

PCJSL Newsletter



From the President | Ted Schmidt

Dear PCJSL Families,

These are exciting times to be a part of Pima County Junior Soccer League. We continue to lead the state and country in small sided play for the younger kids, improving spectator, player and coach behavior with Respect the Game and now in injury prevention. I am pleased to announce our new major sponsor in the CACTIS Foundation (<http://www.cactisfoundation.org/>). Dr. Hirsch Handmaker the CEO of CACTIS will lead the way in educating our players and parents regarding baseline concussion testing and injury prevention (see his article in this newsletter below). CACTIS will also provide that testing for our PCJSL players. Additionally, the support provided by the CACTIS Foundation will allow us to improve all our programs and increase our scholarship support for deserving players.

I am also excited to introduce you to PCJSL's first professional staff member—Chris Keeney. Chris will take our league to the next level in providing service to our families. At the top of Chris' list will be the recruitment of new players into PCJSL. We are on a mission to get Tucson kids off the couch and outside to play. Towards that end, in partnership with the CACTIS Foundation we will hold a major community wide introduction to soccer the first of the year. This event will include booths for every PCJSL club, maps to show where the clubs practice, clinics, demonstrations and a 4 v 4 tournament. The major theme of this event will be physical fitness and injury prevention. CACTIS will play a major role in this program educating and demonstrating how Baseline Concussion Testing is performed and why it is important.

I hope you will take the time to peruse this issue of our Newsletter. You will find very important information concerning the new PCJSL game scheduling policies, Respect the Game and much more.

Here is wishing you a fun, healthy and successful season with PCJSL.

Yours in soccer,
Ted Schmidt

Save the Date!

PCJSL Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 8th at 6pm
AKS Kickin' It Clubhouse

AYSA Meeting

Sunday, September 20th at 9am
AKS Kickin' It Clubhouse

[View the full PCJSL calendar
online here.](#)

CHRIS KEENEY JOINS PCJSL STAFF AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chris Keeney joins PCJSL as the new executive director after nearly twenty years in the business side of professional soccer including career stops with D.C. United, Real Salt Lake, and the Columbus Crew. Following his time in MLS, Chris was General Manager of Special Events for the Houston Texans and hosted Gold Cup matches featuring Mexico and Manchester United vs. MLS All-Stars. He was part-owner in FC Tucson for several years and also had a very brief stint with Arizona United. Chris' daughter, Alex, is a rising senior who plays for Steve Wallace at CDO and Sean Watkins (TSA) at Ironwood Ridge High School. Chris will focus his time and expertise to raise our brand awareness, attract more players to our member clubs, identify corporate partners, oversee the new scheduling process, head up our website and newsletter and develop new events to maximize the value, experience and ROI for the soccer community we proudly serve.



PCJSL League Registration Fee Announcement

The Pima County Junior Soccer League has implemented a league registration fee beginning with the upcoming 2015-2016 season. This is just one of the improvements being made this year to enable a better PCJSL youth soccer experience.

There are a number of reasons why the PCJSL board and the club presidents felt this was necessary; the most significant of which is to improve upon match schedules and eliminate so many of the schedule updates and schedule changes which have existed in previous seasons. The addition of a league registration fee ensures a greater level of commitment from teams and clubs as they complete the registration process, and reduces the risk that a team will withdraw its registration causing countless hours of schedule rework and delays in a finalized schedule being completed, published and available to all players and their families.

Here are the PCJSL league registration fees for the 2015-2016 season:

U11-U19: \$150/team

U9-U10: \$75/team

If you haven't already, you will be hearing more about additional PCJSL rule updates and league enhancements geared to improve your Tucson youth soccer experience.

When the team/club pays the \$150 or \$75 fee, include it in the club accounting in "registration paid to PCJSL". When/if the fee is refunded by PCJSL, simply deduct from the same account. No need to set up a separate line item.

1. Credit amount from bank account when paid to PCJSL
2. Debit amount as PCJSL registration fees

If a business issues the original check and does not want it repaid, the clubs will report it as Sponsor Income when refunded by PCJSL.

1. Debit cash in back for amount refunded by PCJSL
2. Credit sponsor income, noting the name and address of the donor

If you have any questions about how your team or your club will handle the new PCJSL league registration fee, please work with your club and/or your club registrar.

