

***CANADA'S
BEAUTIFUL***



GAME

REED TURCOTTE

Canada's Beautiful Game

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E-Edition

PUBLISHED BY: BCP Publishing

Division of Boundary Creek Printing & Publishing Co.
Ltd. (est.1896)

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Website: www.canadasbeautifulgame.ca

“The words that affect us most are the ones that inspire mankind to think for them”

Reed Turcotte (1991)

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Acknowledgements

A special heartfelt thankyou goes out to my family especially my wife Lorraine, who besides being my confidante has assisted me with my last few newspapers, magazines and my previous five books, as well as this one. I have been honored to work in the print trade over the last forty-two years and able to hob-knob with many soccer journalists, soccer players, managers, presidents and owners, many who are mentioned in this book. It is an honor to publish this e-book for all fans 'of the beautiful game' in Canada.

The first written evidence of a football (soccer) match came in about 1170, when William Fitzstephen wrote of his visit to London. "After dinner all the youths of the city goes out into the fields for the very popular game of ball." He also went on to mention that each trade had their own team, "The elders, the fathers, and the men of wealth come on horseback to view the contests of their juniors, and in their fashion sport with the young men; and there seems to be aroused in these elders a stirring of natural heat by viewing so much activity and by participation in the joys of unrestrained youth."

Prologue

Canada's Football (Soccer) Story

Soccer in Canada is the most popular sport in terms of participation rate. According to FIFA's Big Count, 2,695,712 people played in Canada in 2006, with many more taking to the pitch now. Professional soccer in Canada is played in Major League Soccer, the United Soccer League, and the upcoming Canadian Premier League. Canada also has many semi-professional and amateur soccer leagues. Canada's men and women national soccer teams are ranked 79th and 5th respectively in the FIFA World Rankings, as of September 3, 2018.

Breaking it down to its simplest form soccer/football is a sport played by two teams of eleven players each, using a circular ball, usually on a grass field called a "pitch." Only the two goalkeepers may intentionally handle the ball, which is moved from player to player by kicking; and a goal may be scored by kicking or heading the ball into the opponent's goal. Association football, the traditional name of the game, has now been shortened to "football," while the term "soccer" is derived from the second syllable of the word "association." In Canada and the

United States the game is usually referred to as soccer to distinguish it from other forms of football.

In contrast to Canadian and American football, soccer has spread to almost every nation in the world, and over two hundred nations are now members of FIFA. The game continues to grow in popularity for both men and women, and is now the country's number one participation sport for children and youth. At the end of 2018 close to one million players were registered in soccer at all levels with over forty-seven per cent of those players been female, and playing soccer according to the rules of association football. What is called soccer in Canada today was generally known as football in Canada in the early days of the sport, as it is known in much of the rest of the world today.

From 1891 and continuing right up-to 2018, Canadian soccer/football has been played more or less continually north of the 49th in one form or another. In the early era, the players, managers and owners were of white heritage and many were just average (sports wise) citizens in the city their team served. Today's owners, managers, and players now have an air of exhilaration around them (although they are no longer just white Europeans) and the lack of prominence (and salaries) that they lacked in years gone-by has greatly increased in the last few decades.

Today's professional soccer players and managers are leaders of Canada's sports world and they are the person(s) the community looks up to and idolizes. The game has become the life blood and the heart and soul of the city they play in. In the early days of Canadian media (mostly newspapers back then) the media did not promote these players and the team they played for as is the case now. Today readers, sports radio listeners and television viewers devour the sport and is discussed and in many cases, argued about in the local coffee shops, pubs and places of work.

Once upon a time, the CFL then the NHL was looked upon as the forerunner in the world of Canadian sports and their teams were a living, breathing identity that in many cases took on the persona of their owner or general manager. Today's pro soccer teams have now joined the "big two" and are doing very well on television and in the stands. Millennials (especially younger immigrants) have taken to the sport and it (soccer) is now the new darling on the block. These attitudes will become even more prevalent in the next few years due to the use of smart phones and tablets as a viewing platform. Fantasy soccer, e-sports and gambling will also become a much bigger player in Canadian soccer's future.

This book portrays the saga of the Canadian soccer-football from the late 1800s until today. It starts out in chronological order of Canada's round ball history, the state of soccer today and then spends a chapter on each professional

team (past and present) that not only gives the reader a history lesson on each team but an in-depth look at the owners including their teams various idiosyncrasies. The great ones (Christine Sinclair for example) have their own section (or pictures).

The final chapters of this book tell the tale of the rise of Canada's first true spectator sport and the real reasons behind its status as Canada's number one sport. University, high school and minor soccer have their own chapter. The future of the MLS (Major League Soccer), Canada's men and women national soccer teams (including the under twenty-three, twenty and seventeen teams) and the new Tier 1 Premier League (starting in April 2019) is also dissected along with injuries in the sport. The book comes to its conclusion with soccer musings and thoughts including a look ahead to the FIFA World-Cup, coming, in part to Canada. It finishes with soccer stats. In other words this book is basically an over-view of soccer in Canada over the past one-hundred and seventeen year's.

There was a time when soccer in Canada was in bad shape and not close to the success of its counterpart the NHL. Today the local Canadian professional teams are king of their domain and today's younger millenniums in many Canadian cities (Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto for example) are more involved with MLS then the CFL. The MLS has owners who mostly have deep pockets and they seem to have a fondness for their teams, which is a good thing. Depending on location and circumstances, some specific

MLS and other teams and leagues will face varied threats and changes. In some cases, owners have increased their reliance on television rather than seeking out more butts in the seats, only time will tell us if this is a good thing. Gaming, gambling, fantasy football/ soccer and e-sports will likely be part of the bigger picture and in the years ahead and one may see semi-pro teams in many more Canadian cities. One thing that you can bet on is that the soccer in Canada (grass roots to the pros) will be around for yet a long time to come.

This book is a compilation of stories, facts and information gleaned from hundreds of sources and put together in chronological order for an easy and understandable read. This book is an independent, not for profit work of art and is not affiliated with any soccer club, organization or other media.

Here then is the story of “the beautiful game” as played on the north side of the forty-ninth parallel with a particular narrative on the professional side of soccer.

Introduction

Soccer History - in Capsule Form

At the beginning of 2019 there was about twice as many registered soccer players in Canada than hockey players but the road to soccer supremacy over hockey has been a long one in coming. The first provincial football association formed in Canada in 1891 was the B.C. Football Association and was followed by the Manitoba Football Association in 1896, the Ontario Football Association in 1901, the Saskatchewan Football Association in 1906, the Alberta Football Association in 1909 and the Province of Quebec Football Association in 1911. Soccer in Canada was played under a variety of rules from the early years of the 19th century. The first game played as it is played today seems to have taken place by males in Toronto in October 1876, although it was not considered an appropriate activity for women at that time.

In 1912, the Dominion of Canada Football Association was formed. The governing body of the game retained that name until it was changed to The Football Association of Canada in June of

1952. The Association again changed its name to the Canadian Soccer Football Association in 1958 and then finally to the Canadian Soccer Association in 1971. The first ever professional football/soccer game was played in Vancouver between the Collies and Rovers in 1910.

The "Dominion of Canada Football Association", is known today as the Canadian Soccer Association and was founded in Winnipeg, Manitoba in July 1912. At that time, the Manitoba Football Association combined with the provincial associations of Ontario, New Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta to form the National Association. The organization became a member of FIFA December 31, 1912.

In 1926, the National Soccer League was formed with teams in Ontario and Quebec. On June 21, 1926, the DCFA resigned from FIFA and remained outside the world governing body, following the example of British associations in a dispute over broken time payments to amateurs. In the 1920s, Hamilton's Whitey McDonald was signed by the Scottish team Rangers after they had spotted him while on tour in North America.

When the Dominion Football Association was first organized in 1877, soccer was not considered a suitable activity for women in Canada. Athletic opportunities were limited for women, as only genteel activities such as skating, horseback riding

and boating were acceptable to Victorian society. Towards the end of the 19th century, tennis, badminton and golf became more popular among women, but even cycling was suspect. Sports that required running and the chance of physical contact were unacceptable at that time in history. By the 1920s, women in Canada were now playing team sports such as basketball, softball and field hockey. However, few were playing soccer, which seems to have been considered a men's sport by most Canadians.

A team from England in 1922 arrived in Québec for a North American tour expecting to find some women's teams to play. However, the Dominion Football Association publicly announced their opposition to the idea of women playing soccer, and even forbade any of their men's clubs from competing against the Dick, Kerr Ladies. In this they were following the lead of the Football Association in England, which had banned the club from playing on its pitches. The touring team was therefore forced to compete against men's teams in the United States.

The Great Depression of the 1930s meant that the DCFA struggled financially and could not afford to hold annual meetings in 1932 and 1933 and from 1935 to 1940. In those years, business was conducted by mail. At one point, President Len Pete of Montreal loaned the DFA a considerable sum of money to stave off bankruptcy. The money was later repaid in full. Despite the hard times, Montreal-born goalkeeper Joe Kenna way signed for Scottish giants Glasgow Celtic in 1931 and was an immediate

success. Toronto Scottish won a North American club championship in 1933 by beating holders and US champions St. Louis Stix at Chicago's Soldier Field by a score of 2 to 1.

In July 1946, the Dominion of Canada Football Association held reorganizational meetings in Winnipeg, MB. On July 24, 1948, the Association again became a member of FIFA. On June 6, 1952, the Association officially changed its name to the Football Association of Canada.

In 1957, Canada entered qualifying for the FIFA World Cup for the first time and met the United States and Mexico in qualifying for the finals in Sweden in 1958. Canada won its first World Cup qualifying game 5 to 1 against the U.S. in Toronto, but played Mexico twice in Mexico City and lost 2 to 0 and 3 to 0. In the final group game, Canada beat the U.S. 3 to 2 in St. Louis, but group winners Mexico advanced to the Finals.

The year 1958 once again found the Association in changing its name, this time to the Canadian Soccer Football Association. It would change its name one more time in 1971, at that time becoming the Canadian Soccer Association. During the 1960s there was a concerted effort to push professional soccer in Canada. The Eastern Canada Professional Soccer League was formed in 1961 and featured teams in Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton, and (for one season) Buffalo, New York. One club, Toronto City, even featured some very prominent British soccer

stars during its inaugural season, including Northern Ireland international Danny Blanch flower, England internationals Stanley Matthews and Johnny Haynes and Scottish internationals Jackie Maudie and Tommy Younger. This is also notable as the last time that the England, Scotland and Northern Ireland captains all played on the same side together. Despite this, the league proved unsuccessful and folded within 5 years.

In western Canada, in 1963 a regional league, the Western Canada Soccer League was formed and consisted of between four and ten teams that by 1971, when it folded, was semi-professional and included teams from Winnipeg to Victoria in two divisions and included several national team players. Following a rise in the popularity of the game after the global broadcasting of the 1966 World Cup, the North American Soccer League was formed in 1968. The league primarily based in the United States also had clubs in Canada and used many European professionals brought in to supplement domestic talent. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Canada was represented by professional teams playing in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver with short-lived teams in Calgary and Edmonton. The NASL had a stormy relationship with FIFA and the USSF and their clubs did not compete in the CONCACAF Champions' Cup. The league folded prior to the 1985 season.

The Olympic Summer Games were held in Montreal in 1976, but the soccer tournament featured only thirteen teams

instead of the normal 16 after the African nations boycotted the games in protest against South Africa's apartheid policies. Canada opened against the Soviet Union in the Olympic Stadium, losing 2 to 1 Canada lost its second game in Toronto against North Korea and was eliminated from the tournament. The same year, Toronto Metros-Croatia won the Soccer Bowl, the North American Soccer League championship. The final was held in Seattle, where the Toronto side defeated Minnesota 3 to 0 with a squad featuring Eusebio, striker Ivan Lukačević, Canadian defender Robert Iarosci and goaltender Željko Bilecki. Vancouver Whitecaps won the 1979 Soccer Bowl, beating Tampa Bay Rowdies 2 to 1 in the final at Giants Stadium in New Jersey.

In 1983, Toronto Blizzard reached the final at B.C. Place Stadium in Vancouver but lost 2 to 0 to the Tulsa Roughnecks. Also in 1983 the Canadian Professional Soccer League played one shortened season after two years of aborted attempts to find enough clubs to play. Canada also lost the bid to host the 1986 World Cup in 1983 when Mexico was awarded the World Cup. Toronto Blizzard returned to the NASL Finals in 1984, but in losing to the Chicago Sting, came up short for the second consecutive year. Canada qualified for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics soccer tournament played throughout the United States. In the first round, they drew with Iraq, lost to Yugoslavia and beat Cameroon to qualify for the quarter finals. After taking an early lead against Brazil, Canada was defeated on penalty kicks.

The 1985 CONCACAF Championship was the fourth edition that doubled as qualification for the FIFA World Cup. Canada secured qualification for the 1986 World Cup after beating Honduras 2 to 1 in St John's, Newfoundland on September 14, 1985 at King George V Park in front of over 13,000 people. Canada had bid to host the final tournament, but their application was rejected in favour of Mexico, who qualified automatically as hosts, with Canada earning the remaining CONCACAF spot and winning the CONCACAF Championship (now the Gold Cup) for the first time. At the World Cup, Canada were drawn in group C and lost 1 to 0 to France and 2 to 0 to both Hungary and the Soviet Union.

Also in 1986, four Canadian national team players were guilty of taking bribes in a match-fixing scandal at the Merlion Cup in Singapore. The Canadian Soccer Association suspended Chris Cheuden, Hector Marinaro, David Norman and Igor Vrablic for one year each. Marinaro and Norman were reinstated and resumed play for Canada. In the wake of Canada's World Cup appearance, the Canadian Soccer League began operations in 1987, and in 1989 the Canadian Soccer Referees' Association was founded.

The NASL was replaced by the Canadian Soccer League with teams in eight Canadian cities. The Vancouver 86ers won the 1990 North American Club Championship, beating Maryland Bays 3-2 in the final in Burnaby, British Columbia. The same year, Canada's national side took part in the North American Nations Cup (formerly the NAFC Championship) for the first time, hosting

the three-team tournament. Mexico and Canada sent their full squads, but the USA sent a 'B' team and does not count the games as official internationals in its records (CONCACAF lists the North American Nations Cup 1990 on their website). Canada won the tournament after a 1 to 0 win over the United States on May 6 and a 2 to 1 win over Mexico on May 13, all three goals scored by John Catliff, the tournament's top scorer. In 1991, Canada took part in the championship for the second time as defending champions. Mexico won the North American Nations Cup 1991 with Canada finishing in third place.

After the 1992 season, the CSL was forced to end operations with Vancouver 86ers and Montreal Impact joining the United States' APSL. In January 1993, the Toronto Blizzard also joined the APSL. The Winnipeg Fury, not meeting U.S.S.F. Division 1 market size standards, and North York Rockets joined the National Soccer League, which changed its name to the Canadian National Soccer League in 1993. The Canadian women's national team benefited from a surge in youth participation throughout the 1980s, and in 1995 Canada qualified for the FIFA Women's World Cup for the first time. Canada lost to England and Norway and drew with Nigeria at the tournament played in Sweden. Canada again qualified for FIFA Women's World Cup 1999 played in the United States, again going winless after drawing with Japan and losing to Norway and Russia.

In 2000, Canada's men's team won the 2000 CONCACAF Gold Cup in February. Canada had finished in a tie in group play with the Republic of Korea, but won the tie-breaking coin toss to advance to the quarter-final, where they beat Mexico 2 to 1 on an extra-time golden goal. In the semi-final, Canada beat Trinidad and Tobago 1 to 0, and beat invited side Colombia 2 to 0 in the final. As a result of being named CONCACAF champions, Canada travelled to the Confederations Cup 2001 in Japan, earning a memorable 0 to 0 draw with Brazil thanks to a stellar performance from Gold Cup Most Valuable Player Craig Forrester.

At the next Gold Cup in 2002, Canada reached the semi-final for the second time and lost to the United States on penalty kicks. Despite their success in the Gold Cup, Canada's senior men's side failed to qualify for either the 2002, 2006 or 2010 World Cup. The national team has never achieved a higher position than 40th in the FIFA World Rankings.

Also in 2002, Canada hosted the first ever FIFA U-19 Women's World Championship with games in Edmonton, Victoria, and Vancouver. The final between Canada and the United States was played at Edmonton's Commonwealth Stadium, with the U.S. winning on a golden goal. Canadian Christine Sinclair received the tournament's Golden Ball as MVP and Golden Boot as leading goal-scorer. Rounding out 2002, Canada's senior women's team, with several players from the U-19 squad, met the United States in the CONCACAF Women's Gold Cup final, where the U.S. won on

yet another golden goal. Still later that year, Sinclair led the U.S. NCAA Division I in goals scored as she helped the University of Portland win the national championship.

The senior women's side again qualified for the FIFA Women's World Cup 2003. In the group stages they lost to Germany before beating Japan and Argentina for their first wins in World Cup history (men or women). In the quarter-finals, Canada upset China 1 to 0 before losing to Sweden in the semi-final. They were again beat by old rivals the U.S. in the third place game. In 2004 the under nineteen women's side qualified for the world championship in Thailand but they lost in the quarterfinals to China. For the second straight tournament, a Canadian won the Golden Boot, with Brittany Timko the top-scorer. Sinclair set an NCAA Division I record in 2005 with thirty-nine goals as she led Portland to another NCAA title and earned a second straight Hermann Trophy. In the wake of her record-setting season at Portland, Sinclair won the Honda-Broderick Cup in 2006 as the outstanding female athlete at a U.S. university. Also in 2006, long-serving CSA Chief Operating Officer Kevan Pipe was fired from his duties. The CPSL re-branded as the Canadian Soccer League.

In 2007, Toronto FC began play in Major League Soccer as its first franchise located outside the United States.^[25] Canada's national team reached the semi-final at the 2007 CONCACAF Gold Cup. Dale Mitchell was named coach of Canada's senior men's team, to begin duties after the 2007 FIFA U-20 World Cup, held in

Canada. The host went out without scoring a goal and losing all three matches. The final was held in front of 20,000 people at the National Soccer Stadium in Toronto, with Argentina beating the Czech Republic two to one. Association President Colin Linford resigned after his pick for chief executive officer, Fred Nykamp, was turned down by the board of directors. In September, Canada participated in the FIFA Women's World Cup China 2007. In October, Vice-President Dr. Dominic Maestracci assumed Linford's duties as chairman of the board.

Beyond Canada's last-place finish, the tournament itself was a huge success. Led by National Event Director Peter Montopoli, the FIFA U-20 World Cup Canada 2007 drew a tournament-record 1.2-million fans, was viewed by 469.5-million global television viewers, and generated \$259-million in economic impact. A new Canadian Soccer Association stepped forward in 2008. Of note, Peter Montopoli was hired as the General Secretary, Stephen Hart was hired as the Technical Director and Dr. Dominic Maestracci was voted President. In May, the Association inaugurated the Nutrilite Canadian Championship with the help of Canada's three top professional clubs - Montreal Impact, Toronto FC and Vancouver Whitecaps FC. The Impact won the inaugural season and qualified for the 2008-09 CONCACAF Champions League season. In women's soccer, Canada qualified for the Women's Olympic Football Tournament for the first time in Association history. The team came within an extra-time goal of

knocking off number-one ranked USA in the quarter-final. At the youth level, Canada won its second CONCACAF Women's U-20 Championship.

Canada drew more than 10,000 fans to four senior men's games for the first time in Association history. Unfortunately, Canada could not advance beyond the so-called CONCACAF Group of Death, a group that featured higher-ranked nations Mexico and Honduras. As in other English-speaking nations outside the United Kingdom, association football has been traditionally overshadowed by a rival code of the game with explicitly local roots. As in Australia, where Australian Rules Football took hold; and Ireland, where Gaelic Football is played; while in New Zealand rugby holds greater popularity; Canadian football usurped Association Football. In 1869, the founding of Hamilton Football Club, who played what would become Canadian football, helped make that sport the dominant football code in Canada by the dawn of the twentieth century.

Despite the difference in popularity of their respective professional leagues, association football overtook ice hockey in the 1980s and 1990s as the sport with the most registered players in the country. In 2008, there were 873,032 footballers, compared to 584,679 registered hockey players in Canada in 2008/09.

Major League Soccer (MLS) is the highest level of professional soccer in the United States and Canada. Currently

there are three MLS teams located in Canada. Toronto FC became the first Canadian club in 2007. An MLS franchise was awarded to Vancouver in 2009 and began play in the 2011 season. An MLS franchise was awarded to Montreal in 2010 and began play in the 2012 season. Both the Vancouver and Montreal clubs were long-time organizations that had played in lower divisions.

The Canadian Premier League (CPL) is an upcoming professional tier 1 soccer league. Seven Canadian teams have been confirmed, with seven or eight teams expected to compete in its inaugural 2019 season. The stated goal of the league is to develop Canadian soccer talent, and will have a minimum number of Canadian players on each roster. The second tier in the United States and Canada included the United Soccer League (USL) which has two Canadian clubs: Ottawa Fury FC and Toronto FC II. The North American Soccer League featured the Canadian club FC Edmonton, until it folded in 2017.

Semi-professional leagues have been operated by provincial soccer associations since 2012 and have been designated as Division 3 by the CSA. Currently two such leagues exist; the Première Ligue de soccer du Québec (PLSQ) in Quebec and League1 Ontario (L1O) in Ontario – both operating men's and women's competitions. The two men's leagues meet in the first qualifying round of the Canadian Championship.

There are six Canadian teams in the amateur fourth tier Premier Development League: the TSS FC Rovers and Victoria Highlanders in British Columbia; Calgary Foothills FC in Alberta; WSA Winnipeg in Manitoba; and K–W United FC and the Thunder Bay Chill in Ontario. Thunder Bay Chill won the PDL Championship in 2008, Forest City London (since moved to L10) in 2012, and K–W United FC in 2015.

The second version of the Canadian Soccer League (CSL) is a league in Canada formerly sanctioned by the Canadian Soccer Association and now a member of the newly (at that time) formed Soccer Federation of Canada (SFC). This version of the CSL was unable or unwilling to address alleged corruption and match-fixing problems; the CSL decided creating their own soccer federation unsanctioned by FIFA was the solution.

In May 2009, the southern Ontario based league was granted conditional approval by the Canadian Soccer Association as Canada's national Tier III pro soccer league. Toronto FC and Montreal Impact both previously had their academy clubs playing in the CSL. Toronto had the TFC Academy, in the First Division, and TFC Academy II in the Reserve Division. Montreal had the Impact Academy in the First Division. The League's most recent clubs are Kingston FC, Niagara United, and SC Waterloo Region which joined the CSL in 2012, all moving up from the CSL Reserve Division. On January 31, 2013, the Canadian Soccer Association

announced they were withdrawing support of the league, ending its status as a sanctioned Division 3 league with the 2013 season.

Canadian soccer cup competitions include Canadian Championship (fully pro teams from MLS and USL; league champions from L1O and PLSQ).The Challenge Trophy (amateur men's nationals), the Jubilee Trophy (amateur women's nationals).Many of the provincially sanctioned amateur leagues have league cup competitions. Some such as the ones in British Columbia have significant history. Vancouver Island Soccer League - Sir John Jackson Cup first contested 1914 .Fraser Valley Soccer League - Pakenham Cup first contested 1909. Vancouver Metro Soccer League - Imperial Cup first contested 1913. British Columbia Provincial Soccer Championship - Province Cup (formerly McBride Shield and BCFA Challenge Cup) first contested 1892 .The Pacific Coast Soccer League for the Cambridge Cup. Pacific Coast Soccer League - John F. Kennedy Cup (between top amateur teams in BC, Washington State, and Oregon

Canadian women began competing internationally in the late 1970s. In 1977, a team from the Greater Vancouver Women's Soccer League travelled to Hawaii on a two-week tour. The next year, they competed in the World Women's Invitational Soccer Tournament in Taiwan. The team — the Imperial Order of the Daughters of Empire (IODE) Roadrunners — represented their club rather than Canada. They defeated several of the thirteen teams in the world tournament.

In 1986 the first national women's team was formed but did not qualify for the inaugural Women's World Cup in 1991. The team competed in the 1995 World Cup, but did not place high enough to secure a spot at the 1996 Olympic Summer Games in Atlanta, the first time women's soccer was included in the Olympic program (the top eight teams from the World Cup automatically qualified for the 1996 Olympics because there was not enough time for a qualifying tournament). Canada played in all subsequent World Cup tournaments, placing fourth at the 2003 World Cup. In 2008, the team qualified for the Olympic Games in Beijing, China, where they reached the quarter-finals.

Canada qualified for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, and their performance on the pitch was remarkably good. Millions watched its semi-final match against a favoured American team. Despite a very strong showing that saw captain Christine Sinclair score three goals, the United States won 4 to 3 with the winning goal coming in overtime. The American win came after a couple of controversial penalties against Canada that allowed them to tie the match in the last seconds of the fourth quarter. Putting aside their disappointment, the Canadians defeated the French team three days later in a 1 to 0 win to take the bronze medal. At the 2016 Olympic Summer Games in Rio, Canada defeated Brazil 2 to 1 to win the bronze medal, with Deanne Rose and Sinclair scoring a goal.

The women's national team has twice (1998 and 2010) won the title at the CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football) tournament and has also medalled at the Pan American Games, including a gold medal in 2011. According to the Canadian Youth Sports Report a few years ago by Toronto's Solutions Research Group, soccer is the most popular team sport with boys and girls between the ages of 3 and 17 with 767,000 (now over 880,000) kids (boys and girls) playing organized soccer across the country. Only swimming had more registered participants with 1.1 million. There are several reasons why soccer is on the rise in Canada, for many it is a relatively affordable way to get their kids involved in sports, costing an average of \$675 per child per year (in 2014 dollars), much less than the average cost to register kids for baseball (\$1,115 per year) and hockey (\$1,666 per year).

Another factor has been the recent influx of immigrants into Canada as soccer is the preferred sport for first-generation Canadians, which has provided a huge boost to the game at a grassroots level. A positive perception around the sport is also helpful. The study states most parents associate soccer with "fun", as opposed to hockey, which is seen by some as having "some pushy parents in kids leagues," and that due to the physical nature of the sport, it is "easy to be injured participating."

Interest in soccer can also be found on millennials use of social media. A younger demographic is being drawn towards

soccer thanks to its financial benefits, an insurgence of new talent, and a generally supportive environment that surrounds the beautiful game. Soccer is growing in Canada in a truly distinct Canadian way, and while Canada hasn't competed in the World Cup finals since 1986, if this current trend among Canadian youths continues (can you say Alphonso Davies) it will be back on soccer's world stage in a big way sooner rather than later.

Indeed the history of Canadian soccer from 1891 until 2019 has had its ups and downs but the game has never been in such great shape (from kids to pros) as it is today.

Some of the sources used for this chapter include various archives, Encyclopedia of Canada, Wikipedia, Canadian Encyclopedia and Yahoo Sports

Chapter One

The State of Canadian Soccer Today

According to an article by Nathanael Martin in the northernstartingeleven.com; a group of soccer fans dedicated to growing Canada's soccer foothold gathered in spring of 2018 with representatives of Canada Soccer to discuss the future of the beautiful game. Dr. Nick Bontis, Vice President and Chair of the Strategic Management Committee according to the story was remarkably and refreshingly candid about the mistakes that the CSA has made in the past, as well as the difficulties that will continue to be faced in the future. Despite these challenges, there is a lot of reason to be optimistic. Bontis, alongside Earl Cochrane (Chief Strategic Development Officer) shared some of the goals that the CSA will be focusing on in the upcoming years, while answering questions of those in attendance.

The two-hour town hall presentation started with Bontis looking into the crystal ball. He described some prescient trends that he believes will transpire in the next decade including the proliferation of super clubs at the amateur level and the explosion

of specialized management at the professional level. Bontis then continued with an honest report card of how much of the current strategic plan has been achieved thus far. Cochrane highlighted a colourful assessment of “red”, “yellow” and “green” lights beside each strategic priority which clearly showed the magnitude of Canada Soccer’s workload.

The animated discussion then turned to the future. The two largest and most immediate goals will come as a surprise to nobody if they are paying any attention to Canadian soccer. The 2026 World Cup bid and the Canadian Premier League both hold massive potential to boost the Canadian soccer world into new heights. The CSA Staff is (was) taking every effort possible towards supporting the united World Cup bid. A lot of work remains to be done in securing the hosting rights prior to FIFA’s decision in June (when Canada, United States and Mexico were indeed awarded the rights to the 2026 games). Bontis emphasized several critical milestones that remain including FIFA technical inspections in host cities and international campaigning to over 200 football federations around the world. The Morocco bid has some solid things going for it, particularly in the close proximity of the hosting stadiums presented. Politics can be a difficult thing, so it is important that we as fans continue to support the CSA and the United bid in their work to make this happen for us.

Bontis was very optimistic about the Canadian Premier League and has been for some time, issues aside, the CPL continues to develop and show promise. Establishing a brand new, top tier, coast-to-coast professional league is not an easy endeavour. While the momentum may seem slow from the outside, Bontis assured the audience that dozens of people have been working their hearts out for over a year to make this happen. Bontis revealed that additional teams will almost certainly be sanctioned at the next Annual Membership Meeting, which is scheduled for May 5, 2018 in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (hopefully our own Guillermo Del Quarto can somehow find his way in!).

Another exciting project that Canada Soccer is targeting in the next five-year span is a national player registry. Having worked closely with several provincial and district associations directly, Cochrane described the technical challenges of implementing such a system in Canada. Bontis pointed out his disappointment in the delay of this particular project as it was part of the current strategic plan that ends in December of 2018. Large IT initiatives are extremely difficult to implement in any industry. A lot of work still needs to be done to develop this, but an effective tracking system for the many young players in Canada is absolutely needed for the growth of our game. Bontis promised that this would once again be a part of the next strategic plan. He believes this has the potential to be a real

difference maker for our sport. The national registry will make it much easier to monitor talented players for the national program, create commercial opportunities with sponsors, track player transfers efficiently, automate registration renewal processes, and create an infrastructure to encourage solidarity payments to local youth clubs that are triggered when Canadian players are purchased by rich European clubs.

The registry connects to another goal that Bontis reiterated as essential for future growth: alternative revenue streams above and beyond the current model, which mostly relies on youth player registration fees and government grants. The newly announced (and uncreatively named) Canadian Soccer Business will definitely play a role in this. The objective for CSB is to significantly increase commercial opportunities through broadcasting rights, corporate sponsorship, and advertising deals. Bontis says that in order for soccer in Canada to catapult into the future, the CSA must grow far beyond its current size as a twenty-five million dollar enterprise.

All of these strategic goals hold optimism for the future, and there is reason to have faith in Bontis and his colleagues at the CSA to accomplish them. Bontis highlighted that the CSA established several BHAGs (big hairy audacious goals) many years ago that most Canadians scoffed at and felt were not reachable: an Olympic medal for our Women's team; the growth to the aforementioned twenty-five million dollars in operating budget;

one million players; putting together a Men's World cup bid, and creating a new domestic professional league.

All of these goals have been met. Beyond the CSA itself, there seems to be a new energy in the Canadian soccer sphere. In attendance at the meeting were representatives from the Toronto, Hamilton, and Kitchener-Waterloo CPL supporter's groups; all groups that did not exist five years ago. The Toronto FC supporter's groups continue to grow and were there in numbers as well. This is while TFC faces the real possibility of advancing to the CONCACAF Champions League final (simply unthinkable during the dog days of their history). The CSA is in good hands, and so is Canadian soccer.

