

## **How to Design, Build and Finance a State of the Art Soccer Complex**

### **Jim Matteson, Pensacola Soccer Complex**

- In order to make the facility a success you must make the facility the focal point of soccer in your community.
- There is a need for private investment but only to help finance the building of the facility.
- If the facility is designed and built with the needs of the soccer community in mind the Soccer Complex should be self-sustaining in nature. It is important to remember that the extended “soccer community” contains parents, brother, sisters, girlfriends, boyfriends, etc... and not just players.

### **Design**

- There must be adequate traffic flow into and out of the facility.
- There must be adequate spacing in and around fields either as a run off area for players or for viewing by spectators.
- Every field should have lights (allows greater use of fields).
- There must be adequate parking.
- Running a profitable and high profile soccer complex cannot be done strictly with a volunteer board.
- A soccer complex needs a full-time facility manager and maintenance manager.
- It is important to have administrative offices on site.
- In order to generate increased revenue for the Complex there should be a soccer store on site. It is not suggested that the Complex operators run the store but instead they lease the space out to an established business. There is a captive market in having a store on site. Not only does the store add a revenue stream for the Complex but it also serves to make the Complex more of a destination.
- Make the facility a destination for the whole family by adding a picnic and playground area.
- Include a restaurant / bar in the Soccer Complex as a means of generating extra revenue.
- In addition a concession stand should be provided for the spectators. All these elements add potential revenue streams for the Complex and give it a greater likelihood of turning a profit.

## **Construction**

- Build adequate sand based fields that drain properly in order to ensure that the fields last.
- Adequate irrigation and to minimize damage.
- Secure fields with adequate fencing.
- Fully automated electrical irrigation system.
- Get your construction right the 1<sup>st</sup> time.

## **Operations**

- 5 year business plan to recoup investment.
- Budget for the Pensacola Soccer Complex is \$1 million a year on top of \$4 million that was originally invested.
- The facility handles Club, league play and tournaments.
- A stadium field is critical in terms of generating gate revenue and TV opportunities. The stadium in Pensacola is only 5,000 but has hosted the U.S. National women's team.
- Extra revenue can be generated by hosting soccer camps, clinics and coaching seminars.
- Retail generates revenue.
- Consider profit sharing to a quality concession company instead of trying to run the restaurant / bar / concession yourself.

## **Sponsorship/Advertising**

- “Units of visualization”. – how many people will be coming through the gates and seeing the sponsors advertising.
- Sell products for local companies by showing them how the events benefit their business. (i.e. demonstrate to managers of local restaurants or hotels/motels how their business increases when events are held at the Soccer Complex.)
- Use board markings by the side of each field.
- Commercial development on site. If space permits look into the possibility of having a hotel on site or perhaps some other form of family entertainment Centre (i.e. batting cages, etc..)

## **How do you finance?**

- Public offering for investment.
- Along with the potential return on investment when approaching potential investors it is important to be able to demonstrate “Who is in charge of managing the investor's money?”

This session report submitted by Matt Townsend, Technical Director Manitoba Soccer Association [soccermb@escape.ca]