

## **Dear friends,**

This is our monthly newsletter. I hope the information we write here will help you to understand better what we are doing and how you can help us better by your prayers, financial support or even by visiting us and helping with some projects.

## **Football children's teams**

We run children's football teams in different regions. We have teams in cities and villages. But our main focus is developing children's football teams in villages. In Ukraine children in villages are in a special group of risk. For many of them there is no future. Poor education, living in divorced families, no work, alcoholism etc. So therefore we set up children teams in villages. Today I will share something about our team from Stepan.

We set up the team there 7 years ago as a team for 10 year old boys. The coach there is a Board member of our organization and pastor of local church at the same time. We ran the team for 7 years, we provided qualified coaching sessions for them, we provided life skills, lessons on leadership, motivation, respecting yourself and others, self-confidence etc. We did football camps during the summer for them and other children from the village. We participated with them in many tournaments. Now they have grown up and left our children's team. How can we measure success now? Were we successful or not with them?

I spoke with their coach and we tried to evaluate our work with the boys. Of course there are many things that we should improve with the new children's team there in the future. But there are some things that we can count as success. Success is that many children got a purpose in life, got goals they want to achieve. Some of them who don't have fathers in families got the coach as a role model of man and father. Success is that 15 children didn't become alcoholics as many of the others in the villages have done. Success is that 4 of them went to university and some others will go to university next year. Success is that this year when we started a new children's team for 10 years old boys we got 20 children. It tells us that we did our job right and that the number of children is a recognition of the quality of this job. Success is that when we run children tournaments in this village there were so many adults from the village who support kids (that is unusual in Ukraine, mostly parents do not go to support their children when they play).

We are thankful to the Ball Project for their participation in our projects. During these years we didn't have a lack of balls and other equipment that we needed for coaching sessions. More than that, we were even able to assist other children's teams with balls and equipment, helping them to have a right and proper approach to coaching children and to see coaching as an opportunity to serve kids and impact their lives for the future.

## **Youth league in partnership with Rivne region FA**

As we wrote in last news-letter we got a proposal to restart this league for youth and children. So we agreed to do so and that is our project now. We have 2 age groups (U-16 and U-14). There are 42 teams with 20-24 children in each. At this moment our focus is to set up everything right and properly. The next step will be setting up a good Code of Conduct for players, coaches and officials. In our country there is normal practice that coaches cheat with the age of players and they abuse children. So our next step is creating situations and structures to avoid such practices. At this moment we have a good reputation among the coaches. Our big plan is to create such a relationship with coaches so that we will be able to share with them the reason why we did it in this way. We hope that in future we will be able

to organize football camps for children from those teams when we will be able to share with them more about God's principles for life and for sport.

During the winter time we will have several futsal tournaments for those children and for new age group as well (U-11). It is great to see how such young children play and get joy from the game.

### **My role as member of Disciplinary Committee of Rivne region FA.**

During one month, our region became "famous" in the sport world. First, at a match of U-17 one young player after he scored 3 times, and his team was leading 3-0 and just 2 minutes before the final whistle he disagreed with the referee's decision and punched the referee and knocked him down. A few weeks later during the Super Cup another player punched the referee and knocked him down. About that case even the Guardian reported on it. With 300,000 viewings on Youtube our FA is "famous". • You can watch at <http://www.theguardian.com/football/2014/nov/12/referee-punched-rivne-supercup-ukraine> There were a number of meetings in an attempt to make some decisions. Unfortunately our local disciplinarian laws only allowed us to give a 6 month ban. My proposal was 3-5 years, and the referees' committee asked for a life ban. Such situation just show us why we are here and why we serve in the world of sport. One of my friends sent me such a text after this video: "Shows how necessary your involvement is". • .

### **Fundraising**

We are thankful to our Dutch friends who raised for us 4000 Euros within 3 months, which is 30% of our current annual budget. Thanks to you, friends, we have finances to cover our ministry expenses and let children play during the winter time (we rent the sports gym). We also thankful to Athletes in Action Netherlands, who gave us a temporary account for us and we were able to collect this funds. Thanks to our partner from USA we got \$2,400 for our organization. Also we thankful to Verite Sport who helped us with 3,000 Euros for expenses we need to promote our ministry in the USA and in the EU countries. Our annual budget is 12,000 Euros, but in order to run and develop the organization, be able achieve our goals and vision, be able to change situation in our region and Ukraine, to impact a new young generation for a better future we need a minimum of 36,000 Euros – and ideally 60,000 Euros annually. So please support us in prayers that we were able to raise this amount.

### **For our friends from UK**

One of the tough things in fundraising is to find a local bank account which will collect funds from local people. Direct transfers from USA and EU to Ukraine are difficult and expensive in commission. So we are thankful to Verite Sport that gave us permanent account where you can donate money in support of our work if God gave you such a desire. Below you can find the bank details:

#### ***For people in UK***

Account name Verite Sport  
Sort Code 30-99 93  
Account number 03961323

***For people not in UK***

Account name Verite Sport

BIC: LOYDGB21132

SWIFT: LOYDGB2L

**IBAN:** GB44 LOYD 3099 9303 9613 23

Bank Address:

Lloyds TSB

41-43 South Street

Worthing

BN11 3AU

UK

**Website**

From January 2015 we will have our new website where you can read more news, to see more pictures and video. Coming soon...

**What is our needs and how you can help us?**

**By prayers. Please pray for:**

- Our financial situation. Now we can't do a lot because of lack of resources
- New volunteer coaches
- The children we are working with.
- The task of changing the culture of corruption and bad approach to children and sport in our region.

**By donations.**

- We face a really hard financial situation and lack of funds hinders our development.
- We see lots of challenges. We need to be there but because of lack of resources we are unable to respond to invitations.
- We are looking for 30-50 people who can give a commitment to support us by 25-50 pounds/ Euros/ dollars per month. If you have a desire to support us please contact me and we will discuss all necessary information for this (dontsovzh@yahoo.com).

**Come and help us.**

- We are looking for short-term people who can help us with camps and tournaments (usually during the summer). We are also looking for people who can teach children English, computer skills, and anything else that can help children in future.
- We are looking for long term volunteers who can be a coach in some villages we work in. There are many requests from churches from villages that want to set up children's football teams but lack people who can coach.
- We are looking for people who can help us with PR, fundraising, running the website and facebook page of our ministry.

Zhenya Dontsov

Executive director of Standard Sport.