NorthStar News

The Newsletter of NorthStar Soccer Ministries

PERSPECTIVE BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PAUL NEVILLE

The picture above was taken February 29—the first of two Saturdays of Friendly games for the NorthStar U12 Girls Travel Team (me on the left side of the picture and my wonderful assistant, Coach Olivia, on the right). This game was intended as a transition from pre-season training into the season of league games. We had another of these days on March 7, then the world seemingly fell a part.

This week, April 13, we are stepping up efforts check on families through a club-wide survey. Please pray for NorthStar families impacted by the current crisis. I encourage you to give to organizations that are well equipped to provide relief where it is needed. One I recommend that I know is well run and does good work is Christian Service Mission. Another local organization—Kikstart (kikstart.org) is handling the continued lunch program for Birmingham City students. If your own income is secure and you are able to help then I encourage you to give through these or other organizations that you already know and trust.

The current role for NorthStar in the crisis is limited. But as society re-opens NorthStar's role is critical. The need for an athletic/mentoring program that is affordable and accessible for all—will only increase as more families face economic challenges.

Our commitment to encourage our NorthStar soccer players to be Responsible, Resilient and Reverent continues to have tremendous long-term value for them. Please check inside for multiple ways that you could consider contributing financially to NorthStar in furtherance of this cause.

NorthStar is very much a volunteer-driven organization. We don't want volunteers needlessly placing themselves in danger or inadvertently placing kids and families in danger. We will be very cautious about opening back up our programs. But when we do, we will need a flood of volunteers eager to contribute their time to this cause. I hope you will consider it. The experience will be both challenging and deeply rewarding if you do!

Paul Neville

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PERSPECTIVE	1
SPRING HIGHLIGHTS	2-3
CURRENT ACTIVITY	4
PRAYER CONCERNS	5
INVOLVEMENT	6-7
CORE VALUES	8

NORTHSTAR SOCCER MINISTRIES **promotes opportunities for investment in the lives of urban youth in Birmingham by providing a high quality Soccer Club within a holistic, Christian environment.**

Newsletter printing by Wolnski Scheduling Services!

Highlighting the Spring 2020 "Season"

Milestones for the "current" Spring Season include

- January 12—Three former NorthStar players receive scholarship to attend Mike Getman ID Camp (to show their skills to college soccer coaches)
- February 3—Start of practices for the NorthStar Travel Teams. At that time the major concern for the season? Non-stop, daily rain. In the first two weeks of the season we had a total of 2 practices—and only managed that because we scheduled a makeup session on a dry Saturday.
- February 18—Official start of practices for our Intramural teams.
- February 25—The actual start of Intramural Team practices since the starting week was fully rained out.
- February 29—First game Saturday with a full schedule for Intramural Teams and 'Friendly' games for 2 Travel Teams.
- March 7—Second game Saturday. Full Intramural League Schedule. Two game round-robin series of games for: U11 Boys Travel Team, U12 Girls Travel Team, U12 East Girls Rec Team, and U12 Holy Rosary Team plus U12 girls Skill Session. Productive day and lots of fun for the kids.
- March 12—The Shut Down—Received notification from Alabama Soccer that all related programs must close down for a minimum of 2 weeks due to coronavirus concerns. Within days the schools and then most activity in the country also shut down. By April 1 hopes for resuming the Spring season had evaporated.

Above: U8 game this Spring. Goal Keeper making a save. Behind the goal is a U6 game taking place at the same time. Below: Club Registrar Michelle Chambers organizing Intramural team jerseys for distribution to players.

Left: former UAB Coach and Director of Mike Getman Soccer Camp, Mike Getman leading training session for NorthStar Intramural League coaches on Feb. 29.

Right: Briarwood HS Varsity Girls players took turns volunteering as referees for NorthStar Intramural games and were set for helping the rest of the season!

Travel Team Highlight pictures—Spring 2020

Left: Coaches Hayden Hilt and Eddie Randall at half time (February 29) with the NorthStar U11 Boys Travel Team.

Below: NorthStar U11 Boys v Briarwood in a 'Friendly' game— 1-1 was the final score and it was a great building time for both teams.

These boys have made tremendous progress since the fall and it was sad for them not to have more opportunity to experience the fruit of that work this Spring.

Upper left: NorthStar U12 Girls (royal blue) v Holy Rosary (light blue). Lower left: NorthStar U12 Girls v NorthStar U12 Girls—yes, we had 2 teams this season!. Bottom right: several Briarwood HS Varsity Girls were with us leading a skill session between games on March 7—so what if together they veered off into an impromptu 'TikTok Dance Party' at the end of the session.