Upcoming Referee Grade 8 Classes



PCJSL in conjunction with the Arizona State Referee Administration (ASRA) will conduct Grade 8 Referee Classes at the Patrick Hardesty Midtown Police Service Center at 1100 S. Alvernon on the upcoming dates and times.

Sunday, August 30 from 8am until 5:30pm

Sunday, October 4 from 8am until 5:30pm

Sunday, November 15 from 8am until 5:30pm

Sunday, December 6 from 8am until 5:30pm

PCJSL is inviting individual clubs to "sponsor" one of the Grade 8 referee classes with the primary responsibility of promoting the class they sponsor within their club

and securing attendance by as many of their players, coaches, and parents as feasible. Two clubs have already stepped forward to sponsor classes. TSA is sponsoring the August 8 class and FC Sonora is sponsoring the October 4 class. Please select a date for your club and help us continue the great strides we are making to increase our referee pool. Any questions should be directed to the PCJSL Referee Commissioner, Larry Luckett.



...on the sidelines!

PCJSL Respect the Game Program Update

A number of important developments highlight this report on the first year of PCJSL's Respect the Game program. Overall, coaches did an excellent job of completing their post-game "rate-a-ref" reports, providing assignors and the referee commissioner with useful feedback on referee performances. Nearly 100 youth soccer matches were observed by 19 mentors and these observations were invaluable to both beginning and experienced referees. On June 6, ten of Southern Arizona top referees were recognized at halftime of the Women's Premier Soccer League match between FC Tucson Women and Phoenix Del Sol at Kino Stadium.

The impact of this program can already be seen in several areas. The number of red cards issued in 2014-15 dropped to 40, a significant decline from the previous year. Furthermore, AYSA has been so impressed with the early success of this program they are adopting it statewide.



Charlie MacCabe
Respect the Game
Committee Member

We welcomed in 149 new referees over the last year and a slate of six referee classes are planned for this fall. The next class will be on Saturday, August 8 at the Patrick Hardesty Police Substation at 1100 S. Alvernon. Registration information for all classes is available at azref.com. Please encourage interested parties to sign up! The minimum age is 12 years old.

Moving into our second year with Respect the Game, our primary goals are threefold:

- 1) To continue to increase the numbers and quality of our referee contingent;
- 2) To continue to improve the overall quality of officiating with data collected from our "rate-a-ref" program;
- 3) To fully implement a field marshal program.

PCJSL believes the presence of field marshals at our games will be instrumental in maintaining a safe, fun and respectful way to play, coach and watch youth soccer. Field marshal volunteers must be 21 years old, pass an AYSA risk management check, and complete a one-hour training class. Marshals would only be expected to serve for 2-4 hours one Saturday a month. If you are interested in becoming a field marshal, please contact District 2 Commissioner Mack Romero at azdistrict2@gmail.com.

Most importantly, with your help, we want to continue to change the culture around youth soccer so that it ultimately becomes a more respectful, positive experience for all concerned. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

AYSO AND PCJSL EXPAND PARTNERSHIP THROUGH CHALLENGE FC

AYSO is pleased to announce the expansion of its developmental program to include a competitive division called Challenge FC. The nearly 10,000 kids playing Soccer in Southern Arizona (combined AYSO and PCJSL numbers) will certainly benefit due to this mutual goal to provide all kids the level of soccer they desire. By both organizations working towards common goals, our voices become one when it comes to fields and anything Soccer related in our community. Akin to “having a new baby in the family” – AYSO National has adopted a program called “Challenge”, and it’s here to stay.

What does that mean for us in Southern Arizona? In short- AYSO has created its own “Club” within AYSO. The club division will continue to emphasize most of these philosophies; with the most significant being “Everyone Plays”. The idea is to provide those kids that want to compete at a higher level that opportunity, and stay within the AYSO family. This is an Area run program, which allows any of the 14 Regions that wants to participate to do so under one umbrella. AYSO anticipates the number of teams participating in PCJSL will increase as the interest and understanding of this program is better understood throughout all the Regions.