The Canadian Soccer Association (Canada Soccer) is the governing body of soccer in Canada. It is a national organization that oversees the Canadian men's and women's national teams for international play, as well as the respective junior sides (U-20 and U-17 for men and women). Within Canada, it oversees national professional and amateur club championships. Canada Soccer's objectives, as described in its by-laws, are to: promote, regulate and control the game of soccer throughout Canada, particularly through youth and development programs; organize competitions in Association Football in all its forms at a national level, by defining the areas of authority conceded to the various leagues of which it is composed; draw up Association Football regulations and provisions, and ensure their enforcement; protect

the interests of its Members; respect and prevent any infringement of the statutes, regulations, directives and decisions of FIFA, CONCACAF and The CSA, as well as the Laws of the Game; prevent all methods or practices that jeopardize the integrity of matches or competitions or give rise to abuse of Association Football; control and supervise all friendly Association Football matches played throughout Canada; manage international sporting relations connected with Association Football; host competitions at international and other levels.

Canada Soccer is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of fourteen directors: a President, Vice President, six elected directors, and six appointed or independent directors. Each of the six elected directors is elected from one of six geographic regions. The board must include at least three men and three women. The president of the board is Victor Montagliani and the vice president is Steven Reed.

Canada Soccer is administered by the General Secretariat, which is led by General Secretary Peter Montopoli and Deputy General Secretary Earl Cochrane. The General Secretary is the chief executive of Soccer Canada, and is appointed by the Board of Directors. The head office is located in Ottawa, Ontario. It is a member of FIFA and of CONCAF. At the amateur level, Canada's club competitions fall under the National Championships. The senior champions are awarded the Challenge Trophy (men) and

Jubilee Trophy (women). Club championships are also organized at the U-18, U-16 and U-14 levels.

As far as the state of football/soccer in Canada today, what with the World Cup coming to this country things look very rosy indeed. According to a story by Devin Heroux in the summer past, he states. For far too many years, the future of Canada's men's national soccer program has seemed bleak and without hope. But one announcement has changed that. After Wednesday's decision by FIFA to award the 2026 World Cup to co-hosts Canada, the United States and Mexico, there's suddenly optimism and excitement (and a lot of work ahead) for a country that hasn't played in soccer's biggest event since 1986. After the news came down from Russia, John Herdman, the coach of Canada's national men's team, couldn't stop smiling as he addressed the media members packed into a room at Toronto's BMO Field, which is slated to host World Cup matches in 2026. His energy and exuberance were palpable. "It's officially football Christmas for Canada," Herdman said, beaming. "What a feeling for everyone in this country."

There are still many questions related to Canada's role in the joint hosting arrangement, including whether the Canadian team will be guaranteed a spot in the tournament (host countries typically get one, but this is the first time there will be three hosts). Herdman, though, sees this moment as a turning point for the culture of men's soccer in the country.

"I think the biggest gift this World Cup gives to Canadian players is a genuine reason to stay and play in your own World Cup," he said. If FIFA, as expected, grants Canada a berth, Herdman wants his team to be competitive. "We just don't want to go into the 2026 World Cup and participate. We want to win at it," he said. "No one wants the team to play the odd game and say it was nice we were there. "Herdman knows it's a tall task to get Canada's men's national program up to speed, but he's ready to take on the challenge, buoyed by this massive opportunity that waits. While he doesn't know what the exact makeup of his team will look like, Herdman knows there are young players across Canada today who will begin to imagine their soccer futures differently.

"That's what this country has been missing. It's been missing a reason and purpose to really want to put on that jersey. People have used it as a stepping stone in the past to further their careers and leave, but to stand in front of your own country and play in the World Cup changes everything. "Herdman thinks eight years is more than enough time to build a competitive team, and said his focus at the moment is helping Canada qualify for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. "We have a genuine opportunity to actually lay a foundation for 2026," he said. "That's where my effort is at this stage."

It was just a few months ago that Herdman left his post as the Canadian women's national team coach to take over the

men's side. His task remains restoring belief in a program that hasn't qualified for a World Cup in decades. "When I was a youngster the 1986 World Cup is what flipped the switch for me," Herdman said. "I just ask every Canadian to unite around this one opportunity. It's an once-in-a-lifetime thing. It's coming. It's time."

Jason de Vos, the Director of Development for Canada Soccer, said hosting a World Cup will give an entire generation of soccer players in this country an incentive unlike anything before. "It's an incredibly powerful motivating factor," he said. "I would say it's a dream come true." He recalls growing up in London, Ont., playing both hockey and soccer and trying to imagine a future in the sport with the more modest profile of the two in Canada. But seeing the '86 team play in the World Cup steered him toward the beautiful game. "I would watch the games and imagine myself lifting the trophy, as unrealistic as that seemed," de Vos said.

De Vos ended up choosing soccer and had a lengthy career, including competing for Canada's national team. He never realized that World Cup dream as a player, but he now has the opportunity to help assemble a Canadian team to compete at a home World Cup in 2026. "The players have a big role in determining the culture moving forward. We want to have players who desperately want to wear the maple leaf," he said. "For many years we've had opposing forces working against each other in

grassroots soccer in this country, and now we have an opportunity to rally around the Canadian flag."

Some of the sources used for this chapter include various archives, Encyclopedia of Canada, Wikipedia, CBC Sports and Yahoo Sports



Chapter Two

White Was and Is the Color

Vancouver Whitecaps “original” soccer team was founded on December 11, 1973 and they played in the North American Soccer League (NASL) during the 1970s and 1980s. The Whitecaps of that era included world-class international players such as Alan Ball, Ruud Krol and Bruce Grobbelaar, but also British Columbian stars like Bobby and Sam Lenarduzzi, Buzz Parsons, and Bruce Wilson.

In 1979, the team from the "Village of Vancouver" (a reference to ABC TV sportscaster Jim McKay's observation that "Vancouver must be like a deserted village right now", with so many people watching the game on TV) beat the powerhouse New York Cosmos in one of the most thrilling playoff series in NASL history to advance to the 1979 Soccer Bowl. They triumphed against the Tampa Bay Rowdies at the Giants Stadium before a crowd of 50,699 (66,843 tickets had actually been sold for the game).

It was during this short period that soccer interest peaked in Vancouver. The Whitecaps attendance at Empire Stadium grew

to regular sellouts, at 32,000. The team also recorded two tracks, with "White is the Colour" (a takeoff on Chelsea FC's "Blue Is the Colour) becoming a hit on local radio during the run-up to their championship win.

After playing at Vancouver's 32,000-seat Empire Stadium for most of their existence, the team moved into the brand new 60,000-seat BC Place Stadium in 1983. The team played indoor soccer on and off during their existence. The Pacific Coliseum served as the home field for their 1980–81 and 1983–84 NASL indoor seasons. However for the 1981/82 indoor season the Whitecaps used the much smaller PNE Agrodome, as the Pacific Coliseum became unavailable.

With the subsequent demise of the NASL in 1984 the Whitecaps, along with many other teams in the NASL, were forced to fold. Vancouver Whitecaps FC (formerly Vancouver 86ers) was founded in 1986, the team played its final year in the second tier of the United States soccer pyramid in the NASL Conference of the USSF Division 2 Professional League coached by Teitur Thordarson. The team played its home games at Swangard Stadium in nearby Burnaby, British Columbia. The team's colours were blue and white. On March 19, 2009, an ownership group led by Vancouver Whitecaps FC principal Greg Kerfoot was granted a Major League Soccer (MLS) expansion franchise which began play in 2011 under the same name.

In addition to its men's side the Whitecaps also field a women's team in the USL W-League, two developmental teams (Vancouver Whitecaps Residency, in the USL Premier Development League, and the Whitecaps FC Prospects, in the Pacific Coast Soccer League), and four youth teams in the USL Super Y-League (Coastal WFC, Mountain WFC, Surrey WFC and Okanagan WFC) ranging in age from U13 to U17 for both boys and girls.

The team was previously known as the Vancouver 86ers of both the Canadian Soccer League, American Professional Soccer League (APSL), and later the A-League. The club later played in two later versions of the second tier A-League known as the USL-1 and USSF Division 2 Professional League in North America. In 1986, a professional soccer team was again launched in Vancouver, the Vancouver 86ers, so named because of both the year of the team's founding and to commemorate the year Vancouver was founded (1886). Eighty-six people also originally put up \$500 each to fund the new team as the West Coast Soccer Society. Led by player/head coach Bob Lenarduzzi and his assistant Alan Errington, the 86ers were triumphant in their inaugural CSL match, as they defeated Edmonton Brickmen 4 to 2 in front of 7,646 fans at Swangard Stadium in Burnaby, BC, on June 7, 1987. The 86ers went on to finish second in the Western Division standings that year before bowing out to inaugural league champions Calgary Kickers in the playoff semifinals. The

86ers played in the Canadian Soccer League (CSL) winning four straight CSL Championships (1988–1991) and five consecutive CSL regular-season first-place finishes (1988–92).

In 1988/89, the team, coached by Bob Lenarduzzi, set a North American professional sports record by playing forty-six consecutive games without a loss. Also in 1988 the Vancouver 86ers and Calgary Kickers played six friendly matches each against the Western Soccer Alliance in the month of May.

In 1990, the Vancouver 86ers captured the North American Club Championship after defeating the Maryland Bays 3 to 2 in the final played in Burnaby. The game was played between the champions of the Canadian Soccer League and the champions of the American Professional Soccer League (APSL). The 86ers however came up short in the first round of the 1992 Professional Cup North American Club Championship. Facing APSL champions Colorado Foxes over two legs, Vancouver suffered a heartbreaking 3 to 2 defeat in the first leg in Colorado on August 3, 1992, before the Foxes advanced to the final, as a 2 to 1 second-leg win at Swangard on August 11, 1992, secured a 5 to 3 aggregate victory for Colorado. Vancouver played in the CSL from its inception in 1987 until the league folded in 1992, and then moved over to the APSL in 1993 which was later absorbed into the USL hierarchy of leagues in 1997 becoming the A-League, later renamed the USL.

In 2001, the team began to use the old Vancouver Whitecaps moniker (signifying both the 'white caps' of the nearby mountains, and the waves of the Pacific Ocean). In 2003, the name was again changed, albeit only slightly, to Whitecaps FC, which encompasses the men's, women's, and youth development teams within the organization. At this time, the Whitecaps logo changed slightly in colour (the light teal-green was replaced with a brighter blue) and the word "Vancouver" was dropped from the image.

In 2006, the Whitecaps organization won an unprecedented double-championship, claiming both the United Soccer Leagues First Division championship trophy, defeating the host Rochester Rhinos 3 to 0 at PAETEC Park, and winning the W-League women's trophy. The men's team also won the Nation's Cup, a new tournament established by their club as a way to feature the Whitecaps playing against international competition. The 2006 Nation's Cup tournament featured the Chinese and Indian U-20 National teams and Championship Welsh club Cardiff City F.C. (the "Bluebirds"). The club gradually added the "Vancouver" back into their name, changing it officially to "Vancouver Whitecaps FC".

The following season, the Whitecaps signed a deal to play an exhibition match against the Los Angeles Galaxy, which featured international David Beckham, and promoted Director of Soccer Operations Bob Lenarduzzi to team president.

October 12, 2008, they claimed their second United Soccer Leagues First Division championship with a 2 to 1 victory over the Puerto Rico Islanders. Charles Gbeke scored twice with his head in the second half to help secure the title. In 2009, they placed 7th in the league and were eliminated in the final by the Montreal Impact on a 6 to 3 aggregate.

In November 2009 the Whitecaps, along with several other teams, announced their intent to leave the USL First Division to become the co-founders of a new North American Soccer League, which was to begin play in 2010. On January 7, 2010 the U.S.S.F. announced that neither the USL nor the NASL would be permitted to have a second division league, and the USSF would administer a league where the NASL and USL are conferences within the league.

On November 24, 2009 it was announced that Paul Barber, the former Executive Director of Tottenham Hotspur, will become the Chief Executive Operations director of the `Caps. Whitecaps played a thirty match regular season, with fifteen home games and fifteen games away in the United States Soccer Federation Division 2 Professional League.

For some time, the City of Vancouver and the ownership group of the Whitecaps were considering the idea to build the team a soccer-specific stadium called Whitecaps Waterfront Stadium. The new stadium was to be built over the railway tracks

east of Waterfront Station on Burrard Inlet. This 16,000 seat stadium would have replaced Swangard Stadium as the home field for the USL's Vancouver Whitecaps.

There was a fair degree of controversy with regards to this location; a Vancouver council session to debate the issue was extended to four nights to allow public input. Detractors viewed the proposed stadium as an incongruous addition to nearby historic Gastown that would block waterfront access and promote piecemeal development of the area. Proponents of the development felt that the stadium would attract new business to the downtown and Gastown areas, particularly since the soccer team tended to attract a family-oriented audience.

On July 11, 2006, Vancouver City Council voted unanimously to proceed with the stadium project, so long as the Whitecaps could meet certain conditions regarding land use. On January 22, 2007, the Whitecaps filed a new proposal shifting the proposed site for the stadium project to the current location of the Sea Bus terminal, a short distance northwest of the previous site.

With the Whitecaps moving up to MLS, the franchise has signed to initially play at Empire Field, and then BC Place Stadium from 2011 to at least 2015. It is hoped that the new facility will be completed by the 2016 MLS season.

The Whitecaps' mascot was named Winger. He is a bird who wears a Whitecaps jersey and carries a large drum to encourage the crowd. He often uses signs to get fans in the grandstands to cheer. The Whitecaps have an independent supporters group known as the Southsiders. Founded in 1999, the group is named for their preferred seating area in the south end of Swangard Stadium. The Southsiders, once described as a "rabid supporters group" identify themselves as Canada's oldest supporters association for professional domestic association football. The group originally called themselves "The Carlsberg Crew," named for the beer company that sponsored Swangard's beer garden. The name was changed to "The Canterbury Chorus" for the subsequent season, as the beer sponsorship had changed between seasons. To avoid changing names every time the sponsor changed, the group chose the name "The Southsiders".

The Vancouver Whitecaps have two historic rivals, the Pacific Northwest Portland Timbers and Seattle Sounders. These three teams competed in the yearly Cascadia Cup through 2008. In 2009, the Cup involved only the Whitecaps and Timbers because the Sounders were replaced by an MLS team of the same name.

The Whitecaps also compete on a yearly basis with the Montreal Impact and Toronto FC for the Voyageurs Cup or Canadian Championship. The winner of this series advances to the CONCACAF Champions League.

On July 24, 2008, the MLS announced they were seeking to add two expansion franchises for the 2011 season. One day later, the Whitecaps officially announced that they were pursuing one of the two expansion slots. The Whitecaps also announced that local sports icon Steve Nash will join the Whitecaps ownership team.

"There is no doubt the market for professional soccer exists in Vancouver, as we saw last November when nearly 50,000 fans attended the exhibition match between the Los Angeles Galaxy and the Whitecaps`, MLS commissioner Don Garber said.

Vancouver's bid was officially submitted on October 15, 2008, along with bids from six other cities. Whitecaps representatives Greg Kerfoot and Jeff Mallett met with MLS officials on November 21, 2008 to go over their bid. Don Garber, who was previously involved in National Football League expansion, described the bid presentation as, "one of the best I've ever seen." Garber and MLS president Mark Abbott were in Vancouver on December 7, 2008 to tour BC Place Stadium and learn about the proposed renovations, which were scheduled to be completed in time for the 2011 MLS season. Vancouver was officially named an MLS expansion city on March 18, 2009, and joined the league in 2011. They began their inaugural MLS season at Empire Field, a temporary stadium built at the former site of Empire Stadium, and moved into BC Place Stadium when renovations to the stadium were completed.

An ownership group in Vancouver were granted the seventeenth Major League Soccer franchise on March 18, 2009 by MLS Commissioner Don Garber. While no name was provided at the Vancouver announcement, over a year later the club confirmed it would keep the Whitecaps name.

Vancouver Whitecaps FC is owned by a group of four investors; Greg Kerfoot, Steve Luczo, Jeff Mallett, and Steve Nash. The group had a collective net worth over \$2 billion. Kerfoot has been the majority owner of the Whitecaps since 2002, when he saved the club from contraction after previous owner David Stadnyk left the club, selling it to United Soccer Leagues. He was previously the chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) of Crystal Decisions. Mallett, a former chief operating officer (COO) of Yahoo was raised in Victoria and has a significant background in soccer. He played for the British Columbia under-16 provincial team and was on the University of Victoria Vikes squad that lost in the final of the 1982 CIS Men's Soccer Championship. He also spent one year with the San Francisco State University Gators men's soccer team before an injury left him unable to continue playing competitive soccer.

After leaving Yahoo, Mallett purchased a minority stakes in the San Francisco Giants of Major League Baseball and English soccer club Derby County F.C. Having first met at a charity soccer event in 2005, Mallett partnered with Steve Nash, a two-time National Basketball Association (NBA) Most Valuable Player who

was also raised in Victoria, to put together a bid for a minority share of English soccer club Tottenham Hotspur F.C. in 2008. After that transaction fell through, the duo contacted Kerfoot about a minority stake in the club. Nash is the older brother of former Whitecaps midfielder Martin Nash. The fourth partner, Steve Luczo, is the president, chairman, and CEO of Seagate Technology and a partner in Boston Basketball Partners L.L.C., a group who own the NBA Boston Celtics. Luczo met Kerfoot while the two were both employed by Seagate Technology, and Kerfoot contacted Luczo proposing he become part of the club's MLS bid. In 2009, the group paid a \$35 million expansion fee to MLS for the right to join the league. In preparation for its first MLS season, the Whitecaps brought in executive talent from around the world. On November 24, 2009, Paul Barber, former Tottenham Hotspur F.C. executive, was announced to join the club as CEO. Others joining him included former D.C. United head coach Tom Soehn as Director of Operations and Dutch national Richard Grootscholten as the Technical Director and head coach of the residency program.

As the head coach of the USL and later USSF Division 2 Vancouver Whitecaps, former Iceland international Teitur Thordarson was confirmed as head coach on September 2, 2010 for the inaugural MLS season. He was subsequently relieved of his duties on May 30, 2011 after the Whitecaps won just one of their

first twelve matches. Tom Soehn, the Whitecaps director of soccer operations, replaced Thordarson on an interim basis.

The Whitecaps began play in the 2011 MLS season with their first match on March 19, 2011, against rival Canadians Toronto FC, which they won 4 to 2. The first goal in the Whitecaps' MLS era was scored by Eric Hassli. After their winning start the Whitecaps struggled, and failed to secure another victory in their next eleven MLS games, drawing six and losing five. In the aftermath of their 1 to 1 draw with the New York Red Bulls on May 30 head coach Teitur Thordarson was fired. Tom Soehn took over coaching duties for the remainder of the 2011 season, while Martin Rennie was announced as the new permanent head coach on August 9, taking over officially on November 2.

On March 3, 2012, the Whitecaps won their first minor, pre-season cup at the 2012 Walt Disney World Pro Soccer Classic defeating Toronto FC 1 to 0 thanks to a goal by Camilo. The Whitecaps finished the regular season with eleven wins, three losses, and ten ties positioning the club, 5th in the Western Conference and 11th on the league overall table. On October 21, 2012, the Whitecaps became the first Canadian team to earn a spot in the MLS playoffs. Vancouver was eliminated in the knockout round.

In the 2013 season, Vancouver finished in seventh place in the Western Conference, 13th in the league table with thirteen

wins, twelve losses, and nine ties in the regular season. They were not able to qualify for the post season, in the playoffs as they had accomplished in the season prior. Two days after the end of the 2013 MLS regular season, Rennie's contract was not renewed sparking a search for the next head coach. In their off-season, the Whitecaps were in the midst of controversy with one of their then players, Camilo, who had played for the team since their inaugural campaign, after the Brazilian went on to join Liga MX club Querétaro. The Mexican club believed that he was no longer under contract, while the Whitecaps reported that he was still on a contract with Vancouver. The scandal was resolved with the Liga MX club paying a transfer fee from Vancouver to acquire the Brazilian forward.

In October 2014, the Whitecaps qualified for the CONCACAF Champions League of 2015/16 for the very first time. As a result they became the highest ranked Canadian team in the 2014 MLS season and due to a reformatting of the Canadian Championship in the following season. A week later they qualified for the MLS playoffs for the second time, an achievement unmatched by any Canadian team. On June 8, 2010, it was officially announced the club would continue using the "Whitecaps" name, but with a redesigned logo. The name alludes to the geographic features surrounding the city: snow-capped mountains to the north and the Pacific Ocean's white-capped waves to the west.

The official club colours include navy blue ("deep sea"), white, and light blue ("Whitecaps blue"). The "deep sea" blue represents the maritime landscape of the Vancouver area and the "Whitecaps blue" indicates the reflection of the North Shore Mountains in the Pacific Ocean. The lighter shade of blue also alludes to the primary colour of the original Whitecaps, winners of Soccer Bowl 1979. The silver outline pays homage to the team's championship victories since 1974. On June 10, 2010, the Whitecaps strip package was unveiled with Bell Canada serving as the inaugural jersey sponsor. The home shirt is white with horizontal, navy blue pinstripes; the stripes broaden slightly from bottom to top. The secondary shirt is deep blue with an embossed, interlocking diamond pattern which is also deep blue and is reflective in the light.

On June 14, 2012, the Whitecaps unveiled a third kit. The third kit is predominantly "arbutus brown", with sky blue accents, which reflects the unique land full of roots and the temperate rainforest.



B.C. Place – home of the Whitecaps

The Whitecaps plays its home matches at BC Place in Vancouver, which it shares with the BC Lions of the Canadian Football League. Vancouver has played at BC Place since the final month of the 2011 MLS season, having spent the majority of that year at Empire Field.

BC Place is a 54,500-seat multi-purpose stadium designed for both Canadian football and soccer. The stadium opened in 1983, but underwent a complete two-phase revitalization project between 2009 & 2011. The stadium now features the largest cable-supported retractable roof in the world and polytan artificial turf, which is certified by FIFA with a 2-star rating. The Whitecaps reduce the stadium's capacity to 22,120 for matches by using white sails (known as the "secondary roof") to close off the upper bowl. Club ownership initially hoped to build Whitecaps Waterfront Stadium in Gastown in time for the 2016 season, but the club has committed to BC Place in light of stadium opposition.

The club played most of its inaugural season at Empire Field, a temporary stadium built at the former site of Empire Stadium to house the Whitecaps and the BC Lions while BC Place was being renovated. Empire Field was a 27,500-seat multi-purpose stadium that featured FIFA 1-star rated FieldTurf. The team played its final match at Empire Field on September 24, 2011, a 3 to 1 loss to Seattle Sounders FC. The following week, the Whitecaps played their first match at BC Place, a 1 to 0 loss to Portland Timbers on October 2, 2011.

However, the club partnered with the Government of British Columbia and the University Of British Columbia, (UBC) to build a \$32.5 million National Soccer Development Centre on the UBC campus, which opened on September 22, 2017.



Whitecaps supporters celebrating

The largest Whitecaps supporter's group is known as the Southsiders. The group began in 1999 when fans of the Vancouver 86ers began congregating in the pitch-level beer garden behind the goal at the south end of Swangard Stadium.

The Southsiders' relationship with the team's ownership has not always been amicable. It has evolved since Vancouver received the MLS expansion team. Images of the Southsiders are featured prominently in Whitecaps' marketing campaigns. The group's board was invited to the invite-only launch of the kits and logo to be used in MLS. The expansion has also increased membership to over 1200. The president of the organization said that it had grown from about forty paid members to one hundred paid in July 2010. He also believes there is no reason why the

Southsiders cannot outdo the Seattle Sounders' Emerald City Supporters. Vancouver Southsiders supporters are primarily located in the southeast corner (sections 249-254) of B.C. Place stadium.

Two additional supporters groups are the Curva Collective and the Rain City Brigade. Curva Collective has grown to be the second-largest supporters group for the Whitecaps located in sections 203 and 204 or the southwest curva. The Rain City Brigade has a block of about 225 season tickets for their members in section 201 and marches from Library Square. Another group, "La Doce", formed in January 2011. Their original name in Spanish is "La 12" which can be translated into English as "The 12th" or "The 12th player". La 12 is formed by people from different nationalities that have a preference to support the Whitecaps in a Latin American, Southern European or Eastern European Style. The main feature of La 12 is its cheering style that features constant drumming and longer songs, resembling the way in which fans in South America or Southern or Eastern Europe like to support. La 12 fans were primarily seated in the southeast corner of Empire Field. The group has since folded after the 2011 season with many members joining Curva Collective.

The team sold the first 5,000- \$50 season ticket deposits forty-eight hours after they became available to the public. Remaining season tickets were made available to season ticket holders for the USSF 2 Whitecaps before becoming available to

non-season ticket holders. The team managed to attract 15,500 season ticket holders in its first MLS season and 13,000 for the second. The official mascot for the Whitecaps is Spike, is a belted kingfisher, a bird common to the Vancouver area.

The Vancouver Whitecaps have longstanding rivalries with both Seattle Sounders FC and the Portland Timbers. The rivalries predate MLS and have been an integral part of the soccer culture in the Pacific Northwest. Matches between these three teams are arguably the most passionate in all of MLS as each of these teams are well-supported by their respective cities.

The Vancouver Whitecaps also have rivalries with Toronto FC and the Montreal Impact. Vancouver's first game in MLS was against Toronto in an attempt by the league to spur a rivalry between the two Canadian teams. Montreal was a rival in the second division. The three teams have played each other during Voyageurs Cup competitions.

All Whitecaps matches are broadcast on television and radio. Through the 2013 season, Sportsnet Pacific and Sportsnet One nationally broadcast all "regional" Whitecaps games not televised by TSN or TSN2 as part of its national package of MLS games, broadcasting twenty-four games per season. Regional matches were called by Craig MacEwen, who does play-by-play and former Vancouver 86ers goalkeeper Paul Dolan, who provides colour commentary. Dolan replaced former Vancouver Whitecaps

midfielder Martin Nash, who provided colour commentary during the Whitecaps FC inaugural season. In January 2014, TSN (which is owned by Bell Media, a subsidiary of the Whitecaps' founding sponsor Bell Canada) announced that it would take over broadcast rights to these "regional" Whitecaps games beginning in the 2014 Major League Soccer season. In 2014, selected games aired on CTV and CTV Two's Vancouver-area affiliates due to scheduling conflicts. On radio, Whitecaps games are primarily broadcast on TSN Radio 1040 and 1410 (also owned by Bell Media). Until the end of the 2016 season, matches broadcast on radio has play-by-play duties shared between Peter Schaad and Scott Rintoul, and by former Vancouver Whitecaps midfielder David Norman, who provides colour commentary. Norman replaced Paul Dolan prior to the 2012 MLS season, after Dolan joined the Sportsnet broadcasting team.

Whitecaps FC 2 is the farm club of the Vancouver Whitecaps that was established on November 21, 2014. Whitecaps FC 2 began competing in the 2015 season, in the USL. On November 27, 2017, the Whitecaps dissolved their reserve side in favour of affiliating with 2018 expansion club Fresno FC.

According to a 2011 Globe & Mail story by Matthew Sekeres (now with TSN 1040 radio) and D. Ebner; Vancouver businessman and Whitecaps majority owner Greg Kerfoot guards his privacy to the point of reclusiveness, his motives difficult to pin down. What isn't elusive, however, is his devotion to the

beautiful game. "The one thing I can safely say is that he's done his talking with investments in the game," said Whitecaps president Bob Lenarduzzi, who, like everyone in the inner circle, is guarded in what they reveal about the boss. "He doesn't want to be refunded in any way."

Kerfoot's arrival in soccer seemed almost accidental. In 2002, he decided to buy the near-extinction, second-division Whitecaps within weeks of being approached. He took control of the team by assuming \$100,000 in debts, and the club's staff of three people worked out of his home. As the organization grew, Kerfoot, now in his early 50s, moved it to swanky Gastown offices, and became the invisible hand. "He was a quality owner with great vision," former Whitecaps president John Rocha said. "The community has kept a significant asset and it's reached this point. ... He'd be really happy to see his vision coming together."

This much we know about Kerfoot; he is tall and slender, a husband and a father, and he made his fortune in computers. He keeps a small, closed circle of friends, and plays (played) hockey at Hollyburn Country Club near his West Vancouver home. He does not play soccer.

His Whistler mansion, located on Alpha Lake, near the Creekside base area, is valued at \$16.1-million (at the time this story was printed), according to BC Assessment. The lakeside property also features a private hockey rink that seats one-

hundred spectators, and it held Olympic parties, but only after Canadian athletes was (were) given instructions to respect the host's privacy.

Associates portray Kerfoot as an extremely black-and-white thinker who has little time for nuance and doesn't suffer fools. Some in the business community have found the Whitecaps difficult, because so much of what happens is on Kerfoot's terms, and because he isn't a schmoozer.

Roughly five years ago, when the MLS ball started rolling, a meeting of a dozen business leaders was organized so that Kerfoot could be properly introduced. "Greg showed up a few minutes late because he wanted to avoid the social part, spoke for forty minutes about his vision for the club, then said 'thank you,' and left," said one attendee. "The meeting was designed to get to know Greg. And when it ended, we still didn't know Greg."

To wit, Kerfoot has insulated himself with many faces, including minority partners Steve Nash and Jeff Mallett. Nash is the two-time NBA most valuable player who lends celebrity and will make a public appearance at Empire on Saturday. Mallett is the former Yahoo! executive who liaises with the league office and a global network of soccer contacts. Steve Luczo, a minority shareholder in the NBA's Boston Celtics who once bought Kerfoot's company, also has a stake.

The quartet made a \$35-million (U.S.) bet on the MLS, paying a huge expansion fee and start-up costs to get into a league with paltry television ratings. On the ground, they've entrusted it to Lenarduzzi, Canada's soccer ambassador, chief executive officer Paul Barber, the former Tottenham executive who brings English Premier League credibility, and director of soccer operations Tommy Soehn, an old MLS hand.

But the first game between Canadian MLS teams doesn't happen without Kerfoot. The Canadian women's team would not be up to sixth in the world rankings and a contender at the World Cup in Germany this (past) spring without Kerfoot's financing, which ran through the last Olympic cycle. And soccer would not be a burgeoning commercial property, with MLS coming to Montreal next year and a new national broadcast contract with TSN, minus Kerfoot's seed money.

"I can tell you one thing, I sure didn't get into this business because I thought it would be a good financial investment," he said in a statement when he bought the club, some of the few public words to come from a man who doesn't have a Wikipedia page, and isn't listed on the team's website.

Kerfoot grew up in Burnaby, obtained a bachelor degree in computer science from the University of British Columbia in 1983, and quickly got a job at Computer Associates. His programming acumen was apparent early, helping the firm develop the popular

accounting system Accpac. Five years later, Kerfoot made the leap to a start-up, Crystal Services, which employed five people. He signed on as head of R&D and chief architect of the program Crystal Reports. It was innovative database software that helped companies produce reports to make sense of disparate numbers such as accounting figures. Kerfoot's handiwork was a hit and still exists more than two decades later, marketed by global giant SAP.

Kerfoot took the helm at Crystal as president in 1992, and during his decade-long tenure, the company grew to 1,700 people from thirty, as annual revenue surged to \$250-million (U.S.) from \$2-million. But the sports business is different. It is built on the emotional bond between customer and team, and on a trust that ownership does its best to make the team competitive. Ultimately, the Whitecaps buck stops with Kerfoot and the hands-on culture of soccer fans wanting a say in their club's management may bump against Kerfoot's secrecy. But at this moment, for the hundreds of members of the Whitecaps' supporters group, and the thousands of soccer fans in B.C., Kerfoot is Santa Claus.

"He's like the Bigfoot of the Pacific Northwest because nobody has seen him," said John Knox, president of the Vancouver Southsiders supporters group. "But he deserves a statue in downtown Vancouver as far as we're concerned." Associates portray Kerfoot as an extremely black-and-white thinker who has little time for nuance and doesn't suffer fools.

