

Sports News

May 2009– Newsletter of the Utah Salt Lake City Area Sports

THOUGHT FROM A PROPHET

“Activities of this nature [Church Sports] should have a prominent place in both the ward and stake... I as one look back on the favorable influence which such activities had on my own life.” (Pres. Thomas S. Monson, letter to Utah Central Area Sports, 1992)

UTAH AREA SPORTS WEBSITE

Check out our newly re-designed Utah Area Sports website at www.utahareasports.org. It’s a terrific resource for everyone involved in Church Sports.

SUMMER SPORTS

Three questions:

1) *What do the following have in common?*

Golf	Softball & 5X5 Softball	Hiking	Ultimate Disc	5K Run / Walk
Frisbee	Lacrosse	Track	Outdoor Volleyball	3-on-3 Basketball
Biking	Swimming	Soccer	Mini-Soccer	Horseshoes

Answer: They’re all outdoor activities and competitions that have been sponsored by stakes in the Utah Salt Lake City Area during the daylight half of the year. Some are hosted at the stake level, others by wards, and some are even sponsored by ward Relief Societies as mid-week activities.

2) *What else do they have in common?*

Answer: That tens of thousands of members and friends have enjoyed the camaraderie and physical challenge that these activities present, even those who are not natural athletes or competitors.

3) The last question: *What can those who are called to lead Church Sports in the wards and stake do to take advantage of the warm summer days that are finally coming our way?*

Answer: That’s up to you and those who work in your sports program. Choose one of these enjoyable

sports. Need help? Contact your Region Sports Director. But please don’t miss the opportunity. To paraphrase an old saying, “Make play while the sun shines...”

SOFTBALL

While there are a lot of great summer sports, the most popular remains Church sponsored softball, and the heart of the program in the Salt Lake Valley is Terry Miller, Area Softball Specialist. Consider his thoughts on this great team sport that is enjoyed by adults and youth, men and women.

- Softball is family friendly. Husbands and wives can play on a co-ed team, small children can play on the playground equipment while their parents (or brothers and sisters) play the game, and families can bring a picnic.
- Softball is a fun sport that is often more relaxed than other competitive sports. The game goes at a more leisurely pace, while still having the fun that comes from competition.
- Softball is a forgiving sport, where even the non-athlete stands a pretty good chance of getting a hit, making the base, or catching a fly ball. With so many positions to fill, it’s easy to involve everyone who wants to play.
- Softball teaches teamwork – no one can win a game by themselves. The Priesthood and Church auxiliaries are like that too, aren’t they, in that we need to learn to help each other to be successful?
- Softball is a great place to invite friends of other faiths and less active members to come join the team. Terry has a number of less active friends who look forward to each season, and who, in the process of joining the team, have let go of some of the prejudices and hurt feelings that have kept them away from the Church through the years.

If you need training for your stake or region referees and officials, or help organizing a tournament, contact TERRY MILLER at 598-2096 or terrytoofast@msn.com

5 on 5 Softball—the perfect solution for small teams where 3 teams with at least 5 players each get together for a game. Want to know more? Call Chris Mecham at 801-209-7267.

STAKE SPORTS ORGANIZATION

The Stake Sports Organization is under the direction of the Stake Presidency. It generally follows this line of authority:

- Stake President
- Stake Presidency Counselor (Activities)
- High Councilor (Activities)
- Stake Physical Activities Director

The *Stake Physical Activities Director* is Chairman of the **Stake Sports Committee**, which consists of the following five individuals:

- Stake Sports Specialist
- Young Men's Sports Specialist
- Men's Sports Specialist
- Stake Officials Coordinator
- Women's Sports Specialist

Other Officials, Committee Members, and Specialists reporting to these five leaders

Note: The Young Women Sports Specialist reports to Young Women's Presidency

The Stake Sports Oversight Committee is:

- Stake President (Chairman)
- Stake Presidency Counselors
- High Councilman—Activities
- High Councilman—Ward Mission
- High Councilman—Young Men
- High Councilman—Young Women
- High Councilman—Prospective Elders
- High Councilman—Less Active Sisters
- Stake Physical Activities Director

A stake program organized in this fashion is well-suited to provide a great experience for members who are supported by well trained officials and leaders.

Letters to the Editor

Jerry, I just read the latest newsletter where you related stories of what it's like for the non-athlete who finds participation in Church and other sports programs stressful, (April, 2009, the *Thrill of Victory, the Agony of Defeat*) and I had to respond.

As one of the "athletes" who was never chosen last, I read the article with great interest. You may know

that I was called as a Region Officials Coordinator about 6-8 weeks ago and attended many of the region basketball games associated with the tournament. I saw many good and a few bad examples of sportsmanship with regards to the participants with lower athletic abilities. We tend to think of how opponents treat those with less athletic prowess, but we rarely think of how teammates, especially in a church sports setting where teams are not chosen, treat their teammates with less ability.

In view of what I learned in the newsletter I think this would be a good topic of discussion for quorums and others involved with Church Sports.

Thanks for the thought provoking article. I enjoy all of those that I have read.

Kelly Kinghorn, Sandy, UT

Hi Jerry, this is Justin Wagar, Head Coach for the New Mexico Highland Women's Soccer Team, and former coach at Utah Valley University and BYU Hawaii (where we won our first ever conference championship in 2007). I just learned of Church Sports from reading your article at www.MormonTimes.com on Coach Lee Mitchell of Alta Soccer, who I am a fan of, (*Coaching Young Men and Young Women, February, 2009*). I think it's great that Church Sports is being highlighted and wanted to make you aware that here in New Mexico some 12 of our incoming 14 recruits next year for the soccer team are LDS, and not just LDS, but all active and faithful members. They are great young women who will all be attending the same small Las Vegas branch out here this fall. In fact, the Church is bringing back the institute program as a result of all this activity. I know that your newsletter is primarily for the Salt Lake City area, but it is being read all over the Church. Perhaps it's of interest to your readers there in Utah to know that a number of the girls on our team are from the SLC Area. If you don't mind, I'd like to name them: Susannah Hertz (East High); Lauren Waite, (West Jordan); Jessica Heninger, (Bingham); and Stephanie Devisser, (Alta). We have a great team, and soccer is a terrific sport. I hope it does well in the Church Sports program, both in Salt Lake and around the world!

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the newsletter, please send an e-mail to Utah.Area.Sports@gmail.com. Comments or ideas for the newsletter to JerryBorrowman@gmail.com.