



DIOCESAN RECREATION ASSOCIATION

197 E. GAY ST.

COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215

June 2021

Dear Pastors, Principals, Athletic Directors, DREs and Youth Ministers:

What a year! We made it through, but I hope things will be back to normal for the 2021-22 sports season.

COVID-19 forced the DRA to make several hard decisions regarding the sports offered to the parishes in 2020-2021. I want to thank everyone - the children who participated and all the adults for their time and energy – who made the seasons happen. Many adults offered their support and were willing to share their thoughts in helping to determine how to make this year work. The volunteers, coaches, venue staffs and parents went above and beyond for the kids.

Soccer and football were moved to the spring for the 2020-21 seasons. We were able to hold a fairly normal cross-country season (masks and social distancing, but we were outdoors and the kids were running). Volleyball saw a limited number of teams and about half of the sites we normally use. Basketball was postponed until mid-January. Again, we had less teams as some parishes opted to sit out the season. Football didn't work out for the spring, so we are all anxious to see it return to its normal Fall season. Spring soccer only had one league of Reserve boys. It was an abbreviated season, but it was an opportunity for the boys to participate. Track was interesting this year. We had to use two venues and spread out the teams over the two sites, in essence holding four meets on each Saturday. Baseball actually had two seasons. One in the fall and one in the spring. Softball was offered in the spring. In all we had 3,560 students-athletes participate in the 2020-2021 seasons.

Of course, we held our meetings using Zoom. Athletic Directors and coaches were conscientious about attending the meetings. I felt we all worked together to make things happen for the children.

I would like to thank you for your continued support of the Diocesan Recreations Association (DRA) and the use of your facilities for our programs.

As most of you know, the DRA has partnered with the Play Like A Champion Today Educational Series to host training sessions for all head coaches. To date we have trained almost 2,400 coaches from the parish programs. This year, because of the restrictions placed on us by the coronavirus, the coach and parent trainings were made available via Zoom. We trained over 120 coaches and over 215 parents. I am not sure how these trainings will be conducted in 2021-22. The directives from Play Like A Champion have not come out as of this writing. If we can go back to live presentations, we will. If not, we will continue with the Zom trainings.

We will continue our policy of letting the pastors know when someone has been ejected. This seems to be a best practice and is a deterrent to unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches, parents, fans and athletes. We will be updating the process we use to give the pastors more information about what happened to cause the ejection. We take ejections very seriously and ask the ADs and pastors to follow up with their parishioner when notified of an issue.

We have been trying for several years to transition totally to online submission of parent consent forms. COVID helped us to make this transition. Going forward, all parent consent forms will be completed by going to <https://www.dioceseregister.com/register/>. Parents are able to login and complete the parent consent forms, and sign off on concussion and sudden cardiac arrest as required by Ohio law. We also include the codes of conduct, and personal identifiable information sign offs. Once the parents have completed their portion of the online process, the ADs can go into the program to verify the children are on the teams from the parish and that at least one parent of each athlete has completed the Parent Like A Champion training. Pastors need to verify they are parishioners. The Parish Safe Environment Directors will need to verify that coaches have PGC and BCI. The ADs will be able to verify compliance with Play Like A Champion Coach Trainings. Hard copies of the Eligibility Rosters are still required. The Eligibility Roster may be signed by the pastors, athletic directors, and principals. In some cases, this may be easier than the online process. ADs are told at their meetings when forms are due and are asked to be sure to give the pastors plenty of time to sign off on the forms (at least a week). This saves everyone from having to rush to complete the forms.

The DRA is a program formed by the values of the Catholic Church. The important lessons of commitment, sacrifice and making good choices are part of the experience. It is important to root our sporting efforts in the most important gathering of our Catholic community—the Mass—and to ensure that our young people are blessed in their experiences of athletics. We want to set the precedent in today’s youth sports culture that it is necessary to set aside time for God and family. The DRA has been able to greatly reduce the number of DRA games on Sundays. However, it needs to be noted, that there are other sports offered in the parishes, as well as the local communities, that do not fall under the umbrella of the Diocesan Recreation Association. The DRA hopes to be able to provide the opportunity to reserve Sunday for family time, uninterrupted by scheduled sports, at least once or twice a month.

