

Mount offers outlets for young athletes of all seasons

Soccer, lacrosse and basketball players in middle school and high school can explore the Mount Saint Mary's University campus while they are focusing on their lacrosse, basketball and soccer skills this summer.

Camps by head men's soccer coach Rob Ryerson; men's basketball coach Milan Brown and men's lacrosse coach Tom Gravante offer commuter and residential opportunities for boys. Two weeks are offered for girl's soccer and co-ed soccer as well.

"We do this so kids have an opportunity to be taught soccer in a fun-filled environment," said Ryerson, who has coached men's soccer at the Mount since 1999 and has run camps there for the past 10 years. "There's also a social component, because many campers could be meeting kids from other areas against whom they competed during the soccer season. It helps in their growth and development of the game."

Ryerson said his camp is one of the largest on the East Coast, in past years drawing 300 kids between 10 and 18 over the three weeks. They have come from as far away as Alaska, Colorado and California, though most come from Frederick, Howard and Carroll counties in Maryland.

Girls take to the Waldron Family Field, rated one of the East Coast's best turf field stadiums, the first week of camp, from June 20 through June 24 (\$495 residential; \$395 commuters). The second week, June 27-July 1, is for boys only and the last session from July 18-22, mixes it up for a co-educational camp.

The camp is focused on instruction and technique, and Ryerson said he has recruited a staff made up of former professional soccer players, current college and high school coaches and club team coaches.

"I want them," he said, "to be actually full-time and active in the game now so that they can teach, communicate and demonstrate the game to the campers."

The days feature three instructional sessions with breaks for swimming in the Mount's pool, free time and evening games. Ryerson's staff organizes an internal tournament, as well as an awards ceremony at the camp's end.

The boys' Lacrosse Camp participants between the ages of 10 and 17 can choose an instructional focus or a tournament-based camp for Tom Gravante's three lacrosse weeks (\$175 commuters, \$275 residential) Youngsters 5-13 (\$225 for the week), are also offered an instructional day camp from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. the week of Monday, June 28 through Friday, July 2.

Gravante said he is committed to offering skills-building opportunities for young soccer players, so he offers the Youth Camp and has brought back the age 10 to 17 camp after a year's hiatus.

"Those kids in that age group need coaching," he said, and the younger boys "need some opportunities to get started, learn the game while we keep the numbers low."

For the instructional programs, he recruits his college players and assistant coaches with a staff-to-camper-ratio of 15 kids to two adults.

The final boys' lacrosse camp, the Summer-16 Varsity Invitational, is held July 23 through July 25. Campers are placed on 16 teams, which compete in an intramural tournament throughout the weekend.

Basketball camp is also being offered by the Mount's coach Milan Brown and his staff. Dates are June 20 through June 23, with a cost of \$400 for residents and \$275 for day campers.

While the camps are on the campus of Mount Saint Mary's University and Seminary, they all focus on the sport and do not have any Catholic instruction or practices included in their schedules.

All the camps give the campers a chance to stay in the Mount Saint Mary's air-conditioned dormitory section, where rooms are apartment style and accommodate three to five people.

For information on soccer camps, visit www.scoringgoals.com. For information on

lacrosse camps, visit www.theelite150.com. For information the Basketball Camp, call 240-678-0062.