In addition, we are pleased to announce the Old Pueblo Invitational (OPI) tournament will be returning in 2016. It will be revamped to include the traditional AYSO developmental teams and will have a second part, one with bracketing established to serve the competitive side. The OPI has been around for 34 years, and our goal is that this tournament be a qualifying tournament for anyone interested. Traditionally this has taken place Rodeo Weekend, and we see no reason in changing that. Look for more details to come regarding the OPI. -Tom Simons, Area Director – 12-A

GAME SCHEDULING RULES FINAL UPDATE

As a league, we, Pima County Junior Soccer League, are always looking at ways to improve our league and improve the overall soccer experience for all of our players, parents, coaches and clubs alike. Along those lines, we wanted to inform you of some the league improvement and rules changes which have recently been implemented. The most significant of which is the formation of the PCJSL Competition Committee who’s charter will be to review league rules on a regular basis and provide suggestions to the PCJSL board for rule improvements, updates and modifications to improve the league. Each PCJSL club was invited to have a representative server on Competition Committee, to ensure all views can be heard and considered. In addition rules suggestions, the committee will also address all promotion and relegations activities at the close of each season and address any special considerations in divisional flighting for each new season.

The PCJSL Competition Committees first task was to identify areas for improvement and make suggestions for rules changes for the upcoming PCJSL season. A summary of those agreed upon rule changes are included her for your information.

1. All Divisions will have 7 teams
2. There will be 6 games per season for all age groups (6 games Season I (Fall) and 6 games Season II (Spring))
3. During the registration process, each team will receive 2 blackout dates, were they may use to designate dates when they are unavailable to play league games. Please use your blackouts to make your team available for tournaments they would like to attend (i.e Socctoberfest, Tucson Indoor Cup... etc)
4. All games will be played on scheduled dates (No reschedules)
5. Promotion & Relegation structure for U11 and older age groups
 1. At season end, top two teams in each division will be PROMOTED to next division up; bottom two teams in each division will be RELEGATED to next division down. Season I results effect Season II divisions. Season I result effect Season I divisions the following year, etc. (Any division gaps are evaluated and addressed by the Competition Committee).
 2. All new teams or teams new to an age group start in the lowest division in the age group. This includes teams which change age groups between seasons (i.e. playing “up” during Season I and returning to “true” age for Season II). PCJSL Competition Committee will review and will address bracket adjustments for special or unique circumstances.
7. U12 Division I: will play 11v11
8. U12 Division II and down: will play 8v8
9. U11 all Divisions: will play 8v8
10. U9 and U10 all Divisions: will play 6v6
11. 6v6 Goal Keepers: no punting

The PCJSL Competition Committee is excited about these positive changes to the league and look forward to many other improvements and advances in the future.



Collier Hill
Director of
Competition, AYSA

MAKE A CHILD'S DAY BY DONATING YOUR USED JERSEY'S TO GIVE THROUGH SOCCER

Working in collaboration with Peace Passers, Give Through Soccer came to life in May 2010, young Payton Rudnick decided to create a project that reflected the Jewish tradition of chessed—or kindness—and also incorporated another of his passions: soccer.

Payton has been playing soccer since he was five and now plays for TSA and Catalina Foothills High School.

“I feel extremely fortunate to be involved with soccer, and other youth sports. Participating in team sports in particular has taught me so much about life, while also providing an outlet to just have fun. My successes—and failures—on the field have helped me develop traits like good sportsmanship, integrity, loyalty, discipline, and humility. Soccer has also helped me develop communication skills, and my ability to concentrate—especially when performing under pressure.

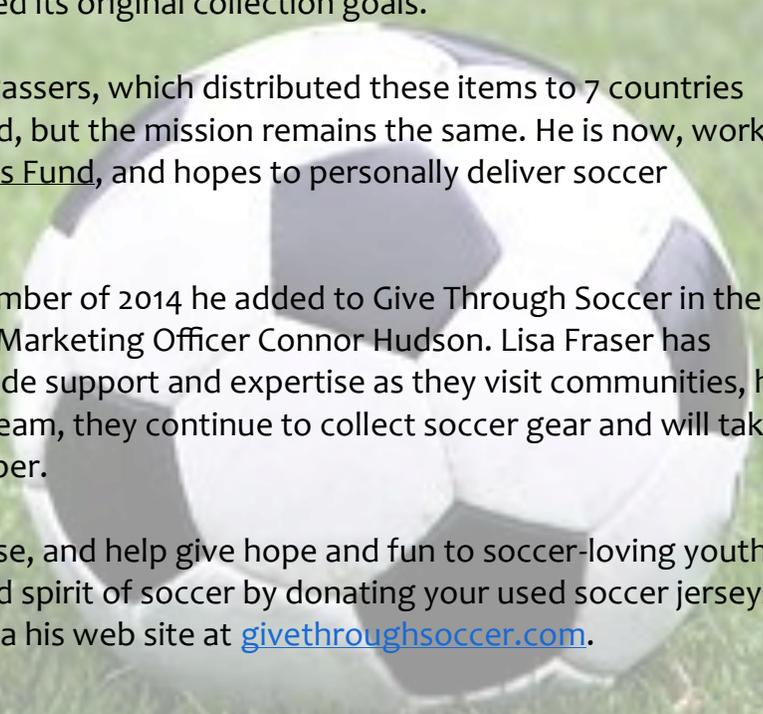
I also feel fortunate to be part of a loving family, and to live in such a great country. When I was researching for my Mitzvah project, I realized there are so many children around the world who also love soccer, and who would benefit from having the same experiences I do every day, but who need equipment and other support to help get started.”

