

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL SPORTS ORGANIZATION
ANNUAL REPORT
OCTOBER 2012

What About Us?

The Great Lakes Regional Sports Organization promotes the physical and mental well-being of youth, teens, and adults who have a physical or visual disability by providing adaptive recreational, fitness and competitive sports programs. Programs are conducted in Illinois and Wisconsin with outreach and technical assistance also provided throughout these states.

Great Lakes Regional Games and Adult National Championships

233 athletes registered, including 46 injured military who competed in track, field, swim, boccia, archery, table tennis, weightlifting and handcycling. Classification was conducted in track, field, and swim. Phil and Deb also offered an on-line course for track and field officials to increase the number of track and field officials.

Recommendations

1. Increase the number of qualified officials for track and field.
2. Continue to offer different pits for the recreational throwers.
3. Provide different targets for the VA veterans in archery.
4. Find a faster track
5. Apply for level 3 sanctioning
6. Move the social to Friday night

WEEKLY PROGRAMS

Junior Varsity Wheelchair Basketball

The team traveled to the NWBA National Tournament and did not do as well as they would have liked however, the team had a great time and Coach Tom Daily is optimistic about the 2012-13 season.

Prep

The team is adding a few more players and will continue this year to be more recreational than competitive, however games will still be played.

Jr. Prep

We are looking to have a few Jr. Prep games against other teams in the area. This team is geared for the players ages 4 to 8 with the intent of introducing basketball in a fun manner and having the players learn the skills appropriate for this age.

Wheelchair football

Practices are moving from Saturday where coach Tom Daily had conflicts with coaching wheelchair basketball. A number of new players have been identified to expand the team.

Wheelchair Floor Hockey

This program continues to be as much social as competitive and draws those individuals who want to be active in a team sport but don't want to travel or adhere to specific rules.

Goalball

Goalball is revamping its program and our current coach will coach only the youth team as we look for a new coach for our adult athletes.

Swim

Under the direction of Glen O Sullivan, swim is one of our more popular programs offering both a instructional and competitive swim team. Changes for the 2012-13 year include goal-setting for athletes conducted on a more formal basis, and adding more adult instructors. GLASA encourages its competitive swimmers to join either a club or their school team for more opportunities for training while continuing to work with GLASA on stroke and techniques.

Congrats to Alyssa Gialamis who competed at the 2012 London Paralympics.

Track

The track program has re-evaluated its program and is changing its format, where one coach will be responsible for workouts and conditioning, the other coaches will be responsible for sitting and positioning, implementation of the workouts and the organization of the team. A specific practice time will be identified for adults.

Field

GLASA has a strong and growing youth and adult field program however, both of its coaches live at least an hour from our practice site.. There have been scheduling challenges so we are in the process of identifying another coach to assist. We are very much in the need for new field chairs.

Weightlifting/powerlifting

This sport is expanding to two days a week and we are very fortunate to have such a knowledgeable coach to grow this sport.

Wheelchair and Ambulatory Tennis

New players have been identified and this year we are looking for a few of our players to enter tournaments.

Power Soccer

The team expanded its tournament team although lost some of its recreational players so we are looking to add a recreational team. Our team was undefeated going into the national tournament, however did not play as well as they would have liked.

Sled Hockey

This is still our fastest growing sport, with a youth team, a mixed youth and adult recreational team and competitive team. Partnering with the Falcon's Ice Hockey Team has proved to be a tremendous asset for the recruitment of coaches and other resources. The adult team played its first national tournament in Texas last spring and did quite well.

Boccia

Although a small program with only a few players, the program is conducted October thru May with players competing in a number of the boccia tournaments conducted in the Chicago area.

Conditioning

GLASA has identified a local gym where we can set up rollers and a donated elliptical for cross training during the winter.

Archery

GLASA has identified a new indoor archery facility which is very interested in working with us to expand our program.

Wheelchair Dance

GLASA did not offer the program the last two years in that we did not find an instructor who was qualified to teach this integrative class. However, our past dance instructor who moved away is back and we are once again very excited to bring back this program.

Golf

GLASA expanded its program to offer the program in late spring, summer and early fall, along with golf programming to its injured military.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAMMING

U of I Wheelchair Basketball Program and Mike Frogley to offer a wheelchair basketball program for its juniors.

Adaptive Adventures to offer our week long adaptive sports camp, kayaking, injured military camp, water skiing and down hill skiing.

Falcons Ice Hockey team to conduct its sled hockey team

YMCA scuba program to offer its adaptive scuba program.

USTA and the National Alliance for Accessible Golf to offer tennis and golf.

Dare 2 Tri established as a program with the Chicago Park District and GLASA, is now a separate 501c3 organization, however GLASA continues to partner with Dare2Tri for a number of events and their camp.

Blade Runners, conducted by Scheck and Siress Prosthetics is a running group conducted by Melissa Stockwell. GLASA provides support in a number of ways to the group.

SCHOOL BASED PROGRAMMING

GLASA targets schools which are in low income areas to provide adaptive sports programming during the day. Many of these students do not have access to transportation so it makes more sense to bring the program to the school. Examples of these programs include track and field to the blind and visually impaired at two schools in the city of Chicago, wheelchair tennis to another school in Chicago where we partnered with Chicago State University using students as assistants, and wheelchair tennis in Waukegan schools where we also involved parents in the program.

NUTRITION

GLASA has begun to promote healthy eating at all of its programs with some coaches more involved than others. We partner with Rosalind Franklin University's medical program where their students come out and conduct hands on presentations as to healthy eating. This fun program has been really popular with our kids.

OTHER SPECIALIZED PROGRAMMING

Injured Military

*In cooperation with Adaptive Adventures, GLASA provides a 3 day injured military camp providing a water show, water skiing, kayaking, and sailing.

*GLASA provided golf, track, field, archery and swimming both on site and off for the veterans of Hines VA and the Milwaukee VA.

*GLASA assisted RIC in their swim, track and field portion of their camp.

*Conducted by World Sport Chicago, GLASA along with other Chicago based adaptive sports agencies assisted in conducting the Valor Games.

*GLASA provides outreach, guides, and equipment so the injured veterans can participate in adaptive sports and recreational activities.

TEAM GLASA

TEAM GLASA is made up of junior and adult athletes who train and compete in a variety of non- team sports through out the Midwest and on a national level.

Adaptive Sports Equipment Lending Program

GLASA has large number of adaptive sports equipment which is available for use by participants and community members.

Ability Presentations

GLASA provides presentations and hands on activities to schools and community based agencies to promote physical activity, healthy lifestyles, adaptive sports and recreational activities.

GLASA 5k Twilight Run, Walk and Roll

This annual event conducted in September each year attracts a large number of competitors who have a physical or visual disability, with awards for the categories of manual wheelchair, racing wheelchair, amputee, blind and visually impaired, and other ambulatory disabilities.

Claddagh Wheelchair Basketball Tournament

A one day tournament for JV and prep teams throughout the Midwest.

IN MEMORIAM

GLASA is saddened to have lost three of its GLASA family members this year.

*John Lawson, a injured veteran who coached our junior basketball team and NJDC team and participated in track and field as a adult competitor.

*Brad Bowen, Brad competed at NJDC for a number of years, played wheelchair basketball on our JV team, and as an adult played wheelchair tennis with GLASA.

*Dennis Wuernema was a longtime GLASA goalball coach and national goalball referee, as well as being a parent of GLASA's goalball player, Jillian.

Submitted by Cindy Housner