

“Right, Mate—Let’s Play Football!”

“Grab that gear from the boot!”
“Right, once around the grid
you go!”

“Your not telling us any porkies,
are ya?”

“That was a brilliant, Riri!”

Those were some of the strange phrases heard on the Vernonia school field a few weeks ago, as the Vernonia Soccer Club (VSC) spent a week training with Jack Walsh and Tim Drohan. Walsh and Drohan are two young gents from England who spent the week schooling Vernonia youth in soccer skills, training drills and soccer (or as they like to call it, futball) culture. It was all part of the Challenger Soccer Camp hosted by VSC.

Challenger Soccer Camps provide a British style, day camp experience that teaches young soccer players new skills and builds confidence, while having fun at the same time. In Vernonia, about twenty-five players ranging in age from four to twelve participated.

Not only did the students learn discipline and how to dribble, trap, shoot and head the ball, they also learned about the English Premiership (the top league in England), Major League Soccer (the top league in the United States) and about some of the most famous soccer players in the world. And they learned lots of British slang and soccer terms along the way.

The puzzled looks from the kids when they were first told to get on the “pitch” or tuck in their “kit” were priceless, but they sure caught on quickly, especially when they had to run around the “grid” or do pushups when they didn’t hustle or were caught fooling around. By the end of the week, four year olds were sprinting across the “pitch” to avoid punishment.

Don’t get the wrong idea; this was not like boot camp. A little discipline seemed to work for the kids and the players really seemed to enjoy their time with their new English friends. Besides using games to teach skills, and scrimmages for practice, the coaches gave many of the kids nicknames and played elimination trivia games to teach them more about the world of soccer.

“Which footballer doesn’t play in MLS—David Beckham, Thierry Henry, Landon Donovan, or Ryan Giggs?” (Giggs was the correct answer—those that answered Beckham, one of the most famous English soccer players in the world who now plays in Los Angeles, had to run an extra lap as Jack exclaimed- “You answered *David Beckham*? David Beckham made the MLS! Once around the grid you go!”)

“What country is Lionel Messi from—Portugal, Spain, Argentina, or England?” (Messi, considered the world’s best player, plays for Spanish

club Barcelona, but is from Argentina. Those that answered England were greeted in mock disbelief by Walsh: “*Lionel Messi!*—does that sound English to you? Tim Drohan? Jack Walsh? *Lionel Messi!*? Right, you’re out!”

It was all in fun and the kids really enjoyed working with such knowledgeable coaches, and learning the slang and soccer terms. Don’t be surprised if you start hearing kids around Vernonia in the next few weeks constantly saying “Brilliant!”

At the end of camp, each player received an individual evaluation from Coach Jack and Coach Tim. One of the young girls was having trouble reading the handwriting on her evaluation and asked Tim to read it to her. Another girl stood in line behind her. “Can you read mine too, please,” she asked after Tim read the first card. “I know what you wrote; I just want to hear you say it.” she said.

For both the young English coaches, the Challenger camps are a fun



Players scrimmage during the recent Challenger Soccer Camp hosted by the Vernonia Soccer Club.

way to spend the summer, traveling the United States and teaching American kids about the game of soccer. They will spend ten weeks here, traveling the Pacific Northwest, spending a week in towns in Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Alaska and Washington. They had the week of July 4th off, and were planning to drive to San Francisco and Los Angeles to see the sights, and swing by Las Vegas for kicks. Word is Jack won \$175!

Drohan will turn twenty-two this month and has been coaching for four years but this is his first year working for Challenger in the United States. “The tipping system is what I’m having trouble with,” says Drohan, about

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Restore, Re-explore, Rediscover Columbia County Through the Passport to Health

The Columbia Health Coalition has created a passport of discounts, deals, and a watercolor map of ways to be active and healthy with your family, right here in Columbia County, with the kick-off at the Columbia County Fair and Rodeo.

In the passport you will find an hand painted watercolor map of bus routes, bike trails, and parks to guide you on your journey, health tips to keep you motivated, and coupon deals from local businesses. Designed for folks of all ages, you can find your free passport at the First Aid booth located by the fair office. Passports will also be distributed at summer lunch programs, and at participating businesses.

The Columbia Health Coalition was established in 2008. The Coalition started with support from state and national funding for Public Health. CHC is comprised of representatives from

partner agencies including Columbia Community Mental Health (Leeann Grasset), Clatskanie Together Coalition (Breanne Mares), Vernonia Prevention Coalition (DeAnna Pearl), Vernonia Health Board (Heather Lewis), The Public Health Foundation of Columbia County (Sherrie Ford and Ashley Swanson), Scappoose Farmer’s Market (Bill Blank), The Vault (Meredith Reading), OSU Extension (Jenny Rudolph), school districts (Brenda Rafferty, Tish Hora), and the community at-large (Gary Heide). The mission is to empower the community to increase opportunities for healthy lifestyles through initiatives for policy, systems, and environmental change. The Coalition aims to change “community norms” of less healthy behaviors and create a community that supports more active forms of transportation, healthier eating and less tobacco use.

Why is this important? Physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use/exposure are the leading factors for increased chronic conditions. According to the Oregon Healthy Teen survey 2007-08: 17.5% of 8th graders are overweight, and 16% are obese. 18.9% of 11th graders are overweight and 9.6% are obese. The adults in Columbia County are also struggling with health issues: 36% of are overweight and 31% are obese according to the Behavior Risk Surveillance Survey 2004-07.

The passport was created as a project of the coalition, with generous support from the following businesses: KOHI, the Columbia County Rider, Scappoose Farmers Market, Vernonia Open Air Market, Eisenschmidt Pool, Rainier Briarcliff Pool, The Clatskanie Recreation Center, Barlow Bikes, Clatskanie Anytime Fitness, and The Vault.

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Session 4: Aug. 15-Aug. 19

Session 5: Aug. 22-Aug. 26

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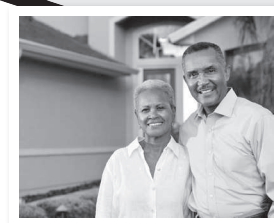
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