In 2010, Payton researched nonprofit organizations that involve both soccer and youth, and he was particularly impressed by Peace Passers. Founded in 2008 by a group of soccer-loving American travelers, Peace Passers recognizes the potential for soccer, “the world’s game,” to strengthen communities around the globe. Understanding that many people living in impoverished areas have little or no access to soccer supplies, they strive to provide the basics for playing, and in doing so, to build connections between people and cultures. Give Through Soccer was born, and with outstanding support from Tucson’s soccer community, quickly reached its original collection goals.

For several years he shipped supplies to Peace Passers, which distributed these items to 7 countries around the world. His recent goals have changed, but the mission remains the same. He is now, working with the nonprofit organization [Global Children’s Fund](#), and hopes to personally deliver soccer equipment to youth in Costa Rica.

Realizing he needed additional support, in December of 2014 he added to Give Through Soccer in the form of Business Manager Gabe Rodriguez and Marketing Officer Connor Hudson. Lisa Fraser has graciously agreed to join the team and will provide support and expertise as they visit communities, host a soccer tournament, and distribute gear. As a team, they continue to collect soccer gear and will take it to San Jose Costa Rica at the beginning of October.

Give Through Soccer hopes you will join the cause, and help give hope and fun to soccer-loving youth around the world. Please help spread the joy and spirit of soccer by donating your used soccer jerseys, and new/used soccer balls. He can be reached via his web site at givethroughsoccer.com.



Changes Coming to Youth Soccer in 2016

Age Group and Small-Sided Games Mandate from U.S. Soccer

Next year, the world of youth soccer will continue its evolution as all members of U.S. Soccer will begin to transition on two key factors to encourage further youth development. The first change will be the nationwide adoption of Small-Sided Games and the second will be a shift from school-year to calendar year for the age grouping of teams.

US Youth Soccer, the largest member of U.S. Soccer, will assist members with information on these changes through the national office and our 55 member State Associations.

US Youth Soccer director of coaching education and long-time advocate of Small-Sided Games, Sam Snow acknowledged, “Since the mid 1980’s US Youth Soccer has been an advocate for Small-Sided Games. Why? The many benefits to the players and even to novice coaches are clear. With fewer players on the field making quick tactical decisions is easier. Players are in the vicinity of the ball more often which engages them in all four components of the game. The players are realistically exposed to the principles of play frequently. In short, Small-Sided Games will accelerate the development of American soccer players.”



Small-Sided Games

Small-Sided Games will be mandated come August of 2017, with specific changes occurring in regard to alterations to the field size, goals and rules. The result will be a decrease in 11-vs-11 competitions in lieu of more 9-vs-9 and 7-vs-7 competitions. U.S. Soccer will encourage the adoption of Small-Sided Games best practices in August of 2016. US Youth Soccer has been encouraging Small-Sided Games for more than 20 years and most of the 55 member State Associations have adopted the philosophy during that time.

The benefits of Small-Sided Games for players include more fun, more touches on the ball and more tactical decisions. The style of play will allow players to learn different positions, learn tactics quicker, increase fitness and allow players to be more emotionally and socially involved — creating a more fun and enjoyable game.

Calendar Year

Effective August 2017, the grouping of players will also change nationwide, with encouraged adoption of best practices in August of 2016. U.S. Soccer will go back to calendar birth years to align with international standards and Youth National Team programs.

