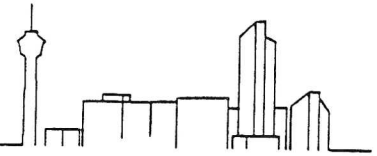


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Calgary and District Soccer Referees' Association



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THE HISTORY, STRUGGLES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CALGARY AND DISTRICT SOCCER REFEREES' ASSOCIATION

Prior to the outdoor season in 1983 there had been two referee associations in Calgary. The Senior Referees' Group provided referees for the Calgary United Soccer Association (CUSA). The Calgary Minor Soccer Referees' Association assisted the Calgary Minor Soccer Association (CMSA) and also provided referees for the Calgary Ladies Soccer Association (CLSA). The only contact between the two referee groups was at the CMSA's Boys and Girls Tournaments and the CLSA's Wild Rose Tournament.

The two associations decided to amalgamate in late 1982. There were periods of long, tough discussions which included the drafting of a constitution and deciding on a name. Several individuals from both referees' associations were instrumental in facilitating the amalgamation, including Gordon Leslie, Ian Halladay, Brian Kearny, Hugh McFadzean, and George Hunter.

The inaugural meeting of the CDSRA took place in early 1983 with Phil Clarke, a FIFA referee at the time, stepping into the role of the association's first president. Another FIFA referee, Tulu Gurkin, was appointed to the position of Director of Referee Affairs.

The next CDSRA president was George Hunter, a National Instructor and Assessor, who was responsible for the CDSRA becoming a not-for-profit society registered with Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

CSF FORMATION

In 1984, the Calgary Soccer Federation (CSF) was formed with the purpose of bringing together the several different local soccer entities. CDSRA members, including Ian Halladay, provided leadership in the creation of the constitution of this new organization. With the hard work of Mr. Gurkin, the CDSRA became one of the member associations and had a single vote in federation decisions. The Calgary Men's Commercial Soccer Association (CMCSA) and the Calgary Women's Soccer Association (previously, the CLSA) each held one vote, with CMSA and CUSA each with four votes. Now all decisions regarding

referees, such as game fees and the scheduler's retainer fee, were to be negotiated through the CSF.

THE FIRST PROVINCIAL INDOOR SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIPS

In the spring of 1984, the first indoor soccer championships were held in Calgary at the old ATCO complex with the CDSRA being one of the founding organizers. The weekend tournament turned out to be a huge success and as a result, the Alberta Soccer Association (ASA) adopted and has continued to maintain the event. It continues to be a highlight of the soccer calendar in Alberta every Spring.

THE CALGARY INDOOR SOCCER CENTRE

A dream that united the soccer community in Calgary was the idea of building a state-of-the-art indoor soccer facility. This project was instrumental in bringing soccer people together and was actually a key factor in the formation of the CSF. When completion of the indoor center was in jeopardy due to financial problems, CDSRA Past President Ian Halladay assisted the negotiating team that was successful in obtaining a repayable grant from the City of Calgary.

REFEREE SCHEDULING

In order to develop referees, it was Mr. Gurkin's belief that control of scheduling game assignments should rest with the CDSRA. The first such scheduling agreement was established with the Calgary Minor Soccer Association in time for the fall league of 1983. Prior to the start of the 1984 outdoor season CUSA came on board, with the Commercial and Ladies leagues following suit before the end of that season.

This system had a terrific impact. The overall quality of officiating improved. Also, the great majority of games in Calgary were now covered by three officials, a service unparalleled elsewhere in Canada. Minor problems like finding the proper person to do the scheduling or funding of the retainer's fee did little to affect the overall performance of this new system.

With the formation of the CSF, referee scheduling was now to be carried out by the CSF, with input from the CDSRA. At the time, CDSRA member Ann Blackwood was the CUSA Office Manager, a paid employee whose duties were expanded to include referee scheduling. For the two years she was the scheduler, the referee community thought that Ann was doing a terrific job.

