



**HOLLANDIA**

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Soccer Saturday Program Report  
Indoor 2016-2017

Prepared by Hollandia Soccer Club  
March 2017

## Background

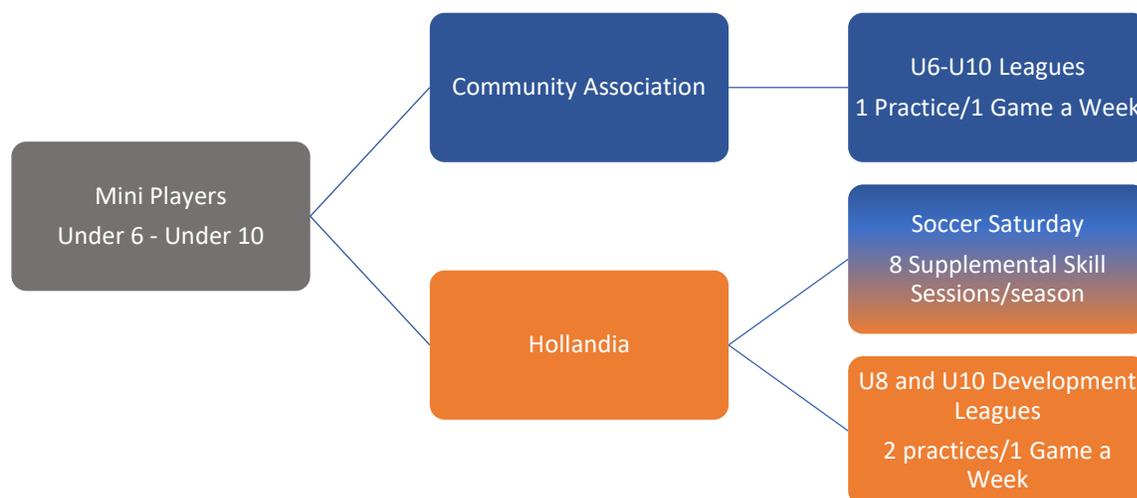
Mini soccer programming in Saskatoon is programming directed at U6-U10 players. Prior to the indoor 2014 season all mini programming was offered through the community associations.

**Hollandia's strategic approach to mini-soccer development is two-fold:** an intra-club program (**D League**) which provides U8 and U10 club players advanced training with mentorship opportunities for specialized coaches and a community outreach program known as **Soccer Saturday** which provides engaged Community Associations weekly coach and player development. **This report covers only the community outreach component of our programming.**

Soccer Saturday is a program that was first developed in the outdoor season of 2014. At the time Hollandia had been receiving feedback about challenges faced by the community associations offering mini soccer in its draw area. Specifically, **there were challenges with finding, retaining, and developing coaches, and secondly there were concerns that many parent coaches felt unprepared** to deliver soccer specific skills. Hollandia also noticed that players coming into the zone system often did not have the level of skill development that would be anticipated.

**Soccer Saturday was designed to bridge the community and zone system**, allowing players access to free, supplemental training delivered by Hollandia coaches. At the same time, the Hollandia coaches mentor community coaches and model age level appropriate training based on long term player development principles. Since its inception more than 500 players have taken part in the Soccer Saturday Program. Thanks to generous grants from Saskatoon Youth Soccer we have been able to implement a free, supplemental program for our community players. However, we want to **ensure this program is a high-quality experience for the coaches and players.**

The current program offerings for mini-players look like this:



## Hollandia's Perspective

The Soccer Saturday program is incredibly important to Hollandia. The opportunity to partner with community associations to provide a continuum of soccer options for families means there are more players playing in the way they want to, but still having the opportunity to develop. With the advent of the Developmental leagues at U8 and U10, Hollandia has the opportunity to work with mini-players in house. However, **Hollandia believes it has a responsibility to our community associations**, players, coaches and families to provide soccer expertise to supplement their dedicated work to provide the highest quality soccer experience to all our families.

**Retaining players as they age through the system is of primary concern to Hollandia.** From a player perspective, we want to encourage enjoyment and lifelong participation in the sport. We want to assist all players to grow as players and offer a variety of developmental opportunities to our players. Equally importantly, we want to **ensure that volunteer soccer coaches have access to mentorship and development** so they can be confident and successful coaches in one season, or through a lifetime of coaching.