Some in the business community have found the Whitecaps difficult, because so much of what happens is on Kerfoot's terms, and because he isn't a schmoozer.

Another story (article) on Kerfoot's business empire was written by Bob Mackin in 2016 and said in part, according to the B.C. companies registry, West Vancouver-based Nevin Sangha is the only director of Carrera Management Corp. which manages Greg Kerfoot's real estate holdings in downtown Vancouver, including The Landing, the heritage office building on Water Street where the Kerfoot-owned Major League Soccer franchise is headquartered. The company's registry shows that Kerfoot is director of Landing Holdings Ltd. Carrera and Landing have the same records and registration office in a law office at the RDG Corporate Centre in Langley, according to updated filings from last summer (for what it is worth).

Although Kerfoot leads a charmed and private life, not everything around him has come up roses. In 2017 Bob Mackin also reported that the younger brother of the Vancouver Whitecaps owner was sentenced to thirteen years in jail (this of course had nothing to do with Greg) in a Seattle courtroom, in a case prosecuted by the grandson of legendary football coach Vince Lombardi. Kevin D. Kerfoot apparently directed others to trade forty-one kilograms of cocaine (bound for Canada) for twenty pounds of ecstasy (bound for the U.S.).

As 2018 came to a close the 'Caps were in the news for many of the wrong reasons. According to the web-site eightysixforever.com, the Vancouver Whitecaps held their year-end presser, and it was...interesting. After a disappointing season in which the now fired manager proclaimed he had his best squad as a manager, and that there were some players that were vocally disgruntled at Carl Robinson's firing, it is unsurprising that some strong opinions were given at the media event; however, few of us could have suspected that players would be so willing to share their grievances. Throughout Carl Robinson's tenure there have been questions around the locker room cohesiveness. Apparently, these issues have been known to the club's front office for a while. However, the depth of the problems was not confirmed to the public, or to media, until Tuesday afternoon's presser, as it became a focal point of player interviews.

We (the web-site) were unable to have someone from 86Forever attend the event, but we are thankful to AFTN and Har Journalist for sharing their notes on Twitter. New keeper Stefan Marinovic, who has played for the New Zealand national team as well as in the Bundesliga 2, noted that he had "never seen a team that had so many cliques." He added that it was very apparent that when there were problems, some players' true nature came out (AFTN). Again, this should not come as a surprise to most of you as it has been something that has been discussed previously. I won't get into rumors or opinions here, as I have nothing to back

up any claims about the various cliques, and certainly do not want to make accusations without strong evidence, but multiple outgoing players have hinted at, or fairly explicitly stated that, there were groups of players on the club that were tight and segregated.

There were those that discounted this viewpoint, including the Whitecaps captain Kendall Waston. While I agree with his statement that it is not correct that “only two or three guys played for the Whitecaps” and that not everyone can be friends, there is a difference between being friends off the pitch and hanging out (I don’t hang out with my colleagues from work), and creating us/them divides on the team. There may be people you dislike or that you don’t agree with on fundamental issues in your workplace, but that doesn’t mean you can’t respect their viewpoint or work with them towards a common goal. Thus, it is easy for someone to state that they did not see a divide, when they are part of the ‘in’ group.

It has also been rumored that Waston had been seeking to leave the club at the end of this season, despite signing a new designated player contract prior to this season, and being under contract until 2020. Today, he confirmed to the media that he is seeking to leave the club.

He was quite vocal about his displeasure in the Robinson firing and certainly placed a lot of the blame on the front office. It

is unclear if the firing led to Waston's desire to move on, but with the problems that seem to be plaguing this team right now, a good house cleaning, including some of the team leaders that may have been part of the problem, may be the best course of action.

It is a shame that it appears that the final memories fans will have of Waston is this, as he has been an integral part of this club for several years and gave fans many memorable moments, some good - some not so good. It looks like there is a lot to fix with the Vancouver Whitecaps for the incoming manager. Luckily, the Caps should have plenty of space and money to do so, while many might not be excited for next season, it is worth noting that the Caps were near a playoff club despite all the turmoil. With the Davies money and the (probable) Waston money, the club has a great opportunity to turn things around and move in the right direction.

A few days after this debacle took place, the Whitecaps "righted the ship" with the announcement of their new well respected coach, Marc Dos Santos. In an MLSsoccer.com article by Michael McColl, he printed, the Dos Santos era has begun in Vancouver. The forty-one year-old Canadian was announced as Vancouver Whitecaps FC's fourth permanent coach of their MLS era after weeks of speculation. With a NASL and USL championship, respectively, under his belt as a head coach, Dos Santos brings with him twelve years of coaching experience across Canada, America and Brazil, the most recent of which was in MLS

as Bob Bradley's assistant at LAFC. That experience and the success that he's had everywhere he's gone, led Vancouver to feel that Dos Santos was their ideal choice to move the club forward.

"The fact that he's won," was Whitecaps president Bob Lenarduzzi's response as to why they opted for Dos Santos. "Everything that he's done from the time he started coaching until now, it feels to us that what he's strived to do is to make sure that he's put himself in different situations so that he could eventually, when the opportunity came, be in the best position possible to have success.

"It's a jump up in levels, but the fact that he had the experience in Kansas City and the invaluable experience this past season in LA, I think he's as ready as he's ever going to be to have success at the MLS level. For us as a club, we wanted someone that was like-minded. We believe we can win a championship and we wanted someone to come in and feel the same way, and from the time was started talking, it was evident that that was what his objective."

Whitecaps co-owner Jeff Mallett revealed that the club had received close to a hundred qualified resumes for the position of Vancouver's head coach, and after whittling that number down and undertaking a number of interviews, for him, Dos Santos was clearly the number one choice.

"There are three things for me for Marc," Mallett told the assembled crowd. "First of all it's his strong character. He's a good man. Secondly, he knows his football plan. He knows how he approaches the game, how he prepares for the game, and he's learned a lot. "As we were looking against other candidates and there were some big names that would have looked good for some announcements, Marc clearly was open-minded about how do we build a plan, like let's look at the academy, what do we do here. So his ability to come in with the direction, come in with a conviction, but be open to how I augment that and how do I build upon that."

The discussions with Dos Santos began three weeks ago, and after looking at the structure of the club, he felt the Whitecaps were the perfect fit for him on many levels. "Number one, they're a Canadian club," Dos Santos said. "I've got a passion towards this country. It's the country that gave me the opportunity to start my career and I have the dream of seeing this country grow in the soccer world. "Then, everything regarding the structure of the club and all the work that's been done in the academy...that is very appealing to me. It's a club that has a dream of building players through the academy and working on that vertical integration."

Tied in with that is ambition, Dos Santos has a reputation as a very driven coach with a serious desire for success. He wants to win titles and he feels he can do that in

Vancouver. "It's a club I've followed, I've seen grow, and I've competed a lot against," Dos Santos said. "We all share the same passion and that's to grow this club into a championship team. That's in my DNA and it's a dream for me to be in a club and right away to think how can we win titles and I know I share that dream with all the owners at this club."

What will the future hold for the 'Caps? No one knows for sure but if the past is any indicator than the soccer team and its fans will be A-Okay. At least for now the ship has been righted, the harbour cleared of mines, no storm clouds are on the horizon and it looks like clear sailing for the good ship Whitecap.

Many sources were used for this Chapter; most were mentioned in the narrative. Other sources used include AtlantisB, snippets from Wikipedia and various archives.



Chapter Three

Toronto Breeds Soccer ‘Champs’

The history of professional soccer in Toronto starts with the Metros who joined the NASL in 1971 and their home field (pitch) at that time was Varsity Stadium. In 1975, fifty per-cent of the team was purchased for \$250,000 by Toronto Croatia of the National Soccer League, and the team became the Toronto Metros-Croatia. The club won the 1976 Soccer Bowl championship even as they struggled at the gate.

The Global Television Network then purchased eighty five per-cent of the struggling Metros-Croatia in February 1979 for \$2.6 million. Following the purchase, Toronto Croatia returned to the NSL as a separate club however with only seven of the twenty-six players from the 1978 roster staying. The NASL team was renamed the Toronto Blizzard following the takeover and under the new ownership, attendances nearly doubled. From 1979–1983 the Blizzard played home games at Exhibition Stadium before returning to Varsity Stadium for the 1984 NASL season.

The Blizzard stayed with NASL until 1984, the last year of league operations and they were runners-up for the league championship in 1983, losing the Soccer Bowl to the Tulsa Roughnecks 2 to 0 in front of nearly sixty thousand people at Vancouver's BC Place Stadium. They were runners-up again in 1984 when they lost to the Chicago Sting two games to none in a best of three championship series. The club was coached in these final two years by Bobby Houghton, assisted by Dave Turner and featured Roberto Bettega, David Byrne, Cliff Calvert, Pasquale De Luca, Charlie Falzon, Sven Habermann, Paul Hammond, Paul James, Conny Karlsson, Victor Kodelja, Trevor McCallum, Colin Miller, Jan Möller, Jimmy Nicholl, Ace Ntsoelengoe, Randy Ragan, Neill Roberts, John Paskin, Derek Spalding, and Bruce Wilson in its lineup.

The Blizzard qualified for the play-offs on only two other occasions, in 1979 and 1982, losing in the first round each time. Prominent players during the first four years included Clyde Best, Željko Bilecki, Jimmy Bone, Roberto Bettega, Drew Busby, David Byrne, Cliff Calvert, Tony Chursky, David Fairclough, Colin Franks, George Gibbs, Jimmy Greenhoff, Steve Harris-Byrne, Graham Hatley, Victor Kodelja, Sam Lenarduzzi, Peter Lorimer, Ivan Lukačević, Drago Vabec, Mike McLenaghan, Willie McVie, Alan Merrick, Charlie Mitchell, Juan Carlos Molina, Jan Möller, Francesco Morini, Ace Ntsoelengoe, Rob Prentice, Randy Ragan,

Neill Roberts, Malcolm Robertson, Peter Roe, Jomo Sono, Gordon Sweetzer, Blagoje Tamindžić, Jose Velasquez, and Bruce Wilson.

The Metros-Croatia fielded a team in NASL's indoor league in 1975 and 1976, as did the Blizzard from 1980 through 1982. In 2010, the 1976 Soccer Bowl winning team was inducted into the Canadian Soccer Hall of Fame.

Today's Toronto Football Club, commonly referred to as Toronto FC is a Canadian professional soccer team that competes in Major League Soccer (MLS) as a member of the Eastern Conference. The team plays its home matches at BMO Field, located at Exhibition Place on Toronto's shoreline, they joined MLS in 2007 as an expansion team and was the first Canadian-based franchise in the league.

The team is coached by Greg Vanney with Bill Manning as president and operated by Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment, which also operates the USL League One affiliate team Toronto FC II, the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Toronto Raptors, the Toronto Argonauts, and other teams.

In 2017, Toronto FC won the domestic treble with the MLS Cup, Supporters' Shield and Canadian Championship. They are also seven-time winners of the Canadian Championship and were runners-up of the 2018 CONCACAF Champions League. MLS awarded Toronto an expansion team in 2005 with Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (MLSE) paying ten million for the team.

The name of the team was announced in May 2006 after an online consultation in which the public was invited to vote on the name during a limited period. The voting options were "Toronto Northmen", "Inter Toronto FC", "Toronto Reds", and "Toronto FC". MLSE's strategy in choosing "Toronto FC" following this process was based on two reasons. Firstly, over forty percent of the online vote supported the simple Toronto FC name during the consultation; secondly, MLSE hoped that the fairly generic name would help the new team earn a more organic nickname from the Toronto fans rather than having one imposed upon the team.^[6] The team has been called "TFC" and "the Reds" by the media and the team. The "FC" in the team's name became the conventional initialism for football teams.

Even with a long scoreless streak to start the team's history, Toronto FC quickly began to establish itself as a team with significant fan support. The team's first win came on May 12, 2007 at BMO Field as Danny Dichio scored the team's first goal in the 24th minute of a 3 to 1 home win over the Chicago Fire. Though TFC slipped to the bottom of the MLS standings with a record of 6–17–7, the team built a foundation as the first Canadian team in MLS. In the team's second season in 2008, Toronto hosted the 2008 MLS All-Star Game. The team finished last in the Eastern Conference with a record of 9–13–8, but the enthusiastic fan base continued to fill BMO Field to capacity.

To determine the Canadian Soccer Association's representative in the CONCACAF Champions League, Toronto FC played in the inaugural Canadian Championship in 2008 competing for the Voyageurs Cup. TFC were the favourites to win the championship in its first year, but the Montreal Impact prevailed.

In 2009 the last-place New York Red Bulls defeated Toronto FC 5 to 0 in the final regular season game, leaving TFC one point out of the playoffs. Despite bringing in some high-profile talent, the Reds could not seem to field a consistent side. Dwayne De Rosario became an immediate scoring influence and Amado Guevara was a strong playmaker and established MLS veteran, but the Honduran's future at the Canadian team seemed murky with looming 2010 FIFA World Cup duties. Rookie goalkeeper Stefan Frei quickly replaced Greg Sutton as a regular starter and immediately became a fan favourite. TFC only scored two goals in the final fifteen minutes of games all season (last in MLS). During the same fifteen minute period, they gave up sixteen goals (most in MLS), thus creating a fourteen goal differential during the final fifteen minutes of play.

The 2009 Canadian Championship required Toronto FC to win by four-goals over the Montreal Impact in the final game of the competition to nullify the Vancouver Whitecaps' plus four goal differential. Anything less would result in Vancouver winning the championship. Toronto FC went down 1 to 0 early, but then

overwhelmed an under-strength Impact side with a score of 6 to 1 on the back of a hat-trick by De Rosario had a hat-trick with Guevara adding two, scoring in the sixty-ninth and ninety-second minute.

Chad Barrett scored the overwhelmed an under-strength Impact side 6 to 1 on the back of a hat-trick by De Rosario. Guevara added two, scoring in the sixty-ninth and ninety-second minute. Chad Barrett scored the decisive goal in the eighty-second minute.



Dwayne De Rosario.

This gave TFC the overall victory. The unlikely win was dubbed by fans and media as the "Miracle in Montreal". Toronto FC subsequently participated in the 2009/10 CONCACAF Champions League but lost 1 to 0 on aggregate to the Puerto Rico Islanders in the preliminary round of the tournament.

After failing to qualify on the final day of the 2009 campaign, Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment said anything short of a playoff spot in 2010 would be unacceptable. With that directive, former director of soccer Mo Johnston hired Preki and made wholesale changes to the roster to reflect the U.S. Hall of Famer's plan to play a tough, defensive style. Despite scoring troubles, TFC played well at the start, going undefeated in seven games at one time. The team struggled following the World Cup break. Sensing problems in the locker room and to try to salvage the season, MLSE dismissed both Johnston and Preki on September 14, naming Earl Cochrane interim director of soccer and Nick Dasovic, interim coach. The players responded to Dasovic's more open flexible style, but it was not enough as the team was eliminated from playoff contention with three games left in the season. Off-field issues with season-seat holders over the 2011 season ticket package added to the fans' frustrations, forcing MLSE to hold a series of town hall meetings.^[17]

Toronto FC played C.D. Motagua in the preliminary round of the 2010/11 CONCACAF Champions League. TFC won 1 to 0 in the first leg on a goal by Chad Barrett, and tied 2 to 2 in the second leg on goals by De Rosario and Barrett, qualifying for the group stage. Toronto FC won their first group stage match 2 to 1 against Cruz Azul on August 17, 2010. However, the team failed to qualify for the championship round after finishing in third place behind group winners Real Salt Lake and second place Cruz Azul.

In November 2010, MLSE announced the hiring of former German international and Coach Jürgen Klinsmann, and his California-based company, SoccerSolutions, to fix the team's game. Over the next six months, Klinsmann assessed the team, identifying a playing style and recommended a candidate for the director of soccer position. On January 6, 2011, the new management team for Toronto FC was announced. Aron Winter was hired as head coach with his compatriot; Bob de Klerk named first assistant coach. Paul Mariner was named as director of soccer. Winter was selected to bring the Ajax culture, possession and 4–3–3 system to Toronto FC. Management made wholesale changes to the roster before and during the 2011 season, trading numerous players and eventually their captain and Toronto native De Rosario.

The team used its remaining two designated player slots on two notable European players, signing Torsten Frings and Danny Koevermans to two and half year contracts. The team went on to set a record for most players used in a MLS season with thirty-nine. Despite a strong finish to the season with only two losses in their last twelve games, TFC missed the MLS playoffs for a fifth straight year. Nonetheless, they earned a win in their final group stage match of 2011/12 CONCACAF Champions League at Toyota Stadium (then known as Pizza Hut Park) against FC Dallas, securing a berth in the knockout stage versus LA Galaxy. After a 2 to 2 draw in Toronto before 47,658 fans at the Rogers Centre,

Toronto FC defeated the Galaxy 2 to 1 in Los Angeles to reach the CONCACAF Champions League semifinals, the first Canadian team to do so. They were defeated by Santos Laguna in the semifinals 7 to 3 on aggregate.

In June 2012, Aron Winter resigned from the team upon refusing to be reassigned from his head coaching role after the team started the season with a nine-game losing streak, setting an MLS record for worst start to a season. In 2012 the team's league record was 1–9–0 and in all other competitions was 3–1–4, including a fourth-straight Canadian Championship. He was replaced by Paul Mariner, but TFC continued to struggle finishing with a 4–12–8 record in league play under him. Toronto FC also failed to advance in the CONCACAF Champions League, finishing second in its group with a 2–2–0 record. Overall, they finished the MLS season on a fourteen game winless streak and ended up in last place, with five wins and just twenty-three points.

In November 2012 it was announced Kevin Payne would be leaving D.C. United for the general manager position at Toronto FC. First-time coach Ryan Nelsen replaced Mariner as of January 2013. In April 2013, Payne signed the first young designated player in MLS, Matías Laba. In July Payne controversially traded Luis Silva to D.C. United for an undisclosed amount of allocation money. The team fired Payne in September following the removal of Payne recently appointed MLSE President Tim Leiweke reasoned that there were philosophical

differences between them as to how Toronto FC should move forward. Leiweke, who brought David Beckham to the LA Galaxy in early 2007, quickly revealed that he intended to make TFC more competitive with similarly ambitious, blockbuster signings. On September 20, Toronto FC announced that the vacant general manager position had been filled by Tim Bezbatchenko.

Under Bezbatchenko, Toronto FC made several high-profile moves during the 2013/14 off season. Among the transfers were MLS veterans Justin Morrow and Jackson; Brasileiro star Gilberto, United States international Michael Bradley of A.S. Roma, and the return of Toronto FC leading goal scorer De Rosario. On January 10, 2014, Tottenham Hotspur announced they had agreed a deal with the team over the transfer of England international Jermain Defoe for a reported fee of £6 million, and an Advertising Rights Agreement with Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment Ltd. Defoe would earn a reported £90,000 a week, making him the highest earner in MLS. These moves required the trade of Matias Laba to Vancouver to comply with MLS's maximum of three designated players per team. On February 7, 2014, Brazil national team keeper Júlio César joined on loan from Queens Park Rangers. The team started the year with promise, but much like 2010, they floundered after the World Cup break. On August 31, Nelsen was fired by Bezbatchenko a day after a 0 to3 defeat to the New England Revolution at BMO field, where Nelsen criticized Bezbatchenko in his post-match press

conference for putting the players under needless pressure in the media. The head coaching position was filled by former American international and Chivas USA assistant, Greg Vanney. Although the team won the most games in its history, it failed to reach the playoffs for the eighth consecutive year. After completing only eleven months of his four-year contract with TFC, Defoe joined Premier League club Sunderland in January 2015.

In the same month, Toronto received Jozy Altidore from Sunderland to complete the other half of the player swap. Three days later, the team signed Italian international Sebastian Giovinco on an annual salary of seven million. On September 26, 2015, Giovinco scored and assisted in a 3 to 2 win over Chicago, putting him on thirty-five points for the season, breaking Chris Wondolowski's league record. Giovinco's totals of twenty-two goals and sixteen assists, for thirty-eight total points, made him the first TFC player to win the MLS Golden Boot, MLS MVP and MLS Newcomer of the Year Award. He was named to the MLS All-Star Game and the MLS Best XI and became the first player in MLS history to lead the league in both goals and assists in a single season. Toronto FC clinched a playoff berth on October 14, for the first time in franchise history. The team were eliminated in the knockout round of the 2015 MLS Cup Playoffs by a 3 to 0 loss at Canadian Classique rivals Montreal Impact.

On June 29, 2016, Toronto FC won its fifth Canadian Championship against Vancouver 2 to 2 on aggregate, winning on

away goals. Giovinco scored a hat-trick against D.C. United, on July 23, 2016, in a 4 to 1 home win, surpassing De Rosario's previous all-time record as Toronto FC's top scorer by two goals to thirty-five goals. In October 2016, Toronto FC clinched a playoff spot for the second straight season. The team proceeded to defeat the Philadelphia Union at BMO Field in the Eastern Conference Knockout Round to record their first-ever playoff win and to secure entry into the first Eastern Conference Semi-final in franchise history. Toronto FC defeated New York City FC 7 to 0 on aggregate to reach an all-Canadian Eastern Conference Finals derby against Montreal Impact. Montreal won the first leg of the Conference Championship, 3 to 2 at the Olympic Stadium in Montreal on November 22. Toronto beat Montreal 5 to 2 in extra time in the return leg at BMO Field in Toronto on November 30, winning on an aggregated score of 7 to 5, making Toronto FC the first Canadian team to compete in an MLS Cup Final. On December 10, Toronto lost the final at home to the Seattle Sounders 5 to 4 in penalty shoot-out following a goalless draw after extra-time.

Toronto FC won their sixth Canadian Championship 3 to 2 on aggregate over Montreal on June 27, 2017, earning them a spot in the 2018 CONCACAF Champions League. On September 30, Toronto FC won their first Supporters' Shield with a 4 to 2 home win over New York Red Bulls, to clinch top of the league with the most points that season. By doing so, they also became

the first Canadian team to win the Supporters' Shield. On October 22 the final day of the season, they played to a 2 to 2 away result in Atlanta, where Toronto FC set a new MLS regular season points record with sixty-nine, eclipsing the 1998 LA Galaxy by one point. On November 29, 2017, Toronto FC won the Eastern Conference Finals for the second time in a row, with a 1 to 0 aggregate win over Columbus Crew, also entering the MLS Cup Final for the second time in a row. On December 9, 2017, Toronto FC defeated Seattle 2 to 0 in the MLS Cup, which was a rematch of the previous year's MLS Cup. Toronto FC became the first MLS team to complete a domestic treble with their win, as well as the first Canadian team to win the MLS Cup.

Toronto FC started the 2018 season with a 2 to 0 away win over the Colorado Rapids in the 2018 CONCACAF Champions League round of sixteen on February 20. After a goalless draw in the return leg against Colorado on February 27, TFC were matched up with Mexican side Tigres UANL for the quarterfinals, where they won the first leg 2 to 1 at home. In the return leg on March 13 in Mexico, TFC lost the match 3 to 2, however progressed to the semifinals for the second time in its history since the 2011/12 Champions League, on away goals, following a 4 to 4 draw on aggregate. On April 10, TFC drew 1 to 1 to Club América at the Estadio Azteca in the second leg of the semi-final after a 3 to 1 home win on April 3 in the first leg, to advance 4 to 2 on aggregate to the finals for the first time in their history.

After a 2 to 1 home loss to Guadalajara on April 17 in the first leg of the CONCACAF Champions League final, TFC would win the return away leg 2 to 1 on April 25, leading to a draw on aggregate, but lost 4 to 2 in the penalty shootout. Later in the season, on September 19, Toronto FC played against Tigres UANL in the inaugural Campeones Cup, losing the match 3 to 1 at home. They failed to qualify for the playoffs after a 2 to 1 home loss against Vancouver on October 6, 2018, with three games left to play in the season.

Before the 2007 Major League Soccer season, construction was completed on a new stadium at Exhibition Place in Toronto at a cost of \$62.5 million. On September 20, 2006, MLS's official website announced that BMO Financial Group had purchased the naming rights for the new stadium. It is the largest soccer-specific stadium in Canada and is owned by the City of Toronto, while MLSE, the Toronto FC, operates it.

Following criticism of BMO Field's use of FieldTurf and its rapid deterioration, MLSE agreed to a deal with the city to replace it with a natural grass surface in time for the 2010 MLS Season. Along with the grass, a heating and drainage system was also installed at a cost of \$3.5 million to MLSE.

In March 2012, TFC played its first-ever match in the Rogers Centre, the 49,982-capacity home of Major League Baseball's Toronto Blue Jays and former home of the Argonauts,

hosting the LA Galaxy in the home leg of the 2011/12 CONCACAF Champions League Championship Round. The retractable roof stadium was also the venue for a friendly against Liverpool of the English Premier League in July of that year.

Expansion to the north end that cost two million and added 1,249 seats was completed for the start of the 2010 MLS Season. A one hundred and twenty million renovation to the stadium was officially announced September 23, 2014. It includes a second tier of seating that would add 8,400 seats, raising the capacity of the stadium to 30,991. New suites, washrooms, concourse and a roof would also be added. Construction began in September 2014 and would be divided into two phases, with the completion of the project set for May 2016. The expansion would accommodate a Canadian football field with artificial turf end-zones when the Toronto Argonauts move to BMO Field in 2016, along with hosting the Grey Cup that year.

Toronto FC's initial seasons saw TFC fans set the standard for MLS fan support, selling out its first three seasons. Referred to as the model franchise off the field by MLS commissioner Don Garber, the team was credited for starting "MLS 2.0" for their embrace of supporters' culture. Lack of on-field success caused frustration among the fan base, spurring fan protests against ownership. In response, MLSE acknowledged the lack of quality on the on-field product, lowering ticket prices in 2013 to 2007 levels. Following a resurgence of interest in the team due to the major signings of

Jermain Defoe and Michael Bradley, the team capped season tickets at 17,000 for the 2014 season.



Toronto FC's recognized supporters' groups are the Red Patch Boys, U-Sector, and Kings in the North, Tribal Rhythm Nation and Original 109. On August 23, 2018, Toronto FC permanently terminated Inebriatti's supporter status for a fire they started at TD Place Stadium in Ottawa during their match-up with Toronto FC in the Canadian Championship earlier that year on July 18.

Bitchy the Hawk is a female Harris's hawk employed by BMO Field falconry staff to sit perched atop the field to ward off seagulls. Originally brought to work in 2007 to prevent seagulls from attacking patrons, the hawk has become a fixture of BMO Field. She has also been employed at Budweiser Stage in Ontario Place to the south to prevent seagulls from attacking concert goers. While no official word has come from the club about her status, she has been called the official mascot of the team.

Toronto FC's biggest rival, Montreal Impact, joined MLS in 2012 with the years leading up to this, emerging as fierce rivals during the Canadian Championship games. The proximity of the two cities and the fact that Toronto and Montreal are long-standing rivals in NHL ice hockey contributes to these meetings being combative. Since both teams have joined MLS, the rivalry has intensified and the matches have become a Canadian soccer classic, nicknamed the 401 Derby after Ontario Highway 401, which links the two cities. The rivalry is also known as the Canadian Classique. On March 16, 2013, Toronto FC fans set an MLS record for travelling support with 3,200 away fans in Montreal to watch TFC lose 2 to 1, eclipsing their own record of 2,400 at Columbus Crew in 2008.

The 2016 MLS Cup Eastern Conference Finals were part of the 401 Derby as well, with Toronto FC winning the series 7 to 5 on aggregate. Columbus Crew and Toronto FC have competed for the Trillium Cup since 2008. Although a manufactured rivalry, albeit linked by the fact that the official flower of both Ontario and Ohio is the white trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), the meetings have since sparked bitterness. On March 28, 2009, approximately 1,700 Toronto FC supporters travelled to Columbus Crew Stadium and witnessed a 1 to 1 draw, during which they lit a number of flares and allegedly committed vandalism. Following the game some altercations broke out between the two supporter groups. Overwhelmed security called police who ended the

melees and made arrests, at which time a TFC fan was tasered while being subdued. The first rematch back in Columbus Crew Stadium following the incident was boycotted by Toronto FC supporters in wake of restrictions imposed on them by Crew officials.

The official team colours include red as the primary colour, with black, grey and white as secondary colours. The primary uniform (jersey, shorts and socks) is red with alternating lighter and darker horizontal bands, black sleeves with red trim, and a vertical black band below each sleeve extending the full length of the jersey. The secondary uniform includes white jerseys with a large red horizontal band below a smaller blue band across the chest with blue and red trim, white socks with blue trim, and with either red or blue shorts (the choice of which is subject to the opponent uniform). In its first three seasons, Toronto FC's secondary uniform colours were light and dark grey. In the following four seasons, the team wore white secondary uniforms, whereas in 2014, the secondary uniforms were changed to onyx. In 2013 and 2014, a shadow-print maple leaf was featured on Toronto FC's primary jerseys.

Since the team's formation in 2007, it has been sponsored by the Bank of Montreal (BMO). The sponsorship was worth \$1–1.5 million per season, but in 2010, a new five-year deal worth four million per season was signed. In February 2016, it was

announced that BMO had extended its sponsorship agreement by another ten years.

Toronto FC are operated by Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment, which also operates the National Hockey League's Toronto Maple Leafs, the American Hockey League's Toronto Marlies, the National Basketball Association's Toronto Raptors (and the NBA G League's Raptors 905 by extension) and the USL League One's Toronto FC II. MLSE also own and operate sports ventures like Leafs Nation Network, NBA TV Canada and GoTV Canada. The company is also involved in real estate and property management, owning such sports venues such as the Scotiabank Arena and being a partner in the development of Maple Leaf Square. The partners of Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment are Larry Tanenbaum and rival media outlets Rogers Communications and Bell Media; Rogers and Bell own each of the primary sports television outlets in Canada (Sportsnet and TSN respectively), while Tanenbaum and Bell share ownership of the Toronto Argonauts, who share BMO Field with Toronto FC beginning in 2016.

In November 2014, Toronto FC 11 was established and is the farm team of Toronto FC. Toronto FC II competes in the USL League One, the third division of the American and Canadian soccer league system. The team serves as a reserve team for TFC and a bridge between the Academy and first team. The team began play in March 2015. Their home stadium is the newly

constructed 3,500-seat stadium at the Ontario Soccer Centre in Vaughan, just north-northwest of Toronto. Jason Bent is the team's first head coach.



Toronto FC's BMO Training Ground,

For the 2018 season, the TFC II moved its home games to BMO Field and Lamport Stadium. On July 2, 2018, the team announced they would move down from the United Soccer League to USL League One for the league's first season in 2019.

TFC Academy is the youth academy and development system of Toronto FC that was established in 2008. The academy consists of multiple teams spanning different age groups, from U12 to U20. Starting September 2018, the senior academy squad (known as Toronto FC III) plays in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy. In June 2012, TFC academy moved to their new practice facility originally named Kia Training Ground, but subsequently renamed BMO Training Ground as the former's naming rights expired at the end of 2017, located in Downsview Park in North York. Built at a cost of \$21 million to MLSE, the facility has seven

pitches: three full-sized grass pitches and four artificial turfs with two capable of being bubbled for year-round use. The Toronto FC Juniors, also known as the TFC Juniors, is part of the youth academy and development system of Toronto FC. The program holds camps regionally and has held camps in Toronto, Pickering, Vaughan, and Stoney Creek in Hamilton, Oakville, and Markham.

