



**Northern Chautauqua Soccer Association**  
P.O. Box 331, Fredonia, NY 14063

**REPORT OF THE D.O.T. 2018-2019**  
*Submitted 10/21/19 by Chris Witkowski*

Due to circumstances beyond my control, I am unable to attend tonight's annual meeting. Despite this, we want to welcome everyone here tonight. We appreciate you all attending the Annual Meeting as its purpose is to keep the membership informed of important NCSA business and to hold elections.

NCSA can only operate with the commitment and dedication of its volunteers. I recently attended a Buffalo and Western New York Junior Soccer League meeting and the President mentioned how a lot of people don't understand we are basically running a small business, with a pretty sizable budget, for free. I want to take this time to thank you all for doing just that!

First, I would like to thank my wife. Without her constant support and ability to be patient with me I would not be able to continue as the Director of Travel. Thank you to all the spouses or significant others for your patience as well. They may not hold a titled position in NCSA but they definitely are NCSA volunteers behind the scenes.

Now, I'd like to introduce the Concord FC committee. These folks take numerous hours away from their families to attend meetings, run events, prepare communications and countless other jobs to bring the youth of this community a quality soccer program. Jim Rush, Debbie Dispense, Cristina Gegenschatz, Mark Maytum and Jim Enser. For the same reason, I also want to recognize our very important and experienced support staff who assist the committee making educated decisions and are just as involved in the day-to-day operations. Our former DOC Brett Gould, Technical Director PJ Gondek, Coach Aaron Pietro and Coach Phillip Cook. Brett, Krista Bellis and Kathy Rush have resigned their respective positions as new endeavors have caused them to direct their attention to those. We thank them all for the many years of volunteer service they have given to NCSA/Concord FC and wish them the best of luck in the future.

The Concord offseason was dedicated to formulating a plan to be as transparent as possible by updating the handbook and improving communication with our families. The Concord committee adopted a full resolution process to further explain the who, what, where, how and why of our decision-making and publishing them on our website.

The 2019 Spring season kicked off with a couple of try-out dates at one of our new partners' facility, Fredonia State University of New York. Holy Trinity has been the home of Concord FC for many years. We thank them for their continued support. However, with Concord FC growing we needed more space. A good problem to have. With the assistance of Brett Gould, Assistant Director of Athletics at Fredonia University, PJ Gondek, Jake Wilkins, Fredonia University Athletic Director Jerry Fisk and Assistant Director of Athletics Angela Pucciarelli, we were able to secure time at this wonderful facility. We held try-outs in the Steele Hall Field house and our teams saw the return of home fields on the turf field. Through great effort, Mark Maytum was able to leverage relationships with the Mayor of Dunkirk to facilitate a meeting with the Dunkirk Board of Education. After a few meetings with Mark, Brett, Jake, myself, Board President Dave Damico and board members Ken Kozlowski and Claudia Szczerbacki, we were able to secure a one-year agreement with the Dunkirk City School District to use their soccer fields. I'm happy to say, while renewing those agreements this year, I was told by many that our club was very professional and well-mannered and that we are welcomed back at both facilities. Thank you again to all that made that possible.

Of course, with the good you must take the bad. We took registration with our Demosphere software which unfortunately, was problematic, but with Cristina helping me, we were able to minimize the issues. We spent many hours consolidating household accounts, interacting with online chat support, and emailing out numerous extra invitations to parents. Jim Enser spent many hours correcting photos that were uploaded incorrectly during registration and then laminating travel passes for teams' first games. We also saw problems with our uniform vendor Challenger Sports. But with our uniform committee, Jake, Cristina and Brett enduring long hours, they were able to get our teams dressed for their first game. We heard a lot of nice compliments about the uniforms. They looked pretty sharp. NCSA/Concord FC will take steps in the offseason to address these issues in hopes of not having repeat problems. On the plus side, Debbie Dispense is very responsible as our finance coordinator getting all fees paid on time and keeping our treasurer reports up to date. Having a person like Debbie is critical to the club having a reputation that is financially responsible. Krista and Kathy spent long hours ensuring all our staff was risk management approved and we were in compliance with the additional standards the facilities required.

The season went very well and had 146 participants. Our coaches and their teams are listed in my annual report. Just listing them in the report, doesn't give them the recognition they deserve however. These coaches are building character in our players. They are teaching advanced skills. They are developing the whole player. Phillip Cook, Emily Pleszewski, Ron Tonelli, Mike Rukavina, Aaron Pietro, Chris Piede, Matt Walker, Dominique Riforgiato, Brett Gould, PJ Gondek, Dan Tomaszewski, Paul Sellari, Josh Gesing, Mark Maytum, EJ Hayes, and Jim Rush. Thank you all for your dedication and countless hours away from your family.

During the season, I like to reach out to the coaches and see how their games go. I received really nice responses from the coaches, overheard some opponent conversations and received unsolicited feedback from other club administrators. It's important that you hear what people are saying about us.

Our 13U Girls Coach Matt Walker text me, "we are all learning and growing together as a team." "They had fun and never gave up." "You could see the girls coming together and playing strong."

Clarence Soccer Club President Mike Bobowicz said to 19U Girls Coach Brett Gould - "one of the lasting memories I will have is the way your parents were elbow to elbow, from nearly the midfield line all the way to the 18. It was so impressive to see the support from your club for that game."

And then I was walking behind an unknown opponent of the 16U boys team and he said, "I like playing that team. They don't play dirty or nothin"

There were others, but I picked just a few. All these comments represent what our club strives to portray. An image of excellence. An image of integrity. An image of professionalism. It is a direct reflection of our coaching staff, administrators, players and parents. We couldn't be prouder of this club!

The 2018 Fall season saw 60 players participate. The coaches for fall were Aaron Pietro, Josh Czekanski, Phill Cook, Joe Stellrecht, Dave Felt, Sean Sullivan, Chris Piede, Peter Reinelt, and Zach Meadows. We look at the fall season as somewhat of a "feeder" to the Spring Season. This program is meant to be a bridge from the Concord Academy to Concord FC Travel. We typically see about half dozen fall players "graduate" to competitive travel. That is a testament to our fall soccer coaches. Unfortunately, we did have to accept a resignation from the Director of Fall Aaron Pietro. Aaron hasn't fully stepped away though. He will still be the Director of Winter Futsal and will be coaching. Thank you for your time directing fall travel.

Looking forward,

The ultimate goal is to ensure the longevity of Concord FC and to operate in an efficient manner.

How do we do this? Our thinking is when you boil it all down, all of our volunteers are critical. Administrators, Coordinators, Coaches, etc. They are the backbone of this organization. We need to take a strategic approach to promote volunteerism through short and long-term goals. We have to get as many volunteers as possible. Having a quality volunteer workforce translates to a very efficient organization. We as an organization must have pride in what we do so that it filters down to our families.

How to do we build that pride? Well, I'm biased but I think we are doing a pretty good job already. A few possible ways are to enhance the following: communicate about volunteer efforts, recognize and thank current and past volunteers, celebrate our alumni players and their accomplishments, strengthen our membership support and holding ourselves to the highest standard thru continued coach education and transparent policies and procedures. I also think it is important going forward for us to build more relationships with as many collaborators as possible.

NCSA/Concord FC is made up of a lot of inspirational and motivated people. Their continued commitment and dedication to our soccer families will catapult us to the next level. Thank you.

Respectively Submitted,



Christopher M. Witkowski  
Director of Travel, Concord FC