

## Annual Reports

1/5/14

### **President's Report** **Submitted by HERRIKA STEVENSON**

2013 has been a year of ups and downs for the Harvard Soccer Club (HSC). During the late spring and early summer we had a change of leadership after the former Presidents moved out of town and stepped down for personal reasons. Leadership was static until November when Peter Foley joined the board as our new Treasurer. We have a new Travel Director and have given the role of NVYSL meeting representative to the President.

I have spent much of my time as President becoming trying to become more familiar with the workings of the board. I have been working on collecting updated job descriptions from all members of the board. I am working on updating the HSC Constitution so our practices and Constitution align. I hope in the next year to make sure the HSC Handbook and the Constitution align and to update the Handbook to current practices.

The Spring 2013 season saw us field 22 teams for travel within the NVYL. This included two teams each at U14 girls and boys. In-Town also 22 teams. We sent three teams to post season tournaments and those teams met with various success. This Fall we fielded 22 teams for In-town and 16 for travel within NVYSL. We continue to work on placing the teams in the best flight possible as well as working on the process that places children on teams. Challenger returned for another successful year and helped with the Spring jamboree. The schedule continues to be a work in progress for Challenger so we can get them as much access to as many kids as possible over the course of the season.

The Club has been exploring some fundraising activities and are looking into developing an online store to sell sweatshirts, hats, and other attire with the HSC logo on it. HSC has organized attendance at two NE Revolution games to great success. We had about 30 people attend a game last Spring and this Fall about 50 attended the New England Revolution's last home game. A number of HSC members also attended the Revolution's first round playoff game.

As the club moves forward we are continuing to try and create opportunities for our members. We will provide more opportunities to attend NE Revolution games both in the Spring and the Fall. We hope to start recognizing the efforts of some of our long term coaches and start tracking our coaches so we can make sure they start to get the recognition they deserve. We are exploring the possibility of hosting a Club event in the Spring with team and individual photos, some representatives of the NE Revolution, food and fun. We are also exploring hosting game watching event for the USA World Cup games.

## **Player and Coach Development, Spring and Fall Seasons, 2013** **Submitted by Steve Stecyk**

During 2013 the club continued with our successful player and coach development programs, making minor changes to better address the needs of our players and coaches. We continued our contract with Challenger Sports who provided two resident full time coaches and two part time coaches in the spring. The two resident Challenger coaches in the spring were Tom Wiffen, and Daniel Boyd. In the spring Tom Wiffen returned and was joined by Niahm Quilligan. The challenger coaches provided training for players and coaches, U6 thru U14. Through the generous hospitality of local families who opened up their homes to the Challenger coaches, Tom, Daniel, and Niahm, became very integrated into the Harvard community and attended many community and school functions. We received positive parent and HSC coach feedback on all of the Challenger coaches.

### **Spring Tournament Season Successes**

In the spring the club had three teams advance to post season MTOC and NCUP tournament play.

#### **GU14A – NCUP Champions**

The GU14A team was coached during the season by Natalie Andrew. Natalie did not stay full time in Harvard, but ran 2-practices each week and attended the Saturday games. During the NCUP Tournament the Harvard Girls were coached by Marisa Steele and John Aney and the team captured the championship title.

#### **BU14A – MTOC-2 Finalist**

The BU14A team was coached by Tom Wiffen and Peter Wharton. The boys advanced to the final championship game. They did not win, but set a new record of being the first Harvard and NVYSL team to advance to an MTOC final game.

#### **BU18 – MTOC**

The BU18 team was coached by Nathaniel Adelson and Karl Schwiegershausen. The boys had a 1-1-1 tournament record and came up short from advancing to the semi-finals.

### **Coaching Curriculums**

In 2013 the club continued to follow our club developed age appropriate curriculums for our U6 – U12 teams. These curriculums modeled after the US Youth Soccer guidelines clearly present the development goals of the club for each of our age groups along with expectations that coaches should have. Included in the curriculums is suggested practice sessions that focused on key developmental areas. These practice sessions were updated this year based on feedback from our town coaches and the Challenger Coaches during the last season.

## Annual Reports

1/5/14

### **In-Town Program (U6 boys and girls combined)**

Prior to each of the spring and fall seasons, meetings were held to prepare the parent coaches for the upcoming season. The curriculums were distributed and the coaches were introduced to the appropriate training focus for U6 children.

At this age the aim is to give children a good physical and social foundation to start soccer skill training. The emphasis of the coaching is to improve the child's basic movements.

#### **Motor Skills**

The emphasis is to give children versatile experiences of basic motor skills and combinations. These are divided to three groups: motor skills of movement, motor skills of movement and balance and motor skills of handling a ball.