As of 2017, Toronto FC games are exclusively broadcast by TSN, with certain games (typically against other Canadian MLS franchises) also shown on CTV. Prior to 2017, Toronto FC games were broadcast exclusively by TSN and Sportsnet. Games that were not covered under national broadcast contracts with MLS or other competition organizers were divided evenly between the two broadcasters, pursuant to agreements between their parent companies (Bell Canada and Rogers Communications respectively) in connection to their joint 2011 purchase of MLSE.^[129] Radio broadcasts are divided between Sportsnet 590 and TSN 1050.

The 2018 season came to a close, James Grossi in TorontoFC.ca wrote, after 47 matches that spanned the continent, the 2018 season is in the books. Toronto FC closed their year on Sunday afternoon with an emphatic 4 to 1 win over Atlanta United at BMO Field, providing a share of the drama that was Decision Day across MLS. Lucas Janson opened the scoring after nine minutes following a turnover forced by pinpoint pressure from Marky Delgado. Delgado himself added the second

in the 21st minute, capping off some fine interplay at the top of the box between Sebastian Giovinco and Jonathan Osorio.

Both sides would find the back of the net around the hour mark, only for video review to cancel each, before Atlanta's Josef Martinez converted a penalty kick in the 77th minute to make it a match, but Janson would add his second on the back of more good work from Giovinco six minutes later and the Italian himself would net the fourth come the 88th minute, sweeping a Jay Chapman cross past Brad Guzan in the visitors goal at the back-post.

“The best part of the day is the fight, the commitment, the work that everyone put in,” said Greg Vanney post-match. “We know the quality that is in the team. We know the challenges we faced during the course of the season. No matter what, when you go into a long break it’s always better to win. It doesn’t make up for the season we had, but the effort and the execution on the day was very good against a good team,” explained Vanney. “We’ll take that for what it’s worth and move forward into an offseason where we have some time to really get ourselves prepared and take all the lessons learned for next year.”

Pride was all that was on the line for TFC on the night. That and perhaps a chance to offer a reminder, as the other teams in the league prepare for the playoffs. For Osorio, that showed: “No matter the circumstances this team is willing to show up and give

our best. The mentality was really good yesterday. We showed the rest of the league that we're still a capable team. We played our game... like last year. We finished in a good way. Now we have to think for next season."

The 2018 season was a rollercoaster, riven with highs and lows. The Concacaf Champions League run seems both like yesterday and a lifetime ago. "In a season that has been challenging, you look for things to be proud of," said Vanney. "It's the last day of the year and the other team had a lot more to play for than us. We showed some character, outplayed them on a day where they had everything to play for. I'm proud of the guys to finish on this note. We'll take it." Not only does Toronto head into the break with a positive result and close the year with a win in front of their supporters on Fan Appreciation Day, but in the process they were able to inflict some suffering on a side that was looking to take something from them, whether that be the Supporters' Shield or the all-time points record".

More than anything, the win was for the fans: to play a good game for the last time in 2018 in front of them," said Michael Bradley. "(And) to make sure you're not passing the shield onto another team on your field. In all those ways, it was good. Ahead lies the offseason; some much needed rest. But before too long--February looms just a few short months away--the matches will begin anew. "Our team needs a break; mentally

and physically,” said Vanney. “This year has been frustrating for everybody. They need to clear their minds a little bit.”

“This team has raised seven trophies over the last three years; and has accomplished a lot of things,” continued Vanney. “We need to take what we can out of this season. I have no doubt the group will come back very motivated to enter the season – Champions League and regular season – with a fresh mindset and be prepared to go after it.”

In October 2015 Bill Manning was named President of Toronto FC and under his direction, TFC promptly put together the two best seasons in club history, both on and off the field. During his first two full seasons as President, Manning oversaw an organization that won the 2017 MLS Cup, the 2017 MLS Supporters Shield with a league-record 69 regular season points, the 2016 and 2017 MLS Eastern Conference Championships and the 2016 and 2017 Canadian Championships. In addition, Manning also represents Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment as Co-Chair for the World Cup 2026 Toronto Bid Advisory Group and as President of the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League.

Sources for this chapter include The Toronto FC web-site, Wikipedia and various Ontario archives



Chapter Four

They've made an Impact

The original Montreal Impact (In French: *Impact de Montréal*) was a professional soccer club that was founded in 1992 with the team having previously played in the United Soccer League. Later, the Impact played in the North American Soccer League (NASL), the second tier of the American Soccer Pyramid until the 2011 season. The owner then, Joey Saputo still operates the team (now playing in the MLS) and they are also called the Montreal Impact.

The team played its home games at Complexe Sportif Claude-Robillard until 2008 when it moved to the new Saputo Stadium where it played until its move to MLS. The team's colours were blue and white and the Impact had eleven different head coaches during these years.

From 2006 until 2010 the Impact also operated a reserve team, the Trois-Rivières Attak, which played in the Canadian Soccer League until 2010 when the Impact created their own Montreal Impact Academy. They also used to operate an indoor team (of the same name) in the NPSL (at the Bell Centre, then at Complexe sportif Claude-Robillard) with many of the same players, from 1997 to 1998 and 1999 to 2000.

The Montreal ownership and front office did a split with their main financial sponsor and announced the start of a new APSL club in December 1992. In 1993 the APSL was trying to gain the USSF Division 1 sanctioning required by FIFA with the award of the 1994 FIFA World Cup and the estimated \$60 million in World Cup profits, it was seen as a league with much more upside than the CSL. The Impact became a dominant club in the APSL (1993/1996) and the A-League (1997/2003), renamed the USL First Division (2004). The team did not compete during the 1999 A-League season. Their main rivals were the Rochester Rhinos and the Toronto Lynx prior to the latter's move to the USL Premier Development League.

After a uninspiring first year, the Impact surprised the defending champion Colorado Foxes (1 to 0) on October 15, 1994, at home in front of a sold out Montreal crowd to claim their first league title. Subsequently, the team finished first or tied for first during the regular season in 1995, 1996, 1997 and 2003 without making it back to the final. The Impact lost to archrivals Rochester

in their first four playoff encounters, in 1996, 1998, 2002 and 2003, before finally defeating them in 2004 in route to their second title. The club was favoured to repeat in 2005, but after a near-flawless season (three losses in twenty-eight games) the Impact were ousted in the semi-finals by the eventual champions, the Seattle Sounders (2 to 2 and 1 to 2). The team also won the inaugural Voyageurs Cup in 2002 and successfully defended this title from 2003 to 2008. In 2009 the Impact were crowned at home for their third title, beating the Vancouver Whitecaps FC by an aggregate score of 6 to 3 in a Cinderella ending to what had been a turbulent season.

In 2004, the Impact finished first in the A-League's Eastern Conference before disposing of Rochester (1 to 0 and 1 to 0), Syracuse (2 to 0, 1 to 1) and Seattle (2 to 0) in the playoffs to capture their second championship, ten years after their first. The final, held in Montreal, saw an all-time record 13,648 fans at Complexe sportif Claude-Robillard Stadium (whose seating capacity for the day was adjusted from 10,100). The MVP was Mauricio Vincello who scored the winner at the thirty-third minute of play. Frederick Commodore sealed the game with a goal at the seventy-eighth minute.

At the gate, the Impact had always been solid within the league before 1999 with average crowds of 4,000 to 5,000. After disappointing seasons in 2000 and 2001 (where the average gate was between 2,000 and 3,000 people), the team had new record

attendances in 2002 (over 5,000 on average), 2003 (over 7,000 on average), 2004 (over 9,000 on average) and 2005/2006 (over 11,000 on average). The all-time single game high was the 55,571 fans in attendance for the 2009 CONCACAF Champions League quarter-final against Santos Laguna (Mexico) at Olympic Stadium in Montreal.

In 1999, the owners had a conflict with the league and withdrew the team from competition, but did play indoor soccer that year in the National Professional Soccer League. After resurfacing in 2000, the club went bankrupt during the 2001 season. Administered until the end of the season by one of the original pillars, Joey Saputo, the club rose from its ashes in 2002, set up as a non-profit organization owned by the Quebec government, Hydro-Québec and Saputo. It also attracted many big-time sponsors such as the National Bank of Canada, Bell Canada and Coca-Cola, among others. The team's mandate was to develop local talent and to serve as a representative of Montreal for tourism. Since the Impact's renaissance in 2002, Quebec born players have played a much more central role in the Canadian national team, after many years of non-selection. For the 2005 Gold Cup, players Gabriel Gervais, Sandro Grande, Patrick Leduc, Adam Braz and Ali Gerba, as well as former player Patrice Bernier and Quebec-born Olivier Occean were all called to the national team and did well by most accounts. The visibility helped Grande and Ali, who both transferred to Scandinavia shortly after the

tournament. On July 15, 2006 the team won the 200th victory in its history.

The Montreal Impact for the first time contracted players to ten months out of the year (twelve months) in 2008. This extended training camp was a first for the Montreal Impact and many in the media have stated that it is a move to next level in professional soccer. They began the year at the soccer training centre, Soccerplexe Catalogna before traveling to Italy for more training and three exhibition games against Italian clubs. They drew their first match 0 to 0 against third division Arezzo, lost their second match 1 to 0 against second division Frosinone and finally won their third encounter 1 to 0 against fourth division Cassino.

In 2008, the Montreal Impact won the Canadian Championship, gaining the chance to represent Canada in the CONCACAF Champions League. The tournament features the best teams in all of North and Central America and the Caribbean Islands. The Impact won two legs against Real Estali 1 to 0 and 0 to 0 to secure a spot in the tournament. Montreal competed then in the group stage where they defeated Joe Public FC of Trinidad 2 to 0 and 4 to 1 and CD Olimpia of Honduras 2 to 1 and 1 to 1. They finished off against Atlante FC of Mexico which they tied 0 to 0 and then lost 2 to 1.

February 25, 2009 saw the team win the first leg of the quarterfinals match 2 to 0 against Santos Laguna from Mexico. The match was played at Montreal's Olympic Stadium in front of a club-record crowd of 55,571. The second leg was held on March 5, 2009 at Corona Stadium, in Torreon, Mexico, where the Impact led 2 to 1 at the half (4 to 1 on aggregate). With the Impact only a few minutes from a semi-final berth, Santos Laguna's Carlos Quintero scored twice in stoppage time to rally the home side to a 5 to 2 victory, thus eliminating the Impact from the inaugural CONCACAF Champions League 5 to 4 on aggregate. Following the match, head coach John Limniatis commented that his side "should have done better", noting that it was "unfortunate to finish this way".

In the 2009 Canadian Championship, the Montreal Impact was eliminated early to the disappointment of their loyal fans. In the final match of the Voyageurs Cup, with the Impact already eliminated, Head Coach Marc Dos Santos decision to field a number of reserve team players drew controversy from fans of both the Impact and Vancouver Whitecaps FC. The team went on to suffer its worst defeat in history, by losing 6 to 1 to archrival Toronto FC of Major League Soccer. Toronto FC needed to win by four goals to advance to the CONCACAF Champions League 2009-10 preliminary round. As a result, the Vancouver Whitecaps FC was eliminated on goal differential, despite holding the same record as Toronto FC.

The Montreal Impact won their third championship in its history, Saturday October 17, 2009, in front of a sellout crowd of 13,034 at Saputo Stadium, defeating the Vancouver Whitecaps FC 3 to 1, (6 to 3 on aggregate goals), in the First Division USL final championship, which was the first all Canadian First Division USL Final. All three of Montreal's championships have been won at home. Montreal had an up and down year that involved firing their coach and struggling early on, so winning the championship was a pleasant surprise to their fans. All the players agreed this championship was more special than their first two because they were expected to win those ones, while the 2009 edition was a surprise finalist, that most experts thought wouldn't advance out of the quarterfinals.

In November 2009 the Impact announced their intent to leave the USL First Division to become the co-founders of a new North American Soccer League, which would begin play in 2010. The league, which has yet to be sanctioned by the United States Soccer Federation or the Canadian Soccer Association, would also comprise the Atlanta Silverbacks, Carolina Railhawks, Crystal Palace Baltimore, Miami FC, Minnesota Thunder, Tampa Bay Rowdies, Vancouver Whitecaps and a brand new team led by St. Louis Soccer United.

After lawsuits were filed and heated press statements exchanged, the USSF declared they would sanction neither league for the coming year, and ordered both to work together on a plan

to temporarily allow their teams to play a 2010 season. The interim solution was announced on January 7, 2010 with the USSF running the new USSF D-2 league comprising clubs from both USL-1 and NASL. Towards the end of 2007, much speculation had been made about a possible franchise move from USL First Division to Major League Soccer. The construction of the expandable Saputo Stadium further suggested such an interest on the part of the Impact to move up to the top level American-Canadian league.

Chairman Joey Saputo held talks with George Gillett (former owner of Montreal Canadiens and co-owner of Liverpool F.C.) regarding possible joint ownership of an MLS franchise. On July 24, 2008, MLS announced they were seeking to add two expansion teams for the 2011 season, of which Montreal was listed as a potential candidate.

On November 22, 2008, the team's bid for an MLS franchise was not retained by Commissioner Don Garber. In response to Vancouver's successful bid in March 2009, Impact GM Nick De Santis commented that he expected Chairman Joey Saputo to pursue and ultimately realize his vision of Montreal as an MLS franchise someday.

On May 16, 2009, the Montreal Gazette reported that MLS commissioner Don Garber and Montreal Impact president Joey Saputo have resumed talks for an expansion team to begin play in 2011. On May 7, 2010, it was officially announced by MLS

commissioner Don Garber that Montreal had been granted the league's 19th franchise, and will begin play in the 2012 season with Impact owner Joey Saputo been granted a Major League Soccer expansion franchise set to begin play in Saputo Stadium in 2012. Although, in a legal sense, the Montreal MLS expansion team is an entirely separate legal entity, the new team carries the Impact name and maintains the team's legacy in the MLS.

The colours of the team were blue and white, and the team's logo featured a stylized fleur-de-lis in blue and silver, overlaid with the Impact wordmark and a traditional hex-stitched soccer ball in flight. The fleur-de-lis is a globally recognized symbol of French heritage, and features prominently on the flag of Quebec as a reflection of French-Canadian culture. The badge featured stars to represent the league titles it won. Titles won in 1994 and 2004 resulted in the addition of the first two stars. A third star was added after the club won the USL First Division in 2009.

On March 10, 2012, the Impact played their first MLS game, a 2 to 0 loss against Vancouver Whitecaps FC. A week later, the team made its home debut at the Olympic Stadium, playing to in a 1 to 1 draw with Chicago Fire; the match attracted 58,912 spectators, surpassing the previous record for professional soccer in Montreal established in a 1981 Montreal Manic home game against the Chicago Sting (58,542). On May 12, 2012, the Impact played in front of a crowd of 60,860 spectators during a game

against the Los Angeles Galaxy, establishing a record attendance for a professional soccer match in Canada. In the 2012 regular season, Montreal had finished in seventh in the Eastern conference with a record of 12 wins, 16 losses, and 6 ties.

On February 23, 2013, Montreal won the 2013 Walt Disney World Pro Soccer Classic, beating Columbus Crew 1 to 0 in the final during their pre-season campaign. Montreal Impact also have won the 2013 Canadian Championship on May 29, being their first major trophy as an expansion team in MLS, second in the club's existence. This victory also gave the Impact its 8th Voyageurs Cup. In the 2013 MLS season, they had finished the regular season with a record of 14 wins, 13 losses, and 7 ties. Montreal Impact earned their first ever berth in the playoffs by clinching fifth seed in the Eastern Conference. During the playoffs, Montreal was eliminated by the Houston Dynamo in the knockout round. By being champions of the 2013 Canadian Championship, Montreal earned their first ever berth as an MLS expansion team for the 2014/15 CONCACAF Champions League.

In 2014, The Impact became repeated champions of the Voyageurs Cup by beating Toronto FC in the 2014 Canadian Championship final on June 4, 2014. In the 2014 MLS season, Montreal Impact finished their season with a 6-18-10 (W-L-D) record being the worst team in MLS that season, being last in both Eastern conference and overall in the league. With the chances of appearing in the playoffs gone and still competing in the 2014/15

edition of the CONCACAF Champions League, Montreal Impact had placed their focus in the regional tournament, consequently winning their group, advancing in the knockout stage.

On March 3, 2015, Montreal became the first Canadian team, and only the second MLS team (after the 2013 Seattle Sounders FC) to eliminate a Liga MX side from the CONCACAF Champions League knockout stage when they eliminated Pachuca on away goals. They drew the first leg 2 to 2 in Pachuca and drew 1 to 1 at home on the return leg, sending the Impact through on away goals. On April 29, 2015, Montreal became the first Canadian team to reach the CONCACAF Champions League Final where they lost to Club América, after a 1 to 1 draw at Estadio Azteca and a 4 to 2 loss in front of 61,004 fans at the Olympic Stadium in Montreal. In their 2015 MLS regular season campaign, Montreal finished third in the Eastern conference with 15 wins, 13 losses, and 6 ties returning to the playoffs. During the summer transfer window, the franchise acquired Didier Drogba who went on and scored eleven goals in his first eleven appearances for the club that season. In the conference knockout rounds of the playoffs, Montreal defeated Toronto FC 3 to 0 advancing to face Columbus Crew in their two-game conference semi-final series.

In regards to keeping the name "Impact", Montreal stated its intention "to maintain its name and global team image." The official logo for the team was revealed at the start of a match

between the NASL Montreal Impact team and the NSC Minnesota Stars on August 6, 2011.

The logo is a shield in blue, black, white and silver containing a stylized fleur-de-lis and four silver stars, overlaid with the Impact wordmark. The fleur-de-lis, which also appeared on the logo of the NASL Impact team, is a globally recognized symbol of French heritage, and features prominently on the flag of Quebec as a reflection of Québécois culture. The four stars represent the four founding communities of Montreal identified on the city's coat of arms. At the top of the shield, the team's motto, "Tous Pour Gagner" (French for "all for victory") is inscribed.

Impact's main supporters group is called Ultras Montréal, also known as UM02, and was founded in 2002. They follow the Impact on away games against New York Red Bulls, Philadelphia Union, New England Revolution, D.C. United and Toronto FC. 127 Montréal was formed in 2011 and followed the Impact on occasional away games. The Montreal Impact Supporters Association was created in 2011 to better facilitate the relations between the Club and the Supporters Groups, to promote the supporters culture, and to help with the financing of different supporter group initiatives.



*Banner for Ultras
Montreal's 10th anniversary
at
Saputo Stadium.*

Named after the founding year of Montreal, 1642 MTL is a supporters group formed in 2015 and located in section 114 at Saputo Stadium during home games. The official mascot of the Montreal Impact is Tac-Tik the dog and the North Star is a five foot (1.5 m) high, 44-inch (110 cm) wide, 1,576-pound (715 kg) bell acquired by the 1642MTL supporters group as a goal and victory celebration. It was inaugurated in October 2015 by Montreal mayor Denis Coderre where it was rung twice in a Montreal Impact victory against Toronto FC. Since then, numerous famous Montrealers have been invited to ring the bell such as local radio personalities Tony Marinaro and Jean-Charles Lajoie as well as Canadian soccer player Josée Bélanger and mixed martial artist Georges St-Pierre.

Montreal Impact's biggest rival is Toronto FC because Canada's two largest cities have rivalries in and out of sport. Montreal and Toronto professional soccer teams have competed against each other for over forty years. From the original NASL, as well as the Canadian Soccer League and the A-League, the rivalry

has continued throughout various leagues they have played up until the past few years where the cities would still regularly meet for the Canadian Championships. Since both teams have joined the MLS, the rivalry has intensified and the matches have become a Canadian soccer classic which has been also named the 401 Derby.

Ottawa Fury FC is the affiliated club of the Montreal Impact, competing in the United Soccer League. The Impact entered into an affiliation agreement in December 2016. Ottawa Fury FC is owned independently of the Impact by Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group, owners of the Ottawa Redblacks of the Canadian Football League and the Ottawa 67's of the Ontario Hockey League.

The Impact used to own and operate a reserve side, FC Montreal, in the USL. FC Montreal operated for the 2015 and 2016 seasons before being disbanded. Montreal Impact Academy is the youth academy and development system of the Montreal Impact and it was established in 2010. The academy consists of various teams, from U8 to U23. The U23 team competes in the USL Premier Development League, the fourth tier of the Canadian soccer pyramid and the U18 and U16 teams both compete in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy.



Match of Montreal Impact at Saputo Stadium

Montreal plays its home games at Saputo Stadium, a soccer-specific stadium - with a natural grass playing surface - built in 2008 for the second division Impact but designed with expansion in mind with the club anticipating a move to MLS. The Quebec government announced \$23 million in funding to expand the stadium to more than 20,000 seats as well as building a training field with synthetic turf next door.

The Impact had anticipated Saputo Stadium's expansion would be finished in time for the start of their inaugural 2012 MLS season, but it was announced on July 17, 2011 that the expansion would be delayed. As a consequence, the neighbouring Olympic Stadium was used for the Impact's first six home dates (five MLS Regular Season and one Canadian Championship) The Impact's first MLS game at Saputo Stadium was finally played on June 16, 2012, a 4 to 1 win over Seattle. Though Saputo Stadium serves as the Impact's primary home, Olympic Stadium is also used for

special events which demand a larger capacity or more favourable playing conditions (e.g. the team's home opener, the MLS All-Star Game, playoff games, or fall/winter international games).

TVA Sports is the exclusive French-language broadcaster (as end of 2017 season) of all Montreal Impact matches, as the team's regional rights holder, and newly instated national French rights holder. TVA Sports aired twenty-four games during the team's inaugural season, with play by play duties currently held by Frédéric Lord and colour commentary provided by Vincent Destouches. English-language coverage of most Impact games (particularly those against Canadian opponents) is broadcast by TSN as part of its national MLS rights deal, and separate rights to Toronto FC and the Vancouver Whitecaps.^[28] The Impact do not have a separate English-language rights deal for the games not covered by TSN's other rights packages. Some Impact games were previously televised in French by Réseau des sports before it lost the French national rights to TVA Sports.

CHMP-FM has served as the Impact's French-language radio flagship since 2015, with Jeremy Filosa on play-by-play and analyst Arcadio Marcuzzi. KGM serves as the English-language radio flagship of the Impact. Rick Moffat handles play by play duties while colour commentary is provided by former Montreal Impact player Grant Needham.

According to the Impact web-site soccer continued to be played until the end of 2018, three Impact teams (the under 15, 16 and 17) in the Development Academy had back-to-back games this weekend, playing against two clubs from Connecticut. In November (2018) the U15 team was the only one to win its game, 4 to 1, while the U17 and U19 lost 3 to 0 and 2 to 1 respectively. The day after, against Oakwood SC, the Impact had more success, winning two games and tying once. Against Beachside, the Impact U15 opened the scoring in the game's first minute when Gabriel Antinoro put his name on the score sheet after receiving a pass from Jordan Therrien.

The second half was completely in favour of the Bleu-blanc-noir, with Antinoro earning assists on Loic Cloutier and Renaud Caron's goals. Jean-Aniel Assi, who came in as a substitute, put an end to any hopes of a comeback for the Connecticut club, scoring in the seventy-eighth minute to make it 4 to 1 assisted by Samuel-Antoine Sinzidi.

The day after, with a different attacking trio than the day prior, the Impact met the challenge successfully and won 6 to 0 against Oakwood SC. Medgy Alexandre scored a hat trick, including a powerful shot from 20 metres out finding the back of the net in the second half. The other scorers were Jean-Aniel Assi, Jordan Therrien and Tidiane Keita.

The Under 17 Impact Beachside (a US team) took advantage of many Impact mistakes in the second forty-five, scoring three unanswered goals to earn the win. On Sunday, against Oakwood, the defence held on, and goalkeeper Benjamin Collins also saved a penalty to help his team stay in the game, but a lack of finishing in front of the opposing net meant the game would finish in a scoreless draw.

In a physical game with many fouls, the Impact U19 lost 2-1 against Beachside SC. Philippe Eullaffroy's men scored first, courtesy of Mujtaba Mirhasan from the penalty spot. But Beachside came back in the second half with two goals to come away with all three points. The day after, the U19 set the record straight against Oakwood SC. Striker Mujtaba Mirhasan scored again in the first half after receiving a nice pass from Yannick Laurent. Winger Mikale Fontaine took care of the rest, scoring two goals in the win.

Impact owner Joey Saputo is disappointed in his club, or so he was quoted in a mid-October 2018 story by Douglas Gelevan of CBC News. Not for what the players are doing on the field, but rather with the performance of the team's balance sheet. He says they're losing more than eleven million per season and that, if something doesn't change, there could be trouble down the road. Financial losses were something Saputo says he expected for a few years after the Impact first joined the league in

2012. Now, he says he's disappointed that his team has yet to find the formula to make them financially viable long-term.

The fact that Major League Soccer is growing faster than ever makes getting the club's books in order an increasingly urgent matter. In 2012, when the Montreal Impact entered the league, the expansion fee was \$40 million. Today, the fees for a new franchise are north of \$150 million. "I never thought that when we entered MLS the league would be where it is today in 2018, with \$200-million stadiums," Saputo said. "It's growing faster than we expected and we need to adjust."

With lower television revenues than other major North American sports leagues, the MLS is still, for the most part, a gate-driven league and the Montreal Impact are struggling to sell out their games. The Impact say their tickets are approximately ten dollars below the league average but, despite the low cost, they are ranked eighteenth out of twenty-three in attendance. Saputo says they might have been even lower than 18th if it weren't for group sales bringing large numbers of people into the stadium at a discounted rate. The team also struggles when it comes to selling season tickets. The league average is 13,500 season ticket holders per team. Montreal has 9,000 and has been stuck at around that number for several years.

Saputo says getting Montreal to the league average in ticket price, season ticket holders and attendance would take care

of a large chunk of the yearly operating deficit. Saputo feels the City of Montreal isn't doing the team any favours by levying nearly \$2 million in taxes on the Impact's stadium and practice facility, even though they don't own them.

Saputo Stadium was built on land that belongs to the Olympic Park and the practice facility was built on land that belongs to the Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve borough .The Impact have a lease agreement with the city to use the facilities, and when the lease is up they go back to the city. Additionally, he argues, since the lands didn't generate any tax revenue before the Impact moved in, he shouldn't have to pay as much now.

Saputo hopes to make a new sixty million dollar investment into the stadium to remake the north-end stands with luxury boxes, a move he says is essential to assuring the team's long-term viability in the growing MLS. But he says he's not willing to do that under the current tax arrangement. Saputo says he recently spoke with Mayor Valérie Plante about his concerns.

Player salaries are also on the rise in the MLS, but Saputo said that he has no plans to cut in that department. "There might be some markets where they don't have to spend a lot of money on players and they can get away with it. In Montreal that will never work. We know that," Saputo said. The Impact is the seventh-highest spending team in the MLS on player salaries. Saputo says he plans to stay in the top tier of the league in that

category but added that they ne He says he's started an extensive global scouting network in hopes to try to avoid any future spending mistakes.

But don't expect another Didier Drogba. Drogba created a lot of buzz for the Impact, filling the stadium in the short-term, but the team says it wasn't a smart financial move, because in the end it didn't drive up season ticket sales. Saputo says the year Drogba played in Montreal (2015) was their worst financial year since joining the MLS, losing fifteen million. In the future, Saputo says he'd prefer to invest in younger players, or lower-profile players who could be just as good as Drogba on the pitch.

Sources used in this chapter are CBC, Wikipedia, various archives along with quoted journalists.



Chapter Five

FC Edmonton Moving Over to CPL

FC Edmonton is a proficient soccer team that will participate in the Canadian Premier League (more about this league in another chapter) in the inaugural 2019 season and play its home games at Clarke Stadium. The beginning of life started in February 2010 with FC Edmonton launched by brothers Tom and Dave Fath who made their money through their company O'Hanlon Paving) and they were the founding members of the North American Soccer League. The club spent the first year playing exhibition matches against teams including Colo Colo, the Spokane Spiders and Vitória, with a squad mostly represented by Albertan college students and amateur players. The team also played a memorable honorary match against the Canadian Armed Forces on Canada Day in July.

Head coach Dwight Lodeweges and his assistant Hans Schrijver left the club in December 2010 before competing in a professional game to take a job in Japan and they were promptly replaced by fellow Dutchman Harry Sinkgraven shortly after.

In January 2012, FC Edmonton started a male youth academy, and in September 2013 launched a female youth academy in partnership with the Alberta Soccer Association.

The team played its first competitive game and recorded a 2 to 1 victory against Fort Lauderdale Strikers in April 2011. Alberta-native Shaun Saiko scored the first goal in the club's history. Edmonton finished their first season in fifth and qualified for the 2011 NASL Playoffs quarterfinals, but they were knocked out in a 5 to 0 defeat against the Fort Lauderdale Strikers.

Hans Schrijver returned to the club as assistant head coach for the 2012 season, but just five wins from 28 games led to the club finishing bottom of the table. In September 2012, both Sinkgraven and Schrijver were both released due to poor results. In November Colin Miller was named as the club's new head coach.

Micro improvement happened during Miller's first year in charge where the club finished fifth in the spring season before slipping to seventh in the fall season. However, the 2014 season saw considerable improvement for the club. After struggling in ninth in the spring season, FC Edmonton recorded their best ever league finish to date in third place during the fall season. The 2015 season bought a similar scenario for the club after a 10th-place finish in the spring season. The club bounced back again to finish fifth in the fall season and miss a playoff position by just

four points. FC Edmonton improved further for the 2016 season and recorded third-place finishes in both the spring and fall seasons. The club missed out on topping the spring season table by a single point after both Indy Eleven and the New York Cosmos recorded eighteen points.

FC Edmonton returned to former ways during the 2017 season and struggled to a seventh-place finish in both the spring and fall seasons. On November 24, 2017, the club ceased professional operations citing the sustainability of the team and "continuous uncertainty being forced upon the NASL by the United States Soccer Federation". FC Edmonton continued to run their academies in hope of re-establishing the professional team at a later date.

In June 2018, it was announced that the newly-formed Canadian Premier League had approved the City of Edmonton for a professional club to compete in the league. Three days later, FC Edmonton announced their return to professional soccer. As well as confirming their place in the league for the 2019 season, the club also revealed a new crest and branding. In July, the club named former assistant coach and academy technical director Jeff Paulus as the new head coach. The team began playing its home games at Foote Field, a 3,500-seater stadium viewed as the centrepiece of a multi-purpose sports facility on the University of Alberta campus. Initially built as a legacy facility for the 2001 World Championships, it was named after University of Alberta

alumnus Eldon Foote, who donated \$2 million towards the construction costs. In 2012, the team moved into Clarke Stadium, the former home of the Edmonton Drillers, Edmonton Brickmen, and the Edmonton Aviators. The club soon expanded the capacity from 1,200 to over 5,000 with temporary seat-back and bleacher seating, and tried to find a permanent solution to bring the capacity up to 15,000. Between 2011 and 2013, FC Edmonton played three games at Commonwealth Stadium, a much larger stadium with a capacity of 60,081. Two games were also played at SMS Equipment Stadium in 2015 as an opportunity to increase the club's exposure in Fort McMurray. In order to join the Canadian Premier League, FC Edmonton asked the City of Edmonton to help increase the capacity to 7,000 to meet the demands of the league. The club cited that "the decision to join will bring in more fans as rivalries between national teams will be much stronger than the club experienced when it was in the North American Soccer League". In June 2019, FC Edmonton announced they would play at Clarke Stadium for the 2019 season. The club's original crest was used from 2010 until 2017 with an maple leaf atop the crest in a crown-like manner. The design also included a soccer ball and the club's name. The club adopted the shade of blue used by City

of Edmonton and they redesigned the crest for their move to the Canadian Premier League and opted for a minimally changed colourway. The crest was shaped along the lines of the Edmonton's coat of arms, and features rabbit footprints in tribute to the infamous mascot and symbol of good luck, the Rally Rabbit.

