanship are highlighted.

In May of 2000, I attended my National Youth Instructors Course at Jekyll Island, Georgia where we were shown a video of the sideline behavior at a random youth soccer game. It depicted both the coaches and the parents. It was nothing less than appalling. Coaches were swearing at the referees and badgering them for calls at a rate of more than one per minute of play. Parents were chiming right in with the same misdirection of energy towards the refs along with some very negative statements to the players. Parents would kick the ground and spin around with a mighty "Aaaggghhh! What the #\$%@ was that Johnnie? Kick the #\$%&@ ball?" when a kid did not do something they seemed to believe was the right thing to do. The kids appeared to be about 9 years old.

I have not yet viewed the video discussed in the *Grand Rapids Press* but I expect it contains some very insightful thoughts on how best we parents (and coaches) can impact our kids for the betterment of the game. Here are some thoughts which may help us as we head into another season:

**1) Control the Controllables:** I teach my players that we can not control the weather, the field conditions, the opponents, the referees, or even our parents. We can control our own play. If that is true, then maybe we should concentrate on the only part of the game we have the chance to control....US! As parents, we should simply encourage and cheer... even for the other team! If their goalkeeper makes a great save... let the shooter know..."Great Shot Becky!" and the opponents goalkeeper..."Nice Save Keeper!"

**2) Be your kids BEST Fan:** Believe that your child is trying to do their best at all times (they really do want to please you, the coach, their team mates...). They will make mistakes! Free them from the fear of retribution for a mistake and they will continue to try new things, take chances... instead of trying to "hide" from the ball knowing that if they touch it, that might result in an insult or "Aaaaggghhh!"

**3) It is about FUN:** Kids play because the game is fun. Adults play because it is fun. As parents and coaches, we have a responsibility to keep as much fun in the game as possible while we try to teach. Parents can keep the fun in the game when they focus mostly on the positive parts of their child's game. They can also spend time playing fun backyard games with their kids.

**4) Winning is NOT the focus:** Player development has nothing to do with winning or losing. Player development has everything to do with players getting better and working towards long-term goals, such as playing in college, etc. If we focus our kids towards winning only, they may adopt an attitude of taking the shortest route, perhaps even a route which includes things such as badgering refs for calls (which are rarely given and even more rarely effect the outcome of a game), using excessive force on players (rough play), or stretching or even breaking the rules to gain an advantage.

**5) Teach them about character:** Sports has always been a place where young people could learn about a competitive game and have opportunities to excel at that particular sport from an athletic standpoint. It has also been a place where kids could learn about several life skills which they could apply to work, marriage, relationships, raising the next generation of parents, coaches, and community leaders, etc. The reality is that only a handful of our kids will grow up and make their living from the game. Most will become managers, attorneys, doctors, insurance agents, moms and dads, and coaches for your grandchildren.

**6) Hold each other accountable:** Parents should agree early in the season on what kind of sideline behavior they want to allow and then hold each parent accountable during games. Some parents carry suckers and when the temptation to scream at the ref arises, they pop in a sucker to help them be reminded to "suck it up."

**7) Referees are doing a very tough job:** I do not know a referee who does not step out on the field with every intention of calling the very best game that they can. If you have never refereed before, you need to try it. Ask your coach if you can ref a scrimmage some time. It is extremely difficult to watch 22 players spread out over 60,000 square feet of grass who are all running in different directions, at different speeds, etc. Yet, if they are doing the best they can, how can we  
*(continued on page 4)*

ask more of them? Also, when we constantly “lobby” for calls, what message does that send our kids? The best way to improve the refereeing is for parents to get certified and become one.

We have such a wonderful opportunity to share in our children’s lives through soccer, to help them learn about the world’s game, to build into them life-affecting lessons about character and values, and be impact parents for them. Of all the world’s top athletes who we read about or hear in TV interviews, when they speak about their childhood experiences in their sports and the impact a parent had on their development, I have never heard one say that when their parents abused the refs, bashed their coaches, or railed on them when they made a mistake, it made them love the game more and they became a better, world-class player. Come on, let’s just be their BEST Fans!