However, CUSA felt that this arrangement did not fit into its plans, and after many more heated discussions, the CSF returned the scheduling responsibility to the CDSRA.

The task of scheduling had since become a huge chore due to the growth of the game in Calgary. It was almost impossible to expect a CDSRA volunteer to be able to satisfy all the requirements of the job with only a small retainer as a reward. Even the members were unhappy with this turn of events and at a General Meeting in August 1990 voted to give the scheduling duties back to the CSF. With this decision the CDSRA saw its influence on the outcome of the monthly schedule diminish. Juanita Sore was hired in September 1992 by the CSF with the sole responsibility to perform referee scheduling duties.

CUSA GAME FEE DISPUTE

In 1987, rumours circulated that CUSA had lost a significant portion of their funds and were in dire financial straits. The league, in danger of folding due to the financial crisis, approached the CDSRA to referee CUSA games for free. The CDRSA did not embrace this suggestion but appreciated CUSA's predicament and offered other alternatives. Without any further discussion CUSA unilaterally slashed game fees to a ridiculously low level, the lowest in Canada, and decided to be selective as to which referees would be appointed to their games. The immediate response by the great majority of CDSRA members was to not be available for CUSA games.

Unfortunately, the other member leagues of the CSF were reluctant to get involved. And while admitting privately that CUSA was wrong to contravene the game fee agreement, they now reaped the benefit of having topnotch officials for their games. The Alberta Soccer Association was also extremely reluctant to step in, possibly fearing the risk of alienating CUSA, a huge financial contributor to their coffers. CUSA did survive the season using a few CDSRA "defectors" and some "off the street" pickups.

Eventually a new amended agreement on game fees for CUSA games was reached in late 1987, but hard feelings remained on both sides. Game fees remained low, however, CUSA did agree to increase the game fees substantially at such time as its financial position was sorted out. CUSA soon got their financial house in order, but the fees never increased to the levels suggested in the amended agreement. In explanation, the CUSA Board stated that the amended agreement to increase the fees was ratified by a previous CUSA Board, which they believed was not binding upon them.

GAME FEE RATES

In 1991, the CDSRA membership discussed the objective of securing better game fees. In preparation, the issue was researched in detail. Cities across Canada were surveyed regarding rates for soccer officials, and different sports in Calgary were surveyed regarding game fees for their officials. The conclusion reached was that Calgary's soccer officials were receiving dramatically lower game fees than officials in comparative sports or soccer referees in other cities.

The CDSRA, represented by Mike Seifert and Kieran McGarrigle, initiated negotiations with the CSF. The negotiations were extremely frustrating and time consuming, and after nearly two years an agreement still seemed unattainable because of the CSF's apparent reluctance to negotiate in good faith. The CDSRA proposed mediation or arbitration as it appeared the 1993 outdoor season might be disrupted because of the impasse. Just before the season was to begin, former CSF President Steve Hill was able to bring both sides together which resulted in a five year agreement being executed by the parties. This increased the game fees to a reasonable standard by the end of a five year period and was quickly ratified by the members.

The time consuming and difficult negotiations resulted in the game fee rates that Calgary soccer referees now enjoy. And these efforts benefited all Calgary referees, not just the CDSRA members.

In 1994, Dave Stasiak and Garth Elgie continued the process by negotiating a similar five year agreement for indoor fees. These negotiations were less difficult because the increases were not too significant, as the indoor fees had always been on par with other parts of the country and with other sports in Calgary.

INDOOR RULE BOOK

Prior to 1993, a number of different versions of the rules for indoor soccer were being used in Calgary and around the Province. It was as though each league had their own version of the indoor rules. The huge task of publishing a definitive Indoor Rule Book was tackled by Mike Seifert, Kieran McGarrigle and Jack Blair in 1993. The value of this booklet was evident as the ASA subsequently published it under their cover without, unfortunately, acknowledging the original authorship.