The design also includes the North River. The 'FCE' for both FC the club's three – family, energy.



representation of Saskatchewan lettering stands Edmonton and main beliefs courage and

The official club colours are prairie blue sky, river city navy and white rabbit. Prairie blue sky is used to represent the sky of the Canadian Prairies, while the other colours pay further homage to the North Saskatchewan River and the Rally Rabbit.

The FC Edmonton Supporters Group was formed in early 2010 by five members of The Voyageurs, a Canadian national team supporters group, in response to the announcement that an Edmonton team would compete in the North American Soccer League in 2011. The group aimed to bring a 'European-style' atmosphere to games in a similar manner to the Red Patch Boys in Toronto and the Vancouver Southsiders. The group folded in September 2018, with the creation of the River Valley Vanguard.

In December 2017, YEG for CPL was created as a group of passionate supporters hoping to persuade the club to join the Canadian Premier League. The group were recognized by owners Tom and Dave Fath, and general manager Jay Ball, as part of the reason the club returned to professional soccer. At his official unveiling as head coach, Jeff and general manager Jay Ball, as part of the reason the club returned to professional soccer. At his official unveiling as head coach, Jeff Paulus praised the group saying "I'm grateful to the YEG for CPL members and all those who fought to save this club". In September 2018, after the success of the YEG for CPL campaign, the River Valley Vanguard was created. The new supporters group is headquartered at Edmonton's Old Town Pub.

The Rally Rabbit has been an important part of the club's culture since its inception in 2011. On June 26, the club played the Montreal Impact at Foote Field whom had vacated the North American Soccer League then moved to play in the Major League Soccer league. Kyle Porter opened the scoring, putting the ball in the back of the net in the fifth minute of the match. In the later stages of the game, a rabbit made its way onto the pitch and sat in front of the Montreal goal. Home supporters cheered for the rabbit and the Edmonton players did not seem bothered, but the visiting team could not stop trying to chase the rabbit off the field. The team failed to regain their focus and FC Edmonton saw out the victory. The rabbit has since made several unscripted

appearances and is always welcomed by cheers from the crowd, seen by supporters as a measure of good luck. The Rally Rabbit has also been known as Eddie Bunny or Eddie Jackalope.

During their time in North American Soccer League, FC Edmonton's main rivalry was with Ottawa Fury, the only other Canadian team competing in the league when they joined in 2014. The meetings between the two sides were named "The Battle of Canada" and occurred in both the league and the Canadian Championship. The two teams met every year in the preliminary round over two legs, with the first ever meeting ending in a goalless draw on April 23, 2014. A week later, FC Edmonton won 3 to 1 in the home leg with two goals from Daryl Fordyce and one from Hanson Boakai. The first league derby between the two teams took place on May 31, with Ottawa Fury emerging as 1 to 0 victors after scoring a 90th-minute goal. The second meeting on July 13 saw a goalless draw as Ottawa Fury played with ten men for over thirty minutes, before FC Edmonton recorded their first league victory against the Fury with a 2 to 0 win on October 18.

In 2011, a rivalry was also formed over the course of the season between FC Edmonton and the NSC Minnesota Stars. In the aftermath of the 2011 Slave Lake wildfire in Alberta, a Minnesota supporters group raised money for affected families. This was reciprocated by an Edmonton supporters group who donated to the American Red Cross after a series of tornadoes affected Minnesota. These events formed a friendly rivalry

between the teams, and the supporters groups created the Flyover Cup. The name was chosen because Edmonton and Minnesota lie in the flight paths of transcontinental flights, but are often passed over by tourists. The symbol of the cup is a loon, being an unofficial national bird of Canada and also the state bird of Minnesota.

In 2018, the FC Edmonton Academy played provincial rivals the Calgary Foothills FC in two friendly games to help them prepare for their upcoming season. The fixtures were also used to gauge Edmonton's interest into a potential return to join the Canadian Premier League. The series was suggested by supporters groups from the two clubs and dubbed "El Classico", inspired by the El Clásico rivalry between Real Madrid and Barcelona. The rivalry will continue between FC Edmonton and Cavalry FC when the Canadian Premier League begins in April 2019.

Sources used in this chapter include team website, Wikipedia and archived internet sites.



**CANADIAN
PREMIER LEAGUE**



Chapter Six

The Other Two Semi- Pro Leagues

Two other major soccer leagues in Canada (besides MLS) are the Canadian Premier League (CPL) and Canadian Soccer League (CSL). The Canadian Premier League (CPL) is a professional, Tier 1 soccer league expected to begin play in April 2019. Seven teams will compete in the inaugural season, with more expected to be added for the 2020 season.

Canada's newest league has adopted a club-based system, unlike the franchise-based system used in Major League Soccer and other North American sports leagues. The aim is to add more teams and eventually having promotion and relegation within the Canadian soccer league system. The league's focus will be to improve national soccer talent and the sport in Canada, with a minimum quota of Canadian players on teams' rosters.

It was officially sanctioned by the Canadian Soccer Association on May 6, 2017, originally with a soft launch date of 2018 that was later pushed back to 2019. It is headquartered in Toronto with plans for a second office in Hamilton. A new fully

professional Canadian soccer league was first reported in the media in June of 2013 and suggested that Hamilton Tiger-Cats owner Bob Young was part of a core group of investors working with the Canadian Soccer Association and its president Victor Montagliani to create a new set of fully professional teams or a league in Canada. The Tiger-Cats ownership group was granted exclusive rights by the Canadian Soccer Association until 2017 to establish a team that would play in the (at that time) under-construction Tim Hortons Field in Hamilton.

In February 2016, reports of the possible league emerged again, when Young spoke to Hamilton City Council requesting permission to erect an air-dome over the Tim Hortons Field playing surface between December 1 and April 30 yearly to allow for year-round training for his new professional soccer team that would call the stadium home. During questions by the council members, it was revealed that the name of the league would be the Canadian Premier League and that the Hamilton team was expected to be the flagship franchise. Further details were expected following the Canada Soccer Association's annual meeting in May 2016.

In a March 2016 interview, Major League Soccer commissioner Don Garber indicated that, from his understanding, the league would be a "lower division" of the Canadian soccer league system but he had not discussed the matter with his Canadian counterparts. Reports in June indicated that the

Canadian Premier League would avoid current Major League Soccer markets.

On November fourteen, the first official employee of the Canadian Premier League was announced. Paul Beirne, a Canadian who was also the first employee of Toronto FC, was hired as project manager for the new league. On May sixth 2017, the creation of the league was unanimously approved and sanctioned by the Canadian Soccer Association. Ownership groups in Winnipeg and Hamilton were also approved.

In April 2018, the Canadian Premier League unveiled its new logo and branding, three colours of the logo – pitch green, sky navy and ocean blue – signified the cultural mosaic as seen through the colours in the Northern Lights. A red version will be used on Canada Day and when teams play in events like the CONCACAF Champions League and the Canadian Championship. The emblem features three main aspects; the North Star to act as a beacon for talent, four rings to signify a ball, the Canadian coasts and the Earth, while the maple leaf to reflect the country.

Two days later, it was announced by Beirne that teams would be revealed on an almost-weekly basis. On May 5, the Canadian Soccer Association accepted club memberships for Halifax, York Region, Calgary, and Port City, confirming their acceptance into the league. It was confirmed in June that the Port City ownership group's team would be based on Vancouver

Island, ending speculation that the team would be located in Surrey. The unveiling of the first team, York 9 FC, took place in May with co-owners Jim Brennan and Preben Ganzhorn joined by Beirne and Clanachan. This was followed by Calgary-based Cavalry FC on May 17, 2018, Halifax's HFX Wanderers FC in May, Valour FC in Winnipeg on June 6, and the rebranded former NASL side FC Edmonton on June 8. After a break from announcements to accommodate the 2018 FIFA World Cup, Hamilton's Forge FC was the next unveiling on July 12, followed by Pacific FC of Langford on Vancouver Island on July 20.

In September 2018 the Italian sportswear company Macron was announced as the official apparel supplier of the CPL. Macron will supply training gear and custom made kits for each CPL team. In April 2018, commissioner Clanachan said that the league is looking at implementing a club-based structure for the Canadian Premier League, rather than a franchise-based system like in Major League Soccer. He also said that he dreams of a day where there are two or three divisions, with promotion and relegation among them.

In 2017, Soccer New Brunswick expressed interest in bringing a professional team to Moncton within the next three years. A Saskatchewan-based ownership group is planning a team in either Regina or Saskatoon. There have been rumours of a team in Quebec City or Sherbrooke. The city of Mississauga, Ontario, has been approached by the league about a stadium for a possible

team. It had been rumoured that existing USL side Ottawa Fury FC would join the league in 2019, fueled by acquisitions of Canadian players prior to the 2018 season. However, on September 5, the club announced it would remain in USL. Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group CEO Mark Goudie said the club would not rule out joining the league at a later date and that discussions would continue.

After Ottawa's decision not to join the league, Clanachan mentioned that the league is looking at regions and owners in St. John's, Moncton, Laval, Quebec City, the Tri-Cities, Niagara Region, Durham Region, Mississauga, Regina, Saskatoon, and Kelowna. He indicated that while the league was working towards an eighth team for 2019, they are prepared to start with seven teams.

In November 2018, league commissioner David Clanachan confirmed the league's plans to expand gradually citing ten clubs by 2020, followed by fourteen clubs in 2024 and sixteen clubs in 2026. Clanachan also stated, in regards to the 2020 expansion, that "we're really working hard with five or six locations right now for three additional spots by 2020," mentioning that the biggest issue is a lack of facilities. On January 10, 2018, David Clanachan, former president and chief operating officer of Tim Hortons, was named as the first commissioner of the league. On January 24, he announced that Paul Beirne had been named president. Having already worked with the league for over a year, Beirne took on

the role of managing the day-to-day league operations. On January 31, the Canadian Premier League announced that James Easton, a former Canadian international, has been named Vice-President of Soccer Operations.

Foreign players and staff will be permitted by roster regulations however the intent of the league is to foster Canadian talent and develop Canuck coaches. The league will establish a quota of the minimum number of Canadians on each roster similar to American player requirements in Major League Soccer. Although three Canadian teams compete in MLS (Toronto FC, Montreal Impact, and Vancouver Whitecaps FC) there are currently no such roster requirements for Canadian players, although CSA president Victor Montagliani had previously stated that changes to these rules were imminent. Following the release of initial league details, it was rumoured that seventy-five percent of all players on each roster would be required to be Canadian.

In July 2018, Clanachan told The Hamilton Spectator that the league will have a salary cap, rosters of up to twenty-five players. The domestic player requirement will be that half the roster has to be Canadian and at least six players playing on the field at any time. Clanachan further clarified that players would be drawn from five pools, or general sources: a foundational group of established Canadian professionals; up-and-coming Canadians who are just starting out or currently in lower-league teams

(either domestically or elsewhere); players associated with a team's home territory, in order to ensure "hometown heroes" on a roster; players in the Canadian university and college system; and finally, the general open market of worldwide talent. He did not mention Canadians in the U.S. college soccer system, though they presumably would be part of either the "up-and-coming" or "open market" pools.

In August 27, the CPL announced that it was holding a series of open tryouts in eight cities across Canada for players 16 and older. The tryouts were led by Alex Bunbury and took place in front of CPL coaching staff from all teams. In October 2018, the CPL and U Sports announced that it would hold a draft for university players. Drafted athletes will be able to play for CPL teams in the spring and summer, and return to their university team on August 15, and preserve their eligibility. The first CPL–U Sports Draft took place in Vancouver on November 12, 2018.



Investors Group Field, home to Valour FC of Winnipeg

In its inaugural season, the Canadian Premier League will use a mix of existing, new, and upgraded stadiums. Tim Hortons Field (Forge FC) and Investors Group Field (Valour FC) are existing Canadian Football League stadiums, and will have the largest capacities in the CPL. York Lions Stadium (York 9 FC) and Westhills Stadium (Pacific FC) are both pre-existing stadiums that will be upgraded in capacity before the 2019 season, and shared with rugby union teams. Spruce Meadows (Cavalry FC) and Wanderers Grounds (HFX Wanderers FC) are new stadiums built in pre-existing venues. FC Edmonton will continue to use Clarke Stadium. York 9 FC has announced plans to build a modular, wooden, 15,000-seat Stadium in York Region, within the next three years.

A March 2018 press release from CPL stated, Canadian Premier League (CPL) announced the launch of Canadian Soccer Business (CSB), a new sports enterprise representing commercial assets and inventory for marquee soccer properties in Canada. Canadian Soccer Business debuts with a suite of top-tier national assets that comprise the backbone of soccer in Canada. This includes representation for all corporate partnerships and media rights related to Canada Soccer's core assets including its national teams, along with all rights associated with the CPL – Canada's professional men's soccer league set to debut coast-to-coast in 2019.

Canadian Soccer Business' representation agreement with Canada Soccer is for a ten year term. Canadian Soccer Business

now represents on behalf of Canada Soccer, all corporate partnerships and media rights for the Women's and Men's National Team Programs also all commercial assets of the CPL including partnership and media assets of each club within the league; a collection of naming rights opportunities at new and renovated CPL stadiums; the Canadian Championship – Canada's professional club championship that features all Canadian professional clubs with the winner qualifying for Concacaf Champions League and the grassroots programs that reach millions of Canadians playing the world's game from coast to coast

“This is a coming of age for soccer in Canada and this enterprise will build off the momentum of soccer and help transform the sport in our country. Canadian Soccer Business has the potential to grow into one of the most important and unique sporting entities in Canada, one that could stand alone in truly representing a Canadian sport that has the reach of community, country and world,” said David Clanachan, Commissioner, CPL and Chairman of the CSB. “Having a partnership team that is one hundred per-cent focused on creating a new soccer economy in this country will empower new and excited partners to help elevate the sport to a whole new level for all Canadians.”

“Canada Soccer has established itself as a leading soccer nation and our brand has never been stronger both domestically and internationally,” said Steven Reed, President of Canada

Soccer. “As the national sport organization responsible for the growth and development of the sport of soccer in our country, we pride ourselves as stewards of the world’s game that has the power to build our nation from coast to coast. We look forward to beginning our collaboration with Canadian Soccer Business and build on our collective efforts with members and partners to add to our history of success both on and off the pitch.”

Canadian sports executive Scott Mitchell has been confirmed as the CEO of Canadian Soccer Business. Mitchell was one of the founders of the CPL along with the iconic tech entrepreneur and sports team owner Bob Young. Mitchell will continue in his leadership role and will oversee all major partnerships and the media strategy for the new venture.

Mitchell takes on the duties while maintaining his role as the CEO of Bob Young’s group of Canadian Companies including the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. “It is truly a pivotal time for soccer in Canada and we are excited that Canadian Soccer Business will be at the forefront of this exciting movement,” said Mitchell. “What the CSB is all about is representing soccer in Canada not only locally in communities, but nationally and globally as well. The CPL’s upcoming launch, along with the strength of the Canada Soccer brand have created a unique opportunity for us and our partners to provide an integrated platform that reaches from the grassroots to the professional level across the country on a year-

round basis. We look forward to a series of exciting announcements and partnerships in the coming weeks.”

Joining Mitchell on the executive team are accomplished sports partnership leaders Ian Charlton and Dave Keeley. Charlton will manage the Canadian Soccer Business team as Head of Partnerships and Chief Sales Officer. Keeley joins the team as Director of Corporate Partnerships. Charlton comes to Canadian Soccer Business after holding senior partnership roles at TSN, Bell Media, NASCAR, NBA, WWE, XFL and Disney. Keeley brings extensive partnerships experience from his time with Vancouver Whitecaps FC, IRONMAN and the Toronto Argonauts.

Veteran defender Nik Ledgerwood points out that the CPL is starting from scratch, and warns that patience will be required, as he believes the league will be a work in progress in the early seasons. Expectations from fans and media will have to be kept in check. “It’s hard to compare [the CPL to other leagues] or to have expectations from the get-go, because people have to realize that starting a new league like this means pulling players from anywhere they’re available. There’s going to be a lot of players who play at a high level elsewhere who are leery of the unknown, which is the CPL. The first couple of years will be trial and error, and some experiments,” Ledgerwood warned.

While cautious about making bold proclamations about how the CPL will compare with other well-established soccer

leagues in Canada and the U.S, he is bullish on the league's future and how it will immediately capture the fans' attention.

"I think you're going to get talented players, the level of play will be very attractive for fans, and the rivalries within the league will help that. The more you see players sign for teams, the more the identity of teams will emerge and take shape," Ledgerwood said.

The other semi-pro league is called the Canadian Soccer League (CSL) has been around for a while now. According to their web-site it (CSL) is a continuation of earlier forerunner leagues, the National Soccer League (NSL), the Canadian National Soccer League (CNSL) and the Canadian Professional Soccer League (CPSL), going back more than eighty years.

The CSL is sort of third tier soccer, below Major League Soccer (MLS), which has Canadian teams Toronto FC, Montreal Impact and the Vancouver Whitecaps, and the second tier North American Soccer League (NASL). The US Pro league also has a presence in Canada with a new Canadian entry from Toronto FC, known as Toronto FC II. FC Montreal is also a member of the US Pro League. MLS, NASL, and the US Pro League are U.S. based. The CSL offices are located at Mississauga, on the west side of Toronto, just minutes from Toronto Airport.

The CSL has added two new teams Real Mississauga and CSC Mississauga for the 2018 season to play in the First Division

which is comprised of Vorkuta FC, Serbian White Eagles, Brantford Galaxy, SC Waterloo, Scarborough SC, Hamilton City 1, Ukraine United FC, and Royal Toronto FC. The league structure includes the Second Division of reserve teams offering a traditional support while also playing a developmental role.

The CLS state in their web-site “Canadian Soccer League exists to provide high levels of competition and quality soccer for the player’s coaches and fans to enhance their social and physical health, in a positive and safe environment and provide the venue to achieve the highest aspirations in the game of soccer”. The CSL (according to its web-site) has operated in Canada since 1928, and creates, operate and nurture a valuable men’s soccer league at a high professional level, using best available players playing the game.

Various archives, organizational web-sites, Wikipedia and John Molinaro of SN were used as sources for this chapter.



Is Christine Sinclair Canada's "greatest female athlete" ever?

Chapter Seven

Quite a Ride for our Ladies

You would never know it today but when the Dominion Football (soccer) Association was first organized (in 1877) soccer was not considered a suitable activity for women in Canada at that time. Athletic opportunities were limited for women, as only discreet activities such as skating, horseback riding and boating were acceptable to Victorian society. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, tennis, badminton and golf became more popular among women, but even cycling was suspect; so called “manly” sports (sports that required running and the chance of physical contact) were clearly unacceptable. By the 1920s, women in Canada were playing team sports such as basketball, baseball/softball and ice hockey. However, few were playing soccer, which seems to have been considered a men’s sport by most Canadians.

In 1922, a touring team from England, the Dick, Kerr Ladies Football Club, arrived in Québec for a North American tour,

expecting to find some women's teams to play. However, the Dominion Football Association publicly announced their opposition to the idea of women playing soccer, and even forbade any of their (men's) clubs from competing against the Dick, Kerr Ladies. In this they were following the lead of the Football Association in England, which had banned the club from playing on its pitches. The touring team was therefore forced to compete against men's teams in the United States.

Still some women indeed did play soccer in Canada in the early twentieth century, despite the disapproval of the Dominion Football Association. During the First World War, for example, The Globe reported that a "ladies' football (soccer) match" had taken place on August 1918 in support of the War Auxiliary. In 1922, under the headline "Amazons Stage Terrific Battle," The Lethbridge Daily Herald in southern Alberta reported on a game between two rival women's teams, the single and married ladies, "all (of whom)]showed a remarkable knowledge of the game." According to historian M. Ann Hall, women also played soccer in Hamilton in the 1920s, "shame," according to an Ontario member of the Dominion Football Association.

In 1936, an article in The Free Press (London, Ontario) reported that, "soccer has become an important fall sport for women undergraduates at the University of Western Ontario;" girls were also playing soccer at Central Collegiate, a high school in the city. In 1950, McGill University formed a women's soccer

team, which played against teams from McDonald College, Bishop's University and a number of local high schools. Overall, though, few women played soccer in the first half of the 20th century, and there was still resistance to the idea of women playing soccer.

In the 1960s the situation changed, as soccer became very popular among Canadian youth of both sexes. By 1972, Scarborough, Ontario, could boast fourteen girls' teams, far fewer than the boys' teams, but still a significant number. By 1976, there were sixty girls' teams in the Calgary Minor Soccer Association; and by 1980, there were 317 teams in the British Columbia Girls Soccer Association.

Since then, soccer has become one of the most popular sports among girls and women; moreover, the ratio between male and female players has steadily fallen. In 1980, females accounted for less than ten per cent of all registered soccer players in Canada but by 2013, this number rose to over forty per cent and in 2018 both sexes were close to even.

Canadian women began competing internationally in the late 1970s. In 1977, a team from the Greater Vancouver Women's Soccer League travelled to Hawaii on a two-week tour. The next year, they competed in the World Women's Invitational Soccer Tournament in Taiwan. The team, the Imperial Order of the Daughters of Empire (IODE) Roadrunners, represented their club

rather than Canada. They defeated several of the thirteen teams in the world tournament. The first national women's team was formed in 1986, but did not qualify for the inaugural Women's World Cup in 1991.

All over Canada one can find girls playing soccer on the weekends by the thousands with many of these players want to grow up and play on the National team. The Canada women's national soccer team (French: *Équipe du Canada féminine de soccer*) is overseen by the Canadian Soccer Association and competes in the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF).

The team reached international prominence at the 2003 FIFA Women's World Cup, losing in the third place match to the United States. Canada qualified for its first Olympic women's soccer tournament in 2008, making it to the quarterfinals. Canada women's soccer team are two-time CONCACAF Gold Cup champions, and two-time Olympic bronze medalists from London 2012 where they defeated France 1 to 0 in Coventry and from Rio de Janeiro 2016, after defeating hosts Brazil 2 to 1 in São Paulo.

A certain segment of the Canadian women's soccer fans are closely linked to the U-20 team (U-19 prior to 2006), partly due to Canada hosting the inaugural FIFA U-19 Women's World Championship in 2002, a tournament in which the team won silver in front of 47,784 fans at Commonwealth Stadium in

Edmonton, Alberta. Canada also hosted the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup, where they were eliminated in the quarterfinals by England. Canada set the tournament and team record for attendance in the process, with 1,353,506 and 54,027 respectively.

The Canada women's team played its first international in 1986, a 2 to 0 away loss to the United States. The team's first major tournament was the 1995 FIFA Women's World Cup in Sweden, where the team achieved one draw and two losses in group play and failed to advance. Its first success in a major tournament was the 2003 FIFA Women's World Cup in the United States, where Canada finished in fourth place, their first time reaching the semifinals of a major global tournament. Canada's best finish in any major global tournament was its third-place finish at both the 2012 and 2016 Summer Olympics.

Captain Christine Sinclair has been called the "backbone" of the Canadian national team, earning her 250th cap in 2016, while ranking second worldwide in international goals scored by any player, man or woman. She was named Canada Soccer's female player of the year every year from 2004 to 2014, and has been nominated for FIFA's Women's World Player of the Year.^[15] Despite speculation otherwise, she confirmed in 2016 that she plans to compete in the 2019 Women's World Cup and the 2020 Olympics. She also added prior to the 2016 Olympics that "The

young players coming into this Olympic squad have brought an energy and passion to our team and they have raised the bar."

Canada has qualified for next summer's (2019) FIFA Women's World Cup in France after defeating Panama 7 to 0 in the tournament Semi-Final in Frisco, Texas. "I'm very happy for this team. For us, qualifying that's the only thing we talked about getting here, that was for us to qualify," said Canadian Women's National Team Head Coach Kenneth Heiner-Moller. "Right now, everyone needs to decompress a little bit. We've qualified so now we need to set a new goal."

According to the Team Canada Olympic web-site (and just about everyone else) Christine Sinclair is the most successful soccer player to ever compete for Canada. She made her debut with the senior national team as a sixteen year-old at the 2000 Algarve Cup where she also scored her first international goal. Since then, she has accumulated more than 160 career goals, ranking her second all-time but first among active players.

Sinclair has competed at two Olympic Games, winning bronze at London 2012 where she was the tournament's leading scorer with six of Canada's twelve goals, including a hat trick in the controversial semi-final extra-time loss to the United States. For her efforts, she was named Canada's Closing Ceremony flagbearer and became the first soccer player to win the Lou Marsh Award as Canadian Athlete of the Year. In 2013 she was

inducted to Canada's Walk of Fame. Sinclair first came to national prominence during the 2002 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup in Edmonton where she won the Golden Boot as the tournament's leading scorer with 10 goals (including five against England) and the Golden Ball as tournament MVP as Canada finished second. A year later she competed at her first of four FIFA Women's World Cups, scoring three goals and helping Canada reach the bronze medal game.

In 2011, she showed her determination to compete after breaking her nose in Canada's opening match, forcing her to wear a face mask for the rest of the tournament. Later that year, she led Canada to gold at the Pan Am Games in Guadalajara, following up on her bronze medal in 2007. Sinclair was named Canada Soccer's female Player of the Year eleven straight times from 2004 to 2014 and is a multiple time nominee for FIFA Women's World Player of the Year.

Sinclair's family: Parents Bill and Sandra Sinclair... Older brother Michael... Getting into the Sport: Started playing soccer and baseball at age four because her brother played and she wanted to do everything he did... Outside Interests: Enjoys playing golf... Graduated from the University of Portland in 2005 with a degree in Life Science... Odds and Ends: Nickname: Sinc... Before a game, always listens to Michael Jackson and puts on all her equipment left side first... She received Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Simon Fraser University in 2013.

Canada's Christine Sinclair near the end of 2018 questioned why the CONCACAF women's championship wasn't get the same attention as a men's game on social media. That was Canadian captain Christine Sinclair's question, apparently after seeing the Canadian Soccer Association's enthusiastic social media push of the Canadian men's game in October against Dominica.

"Hey @CanadaSoccerEN when do the women start their World Cup qualification tournament?," Sinclair tweeted above a Canada Soccer posting with a welcome from new midfielder Ballo Tabla with information on how to buy tickets for the men's game in Toronto. Her message seemed to find a home. The CSA re-tweeted a story on the women's tournament.

Then, getting in the spirit of things, Canada Soccer tweeted: "Thanks for asking Sinc! Here's the schedule and how .CanWNT fans can watch the group stage matches! Check back tomorrow for the tournament preview! Can't wait!!!"

Sources used for this section including Team Canada's Olympic web-site, Canadian Encyclopedia, Wikipedia, CBC, Chris Young and various archives.



Hall of famer and the face of Canadian soccer Bob Lenarduzzi

Chapter Eight

Canadian Soccer Has a Hall of Fame

Canada's original Soccer Hall of Fame and Museum existed at the William Hoyle Room (Soccer Centre) in Vaughan, Ontario. Their website has a 'virtual type hall' complete with a short summary of each player, builder, pioneer, team and organization that has been inducted since 2000. The museum collection is housed at the Soccer Centre and contains the largest digital library of soccer history and information in Canada. According to the Soccer Hall of Fame and Museum they are an organization that aims to "collect, record, interpret and commemorate the soccer heritage of Canada" and since 2017 they are under the auspices of the Canadian Soccer Association in Ottawa. The Soccer Hall of Fame and Museum commenced when a group of individuals that were of one mind created a heritage committee in 1988 to preserve Canadian soccer history. The committee started building a collection of soccer memorabilia that has grown to include Canada's gold medal from the 1904 Olympics, the 1926

Challenge Trophy, and the boot Geri Donnelly used in 1986 to score the first-ever goal for the Canadian national women's team. While looking for a permanent home, the committee filed incorporation papers in 1997; former Ontario Soccer Association president Bill Hoyle and soccer historian Colin Jose were among the six signatories.

The first Hall of Fame class was inducted in 2000 with a starting XI of both players and builders: the eleven players included Bruce Wilson, Bobby Iarusci, and Geordie Campbell, and the eleven builders included David Forsyth, an influential figure in the early development of Canadian soccer. Since then, the Hall has honoured many players (example, Charmaine Hooper and Jason deVos)

Nominations to the Hall of Fame can be made by members of the public or by members of the Hall's ballot committee. The ballot committee is composed of Hall members, historians, and prominent members of the soccer media. A maximum of four players and two builders may be inducted each year, as well as one pioneer, team, and organization.

To be inducted into the Hall of Fame as a player, a candidate must have played with distinction for Canada or in a national senior or professional league in Canada or abroad. They must also have been retired from professional or international play for at least four years before being nominated. Players must

have been born in Canada or have become Canadian citizens before or during their playing career. However, the committee takes context into account when evaluating older players: Canadian citizenship, as such, did not exist until 1947, and from 1927 to 1957 Canada did not have a national team.

The Builder category includes coaches, administrators, referees, and medical staff who have served the sport with distinction at the provincial, national or international level for media who has commented on or written about soccer. Pioneers must have made a “significant contribution to the early development of the game of soccer in Canada.” They include players, coaches, referees, administrators, medical staff and members of the media. Both builders and pioneers must be Canadian citizens, or have been long-term residents. Teams and organizations (including clubs, tournaments, organizations and publications) can also be inducted into the Hall of Fame if they have excelled at the national level.

To be elected, no player, builder, pioneer, organization or team can have brought the sport into disrepute. The Soccer Hall of Fame also awards the Brian Budd Award, which recognizes outstanding individuals who have promoted the game of soccer in Canada. This award is decided upon solely by the board of governors. The Canada Soccer Hall of Fame as previously mentioned supports the largest digital library of Canadian Soccer history and information. The library helps recognise the

contribution of soccer to the athletic and cultural institutions in Canada through records, images, video, and artifacts plus it supports physical acquisitions, prioritizing pieces of the game and items of historical significance.

The CSHF supports continued research into the history and heritage of Canadian soccer, notably persons and organisations that had a positive impact on the game and communities across the nation. On an annual basis, Canada Soccer will publish both the **Records & Results** guide featuring end-of-year records & results and the All Canada research journal featuring collaboration from interested soccer historians, journalists, and writers. They collect, record, preserve, interpret, and commemorates soccer heritage in Canada. They also welcome both physical and digital acquisitions that highlight significant moments from Canadian soccer's past, present, and future. To contribute or donate to Canada Soccer Hall of Fame's collection, contact info@canadasoccer.com.

One such honored player is Robert Italo ("Bob") Lenarduzzi, (born May 1, 1955) and is a former North American Soccer League star, Canadian international, and coach of the Canadian National and Olympic soccer team. As a midfielder/defender, Lenarduzzi began his professional playing career at age fifteen as a youth with Reading in the English Football League and went on to play sixty-seven first-team games

with the club, and scored two goals. Lenarduzzi then also joined the NASL Vancouver Whitecaps in 1974 in the team's first season. Until 1976 he divided his time between Vancouver in the summer and Reading in the winter. He played eleven seasons for Vancouver until the Whitecaps' last season in 1984, when the league folded. Lenarduzzi holds the record for most games played in the league, with 312. Lenarduzzi played all eleven positions during his tenure with the team. He was also voted NASL North American player of the year in 1978. The Whitecaps won the NASL Soccer Bowl championship in 1979. In 1984, Lenarduzzi joined the Tacoma Stars of Major Indoor Soccer League (MISL). He spent two seasons with them before moving to the Vancouver 86ers of the Canadian Soccer League in 1986 to become the team's Executive Director. In 1987, he returned to the field as a player and a coach with the 86ers. Lenarduzzi earned forty-seven caps playing for Canada. He played all the country's matches both as the squad progressed to the quarterfinals of the 1984 Summer Olympics and as it participated in the first round of the 1986 World Cup finals.

