

# November 2009 Sports News

## Newsletter of the Utah Salt Lake City Area Sports

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### BREAKING NEWS!

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The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve recently approved recommendations to transfer primary responsibility for Church Sports in the state of Utah to the *Coordinating Councils* that meet under the direction of Area Seventies. Coordinating Councils are groups of stake presidents that include from 4 to 25 stakes.

We have already heard from a number of stake presidents who are enthusiastic about the chance to use Church Sports in their re-activation and missionary efforts. Of course we share that enthusiasm and look forward to establishing a very positive working relationship with the Priesthood Leaders who sit on the Coordinating Councils.

The Coordinating Councils in the Utah Salt Lake City Area generally correspond to the current Region system used in Church Sports, with some minor changes that will be announced in each Council area.

In order to provide an orderly transition to the new system, the Brethren desire that the current system operate for up to 8 months until the local Coordinating Council is ready to take responsibility for the program. Thus, our Region officials will remain in their position for the time being. The Area and Division leadership will also remain in place to help the stakes with their Church Sports programs.

All these changes were greeted with genuine enthusiasm when announced at a special meeting of the Area and Division leaders on Sunday, Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>, with those involved anxious to receive the additional guidance and support of Agent Stake Presidents and those whom they call to assist. We stand ready to support the Coordinating Councils and their Agent Stake President as soon as they wish to assert control and will continue to provide training and support for officials, coaches, and players, as well as assisting in tournaments and special events as requested.

Also announced by Elder Steven Snow of the Presidency of the Seventy was the release of Ron Gerber, the long-term leader of the Church Sports

program in Utah more than 30 years. Brother Harold Turley was called to assume leadership of the Church Sports program for the 547 stakes in the Coordinating Councils in the State of Utah as the Utah Area Sports Director. We express appreciation to Brother Gerber and our congratulations to Brother Turley.

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### A Saturday Morning Miracle

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In any other circumstance this story would be completely unbelievable. What are the odds of ten bedraggled 16 year-old human males dragging themselves out of bed by 9:00 a.m. on a crisp October morning? Did we mention that it's a *Saturday* morning—that glorious day when the school bell doesn't ring and most young men are sound asleep recovering from a late Friday night? But improbable as it sounds, our intrepid young heroes are not only awake, but cheerful as they make their way to the field of their own free-will and choice. Incredibly, they are even more alert than their unshaven and shivering adult leaders.

The draw that makes this miracle happen? **Flag football**, that just-for-fun version of the competitive sport that most kids never get a chance to play. What a great game—all the fun and excitement of football without the violence, and scaled down so that as few as five can play. A big part of the appeal is that it's all about throwing the ball, which keeps the outcome "up in the air" until the last moment, since interceptions are always a possibility that can turn the game in a single play. The fact that both teams almost always know each other from school just adds to the fun, since they kid with each other and laugh at one another's foibles. Perhaps it's in the nature of this G-Rated version of the game, (where players unexpectedly find themselves slipping on the dew covered grass, or zigging and zagging their way to the perfect reception) that tempers simply don't seem to flair like they do in other sports. Because the game itself is so casual it's easier to play it just for fun than the traditional "Big 3" of Church Sports (Basketball, Softball, and Volleyball). Even though winning still

feels good, losing isn't so bad, and good sportsmanship is the rule.

As important as fun is, however, the program has more meaningful impact. For example, in one recent game in the south end of the valley, one of the members of a ward priest quorum goes to a different high school than the other boys in his quorum. Church Sports gives him a way to stay connected to his quorum where school affiliation isn't available. In another case, a boy who seldom goes to church does come out to play sports, and in so doing maintains vital relationships with young men who are striving to live up to the values of the church. The examples are endless, the impact potentially eternal.

If you don't have organized flag football in your stake, you should give it a try. Who couldn't use a "Saturday Morning Miracle" with your Aaronic Priesthood aged youth? Flag Football is just one of the more than 40 authorized sports available to members in the Utah Salt Lake City Area, and certainly one that brings out the best in the stake young men.