<b>Skills of movement</b>	<b>Skills of Skills of Movement and Balance</b>	<b>Skills of Handling a ball</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walking</li><li>• Running</li><li>• Jumping</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standing</li><li>• Sitting</li><li>• Rotation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dribbling a ball</li><li>• Kicking a ball</li></ul>

#### **Social and psychological development**

When coaching children we are aware of their psychological and social development as part of the child's overall development. The coaching approach is focused on creating a child who is motivated, confident, and has a positive attitude towards soccer.

The U6 program combined practices and small sided fun games into one Saturday morning session at the Depot Road Fields. From 7:30 – 8:00am Saturday morning, the Challenger coaches met with the town team coaches to run through the drills and activities for the day. From 8:00 - 9:00am the team coaches, with oversight of the Challenger coaches, ran a short team practice session followed by small sided games. No scores are kept and all players are given as equal playing time as possible. The overall goal is to provide the boys and girls as many touches on the ball as possible.

### **In-Town Program (U7/U8 girls combined, U7 boys, U8 boys)**

The U7/U8 coaches also attended the preseason coaches' meeting to review the U7/U8 curriculum and development plan

The focus of the U7/U8 program is on skill development. There are four core skills that we address:

- Skill 1 - First Touch
- Skill 2 - Control
- Skill 3 - Passing & Moving
- Skill 4 - Dribbling & Turning

Each U7/U8 team had one weekday practice session with the Challenger coaches. Multiple teams practiced together along with the coaches from those teams. The boys and girls teams' attended the

## Annual Reports

1/5/14

same practice session. In the fall we arranged the schedule so that both Daniel and Tom were present at the practice session. This provided a better coach to player ratio and assured all players received a high amount of coach interaction. The general structure was for the Challenger coaches to call the players and coaches together and demonstrate a drill or activity, and then for the coaches to break away and run the drill while the Challenger coaches observed and provided assistance. The U7/U8 games were intra Harvard games taking place on Saturday morning starting at either 8:00am or 9:15am at Depot Road Fields.

### **Travel Program (U10-U14+)**

Prior to the season the travel teams held a coaches meeting separate from the U6-U8 meetings. During the meetings, coach and player expectations were reviewed and curriculums were distributed. Agendas and topics discussed are available on the club website.

The U10 and U12 teams each scheduled two practices during the week and games were played on Saturday. Of the two practices, one practice was a joint practice with other teams, lead by one of the Challenger coaches, and the other practice was left to be scheduled and run by the team coaches.

### **U12 Travel Team Game Day Assistance**

On game day Saturday, the Challenger coaches attended as many games as they could. The Challenger Coaches provided game assessments to the HSC coaches, during the half time and after the game. Feedback was well received by our town coaches and everyone felt the feedback and discussion was constructive and helpful.

### **U14 Travel Teams**

For our U14 teams, the club arranged to have each team staffed with a head coach from Challenger. The teams also had dedicated parent assistant coaches and team managers. In the spring we arranged for a Challenger to lead both the GU14A team (Natalie Andrews) and GU14B team (Luke Loveitt). This was the second season that we had a professional women coach lead our older girls' team. The feedback was very positive from both the players and the parents. In the fall we fielded one GU14 team which was led by Challenger Coach Niahm Quilligan

In the spring, the BU14 teams also received coaching from Challenger. The BU14A team was coached by Tom Wiffen, and the BU14B team was coached by Daniel Boyd (Challenger). In the fall, Tom Wiffen also coached the Boys A-team.

### **Special Player Clinics**

In the both the spring and fall seasons we conducted a weekly functional clinics targeted for each of the travel team age groups and genders (i.e. GU10, GU12, BU10, BU12) . The clinics, run by the Challenger coaches, focused on skills required by forward and skills required by defenders.

### **In-Town Mass Youth Soccer Certification Training**

On October 6th the club hosted a MYSA G-Course Coaching Clinic. The four hour course was attended by 16 coaches (14 from Harvard) . The feedback was extremely positive from all who

## Annual Reports

1/5/14

attended. Each attendee was required to pay \$35 to attend, however the club reimbursed all Harvard Soccer Club Coaches.

### **Access to Challenger On-Line Coaching Material**

By special arrangement with Challenger Sports, all of the HSC coaches have free access to the Challenger Way Soccer Website. The site provides practice activities and coaching tips with detailed diagrams and videos. <https://thechallengerway.com>

All materials from the clinics and coaches meetings are accessible on the Harvard Soccer Club Website – Coaches Corner link.