As the Indoor 2016-2017 season is drawing to a close and preparations are beginning for planning outdoor 2017-2018, Hollandia wanted to check in with the families taking part in the current Soccer Saturday program to find out what we are doing well and where we need to improve. We are dedicated to continual improvement to meet the needs of our members. We conducted a survey of participants of the Soccer Saturday between March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Parents and coaches were asked a variety of categorical questions to determine their overall enjoyment and satisfaction with the current program, as well as open ended questions to solicit advice and guidance on areas to take into consideration for future planning.

## Schedule

**A total of eight sessions were run this season** for each of three age groups; U6, U8, and U10.

The dates of these sessions were:

November 5, 19, 26

Dec 17

Jan 14

Feb 4

Mar 4, 11

## What do the Numbers Say?

This indoor season there 71 individual players from 64 families registered in the Soccer Saturday program, broken down as:

Age Group	Number of Players
U6	16
U8	30
U10	25

There is a large non-response bias with this type of surveying as those individuals happy with the products or services have a lower expected return for completing the survey. Those that are very happy or those that are very upset, or those that have other motivations to answer (such as coaches) are more likely to respond.

Thirty-two people completed the survey representing an overall response rate of 45%. While the responses varied between age group, there was a minimum of 20% response for each age group.

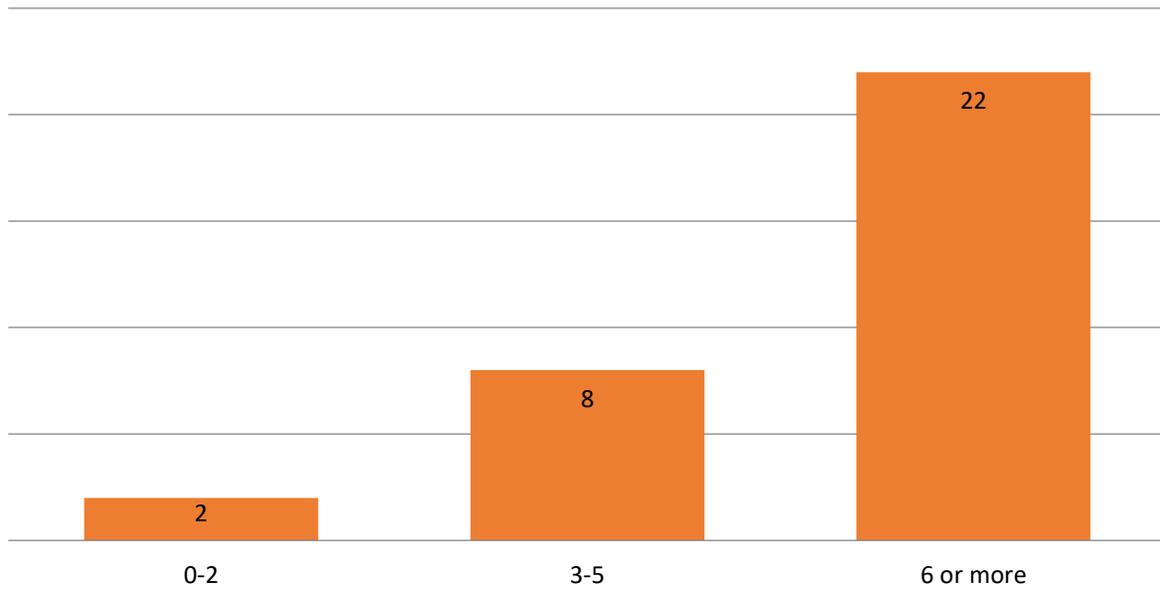
The survey asked questions that:

- Captured basic categories for classification purposes (Gender, division, role);
- Helped gauge enjoyment of the Soccer Saturday program as part of the soccer offerings, the way players were able to implement their learning in game, and how well coaches felt supported and coach learning.
- Recommendations about future offerings of Soccer Saturday

