

Youth Activities — MacCanDo

story and photo by Steve Micros

MacCanDo Tenderloin Youth Track Club, one of the Elks many youth charities, is a non-profit organization which helps at-risk youth achieve their full potential through track and field opportunities. In their fifth year, 10 MacCanDo youth athletes qualified to compete at the 2009 National Junior Olympics in Iowa. The 2010 season opens on April 3rd with the Stockton Saints Track and Field Sectional Seasonal (PA/USATF) youth track meet in Stockton, CA.

MacCanDo not only requires an athletic commitment from its participants, but also holds them to high academic standards. The club's philosophy is focused on developing self-confidence, teaching mutual respect and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Family participation is a key element in supporting the athletes as well as achieving the club's mission.

This year, 30 registered participants are all striving to reach personal goals in track and field, dream of returning to the Nationals in 2010, and having fun along the way. The youth athletes will participate in approximately 20 track and field competitions, including, sectional, regional, and national events. The team practices three times a week. During the off season, the workouts focus on strength and conditioning, weight training and basketball. The end of the season is celebrated at a semi-formal team banquet held at the SF Elks Lodge.

MacCanDo's founder and Coach Robert McDaniels puts more than just his time into making MacCanDo the successful track and field organization that it has become. He also puts his heart into reaching out to the community. Coach McDaniels, along with his dedicated assistant coaches and the parents of MacCanDo youth athletes focus their efforts on community-building in both the Tenderloin and Treasure Island neighborhoods.

MacCanDo conducts youth sports clinics several times a year on Treasure Island. Neighborhood children are invited to participate in a workout starting with of a warm-up and stretching session, running and basketball drills, including the fundamentals of each sport followed by a BBQ lunch.

On May 27, 2010, MacCanDo will present a "Family Track Day in the Tenderloin." The event will take place at Boeddeker Park from 4-7 pm. This event is Coach McDaniels' way of letting the children and parents of San

Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood know that the sport of track and field is not going anywhere as long as he has something to say about it.

It goes without saying that MacCanDo could not achieve these feats without the support of their many donors. However, the level of funding MacCanDo will receive in 2010 has been greatly reduced. As such, they have had to limit out-of-town travel to events and to ask for supplemental contributions from the parents for team travel to events outside of the Bay Area, including, Stockton, Sacramento and Reno; all of this of course, in preparation for the National Championships in Illinois.

Coach McDaniels, the assistant coaches, the youth athletes and their parents have expressed their sincere gratitude to the Elks and their members for the continued financial support used to supplement team uniforms, transportation to events, and entry fees for track meets.

To learn more about MacCanDo and how you can contribute or participate in upcoming community events, please refer to the website: <http://www.maccando.webs.com/> or contact Steven Micros at sjmicro1@gmail.com.



Coach Rob McDaniels and Steve Micros have a few laughs at the December 2009 Lollipop Run, the semi-annual event benefiting "Girls on the Run" in Golden Gate Park.