### **Spring Jamboree/Try-Outs for U10 and U12 Team Placement**

In the spring we stayed with the new format that was introduced in 2010 for the U10 and U12 Jamboree. Challenger provided 10-11 coaches to server as evaluators.

### **Hosting of In-Town April Vacation and Summer Soccer Camps**

This past year we hosted two soccer camps run by Challenger Sports. In April and August, Challenger ran a week long soccer camps. The camps offered full-day and half-day participation and were open to Harvard and non-Harvard residents. Both camps provided very good coaching and skill development for U6 – U12 players in a fun and challenging environment. The August camp was particularly popular attracting ~100 players of all ages.

### **Advanced Player Development (ADP) Training Sessions**

In both the spring and the fall in addition to the In-Town soccer program HSC organized a program to provide additional training opportunities for our youngest soccer players (boys and girls in the U6-U8 age groups). The primary focus of the program was technical development using a structured development curriculum that follows the guidelines established by the US Youth Soccer Association and the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association. The Advanced Development Program (ADP) provided an opportunity for our young players to attain a higher level of skills. The ADP was open to all Harvard boys and girls. The program was 7-weeks and met every Sunday. There was a charge of \$10/session. The program was overseen and coordinated by the Harvard Soccer Club. The trainers for the program were our resident Challenger Coaches.

### **National Soccer Conferences**

The club's Coordinator of Coach and Player Development, Steve Stecyk , attended the annual NSCAA (National Soccer Coaches Association of America) National Conference in Indianapolis, IN. Educational sessions at the Convention focused on innovative and new techniques and training plans designed to help coaches elevate their teams. The class room and lecture sessions discussed club standards and running clubs with primarily volunteers.

### **Overall Assessment and Areas of Improvement**

Partnering with Challenger Sports continues to be a positive experience for the HSC coaching staff. The club's success at the MTOC and NCUP tournaments and the large player participation at the older (U14+) age groups provided strong evidence that our club is keeping our youth players excited and interested in playing soccer. This is even further evidenced in the strong turn-out of players at the

## Annual Reports

1/5/14

middle school and high school. Record numbers of players participated at the middle school, freshman, JV and varsity levels this fall.

The coach development focus remains on furthering the education of our volunteer coaches. A strong emphasis will be on age appropriate expectations and training methods. The club will continue to offer certification training as well as club conducted clinics.

Player development in our younger age groups will continue to focus on maximizing touches on the ball in a fun and exciting environment. In the older age groups we intend to emphasize keeping the game fun and challenging. We want to not only give extra attention to the less skilled, developing players, but also provide a play-up path for players who have achieved early skills and ability.

The club is always looking for feedback from our member families. Our goal is to provide a positive soccer skill building experience for all players. Everyone's opinions and suggestions are important.

### **In-Town Annual Report Submitted by Andrew Thomas**

#### **In-Town Program**

For the 2013 year, In-town enrollment remained roughly flat year over year, with a decrease in spring numbers and an increase in fall numbers as grades and age groups transitioned. Additional marketing efforts focused on the U6 entry level seemed to pay off. Flyers and word of mouth efforts in kindergarten and various preschools, as well as sandwich board signage on the Common were used. Though there is a general decline in school population, soccer enrollment remains strong.

<i>Season</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>
<b>Spring</b>	161	157
<b>Fall</b>	147	172

Volunteerism remains high, with adequate support from parents to provide coach and assistant coverage for all teams. There were 46 volunteers overall; 22 volunteers supporting U6, 12 in U7 and 12 in U8.

#### **U6 boys and girls combined**

Registration numbers for the year were as follows:

## Annual Reports

1/5/14

<i>Season</i>	<i>Players</i>
<b>Spring</b>	77
<b>Fall</b>	73

Prior to each season a Written Development Program was distributed to the coaches and a coaches meeting was held. During the meeting the Challenger coaches outlined the goal of the U6 program.

At this age the aim is to give children a good physical and social foundation to start soccer skill training. The emphasis of the coaching is to improve the child's basic movements.

### **Motor Skills**

The emphasis is to give children versatile experiences of basic motor skills and combinations. These are divided to three groups: motor skills of movement, motor skills of movement and balance and motor skills of handling a ball.

#### **Skills of movement**

- Walking
- Running
- Jumping

#### **Skills of Skills of Movement and Balance**

- Standing
- Sitting
- Rotation

#### **Skills of Handling a ball**

- Dribbling a ball
- Kicking a ball

### **Social and psychological development**

When coaching children we are aware of their psychological and social development as part of the child's overall development. The coaching is focused on creating a child who is motivated, confident, and has a positive attitude towards soccer.

