

## Recreation State Cup Committee

Jan. 23, 2007

Greensboro, N.C.

**Committee Members:** Ali Bahmanyar, Old Providence Soccer Association, Mike Baptiste, Mebane Youth Soccer Association; Andre Burger, NCYSA VP of Tournaments; Roy Crunkleton, Monroe Soccer Association; Tim Hopkin, Hendersonville Soccer Association; Chris Little, NCYSA Director of Coaching Education; Tara Richardson, Cape Fear Youth Soccer Association; Ian Spooner, Greensboro Youth Soccer; Shane Weems, Asheville-Buncombe Youth Soccer; Ed Yarboro, Greater Cleveland County Soccer Association; Tim Nash, NCYSA Assistant Director Recreation.

The Recreation State Cup Committee was charged with debating the future of the Rec State Cup and making a recommendation to the Recreation Council. The Committee met for two hours and discussed the pros and cons of the current Rec Cup, as well as the pros and cons of the Festival format that is being used in District 5 (mountain area) and at the Classic level of U11s and U12s.

### **The Committee came to the following conclusion:**

1. Regional or District Festivals should be implemented for Recreation teams U12 and below. These festivals would be played in the fall and/or spring.
  - a. District Festival would utilize round-robin schedules where each team is guaranteed three games. Accompanying the games would be player and coaching clinics, and other fun activities for the kids. NCYSA will facilitate the organization of the District Festivals and award gifts (i.e. medals) to all participants.
2. Regional State Cup Qualifying Tournaments should be held for ages U13 and older with the winners advancing to the Championship Weekend.
  - a. Regional State Cup Qualifying could be played in conjunction with the District Festivals. Age group winners will advance to Championship weekend the following weekend, which still allows the possibility that teams will only have to travel one weekend.
  - b. The exact format and advancement criteria needs more discussion
  - c. More work needs to be done on the Districts first.

### **Discussion Notes**

- **Shane Weems** of ABYSA noted that they have hosted District 5 Festivals for the past two years – spring and fall. This past fall, 52 teams participated. All were from within a 45-minute driving range. They also try to group games in one-half of the day to leave time for clinics and other fun stuff and not take up the families' whole day.
- **Chris Little** said that his stance is that there should be no competitive (elimination bracket) tournaments for kids Under-12. He is in favor of competitive tournaments at older ages. He said it is the responsibility of the state to come up with programming options.
- **Ian Spooner** said that kids are put under pressure from the parents/adults and that the majority of the kids go away disappointed. The games will be naturally competitive. He added that there should be no state-sponsored Festival for U8 and below.
- **Ed Yarboro** suggested that we try Festivals but not get rid of the Rec Cup. Try both at the same time. He said the Rec Cup offers Rec teams a chance to see what other rec programs are like and exposes kids to the next level. He feels the current Rec Cup has a lot of positives and should remain.

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- **Roy Crunkleton** said he is in favor of Festival type tournaments but agreed with Ed Yarboro and thinks the Rec Cup still has a place. He said that kids want a competitive tournament.
- **Ali Bahmanyar** said that we should be concerned with fostering a passion for the sport in the kids, not focusing on the competitive parts of soccer. Rec has totally lost sight of the value of the players. He wants to promote player and coach education at all levels, especially the Rec level.
- **Mike Baptiste** said that his team had a blast at the Rec Cup and did not see the competitive environment as a negative. He said it added a lot to the experience the kids had. He said that part of the appeal to the kids was to play in a state championship and worries that taking away the competitive nature of the Rec Cup might not be in the best interest of the kids.
- **Tara Richardson** agrees that there shouldn't be a tournament that crowns champions at ages U12 and below and that a Festival atmosphere better suits the majority of recreation soccer players.
- **Tim Hopkin** pointed out that a community/count-wide Festival in Massachusetts allowed non-registered teams to enter as a way of promoting soccer in the community and that NCYSA should explore a similar arrangement. He added that the true Rec player might not be interested in the next level.
- **Andre Burger** pointed out that there will be an estimated 47,000 registered rec players in the state and roughly 750 of them participated in the Rec Cup. Suggested that we aim for Spring 2008 for the first District Festival.
- **Tim Nash** said that based on the participation numbers, NCYSA is not offering its Rec members a product that they enjoy or take advantage of. So, the product should change.