

TRSA Tournament Overview (Terwillegar Riverbend Soccer Association)

How it Started

As part of registering your child for soccer, you must either volunteer or pay an additional fee. I chose to volunteer for the soccer tournament and a few days later it dawned on me that I could use this opportunity to tie my current work project – healthy eating environments in community events, sporting events and recreation facilities.

I contacted the organizers of the TRSA and they were enthusiastic and supportive from the first conversation. The past two years of the concession had been very unsuccessful; there was little uptake, it was very heavily dependent on volunteers and it lost a lot of money. They even tried to have food trucks onsite and there wasn't enough interest there either! This was a perfect opportunity to provide healthy snacks at a reasonable cost for the athletes and spectators!

The TRSA tournament is a U-10 tournament that hosts approximately 100 teams with about 1000 players. There are several locations for the tournament with one set of fields as 'home base' which is where our concession was operated.

Our concession was a huge hit! We served fresh fruit kabobs, fresh veggie bags with hummus, 100% fruit popsicles, homemade quinoa salad and freshly made pita chips. Parents were thrilled, kids were excited and the tournament organizers asked us back next year.

Things to Consider that Made this a Success

1. My tournament organizers were 110% supportive and on board! One of their major sponsors (they own a pizza chain in the neighborhood and live in the area) wanted to pass out free pizza but were not 'allowed' to until my concession was completely finished for the entire tournament!

2. I was lucky enough to just have to 'break even' so I could keep prices very competitive and I didn't have to worry if I lost money. Regardless of the small loss of money (approx. \$250), we look at it like:

“Wow – it only cost us \$250 to feed kids healthy snacks that will fuel their bodies for the day!”

3. We had a great local charitable organization that the leftover food went to. It was great to know that no food was going to be wasted! This also meant no trips back to the grocery store to return unopened boxes of food.

4. I had an abundance of volunteers & the volunteers loved their doing the food prep – not even one complaint!

Lessons Learned

1. Price your food items for easy math! Have nothing end in \$0.25 or \$0.75.
2. The homemade items sold the quickest. Fruit kabobs, veggie bags and the pita chips were the best sellers by far!
3. ON SITE ADVERTISING IS CRUTIAL! We e-mailed coaches and as many parents as we could prior to the tournament but several people didn't notice we were even there. The more signs on site, the better. I would also highly recommend having a 'postcard' with the menu on it and have a volunteer hand them out to parents as the games are going on. It would also be helpful to have a freebee – maybe if you bring in the post card and buy an item you get a free freeze (the 100% juice freezies are only \$0.21 each...)

Other random tidbits

1. I didn't shop around for prices in order to keep things simple. I went to 2 stores – Superstore and Costco. I bought the bulk of what I needed at Costco and the rest at Superstore and didn't price compare at all. KISS ☺
2. Make sure your kitchen is stocked with the supplies you need for cutting and storage (mine wasn't and a volunteer had to run home to get knives and cutting boards.)

Time & Volunteers

Day Prior	1 volunteer: 2 hours	Shopping
Day Prior	3 volunteers: 2 hours	Food Prep: Cut fruit (except bananas) Prepare veggie bags Portion Cracker bags
Day Of	3 volunteers: 4 hours (2 shifts)	Food Prep: Make Pita Chips Make Cookies Assemble Fruit Kabobs General Clean up