

**LITTLE ILLINI SOCCER CLUB
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**Director of Coaching Report
March 14, 2007**

Dear Club Members,

I am excited about all of the new things we are trying to accomplish at LISC and the obstacles that still remain ahead of us. This past year has seen many changes so please allow me the time to expand on the direction that I see this club going and how we can try to go about getting there together.

Personal Perspectives of Club

Since coming on board to the LISC in October of 2005, it has been an exciting as well as a challenging process for me thus far. Some of the key points that were presented last year like communication, strong management, membership support, and fundraising/sponsorship are issues that constantly need to be molded on a daily basis. I feel that since that time we have greatly strengthened the communication aspect of the club amongst the coaching staff, board members, and members of LISC. Although nothing is perfect, the direction we are headed with communication via email and on our web is a solid foundation to build upon. Communication is vital to any organization especially a soccer club that strives on coaching and parental support.

Along with solid lines of communication, we as a club need to provide our members with a solid managerial group that makes the best decisions for the club as a whole. With that we need to provide a quality service to our members through our administration as a club, our sound coaching practices/principles and effective decision-making amongst the board, down to the coaches, down to the club membership. Last year, I touched on being a part of something special and having a positive environment that is contagious. It is my hope that we have taken many positive strides in reaching these goals and have created just that. I feel that we have people in place on the board that can provide the communication and results to our members and I believe that we have the coaching staff to provide the best possible training environment for our youth in the Champaign-Urbana community as well as from those who travel from outside of the community to participate in LISC.

Direction and Goals for LISC from a Coaching/Parental Standpoint

Last year I stressed that we need to concentrate on our coaching staff and producing the best service that we can to our members. I am proud to report that we currently have a coaching staff in which 95% have an NSCAA License/Diploma or a USSF License, which specialize in training our coaches in all the technical/tactical aspects of the game as well as to ways in being a better coach both on and off the field. This past winter we sent 10 coaches off to obtain either their "E" or "D" licenses with the USSF. I encourage you all to look at the coaching biographies of each coach on the website and to try to appreciate the coaches that have spared a lot of their time in order to make your child a better soccer player hopefully.

Our staff right now is one of the biggest coaching staff in Central Illinois at the moment. At the current moment we have 22 coaches who are on the LISC staff. Although quality of coaches not quantity is what we try to strive for, I feel at LISC we have both, which eliminates potential stresses of the coach when dealing with multiple teams by himself/herself. I have tried to provide each coach of a team with an Ass't. Coach or a Trainer in the upcoming season so that we can always have someone knowledgeable at all the league games and tournaments.

Last year I touched on the professionalism of our coaching staff and hopefully we have taken strides since then with communication issues, evaluations of players and games along with keeping development of players being our top priority. All of our coaches have a coaches binder in which we can monitor our training sessions, attendance, game reports, evaluations, goal safety, etc. At the end of each season we will be holding individual coaching meetings that address how the season went for each team and ways for which we can do better. Just this past season, I was able to get a lot of different ideas from the coaching staff for ways to better the training environment and playing environment of our players. Also, from a fiscal standpoint I felt that this past season was much easier in the terms of what our treasurer has set in place to assist the coaches i.e.- coaches expense report, coaches advance, registering/paying for tournaments, etc.

Along with our coaching staff, we also have club trainers that will specify in certain age groups on the girls and boys side. These trainers will assist the coaches at those age groups in providing more training ideas/techniques that will allow our players to become even better. Between the ages of U8-U12 we have incorporated a more thematic approach to our training sessions with a focus on 4v4 games at the end as well as various technical work needed at an early age. We have incorporated new learning methods like coerver training for teams at the U11/12 level in which we hope to better develop the players technically.

I feel that not only with the coaching/training staff we have, we are constantly looking for ways to improve as coaches. We have incorporated more clinics for our youth that has been staffed by college coaches locally as well as regionally so that they are getting the tools and knowledge of what it might take to play at the next level. We have increased our tools for learning with providing coaches curriculum (available online) as well as most recently a coach's manual that will help the coach along throughout the season.

With all club sports the parental role is one of great importance. If we expect a lot from our youth while playing for LISC we should expect the same from our parents in the club. I feel that the parent representatives we have in place have been given ample communication in how to assist our coaching staff for the future. Our past board's parent representative has created a wonderful manual to assist our parent representatives in the day-to-day operations of helping a coach manage a team.

Goals of Club

Below are the goals set forth for this club that were mentioned last year. I will attempt to expand on how we have reached those goals or what we still need to do to accomplish them.