Dan McAllister, DMcall5553@aol.com  
GRASA Director of Coaching

## 2002-2003 Teams / Coaches

### Boys Teams:

U9 – Scot Van Airsdale, Kurt Swardenski  
U10 White – Clark Udell, Todd Vandenberg,  
Doug Bredberg  
U10 Blue – TBD  
U11 – Chris Barlow  
U12 – Scot Van Airsdale, Dave Duiven, Jack Petiet  
U13 – Alberto Chavez  
U14 – Mark Stacy, Evan Dufendach, Gordon Dean  
U15 White – Ken Schulte, Mike Petrusma,  
Bill Lawrence, Randy Sahajdack  
U15 Blue – (will complete with second tryout in winter)  
U16 White – Matt Roberts  
U16 Blue – (will complete with second tryout in winter)  
U17 White – Evan Dufendach  
U17 Blue – Todd VanThomme

### Girls Teams:

U9 – Hamdi Rammal, Jeff Peterson  
U10 White - Chip Bowman, John Sellman, Dave Prouty  
U10 Blue – Tim Wolffis, Drew Flemming  
U11 White – Hamdi Rammal, Kevin Jones,  
Jeff Peterson  
U11 Blue – TBD  
U12 White – Todd Stacy, Tom Hilbert, Rick Huempfer  
U12 Blue – Lawrence Murray, Bernard Bossuah,  
Dan McAllister  
U13 – Sarah Derrico, Ryan Smith, Jason Stob  
U14 – Amy Panse, Meghan Luckett  
U15 – Lawrence Murray  
U17 White – Jerald Zezulka  
U17 Blue – DeAnn Eisele

Two of our coaches had recent employment changes and will not be able to coach this fall. As of this writing, replacements had not yet been named.

## Tournament Tips

The first sign of an approaching tournament is usually the team manager asking for hotel room reservation information. Usually a credit card number is required to hold each room reservation. If reservation cancellation information is not provided, be sure to ask for it. Cancellation policies and deadlines vary greatly by tournament and hotel.

If your family has players on more than one team, decide which team you will stay with, and be sure to notify the other team manager(s) about which team manager is handling your family’s reservation. If you have more than one player on a team, be sure the manager only books one room per family, and not one room per player.

Staying with the team can be a lot of fun, for both players and families, and it is a good way to get to know the other families on the team. However, some families will choose to handle their own accommodations. They may stay with family or friends in the area, or they may opt for more economical choices. If you do this, be sure to let your manager know, and also provide the manager with a phone number where you can be contacted while staying at the tournament.

The GRASA website ([www.eteamz.com/GRASA](http://www.eteamz.com/GRASA)) has a *Tournament News* page which may contain additional tournament information, especially for the club tournaments. This may include team assignments by hotel, links to hotel web pages (for hotel maps and accommodation info), links to tournament web sites, and links to other features of the tournament city or area.

Most tournaments will schedule each team for three bracket games, usually with two games on Saturday and one on Sunday morning. (Sometimes games are scheduled for Friday evening, and generally the more local teams are scheduled into these slots.) The top team in each bracket will generally advance to the semi-final or final games on Sunday afternoon. The game schedules usually become available two or three weeks before the tournament. Some tournaments will post the game schedule on their tournament website as soon as it is available.

The tournament t-shirt has become somewhat of a soccer tradition. These may be ordered in advance, often at a discount. The manager or parent volunteer will consolidate all the player t-shirt orders into a single order which is sent to the tournament. When the manager checks in the team paperwork at the tournament on Friday evening, the pre-ordered t-shirts are given to the manager for distribution to the players who ordered them. The t-shirts may also be purchased at the tournament, but shop early as they sometimes run out of popular sizes.

## On Net

### *Helpful Hints*

The GRASA web site at [www.eteamz.com/GRASA](http://www.eteamz.com/GRASA) has several features to help the soccer family throughout the soccer season. First up, the front page that you see when you first access the web site contains current and timely announcements. Checking these periodically will help keep you informed about events and happenings within GRASA and the local soccer scene.

If that map to the game field doesn't quite make sense (or if you can't find it), check out the Maps folder of the web site. On the left panel, click on the Maps link. You will find an alphabetical listing of the fields at which the GRASA teams play games. For many fields, you will find driving directions telling how to get to the field.

If there is a compass icon shown or a Map quest link, you can click on the compass or the Map quest link to go to a map showing the location of the field. You can zoom in or out to select a map that is scaled for your needs. The map can be printed on your printer. You can select Driving Directions, enter your home address as the starting point, and get turn-by-turn directions from your house to the field.

