

Togetherhness means victory for Cosmos soccer squad

By C.J. Rishak
staff writer

Teamwork makes teams successful. To develop that talent, players need time. They have to work together to refine and blend their abilities into a successful contingent.

The local Cosmos soccer squad is an example of the theory of team evolution. Gordon Rama, a Plymouth resident, brought together a group of 10-year-olds five years ago.

That was the founding of the Cosmos. Last year Rama, who still coaches the squad, saw his group of boys jell into a championship team as the Cosmos won the state crown for boys under 14.

TIMES HAVE changed, but the Cosmos are still a top-flight squad. Playing in the Bonanza Express Soccer League (BESL), the Cosmos, with members from Plymouth, Livonia, Birmingham, Northville and Brighton, finished on top of their under-16 division with an 11-0 record.

In reaching that record, the Cosmos allowed just two goals all season.

Their success carried into the state playoffs, but they faltered in their bid for a second straight title. With a team of mostly 15-year-olds, the Cosmos made it to the semifinals but were halted by Livonia Arsenal.

"Our aim is to win the state title next

year," said Linda Rama, manager of the Cosmos and wife of the coach. "Some of these kids have been on the team since my husband formed it five years ago."

"That togetherhness has helped in the team's attitude," Mrs. Rama said, noting that only two goals were scored against them all season. "They played hard on defense, even when they were ahead and a let-down was certainly possible."

THE COSMOS have done some traveling during the season and have been equally adept when matched against talent outside the state. At the Reston International Tournament in Washington, D.C., the Cosmos tied McLean, Va., 1-1; beat Reston, Va., 3-0; beat Hamilton, Ontario, 4-0; and beat Little River, Md., 2-0, before losing to Annandale, Va., 5-2 in the final game.

The Cosmos also displayed their gamehness at the Wolverine III tourney at Schoolcraft College earlier this month. Competing against mostly older players, the Cosmos still surged into the finals before being defeated by London City of Canada, 2-0.

Prior to being ousted, the Cosmos tied Lansing, 1-1, defeated Sweden, 5-2, and defeated Windsor (Canada) United, 4-0, to win their division. In the playoffs, the Cosmos topped the Canada Maple Leaf Club, 1-0, and the Canada Blue Water Club, 6-3, to qualify for the finals.

THE KEY to their success? Mrs. Rama explained it simply: "Everyone plays different positions, and (they understand that) every position is just as important as any other."

Adam Cernak of Birmingham led the Cosmos' goal scorers with 18 on the season, while Craig Ciccone, also of Birmingham, was the team's top goalkeeper.

Team members from Plymouth include Mark Flower, Mike Milton, Steve Moran and Andy Rama. Cosmos players from Livonia are Chris Gembis, Brett Murphy, Dennis Patchett, Jim Radevack, Bob Tartaglia and Chris Wiegell. Randy Eppers, Bob Gulberg, Matt Lotarski and Doug May hail from Northville, and Kurt Rindfass is from Brighton.

THREE COSMOS team members were chosen to the one of Michigan's Select Teams. Cernak made the under-17 squad, and Flower and Rama were named to the under-15 team.

To make the squad, the Cosmos trio had to battle some 200 other contestants through six tryouts. The Select Teams will compete in Canada at a date and location yet to be determined. All three Cosmos players are repeaters from a year ago.

And all three hope that their team, the Cosmos, repeats its feat of a season ago by capturing the state title next year. After all, that's the ultimate goal of every team.

Golf outing aids charity

Four golfers playing at Oakland University Katke-Cousins Golf Course Sunday and four playing at the Rochester Golf Club and Steak House on Friday will have a long day when the attempt to play continuously from sunrise to sundown in support of the American Cancer Society.

Helene and Lewis Luchow and Alice and Bob Mauro of Rochester will play at Katke-Cousins while Jim Barbet of Ann Arbor and Shanda Gerke, Bob Prill and Dave Wierzbicki of Romeo will play at the Rochester Golf Club. They will be seeking pledges for each hole of golf completed during the American Cancer Society's "Longest Day of Golf."

Gerke said they hope to complete at least 54 holes between their starting time at sunrise and when they call it a day at sundown. "We know the 'Longest Day of Golf' won't be easy," Gerke said. "It's a real test of endurance, but we feel it is an important way we can demonstrate our support of the American Cancer Society."

The two foursomes are asking those concerned about the disease of cancer to make a pledge for each hole of golf they complete. Funds raised will support research conducted in Michigan as well as local education and service programs of the society.

For further information, contact Gerke at 335-2715.



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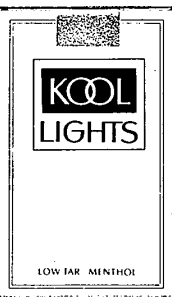
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