

# The Huddle

## Hamilton County Sports Authority **News**

### ***Colts finds new home for training camp at Grand Park***

The City of Westfield signed a 10-year agreement with the Indianapolis Colts to host the annual training camp at Grand Park beginning in 2018. The training camp should bring thousands of fans seeking to get a first look at new draft picks, nab autographs from Colts veterans and wander around an expanded (72,000-square-foot) Colts City fan experience.

“To have an NFL team committed to Grand Park for a decade proves that our facility is not only a premiere venue for youth sports, but also for professional athletes,” Westfield Mayor Andy Cook said.

Grand Park will be only the third spot for the Colts off-site, summer training camp. Anderson University hosted the camp from 2010 through 2016, and from 1984-1998. From 1999 through 2010, training camp was at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute. This past summer, training camp was conducted at the team’s complex on Indianapolis west side, which severely limited fan access. That will change in 2018 with expanded fan experiences.

“Holding training camp at Grand Park will give our team a chance to practice at a top-notch facility in addition to giving us the chance to connect with our fans as we prepare for the season,” said Colts General Manager Chris Ballard during the contract announcement. “The venue is located in an ideal proximity to our fan base, and we feel this is an advantageous move for the Indianapolis Colts.”

Nearly 20,000 fans attended camp in 2016, down from more than 38,000 in 2015. While Colts City will be expanded at Grand Park, the Colts also plan to bring Play 60, an NFL initiative designed to tackle childhood obesity by encouraging kids to live healthier lives by being active at least 60 minutes every day.



## ***Halloween Classic draws record-number teams***

When the Fishers Soccer Club hosted its first Halloween Classic, the club constructed handmade goals for 26 teams, who played on fields at 116th and Hoosier Road. When the 26th annual Halloween Classic kicks off Oct. 27, 376 teams that will play on eight fields throughout Fishers and Noblesville.

It's the largest Halloween Classic ever and will include teams from all over Indiana, plus Missouri, Wisconsin, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Kentucky and Tennessee. That means 5,000 players and their families who have booked 1,000 hotel rooms Oct. 27, and 1,400 rooms Oct. 28 for the three-day event.

A lot has changed in 26 years. Halloween Classic is now hosted by Indy Premier Soccer Club, which was formed in 2014 with the merger of Fishers Soccer Club, Indianapolis Premier Soccer Club and Noblesville United Soccer Club, creating one of the largest travel and recreation programs in the state.

Halloween Classic has grown, just like the community has grown, said Ben Reimann, who is the spokesperson for Indy Premier and played in the tournament in 1993.

"It's one of the biggest tournament in travel soccer," he said. One of the reasons it's become so successful is the caliber of competition at all age and skill levels. Travel teams from Under-8 to Under-15 age group will compete, and each team will play at least three games, with winning teams advancing.

For the first time this year, the boys and girls Halloween Classic is combined, to utilize all the fields. The headquarters field is at Cyntheanne Park in Fishers. In addition to competition, there are Halloween-themed, family friendly activities on opening day. But, don't expect players to be dressed up in anything other than their soccer uniforms, players come to win a custom-designed Halloween-themed trophy.

### ***Hamilton County Sports Authority***

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## ***Scouting top talent at Grand Park***

More than 25,000 people are expected over a weekend in November and a weekend in December for the Indianapolis College Showcase, which will attract some of the best high school soccer players in the country, and more than 250 collegiate scouts.

More than 300 teams will be in Westfield for the girls tournament Nov. 17-19, and about 200 teams will be competing in the boys tournament Dec. 1-3.

The annual tournament is hosted by Soccer By Design, which operates events across the country, but calls Westfield home. Soccer By Design, which is headed up by Brent Paulson, also runs the Grand Park Youth Festival, Grand Park Elite Indoor Invitational and the Circle City Showcase.

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