Lenarduzzi resumed his pro career in 1987 as a player/coach with the newly formed Vancouver 86ers of the newly founded Canadian Soccer League. After retiring permanently from playing in September 1988, he continued to coach the 86ers for the next five seasons. He led the franchise to an unprecedented four consecutive CSL titles from 1988 to 1991. His team set a record for professional North American sports

teams when the team went forty-six games unbeaten between June 6, 1988 and August 8, 1989. His 86ers career totals of ninety-six wins, twenty-four losses and twenty-eight ties makes him the winningest coach in Vancouver professional sports history.

Lenarduzzi became head coach of the men's national team in 1993. In his first of two bids to see Canada back through to a World Cup finals, his squad twice came close but failed to progress to the 1994 finals. First they lost at home to Mexico despite scoring the game's first goal in a game with which Canada could have gone through to the finals with a win. As CONCACAF qualifying winners-up, Canada then lost the away leg to Australia in a match decided by penalty kicks that saw the winner of the home-and-away series go on to play Argentina in a home-and-away series for a finals spot (won by Argentina).

In qualifying for the 1998 finals, Canada failed to finish in the top three of a six-nation CONCACAF. Lenarduzzi subsequently resigned his post in 1997. Lenarduzzi served as 86ers general manager from 1988 to 1993. He resumed the post in 1998 and was named the A-League's executive of the year for 2000. In 2001, he also assumed the position of the Whitecaps Head of Soccer Operations. (The 86ers changed their name to Whitecaps in 2001.) During the 2008 MLS season Lenarduzzi served as colour commentator during CBC's Toronto FC broadcasts before Jason DeVos arrived to fill the position on a more permanent basis. In 2001, Lenarduzzi was inducted as a player into the Canadian

Soccer Hall of Fame. In 2005, he was awarded the Order of British Columbia. In 2003, he was inducted into the U.S. National Soccer Hall of Fame. Lenarduzzi was voted one of the Top 30 Players of the Century in the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF) region. Currently he is president of the MLS Vancouver Whitecaps.

Candace Chapman and Tomasz Radzinski are the two most recently honored players that have been named to the CSHF. They also present the Brian Budd Award that recognizes those who have excelled both in soccer and in another endeavours but who might not otherwise qualify for induction. The candidate must exemplify good character, show outstanding dedication, achievements and leadership in developing soccer in Canada and provide inspiration to past, present and future generations. The award honours the late Brian Budd, a Canadian soccer player who won the Superstars World Championship competition three years in a row from 1978 to 1980.

Sources used in this chapter include, Canadian Encyclopedia, Colin Crawford, Canada's Soccer Hall of Fame and various archives



Canada men's National team (pic courtesy of Soccer Canada)



Chapter Nine

Canada's Men's Team Time Has Come

Canada men's National Soccer team represents Canada in international soccer competitions at the highest (senior) level. The team is administered by the Canadian Soccer Association and compete in the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF). Their most noteworthy accomplishments were winning the 1985 CONCACAF Championship to qualify for the 1986 FIFA World Cup and winning the 2000 CONCACAF Gold Cup to qualify for the 2001 FIFA Confederations Cup.

Soccer was being played in Canada with the Dominion Football Association (1877) and Western Football Association (1880) acting as precursors to the modern-day Canadian Soccer Association. In 1885, the WFA sent a representative team to New Jersey to take on a side put forth by the American Football Association, the then-unofficial governing body of the sport in the

United States. In an unofficial friendly, Canada defeated their hosts 1 to 0 in East Newark, New Jersey. The American team won 3 to 2 in a return match one year later. In 1888, a team represented the WFA in a tour of the British Isles, earning a record of nine wins, five draws, and nine losses. The squad comprised sixteen Canadian-born players with the only exception being tour organizer David Forsyth, who had immigrated to Canada one year after his birth.



The Galt F.C. represented Canada at the Summer Olympics

In 1904 Galt F.C. represented the WFA at the Olympic Games in St Louis, Missouri. As just one of three teams competing, Galt defeated two American clubs, Christian Brothers College (7 to 0) and St. Rose to win the tournament. The Toronto Mail and Empire of November 18, 1904, reports that "Immediately after the game, the Galt aggregation, numbering about fifty persons, retired to the office of James W. Sullivan, chief of the Department of Physical Culture, where they received their prize. After a short talk by Mr. James E. Conlon of the

Physical Culture Department, Mayor Mundy, of the City of Galt, presented each player on the winning team with a beautiful gold medal." The medals are clearly engraved with the name of the company in St. Louis that made them.

A British team of touring amateurs nicknamed the "Pilgrims" toured Canada in 1905 with their match against Galt billed as the "championship of the world". The match was played in front of 3500 fans in Galt, now part of Cambridge, Ontario, and ended in a 3 to 3 draw. Earlier the Pilgrims had been beaten 2 to 1 by Berlin Rangers, in the city now known as Kitchener.



The team that toured Australia in 1924

The Canadian national team toured Australia in 1924, playing a series of "test" friendlies against their hosts, including their first official match, a 3 to 2 friendly defeat to the Australian national team in Brisbane, Queensland on June 7, 1924. Canada also played Australia at the Jubilee Oval, Adelaide on Saturday July 12, 1924, and defeated them by four goals to one. In 1925, Canada played their old rivals, the United States, in Montreal,

winning 1 to 0 on Ed McLaine's goal. In a return match in November 1925 in Brooklyn, New York, Canada was defeated 1 to 6. One year later, Canada lost 2 to 6 to the Americans in the same city before playing four internationals in a 1927 tour of New Zealand.

The New Zealand tour included a total of twenty-two games, of which Canada won nineteen with only two defeats. Most of the games were against local combined teams although Canada also played New Zealand in four occasions with a combined score of eight to five.

Shadowing the lead of British football associations, Canada withdrew from FIFA in 1928 over a dispute regarding broken time payments to amateur players. They rejoined the confederation in 1946 and took part in World Cup qualifying in the North American Football Confederation (NAFC) (a precursor to CONCACAF) for the first time in 1957, the first time they had played as a national team in thirty years. Under the guidance of head coach Don Petrie, Canada defeated the USA in Toronto 5 to 1 in their opening game, but lost two games in Mexico (failing to play a home game due to financial reasons) 0 to 2 and 0 to 3 before defeating the USA 3 to 2 in St. Louis. Mexico advanced as group winners, meaning that Canada missed out on the World Cup in 1958 in Sweden.

Canada withdrew from World Cup qualifying for 1962 and did not enter a team for 1966. At the 1967 Pan American Games hosted in Winnipeg, Canada finished a respectable fourth place, helped somewhat by defending champion Brazil's absence.

A 0 to 0 draw away to Bermuda meant the Canadians, under manager Peter Dinsdale, could not advance out of the first round of qualifying for the 1970 World Cup. Dinsdale was replaced by Frank Pike. In their second participation in soccer at the Pan Am games, held in Cali, Canada did well to finish second in their opening round group (to hosts Colombia). In the final group round however, they managed only one win (over Colombia) and finished next to last.

Once again Canada again failed at the first hurdle in qualifying for the 1974 World Cup. Under German manager Eckhard Krautzun, they finished second in a home and away qualifying group for the 1973 CONCACAF Championship (to Mexico). For the 1975 Pan Am Games, Canada, along with most of the larger Pan Am countries, sent their Olympic team, which was amateur (and senior aged), to compete. After narrowly qualifying out of the first round, the Canucks were soundly defeated by Costa Rica, Cuba, and Mexico, conceding a total of fourteen goals while scoring none. At the Summer Olympics the following year, under head coach Colin Morris, Canada failed to get out of the first round, losing both of their games. This despite the brilliant play of Jimmy Douglas, who scored a wonder goal

against the USSR and another goal against North Korea, Canada's only two goals for the tournament.

At the 1977 CONCACAF Championship, with both group winners and runners-up now advancing, Canada, again under head coach Krautzun, qualified as runners-up after defeating the Americans 3 to 0 in a neutral site one-match play-off, played in Port-au-Prince. In the championship, played in Monterrey and Mexico City, Mexico won all five of their matches with a plus fifteen goals difference winning the tournament handily. Canada finished fourth.

Matters were different however at the next CONCACAF championship, in 1981, played in Tegucigalpa. Canada entered the tournament raising eyebrows by winning their qualifying group over Mexico and the States. In tournament play, the Canadians opened strongly with a 1 to 0 win over El Salvador, with Mike Stojanovic the goal-scorer, and a draw with Haiti, then drew with Mexico. A win in their final game against Cuba would have put them through to Spain, but they were held to a 2 to 2 draw, allowing El Salvador to qualify as tournament runners-up.

1981 through 1985 saw Canada develop under the guidance of English manager Tony Waiters. So close in 1981, Waiters would see the Maple Leafs through to their first World Cup finals appearance in 1985. A 1 to 1 away draw to Guatemala was the key in allowing them to eliminate Los Chapines in the first

round group. The second round was also closely contested, in part as this Canadian squad was strong defensively but had limited ability to score goals. The Canucks managed to eke out a 1 to 0 away win over Honduras, thanks to a George Pakos winner, hold Costa Rica scoreless in San José, and then in their final game, one they needed to draw to qualify, beat Los Catrachos a second time, 2 to 1. The victory secured their first World Cup finals berth. CONCACAF champions for the first time, although Mexico did not compete, having already qualified automatically for the World Cup as hosts. At the 1986 FIFA World Cup, Canada impressed defensively in their first game, allowing few chances and conceding a late Jean-Pierre Papin goal to lose to France 0 to 1. They lost their next two matches to both Hungary and the USSR 0 to 2, however, to finish at the bottom of their group.

Qualification for 1990 lasted all of two matches for Canada, a home-and-away series with Guatemala, played in October 1988. The Central Americans won the first game 1 to 0 in Guatemala City while Canada prevailed in Vancouver 3 to 2. Tied on goal difference, Los Chapines advanced on away goal rule.

1990 saw Canada take part in the first North American Nations Cup, hosting the three-team tournament. Mexico and Canada sent their full squads, but the USA sent a 'B' team. Canada won the tournament after a 1 to 0 win over the United States on May 6 and a 2 to 1 win over Mexico on May 13. All three

Canadian goals were scored by John Catliff, the tournament's top scorer.

Canada came close to qualifying for the World Cup again in 1994 under the guidance of a defender on the 1986 team, Bob Lenarduzzi. They entered the tournament at the second round stage and advanced as group runners-up. Canada competed strongly in the final qualifying round, drawing their first match in Tegucigalpa after a controversial penalty allowed the Hondurans to draw even, winning their next two, over El Salvador and Honduras in Vancouver, losing convincingly at Azteca Stadium, and winning 2 to 1 in San Salvador. They went into their final group match against Mexico, in Toronto, needing a win to win the group and thus qualify directly for the World Cup. Canada went up 1 to 0 on a goal credited to Alex Bunbury off a free kick, but Mexico scored twice in the second half to win, 2 to 1. The loss meant Canada finished second and advanced to an intercontinental play-off series where they needed to win two rounds to qualify for the USA 94 World Cup.

The Reds went up against Oceania Football Confederation's champions Australia. Canada won the first leg 2 to 1 in Edmonton. Australia led the second leg 2 to 1 at the end of ninety minutes, sending the tie to extra time. There was no score in the extra thirty minutes, meaning the series was decided by a penalty shootout which Australia won 4 to 1 to eliminate Canada

from contention. Australia went on to lose 2 to 1 on aggregate to Argentina, who advanced to the World Cup.

With the World Cup to be played in the US, Canada had the opportunity to play a number of high-profile squads in tune-up matches. The highlight of this set of matches, played against Morocco, Brazil, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands all within thirteen days was Canada holding eventual World Cup champions Brazil to a 1 to 1 draw at Commonwealth Stadium, on a 69th-minute equalizer by Eddy Berdusco, on Canada's only real scoring chance in the game. Also memorable were accusations by Dutch players after their match of the Canadians tackling too aggressively for a friendly.

With three countries set to qualify out of CONCACAF for the 1998 World Cup, and with Canada handily winning their second round group over El Salvador, Panama, and Cuba, expectations were high for a second qualification in twelve years in the spring of 1997. The aging Canadians, however, fared miserably, losing their opening game to Mexico 0 to 4 and the following one to the US 0 to 3. At home in their next two matches to El Salvador and Jamaica they could only manage two 0 to 0 draws as they finished bottom of the group with six points from ten games and a fifteen goal difference. Having overseen two consecutive World Cup campaigns end in the side failing to qualify, Lenarduzzi stepped down in 1997 and was replaced by interim manager Bruce Twamley.

The Canadian Soccer Association turned to another German to lead the senior national team in 1998 with the signing of Holger Osieck. Success came quickly with Canada winning the CONCACAF Gold Cup in February 2000. After emerging from the first round on a coin-toss tiebreaker with invited side Republic of Korea, the Canucks scored a quarter-final upset win over Mexico. The win set the stage for an unprecedented run to the final, where Canada defeated Colombia 2 to 0 at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Canada swept the awards ceremony, with goalkeeper Craig Forrest winning MVP honours, Carlo Corazzin securing the Golden Boot, and Richard Hastings named Rookie of the Tournament.

Expectations were again high following the winter's result, but the campaign sputtered. A positive 1 to 0 away result in Havana in June was followed by a listless 0 to 0 home draw against Cuba. For the semi-final round two out of four teams advanced. Canada was eliminated from World Cup contention after finishing third in the semi-final round. Canada managed just one goal in six games while conceding eight to finish third in the standings, well adrift of advancing sides T&T and Mexico.

Winning the Gold Cup earned Canada a place in the 2001 Confederations Cup, where the highlight was holding Brazil to a 0 to 0 draw. The Gold Cup victory also won them an invitation to compete in the Copa América 2001. When security concerns prompted the cancellation of the tournament, Canada disbanded

their training camp. The tournament was then reinstated and held on schedule. The Canadian Soccer Association announced they would not be able to participate in the reinstated tournament.

Canada had another strong showing in the 2002 CONCACAF Gold Cup, losing to the United States in the semi-finals in penalties, and then defeating South Korea in the third-place game, 2 to 1. There was a Gold Cup held the following year so as to hold the event in years between the World Cup and the Olympics, and Canada was eliminated in the first round on goal difference. The year 2004 marked the beginning of 2006 World Cup qualification and a new era under the guidance of former Canadian skipper Frank Yallop. Things began brightly, with the Canadians dispatching of Belize handily in the preliminary round, 8 to 0 on aggregate, in a home-and-home series. Matters turned, however, with Canada finishing bottom in a group featuring Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras. They managed only 5 points from six matches and a four goal difference. Hard times continued under Yallop as the Canucks again went out at the first barrier in the Gold Cup, losing to both the US and Costa Rica, while defeating Cuba. The manager stayed on through 2005 into the following summer, overseeing a series of friendlies against European sides. He resigned on June 7, 2006, finishing with a record of 8–9–3.

Things turned around under interim coach Stephen Hart's guidance. Canada opened their 2007 CONCACAF Gold Cup

campaign with a 2 to 1 win over Costa Rica. Yet a 1 to 2 upset loss to upstarts Guadeloupe was followed by a 2 to 0 victory over Haiti, securing Canada first-place in their group. They next beat Guatemala 3 to 0 in their quarter-final match setting up a semi-final showdown with the host Americans. Substitute Iain Hume scored for Canada in the seventy-sixth minute to cut the USA's lead to 2 to 1. After the United States were reduced to ten men, Canada pressed for the equalizer but was denied when Atiba Hutchinson's stoppage-time goal was incorrectly flagged offside by linesman Ricardo Louisville and Canada was eliminated.

The team faced criticism for its poor handling of goalkeeper Greg Sutton, who suffered a concussion during a practice prior to the start of the Gold Cup. Without a doctor accompanying the team, Sutton instead saw a local physician who cleared him to practice, resulting in Sutton suffering post-concussion syndrome. Sutton was lost to his professional club Toronto FC for nearly a year.

The Canadian Soccer Association announced prior to the Gold Cup in May 2007 that former national team player Dale Mitchell would take over as head coach of the senior team after the 2007 FIFA U-20 World Cup. Mitchell had previously served as an assistant coach under Coach Frank Yallop. Under Mitchell, Canada drew friendlies with Iceland and against Costa Rica, lost 0 to 2 to South Africa, had a 1 to 0 win over Martinique, and a 0 to 2

defeat to Estonia. Optimism grew, however, as Canada played well in a 2 to 3 loss to Brazil.

Despite defeating Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 7 to 1 on aggregate in a second round series, (they had had a bye in the first) Canada did not play at the level they had at the Gold Cup and were eliminated from qualifying for the 2010 World Cup. They conceded an equalizer shortly after scoring the opening goal in a 1 to 1 draw to Jamaica at BMO Field, conceded two second-half goals in quick succession in a 1 to 2 home loss to Honduras at Saputo Stadium, and then lost away to Mexico and Honduras. They finished last in the four-team group with just 2 points from 6 matches. On March 27, 2009, head coach Dale Mitchell was fired. The president of the Canadian Soccer Association, Dominic Maestracci, said that "the Canadian Soccer Association is committed to the future of our men's national team program. We have made this decision to move the program in a new direction." Technical director Stephen Hart was renamed as interim head coach. On December 9, 2009, Hart was named as head coach.

Stephen Hart's first competitive action as the full-time head coach was a humble showing at the 2011 CONCACAF Gold Cup, not managing to get out of the group stage. However, during the early stages qualifying for the 2014 World Cup, Canada topped their group in the second round but were eliminated in the third round of CONCACAF qualifying, finishing one point

behind Honduras and Panama after losing 8 to 1 in Honduras on the final match day.

After a series of interim coaching changes following Stephen Hart's dismissal on October 12, 2012 Benito Floro replaced Colin Miller as Canada's coach on August 1, 2013. Being a coach with top-flight management experience in La Liga, he is expected to help Canada raise its competitiveness prior to 2018 FIFA World Cup qualification. In the midst of Floro's player identification and restructuring phase, the team experienced many difficulties including a 958 minute goal-scoring drought, which was finally broken by Atiba Hutchinson in a 1 to 1 draw with Bulgaria on May 23, 2014. Despite showing improvement with two draws in Europe, Canada continued to shed FIFA points having gone winless for nearly two years, and sank to their lowest ever FIFA ranking of 122 in August 2014. Canada ended a sixteen match winless streak on September 10, 2014, defeating Jamaica 3 to 1 in Toronto.

Canada was drawn into the 2018 FIFA World Cup second round of qualifying against Dominica in June 2015. Canada entered the second round of 2018 World Cup qualifying against Dominica with a game at Windsor Park in Dominica which they won 2 to 0 with goals from Cyle Larin and a penalty converted by Russell Teibert. In the return leg at BMO Field in front of 9,749 fans they defeated Dominica 4 to 0 with two goals from Tosaint Ricketts and one each from Tesho Akindele and Cyle Larin.

The team did not score a single goal and finished last in their group in the 2015 CONCACAF Gold Cup after two 0 to 0 draws to El Salvador and Costa Rica, while also suffering a 1 to 0 loss against Jamaica.

Canada then advanced to the third round of 2018 World Cup qualifying against Belize, winning 4 to 1 on aggregate and advancing to the fourth round of 2018 World Cup qualifying. Canada was drawn into a group against Honduras, El Salvador and Mexico. They played their first pair of matches in the fourth round on November 13 and 17, 2015. The first match was played in Vancouver at BC Place against Honduras, resulting in a 1 to 0 win for Canada thanks to a deflected goal by Cyle Larin. The crowd of 20,108 set a new record for the Canadian men's team in the province of British Columbia. In their next game on November 17, away at El Salvador, Canada drew with El Salvador nil - nil as Julian De Guzman broke Canada's record for most caps for the national team with his eighty-fifth cap, passing Paul Stalteri's record of eighty-four caps. With this result in Canada's last game of 2015, they ended off the year conceding just three goals in their final twelve games and in fourteen games overall, they ended off with a record of six wins, six draws, and two losses.

On March 25, 2016, in a World Cup qualifier against Mexico at BC Place Stadium in Vancouver, 54,798 people were recorded in the stadium which set a new attendance record for a Canadian national team of any sport. Ultimately, however Canada

lost the game 3 to 0, but remained in second place in the group, keeping them in contention for World Cup qualification.

On September 6, 2016, after not being able to qualify for the fifth round of the 2018 World Cup qualifying despite a 3 to 1 win over El Salvador, head coach Benito Floro was sacked on September 14, ending his reign as manager of the national team.

Canada played its 2010 World Cup qualification home games at BMO Field, Saputo Stadium, and Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton. From 2011 to September 2015, Canada played all home games at BMO Field in Toronto except for a 2013 friendly against Costa Rica at Commonwealth Stadium. In November 2015 and in 2016 Canada played their World Cup qualifying games at BC Place in Vancouver.

Canada also has an under 20 National team. The Canada Under 20 men's national soccer team, also known as Canada Under-20s or Canada U-20s, is a youth team for national soccer in Canada. It plays a large role in the development of Canadian soccer, and is considered to be the feeder team for the Canada men's national soccer team. The team has qualified for eight out of nineteen FIFA U-20 World Cups. Their best result came in 2003 where they reached the quarterfinals. The team also competes in the CONCACAF U-20 Championship, which they won in 1986 and 1996.

Canada's most significant accomplishments at youth level are winning the CONCACAF U-20 Championship and Francophone Games twice, reaching quarterfinals of the 2003 FIFA U-20 World Cup, and defeating Brazil U-20 2 to 1 in a friendly on May 19, 2006, at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton, Alberta

Canada's Under-20 soccer team was created in 1976 as Canada's response to the newly created World youth Championship. The team failed to qualify for the inaugural tournament in 1977 in Tunisia, but they qualified for the following tournament two years later in Japan. They finished last in their group with two points, but they did manage to defeat Portugal 3–1. The next time the team qualified for a World youth Championship was in 1985, in the USSR, again they came last in their group with only one point. In the 1987 WYC in Chile, Canada's Under-20 soccer team put up a good effort scoring four goals, and tying Italy, however they still did not manage to get out of the group stage.

In 1997, after failing to qualify for four World Youth Championships (as the event was known until 2005) in a row, Canada made it past the group stage. The team progressed to the second round after a 2 to 1 win against Hungary in which a young Dwayne De Rosario scored a goal. They lost the round of 16 games against Spain 2 to 0. After missing the tournament in 1999, Canada qualified for Argentina 2001 after winning the qualifying tournament based on home soil in Vancouver, British Columbia.

At the finals, they finished last and were eliminated from a group including Brazil, Germany and Iraq.

Canada once again appeared in the 2003 FIFA World Youth Championship in United Arab Emirates. They qualified to the round of sixteen where they blanked Burkina Faso 1 to 0, and in a rematch against 1997 conquerors Spain, Canada lost in the quarter finals. Iain Hume scored three goals for Canada including a direct free kick against Spain while Atiba Hutchinson was an impressive performer in midfield.

At the 2005 FIFA World Youth Championships in the Netherlands, Canada was eliminated in the group stage after tying once and losing twice. One bright side of the tournament was Jaime Peters' and Marcel De Jong's goals.

In the build-up to the 2007 FIFA U-20 World Cup, as the tournament came to be known, Canada's defeated Brazil in the first game of a three-game series, winning two in front of 14 000 plus at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton on May 19, 2006. David Edgar and Will Johnson scored and Stephen Lumley made goal-line clearance to preserve Canada's first win over a Brazilian men's team at any level. Canada lost the remaining two matches 3 to 1. Despite an impressive run in friendlies leading up to the competition, Canada went winless in first round play without scoring a goal on home soil.

The CONCACF Gold Cup is celebrated and anticipated every two years by fans across the region, as a true celebration of world class football. Concacaf president Victor Montagliani said in a statement. “The venues selected thus far offer a mix of soccer history as well as a taste of the future of the sport in and we are excited to work with the local host committees to bring the game to fans all over”. The Gold Cup becomes a regional event on even more levels, as Concacaf continues to focus on making football accessible to more teams and players. The United States won the last Gold Cup, meaning that winning again in 2019 would automatically qualify the Americans for the 2021 FIFA Confederations Cup—provided the tournament exists.

Mexico has won a record seven Gold Cups, followed by the USA's six. Canada is the only other nation to ever win the competition, doing so in 2000. Before 2015, when the Gold Cup did not fall in the same year as the FIFA Confederations Cup, the winner, or highest-placed team that is a member of both CONCACAF and FIFA, qualified for the next staging of that tournament. Beginning in 2015, the winners of two successive Gold Cups (the 2013 and 2015 editions in the first instance) face each other in CONCACAF Cup – a playoff to determine the CONCACAF entrant to the next Confederations Cup. If the same team has won the Gold Cup on both relevant occasions, there will

be no playoff and that team will automatically qualify for the Confederations Cup.

Before the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF) was formed in 1961, association football in the region was divided into smaller, regional divisions. The two main bodies consisted of the Confederación Centroamericana y del Caribe de Fútbol (CCCF) founded in 1938 (consisting of Central America and most of the Caribbean) and the North American Football Confederation (NAFC) founded in 1946 (consisting of the North American nations of United States, Mexico, Canada, and Cuba). Each confederation held its own competition, the CCCF Championship and the NAFC Championship. The CCCF held ten championships from 1941–1961, Costa Rica winning seven and one each by El Salvador (1943), Panama (1951) and Haiti (1957). The NAFC held four championships in 1947 and 1949 and later, after forty-one years of absence, in 1990 and 1991 for the North American zone as the North American Nations Cup with Mexico winning two (47 & '49) and Canada winning one (1990) before the introduction of the CONCACAF Gold Cup.

CONCACAF itself was founded in 1961 through the merging of NAFC and CCCF which resulted in a single championship being held for the continent. The first CONCACAF tournament was held in 1963 in El Salvador with Costa Rica becoming the first champion. The CONCACAF Campeonato de

Naciones, as it was called, was held every two years from 1963 to 1973. The second tournament was held in Guatemala in 1965 when Mexico defeated the host country in the final of a six-team tournament. The 1967 competition was held in Honduras and saw a third champion crowned, Guatemala. Costa Rica won their second title as hosts in 1969, knocking off Guatemala, while two years later, Mexico won their second championship as the tournament moved to Trinidad & Tobago, the first time in the Caribbean. In 1973, the tournament kept the same format of six teams playing a single round-robin, but there were bigger stakes attached: CONCACAF's berth in the FIFA World Cup tournament in 1974. In Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the host country pulled off a shocking upset by winning the tournament and claiming a spot in the World Cup in West Germany.

With the Campeonato de Naciones doubling as the final World Cup qualifying tournament, the next two editions were held in Mexico City and Tegucigalpa, Honduras in 1977 and 1981, respectively. In each case the host country was crowned champion and earned a spot in the World Cup. In 1985 and 1989, the winner of the World Cup qualifying tournament was again crowned Confederation champion. Canada and Costa Rica were named champions in 1985 and 1989, receiving a trophy. In 1990, CONCACAF brought the CONCACAF Championship to an end and created the CONCACAF Gold Cup, with the United States hosting the first competition in 1991, and hosting or co-hosting every

subsequent tournament (as of 2019). The host country was the inaugural champion of the eight-team tournament. Mexico dominated the remainder of the decade, winning three consecutive CONCACAF Gold Cup titles in 1993, 1996 and 1998.

In 1996, the Gold Cup field included its first guest team, the defending FIFA World Cup Champions Brazil. Guests were invited to participate in the six Gold Cup tournaments from 1996 to 2005. Starting with the 2000 Gold Cup, the tournament field was increased to twelve teams and for the 2007 tournament; the Gold Cup again was contested exclusively by nations within CONCACAF. The 2007 Gold Cup hosts successfully defended their title beating Mexico in the final 2 to 1 in Chicago; Canada and Guadeloupe shared third place. Mexico won the 2009 Gold Cup by beating the United States 5 to 0. In the 2011 Gold Cup, Mexico defeated the USA 4 to 2 in the final while the USA won the 2013 Gold Cup by beating Panama 1 to 0.

Since the formation of the Gold Cup in 1991, the CONCACAF Championship has been won seven times by Mexico, six times by the United States, and once by Canada. Runners-up include Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, and Jamaica. In January 2017, Victor Montagliani announced the expansion of the Gold Cup from twelve to sixteen teams, starting with the 2019 tournament.

*Various archives and sources were used for this chapter
including Sports Illustrated*



Owen Lee Hargreaves is a Calgary born English former footballer.



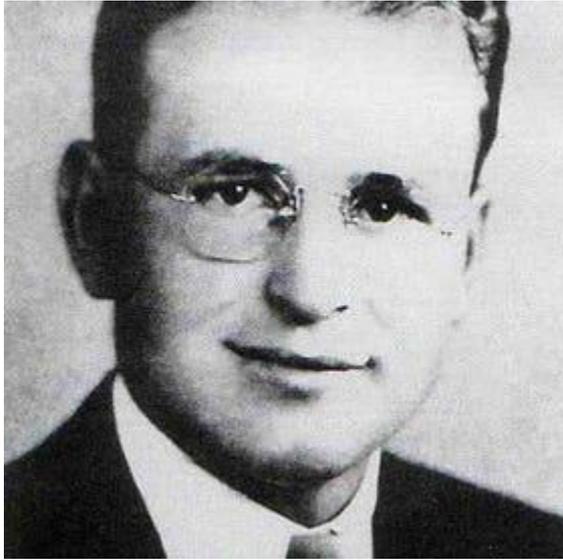
Fernando João Lobo Aguiar is a Portuguese retired footballer who played as a defensive midfielder. He was arguably Canada's second most successful player to have competed in Portugal,



Alexander "Alex" Bunbury is a Canadian retired footballer who played as a striker. He played mainly for Marítimo in Portugal during a 13-year career.



Srđajan Djekanović is a Serbian-born Canadian retired professional soccer player. He was also an international for Canada.

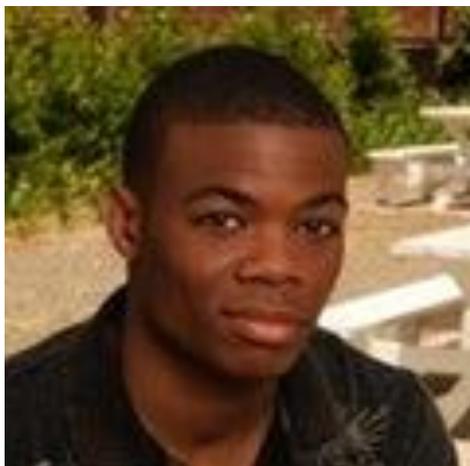


Whitey McDonald was a Canadian soccer player who earned two caps with Ireland. He began his professional career in Canada.



Craig Lorne Forrest is a Canadian former professional soccer goalkeeper.

Paul James,
Hall of Fame,
two World
Cups and
Analyst



*Jordyn Pamela
Huitema is a
seventeen year
old Canadian
world-class soccer
player.*



CONCACAF champion John Catliff took part in three cycles of FIFA World Cup Qualifiers. He scored four times in six matches in 1993. He also participated in the 1984 Olympic Tournament and was the hero of the 1990 Corona Three Nations Cup. He was a five-time champion in the Canadian Soccer League. In 2004, he became an honoured member of The Soccer Hall of Fame.



