

Milton high school soccer helps out at local camp

by Cody Smith | Posted: Tuesday, August 8, 2017 6:50 am

MILTON — Though dreary conditions potentially drove away a margin of Milton's local youth soccer players Monday night, a gaggle of young players showed up to the Milton State Park to take part in a local soccer camp-type practice.

Once a year before official team practices start, local youth soccer coach Terry Minnier helps get Milton Youth Soccer ahead of the curve by hosting camp-style practices at the state park. Each year, some of the best local talent around comes to help mentor Milton's youth. Some past and present participants include, but are not limited to the Bucknell women's soccer team and the Milton Area High School boys and girls soccer teams.

Currently in his second year with the Milton boys soccer program, head coach Eric Yoder loves having the opportunity to have he and his team come out to help coach the local youth players and keep kids interested in the game of soccer.

"The idea is to get young players excited about soccer," said Yoder. "I bring some older kids along out with me to show everyone that if you stick with soccer, you could eventually be able to do what these guys can do."

Yoder and some of the Black Panthers took over Monday's practice, showing kids some techniques and helping them improve their game.

On a normal night the practice usually draws between 30 and 40 participants according to Minnier, but even with a fine mist falling and cool temperatures, quite a few youth players showed up to learn a thing or two.

The practices this season were held twice a week for two weeks, with Wednesday being the last opportunity to get some preseason work in at the field. Regular team practices start Monday, Aug. 21, with regular season games following shortly afterward.

Coach Yoder hopes that by coming out and showing youth players some of the ropes will help the high school program in the long run.

"Here in Milton we seem to have a lot of young kids come out, but we lose them between the ages of 10 and 14," said Yoder. "I'm hoping that we can figure out how to keep everyone excited about playing soccer and the game of soccer in general. Not everyone is going to stick with it, but we're trying to do what we can to make sure more and more do each year."



Yoder

Milton boys soccer head coach Eric Yoder instructs local youth players as they run through drills Monday night at Milton State Park.

With a ton of youth coming through the program already with an interest in soccer, the future of the Milton soccer program seems to be in the right hands and headed in the right direction.

“Milton’s future should be pretty good... unless I mess it up.” joked Yoder.

Milton’s high school soccer teams are slated to begin their seasons in the near future, with the boys team currently scheduled to open play on Sept. 2 at the Montoursville Tournament.