

# The ISC BULLETIN

*Organized to help provide Central Illinois youth the best sports programs in the country!  
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## Bradley, Illinois Coaches Entertain at Annual ISC Smoker **Brian Wardle, Brad Underwood speak to capacity crowd**

The 22nd annual Independent Sports Club Smoker on Oct. 11 was again a rousing success. A sold-out crowd of more than 300 basketball fans, who paid between \$60 and \$85 for a ticket, packed The Warehouse on State. It was a record for attendance and the fifth consecutive year no advertising was needed to fill the wait-list event which has become the hottest ticket in town.

Hungry for college basketball insight, the crowd wasn't disappointed. New Illinois head coach Brad Underwood's humor and storytelling skill immediately won over the audience. Underwood, a former assistant coach at Western Illinois prior to moving on to head coaching gigs at Stephen F. Austin and Oklahoma State, also spoke of his elation in returning to the basketball-centric state of Illinois.

"The players and coaches in this state are second to none," Underwood told the crowd. "This is my dream job."

Underwood was joined on the dais by Bradley head coach Brian Wardle, who was making his third Smoker appearance.

"I love this event," Wardle said. "Everyone has so much fun."

So much so that the club received more than a dozen membership applications during and following this year's event.



**Bradley Head Coach Brian Wardle and Illinois Head Coach Brad Underwood discuss their programs.**

"We had another active and attentive crowd that included a number of guests that were not familiar with the ISC," said Smoker chairman Jeff Doeden. "That's a credit to our members and long-time supporters for continuing to invite people to our signature event. I thought the coaches really did well in sharing stories and insights that give our audience more than what sports fans typically get from coaches in press conferences and interviews."

Doeden pointed out the key to such honest commentary lies with the cooperation of all involved to not share the coaches' private reflections in the newspaper or on social media. The Smoker, as usual, was emceed by Journal Star sportswriters Kirk Wessler and Dave Reynolds.

"The ISC board really appreciates that type of compliance because it protects the coaches, which protects this very unique event," he said.

Planning for the Smoker is six months in the making. Among the tasks undertaken by organizers include scheduling the venue, the coaches, the emcees and the caterers, securing sponsors, hiring and managing poster and program production, ticket distribution and all the myriad last-minute items that need addressed with such a large gathering.

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# ISC Awards \$11,000 in Capital Improvement Grants

## “Bricks and Mortar” Campaign Helps Improve Area Facilities

The Independent Sports Club of Central Illinois that youth sports organizations periodically need to make permanent improvements to their facilities. The ISC awards Capital Improvement Grants, also known as “bricks and mortar” grants, for projects like dugouts, scoreboards, lighting, concessions, bathrooms, storage buildings, etc. The application process includes a committee review of financial health of each organization, a detailed outline and budget of their project, interviews with their administrators, and proof of fundraising efforts.

This year the ISC will be awarding Capital Improvement Grants to the following organizations :

Washburn Summer Rec Program, which serves more than 120 kids, is seeking to add lights to its softball diamond. The ISC voted to award \$1,000 towards this project.

Peoria Notre Dame softball league, with more than 65 members, is seeking to build a storage shed for equipment and concessions. The ISC voted to award \$2,000 towards this project.

The Christian Center, which serves nearly 700 kids, is seeking to install a new batting cage and outdoor basketball hoop. The ISC voted to award \$1,500 towards this project.

Limestone Youth Baseball is seeking to purchase and install two new wireless scoreboards. The ISC voted to award \$2,500 towards this project.

Morton Youth Baseball serving over 500 kids is seeking to purchase a new backstop screen for increased safety. The ISC voted to award \$2,000 towards this project.

Richwoods Youth Baseball is seeking to create a new field and needs materials for the infield and outfield fence. The ISC voted to award \$2,000 towards this project.

**The next application period for Capital Improvement Grants runs annually from Aug. 1 until July 31, 2018. The application can be found on the ISC website at [iscpeoria.com](http://iscpeoria.com). If you are involved with an organization that could use some financial assistance to improve their facilities, the ISC is here to help with those endeavors.**

*Save the Date...*  
**January 6** — NFL Playoffs Party at Peacocks Pub  
**February 18** — Illini basketball bus trip

## ISC Smoker (Continued from page 1)

“There are a lot of moving parts to pull this off,” Doeden said. “We are not professional event planners so we know things won’t be perfect. But we are all pleased with another successful Smoker.”

Special thanks to the corporate sponsors and private donors who help support and underwrite the event. They include Baumgarten Distributing, Prairie Home Alliance, Scott Communications, Fortner Insurance, The Law Office of David Hunt, KB Elliott Financial Advisors, Royal Publishing, and OSF HealthCare-Orthopedics. Special thanks to the staff at The Warehouse on State and Cracked Pepper Catering. And to ISC member Steve Hinrichs for donating the Illinois vs Michigan State basketball game package.



The ISC Board of Directors, pictured with Coach Wardle and Coach Underwood, thank everyone who helped to make this annual event such a success.

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# Brimfield Freshman Receives Andy Paul Award

Following a one-year hiatus, the ISC named Jeremy Ott the recipient of the 2017 Andy Paul Award, which recognized the area's outstanding junior golfer for his performance in the Peoria Men's City tournament.

Ott, a freshman at Brimfield High, qualified for A Flight in his first appearance in the storied tournament. He won two matches at Newman Golf Course before a quarterfinal loss ended his deep tournament run.