- **Provide the most qualified coaching staff and opportunities to our children-**I feel we are constantly looking for ways to improve as a coaching staff. Whether that means that I am looking for better ways to administer information to our coaches or if it is from a standpoint of the coaching product we put on the field. This is a goal that is constantly changing and I want to stress that with anything it will take time. I urge for our parents and players to be patient in this process and know that I will do everything to provide the best staff that we can at LISC.
- **Grow the club each and every year from our coaching staff to our participants-**Last year we had roughly 285 members. We know currently have about 322. That hopefully shows that we are trying to provide a quality product and are continuing to garner interest from various communities. We have also added some coaches to our coaching staff, which is ever evolving as well. We need to understand that since most all of our coaches have full time jobs and being a “staff” coach isn’t one of them that is different from other bigger clubs throughout the state who might be able to employ staff coaches full time. With that said I feel that our staff does an outstanding job with the amount of time they spend with our kids and what they are trying to teach them.
- **Organize the club from the top on down so that everyone knows their roles and functions in whatever position they are in whether that is parental roles, parent representative duties, coach’s responsibilities, etc-** I feel that this process is also one that takes time. We are trying to provide as much information as we can via the website at www.liscsoccer.com that covers all the items listed above.
- **Reach out to the community and offer more clinics as well as become more of a community leader-** I am proud to report that this past winter, coaches from our LISC staff volunteered their time to help out at various coaches/players clinics with the Savoy Recreation Center and Villa Grove Recreation Soccer Program. We also have volunteered our coaches to staff the Champaign Park District Micro Soccer Program in the fall/spring seasons. NEW, this spring we will be staffing the LISC Soccer Academy, which will be held on Friday nights. This is the first time that we have had such an academy so it will be exciting. We are already at maximum capacity! For next fall, the Micro Soccer Program at Dodd’s/Champaign Park District will be re-named to the LISC Micro Soccer Program in which our club will also benefit from the revenue brought in by the participants. This structure will also hold true for our LISC Soccer Academy as well as our LISC Summer Soccer Camp, which will be held at Morrissey Park July 23-27th tentatively. This is also the first time since I believe 2002 since we have had a soccer camp. It will be open to our members at a reduced rate as well as open to the public. We are still in the planning stages of all three so please keep on the lookout for any information that might be posted on our website or in the Fun Formation Guide and the Champaign Park District. Lastly, beginning in May we will be holding our practices at the Urbana Park District, as they have been very gracious in letting us rent those fields. We also will be holding our

tryouts at Urbana Park District/Brooken's Fields beginning in June. We are constantly looking for ways to involve everyone that we can and hopefully have a positive effect on the kids and parents that we interact with.

Keep visiting our website for the most up to date information on certain events that are coming. At the end of this month we will be holding a coaches clinic on March 28th from 5:30-7:30 which is being run by the EIU Men's Coaching staff as well as a college coaches panel from 8:00-9:00pm at the Savoy Recreation Center

- **Provide more communication via the website on our policies, procedures, information for our players and teams, etc. so we can present our club to our members and outsiders more readily as to what we provide and how things get done-** I feel that our website is one of the best around thanks to those that we have updating it on a daily basis. It is there where you can find training schedules, game schedules, tournament schedules, upcoming events, tournament results, coach's biographies, policies, manuals/curriculums, and important registration forms for our tournaments along with financial information as far as payment plans, etc. Please make sure that you familiarize yourself with our website as that is the main line of communication from the board and myself to our membership. Also, if you haven't visited our website we are also in the process of offering a Club Wide LISC Newsletter that will be available at the end of each season. We currently have our Winter Newsletter up for your review at www.liscoccer.com

Review of Winter Program

This has been the first full year in which we have completed our winter program and have incorporated that more readily in our dues structure. I feel that we provided a quality service to our youth that was implemented by our very own coaching staff. Our winter program was developed and designed by Lee Taft who is the co-owner of Sports Speed, Etc. as well as the Performance Director. Lee also serves as Executive Vice President for the International Youth Conditioning Association, the premier international authority with respect to athletic development and young athlete-based conditioning. Again this winter, he was able to provide a coaches clinic for our staff to educate them in ways to better train and condition our youth in the off-season. With our winter program, our players were able to get maximal touches 2-3 days a week for 10 weeks as well as work on injury prevention, quickness, and strength. The curriculum that was provided for us was an age-specific curriculum that focused on all the aspects of making a better soccer player and athlete. Our coaches were asked to implement various exercises and drills that challenged our players each time they trained and we always stressed the importance of ball touches and finishing with small-sided games.

This winter we have increased our participation from 60% of our players who participated in the winter program last year to roughly 90% this year. I feel that our treasurer has come up with very sound financial payment plans for the year round program and she has been very helpful in working with parents in this process.

As mentioned last year, there will always be other sports and hobbies that will make it hard for someone to dedicate themselves to a year round sport. Nothing is

perfect and we are always looking to adjust things. The financial committee will sit down and figure out the “kinks” with the winter program or any financial issues and I am confident that with the help of our treasure you will be satisfied with what comes to play. I feel that this past winter we were also more flexible as a coaching staff to have players who couldn’t make a particular session to give them the option to train with another team per the coach’s and DOC’s discretion.

Keeping Things in Perspective and Building for the Future

I would like to take the time now to stress how vital it is for us as a membership to take ownership in LISC. That means helping with volunteers, fundraising/sponsorship, tournament committees, etc. All of those things listed in the President Report following our retreat session need to be fleshed out. That starts with you as a membership volunteering your time to server on one of those committees. Again, change doesn’t happen overnight but with people who are driven to accomplish some of these goals, that is what we need. I understand that there are flaws in our club, our coaching staff, our facilities, whatever it might be but we all must work together to try to correct them so that we can all be proud of our club and what we represent. That is my challenge to us as a board and you as a member in a children’s soccer club. Please help in the process of letting LISC grow and provide what is best for the children in our community. All the best!

Sincerely,

Michael Kobylinski
Director of Coaching
Little Illini Soccer Club
www.lisesoccer.com