



Cougar Dome - 2017/18 Season Ending Report

It seems unbelievable but the Cougar Dome is just finishing its 4th year in operation. This project has fulfilled its primary mandate to give our youth the skills so they can go on to live a healthy active lifestyle. The Cougar Dome gives free access to all schools in the Chignecto Central School district during school hours. Our by-line, is *“Living Life, Having Fun, Staying Fit...at the Cougar Dome”*. Since the Dome opened, there have been hundreds of school visits with an estimated 18,000 students enjoying free use of the turf, tennis courts, track and jump pit. In addition to this, user groups including Soccer, Football, Baseball, Track and Field, Golf, Tennis and other sports, groups and spectators combined have resulted in more than an estimated 125,000 people visits through Cougar Dome doors to date.

These students are having fun with their teams and are gaining the skills required to be confident living an active lifestyle. The Cougar Dome has very affordable user fees for general public and sporting group users throughout central Nova Scotia and beyond. As a not-for-profit organization, CSAE user fees together with proceeds from donors and sponsors are used to fund the free access to the Cougar Dome by these schools in our region.

This has been an ambitious project, and we are proud of the positive impact it is having on our youth. We are indeed a better community because of this initiative. General highlights of this season’s initiatives and achievements is summarized below. As part of CSAE efforts on an on-going bases, the Cougar Dome will be publishing an Annual Report commencing November 1st 2018 with an outline of specific stats including school and after school usage numbers, notable athletic achievement awards / successes and any other information applicable for the 12 month period ending August 31st 2018 and each year thereafter.



Turf, Track and Jump Pit

In addition to increased use by schools and after school usage by CEC students, Cougar Dome saw a fair number of new group participants and individuals along with returning groups. During peak season (November through March), the Cougar Dome turf is widely used by a multitude of different sports with soccer being one of the more prominent uses. This past winter saw literally 1000 or more weekly visitors to the Cougar Dome with soccer athletes and parents making up over 70% percent of these.



Track, Turf and Jump Pit season highlights are presented below:

- During this past season, the Cougar Dome welcomed several new groups including Truro Minor Football Association, Truro Senior Bearcats Hardball, Truro Soccer Club and Truro Lions
- Of particular note, we saw a significant increase in out-of-town visitors using the turf and track this past season including Baseball Nova Scotia, Cole Harbour Comets, U15 and U17 Boys Provincial Hardball Teams and the Darren Doucette Baseball Academy
- Bubble Bump soccer is growing in popularity for all ages and is commonly used during birthday parties
- There has been a notable increase in after school use of the turf and track by CEC students which is a very encouraging sign.



Tennis

This season has seen an increase in many new programs and school visits all designed to grow the game in this region. One of the most significant achievements is the recognition by Tennis Canada naming the Cougar Dome as a Tennis Development Centre (TDC). To become a TDC is no easy task, and Cougar Dome is only one of two facilities in all of Atlantic Canada who have earned this recognition. This would not have been possible without the hard work of François Giguère, Facility Manager / Head Tennis Director and Francis Charest, Head Tennis Pro, both of whom are Coach 2 certified by Tennis Canada.



Additional information and tennis highlights are as follows:

- As a TDC, the Cougar Dome was required to demonstrate its alignment with Tennis Canada's overall objectives for TDCs. This objective is best summed up as follows: TDCs serves as a "support program" designed to work with junior competitive development which is a key component of the overall player development plan of Tennis Canada and its mission of developing world class players.
- This season, the Cougar Dome started a Tennis Study program whereby high performance juniors have earned special permission from schools to train up to four hours per week on top of the 8 or so hours spent on court after school, weekends and holidays.
- Results of this training is evidenced by our kids competing hard in local, regional, national and international tennis tournaments.
- Other new tennis programs includes a CEC Tennis Team and regularly scheduled weekly lessons for Parents / Child, Cardio Tennis and other programs including lessons for all age groups and abilities starting with beginners.
- In close cooperation with the Truro Tennis Club, all Cougar Dome lessons are held outdoors during the summer, and move indoors during inclement weather for the uninterrupted year round enjoyment by the tennis community in our region.

Financial Supporters and Fundraising

We would like to thank all of our sponsors and donors whom helped make the Cougar Dome a reality. Of particular note, we would like to acknowledge our partnership with Subway including its financial support since our opening. Subway and the Colburnes have been, and continue to be, great supporters of the Cougar Dome and we thank them for that.

Like many not-for-profit organizations, the CSAE faces financial challenges and is reliant on sponsors and donors for its continued operations. Increased operating revenues and lowering of costs are equally important in this regard, and for this, the CSAE is embarking on fundraising campaigns designed as follows:

- **TENNIS ACADEMY** - a sponsor will help grow participants by making programs more affordable for youngsters starting at five years old. Proceeds raised will go towards coaching including coach certification costs, tournament travel expenses, player apparel and other costs. We will seek a three year sponsorship deal at \$25,000 per year which will go a long ways towards increased access to all including kids in need of financial assistance.
- **LED LIGHTS** - electrical costs using current lights is a major annual expense to the Cougar Dome. By upgrading to new LED lights, this cost can be reduced by an estimated \$20,000 per year. A fundraising campaign for new lights will commence ASAP in an effort to fully fund the purchase of new LED lights with a capital cost estimated at \$110,000.
- **DOME NAMING RIGHTS** - Starting October this year, a new five to ten year term for naming rights will become available. CSAE will solicit corporations interested in having its corporate names / products displayed on the Dome.

