

Utah Area Sports

SPORTS NEWS—December 2011

Training for Basketball Coaches, Officials, and Scorekeepers in December

Two Options for Attending:

- Saturday, December 3, 8 a.m.–11 a.m. at 4917 Viewmont Street, Holladay
- Saturday, December 10, 8 a.m.–noon at 13400 South 2700 West, Riverton

Additional Detail Provided on December Calendar

Basketball clinics will be held the first two Saturdays in December. All coaches, officials, and scorekeepers are invited to attend either the December 3 event in Holladay or the December 10 event in Riverton.

During the first hour, the clinic will focus on “basics” like new rule changes, guidelines to follow, and the purpose of church sports, said Kae Strong, Salt Lake City Area officials director. This is important, she said, because while many of those called to these positions have played basketball before, just as with other callings, they’re not paid or trained professionals.

“A lot of them have never done this before,” she says. “It’s a lay work, just as all callings are. We receive training anytime we receive a new calling, and it’s no different with the sports program. Our job as your resource team is to provide the training.”

This segment of the meeting is also important because there are lots of different sets of rules for basketball. For instance, the NBA, NCAA, and National Federation all have slightly different rules. And since the Church doesn’t follow just one organization’s style across all sports, it’s important to introduce coaches, officials, and scorekeepers to—or remind them of—the rules followed in each particular sport.

This segment of the meeting will also provide an opportunity for those attending to get copies of rulebooks, equipment, jerseys, or anything else they may need for their program.

The second two hours of the meeting will feature breakout sessions specifically for each role:

- Coaches’ class will be taught by Kae Strong.
- Officials’ class will be taught by Kelly Kinghorn and Wayne Oberg.
- Scorekeepers’ class will be taught by Shirley Crawford and Monica Porath.

And at the **December 10 clinic only**, there will be an optional fourth hour from 11 a.m. to noon where officials can practice officiating with two teams coming to play for that purpose. Those who are interested in participating in this segment of the meeting should bring a whistle and wear shoes they can run in.

Sister Strong says that the same material will be covered at each event; the only different between the December 3 and December 10 clinics will be the officiating practice held at the end of the December 10 meeting.

“We want people to understand that the program is not about winning,” says Sister Strong. “It’s about teaching the rules, teaching responsibility, and teaching the players to do their best.”

She shared the example of one sister who had played basketball but had never been trained about how to coach until she attended a clinic. That coach, Sister Strong reported, said that the clinic “made all the difference in the world.” She shared the following with Sister Strong:

“I learned that if I loved the girls; invited them out; made them feel important; and reached to friends of other faiths, those who aren’t active and to those who aren’t athletic, we could have a successful program. We had the biggest, most consistent team in the stake. It’s not that we were winning, but they came, and we had a good time.”

In time, Sister Strong reports, that team's abilities improved. They began taking their drills and practices more seriously, and before long, they started to win.

"That's exactly the whole idea," Sister Strong said. "If you try hard and do your best and feel that you belong, you learn to love the sport and everyone else, and you begin to succeed. And then you can take that into school or another hobby, like playing the piano, and find success there too. It's the same formula.

"This isn't a high school or county rec program," she continued. "The Church sports program is not about creating athletes. It's about creating sons and daughters of the Savior. It's no different than a calling in Young Women or as a Scoutmaster or as an Elders Quorum President. You're still teaching the gospel; you're just doing it in a different part of the building."

Questions about the clinics can be directed to Kae Strong, Salt Lake City Area Officials Director, at 801-568-7853 (home), 801-347-5619 (cell), or kaestrong@gmail.com.

These training clinics are made available through the Utah Salt Lake City Area Sports Resource Team. A special thanks to the Barry Miller and Holladay Coordinating Council and Gene Horne and the Riverton Coordinating Council for hosting these events.

Sports Mall Nights Planned for February

November 19's YSA co-ed volleyball tournament was highly successful, with 40 teams participating in the all-day tournament at the University of Utah Institute building and three other surrounding buildings. Each team of approximately 10 YSA co-eds played at least seven games; the tournament championship went to the Salt Lake YSA 2nd Ward in the Taylorsville YSA Stake.

"These kids really like this kind of thing," said Gary Larsen, who, with his wife, Suzanne, serves as the Salt Lake City YSA Director and YSA Coordinating Council Sports Specialist. "They like the competition. They like the camaraderie. They like the sports because it's fun. They meet a lot of other kids. It definitely fills a need."

The next YSA events will be a Sports Night at the sports Mall at 5445 S. 900 East in Murray. The North Division (Bonneville, Bountiful, Holladay, Pioneer, and Taylorsville Stakes) event will be Friday, February 3, from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. The South Division (Draper, Murray, Riverton, Sandy, and West Jordan Stakes) event will be Friday, February 10, from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m.

The event, which Brother Larsen notes has been very popular in the past, will offer the following activities:

- Three-on-three basketball (both men's and women's)
- Co-ed wallyball on seven courts
- Dodge ball on two courts
- Open swimming and intertube races
- Zumba dance classes
- Mixed doubles tennis

YSA Volleyball Tournament a Success;

"Church sports activities have a unique central purpose much higher than the development of physical prowess, or even victory itself. It is to strengthen faith, build integrity, and develop in each participant the attributes of his maker."

The Church Sports Official video, quoted in Thomas S. Monson, "Goal beyond Victory," *Ensign*, November 1988.