Scheduling the athletic events is always a challenge. Please provide your Athletic Directors with a complete listing of conflicts with church and school activities. The ADs are asked to check with the parish secretary, the DRE, the school principal, the youth ministers, Scouts, etc. to be sure they have a complete list of conflicts for the Sport Information Form that is due several weeks prior to the beginning of the sports season. It is much easier to schedule around the conflicts than it is to change games after the schedules come out. We are asking that the ADs check with everyone in the parish for such conflicts, and to **include them on the conflict forms**. We realize these may change. Please note the time of your Saturday Mass and the last morning Mass on Sunday. We want to be sure to schedule our activities so they do not conflict with the celebration of the Mass. Nothing is scheduled on Sundays until after 2:00pm. Please be sure to include the dates and times of PSR classes, if your young athletes attend PSR. If parish and school related conflicts are received after the due date and after the schedule has been published, we will try to accommodate the parish or school conflict, but we cannot guarantee it. Once games are set, changes have a tendency to have a snowball effect on the league and affect other teams. We do understand there are instances when something comes up at the last minute and will try our best to make things work. Many coaches who are new to the DRA incorrectly assume that they can modify their own team schedules. It is important to note that the only valid conflicts for a given team are parish and school activities. These must be approved by the DRA. Individual coach and player conflicts are not valid conflicts.

The team league fee will remain at \$60 per team this year. The Athlete Participation fees will be \$15, with the exception of the football fees. The football fees are \$25 per athlete to help offset some of the fees we are being charged for Head’s Up Football. Flag football fees are \$50 per player. This will include the flag belts and flags. There will be no increase in officials’ fees for the upcoming season.

To help with planning, tentative dates were sent to the Athletic Directors and revised dates are included with the letter. The DRA calendar is found on the website www.columbuscatholic.org/recreation then click on calendar.

We need to know who your athletic director will be for the upcoming year. This year, we would like all ADs to complete the form. Many have changed and we need to update the information. I have included the link to the Athletic Director form which is located on the DRA website. <https://goo.gl/forms/uBmwkWK8feowmxtz2>.

If you have decided to move on, we thank you for your service as AD and ask your help in getting this information to the proper person.

Please check our website, <http://www.columbuscatholic.org/recreation> for other information and all forms.

Whether your parish is participating in the DRA or is one that has other sports affiliations, it is my hope that you will not hesitate to contact the DRA office for any assistance we can provide for you and your parish. I can be reached at mraines@columbuscatholic.org, or at 614-241-2580.

Once again, thank you for your support. If the Diocesan Recreation Association can help you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Marty Raines
Director Office of Diocesan Recreation
Director of Girls' Athletics

Schedule for 2021-22

Dates are subject to change.

Athletic Directors' Meeting

July 31—10:00am at St. Mary Magdalene in the church basement

Soccer

July 5--Practices may begin

July 9—Sport Information forms due

July 13—Coaches Meeting 6:30pm at St. Mary Magdalene

July 19—Eligibility Rosters, parent consent forms and fees due

July 24—games begin
Aug. 28/29—Tournament

Football

Aug. 9—Practices begin
Aug. 16—Sport Information forms due at 9:00am
Aug. 21/2-- tentative date for coaches meeting
Sept. 1-- Eligibility Rosters, parent consent forms and fees due
Sept. 11-12—games begin
Oct. 30/31—Tournament Finals

Volleyball

Aug. 9—Practices begin
Aug. 16—Sport Information forms due at 9:00am
Aug. 21—Coaches Clinic and meeting 10:00am at St. Charles
Sept. 1-- Eligibility Rosters, parent consent forms and fees due
Sept. 11/12—games begin
Oct. 23—Tournament begins
Oct. 30—Tournament Finals

Cross Country

July 26—practices begin
July 31—Cross Country Coaches Meeting 12:00pm at St. Mary Magdalene
Aug. 11-- Eligibility Rosters, parent consent forms and fees due
Meets TBD
Oct. 16—Championship Meet

Basketball

Nov. 3—Practices begin
Dec. 4/5—Games begin
Jan. 8/9—Games resume
Feb. 12/13—Regular season ends
Feb. 19-27—Tournaments

Track

March 2--Practices begin
April 2—First Qualifier
April 9—Second Qualifier
April 23—Third Qualifier
April 30—Buckerfield Relays
May 7—Championship Meet

Baseball/Softball

March 7—practices may begin
Week of April 11—first games
May 21-22--Tournaments