



PCJSL LEADS STATE WITH SHORT SIDED GAMES

Anticipating the statewide transition to 6 v 6 play for all 10 and under players, PCJSL launched a pilot program last year for 6 v 6 play for 9 and under. The program was so well received that PCJSL has decided to make the program a permanent fixture. Ricardo Hinds, Director of Coaching for the League, explained, "This is the future of youth soccer. There is no question that the huge increase in the number of touches for each child vastly improves their development while making the game significantly more fun for them." Ted Schmidt, President of PCJSL says, "Some coaches and parents were reluctant to make this transition at first, but once we got started they could not be happier. I have never seen such enthusiasm on the sideline with every kid on the pitch intimately involved in play the entire game. These kids will develop technical skills at a much faster pace than ever before while having the time of their life." It is expected that for many kids in the program, soccer will be a part of their life for much longer than would have been the case otherwise simply because it is so much more fun.

PCJSL LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAM TO IMPROVE OFFICIATING AND REDUCE SIDELINE ABUSE

Last year Southern Arizona ran into a unique problem. Fields available and teams anxious to play but not enough referees to conduct all the games scheduled. Maggie Barton, PCJSL Referee Assignor explained, "The number of referees available to officiate our games has been on a downward trend for the last couple years. Attrition is the worst with the younger and new referees." Why? Most all of the potential referees of the future will tell you: "I enjoy officiating, but I am through dealing with the abuse from spectators and coaches."

In response, PCJSL in partnership with Ben's Bells, FC Tucson and TSA FC has launched a new program they call "Respect the Game Southern Arizona Style." It's a simple program that if successful is likely to be the wave of the future. First a "Rate a Ref" program has been created and each coach at each PCJSL will be required to use the program on their cell phone or laptop to evaluate the referee at the conclusion of each PCJSL game. This rating will be used to help officials improve and to reward those who do. The league has also made a significant financial commitment to allow for a significant increase in the mentoring program as well as to provide incentives for improvement and continuing education for officials.

At the same time each player and parent have been required to sign a new Code of Conduct in which they agree to behave appropriately on the field and sidelines. A failure to do so will result in mandatory education in proper behavior before an offender can participate further in the soccer program. A second offense will involve a stiff fine and a third a year suspension.

Finally, the program incorporates a recruiting program whereby the league has developed a professional brochure to disseminate at high schools and colleges to recruit new referees. PCJSL plans to participate on campus at career days and the like to meet with potential new officials and encourage them to give it a try.

Ted Schmidt, PCJSL President says, "This program is the result of many hours of research and interviews with others addressing these problems around the country. I am confident the program will be successful and hope to see it implemented statewide, perhaps as early as President's Cup this season." This program could very well serve as a model for improving officiating and sideline behavior in all youth sports.

AYSA CONDUCTS SEPTEMBER MEETING IN TUCSON AT THE ANN KATHRYN SCHMIDT KICKIN' IT CLUBHOUSE

This year's annual AYSA board meeting in Tucson was held on Saturday September 6, 2014 at the newly opened AKS Kickin' It Clubhouse. Board members had the opportunity to see this amazing testament to the generosity of the Tucson community in creating a first class facility for AYSA and PCJSL activities.

The board welcomed new District II Commissioner Mack Romero on board and discussed advances made in making the Kino facility more affordable for league and State Cup play as well as the impending new 6 v 6 program for 10 and under to be implemented statewide next fall.