

NorthStar News

The Newsletter of NorthStar Soccer Ministries



RESILIENCE BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PAUL NEVILLE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

RESILIENCE	1
SEASON UPDATES	2
CELEBRATION!	3

**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.**

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Back in April I was trying to figure out what exactly I was supposed to be doing with myself. The soccer season was shut down. Fields were closed. Everything was shut down. Task number one —don't panic. Jump up on opportunities for financial help. Next, how do I use this time to build for the future for NorthStar? That's when—with some great help from Alabama Soccer Association Director of Coaching, Kevin Laux, I worked through the **NorthStar Values: Responsible, Resilient, Reverent**. These three values cover well what we hope to instill in players through their time with NorthStar. I realized they also made great goals for me and for staff/volunteers. I engaged in study time in a number of coaching books including, John O'Sullivan's *Every Moment Matters*. I came away from my study with fresh understanding of my need to work through the values myself in order to be better prepared to do the work of encouraging their development in kids (you can read a few of my insights on paulneville.net.)

The second outflow from shut down time: more time to spend developing program ideas that had been percolating since January (before I even knew what a 'coronavirus'

was). I will share more of this program vision at the Celebration on November 12. The preview? NorthStar is actively working with Birmingham City Schools to develop an in-school league for 4th and 5th graders which will immediately broaden the number of kids we are impacting and have ripple effects up and down our program.

Which brings me to the picture above. The two boys in NorthStar blue are currently teammates on our U12 team that is featured on the next page. They both started playing soccer with NorthStar through our Hemphill School outreach program a couple years ago. It is exciting to me to see them grow and develop. But what if NorthStar had a bigger presence in more schools? How many more pictures like this could I take. And regardless of how far they go in soccer, what happens if we are instilling in their lives the values of Responsible, Resilient & Reverent and teaching them what that looks like not just on the soccer field but in life?

Paul Neville

Fall Season Updates

Resilient. In the Spring we settled on Resilient as one of the three defining Club Values that we want to instill in our players. In fact, being Resilient is a pretty important challenge for the organization as a whole!

The Spring season being shut down when it had just barely started was tough. The summer wore on and infection rates exploded. The pool of likely Club Team girls shrank from 30+ to 9. Boys showed a similar drop. Then we discovered that both our primary fields would be closed the Intramural Program had to be cancelled. We shifted a few girls over to the U12 boys team and moved our four remaining 'older girls' to be guest players with our partner Holy Rosary Soccer (who were also running short on players).

But, so far, the U12 coed team is 2-0-2 playing in the boys division! Our four older girls are standing out as top (guest) players for Holy Rosary U14. Some of our 07/08 birth year girls are now returning and we are forming a U14 girls Tournament Team to compete in a rec-level tournament on November 14-15. Several coaches have had to quarantine but not a single player (or family member) has had a Covid issue (thankfully). We are following protocols and working to keep everyone safe.

Special thanks to interns Katie Newton and JP Rooney for providing leadership on the **Virtual Soccer Training** program that we launched this Fall. We have 8 groups of players (some actively playing, some sitting out) led by high school & college students. The coaches are using google classroom to upload skill videos and devotional videos then they have weekly video conference meetings with group members to review and encourage at-home skill work. It is going about as smoothly as you probably imagine. But we are pleased with our volunteers for giving it their best and helping NorthStar to be Resilient in providing a platform for skill development & mentoring relationships for our kids!

Thanks to our Fall 2020-Spring 2021 Team & Field Sponsors. Ingram Equipment is our Club Team Uniform sponsor and both ACCi and Elegant Earth are Team Sponsors (which for the Fall means ACCi for girls and Elegant Earth for boys—We anticipate expanded team sponsor opportunities for the Spring!)



Fall 2020 'Field Sponsors' Include Southland Transportation Group and J.R. Prewitt & Associates



Right: top scoring player on the U12 NorthStar team this fall who got his soccer start through the NorthStar outreach program at Hemphill Elementary School a couple year ago.



Half-time, pandemic style—

Coach Hayden talking to the U12 team—Typically there are no benches this season. Normal interaction in the game but we try to spread out at half-time. Health survey and temperature check before practice & games plus hand-sanitizer afterward. It's a crazy time but, so far, we have had zero cases on the team!