NorthStar Now—and Tentative Plans for the Coming Year

Currently our ability to connect with our NorthStar players and their families is, of course, quite limited. This week we are:

- Initiating an online survey to gather information on impact from the current crisis on our families
- Starting a series of regular videos from "Coach Paul" to players with at-home soccer training encouragement (and more). These videos are being distributed through parent emails and for some teams—through Groupme and text. The videos feature demonstrations by former NorthStar player, Jeffrey Neville. Over the coming weeks/ months we will bring in guest appearances from other former NorthStar players. *If we can execute this well then it could lead us to new capabilities that will have value on the other side of the current national crisis.*
- NorthStar is cancelling the remainder of the Spring Season. *Instead* we have tentative plans for a loose summer league in June and July.
- *Hopefully* we will have a semi-normal Fall 2020 soccer season and a very normal Spring 2021 Spring soccer season. Even if we can't have a normal season, at the very least we expect to be able to be on the field with small groups of kids. We will do as much soccer as is possible this Fall.
- **Summer 2021**—begin offering small summer camps to our soccer players. This was a goal pre-Shut Down but building the capacity to do it has increased in importance. Our players need this focus from a soccer stand-point for sure, but the educational enrichment aspect is of tremendous importance for many of our NorthStar kids. Pray that we can get there.

Check out northstarsoccer-ministries.org for videos promoting at-home training for our youth. Current videos feature former NorthStar player (and future Mississippi College player!), Jeffrey Neville. We expect to involve other former NorthStar players over the coming months.

Below: NorthStar U12 Girls Travel Team. Check out this girl drawing on the skills she has developed to receive a pass & speed past the defenders, getting into position for a quality shot on the goal. Proud of the progress these girls were making and sad for them to have lost this season!

Current NorthStar Soccer Prayer Concerns

1. Health Impact: The current worldwide crisis will have it's immediate and perhaps lingering impact on the health of many. Pray for our families and support organizations that support first responders and front-line health workers.
2. Economic Impact: No one knows how deep the damage will be to the economy or how long it will take to recover. Jobs & income at all levels are in jeopardy, but we expect NorthStar target communities to be hard hit. Pray for the economic well-being of NorthStar families. Consider contributing to organizations addressing those concerns and also nutrition concerns for families.
3. The children we serve will have great need for both the fitness component of NorthStar Soccer as well as the long-term character impact (see below). **Pray for stable funding for NorthStar through this crisis so we can effectively plan programs for the coming months and year and beyond.**
4. Our mentoring/discipleship impact is as needed as ever. Pray for volunteers starting in the summer/fall (or as soon as we can open up). Consider giving time yourself! Pray for the health and safety of volunteers who will step up.
5. We expect our kids to lose ground on educational outcomes. **That is why we hope to have summer programs in 2021 that will mix soccer & academic support.** Pray that we can develop the resources to address this need for youth we serve.

Left*: player on our Hemphill School U8 team on a game day the beginning of this Spring Season*

Goals for Player Development

UCLA gymnastics coach Valorie Kondos Field gave a TED talk in 2019 titled "Why Winning Doesn't Always Equal Success" (you will benefit from taking the time to look it up and listen to it). She talks about winning being a lot of fun but "Is winning success?" The answer is no. If we are focused on that end result over the process then we might produce teams that win games and even championships but it often comes at the cost of damaged lives. "REAL SUCCESS IS DEVELOPING CHAMPIONS IN LIFE".

Exactly. The game of soccer is merely a tool for doing that. Winning games is fun and, to a degree, it is one tool for evaluating the effectiveness of coaching. But REAL SUCCESS is our goal at NorthStar. To help clarify this on a club-wide basis, this spring we began refining our statement of Core Values as a road map for parents, volunteers and the kids themselves. Implementing our programs should lead to youth who are Responsible, Resilient and Reverent (see back cover—page 8). The idea of 'Resilience' seems particularly big in the current crisis. A resilient soccer player doesn't quit the play in frustration after she makes a mistake but immediately turns her focus on correcting the mistake and helping her team win the ball back. Likewise, when his team suffers set backs the resilient player does not grow discouraged and/or critical of teammates. Rather, he approaches the losses with a determination to learn from them and to help the team get stronger for the future.

For more on how we understand these core values and our plans to promote them for coaches, parents and players check out the Core Values page under the 'About Us' tab on the website.

www.northstarsoccerministries.org

Involvement Opportunities

- *Giving money or time? How about both!*

There are two primary ways to directly get involved with NorthStar: contribute financially (page 6) or give your time (page 7). Having the funds to operate and develop these programs is critical so we very much welcome your financial contribution. Thanks! Instilling the Core Values of Responsibility, Resilience and Reverence requires the direct involvement of people giving their time. Direct involvement is a transformative—two way exchange. Whether you are able to give financially or not, I encourage you to get involved with your. Join us in the Journey. Share the opportunity with others!

How to Make a Financial Contribution?

