



Connection

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Article by Michael Savoie

Soccer Enters the St. Anne Grade School Halls



The 2025 St. Anne Grade School soccer team poses for a team photo. Photo provided by Devon Lamie

ST. ANNE, ILL – For the first time in school history, St. Anne Grade School has hit the pitch.

The Giants offered soccer this spring to students, joining middle schools across the area that have added the non-IESA-recognized sport in the last few years.

They are led by head coach Devon Lamie, who when first notified of the opportunity to be the head coach of the program via social media, jumped at it and when hired was excited to take on his new challenge.

“I got mentions on Facebook and phone calls,” Lamie said. “I was at work and stopped everything to be the first [applicant]. Once I got it I was speechless.”

Lamie was a 2017 graduate of St. Anne Grade School, and later in 2021, a graduate of St. Anne Community High School. His experience runs deep in soccer, he played in St. Anne’s youth group and played three years at SACHS.

He also has served as a head coach in multiple organizations prior to his current role. He has coached in St. Anne’s youth group, Dynamo, and Old Mill. Lamie felt his experience and effort in soccer qualified him for the position.

“I felt like I was meant for this opportunity with all my experience,” he said. I felt like it was all coming together.”

But in order to even have a program, there needed to be interest among-

the student population. Enter eighth grader Cody Lamie – a stalwart in the program’s upbringing – who got signatures of students who had interest in playing and persuaded students to come out and play the sport.

The results were exceptional.

“Tons of [students] were interested from playing in youth group or even with friends in school during PE or recess,” Lamie said. “[Cody] was very persuasive to get this program up and running.”



Cody Lamie kicks the ball during a home game on April 10 against Bradley Central. Photo by Michael Savoie.

His work resulted in plenty of students at tryouts. The team is co-ed, meaning boys and girls could play on the same team. At the end of tryouts, Lamie had a healthy mix of boys and girls that started the journey.

And out of the 18 players kept on the roster, only two of them had previous organized soccer experience. Cody and classmate Deigo Guerrero had experience playing soccer in the past with Lamie coaching them.

“With my coaching I have had the honor of coaching Cody, my little brother, all throughout dynamo to help him become the freak athlete he is today in soccer and track,” Lamie said. “Same with Diego Guerrero, I coached him for two different teams.

“Both [are] outstanding players and I’m very proud of them.”

There was an evident lack of experience and it showed in the beginning of the season. The first game in program history, a March 11 matchup at Peotone, resulted in a 6-0 loss.

It was not until a week later, March 18, that the Giants scored their first goal. It was eighth grader Jamey Hawkins who scored it in a 4-1 loss at Bradley Central. The goal was a sign of improvement, which carried throughout the whole season.

“There’s gonna be kids confused, lost, but excited and wanting to learn, and I see that every game I coach these kids,” Lamie said. “They’re all slowly figuring it all out to play organized soccer. It’s baby steps, but we want to see improvements, and we have.

“Seeing all these fundamentals come together and getting our first goal [of the season] is such a nice feeling.”

The improvements the Giants made eventually made its way in the win column. On April 10, a home matchup against Bradley Central, they dominated the Knights from start-to-finish and earned a 5-0 win. The win was the first in school history.

“[This win meant] that we can get our basics out of the way and apply them to the game,” he said. “Watching our passing come together in that win was a beautiful sight to see.”



Diego Guerrero celebrates with teammates after a goal in the team’s April 10 game against Bradley Central. Photo by Michael Savoie.

When high school comes around for many of these players on the team, they may not continue playing soccer. They may find other interests, or focus on playing sports they have more interest in.

But for Lamie, he wants his players to appreciate a sport that many of whom have never played organized before. For the players that want to continue in high school, he also wants to make sure that he makes it as easy as possible for SACHS head soccer coach Neal Buck.

“I want them to have a love for the sport,” Lamie said. “It’s definitely different from others and different for a lot of athletes on their body. So getting them to understand how this sport can be and how close you can all become and be a little family.”

“At the end of the day though, I want them to understand that we were all in it together.”



SAGS soccer coaches (from left to right) Sebastian Martinez and Devon Lamie give their players instruction during halftime of their April 10 home game against Bradley Central. Photo by Michael Savoie.