THE CSF LOTTO AND THE CDSRA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CSF

In 1994, the CSF conceived a lottery to assist in reducing its debt incurred during the final phase of construction of the Calgary Soccer Center. The lottery was unsuccessful and incurred a debt of approximately \$120,000. The CSF required the member organizations to cover this debt, proportional to the voting structure. This meant the CDSRA was responsible for about \$ 11,000. The CDSRA initially declined to agree to this request.

The CDSRA's rationale for this position was based on several considerations. Of significance to the CDSRA was that it's representatives had not been present, nor had they been advised of the meetings when decisions were made to allow the debt to rise above approximately \$27,000. A requested accounting of the lottery's finances and relevant minutes of crucial meetings were not forthcoming from the CSF. The CDSRA also pointed out that the constitution of the CSF had no provision to apportion debt and that the voting structure was intended to facilitate decision making only and not to be used to apportion debt. On a more practical side, the CDSRA had neither the financial resources nor the large memberships of the other member organizations to handle this unfortunate situation. Discussions on alternate forms of assistance reached an impasse and reluctantly the CDSRA found it necessary to withdraw from the CSF.

Since this time, several applications to rejoin have been tendered, either as an associate non-voting member or again as a full member. Each attempt has been refused, with the monetary debt surfacing as the main point of contention even though many different proposals were offered to contribute to a portion of the Lotto loss.

CSF REFEREE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Prior to 1994, the CDSRA had representation on the CSF Board. The board meetings were often taken up with referee affairs issues. The CDSRA, through the efforts of Mike Seifert, was instrumental in establishing the CSF Referee Affairs Committee with the intention of handling referee affairs on a monthly basis. Representatives from the CSF member leagues also sat on the committee. This became the CDSRA's only formal contact with the CSF after the CDSRA withdrew from the CSF .

SCHEDULING AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES DISPUTE

A serious dispute between the CDSRA and the CSF occurred in 1998, which impacted the entire 1998 outdoor season. The dispute revolved around a co-

signed Agreement between the CDSRA and CSF, which established terms and conditions for the scheduling and payment of referees. This Agreement, which had been established in 1995, was in the process of being reviewed and updated during 1997. Then without warning, the Agreement was cancelled by the CSF in January of 1998 (during the indoor season) and a new set of terms and conditions were unilaterally imposed suddenly and effective immediately. Up to this point there had been a difference in opinion on some issues, but discussions were ongoing.

One issue, dealing with finding a replacement when an official cancelled an appointment, was particularly contentious. The CSF claimed that their Referee Scheduler, a full time paid employee, was spending too much time re-assigning officials who cancelled games. The CDSRA asked for details on which officials were causing "the problem" and the amount of much time that was being spent by the CSF Scheduler, however, no firm details were provided to support their claims. In addition the CDSRA felt that the terms and conditions on this matter, which were outlined in the original Agreement, were fair. Also, it was understood that if in fact there was an official who abused the terms and conditions of the original Agreement, the CDSRA would investigate the complaint and deal with the matter appropriately.

Over the next three months all CDSRA attempts to discuss, negotiate, mediate or arbitrate a resolution to the differences were flatly rejected by the CSF. Individuals and organizations in Calgary who were sympathetic to the CDSRA's plight tried to intervene. In every case it appeared that those key individuals, who had been the initiators of the unmitigated CSF position, employed bullying tactics, manipulation, threats and intimidation to thwart any attempt at resolving the dispute. It looked like the CSF was intent on breaking apart the CDSRA and eliminating the association from the Calgary soccer scene, something that the membership suspected was the CSF's prime motive in the dispute from the onset. These suspicions appeared to be confirmed when the CSF made a decision to no longer recognize the CDSRA. The CSF also changed the structure of its Referee Affairs Committee to no longer include CDSRA.

Tension between the two sides was becoming extreme. With the outdoor season fast approaching, a resolution was further frustrated as the governing body for soccer in Alberta refused to be involved. ASA stated that the dispute was a local matter, even though referees in Calgary are registered directly with this provincial body.