NorthStar Celebration: Resilient

On Thursday, November 12 at 6:00 we will gather (as we do every year) at Shades Valley Community Church to Celebrate! the past year of ministry and to look ahead at the vision for the coming year. We are pleased to have as our main speaker professional soccer player Satara Murray.

Also speaking will be NorthStar Graduates Matthew Dale and Fredrika Dunson. Two young people who got their early soccer start at NorthStar and have risen to play the game at a high level and are remaining connected to NorthStar to give back to those coming along in our program.

Director Paul Neville will also be talking about the vision for 2021—including an exciting new program we are developing in partnership with Birmingham City Schools.

For this year’s event we will have many safety precautions in place including: boxed dinners at the door rather than our typical buffet style. **We are also introducing a Live-Stream option for those not comfortable attending in person.** Like many things this year, we are doing it because we must but, there is a substantial side-benefit. Since we will be on live-stream *you don’t have to be in Birmingham to check us out!* Purchase an in-person ticket OR register for live-stream on our website

www.northstarsoccerministries.org



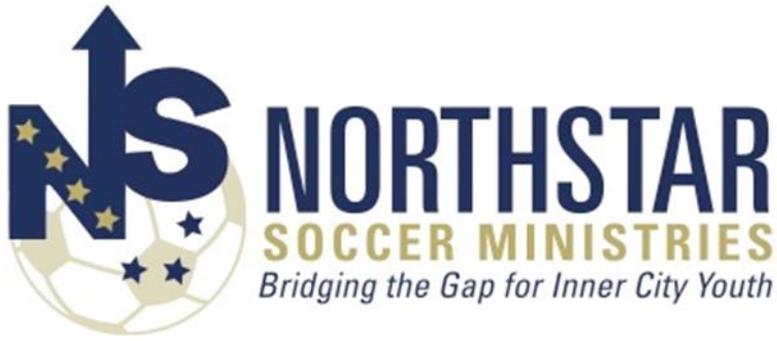
Satara Murray (above) signing a ball at the Satara Murray skills clinic for NorthStar kids in November 2016—two days after serving as the speaker for the NorthStar Celebration. NorthStar is honored to have her back 4 years later. Satara played soccer at UNC. Since college she has played professionally for Washington Spirit, Liverpool (which was her team in 2016), Houston Dash and currently with Kolbten Football Club (Norway).



Matthew Dale. Above: left-coaching a NorthStar player this fall on the sideline during a game; right-as a U10 NorthStar player (taken during the Hoover Havoc Tournament which they won in 2012 (no, he wasn’t ‘playing up’). Mathew was one of 4 NorthStar boys moving as a group to Homewood Soccer competitive level team at U11. Today, Matt is a freshman at Birmingham-Southern, and on the soccer team.



Fredrika Dunson. Below: On the left is Fredrika this Fall (a 10th grader at Ramsay High School) as a member of the Hoover-Vestavia girls 2005 (soccer teams are designated by birth year) Club Team (HVS is a new, top flight team playing in a regional league); center is Fredrika on a U11 NorthStar girls team in Spring 2016. Fredrika got started in soccer with NorthStar around age 7 in 2012. From her top performance in 2015-16 she was invited to the first ever NorthStar competitive level team in Fall of 2016., one of 2 girls playing on the boys team for the 2.5 we fielded that team —right is Fredrika receiving her medal from Coach Butler after the team won their division in the Birmingham Bash Tournament in the Fall of 2016.



Nonprofit Organization

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Inter: Katie Newton

www.northstarsoccerministries.org

JOIN US ON NOVEMBER 12!



Powering through. The girl with the ball was the least skilled and least confident on our coed U12 team at the start of the season. But at a recent game she showed she had learned how to play her position and greatly improved her skill. Here she is winning a goal kick and powering her way through for a shot on goal. You make new-found success for youth like her possible when you support NorthStar. Thanks!

The annual NorthStar Celebration is November 12, 6:00pm at Shades Valley Community Church

Purchase a ticket for the in-person event

Or

Register for the new live-stream access

On our website

www.northstarsoccerministries.org

Our theme is: Resilient

Use the enclosed envelop to mail a contribution today or give through our website. As the holiday season approaches, please remember to do your amazon shopping through smile. Amazon and select NorthStar Soccer Ministries as your charity of choice!