Paul Peschisolido, a Toronto Blizzard player English footballer, manager and a Canadian Soccer Hall of Famer

Pictures of former great Canadian soccer players are courtesy of the Ranker web-site. Jordyn Huiteman (the next great one?) is from canadasoccer.com



Playing soccer at the University level starts at the grass roots level



Chapter Ten

Soccer - from Children to University

In Rob Kelly's article, Pathway to University soccer in Canada he wrote (using Jenn Beagan, Tino Fusco and Jami Clark as his sources), the two best options for young Canadians wishing to play University soccer are staying in Canada and playing for a CIS team or heading south to play for an NCAA program. If a player is using university soccer as a stepping stone to go pro, players playing in the NCAA have the advantage of being eligible for the MLS Super-draft. Whether in Canada or the US the benefits of playing university soccer are significant. High level training and coaching, along with athlete development services such as physiotherapy, strength and conditioning, nutrition and sport psychology support and simulates a professional atmosphere with travel, competition, and performance expectations. National team and professional scouts frequently attend university championships, and follow teams, athletes and statistics. Get an education (often with scholarship dollars and support financially)

Academic support and guidance, free academic tutors and programs. Develop transferable skills that will benefit you in life and career (time and stress management, leadership, team work, performance under pressure to name a few).

I think the biggest misconception with parents and players today is that a coach is going to find me....in fact, it's very much like a job – you have to do the work upfront to sell and market yourself to get noticed. Coaches don't have the time or resources to find you. Video is the key for me....if a player sends me an email without video links – I flag it differently than a player who has an introductory email that has good informative data included.” The key is exposure. Canadian players need to come with their club to an event or two in the US. The other option is to come down for camps. As a school close to the border, we try to get up and see Canadian teams three or four times a year and also watch them when they come south for games/tournaments.

The hardest part for Canadians is that University at home is relatively inexpensive compared to attending a US school so it takes a huge scholarship to lure a player down to the states, which means they usually have to not only be as good as the American players, but actually better. Scott Menzies and Josh Heard are Canadians currently playing for the U of W in NCAA soccer. They have both offered up advice to young Canadians pursuing a spot on an NCAA roster.

I made initial contact with the U of W by going to one of their ID camps. I kept coming back to camps (five of them) until eventually they offered me a spot on the team. I think my biggest piece of advice to young players is become the best player that you can be because you need to be better than all the Americans who recruiters see every day in order to make an impression and get on their radar. Make sure to talk to as many schools as you can to have the highest chance of getting an offer.

I think the two biggest things I've learned in being able to play soccer here at UW are the values of both hard work and enjoyment. I always made sure I always worked my hardest in youth training while also realizing it was vital in also truly enjoying what I'm doing. I've also learned these two values can go hand in hand. To work hard and see the results is incredibly rewarding and a joy to see. I advise young aspiring soccer players to take the driver's seat. Reach out personally to schools you want to go to, make yourself familiar with coaching staffs and find what best fits your own character. Another big aspect of getting noticed is recruiting camps. Most university soccer programs have camps where you can go and play with kids your age and show your skill. The number one thing is finding a way for NCAA programs to see you.

Athletes should begin thinking about university recruiting in grade nine or ten. This is not a typo, at fourteen years old a student athlete is more focused on short term goals, having fun

with their friends, their upcoming games, and school commitments. But NCAA coaches are beginning to recruit and identify prospective athletes earlier and earlier. It is not uncommon for top universities to have commitments from their incoming athletes a year (sometimes two years) in advance of high school graduation. There are steps you can take at fourteen or fifteen to set yourself up to be recruited, but it is the responsibilities of coaches and parents to learn about the process and recruiting time-lines so they can help young athletes be prepared. (Note: CIS recruiting can start in grade eleven)

For most young student athletes, choosing which University and university teams you want to pursue is a difficult and time consuming task. There are geographic, academic and athletic criteria to think about, evaluate and research so that the school you ultimately end up at is a good fit, and is somewhere you can succeed.

We recommend athletes create a target list of about 10-15 schools to start out with. However, if you want to play soccer beyond university, especially professionally, there is another layer of research you must add to this list. Pay special attention to who the coach is and where they play, who they know and what kind of connections they have to European teams, national teams or MLS. What style do they coach? Will you be learning tactics and strategies that will translate to the pro level? If you play well, your university coach can help you get tryouts with teams, it will

be important to communicate with your target coaches that your goal is to play professionally. Check out the rosters of some of your favourite professional teams, what universities are represented there?

Coaches want to evaluate athletes at least three times a year during recruiting. This can be achieved a number of different ways. The most important thing to have at the outset is a good quality highlight video. This should show you in competition, show your team skills, tactics, positioning, on and off ball ability. The video should include a skills session where you show ball control, by dribbling, shooting and distribution skills. A highlight video is what is going to catch the attention of a coach, and make them want to see more of you. Other ways to be seen and evaluated are at showcase tournaments, college camps, national level competitions, and any competition that you have invited a coach to come see you play. Much of successful recruiting is communication and developing a good relationship with your target coach. You want to use the recruiting process to sell yourself to them, demonstrate your character, your skills and abilities and why you will be a good addition to their team.

You also want to use the recruiting process to ask meaningful questions, learn about the school, team and coaching staff. Try and develop a personal relationship with the coach, when you are away from home, across the country, or even across a border your coaches will be your support system and parents

away from home. The coaching staff at your university will also be your advocates in finding professional tryouts, identification and playing opportunities whereby the better your relationship, the better your opportunity. There are many things you can do now, as a youth athlete that can help you mentally and physically prepare for the next level of soccer, whether it is university or professional. Seek out mentor-ship and guidance from your support system, coaches, teachers or other professionals.

Men's soccer is the highest level of play at Canadian University's under the auspices of U Sports, Canada's governing body for University soccer. It has become a power-house and can be the next step as ones teen-age years come to a close. . As of the 2018 season, forty-eight teams from Canadian universities are divided into four conferences, drawing from the four regional associations of U Sports: Canada West Universities Athletic Association, Ontario University Athletics, Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec, and Atlantic University Sport. After inter-conference playoffs have been played, eight teams compete for the Sam Davidson Memorial Trophy, awarded to the U Sports Men's Soccer Championship team.

The regular season is eight to nine weeks long, depending on the conference. Teams play between twelve and sixteen regular season games, depending on conference or division, with teams typically playing a home and home series with every other team in their conference or division. All regular season games are

in-conference. Following the conclusion of the regular season, the Joe Johnson Memorial Trophy is awarded annually to the Player of the Year in U Sports men's soccer.

After the regular season, single elimination playoff games are held between the top teams in each conference to determine conference champions. In the Canada West and Quebec conferences, the top four teams qualify for the playoffs, with the fourth and first seeded teams playing one match and the third and second seeded teams playing another. The two winning teams then play for the conference championship. Because there are more teams in the Atlantic conference, the top six teams qualify, with the top two teams receiving a first-round bye. The sixth and third seeded teams play one match and the fifth and fourth seeded teams play another. The winning teams then go on to play the top two seeded teams, with the lowest remaining seed playing the first seeded team and the highest remaining seed playing the second seeded team. The winners of these two semi-final matches then play for the Atlantic conference championship.

The Ontario playoff system operates much like the Atlantic one, except it functions for both the West and East divisions. The top six teams from each division (total of twelve) qualify for the playoffs, with the top two seeds of each division receiving byes. The champions of each division then play for the OUA conference championship. Because the OUA has twelve teams competing, it necessitates a longer post-season schedule. Consequently, the

first round of the playoffs in the OUA occurs during the same week that each of the other three conferences is playing their last regular season games. The four conference champions automatically qualify for the U Sports men's soccer championship.

The U Sports Men's Soccer Championship, first established in 1972, features eight teams in single elimination matches to determine a national champion. The championship hosts eleven games over four days at a predetermined host venue. The host team is automatically qualified for the tournament, as is each of the conference champions. Another berth is awarded to the second-place finisher in the Ontario conference and the two remaining spots are awarded to the second-place finisher in each of the remaining conferences. If an OUA team is hosting, three teams from the OUA qualify.

U Sports is not geared towards producing professional soccer players, though some U Sports players have turned pro. U Sports players are not eligible for the MLS SuperDraft, but are able to be selected in the USL Draft. Most U Sports players are twenty-one or twenty-two upon leaving university and are too old to be considered prospects by most pro teams. Top players in high schools and sports academies may opt not to play in U Sports so that they can turn pro directly. Despite this, some U Sports alumni in the pro ranks include Haidar Al-Shaiban (Western), Nana Attakora (York), Gabe Gala (Toronto), Srdjan Djekanović (UBC).

Ladies soccer has also exploded at the University level in recent years and is played under the umbrella of U Sports, Canada's governing body for university sports. As of the 2018 season, fifty-three teams from Canadian universities are divided into four conferences, drawing from the four conferences of U Sports: Canada West Universities Athletic Association, Ontario University Athletics, Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec, and Atlantic University Sport. After inter-conference playoffs have been played, eight teams compete for the Gladys Bean Memorial Trophy, awarded to the U Sports Women's Soccer Championship team.

The regular season is eight to nine weeks long, depending on the conference. Teams play between twelve and sixteen regular season games, depending on conference or division, with teams typically playing a home and home series with every other team in their conference or division. All regular season games are in-conference. Following the conclusion of the regular season, the Chantal Navert Memorial award is awarded annually to the Player of the Year in U Sports women's soccer.

After the regular season, single elimination playoff games are held between the top teams in each conference to determine conference champions. In the Canada West and Quebec conferences, the top four teams qualify for the playoffs, with the fourth and first seeded teams playing one match and the third and second seeded teams playing another. The two winning

teams then play for the conference championship. Because there are more teams in the Atlantic conference, the top six teams qualify, with the top two teams receiving a first-round bye. The sixth and third seeded teams play one match and the fifth and fourth seeded teams play another. The winning teams then go on to play the top two seeded teams, with the lowest remaining seed playing the first seeded team and the highest remaining seed playing the second seeded team. The winners of these two semi-final matches then play for the Atlantic conference championship.

The Ontario playoff system operates much like the Atlantic one, except it functions for both the West and East divisions. The top six teams from each division (twelve in total) qualify for the playoffs, with the top two seeds of each division receiving byes. The champions of each division then play for the OUA conference championship. Because the OUA has twelve teams competing, it necessitates a longer post-season schedule. Consequently, the first round of the playoffs in the OUA occurs during the same week that each of the other three conferences is playing their last regular season games. The four conference champions automatically qualify for the U Sports Women's Soccer Championship.

The U Sports Women's Soccer Championship, first established in 1987, features eight teams in single elimination matches to determine a national champion. The championship hosts 11 games over four days at a predetermined host venue.

The host team is automatically qualified for the tournament, as is each of the conference champions. Another berth is awarded to the second-place finisher in the Ontario conference and Canada West conference. The final spot is given to one team from one of the three remaining conferences on a yearly rotational basis.^[4]

Although these next few chapters were written six years ago by Ben Rycroft, it still plays well today and puts an exclamation point on this chapter. The route to a professional career for Canadian university soccer players has never been easy. In fact, it's been downright impossible. At twenty-three years-old, they're either deemed too old to be a project or too young to hold down a veteran spot.

They can always try their luck in Europe, or attempt to claw their way up to the professional level from the lower ranks of the North American leagues. But, for most on their graduating perch, looking out on the large expanse that is the soccer landscape, they'll only see pathways with stop signs ahead. Major League Soccer and Canadian Interuniversity Sport are looking at ways to change that. One of those people is Todd Durban, MLS executive vice president of player relations. He sees greater CIS inclusion in the MLS SuperDraft as an option in the near future, but says there are plenty of other emerging routes for young Canadians seeking a professional soccer career.

"SuperDraft entrance is not exclusive to the NCAA. We have begun bringing in players from other countries as well, and certainly as we grow and expand that program, clearly one of the markets we'll be looking at for inclusion is Canada," Durban said.

"We've gone from one Canadian team to three Canadian teams in a very short time frame and developing and identifying young Canadian players is an absolutely critical and important strategic imperative to our league. But in addition to the draft, Durban also points to what he sees as an advanced scouting system in Canada that is creating opportunities.

Are we scouting the Canadian player to the same extent that we're scouting the American domestic player? It's my belief we are scouting the Canadian player better. Given their academy systems and given the lack of regulation that surrounds Canadian university athletics, it actually makes it a lot easier for teams to scout or interact with college age players than in the States, Durban said.

Pat Nearing, the head of the CIS Canadian Coaches Association, would like to see that scouting go a step further still. Our recent inclusion in the USL draft was step one. And it was a huge step forward for CIS soccer, in terms of getting recognition in the second tier of professional soccer in North America," Nearing said. "But now that we have a presence in the U.S. soccer

system, in the next year, we will look to approach the MLS about advancing our players into the SuperDraft."

For Canadian schools like Simon Fraser University, who have made the jump to play in the NCAA ranks over the past few years, they still see the present advantages the U.S. setup offers as a way forward for their kids. "We made the move to the NCAA because of the competitive advantages it offers. The overall quality of play is higher and the spotlight on us from North American soccer - whether it's the draft or scouting - is greater," said Simon Fraser's men's soccer head coach Alan Koch.

Koch doesn't discount the quality of some of the players in CIS, but does say that overall level of play isn't as complete as in the NCAA and perhaps why Canadian university soccer doesn't get the same level of exposure. "There are players within the CIS who could certainly make it in the MLS Draft. The top two or three in Canada are consistently on that level. But we've played some of the top teams in CIS and handled them easily."

Meanwhile, Nearing and the CIS are continuing to look at a number of ways to help graduating players advance into the professional ranks. "We're trying to determine what's in the best interest of our players. And we don't necessarily need to be in the SuperDraft because I don't see it as one of the keys to getting good players through into the MLS," he said. "It would make plenty of sense to see our players into the ranks of the academies

or Toronto FC reserves, or the Vancouver reserves, and then making their way into their first teams as they round out their games."

That's an approach that seems more in line with the thinking of at least one Canadian MLS team. Stuart Neely, the new head of player management for the Vancouver Whitecaps and previously the man credited with building Toronto FC's academy into the success it has become, says there will be less emphasis on the draft in the years to come. "There is still some value to the draft, but certainly the more the academies grow, the more it is going to be a massive challenge for the NCAA programs to remain relevant," Neely said. "To get a real top player coming out of there is a real find to do so. ... A lot of clubs are going to look at where they put their money."

And in a financially tight league like MLS, cheap options - like players graduating from CIS - just might be the solution for teams looking to fill out their roster." CIS will be looking at formalizing a number of different paths over the next year but for us, Canadian schools and Canadian teams make sense," Nearing said. For CIS players looking to make dollars, that can add up to a few less stop signs along the way.

Sources for this chapter include Soccer Canada, Wikipedia, archives, CBC Sports, smittysports and others.



*Injuries are a common and normal part of Canadian soccer
(Picture courtesy of pixshark.com)*

Chapter Eleven

Soccer Has a Boogeyman

It's not just the NFL, NHL or the CFL that has a problem with concussions – soccer also is now being scrutinized. Youth soccer has exploded in popularity since it first emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. But as the number of players has increased, injuries have soared as well.

By evaluating emergency room data from 1990 to 2014, a study published in the journal *Pediatrics* and reported by CNN found that the annual injury rate for young soccer players jumped by 111% in the twenty-four year period. More than seventy percent of those injuries were in older children, ages twelve to seventeen. In addition, this age group was more than three times as likely to be injured as younger players. Although this was a US study it would be prudent to believe that things would be more than likely the same in Canada.

Sprains or strains were the most common injuries, accounting for 34.6% of all injuries, followed by fractures, which represented 23.2% of all injuries. Soft tissue injuries such as

lacerations and abrasions accounted for 21.9% of injuries. The study is the most comprehensive analysis of youth soccer injuries, but it may actually underestimate the number of soccer-related injuries; the study evaluated only emergency room visits.

The most common injuries in soccer involve the ankle and knee joints, and the muscles and ligaments of the thigh and calf. Rehabilitation to restore strength and endurance after healing is extremely important to prevent a recurrence of the injury, which is much more severe and disabling than the initial injury. Sprains and strains of the hamstring and quadriceps, and injuries to the external and internal structures of the knee joints are frequent and relatively more disabling. Recent progress in the technical aspect of investigative medicine, such as magnetic resonance (MRI) imaging/quantitative only computer tomography (CT) scanning, ultrasonic imaging of soft tissues and isokinetic measurement of muscle characteristics, lead to better diagnosis and management of soccer injuries. Appropriate nutritional and physiological preparation, maintaining fluid and electrolytes during the game and restoration of the reserves following completion of exhaustive activities will help to minimise injuries.

In a November 2018 story by Doyle Potenteau of Global News called heading the ball in soccer may be hazardous to your brain health. That was the summary of a study out of the University of British Columbia Okanagan

that examined players who redirected the ball using their heads.

The UBC Okanagan report suggests that repetitive impacts of a soccer ball on a player's head could cause damage to the cells of the nervous system. The findings, according to UBCO, were published recently on the website BMJ Open Sport and Exercise Medicine. The study can be viewed [here](#).

“Soccer is unique in that playing the ball with the head is encouraged, yet players don't wear protective headgear,” said Paul van Donkelaar, UBC Okanagan neuroscientist and senior author of the study. “Although there are a growing number of studies evaluating the wisdom of this, ours is the first to measure blood biomarkers of cell injury.” Van Donkelaar and his research team evaluated the impact of 40 headers for their study. What they did was measure the blood levels of two nerve cell enriched proteins: tau and light neurofilament (NF-L). The eleven participants were also asked to record any concussion symptoms.

According to the study, the numbers were compared to an alternate day when participants did not contact the soccer ball with their head. On the day that participants headed, the study said NF-L levels were higher at one hour

later when compared to the day that they did not contact the ball with their head. Elevated levels were also recorded one month later. The higher NF-L levels correlated with a higher number of concussion-like symptoms such as headaches, dizziness and confusion. There was no difference in the tau levels between the groups.

A study from 2017 found that soccer players who head on average 125 balls over a two-week period are at a greater risk of getting a concussion. “We believe this is the first study to measure blood levels of NF-L and tau prior to, immediately after, and twenty-two days following a series of soccer headings,” said van Donkelaar, a professor at UBCO’s school of health and exercise sciences. “These findings suggest that repetitive impacts in the form of soccer headers can cause damage to the nerve cells as measured by elevated NF-L levels and increased concussion-related symptoms.”

Van Donkelaar also said “sport-related concussion is becoming a major concern for athletes, parents, coaches and sport associations. Finding ways to improve the safety of contact sports is one key approach to mitigating the risks.”

A recent UBCO doctoral graduate student and study co-author, Colin Wallace, says that NF-L has previously been noted as a promising biomarker for the detection of head injury as elevated levels are associated with acute

concussion in athletes. “We suggest that heading in soccer should not be overlooked as a potential way to inflict damage to nerve cells,” said Wallace. “Perhaps our findings are game changers.”

A 2018 study by the University of Alicante in part stated, there were twenty-six participants (thirty-eight Super League and thirty-two National League women) with a mean age of 21.20 ± 4.64 years and body mass index (BMI) of 21.94 ± 1.79 kg/m². There are several reasons why the health problems of the women’s soccer must be taken into account. Among these reasons, we think that the speed actions in this sport will have a great impact on the health of competitors. In addition, the women are more prone to overuse injuries due to the morphological characteristics. Results: Musculoskeletal injuries and pain were importance to women’s soccer of two levels. This was reflected in our study, the high percentage of activation muscle shortening, especially at hip external right and left rotators (100%), also at internal hip right and left rotators (100%) in the premier league. However, in national league the high percentage was at hip external right and left rotators (78.1%) and shortening in internal hip right and left rotators (90.6%). Conclusions: It is important to continue hearing the ergogenesis of this sport and particularly of women's soccer, to reduce its lesional index.

In yet another research paper produced by P. Wong and Y. Hong of the British Journal of Sports Medicine said in part,

previous studies have shown that soccer has a high injury rate and injury percentage. More injuries have been found in soccer than field hockey, volleyball, handball, basketball, rugby, cricket, badminton, fencing, cycling, judo, boxing, and swimming. Most soccer injuries occur to the lower extremities, especially the ankle.

It has been reported that soccer injuries result in decreased physical activity and work time lost in addition to substantial medical costs. Eleven review papers that discuss different aspects of soccer injuries have been published. These papers included risk factors, preventive strategies, management, incidence and severity, as well as evaluation and treatment of injuries. One of these papers provided a specific review of soccer injuries to the head and neck. As mentioned, previous studies reported that most soccer injuries were located in the lower extremities.

For the seven studies that included male and female players, we can see a sex difference in injury rate. Injury rate was higher in female players than male players, overall and during training. One reason may be that female players are less skilful; with less experience, they may not be able to control the ball as well and avoid injury provoking activities such as tackling and sliding. Peterson reported that players with low skill levels had twice as many injuries as those with higher skill levels (in terms of 1000 hours athlete exposure time). They also suggested that more

skilful players might allow them for a reduction in the number of injuries during competition. On the other hand, male players have higher injury rates than female players during competition. One possible reason is that male players are usually playing at higher competitive levels. The more competitive the match, the greater the speed of movement and more body contact, all of which increase the chances of injury.

There seems to be a difference between male and female players in the body parts most often injured, the former having more ankle injuries and the latter having more knee injuries. The results of the National Collegiate Athletic Association show that the three most commonly injured body parts for male players were ankle (20%), upper leg (17%), and knee (15%), and those for female players were knee (24%), ankle (21%), and upper leg (16%). Lindenfeld and Schmitt found that the most commonly injured body part of male and female indoor soccer players were the ankle (23%) and the knee (23%) respectively. Hawkins *et al* suggested that the knee is very susceptible to injury from large forces produced by kicking the ball. It also is the centre of the lever arm of the leg, so it is susceptible to greater forces being transmitted from the trunk through the hip, and from the ground through the foot and ankle.

Sources for this chapter (besides those named) include Pub Med Central and British Journal of Sports Medicine, UBCO and CNN



The 2026 World Cup could be a “great unifier,” says TFC boss Bill Manning — like the women’s showcase in Canada in 2015.
(VAUGHN RIDLEY / GETTY IMAGES FILE PHOTO)



Canadian men's national team player Alphonso Davies, right, and Decio de Maria, President of the Football Association of Mexico helped present to FIFA a successful joint bid by their countries and the United States to host the 2026 World Cup. *(Pavel Golovkin/Associated Press)*

Chapter Twelve

Facing a World Cup Bounce

A story in the Toronto Star in the summer of 2018 by Laura Armstrong said; if the United 2026 bid is greenlit by the FIFA congress, thirteen year-old Canadian boys can start dreaming about playing in a World Cup on home soil.

An eight-year campaign to promote soccer in Canada can begin, perhaps cracking the global consciousness and the upper echelon of professional sport in this country, where hockey reigns supreme. And the men's national team, ranked No. seventy-ninth in the world and with a lone World Cup appearance to its name thirty-two years ago, will finally have a major tournament to work toward.

Those were the hopes of the Canadian soccer community as the decision day loomed. It was a united joint bid by the United States, Mexico and Canada versus Morocco for the right to host the World Cup in eight years, with the winner announced in Moscow around the time Canadians were waking up. And as we all know, we won the day and the joint bid is ours.

With the World Cup in the bank it is time to capitalize. Participation rates are already high with about 834,363 registered soccer players, coaches and referees in Canada in 2017, according to a report by the Canadian Soccer Association. But alongside the prospect of hosting the sport's biggest tournament, a desire to move soccer closer to the mainstream has emerged, with emphasis on what that growth could do for the game for generations to come.

Soccer has made a lot of progress in Canada with three Major League Soccer teams, a thriving women's national program and the emergence of the Canadian Premier League on the horizon. But it's still a young sport here, said Richard Legendre, executive vice-president of soccer operations with the Montreal Impact. "The World Cup could be an accelerator," he said. There's a big difference between how MLS is perceived around the world today compared with six years ago, when the Impact began, Legendre added. Clubs are acquiring more talent from Europe, South and Central America, for example. The quality of play has improved and with it the perception of soccer in North America, which hosting a World Cup could take to another level.

"It reminds me a little bit of all the movements ... when you hold the Olympics at home," he said. "There's a great rally behind developing players at home. It's almost as important as the promotional side. To develop international players, it doesn't happen overnight. There's no magic, in any sport."

Toronto FC president Bill Manning considers soccer a “great unifier,” bringing Canadians together around the game like the Women’s World Cup did here in 2015.

“I think as soccer continues to proliferate in Canada, having the World Cup and kids seeing players playing at the highest level in the world that are kids here from the GTA, they can be role models,” Manning said. “For me, that’s what it’s all about. I’m sure in hockey you have that, kids that looked up to a Wayne Gretzky or even a Brendan (Shanahan) when he was playing. They aspire to that and they can identify because they’re local guys. I think that’s what you’ll see as well with Canada.”

Pathways to the pros already exist, such as MLS academies, but Manning believes a World Cup would “amplify everything, which can only help the sport in this country.”

Shaun Hammond, president of Alberta Soccer, said just the notion of bringing a tournament of this stature to Canada inspires kids to stay in the game and wanting to be a part of it. “I think it will change a lot of attitudes were we to get this kind of tournament here, this kind of exposure,” Hammond said. “I think people will start taking a lot of notice.”

But for all the optimism, Simon Darnell, an assistant professor in kinesiology and physical education at the University of Toronto, finds the question of what the World Cup would do for soccer in Canada a bit mystifying. Grassroots participation is already very strong, says Darnell, who studies how sports fit into

society and culture. He adds research shows that while hosting major events and having famous athletes play in your country may lead to a spike in interest in a sport; it doesn't necessarily translate into increased participation.

Instead, much of what sports mean in Canada is driven by elite performance, he says, pointing to the Own the Podium program for the Olympics. While Canadians have had success at the Games, the project also feeds a sense that sport doesn't mean anything unless athletes are winning at the highest level.

"I think there's a sense among Canadian soccer (stakeholders) that they're kind of desperate to play with the big boys, to actually be in the big tournament," Darnell said. "In this line of thinking, it's not enough potentially to have a real grassroots soccer culture in this country." This leaves Darnell with what he calls the "most cynical" benefit of Canada's role in the bid. It might be the only way for the Canadian men, as co-hosts, to get back into the tournament in the foreseeable future.

"I wouldn't be surprised if that, at some level, is playing a role here," he said. "I think with the Canadian Soccer Association, it would force them to actually develop a team that would have to be able to play in the tournament. We don't see many signs that that's going to happen otherwise." The world's biggest soccer event is coming to Canada.

In a CBC Sports story in June 2018, Jamie Stashin wrote, Canada, the United States and Mexico won the right to co-host

the 2026 FIFA World Cup, which will mark the first time ever that men's World Cup matches will be played in Canada. But how many exactly and will the Canadian men's national team actually get to play in the tournament? And how much is this going to cost?

Here's a look at those questions and a few more in the wake of Wednesday's (June 2018) announcement. While the World Cup has had co-hosts before, this is the first time three nations have successfully won the right to stage it together.

In 2026, the World Cup will expand to forty-eight teams (the tournament in Russia had thirty-two), and the so-called "United" bid calls for eighty matches to be spread across the three host nations, with ten in Canada, ten in Mexico and sixty in the United States. All games from the quarter-final stage forward are expected to be played in U.S. stadiums.

Sixteen North American host cities have been proposed, and the Canadian sites are Toronto, Montreal and Edmonton. Games would be played at BMO Field in Toronto, Olympic Stadium in Montreal and Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton.

But even though the bid has been accepted, it doesn't mean Canada is guaranteed ten games in those three cities come 2026. Canada's allotment could be reduced as the FIFA council — a thirty plus-member board overseen by Gianni Infantino, the president of soccer's world governing body — has the final say on the number of games each country gets and the specific locations.

Traditionally, host nations have received an automatic spot in the tournament. But there have never been three hosts before.

The early indication is that Canada will get an automatic berth and avoid having to qualify, something it has done only once, in 1986. A final decision may not come for a few years, after the qualifying format for the new forty-eight team field is finalized. The expanded field probably helps Canada's chances of getting a spot.

This is a big question. When it comes to figuring out what the final bill could be for host cities, there are many unknowns. So far, there has been a lot of focus on the potential economic benefits. The joint bid's website boasts that the event "is projected to generate more than five billion [US] US in short-term economic activity, including the creation of 40,000 jobs."

"The problem is, with events of this magnitude, there are huge costs as well," says Prof. Simon Chadwick, a director of the Centre of Sports Business at Salford University in the United Kingdom. "Sometimes people talking about the benefits are somewhat disingenuous as they talk about the benefits without talking about the costs. The net economic benefits for these types of mega events tend to be marginal."

For example, Toronto municipal officials have estimated it would cost the city between thirty million and forty-five million to host three to five World Cup games, including potential stadium upgrades at BMO Field. Those figures don't include security costs,

which can be hard to predict. For example, security costs for the Vancouver Olympics were originally estimated to be \$175 million. The final price tag ended up being \$900 million.

Still, Toronto Mayor John Tory supports hosting the World Cup. "Hosting the FIFA World Cup is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to showcase Toronto to the world," he said. "Coming off the success of the 2015 Pan Am - Parapan Am Games and the 2017 Invictus Games, it is clear that Toronto and Torontonians are ready to be one of the host cities for this iconic event."

The city's support is contingent on federal and provincial funding. In recent months, the federal government has committed millions to a successful bid and indicated it would help offset security costs. Ontario premier-designate Doug Ford also indicated support for the bid.

Vancouver was supposed to be a key part of the Canadian bid, but city and provincial officials were never comfortable with the concessions required by FIFA. "While we support the prospect of hosting the World Cup, we cannot agree to terms that would put British Columbians at risk of shouldering potentially huge and unpredictable costs," B.C. Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Lisa Beare said in a statement.

B.C. Premier John Horgan told reporters that while he would like to see the World Cup come to Vancouver, he was not about to write "a blank cheque" to FIFA. The City of Chicago followed suit. "FIFA could not provide a basic level of

certainty on some major unknowns that put our city and taxpayers at risk," the Chicago Mayor's office said in a statement. "The uncertainty for taxpayers, coupled with FIFA's inflexibility and unwillingness to negotiate, were clear indications that further pursuit of the bid wasn't in Chicago's best interests."

Adds Chadwick: "Essentially, FIFA is a franchise. It comes to town for a month and then it leaves. So whatever happens in the run-up to the franchise arriving and whatever happens when it leaves is left for the city or host to deal with."

Soccer officials (and those in other sports) like using that phrase. And there is no question that attending World Cup games on home soil would be the ultimate sporting experience for Canadian soccer fans. But what impact will hosting a handful of matches actually have on the growth and development of the sport in Canada? "We will use the opportunity of hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup to extend the reach of the game, working to energize communities to embrace the sport in new ways, developing the game at all levels, and engaging the next generation of players, officials, and fans as never before," reads the 2026 United bid website.

Yes, hosting a World Cup in Canada could give elite young players something more tangible to aspire to. And it may shake Canada's men's team out of perpetual mediocrity - maybe. But there is no evidence that hosting events like the World Cup boosts

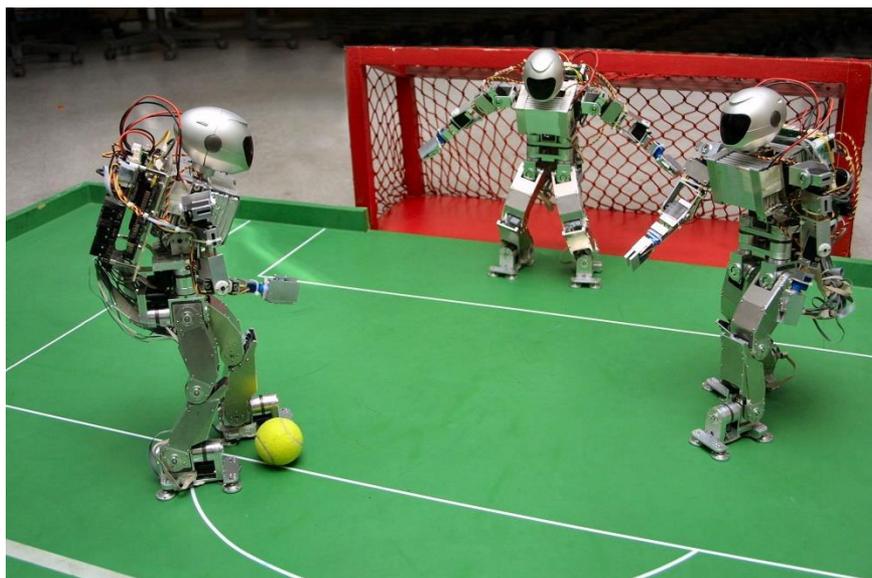
participation or improves grassroots infrastructure. Chadwick points to London's 2012 Olympic experience.