The GVSA league web site at [www.westmichigansoccer.com/Gvsast.htm](http://www.westmichigansoccer.com/Gvsast.htm) is also a useful resource. (Click on "Clubs, News, Results & Standings" to get to the good stuff.) As soon as the fall game schedule is available, it is posted here. It is usually available in two versions: a division schedule (organized by age group) and a field schedule (organized by field and club).

As the season gets underway, the game results and team standings are posted here also. These are updated weekly, usually about mid-week.

### *Team Web Pages*

Under the GRASA website, each team has a web page. They currently just have a little information on the team (coach and manager names, for example). These team pages are available for use by the teams. Last year, two teams posted game summaries following league games, and a tournament summary following the tournaments. Several teams posted photos, including team photos, game action photos, and snapshots of other team activities.

Contributions to the team page can be handled by a parent, other family members, or by the players themselves. If your team is interested in making use of their web page, please contact the GRASA webmaster, Ken Coviak, at email [Ken.Coviak@attbi.com](mailto:Ken.Coviak@attbi.com) or phone 676-2873 (evenings).

## Departing Board Members

We bid a fond farewell to Mary Boetcher as she is moving to Colorado. She has served on the Board as Field Coordinator for the past year. She has also served as the GRASA representative on the Brewer Park field committee.

John Hall is also stepping down from the Board, although we still expect to see him around the soccer fields. John has been involved with GRASA for many years. In addition to being a coach and a referee, he has served as Try-Out Coordinator for several years, and for the past year has been the Fundraising and Sponsorship Coordinator, as well as the newsletter editor. John's contributions to our club and players have been substantial, and we very much appreciate all that he has done.

## New Board Member

We would like to welcome [back] Mike Petrusma as our new Field Coordinator. Mike has been involved with GRASA for about 10 years. He served as the first Director of Coaching in the "early days". When GVSA and GV Premier were formed, he became the first Director of Coaching for the GV Premier organization. He brings a considerable amount of knowledge and experience to the Board.

## GRASA Board Positions

Our club is dependent upon the work of our volunteers, particularly the Board of Directors. We have a very dedicated and fun-loving board, and we are now looking for a few new members. If you have a love of the game, a big heart, and a dedication to our kids, please consider joining our board. No previous experience is required.

Currently, we are looking for someone to be our Treasurer, our Tryout Coordinator, and our Fundraising/Sponsorship Coordinator. Our new Treasurer would start this September. Our current treasurer will be available to give advice and guidance as needed. We would like to get our Tryout Coordinator in place anytime to give them plenty of time to be ready for our tryouts next spring. We have the procedures and paperwork in place, so you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

This board works together on almost all issues, and we give each other a lot of support. It is a very rewarding and fulfilling experience.

We ask you to give it your heartfelt thought, and if you have any questions or are at all interested, please contact Laurie Wilson at 245-6973.



PO Box 232  
Ada, MI 49301

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ADA, MI  
PERMIT NO. 163

## To Our Friends:

### Current GRASA Board:

Member:	Position:	Age Group Representative:	E-mail Address:	Phone:
Laurie Wilson	President	U9	LWW920@attbi.com	245-6973
Sheila Schlosser	Secretary	U11	schl89@aol.com	
Paul Clemens	Treasurer	U15	Paul.Clemens@53.com	575-0515
Linda Sellman	Boys Registrar		sellmansix@attbi.com	956-8016
Laura Bowman	Girls Registrar		Cbls03@aol.com	
Dan McAllister	Director of Coaching		DMcall5553@aol.com	897-0039
John Corbett	Referee Coordinator	U14	JSCsails@aol.com	245-4858
Claudia Judson	Manager Coordinator	U16 & U17	ClaudiaJudson5@attbi.com	
Ken Coviak	Communications	U10	Ken.Coviak@attbi.com	676-2873
Mike Bart	Equipment Coordinator	U13	pmsbart@attbi.com	
Mary Brandon	Tournament Coordinator	U12	maryb@asrcorp.com	
Mike Petrusma	Field Coordinator			942-2218
(open)	Fundraising Coordinator			
(open)	Try-Out Coordinator			

GRASA Website: [www.eteamz.com/GRASA](http://www.eteamz.com/GRASA)