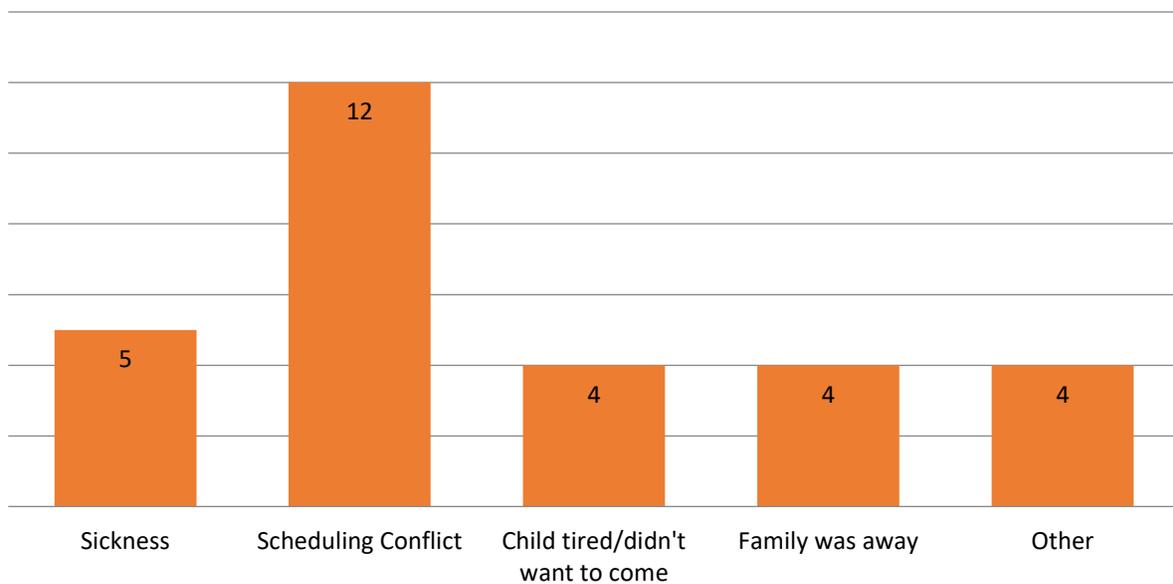
## Enjoyment of Soccer Saturday

**Overall, 68% of players attended 6 or more of the Soccer Saturday sessions.** The main reason when players didn't attend was a scheduling conflict. Attendance at a free, supplemental program is a good indicator of how well the program is being received, how much children and parents enjoy it. When we see attendance go down it is the first indication that something needs to be adjusted in our sessions.

## How many sessions did your child attend?

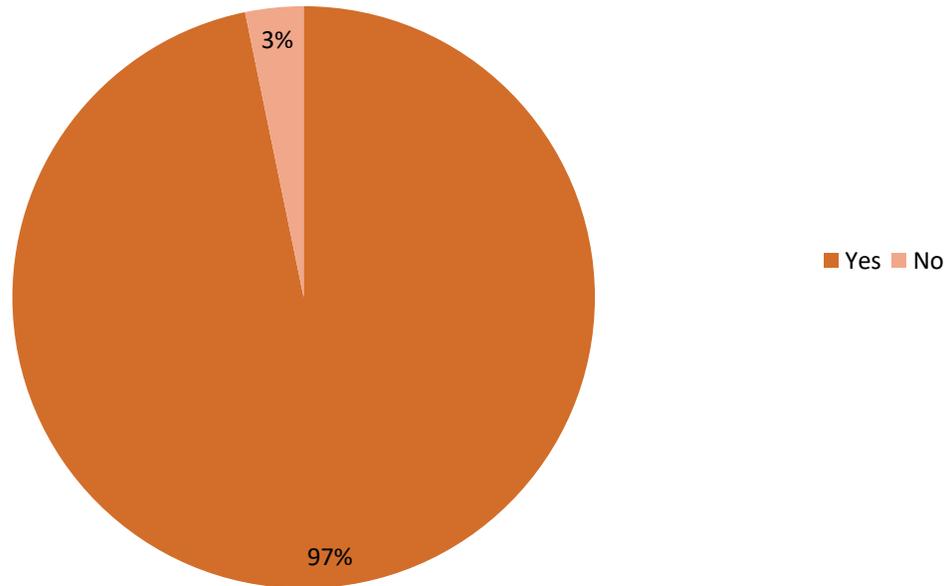


## Reason for non-attendance



The most important indicator we received that the Soccer Saturday session is on track, is that 97% of parents identified that their children enjoyed the session.