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### **Where to Go For Help**

It's sad, but true, that the word "organized" in Organized Sports is sometimes more of an aspiration than a reality. But it doesn't have to be. The Priesthood Leaders who preside over the Utah Salt Lake City Area realize that it takes a lot of dedication to organize a sports program in a stake and ward, particularly since we have multiple groups who want to play, including the Young Men and Young Women; Relief Society; and Men's and Women's Sports. With the need to provide qualified referees and officials, the task can be truly daunting.

Which is why the Utah Salt Lake City Area Sports program has been organized as an official program of the church, staffed with some terrific individuals who both love the sports they represent and who have a great deal of experience making it work at the local, stake, and (for the time being) regional level. These leaders are both anxious and available to help you succeed in your calling in Church Sports. Here is a list of individuals you can call or e-mail for help in the:

#### **UTAH SALT LAKE CITY AREA**

- **Director**—Harold Turley, 801-942-5630, [harold@tetracsi.com](mailto:harold@tetracsi.com)
- **Women's Director**—Lori Zundel, 801-694-1690, [lz73@earthlink.net](mailto:lz73@earthlink.net)
- **Assistant Director**—Tucker White, 801-578-5507, [twhite@naiutah.com](mailto:twhite@naiutah.com)
- **Officials Coordinator**—Kae Strong, 801-347-5619, [kaestrong@hotmail.com](mailto:kaestrong@hotmail.com)

- **Young Single Adult Directors**—Gary & Suzanne Larsen, 801-699-9950, [Larsen.ysasports@gmail.com](mailto:Larsen.ysasports@gmail.com)
- **Communications Director**—Jerry Borrowman, 801-949-2984, [jerryborrowman@gmail.com](mailto:jerryborrowman@gmail.com)
- **Volleyball Specialist**—Brian Tingey, 801-201-1049, [btingey@juno.com](mailto:btingey@juno.com)
- **Basketball Specialist**—Ray Shepherd, 801-680-4535, [rshepherd@graniteschools.org](mailto:rshepherd@graniteschools.org)
- **Softball Specialist**—Terry Miller, 801-598-2096, [terrytoofast@msn.com](mailto:terrytoofast@msn.com)
- **Golf Specialist**—Ray Goodson, 801-455-2644, [raygoodson@3-form.com](mailto:raygoodson@3-form.com)
- **Futsal Specialist**—Bob Bedont, 801-966-7209, [rbedont@aol.com](mailto:rbedont@aol.com)
- **Tennis Specialist**—Val Martin, 254-493-6228 [vjm14@msn.com](mailto:vjm14@msn.com)

#### **WASATCH DIVISION**

- **Men's Director**—Jeff Cutrer, 801-598-4020, [jeff@cutrer.us](mailto:jeff@cutrer.us)
- **Women's Director**—Monica Porath, 801-694-5161, [m\\_porath@hotmail.com](mailto:m_porath@hotmail.com)
- **Officials Coordinator**—Kelly Kinghorn, 801-520-7668, [kellykinghorn@gmail.com](mailto:kellykinghorn@gmail.com)

#### **OQUIRRH DIVISION**

- **Men's Director**—Chris Mecham, 801-209-7267, [cdmech@comcast.net](mailto:cdmech@comcast.net)
- **Asst. Men's Director**—Layne Sims, 801-631-0873, [simlay@wfrmls.com](mailto:simlay@wfrmls.com)
- **Women's Director**—Shirley Crawford, 801-792-9548, [akcrawford@juno.com](mailto:akcrawford@juno.com)
- **Asst. Women's Director**—Kristine Holdaway, 801-633-0892, [spikeit.kh@gmail.com](mailto:spikeit.kh@gmail.com)
- **Asst. Women's Director**—Sharon Jackson,, 801-414-0274, [sjumpstart@yahoo.com](mailto:sjumpstart@yahoo.com)
- **Officials Coordinator**—Wayne Oberg, 801-712-9381, [obergfamil@netzero.net](mailto:obergfamil@netzero.net)

In addition to these individuals, the Oquirrh Division encompasses 9 Regions while the Wasatch Division has 11 Regions--each with their own Men's and Women's Directors and Officials Coordinators. We also encourage you to go to [www.utahareasports.org](http://www.utahareasports.org) for resources on how to fulfill your responsibilities in Church Sports. Good luck. We'd love to help.

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