

THE EYE OF THE STORM

PONOKA STORM NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 | 2026



INDOOR TO OUTDOOR



PHOTOS

INDOOR SOCCER PHOTOS, a first for Ponoka Minor Soccer Association, were held on January 30th at the High School Ponoka Secondary Campus School gym.

Parents can contact photo extraordinaire, Angela Douglas of Wild Child Photography (wildchildponoka@gmail.com, 587 876 2661) for more information about their child's portraits.

OUTDOOR SEASON

February 1 marked that goal-den moment where Ponoka Storm registration opened for kids from U5-U17.

Registration closes March 1. Head over to our website to register your child or yourself, as a coach.

TEAMS NEARING LAST LEAGUE GAMES OF INDOOR SEASON

Many indoor Ponoka teams from U9 to U17 will be wrapping up their league games from the winter, indoor season some of which will be headed into play offs. Good luck to all.

FUNDRAISING

PMSA IS happy to have Fundraising Lead, Kate Johnson, who has been thinking of wonderful ways to help build up Ponoka Storm.

More information to come but mark your calendars for our PONOKA STORM BOTTLE DRIVE May 19th from 1:00-5:00. Meet at the Lucas Heights fields and start saving your bottles!

President's message

by Lonny Behm

Ponoka Minor Soccer Association (PMSA) strives to promote the spirit of soccer in Ponoka by providing opportunities for children, youth, and adults to engage in the game. We believe this engagement happens best through playing, coaching, refereeing, and spectating this great sport.

- PMSA welcomes all soccer enthusiasts who wish to see individuals and families flourish in our community through soccer. From the grassroots level U5, U7, and U9, we aim to create a fun, safe, and inclusive environment where children learn the game through small-sided play. At these ages, our coaches grow alongside the players, learning and developing together.
- As players move into our competitive age groups U11, U13, U15, and U17, we continue to emphasize a positive, inclusive environment where athletes are encouraged to learn the game at their own pace in a team structured environment. While we are predominantly a Tier 4 club, we also believe in pushing the envelope when teams are ready, supporting players who wish to transition to higher tiers of competition.
- Ponoka soccer has a proud tradition. Our club has won seven provincial championships, including five at the Tier 4 level, as well as one at Tier 3 and one at Tier 2. With that we have also had several teams in the past represent our club and district at the provincial level bringing home medals and also great experiences while they represent Ponoka.
- We have had teams travel internationally, including recently a trip to Portugal to compete at the IBERcup against some of the top academy teams in Western Europe, former athletes who have gone on to play collegiate and university soccer, as well as compete at the highest collegiate and university level in volleyball, track, as well as an Olympian speed skater. We are proud of our current and former Ponoka Storm athletes in what they have, and still can accomplish.
- At the end of the day, our goal is simple: to give kids the opportunity to be active, have fun, challenge themselves, and grow into great members of the community. Soccer is our vessel for achieving that.
- We are equally committed to supporting our coaches and referees by providing them with the best training possible, so they feel confident and equipped to help our players develop.
- Thank you for registering your children in the great game of soccer. If you haven't registered yet, we hope you'll consider joining us. Our dedicated volunteers at Ponoka Soccer are ready to support your children's athletic journey and be part of their growth on and off the field.

GO STORM GO



COACHES CORNER:

"As a Coach for U11, I had to take some necessary online and field training certification offered through Canada Soccer, which not only helped me understand some of the technical skills of the game, but helped me understand nurturing aspects of mental health and emotional well-being for our community players as well," said PMSA board director and U11 Coach, Jessica Jones.

"Not only did it give me a good awareness as a coach, but I also picked up a lot of benefits just as a parent for my own children. I'd recommend this great education!"

Head over to our website to register as a coach, or email registrar@ponokasoccer.ca

WORLD CUP EXCITEMENT:

Ponoka Minor Soccer Association is looking at hosting festivities that the whole Ponoka community can take part in to coincide with the 2026 World Cup.

This will include watch parties when Team Canada plays and a "community mini World Cup" where our community members play three versus three in a fun tournament.

The World Cup is June 11 to July 19 and we want to garner the excitement and bring soccer to the forefront right here in Ponoka.

More information to come but plans are in the works to host events that bring that soccer spirit alive in our community.

YOUR PMSA BOARD MEMBERS:

Last November we held Ponoka Minor Soccer Association's annual general meeting and a new legal volunteer board for 2025-2026 was appointed.

Members on the board hold various responsibilities and many of them are also team coaches. There have been a few changes on the board, with the addition of some community-minded people who are committed to building Ponoka Storm.

Lonny Behm - President

Christoph Dittmar - Vice President

Holly Porterfield - Treasurer

Melissa Burke - Secretary

Jessica Jones - Director

Temple Pineo - Director

Logan Roos - Director





U9 FESTIVAL FUN

For this upcoming Outdoor Season Ponoka will be hosting U9 festivals. These festivals are formatted as mini games and this has been a great success in past years.

The festivals attract teams from many other communities and is a fun day for hundreds of players. More information to come.

Outdoor Team Evaluations

Please stay tuned for possible time/date changes, but evaluations will more than likely be held at The Dome (334 Energy Way, Red Deer County) on March 29 and 30th for outdoor teams U11-U17.

Possible times (subject to change and field availabilities):

March 29:

- U13 girls tryouts 5:30-7:00
- U17 girls tryouts 7:15-8:30
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March 30:

- U11 5:00-6:00
- U13 boys 6:15-7:15



Building a *Legacy*.



The U13 girls finished 2nd at the SC Central Alberta Cup (Tier 2) last January. Final ended 0-0 and went to penalty kicks — tough finish, but an amazing tournament and effort from every player. Way to go, girls!



HEADED TO THE GREAT OUTDOORS

We are gearing up for Outdoor Soccer! House Leagues (U5, U7, U9) with PMSA run for eight weeks around the week of April 20 and ending around June 10. All sessions are weather dependent, and, keep in mind, could be cancelled due to weather, air quality, or field conditions.



Most age groups for Outdoor Soccer need appropriate footwear--soccer cleats. Kids at the U5/U7 level can get away with outdoor running shoes but soccer cleats (not football cleats) are advisable.



All of our players are required to have shin pads. Unfortunately, if shin pads are not worn underneath socks for both practices and games, your little player will not be able to participate. Please ensure shin guards are in place for your child.



U9 PARENTS MEETING

PMSA wants to ensure our players are having the best outcomes. We are committed to player development.

- U9 PARENT'S MEETING on **Monday, February 9 at 5 p.m.**
- **At the Hudson's Green Activity Centre** (6210 61 Street.)
- Open for adults of current U9 players, as well as adults of upcoming Outdoor Season U9 players.
- In cooperation with our U9 parents and adults, we would like to discuss the grassroots philosophies of Canada Soccer, Alberta Soccer and Central Alberta Soccer Association and what that means for U9 Ponoka Storm this upcoming outdoor season.