

Minutes of OSS Board Meeting, February 15th 2011

Note: The next Board Meeting will be held Tuesday, March 8th, 2011 7:30-9:00pm @ Cold spring Community Center.

Attendees:

John Montanaro, John May, Chris Runci, Russ Tellier, Jen Gallagher, Keb Brackenbury, Pat Corso, Bill Gallagher, Rosemary Stitt, Jeff Boldt, John Resendes, Ric Thornton, Frank Overly, Pete Andrews, Deb Caramante, Phil Beati, Lisa Beati, Byron Lind

- Meeting began at 7.37pm
- Minutes from the January board meeting were passed.

President's Report

- John Montanaro had recently participated in a Superliga Webinar that was attended by many associations – it was a very successful event and raises the possibility that OSS could also start implementing web meetings as a way of both increasing participation and being more flexible/accessible to existing board members and volunteers.
- The scholarship application is to be posted on the OSS website. In addition, John Montanaro will send out the application to NK HS and will also send it out via a mass-email to all players to apply.
- There have been various problems with the Stony Lane gym which have meant repeated practices have had to be cancelled.
- Spring Sign Up for Rec - Fliers have gone out to all of the NK elementary schools as well a to various local day-cares, preschools and other children's sports facilities (a total of 2800 have been distributed). Additionally, ads for sign-up were in both of the NK Standard Times and the North East Independent for each of the 4 publications in February.
- John May will get the summer camp flier out and will also post it on the OSS web-site.
- Uniforms – Pat Corso and Chris Runci will explore alternate retail avenues to existing source.
- A few emails from parents have been received recently – mostly related to player registration with one vigorously complaining about the above referenced gym problems at Stony Lane.
- A number of board positions remain vacant and need to be filled – another mass email will be sent out soliciting interested parties.
- Meanwhile though, the on-line store is going well.
- OSS has been contacted regarding a senior project with the senior involved wants to undertake a project connecting volunteers to the community. John will send out the related correspondence to the board.

Registration report

- To date there are 333 competitive registrations for spring (equating to around 28 teams) and 136 for recreation.

Treasurer's report

- Still some problems with the GotSoccer data base related to which Jen is working with Jeff to resolve. Meanwhile though, net income was \$26k through January and the financial position is good.

Members' Comments

- 1 - Byron Lind, a U14 coach, spoke about his concern that a lot of talent has recently left OSS to play premier elsewhere. Byron feels he has a lot of talent to offer but results are impeded by the mixed abilities of the team - some of the players are more "rec-like" in abilities, have trouble with basic skills such as passing and don't even seem interested in playing competitively. Therefore before rosters are set for the spring season Byron proposes taking the best talent from both U13 & 14 to make a more competitive team. He voiced the view that OSS has to have a program focused on making players feel that they can win championships; the current problem is that teams are diluted since the best players are disbursed across teams as opposed to be being concentrated in one "super" team – without a more skill-based approach to how the better players are placed, the outflow from OSS will not be stemmed. Byron also commented that doesn't want to teach rec-level soccer to a competitive team and that he has a problem understanding how the results of try-outs work should weigh heavier than individual coaches' knowledge of each player following a full season of play – therefore urges that more discretion should be given to the coaches vis-à-vis placement. Finally, Byron also commented that for higher level teams, coaches have to have a commensurate level of experience. Chris Runci commented that for the team that Byron currently coaches, age purity was the first factor since there were not a lot of players to start with. Chris also stressed that in addition to SRI input, coaches' inputs is taken into account vis-à-vis placements. John Montanaro added that next year we need to get more input from coaches in the group but meanwhile, OSS is reviewing coaches' training. Moreover, we now have a new Director of Technical Training and are looking at short-courses and training programs with which to enhance skills. In short, we're taking the right steps and in terms of team selection are getting coaches' input in addition to considering independent evaluations. Ric Thornton added that the reason for some of the defections from OSS was due to the three-town rule. Ric also suggested that maybe two coaches could share a practice as a way to elevating the level of the game and skills practiced.
- 2 - Byron Lind also requested OSS look to promote recycling of plastic bottles since they're currently thrown away as trash and this is clearly at odds with the importance of recycling that we try to teach to kids. Advised that the Rhode Island Resource Recovery can provide large blue bins which they'll also come to collect.

