

Tips for soccer parents this summer

BY ANNA HUBBEL

Webster Herald Editor

Ah, the month of May... the pre-summer month. For some, this month may be comforting, as it is the transition into summer vacation, warm sunshine, and trips to the beach. Or perhaps it's the month you start getting some yard work done. But for others... it's the start of the summer soccer season.

Yes, you soccer moms and dads out there – it's that time of year when the soccer practices, games and tournaments seem to block out your entire family calendar, taking your lives away from you, and making you blink only to find that summer's already over.

But with the proper organization and planning (as well as healthy management of stress levels), you may find that you can have some time to relax this summer and still be the loudest parent on the sidelines.

Here are some tips gathered from research on what soccer parents around the globe do to keep themselves sane during this hectic time:

- **Take full advantage of phone apps, such as Cozi, Google Calendar and TeamSnap.**

Cozi is a family organizer that has shared color-coded calendars, to-do lists, meal plans, and shopping lists. It can also integrate with other calendars and sites you may use on a regular basis.

Google Calendar is obviously an easy one, especially if you already have a Gmail account. You can easily add events from your Gmail to your calendar with this app.

TeamSnap is an ideal tool for managing sport schedules and teams. It syncs with both Cozi and Google Calendar, keeping all team information, schedules, information, etc. updated for your convenience.

- **Keep any information packets or emails provided by your coaches handy.**

When things get busy, it's easy to forget something your child's coach may have already announced to parents. Oftentimes, coaches (organized ones, anyway) will give out packets or send out emails with information you may need later on (team picture dates, etc.). When things get busy, it's easy to fall into panic mode when you can't remember what the information was or where you put the information. Keep it somewhere consistently so you remember. It will save you a lot of stress if you take care of this upfront.

- **Check your email frequently.**

You never know when a game or practice time might



The 2015 Lakefront Soccer Tournament in Webster.

File Photo

change and you don't want to be left standing in the rain!

- **Don't sign your kid up for too much during the soccer season.**

Kids are energetic and often want to be involved in a lot of things. Be kind to yourself and limit the number of activities they are involved in during the soccer season. You will have far fewer scheduling conflicts if you plan this out ahead and give yourself some time to relax or focus on other priorities in your life.

- **Stock up on supplies.**

Pretend it's the zombie apocalypse and you need these items to survive through the season. You may find you don't end up needing all of it, but at least you will be prepared for anything!

You should have these things in your car at all times during the summer soccer season: an umbrella/rain gear for yourself and your family; towel(s); blanket(s); a jacket; sunscreen; insect repellent; snacks; extra water; money (your child or teen is always going to point out that ice cream or vendor truck during or after the game); chair(s); an ice pack or two; Band-Aids; and extra cleats for your kid (if you can).

- **Remind yourself that it's just a game.**

Parents may have to remind their kids of this simple fact now and then, but sometimes parents can either become overly invested in the game, or even just stress out about keeping organized and on schedule. It's just a game. Nothing terrible is going to happen if the team loses. Nothing terrible is going to happen if you show up late to practice. Life happens. Nobody's perfect. Just allow yourself to breathe.

- **Last but not least - cheer loud and proud for your kid!**

You won't always be able to cheer them on through life. Even if they aren't playing well or are having a bad day, always be the loudest... they will remember.

Looking forward to a fun Lakefront Soccer Tournament (with happy soccer parents) in Webster come June!