

## Boys soccer: Alumni game will be Aug. 29

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The 32nd annual Joel Barlow High boys soccer alumni game will be played on Saturday, Aug. 29, at 7:30 at the school. The 2009 varsity team, led by senior captains Dan Goldman (front row, left), Anthony Caruso, Jake Soodek, Zack Frank (back row, left), Chris Ferullo and Brian Kraekel, will take on former teammates and other players from seasons past.—Jillian Goldman photo

The close of summer may mean only one thing to Joel Barlow soccer fans — the annual alumni game, which this year will be played on Aug. 29 at 7:30 p.m. at the Barlow stadium field.

According to former head coach and founding father of Barlow's soccer program, Jim Dolan, who coaches the alumni team, this unofficial start of the season will take place for the 32nd consecutive year. Although no one is keeping official track of the wins and losses, Dolan says that most of the games have been evenly played, ending in ties or decided by a one-goal margin.

But it is not about who wins or loses that is most important about this game, it is about bringing together what current Barlow coach Paul Winstanley calls the "Barlow soccer family" for an annual reunion where, as Dolan puts it, the "older brothers can play their younger siblings." Even more than that, adds Dolan, it is to give the

current crop of Barlow players a sense of the legacy he helped create, and which Winstanley has kept alive.

As Dolan notes, many of the returning alumni would otherwise just be names attached to the statistics he and Winstanley have compiled over a period of 35 years. To add yet another dimension to the game, Dolan expects current assistant coach Marc Nizzardo to return for another year of play with the alumni and to "old school" the team he coaches.

Kevin Lehman, another all-time Barlow great who went on to play soccer at Ohio Wesleyan University (where 2007 co-captain Dylan Stone now plays), is also expected to return for the game.

The alumni game also gives Barlow fans the first look at their team for the upcoming season. On that score, they have a lot to be hopeful for this year. The core group of players and captains of the team — seniors Anthony Caruso, Dan Goldman, Chris Ferullo, Zack Frank, Brian Kraekel and Jake Soodek — have been playing together as far back as middle school and have been part of the Barlow soccer program since their freshman years.

They are surrounded by a group of skilled and experienced players led by senior Will Kiriazidis; juniors Sean Bassak-Smith and Connor Regan and sophomore Ryan Schwaber.

The team is rounded out with veteran seniors Matt Giamportone, Varyk Kutnick and Pat Stimola, and a collection of talented underclassmen.

A food truck vendor will be on site for the game, offering a variety of food and drink.