➤ *Rosemary to follow-up.*

3 - Frank Overly, the parent of a U12 competitive player proposed creating a special program for premier potential players in order to keep them at OSS and playing together. Commented that the attractions of premier include good coaching; regular practices and a core of kids who play well together – if we build the same and promote the same level of soccer experience at OSS, we could even attract kids back who've left to go to play on premier teams.

4 - Deb Caramante spoke about her son who recently did not get selected for the U15 team (although meanwhile there are some U14 players on the team). Stated that she wants to see rankings of all children on team and wants to see approval for U14 players playing up. Also said that the feedback from both coaches was that the 2 kids cut from the team were not up to playing on the team. Continued that her son had previously played for OSS for 7 years during which time he'd gone to every practice, played in every game and meanwhile was captain of 8th grade school team, has played 3 years of middle school soccer and is also a referee for OSS. Also added that every other player given a place on the OSS team currently plays on the same JV team as Deb Caramante's son. Chris Runci stated that he'd been trying to resolve this issue since November and had come up with 3 plans, none of which involved cutting a player, however each was rejected by the coaches. Given all of this he questioned what else he could reasonably do. Added that SRI doesn't give feedback on this age level and therefore the selection was based on the coaches' feedback and try-outs. Potentially we should consider getting SRI to evaluate this age level for future purposes. Also added that within 24 hours of notifications being sent out about placement, he had spoken with Deb Caramante, as well as to the family of the other player who didn't make the team. (John Montanaro had to leave mid-way through the discussion of this issue).

➤ *Keb and Chris will talk to Anton and will target getting back to Deb by Thursday, 2/17.*

5 - Phil and Lisa Beati, the parents of a U10 competitive player discussed the team placement for their son (and referenced that conversations had previously taken place with John Montanaro, John Roy and Chris). After try-outs their son was ranked near the bottom of the 55 U10 players although relative to the other players on the team he'd played on in 2010, he was easily within the top 4. Meanwhile, the player who was only the 12th ranked player from the same 2010 team was ranked 4th out of the field of 55 following the try-outs and made the A team (both boys share the same first name, which the Beatis believe have led to confusion at try-outs, possibly either on the part of the observers or on the sign-up sheet if the names were inadvertently switched). Given their son's low ranking after try-outs, he is currently on the C team which includes many less able players – the Beatis stated they feel there's no consistency in OSS. John May stressed that this was not Chris' fault and that John Roy hadn't had time to do an independent evaluation of the U10s; also suggested that the boy should come to a few practices to see if he makes the cut for the A team. (Chris Runci had to leave during the discussion of this issue).

➤ *Keb proposed getting John and Chris together to come up with a resolution plan.*

Reports

John Resendes - DTT

- Clinics will be held at West Warwick Civic Center on March 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th from 1-2.30pm for U8s-U10s, both rec. and competitive (co-ed). Mike Needham from URI will run 3 of the 4 sessions and John or Kyle run the 4th. Cost is \$40 for the 4 sessions. Maximum headcount is 20 with a minimum of 10 needed. The next clinic will cover keeper training. Tom Miller raised the need to get all coaches to all sessions since this enables them to learn without having the deal with the distraction of supervising the kids. It may be necessary to give the coaches a gift card or golf shirt (for example) in order to encourage attendance.
- Has spoken to John O'Conner, a coach at URI about the potential for establishing a link to the men and women's soccer program at URI with the intent of getting OSS players out to URI games, get them excited about the game etc.
- Another idea is to rent space at URI and open it up both to OSS and other teams.
- Hoping to do something pre-season for the kids – additional camps, perhaps a captains practices that we win

Rules committee – nothing to report

Concessions stand – aim to get more involvement from parents

Summer camp – no need for a half day program any more. Flier now approved and will get printed for distribution.

Development – nothing to report (Craig could not be present).

Referee report – 77 referees are signed up so we're in good shape despite having lost a few kids who have gone to college kids. Will run a certification class in July. The age for refs is now 14.

Operations – nothing to report. Alarm went off (a false alarm) a couple of weekends ago. Perhaps we should think about ending the alarm contract.

On line store – 7 items sold recently. Will increase inventory and set-up a table for the start of spring games (sweat-shirts should be a good seller).