

Wings offer development program

The Buffalo Wings girls lacrosse organization, which is open to players of all ages from modified to varsity, is debuting the "Hot Wings" developmental lacrosse program for girls entering grades three through eight this fall. Registration for the 2008 season is also now underway. For more information, call Kim at 531-2705 or visit www.buffalowingslacrosse.com.

Soccer team embarks on European tour

Williamsville player on Clarence squad headed to Prague Cup

by **JASON NADOLINSKI**
Reporter

It's not uncommon to see athletes join travel teams during the summer to keep their skills up-to-date in their chosen sport, but one Clarence soccer team is giving a new meaning to the term "travel team."

The Clarence Stallions U16 boys team left Monday on a 13-day journey that will see them participate in the elite Prague Cup Tournament July 2-5 before playing a couple of friendly games in Austria. The Stallions, who've lost just twice to local and regional competitors in 50 games over the past two years, are looking to test their mettle against some upper-echelon squads.

"It's going to be a great time and definitely a good soccer experience," Stallions coach Lou Vitello said. "We did a trip about five years ago like this, and some of the kids on the team now had older brothers on that team. The parents started talking, we put together a couple of options, and the kids are all psyched that the parents wanted to do this trip."

When the idea of playing in an overseas tournament became more of a reality, Vitello contacted Harvard Sports Management, a company that takes into consideration multiple facets about a team — its record and age level, among others — and finds a tournament or other playing situation that best suits that squad. That's how the Stallions wound up with a berth in the Prague Cup.

The Stallions will play in the six-team U16 International Bracket Premier Level bracket at the Prague Cup, with three games guaranteed in the form of pool play. Clarence has the potential to play two more games depending on how things shake out in pool play.

After that, the Stallions will play exhibition contests in Salzburg, Austria, and Regensburg, Germany.

"These kids have been extremely successful these last two years, and by going overseas, they're going to face better competition that is going to really test their abilities," Vitello said. "They're going to see where they stand. These guys are all doing so well,

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— *Coach Lou Vitello*

and it's an anomaly that, at this age, they are all doing so well. They're not recruited for this team, but we're going out and beating teams that are made from recruited kids."

The trip is costing \$3,000 for

each of the team's 17 players — 14 from Clarence High School, three from Canisius High School and Evan Anderson from Williamsville East. There are 18 adults going on the trip as well.

Every one of the players did multiple fundraisers for the trip, giving them a greater appreciation for the trip they have just started.

"These kids did team pancake breakfasts, we put ads in our team program, we raffled off a trip to London ... the kids worked hard to raise money for their trip," Vitello said. "Some of them raised so much that they paid for their trip in full."

Vitello, who was Clarence's varsity head coach for three years earlier this decade and is now the associate head coach at Medaille College, was quick to point out that the trip is about more than soccer. The Stallions will be visiting numerous cultural and other tourist-type destinations while traveling through the Czech Republic, Germany and Austria.

"We're going to see four major cities that had been behind the Iron Curtain not too long ago,

when you really think about it," Vitello said. "I didn't want the whole trip to just be about soccer. We're going to go to the Dachau Concentration Camp, we're going to white water raft in the Alps. We have a lot planned along the way for them to get the cultural aspects of Eastern Europe."

Vitello worked extremely hard to make sure the Stallion players and their parents get the most out of the trip, since a trip to Europe isn't exactly going to be a yearly excursion — especially with the rising cost of air travel and fuel, and the declining value of the dollar against the euro.

"I can't see this trip costing less than \$3,000 in the future," Vitello said. "When I first booked the trip, I made sure the travel agent bought euros at that point when the deposit was locked in. Even then, I was told we could get an increase in the price because of fuel prices. But, that was part of the reason we wanted all the kids to partake in every fundraiser, so that they have a greater appreciation of the value of the trip."

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Pepsi Center to host in-line hockey tourney

The Tournament Of Roller Hockey Series (TORHS) will be bringing its National Tournament to Buffalo when the Amherst Pepsi Center hosts the 2008 action from July 4 to 12.

