

We've decided to stop turning players away and just register them. In turn we increased our membership for the third year in a row and now are in position to flex our 3rd vote in the next election.

We continue to emphasize board representation at Regional and National events, which culminated in many volunteers for this year's AGM in Las Vegas. So many in fact that our budget dictated us to skip Regional meetings in San Diego all together. Yes, Alaska has their priorities straight.

Our state tournament at the end of July featured teams from the Canadian NW Territory, as well as Fairbanks, Eilson Airforce Base and the Mat-Su Valley. Unfortunately we have been unable to attract local teams to the event and we continue to explore ways of retaining existing participants and encouraging new ones from Anchorage.

For the first time we sent an Alaskan referee to the Veteran's Cup. I am certain that Eric did not speak of our representative when he mentioned a lack of officiating talent as compared to the level of play. Nina Johnson spoke very highly of the event and the training she received there. She had attended several youth regionals and told me that she learned more in this one adult tournament than she had in the previous three youth ones. In the past the Alaska SYRA has tied referees to the youth leagues by providing training and trips to the Regional contests. In turn the up and coming officials chose youth games over adult ones when given the choice. Our goal is to even the playing field by exposing those referees to a higher caliber of events and adult specific training that can be applied every day in our leagues.

We also celebrated our first entry in an outside tournament in some time, when the International FC traveled to Seattle for the Copa. Although late season injuries and budget problems decimated the team before their trip, they enjoyed themselves and hope for a larger contingency and better results next year.

We were excited to host the Region IV President's meeting and although it was our first foray into entertaining the brass, we are looking forward to future similar opportunities. The mid-year event would be great in AK, but Bill if you think the beaches were packed in September, you should see them at the end of October. We would appreciate any help all of you can provide in moving the event to late June, a time when the ice actually leaves lakes, if we are to have any shot at another hosting gig. On the other hand, march in Anchorage would be lovely.....

Our first full sized, domed turfed field is scheduled to open in Anchorage next March. The local adult league is the primary tenant of the venue and between being able to offer full sized games year around and the increase in indoor space, all leagues should see further growth.

We continue to pursue fledgling leagues in the state to bring them into the fold. We lure them, entice them, and wait for them in dark alleys. In the end we'll succeed.

Our goals for next year are to rewrite our bi-laws, who are dated and don't apply to many current issues. Since there are no meetings in Vegas next year, we have offered to send affiliated league administrators to San Francisco for the Region IV workshops. In addition we look forward to sending our first team to the Veteran's Cup. We will enter the over 45 group, but hope to get an exemption and play the 60 year olds.

Paul is buying in D.C.. See you all there.