Presented his award at the ISC's Oct. 2 board meeting, Ott validated his selection by putting together a fantastic postseason for the Indians. On Oct. 3, Ott won the IHSA Class 1A regional at Coyote Creek with a 1-under par 71, the only player in the field with a red number. He followed that by shooting 78 to advance from the Havana Sectional, then posted rounds of 83-81 – 164 to finish tied for 27th at the Class 1A state finals at Prairie Vista in Bloomington.

On a related note, the ISC did not choose an Andy Paul recipient in 2016 because there were no eligible candidates. Named after Paul, who won the 1939 Men's City as a 16-year old (and was later a president of the ISC), the award was designed to honor the outstanding junior player from the Peoria Men's City. But in recent years, the top young players in the area are no longer playing this sagging event,



in favor of seeking state-and-national competition against their peers.

As a response, the ISC board has begun discussions to change the scope of the award to honor the year's outstanding junior player from the Tri-County area. No specific criteria has been decided on, but we are likely to work in conjunction with the River Cup Foundation to identify the top player from its Junior competition and qualifying structure.

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## Annual Steak Fry at Lariat

Help the ISC kick off the holiday season by attending the annual Steak Fry, which honors our past presidents.

This year's event is December 7 at its usual home, The Lariat Steakhouse on Glen Ave. in Peoria. ISC supporters Ken and Dan Kouri always do a great job of providing us with the venue and a great meal for the evening.

This event is sure to be an enjoyable night. Activities include the annual Turkey Raffle, which gives you the chance to throw another bird on the holiday table for a mere \$5 entry, tip boards and a 50/50 drawings.

Your \$30 admission gets a ribeye steak dinner with all the trimmings, soft drinks and draft beer. Doors open at 5:30 followed by dinner at 6:30. Please join us for this fun night by calling Ron King at 309-678-5004 to RSVP.

## Inaugural Bags Tournament a "Hole" Lot of Fun!

Always looking for new ways to raise money for youth sports, the ISC hosted a new event this past summer.

Headed by ISC board member Kelly (Rickey) Griffin, a Bags tournament was held on July 22 at Knuckles Pizza in Dunlap. Griffin organized 12 two-player teams for the inaugural event, who competed in a bracketed format that eventually crowned Ed Papis and Kevin Pheifer as winners.

"Everyone had a great time and complimented the number of games they got to play," said Griffin, who suggested the event to the ISC board and ran the tournament.

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## MONTHLY FINANCIAL GRANTS

The majority of the discussion at the monthly board meetings held by the ISC is dedicated to awarding financial grants to those applicants and voting on the new ones we receive.

Currently, most grant requests are met with an award of \$600, although we are currently discussing the possibility of increasing that amount for our upcoming fiscal calendar.

Local organizations who have recently applied and been awarded grant money include...

- Peoria Youth Hockey Association
- Christian Center baseball and softball leagues
- Sunday Night Dream League
- Illini Legacy
- George Washington Carver Center
- Future Stars Biddy Basketball League
- American Legion Post No. 2 baseball team
- Washington Area Youth Sports
- Peoria Area Rugby League
- Peoria Area Water Wizards
- Sonic Waves Swim Club
- Chillicothe Rugby Club
- Dunlap Boys Lacrosse
- Washburn Summer Rec League



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# Some Walking-Around Money

In addition to supporting youth sports and the camaraderie of like-minded cohorts, one of the benefits of attending ISC events has always been the chance to pick up a little pocket change!

All of our events usually include an opportunity to participate in raffles, drawings, tip boards, square boards, etc. While we do keep a small portion of these proceeds to help fund our philanthropy, ISC members have become accustomed to sometimes stuffing their wallets with winnings.

Twelve prizes, paying between \$1500 and \$200, were awarded at the Smoker in our final \$50 cash drawing of the year. Winners included David Hunt, Bill Molleck/Tom

Knaub, Jamie “Doc” Morse, Ken Kouri, Tom O’Neill, Shannon Baker, Tom Gramkow, Donna Baldock, Jim Krusemark, Mindy Gorman, Greg Stewart and Steve Hinrichs.

At the same event, three lucky winners took home a share of the 50/50 drawing, which recently has transformed into more of a 50—25/15/10 drawing. With such a large pot being raised (more than \$4000 at the Smoker), we feel like it’s better to spread the wealth.

The annual Las Vegas raffle, which only requires a \$5 donation to enter, was won this year by Pat McCarthy. He picked up \$800 to use toward a trip to Sin City, or however he sees fit.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Use this handy form to join or renew your membership in the Independent Sports Club of Peoria. Complete and mail to Independent Sports Club at P.O. Box 5776, Peoria, IL 61601-9998, along with your dues of \$20 for one year. Welcome!

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# NEW MEMBERS

Thanks to our recent events and increased exposure of iscpeoria.com, several new members have joined our ranks recently. Since the the last newsletter was published in August, the following folks have pledged their support to the ISC.

**Randy Westerdahl (Peoria), David Kasel (Morton), Brad Mitchell (Morton), Drew Eilts (Germantown Hills) and Jeff Tassert (Pekin) are new members. Their association brings our total of paid members to nearly 600 for 2017.**

For 2018, we would like to increase our membership to more than 1,000. For that, we need your help.

The ISC board is asking each of members to recruit at least one new member next year. Certainly you have a family member, friend, neighbor or co-worker who would be interested in supporting our cause.

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