- **Mail a check**—use the enclosed envelope and response card to mail in your contribution today!
- **Send a check electronically through your bank**—directing your bank to send NorthStar a check works very well for us
- **Contribute on line**—go to our website (www.northstarsoccerministries.org) —and make a contribution. You can also set up a regularly recurring contribution (sustaining support). Our monthly supporters are a huge blessing to the ministry. Please consider joining them!
- **Designate NorthStar Soccer Ministries as your preferred charity when shopping on amazon—**a small percentage of the money you spend will be donated to NorthStar by amazon.
- **In kind gift**—for example—for the past few years the old Neville family van has served as the equipment van. This past year we made significant field improvements to Cornerstone Field and are needing to cut the grass a lot more frequently. So the van is also used to pull the trailer and get the mower to the field. The drive shaft on it is going out. Before August we need to either replace the engine or replace the vehicle. **Your contribution of a suitable used vehicle (mini-van or SUV) would be the best solution by far. Contact Paul Neville if you have one you want to donate!**

- **General Support** (monthly or any frequency you choose) for Paul Neville, give (or simply commit to pray) in this area and you will receive regular updates from Paul in addition to this newsletter. These regular contributors provide the core financial base for the ministry. Over the years many have fallen away so we are looking for new supporters.
- **Team or Program Sponsorship**—see the response card for specific options. Many who give through their business choose this approach. We highlight those businesses on our jerseys and other ways. Even if seeing your business highlighted is not important to you we encourage you to allow it because it may encourage others to join.

- **Become a (short-term) financial sponsor for our new intern Katie Newton** (with U8 players in picture below), who will be half-time with us August through December and full-time January through May. Katie is a past NorthStar volunteer who will graduate from Samford in December. She will play a critical role in: developing the Hemphill School outreach program, serving as a Travel Team coach and ministering deeply to a group of girls, providing key leadership in volunteer recruiting and help NorthStar strengthen our channels for future volunteer recruiting. To hear directly from Katie about her coming 9+ months of Internship email her at knew-

Opportunities for Giving Time

Summer Sessions—As a make-up for losing the Spring Season, we have tentative plans to launch a new summer season to take place in June and July. We will operate on week nights only (no Saturdays). Our primary location will be Cornerstone Field (in Woodlawn) but we hope to offer a secondary site at Hemphill School (West End) as well.

Fall Season coaching staff
Get on the list today to a coach for the Fall season. We need **coaches and assistant coaches** both. We have opportunities requiring from little or no previous soccer experience up to Travel Team coaches who should have strong soccer experience. *Also needed for the fall* - referees and a referee supervisor to work with NorthStar youth who will serve as referees for U8 and U10.

Facility Volunteers

- Grass cutting—have your own riding mower & trailer and willing to get on a schedule to help us keep our game field well groomed? Getting on the schedule for as little as once/month will help free up staff time.
- Volunteer groups are needed at different times to do field improvements. Contact us about scheduling a one-day group service day at one of our fields or at the office.
- Grounds keeping at the NorthStar office—basic mowing is covered, but we need volunteers to commit to a couple times per month to provide loving care to the garden and the grounds at the NorthStar House (our office location).

Resource Development Volunteers

- Sponsor Recruiter—Help us recruit Team Sponsors for the coming program year. This work is happening now and is done primarily through email and phone calls. In addition to major Uniform and Team sponsors we have smaller levels available for field sponsorships
- Sponsor Recruiter for the *first ever* NorthStar Jamboree scheduled for August 8 at Briarwood High School. We need volunteers to 'pound the pavement' looking for businesses and others in the Briarwood High School area who will be interested in the marketing we will provide through this event—a one-day mini-tournament for teams from across the metro area.
- Banquet Recruiter—recruit guests or sponsors or both for our annual banquet in November.

NorthStar Jamboree is a new event scheduled for August 8. We need a team of volunteers to serve in shifts on that day. It is a great opportunity for teens and for anyone wanting to make a contribution but not yet ready for a long-term commitment. We will need the following volunteers: referees, parking lot attendants, field managers, errand runners, more.

Below: U8 game complete with: kids having a great time playing the game, Dad Coach engaged with the kids, and older youth player gaining leadership skills through refereeing. A lot to celebrate!

NORTHSTAR SOCCER MINISTRIES
Bridging the Gap for Inner City Youth

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit Number
3257
Birmingham, AL

NorthStar Soccer Ministries
P.O. Box 11512
Birmingham, AL 35202

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone: 205-322-9296
E-mail: paul@northstarsoccerministries.org

Board of Directors:

Raymond Butler, Michael Grant, Kevin Holdefer, Annette Martin, Kimberly Rollins, Scott Sutton, Teneasha Washington

Executive Director: Paul Neville

Club Registrar: Michelle Chambers

www.northstarsoccerministries.org

NORTHSTAR SOCCER – CORE VALUES

In the same way that the traveler can use the Big Dipper to find the North Star and use it to navigate on a journey, the NorthStar player uses the values of Responsibility and Resilience pointing to the ultimate value of Reverence toward God to find direction in life.

At NorthStar Soccer we are teaching kids great soccer skills, but more importantly, we are using soccer to teach them values. Open up this newsletter to learn more and see how YOU can join us in the journey!

The Big Dipper pointing to the North Star

The NorthStar player is:

Responsible – takes care of self and carries through on commitments to the team

Resilient – works hard to reach goals and learns from mistakes – knows losses & setbacks are an opportunity to learn and get better

Reverent – on and off the field seeks to follow the two great commandments: loving God and treating neighbor (teammate, opponent, referee, everybody) in the same as would wish to be treated.