OhioWaterPolo.com caught up with the coaches from St. Xavier High School to get a look into some of the highlights from the St. Xavier High School Sunlite Shootout that was held at Coney Island on September 16 -17, 2017.

OWP.com: What encouraged you to have it at Coney Island? What a crazy (and great) idea!

St. Xavier High School: We wanted to host JV and V games in the same outdoor pool so that our entire team could be together. We thought our JV would benefit from that.

OWP.com: When did the planning start for this event?

St. Xavier High School: A small amount immediately after last year's tourney, but almost all in the 60 days leading up to tourney.

OWP.com: Seems like a multi-person event that helped plan and execute the event. Anyone specific that was a great help to this event other than the coaches?

St. Xavier High School: Joe Lockett and Jeff Graham (parents) were our tourney directors and put in lots of hours in the 8 weeks leading up to tourney. They did everything from selling idea to Coney, coordinated the vendors, enlisting volunteers, soliciting coaches, securing refs (local and other) and hotels and sponsors, creating competitive schedule, and worked the 2-day course set up and event. Cary Belyea of Swimsafe was also critical. He provided the supplies, know-how and labor to set up the 3 courses.

OWP.com: How many teams did you have in total? Varsity? Junior Varsity?

St. Xavier High School: 15 V and 12 JV

OWP.com: How many games took place at the Sunlite Shootout?

St. Xavier High School: 75 Games

OWP.com: What are your thoughts on the event? Did it meet expectations or did it exceed expectations? Please provide a summary.

St. Xavier High School: It far exceeded our expectations.

From a polo standpoint, teams seemed to enjoy having competitive games for the most part. Attracting the interest from good teams outside Ohio was special. While N'Ville was clearly strongest team, they did not escape without a loss, and the team that finished second lost to every other team in round robin.

From a financial point of view, we anticipating a >$1,000 loss, but the weather and curiosity about the event gave us a larger than expected gate. Thanks to sponsorships and Coney's generous pricing, we did well. Coney's genuine enthusiasm about hosting polo was key.

It took hundreds and hundreds of man hours to do well. Fortunately, our 60 member team gives us solid volunteer base to spread the work.

And our original interest of having our JV and V together was great for growth of our team.

OWP.com: What are expectations for next year? Is there a next year?

St. Xavier High School: We've had informal talks with Coney and plan to meet with them in Oct-Nov to discuss 2018. Right now, we plan to do it again. What "it" is however is undetermined. We could; (1) replicate the 2017 event or (2) host the 16 best teams east of the Rockies for a mythical non-Ca National Champ in two 25M-30M pools that run side by side. Good teams in Pa and other states (and D.C.) have already expressed interest in coming out.

In our early talks with Coney we're exploring possibility of earlier weekend to protect against poor weather.

OWP.com: Seems like coverage was very good from multiple news groups and USA Water Polo. Did you expect this much?

St. Xavier High School: Joe Lockett worked the local media hard and they fortunately supported it. Again, the unique venue probably helped pique their interest. USA Water Polo somehow picked up the drone video and generously retweeted it. That video has over 12,000 impressions and 9,000 views. We by no means expected any of that. But, at the end of the day, the unique venue and some good polo can possibly be a foundation to make Ohio a known and real hotbed for water polo outside Ca.

Additional News Release:

Cincinnati Enquirer/Cincinnati.com
http://www.cincinnati.com/picture-gallery/sports/high-school/high-school-sports/2017/09/21/gallery-st-xaviers-sunlite-shootout-water-polo-tournament/105841494/

USA Water Polo – Greg Mescall – *The Counter Attack* **-**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEmByo_HNlk