



P: (828) 299-7277
F: (828) 299-0133

P.O. Box 1061
Asheville, NC 28802

www.abysa.org

Spring 2026

Dear HFC Parent and Player,

The 2025 Marathon Games raised over \$188,000, significantly helping to control the cost of your HFC club fees. Through your efforts and over 2,400 donations made by friends and family to support your children's soccer ambitions, we can offer a high-quality, competitive soccer experience for your player.

On **Saturday, May 16, 2026**, ABYSA will host its **25th Annual Marathon Games**. The Marathon Games continue to be our only annual fundraising event because it is high-impact and requires only a small amount of effort to participate. **Fifteen minutes, fifteen or more address labels, and you are done!** **ABYSA does the rest.** Please also note that we do not save names and addresses and will not use the contacts that you provide for any other solicitations.

Fundraising is a necessary and beneficial part of our non-profit organization, and we are counting on your participation this year to help us continue our Marathon Games success. **Each player's contribution of labels is critical.**

Attached is a description of how the Marathon Games work and samples of the sponsorship letters ABYSA will send using the mailing labels you provide. **Please turn in your labels to your Team Coach or your Marathon Games Ambassador by Friday, March 13, 2026.** Every player who turns in labels will receive a custom short-sleeved Marathon Games Performance T-Shirt, and there are even better prizes for teams with 100% participation in the label drive! This year's incentive for our players is their choice of a CUSTOM HFC PopSocket & HFC Croc Charms Bundle, HFC Scarf (it's a soccer thing!), HFC Water Bottle, HFC Drawstring Bag, or HFC Trucker Hat.

Save the date, May 16, 2026, and join our HFC family in this memorable year-end celebration. Thank you for your support and for the opportunity to serve your family in soccer!

Sincerely,

Mike Rottjakob

Executive Director

MARATHON GAMES FUNDRAISER

How it Works

MARATHON GAMES

- Saturday, May 16, 2026, Game Day (rain date is May 17th) at the BCSP.
- 25th Annual MG (Our Silver Anniversary)
- 21st Annual Panoramic Photo
- Money raised through mailings/labels goes directly to benefit HFC soccer
- The 2025 Marathon Games raised over \$188,000, saving every team nearly \$3,000 in player fees
- This event DOES NOT benefit the Financial Aid Program. Other fundraising initiatives support our financial aid program. Marathon Games benefit **ALL** HFC player families.
- Marathon Games is our only club-wide event, a fun-packed day celebrating the end of a great year of soccer!

THE FUNDRAISER

- Labels, Labels, Labels are how we all save money!
- Please...Fill in 15 or more names and addresses on the attached label of supportive family, friends, or professionals (dentist, doctor, etc.), you know who might be willing to sponsor your child in this event. Random names from the phone book will not be accepted.
- Include the name of an individual, along with the address, if providing a potential business sponsor.
- Use black or blue ink
- Write clearly to avoid incorrect names on letters
- **Address the label in the same way the player would refer to that person (Granny, Uncle Ray, PawPaw, Miss Sue)**
- Provide complete addresses, including the zip code
- Edit the player's name on the cover sheet (to be consistent with how your child is known – this is how the letter will be signed) and circle shirt sizes (otherwise, we have to guess). Every player turning in labels gets a marathon games t-shirt.
- Players on teams with 100% participation (most teams achieve this!) will receive their choice of a custom HFC PopSocket & HFC Croc Charms Bundle, HFC Scarf (it's a soccer thing!), HFC Water Bottle, HFC Drawstring Bag, or HFC Trucker Hat.
- **Return the labels and cover sheet by Friday, March 13.**
- Again this year, we will offer an online donation option for donors' convenience and for those who don't have checkbooks. It also enables us to provide thank-you letters electronically.
- That's all! HFC does the rest!

NEXT STEPS

- We will print solicitation letters explaining the event and why your child is asking for their sponsorship
- We will have the player personally sign the letters at a training session or game
- We will stuff and stamp the envelopes
- We will mail thank-you letters (which serve as tax-deductible receipts) to all sponsors. ABYSA is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 Corporation
- Online donations will receive an electronic thank-you letter

THE EVENT

- All classic, intermediate, and academy players and their families are invited to game day (over 1,000 players participated in the 2025 fundraiser)
- Cookout, including burgers and sides for players, family, and their guests, is complimentary and our pleasure
- Full day of fun soccer games (not serious, just fun) and celebration

OTHER INFORMATION

- Please return the cover sheets with the information filled out for each of your players. This is especially important for families with more than one player in the HFC program. We need this to track and give incentives.
- PLEASE REVIEW LABELS TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE COMPLETE! STREET ADDRESS, CITY, STATE/ZIP
- DO NOT INCLUDE THE NAMES OF YOUR TEAMMATES AND THEIR PARENTS ON YOUR LABEL SHEETS
- Monica is here to assist Spanish-speaking families.

Thank you for your help in making Marathon Games 2026 a success!



SAMPLE SOLICITATION LETTER THAT WILL BE MAILED TO POTENTIAL SPONSORS

Spring 2026

Dear «First»:

Soccer is more than just my favorite sport; for me, it is a way of life. Physical fitness, self-discipline, and teamwork are just some of the rewards that come from putting myself into my sport three days a week and every weekend.

I am a member of the Highland Football Club (HFC) in Western North Carolina. HFC is the Competitive level of the Asheville Buncombe Youth Soccer Association. Our teams compete throughout North Carolina and the Southeastern United States. My club is raising money to help provide high-quality soccer programming for our 123 teams. Our goal is to raise \$188,000 in this year's 25th Annual Marathon Games. In May of 2025, our Marathon Games Fundraiser was a tremendous success. We are all looking forward to this year's event, including celebrating the restoration and reopening of The John B. Lewis Soccer Complex, which was seriously damaged by Hurricane Helene last year.

I am writing to ask you to consider sponsoring me in this five-hour event. You may pledge by the hour or make a one-time donation in a specific amount. For example, if you pledge \$15 per hour, your total donation to the Highland Football Club would be \$75. All support is greatly appreciated. HFC is a tax-exempt 501(c) 3 corporation, so **all donations are tax-deductible**.

Please read the enclosed form carefully. If you would like to help my team, our players, and our program, please complete and return the sponsor form with your check in the enclosed envelope, or use the QR code found on the pledge card to make an online donation. If you make an online donation, please make sure to complete the requested information about the player you are sponsoring.

Sincerely,

«Player»



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**SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER THAT WILL BE MAILED TO
DONORS. A SIMILAR LETTER WILL BE SENT ELECTRONICALLY
TO ONLINE DONORS.**

Spring 2026

«First» «Last»
«Address»
«City», «State», «Zip»

Dear «First»:

On behalf of the youth soccer players of the Highland Football Club, I thank you for your donation of \$«Amount». The money HFC has raised from the Marathon Games will benefit all of our players ages eight through nineteen. With help from generous individuals like you, we can provide innovative programs that keep our teams competitive at both the state and regional levels.

HFC is recognized as a not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of North Carolina and by the IRS as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt corporation. All donations to HFC are tax-deductible. The IRS requires us to advise you that no goods or services are offered in exchange for or in recognition of your gift. Please retain this letter as a receipt for your gift.

We are extremely pleased that you have taken an active role in promoting quality youth soccer in our community. If you are in the Western North Carolina area on any weekend, please feel free to come out and support the players as they do what they love to do. You will always be welcome.

Sincerely,

Mike Rottjakob
Executive Director