Then, at a CDSRA General Meeting in March, the membership voted to be unavailable for weekend local games as an indication of support to the CDSRA's position and displeasure at the CSF's actions. They would, however, be prepared to do games during the week, Monday through Friday, when the bulk of the CSF's games take place. This action was supported by the bulk of

the CDSRA membership, from FIFA Officials to Class 3s. The CSF's response to this position was to not use any of these referees for the entire 1998 outdoor season. Consequently, the bulk of the CDSRA membership were not used by the local District for local games. The season went ahead with new officials obtained from hastily organized referee clinics and a group of about 15 referees who chose not to support the CDSRA position. By all accounts the games suffered immensely from inexperienced officials, however, with both sides firmly entrenched in their positions, the entire outdoor season was adversely affected.

As the 1998 outdoor season progressed, CDSRA referees were still officiating provincial games, primarily in the Alberta Major Soccer League (AMSL). The CSF set out to stop this by instructing the ASA to pass a policy stating that to be considered for provincial games a referee had to do local games. This effectively eliminated all referees who supported the CDSRA from doing any games whatsoever. This also clearly showed the CSF's power and influence over the provincial body. It became readily apparent that the CSF was able to easily manipulate the ASA through certain key individuals who were elected Directors in all three levels of the soccer's administration in the province (Calgary's local leagues, the CSF and the ASA). In a related matter, these individuals were also able to remove the CDSRA's representation from the CSF's monthly Referee Affairs Committee.

With the dispute threatening to extend into the following indoor season, a new set of terms and conditions were included in a booklet that was to be distributed by the CSF at the Indoor Refresher Clinics. Information was provided to the CDSRA Executive in advance and, as a result, a Special Meeting of the membership was called in September to review this fundamental shift in the CSF position. The members voted to once again be available for all games as the proposal appeared to be a more equitable arrangement.

CDSRA ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the long history of the Association, many people have believed very strongly in the goals and objectives of the CDSRA. The long hours spent above and beyond the regular time demands of refereeing, assessing and instructing are a testament to their dedication and love of the sport of soccer. A few of the more outstanding achievements are presented here to provide a sense of the determination of this group to contribute to the long term ideals of improving the quality of soccer refereeing in Calgary. Some of the concepts were sufficiently impressive to be adopted at the provincial and national levels.

- **Assessment Of Referees**

Convincing the ASA to change the policy to permit maintenance and educational assessments for new and youth referees to occur in games without linesmen was a major achievement of the CDSRA. Also, it was CDSRA member Andrew Ungar who established linesmen's assessments. Within two years, the Canadian Soccer Association adopted his linesman assessment procedure for the country.

- **Mandatory Refresher Clinics**

Since 1987, the CDSRA has organized refresher clinics prior to the start of the upcoming outdoor and indoor seasons for its members. The CDRSA realized the value of collecting the referees together before the start of each season to discuss the laws and review practical situations with the aim of creating consistency and uniformity of refereeing conduct. Many CDSRA members, past and present, have been involved with these refresher clinics. John Kerr Jr. and Mike Seifert were able to convince the ASA that refresher courses should be mandatory before the start of indoor and outdoor seasons.

- **The Alberta Soccer Referees' Association**

In the early 1980s, the Edmonton Referees Society tried to form a provincial referees' association, but the project never really materialized. In the early 1990s the project was resurrected by the CDSRA, with Mike Seifert and John Isvoranu playing key roles. The CDSRA became the major initiator in the formation of the Alberta Soccer Referees' Association, and continues to provide the majority of ASRA members.

- **"The Signal"**

The CDSRA saw the value in creating a newsletter to provide interesting and useful information about soccer refereeing to its members. "The Signal" was established by Jack Blair, the creator and first editor, who put a lot of hard work into this project. "The Signal" became the newsletter for all of Alberta's referees with the formation of the ASRA. Another previous editor of "The Signal", Kim Chalmers, is a CDSRA member.