US Youth Soccer will implement the best practice of calendar year age grouping for player registration beginning with the 2016-2017 soccer year for [US Youth Soccer program and competitions](#).

Using the school calendar for age groups is practiced only in the United States and Canada; as all other FIFA members go by the calendar year.

Previously, age groups were determined based on players born between Aug. 1 and July 31. The change to calendar year age groups will reflect the calendar year, or Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Players are still allowed to “play up” or play in an older age group.

US Youth Soccer, a respected leader in player development for more than 40 years, has seen the evolution of the game and various changes. The US Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program has used the birth year for the grouping of players since it was established in 1977. In fact, the James P. McGuire Cup, the oldest trophy in youth sport, awarded at the annual US Youth Soccer National Championships also shows the history of teams named for their calendar year age group.

For more information, click this link: <http://files.ctctcdn.com/fda94846101/ffcc312e-a1aa-4ce6-a2f7-d9d7533da261.pdf>

The CACTIS Foundation and Tucson Concussion Center Provide "Heads Up" Thinking in Regards to Concussion Prevention and Management



While the national media has called attention to the issue of concussions in professional athletes, it is gratifying to know that organizations such as the Pima County Junior Soccer League are equally concerned about, and taking a leadership role in addressing the issue in youth sports. The CACTIS Foundation ("CACTIS") and the local health care professionals who have formed the Tucson Concussion Center (TCC) are pleased to be part of a collaboration with PCJSL to provide education for players, coaches, parents and staff, as well as provide a comprehensive baseline concussion testing program for the young athletes at the affiliated clubs.

Our colleagues at CACTIS have learned a great deal about concussions in the past several years, and now recognize that while concussions happen, in sports and everyday life, the most important factor in reducing the adverse consequences of the concussions is assuring that the athlete does not "Return to Play (RTP)" or "Return to Learn/School (RTL)" before the brain has had a chance to recover and heal. A crucial part of enabling qualified health care professionals to make the RTP/RTL decision is knowing what was "normal" for the young athlete before the injury. This is referred to as a "Baseline." We have been fortunate to work with and learn from the finest concussion specialists in the country to develop and implement these procedures on a routine basis to a large number of young athletes. The response to the demonstration of these tests at this year's Ft. Lowell Shootout was gratifying, and in conjunction with PCJSL, this testing will be made available to affiliated clubs and teams through a generous grant from the Tucson Medical Center Community Benefits program and the TMC Foundation.

According to the CDC, nearly 20% of young athletes will suffer a concussion each year, and while soccer is a generally safe sport, soccer players are at risk for concussions. It is estimated that 50,000 high school soccer players nationwide have a concussion each year^[1] and female soccer players have one of the highest risks for concussion of any sport^[2]. Although we cannot completely prevent concussions in soccer, or any sport, we can minimize the effects of these injuries through proper education, identification, and clinical management. Encouraging players, parents and coaches to faithfully report head blows that cause concussions, and then successfully treat them, will reduce the more serious complications now being reported in the media. With proper management, concussed soccer players can experience a full recovery and return successfully to the field and school.

To minimize the risk and effects of concussions in soccer, we know we must:

- Immediately remove a player from the game or practice if a concussion is suspected.
- Never return a player to a game or practice on the same day as a suspected concussion.
- Always have a player with a suspected concussion evaluated by a trained medical professional with expertise in treating concussions.^[3]

The professionals developing the Tucson Concussion Center, expected to open later this fall, will provide their services "under one roof" for patient convenience. They share a belief that a personalized and interdisciplinary approach will lead to the best outcomes. The ATC Navigator for TCC, Carisa Raucci, PhD, is available now, and will assist with arranging for young athletes with concussions to see the right specialists and secure the RTP and RTL approvals needed to assure the best outcome for them.

The CACTIS Foundation and Tucson Concussion Center are proud to collaborate with the PCJSL to bring the "Best Practices" in concussion management to the young athletes in Pima County and Southern Arizona. For more information or assistance, please contact Dr. Carisa Raucci at 520-620-9100.

For more information on CACTIS, please visit www.cactis.org.

Hirsch Handmaker, MD
Chairman and CEO
The CACTIS Foundation

^[1] Gessel et al., Journal of Athletic Training, 2007

^[2] Marar et al., American Journal of Sports Medicine, 2012

^[3] Kontos, Research Director/Associate Professor, UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program