More than 2,000 players making up nearly 200 teams in multiple age groups — including teams from Texas, Florida, Missouri and Canada plus Western New York — will celebrate the 10th anniversary of TORHS by participating in the tournament.

The Western New York in-line hockey community will be well represented with teams from the Buffalo Wings, the Buffalo Storm and Buffalo In-line Hockey Group

(BIHG). Local players, including Chris Kendall, Pat Smith, Eric Wright, David Campuzano, Shane and Mike Irwin, Derek LaViolette, Brad Owens, Adam Rainey, Ryan Okon, Jonathan Clark, Ian Durgan, Zac and A.J. Zaepfle, Russ Rizzo, Kevin Eberth, Christian Curtola, Adam Terragnoli, Alex Willis, Calvin Waley, Josh Graser, Ricky Jacobs, Tyler Cassillo and Zac Carlisle, are among those scheduled to participate.

"When it comes to finding a location for an event as big as this year's TORHS Nationals, you have to find a city you trust will get the job done for TORHS play-

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Clarence swim club fares well at STAR Long Course Meet

The Clarence Swim Club enjoyed more success in June at the STAR Long Course Meet.

Setting new club records for Clarence were Kim Forhd (10 and under 200 breaststroke), Kendra Mayer (11-12 50 free, 50 back, and 100 and 200 butterfly), Christina Seminara (13-14 200 butterfly), Cami Farkas (senior 200 free, 100 butterfly), Julia Bulmahn (senior 100 and 200 back), and Jake Michalski (8 and under 100 free, 50 backstroke, 50 butterfly).

The relay team of Mayer, Becky Michalski, Claire Willis and Hannah Johnston also broke the 11-12 girls 200 medley record.

Standout performances over the weekend-long meet included Andrew Barden's eight races, where he swam all four strokes and had a significant drop in time in every event. Bulmahn was also impressive as she dropped time in each event while annihilating both of the senior backstroke records.

Emmanuel Rockwell continued to dazzle the crowd with his continued consistent improvements; Rockwell dropped a total of 68.96 seconds over the course of his seven races.

Coach Russ Sampson was par-

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The Amherst Thunder girls U15 soccer team concluded the recently-held Tournament of Champions Series in Rochester with a shootout win over the Doug Miller Soccer team. Members of the team are, from left: front row - Katie Brown, Sarah Bellinger, Taylor Kunkle, Megan Kerr, Emily Woods; back row - coach Al Bluemle, Katelyn Carpenter, Kristen Boreanaz, Molly Bluemle, Jocelyn Hirschey, Liz Malinowski and coach Brian Boreanaz. Team member Robin Kennery is missing from the photo.

Thunder rolls in title game of six-week soccer tournament

The Amherst Thunder Girls U15 concluded the recently-held Tournament of Champions Series in Rochester with a dramatic shootout win over the Doug Miller Soccer team.

The championship game was knotted 0-0 late in the game when a penalty kick was called against the Thunder. Thunder goalie Katelyn Carpenter laid out and batted away the shot headed toward the side netting to preserve the tie. Minutes later, a shootout was necessary to determine the winner of the six-week tournament.

Again, excellent goaltending from Carpenter allowed the Thunder to seal the win. Three successful shootout goals from Liz Malinowski, Jocelyn

Hirschey and Robin Kennery provided the winning touch for the Thunder.

The Thunder beat STAC United in the semifinals, 2-0, with goals from Molly Bluemle and Emily Woods to advance to the championship game.

Despite injuries to several key players, the Thunder won several TOC games playing either without a bench or with a severely short-handed one leading up to championship weekend.

Contributing to the championship win and games throughout the series were team members Taylor Kunkle, Megan Kerr, Gaelynn Ryan, Sarah Bellinger, Katie Brown, Kristen Boreanaz, Kate Tuskes, Mary Jones and Haley Welch.