- **Technical Sessions And Workshops**

Over the years, the CDSRA has organized various clinics and workshops, often bringing in feature speakers from out of town. Of particular significance are the Spring Workshops, established by Mike Seifert and organized with the valuable assistance of numerous CDSRA members. Top instructors such as

Emerson Mathurin, John Meachin and Bob Sawtell provided subtle insights in their presentations that benefited those in attendance.

Through the leadership and dedication of Andrew Ungar, practical sessions are organized, usually for the newer referees. An experienced instructor accompanies a group of "spectator" referees to a game to observe and discuss the official's performance. Many CDSRA members, past and present have been involved in these projects in the interests of developing and improving the skills of Calgary's soccer referees.

• **Miscellaneous Projects And Initiatives**

Some of the many CDSRA individual or group projects that have occurred, often discretely over the years, includes:

- Pre-season indoor tournament for local youth and senior teams.
- Sponsorship of the ASA Introductory Class 3 and Youth Referee clinics.
- Several of the forms and documents used on a regular basis by Calgary officials were established by CDSRA, including the CSF's Monthly Availability form, the CUSA Game Sheet, the ASA's and CSF's Dismissal Report, the Linesman Assessment form and the Misconduct Against Officials Report form.
- Donation of a beautiful trophy case to the CSF.
- Furniture and lockers for the referee dressing rooms at the Soccer Centre.
- Regular mail outs of interesting and useful information for the members, like the newsletter, rule interpretations, etc.
- The CDSRA Referee Information Manual which included field locations, code of ethics, general requirements, uniforms standards, member services, etc.
- A "mentor" program for youth and new officials.
- CDSRA badges and lapel pins and a "flipping coin".
- The annual Telephone Directory of members.
- A summer BBQ for CDSRA members, their families and friends.
- Challenges with our Edmonton counterparts to "friendly matches."

PROMINENT AND DISTINGUISHED CDSRA MEMBERS

Over the years, some of the finest soccer officials in Canada have been CDSRA members, including six FIFA (internationally certified) officials. Mike Seifert became Canada's youngest FIFA Referee in 1990 and has been selected to officiate in numerous international games and tournaments. Kim Chalmers and Ann Blackwood, as Assistant Referees on FIFA's Women's List, have seen regular international duty since 1994. Mike, Kim and Ann progressed "through the ranks" while continuing to be members of the CDSRA. Also, three FIFA

Referees became members after relocating to Calgary: Phil Clarke from Ontario, Tulu Gurkan from Indonesia and Kevin Skinner from British Columbia.

In addition to the International contingent, the CDSRA has seen an extremely strong and active group of its members achieve National Referee status with the Canadian Soccer Association. Included in this impressive list are George Hunter, George Thomson, John Kerr Sr., Mike Seifert, Teddy Juliussen, Keiran McGarrigle, Kim Chalmers, Ann Blackwood and John Isvoranu. Not just limited to on field achievements, CDSRA has also produced National Assessors and Instructors. George Hunter, George Thomson, Andrew Ungar and Hugh McFadzean made the grade as National Assessors, while George Hunter also "doubled" as a National Instructor.

THE FUTURE

Notwithstanding the fact that the CSF and ASA chose not to formally recognize the CDSRA, the Association continues to be involved in referee issues in Calgary. The Executive meets regularly every month to establish and maintain programs, projects and services that are intended to promote soccer refereeing as an interesting and beneficial activity. While the main focus of the CDSRA is on referee development and representing the interests of all soccer officials, there are always a wide assortment of other activities and projects being developed. These initiatives have continued to demonstrate that the CDSRA is a very proactive, dynamic and progressive association with a rich tradition, a proud past and a promising future. The membership has demonstrated commitment, dedication and an appreciation of the value and strong principles of the CDSRA and are always willing to support the efforts of the Association, it's initiatives and projects.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