The U6 program combined practices and small sided fun games into one Saturday morning session at the Depot Road Fields. From 7:30 – 8:00am Saturday morning, the Challenger coaches met with the town team coaches to run through the drills and activities for the day. The Club experimented with starting this at 7:45 am in the Spring, however it was determined after the season that the full 30 minutes session for coaches was more productive, with an emphasis placed on timeliness of the Challenger coaches and engagement from the volunteers. From 8:00 - 9:00am the team coaches, with oversight of the Challenger coaches, ran a short team practice session followed by small sided games. No scores are kept and all players are given equal playing time.

Building off its experience in 2012, the club took strides to increase the number of touches that U6 players obtain during game sessions with the above goals in mind. Team sizes were targeted to 6-7 players, which worked well.

### **U7/U8 boys and girls combined**

Registration numbers for the year were as follows:

Annual Reports

1/5/14

<i>Season</i>	<i>U7</i>	<i>U8</i>
<b>Spring</b>	48	32
<b>Fall</b>	46	53

Prior to each season the U7/U8 coaches were also invited to attend the coaches meeting to review the U7/U8 Development Plan and goals for this age group.

The focus of the U7/U8 program is on skill development. There are four core skills that we address:

- Skill 1 - First Touch
- Skill 2 - Control
- Skill 3 - Passing & Moving
- Skill 4 - Dribbling & Turning

Each week the Challenger coaches worked with the players and coaches by following the written Skill Development Program.

The U7/U8 program consisted of one weekday practice session and Saturday morning games starting at either 8:00am or 9:15am at Depot Road Fields. The academy format for practice was continued for the second year in a row. Challenger coaches would instruct the large group on a series of activities, one by one, and subsequently each of the teams would “retreat” to their own practice area to conduct the activity. After the activity was complete, the next in the series would be reviewed by Challenger centrally again, whereupon the teams would again divide up and conduct the activity. The Challenger coaches would then circulate to provide 1:1 assistance to the teams.

After two full years of this format, we have concluded that while it keeps the kids engaged and enjoying the activities, developmentally there is too large of a gap between U7 and U8 to keep them combined. In 2014, we’ll split the age groups and focus on skills development at an age group level.

The shift to a 4v4 format without goalies remains positive in U7, emphasizing shooting and avoiding specialization towards goalies.

U8 remained in a 5 v 5 format with larger goals and goalies, as the children are prepared to transition to the travel program.

**2013 Referee Report  
Submitted by Austin Franklin**

24 Harvard referees total

6 new referees for 2013

Most U10 games had Referee Advisors, or certified Mentors attend. The referees found this to be very useful.

No instances either in Spring or Fall to report.

We had three U7 games, two U8 games, three or four U10 games, two U12 games and an average of one U14 game each weekend for the Fall season. All games were covered. One U10 game had a late show (went to wrong field) that was handled by another referee until the assigned referee arrived.

**2013 Field Report  
Submitted by Austin Franklin**

There were no field closures/reschedules for the Fall of 2013.

New 11v11 nets were put on Harvard Park goals.

Due to having six 11v11 teams for the Spring 2013 season, we attempted to use Lower Harvard Park field for practices, but the field was undesirable as it was typically wet and quite lumpy. Practices were shifted to other fields as available.

Only field incident was an unused 11v11 goal near the technical touchline of the 8v8 field on Upper Depot fell over during a game and injured an opponent's team coach. Town coaches were instructed to check any unused equipment near the field and make sure the equipment is safe. Only the goals used during a game are the responsibility of the referees to check.

Harvard Park drains were inspected, and not found to be an issue. The field was aerated and there was no issue with the field being soggy during the Fall season. Whether this

## Annual Reports

1/5/14

actually solved the issue can not be determined until more time has passed, as the Fall season was quite dry.

The 8v8 field on Waite was place on the far side parallel to Lancaster County Road for the Fall season. This worked out quite well.

All U10 games were on Waite, due to the number of U10 teams Harvard had for this season.

We are in good standing with respect to number and condition of goals and nets. We may need some new parts to repair corner flags this coming season. Six new 6v6 nets were purchased in 2013. There are approximately four 6v6 nets that are to be returned to KwikGoal for warranty replacement. A new package of sandbags needs to be purchased for the Spring season.

## **Annual Equipment Report Submitted by Keith Bilafer**

In the Spring of 2013, we supplied equipment to 44 teams and 38 in the Fall of 2013 while spending around \$2,300. Each year, the club loses approximately 50% of the balls. And, as we attempt to provide every player and coach a ball, each season, this means purchasing about 250 new balls a year. Goalie gloves, goalie shirts and pinnies wear out less frequently and thus are purchased only when needed.