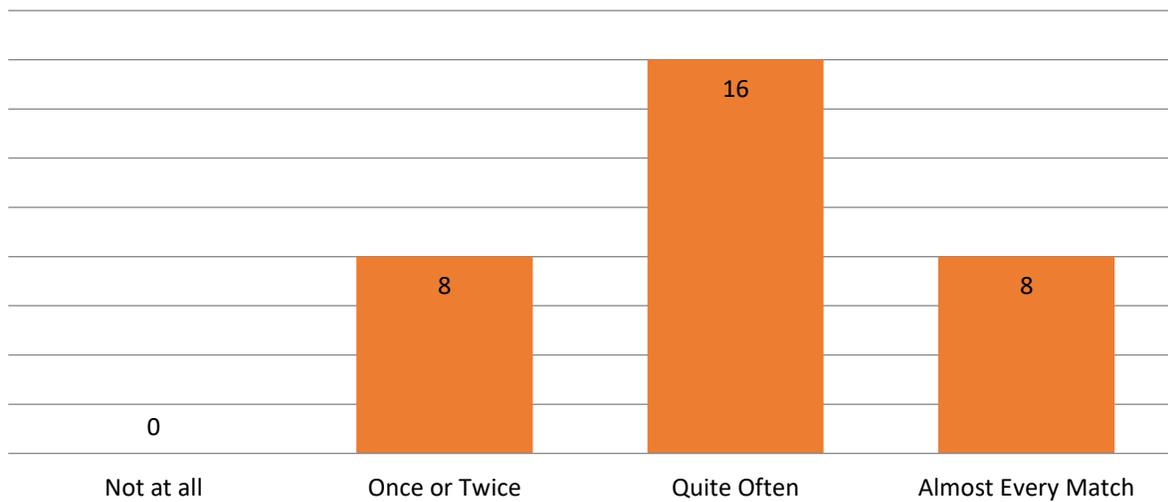
## Did your child enjoy the Soccer Saturday session



### Learning at the Sessions

Overall 75% of parents identified their children tried something they learned quite often or almost every match.

## How often did you child try something learned at a session in a match?





## What did respondents like?

1. **Head Coaches** - “Excellent instructions, great engagement with the children, the coaches made it fun for the kids!” Respondents were impressed with the energy and commitment of the head coaches. They were surprised at their ability to handle large numbers of kids, while keeping them engaged and having fun. They liked the exposure to different ways of doing things.
2. **Skill Development** – “The coaches were amazing with the kids and we definitely saw a lot more skill building than just repetitive scrimmages. I was so very happy with the whole process and hope that we can attend again in the future!” Parents saw skill building happening in fun and different ways, and then they saw the skills being implemented in matches. They saw the same techniques being replicated in their community practices.
3. **Community Coach Support** – “As a community coach I appreciated an actual soccer player coaching my child/ team.” This is the very reason that the Soccer Saturday program was created, and we are happy to see that it is having the impact we were looking for.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

There is strong support from the parent and coach perspective that the Soccer Saturday program needs to continue. People are pleased with the level of expertise and experience of the head coaches, and they love the different way skills are taught to their players in fun and engaging ways.

We need to continue to find ways to deepen the experience for our community coaches so that they feel engaged and involved in the process. For the indoor season we need to work on new and innovative ways to increase the number of offerings of the program, but at the same time keep the program free for our participants. We need to ensure our head coaches display the same skills as the current head coaches – realizing the challenges of finding dedicated age group specialists at the younger ages.

**The grants from Saskatoon Youth Soccer have enabled this program to run, and this funding is crucial to ensure we can continue this program offering. Hollandia may need to request additional grant money to be able to extend this program to our newly assigned core neighbourhoods, where the program could be an important engagement tool.**

## Acknowledgements

Hollandia would like to thank Saskatoon Youth Soccer Inc. for providing funding vital to the successful operation of this program.