"One of the reasons given for the bid was that it would boost mass participation in sport, leading to a generation of fitter, healthier people," he says. "What's really shocking is that, since 2012, participation in sport in Britain has gone down, not up."

There's also the current state of soccer in Canada, which appears healthy. The women's national team program is strong after winning bronze at each of the last two Olympics. Major League Soccer, which has franchises in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, is gaining increased global respect. And the Canadian Premier League is about to launch. Meanwhile, more Canadian children are playing soccer than ever before.

"Youth soccer is so well developed in Canada, the United States and Mexico," says Peter Donnelly, a professor with the University of Toronto's Centre for Sport Policy Studies. "It's hard to see what would be added."

Sources used in this chapter were all named



Will the future of soccer look like this?

Another form of soccer in the future is already here. Future Soccer is a fast-paced sports game based on the classic game of Soccer, but with a futuristic twist! Set in a distant future with incredible technological advancements, Future Soccer pits you against skilled opponents in a wide variety of arenas. Players are equipped with a powerful close-range "Volley Gun" that can launch the ball (and their opponent) with great velocity. Beware; holding the ball leaves a player extremely vulnerable to their opponent's volley gun! Anyone who falls in battle is instantly rematerialized at their side of the field, though ball possession is lost. The team with more goals at the end of the game is victorious!

Chapter Thirteen

What's the Future of Soccer in Canada?

Martin Rogers a reporter at USA Today wrote this story on the future of soccer. The way soccer is consumed in the U.S./Canada is more of an international deal than ever. MLS has made great strides, but there are still vast numbers of young and not-so-young Americans who crave the thrill of seeing the true elite, from the biggest and best European clubs.

A bounce off the World Cup is a part of the soccer puzzle that doesn't fit neatly into a box but has nevertheless become a key part of the calendar. The International Champions Cup is the latest and arguably the biggest summer preseason tournament to come to these shores and is stacked with virtually every major European club team you can think of.

There was a time when preseason tours featuring big European clubs had dismal reputations. The teams were only coming to the US for sunshine and relaxation, so went the narrative. The squads featured would barely reflect what lineup would actually take the field when the season began back home.

No one is pretending that the ICC is an event on the scale of the Champions League and it doesn't aspire to be. But the story has shifted.

It is not the only element of American soccer to deal with misconception. MLS gets tagged with the stereotype that it is a haven for washed-up European players in search of one last easy payday. That was once the case, and stars such as Wayne Rooney and Zlatan Ibrahimovic have still come at thirty-two and thirty-six, but more central of the league's health is a crop of younger performers from both Europe and South America who have greatly increased the overall quality.

As for the ICC, the change came about when leading European coaches – one of them in particular – started making preseason a priority. “Jose Mourinho changed things,” Charlie Stillitano, chairman of ICC organizer Relevant Sports told USA TODAY Sports. “He worked out that if you make a flying start in the league back home, it gives you a great chance of holding on and winning it. And the best way to start strongly in the league is to have had a great preseason, with games against high-quality teams.”

Mourinho's Manchester United is here, and others have followed. Some teams still like it the old way. Everton of the English Premier League thrashed a semi-pro Austrian side 22 to 0

recently. United took on EPL rival Liverpool, Italian giant AC Milan and Champions League winner Real Madrid.

The games were competitive in both spirit and execution, and generally feature strong squads with some promising emerging players mixed in. It contributes to making watching soccer a year-round experience. NFL fans don't have that, facing a long and tortuous wait between the Super Bowl and the start of each new season. The NBA also has a lengthy gap, which is only partially sated by talk of trades and contract minutiae when everyone would rather be watching games.

For the soccer aficionado, there were merely four empty days between the World Cup final and the ICC opener, between Manchester City and Borussia Dortmund at Chicago's Soldier Field. Maybe you can get too much of a good thing, or maybe not. One thing is for sure, if you're getting soccer withdrawals symptoms, you've got a painfully short attention span. Before we know it 2026 will be here, bringing with it another watershed moment. There will undoubtedly be bumps in the road moving towards that point, but there is no question that the future is bright.

Gerald Jones wrote the quintessential book on the future of soccer coaching. In one of his reads he says when working with a player today, prepare them for the game of tomorrow.

Often in education, like in the coaching of sports, we only prepare the learner based on the world of today... not tomorrow. The danger is that when the learner arrives in the world of tomorrow they find it difficult to adapt and perform at the required level due to how different the world has become. Does this sound familiar in soccer? Certainly! We often see certain groups of players coming through our academies who are failing to impact on the world of tomorrow. What is the solution? Do not prepare players based on what the world (in this case the game of football/soccer) looks like today; rather prepare them for where you think it will be in the future!

It would not be a complete surprise if soccer players in the future are so technically and tactically flexible that they become almost position less in the sense that they may start playing in one position and finish in another. The player of the future will almost certainly be so highly skilled that they can adapt to any shape and formation the opposition play, and the team they represent starts with. As the game progresses it may be the players who shift the system into one that cannot be easily recognized as the conventional 1-4-4-2 or 1-5-3-2.

Over recent years, the game has become much faster, and players are quicker when compared to previous years. Most players are more technically efficient, they can occupy more roles, and as a result of their increased levels of technical excellence they are able to use their feet to control and manipulate the ball

under high degrees of opponent pressure across all positions on the pitch.

Past generations saw traditional defenders as players who perhaps were not the greatest on the ball technically, but were good in the air and could tackle and use their bodies well. Now defenders, such as centre backs, have to be technically competent in order to retain possession when playing out from their goalkeepers, receiving passes across the back and from midfield, alongside the ability to step into midfield to overload central areas. Even full backs are more attacking, with higher starting positions than before; they are often occupied as additional wingers in the modern game.

The game has seen power, speed, and endurance become key factors in the requirements for the modern (and future) player, with the ball moving to and from players at quicker speeds than before. As a result, teams are keeping possession of the ball for longer periods. All of this information is not new information... so what are the implications for the future player?

Future players will undoubtedly be good learners, intelligent, and with excellent professional attitudes, as they will need to be able to understand the importance of the first and second pass that allows their team to keep possession. Remember possession is our best defender, so with this in mind, players will create more passing and receiving situations where the ability to

play with few touches will be a pre-requisite to play at the highest level. As a result, more teams will become universal in the sense that passing retention will increase and there will be an increased demand for skilful dribblers.

As a result of teams being technically and tactically efficient, and athletically strong, opposition teams will have the challenge of 'patience' when defending (as opposed to an all-out high press, all the time). The ability to regain possession from clever interceptions and one versus one tackling will be of paramount importance as team defending will need to anticipate and respond better to the opposition's increased levels of possession.

Continuing the universal position less theme – does the game of tomorrow mean that there will be no real experts in one role? Perhaps, although certain players will still have strengths and preferences towards set positions. This may mean that as positions interchange, players will revert back to their desired position – one that meets their strengths and preferences. This may not be the original position they started out in, of course. This will help teams become unorthodox and unpredictable.

The most important consideration for coaches is that the game will become fluid with players' movement so fast and interchangeable that it becomes increasingly hard for opposition teams to track runners and identify opposition strengths and

weaknesses. Matt Whitehouse's recent book *Universality* expands upon Dick Bate and Arrigo Sacchi's findings on how much the game has changed over the years, such that: "The future will not just be a team-centred game, but a universal game where players require positional freedom and variability to interchange where required."

Some will argue that these claims are false, and suggest that no team that can play all positions will be able to win soccer matches ("Jack of all trades, master of none"). Despite the debate, we are certain that players will need to be comfortable in demanding and governing the ball. They will need to demonstrate game-intelligence and have excellent aerial and ground ability when attacking and defending balls using all body parts.

How does this impact on your coaching? You will need to encourage game understanding through the use of game-calls, and allow players to play in a range of positions both during games and in training. In a nutshell, you will need to encourage flexibility. There is a case that expertise comes from specialising players into set positions early. I would however argue against this. There have been numerous elite players in the game who have started in one position, and finished in another. Take Jamie Carragher, ex England international and Liverpool defender, who started off as a forward and finished his playing career as a defender. In the early years of his career, Steven Gerrard, ex England international and Liverpool legend was played as a right

back and right midfield before becoming a central midfielder and later a holding midfield player. The key message, therefore, is to encourage players to learn the game by playing the game.

In order to become well trained in the use of game-calls and in the game of soccer as whole, players will need to become excellent self-learners. This means that they take responsibility for their learning and reflect more on not just what the coach has said but how they interpret their own performance, as well as the areas they feel they need to strengthen and address.

Becoming a great self-learner is a key trait that separates top performers from average ones. The players who can instantly take feedback from significant others and themselves on-board, and act on the feedback to improve their performance, will be players who have the greatest success.

We currently know that most learners in groups can be categorised into three groups: those at the top who are pushing forward, those in the middle who are getting by (and trying to keep up with the top crop of learners). And, finally, those at the bottom who are struggling to keep up with everyone. These different groups, as discussed, will emerge from any chosen task and will require different individual challenges.

This global assessment masks the truth behind personal learning. Some players may be bottom of the group in terms of their social learning of game-calls but at the top of the group in

terms of their tactical understanding of the game. This is where becoming a good self-learner will allow this player to figure out what they need to do to address their inadequacies.

The problem in the past has been that players struggle to self-diagnose their barriers to learning and rely on feedback from their coaches solely. A player who lacks the ability to self-analyse and correct will struggle to adapt to changing environments. This is where it is vital that coaches try to develop responsibility (during training sessions and in games) in players.

Self-learning is guided by metacognition meaning how one thinks about one's own thoughts. The power of thinking about their thoughts will allow players to develop strategic knowledge, which is what the theory of game-calls is based on. Players who are self-learners will plan, monitor and evaluate their personal progress better than those who cannot. The best players in the world are the best self-learners – and inspire others by their actions.

The tone of how a coach says a particular game-call to a player, and how the player in turn says a game-call to a teammate, will influence the recipient of the information differently each time the word or phrase is used. For example, if a goalkeeper always screams his game-calls aggressively to his defence as “AWAY!” and “PRESS!” with a strong tone and volume, he may subsequently find himself in a situation that requires the

players to react more urgently and quickly than normal. But because he is always 'loud and urgent' teammates listening to the call won't be able to determine any difference in the situation.

When I say "Show Away" calmly to one of my teammates, they will notice a difference in my voice compared to if I say "SHOW AWAY!" more loudly, with more duration, and perhaps an air of nervousness in my voice. This will trigger a different reaction from the players physiologically and therefore they might react more quickly and aggressively themselves. Basically, the tone suggests to the player that this is a more stressful situation that requires more urgent attention.

Many coaches, however, often have a teaching style which involves the same tone, speed of speech, volume and frequency of words... regardless of the situation. As a result, players will not be able to differentiate when a coach is calm, or nervous, or being serious, or joking. The ability to manipulate tone, volume and speed of speech will become a future requirement of both the coach and player.

Players who are accountable for their actions and take responsibility for their decisions become better decision-makers long term and better learners. Players who do not take ownership in the sense of wanting to learn from mistakes, practice more, or be accountable for their decisions, are the ones that will never

reach their full potential as they will forever play it safe for fear of being criticised.

This is not to say that coaches can lay the blame on players for making mistakes. Good coaches are ones that are not afraid to say: “I take responsibility for this. I tried it and it didn’t work and that was my decision.” This is hugely powerful to players as it shows we are all human. Players will become increasingly effective at listening to their inner voice in the future. This is what will guide them to make better instantaneous decisions. Using game-calls regularly, you will find that players will train their minds to think deeply and articulate what they see. Therefore, when they reach the stage of transcendence, as described earlier in the book, they will have this inner voice screaming the game-call to them, without them having to say it out loud. They will talk themselves through the game by recognizing the triggers for when to press, when to drop, when to play quickly, and so on.

This will provide the ability to talk positively about their perceptions and experiences of how well the game is going. Equally, players will be able to control their inner emotions to remain in a positive state of mind and deal with negative scenarios that occur during the game. The ability to have strong emotional control and not lose control over incidents involving disagreement, aggression, challenge, adversity or confrontation will become a required skill of the future player.

Positive self-talk and reflection will become an intrinsic motivational tool for players, as they will use their reflections and talk during the game, to inspire their actions. This is one of the benefits of self-talk and reflection. Often coaches think about how to motivate their players. The player of the future will be a good self-motivator as a result of the self-talk and reflection. The challenge for coaches will be how to get a little extra from the players. The greatest coaches manage to get that little bit more from players who are already motivated to learn and perform. They achieve this by encouraging them to think deeper about their performance (reflection) and the action their thoughts towards a higher level of performance.

The player of the future will undoubtedly engage in football homework, meaning specific practice to aid their learning. Some coaches may feel that if we start giving football homework to players, we are giving them too much as they already have a lot to do and think about (especially if still at school or university). I would disagree – there is still a place for homework.

In the past, I have asked junior and senior players to watch a game of their choice and identify key things a player in their position does. In my experience, some players completed the task, others say they forgot, and some clearly did it on the way to the session at the last minute. The learning from such an exercise is not always as good as intended! A powerful and successful

method I have used includes setting substitutes tasks to watch certain aspects of the opposition's play, which they can then feedback to players or just me. I have asked players to feedback to players at intervals when they felt the opposition was weak, and who was causing us a problem on the opposition team.

Each of these methods allows players to think more about the game and learn through study. Another way of setting football homework can be to harness social communications via email, such as emailing a player an image of a situation from a game and getting them to comment on it.

Players, in general, are visual learners, so find ways of tapping into this by giving them homework where they have to reflect on what they have observed. Make it relevant to the player, for example a player who is struggling with driving and sliding may need a video or the coach to point out when this occurs successfully during a game in order to learn the skill. The homework could be used to identify when this skill is used in a game and why.

Without doubt, the parent has the most influence on a player's life. As the coach you want this influence to be positive and supportive of the player's learning journey. One way of tapping into this, is to set parents some football homework that is specific to their child. Knowing that one player may need to work on his ability to track runners, I would ask the parent to make a

note of how many times his son successfully tracked his runner, including the number of total attempts. This could be done over a few weeks. It offers evidence to support any assessment I make on the player's progress and develops a specific conversation on the way home between the player and parent geared around the player's learning. It is also another example of how to make a player feel special, which is the key to getting buy-in from a player. Players will be more inclined to do homework if they feel you care and there is a long-term benefit in them doing so. This is particularly relevant when working with young players.

Naturally, players seek validation on how well they are doing. Some need this from the coach, others only need it from themselves. In order to make sure validation is achieved, you need to make an effort to understand the individual and show you care. Once this is achieved, the player will always buy into what you want from them.

Find out who that 'significant other' is in a player's life. It may not be a parent, it may be their friend or mentor, or a loved one. Whoever it is, ask them to help and more often than not they will. Often the importance of how a coach phrases his sentences is neglected in coach education, and yet is a fine detail which we need to facilitate and maintain player learning. Once a coach has started on his coach education journey, he is immediately experimenting with the skill of how to improve feedback to players. One way to improve feedback is through purposeful

language. What is this? It is language that has a specific aim: to meet the need of the individual and how they learn!

Often I see coaches give feedback to players, irrespective of their preferred learning style. (In fact, I have fallen into this trap, before). When working with an Under-14 player, in particular, I would stop the player to demonstrate the situation to him. I soon realised that this player did not respond well to being stopped as he felt he had made a mistake.

It was only when I asked myself “What is this player’s individual learning style?” that I decided not to stop him during an activity. Instead, as the game or practice went on, I simply stood next to him and asked him a question about what I had seen. This made a massive difference as the questions/feedback I offered related to the game-calls we used; the player listened to what I asked rather than ignoring it.

Purposeful language goes even further. The coach who is focussed on improving learning needs to use specific phrases and ways of saying phrases in line with the preferred learning style of a player. When supporting players through game-calls, find out what their preferred learning style is. In other words, do they prefer to learn by seeing the action (Visual), do they prefer to feel and experience the action by doing it (Kinaesthetic), or do they learn better by listening and being asked a question (Auditory)? Some players will prefer to see words written down so that they

can read and reflect upon themes, or even write the words themselves.

Depending on the context of learning, each player will prefer to learn in any of these ways, hence the reason for using the word “preferred” and not setting a learning style. This is vital when intervening with players as you need to know in what situations they prefer to be asked a question rather than shown (or told).

We will end this chapter by giving the last word to J.J. Adams in his Province newspaper story (part of) published in the summer of 2018. The headline said, “A red tide of young talent bodes well for the future of Canadian soccer.” I think if Canada is going to get to the World Cup again on the men’s side, they’re going to need a bigger pool of players,” said Tony Waiters, who directed the 1986 World Cup squad. “When I came in 1977 with the old Whitecaps, we could have put a team on the field then in the NASL of all Canadians ... and we would have been competitive. The problem today is those players aren’t as plentiful.”

The current Whitecaps (in the middle of the 2018 season) have four players who have been capped for Canada at the senior level, Marcel De Jong (55), Russell Teibert (20), Doneil Henry (22) and Alphonso Davies (6).

One factor holding back Canadian soccer is the lack of a true domestic league. Almost every team that has qualified for

the World Cup has a league where homegrown players can be developed close to home. Playing overseas is an option for Canucks, but they can't just be as good as the next man up — they have to be better.

The impending launch of the newly formed Canadian Premier League has promised to fill that void. “We’ve had a combination of vets and inexperienced players — there’s never been a middle group,” said Henry, who began his pro career with Toronto FC in MLS before heading overseas to Cyprus and then England with West Ham and Blackburn. “We have the Canadian league coming in, so the right steps are being made. Players will be able to play on a weekly basis. And I think that was a big problem. We had good players, but they weren’t playing at their clubs. “I think we have the quality, and finally have the right players and the right coaches. It’s a great time to be a Canadian football player.”

John Herdman was named head coach of the men’s program in January, the eleventh man to hold the position since Lenarduzzi in 1998. That includes Colin Miller, Tony Fonseca and Michael Findlay swapping interim tags in a three-year span, and Octavio Zambrano lasting less than a year before he was fired and Herdman took over.

There has been little continuity in the coaching ranks on the men’s side — the women won two Olympic bronze medals

and gold at the 2011 Pan Am Games in Herdman's seven years coaching them — and players are hoping he can bring both. "It's not about skill; it's a tactical game," said Henry. "You've seen it — a lot of upsets are happening at the 2018 World Cup - why - because guys are defending patiently, and taking their chances well. "I think now, the coach definitely knows what he's talking about. He seems like a really knowledgeable man, and he's had success with the women, so I'm sure he can transition the men and get us on track."

And it's not just the top-level coaching that needs to change. Iceland has established the blueprint for international success for smaller countries. With a population of around 335,000 — Metro Vancouver is 2.463 million, by comparison — the tiny island nation made the finals of the 2016 Euros and qualified for this year's World Cup. The North American youth coaching model is heavily weighted toward a pay-to-play model, with a hugely inconsistent coaching climate. In Iceland, a coach must have a UEFA 'B' licence — one step below the pro level, to coach four-year-olds. They have more than four-hundred with B licences, a ratio of one per 825 people. By comparison, the number in England is one per 11,000.

"The biggest difference from being here and being in Europe is that they do the simple things perfectly. A lot of times, you see younger players trying to do too much, and they over-complicate the game," said Henry. "My biggest problem growing

up, and especially when I was on TFC, was I wanted to wow people.

“I was relying on my athletic attributes more than I was thinking about the game. I’m playing the mental game now. Football is beautiful once you really understand it.” Hockey is king in Canada. But outside of North America, it’s almost an afterthought. Of the one-hundred athletes on the list of most popular athletes in the world, none play hockey. There are cricketers, snowboarders and swimmers in the top twenty, and, of course, three of the top four athletes are soccer players. “You see the passion. You see the fans watching, and how absorbed and how taken they can get by the game of soccer,” Teibert said, referencing the broadcasts of fans at the World Cup.

He’d like to see it here in 2026 when Canada will host the World Cup along with the United States and Mexico. “Hockey is religion in Canada. It’s a fact. You’re born with it. I was born with it. I had a backyard rink. I played the sport growing up. I love the sport,” said the Niagara Falls, Ont., native. “Soccer isn’t there yet. Fast-forward eight years, and who knows? The World Cup (in 2026) could do things for soccer in this country that we’ve never seen before. It could change the culture of soccer in this country. It’s exciting.”

Chapter Fourteen

The World of Canadian Soccer

The governing body of soccer in Canada is the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA), which oversees the system (Canadian soccer league system) and Domestic Cups which includes the Canadian Championship or Voyageurs Cup but does not operate any of its component leagues. For pragmatic reasons top tier professional Canadian teams are often affiliates of leagues that are based primarily south of the forty-ninth.

Marketing and relegation tie-ins does not fully occur between any league levels and Canada does not have a fully professional national league (yet), though the Canadian Soccer Association has given approval for the Canadian Premier League to begin play, in 2019 (see separate chapter on this new league). Canadian Division I clubs, as well as selected Division II and Division III clubs, compete in the Canadian Championship for the Voyageurs Cup, which is the country's national championship

trophy for professional teams and which earns the winner the right to play in the CONCACAF Champions League.

Previously the CSA authorized the second version of the Canadian Soccer League (CSL) as Division 3; it is set up as a semi-professional league in Canada. The CSL has wanted to become the largest national domestic league. It has, however, always been a league based in southern Ontario, often with one team in Quebec and occasional teams in Ottawa. It was the highest level domestic league below the Canadian teams competing in American leagues from 2010/13. The CSL removed itself from CSA sanctioning for the 2014 season.

During the mid-1960s, there were four major leagues across Canada including the Eastern Canada Professional Soccer League (1961 to 1967). From west to east, the other major leagues were the Pacific Coast Soccer League (British Columbia), the Western Canada Soccer League (Alberta, Saskatchewan and eventually Manitoba and British Columbia), and the National Soccer League (Ontario/Quebec). In 1968, Canadian soccer turned its attention to the cross-nation North American Soccer League that initially featured professional teams in Vancouver and Toronto. Over the next fifteen years, the professional league also featured teams in Calgary, Edmonton, and Montreal.

After the collapse of the original North American Soccer League, and Canada's participation in the 1986 FIFA World Cup

the original Canadian Soccer League started operations as a nationally based CSA sanctioned Division 1 league. When the original CSL folded in 1993, three Canadian teams moved to the American Professional Soccer League (APSL) where several had played preseason games and competed in post season tournaments. When Major League Soccer (MLS) won the USSF's competition for USA Division 1 status in 1993, the APSL lost stature and teams in several markets as well as in MLS markets in Denver, Los Angeles, and New York when MLS started three years later. Canadian teams continued to participate in the APSL and subsequently with the United Soccer Leagues merger in the A League - USL-1. FIFA did not allow the USA Division 1 sanctioned league to include foreign teams which was why the APSL was never officially recognized as Division 1 before MLS.

Soccer in the United States made great gains after their 2002 FIFA World Cup quarterfinal appearance. By the 2008, the US (and by extension Canadian) soccer landscape was changing with competitors to the United Soccer Leagues arising such as the U.S. Soccer Development Academy starting in 2007 or strengthening such as the resurgence of Major League Soccer. Stronger USL-1 sides became frustrated by what they perceived as lack of ambition and a restrictive structure of the United Soccer Leagues. With the introduction of designated players, Soccer United Marketing, expansion of MLS in 2005, and larger attendances in Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup games versus MLS

sides, the stronger USL-1 sides became less competitive with MLS sides on and off the MLS looked field.

Toronto FC joined MLS for the 2007 season, whereas the Toronto Lynx left the USL-1 and began playing in the amateur-only USL Premier Development League (PDL). Frustration eventually resulted in the USSF Division 2 Professional League in 2010 and a new league, the North American Soccer League. As part of the changing soccer landscape, two long time USL-1 Canadian clubs purchased franchises in MLS: Vancouver Whitecaps FC joined in 2011 and the Montreal Impact joined in 2012. None of the other original CSL teams did not join the APSL rather they joined the National Soccer League based in southern Ontario. The National Soccer League renamed itself the Canadian National Soccer League (CNSL) with the addition of an out of province team. The CNSL had four teams found the second league named the Canadian Professional Soccer League (1998-2006) or CPSL with four other new teams. In 2006, the CPSL teams restarted in a new league, the second Canadian Soccer League (CSL). This second version of the CSL was initially sanctioned the Ontario Soccer Association and later by the Canadian Soccer Association in 2009. Following a match fixing scandal the league was then de-sanctioned and continues to operate as a member of the Soccer Federation of Canada (SFC) that is not associated with any international body.

Under Division Two, the soccer competitions in Canada are mostly regionally-based due to its large geography and dispersed pockets of population. There are two Division 3 Canadian-based semi-professional leagues, League1 Ontario (L1O) and the Première Ligue de soccer du Québec (PLSQ), centred in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec respectively.

The Thunder Bay Chill competes alongside WSA Winnipeg in the Heartland Division of the U23 Premier Development League (PDL), a U.S.-based league. Calgary Foothills FC, Victoria Highlanders and TSS FC Rovers compete in the PDL's Northwest Division. On November 18, 2015, four Ontario teams (including FC London, who then moved to L1O) were given notice by the Ontario Soccer Association that they would no longer be permitted to participate in the PDL starting in 2017.

There are twelve provincial soccer associations in Canada with a number of leagues organized as amateur competitions at adult and/or youth levels. Typically there are promotion and relegation plus league and cup competitions in each provincial region culminating in the National Challenge Trophy.

For the top two levels on its pyramid structure, Canadian-based teams play in USSF sanctioned leagues. Toronto FC, Vancouver Whitecaps FC and Montreal Impact play in Division 1 Major League Soccer (MLS), while Ottawa Fury FC plays in Division

2 USL Championship. There is no promotion or relegation between the leagues.

In February 2010, the Canadian Soccer League was granted full membership by the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA) and sanctioned as a semi-professional league. Sitting behind MLS and the NASL, the CSL operated as one of the Division 3 leagues within the Canadian pyramid. However, following the release of a development study and subsequent change in CSA policy for the future growth and development of regional leagues, also coinciding with match fixing allegations in 2012, the CSL was de-sanctioned by the CSA in 2013 and would not be considered a CSA sanctioned semi-pro league for the 2014 season.

The Première Ligue de soccer du Québec (PLSQ) was founded as a semi-pro league in 2012, as a Division 3 league, with five teams and plays May to September. In 2013 the league expanded by two teams and will stream all games over the internet.

The Canadian Championship competition, established in 2008 to determine the Canadian representative at the CONCACAF Champions League (CCL), awards the national trophy, the fan-created Voyageurs Cup. The CCL is the region's largest club tournament qualifying a club to the FIFA Club World Cup. Currently, the Canadian Soccer Association has limited the Canadian Championship to the country's four professional clubs at

the Division 1 and 2 levels and the winners of the two Division 3 leagues.

The United Soccer Leagues (USL) manages several leagues, including the amateur USL Premier Development League (PDL). The PDL is sanctioned and administered under the USASA, along with the National Premier Soccer League (NPSL). Both leagues are considered Division 4 in the American league system, although only the PDL featured Canadian clubs in competition. Both leagues are effectively a short twelve week season for post-secondary players following their collegiate commitments.

At level 4 there are various amateur provincial leagues that are sanctioned under their individual provincial or territorial associations. This includes such leagues as the Pacific Coast Soccer League, Vancouver Island Soccer League, Vancouver Metro Soccer League, Fraser Valley Soccer League, Alberta Major Soccer League, Saskatchewan Premier Soccer League, Manitoba Major Soccer League, Ontario Soccer League, Ligue de Soccer Elite Quebec, Nova Scotia Soccer League, and New Brunswick Premier Senior Soccer League. This collection of leagues across the country collectively competes for the Challenge Trophy.

In order to limit the Americanization of all of Canada's professional soccer clubs, the CSA issued a moratorium on the sanctioning of any new Division 2, 3, or 4 teams on November 15, 2010, with the ban set to last until September 30, 2011. Despite

the moratorium, the NASL announced that Ottawa had been awarded a franchise on June 20, 2011.

In 2013, following the release of "The Easton Report", the CSA set out to create a Division 3 semi-pro structure divided by region, similar to the major junior hockey leagues in Canada, with regional champions competing in a national tournament. In November 2013, the Ontario Soccer Association (OSA) announced plans to sanction League1 Ontario as part of this new structure.

The women's game in Canada also has promotion and relegation only in amateur leagues that culminate in the Jubilee Shield. It functions like a pyramid at the amateur levels. Other U.S.-based leagues with Canadian players and Canadian teams could be considered part of the women's league system.

Ten Canadian Women's National Team (CWNT) players are paid by the CSA and other federal government athlete funding programs to play in the U.S. league, the National Women's Soccer League, when they are not in national team camps. (Similarly, twenty-four USWNT members and twelve Mexico national team members are paid by their respective federations to play in the league.) Unsubsidized Canadian players can also play in the league as part of the international quota while others play in Europe. Canadian players play in the NWSL although all franchises are located in the U.S.; there are no Canadian franchises in this U.S. league. Financial remuneration varies in the NWSL; the four-

month-long league is new as of 2013 and salaries for unsubsidized players are not high enough to support them without other outside income. Various women's leagues operate throughout North America below the NWSL in a pro-am setup. As with the men's system, there is often no formal association between leagues. Three of these leagues contain Canadian teams; League1 Ontario has twelve Canadian teams and is the only one of these leagues based in Canada, while United Women's Soccer and the Women's Premier Soccer League have two Canadian team each (Calgary Foothills WFC and the North Shore Girls Soccer Club - TSS FC Rovers, respectively).

There are provincial competitions run by each of the provincial soccer associations to qualify an amateur team for the national championship, the Jubilee Shield. Some of these are leagues and others cup competitions. Many other primarily adult amateur leagues, some with eight month seasons, also culminate in the Jubilee Shield. There are indoor (March) and outdoor (September) national championships.

This chapter used many, many archives, newspaper articles, soccer web-sites and Wikipedia



Female athletes who currently play or played for Canada.

Chapter Fifteen

Women's National Teams Are Good

Canada Soccer's Women's National Team competes in both the FIFA Women's World Cup™ and Women's Olympic Football Tournament in a four-year cycle and their head coach is Kenneth Heiner-Møller a former Danish soccer manager. The Canadian team is overseen by the Canadian Soccer Association and competes in the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football (CONCACAF).

In 2003 the team reached international prominence at the FIFA Women's World Cup, losing in the third place match to the United States and then Canada qualified for its first Olympic women's soccer tournament in 2008, making it to the quarterfinals. The women's team are two-time CONCACAF Women's Gold Cup champions and two-time Olympic bronze medalists. In London 2012 they defeated France 1 to 0 in Coventry and in Rio de Janeiro 2016, where they defeated hosts Brazil 2 to 1 in São Paulo. Canada has participated in six consecutive editions of the FIFA

Women's World Cup (1995 to 2015) and three consecutive editions of the Women's Olympic Football Tournament (2008 to 2016). At Rio 2016, Canada Soccer's Women's National Team was the first Canadian Olympic team to win back-to-back medals at a summer Olympic Games in more than a century.



*Former Canadian National soccer star Kaylyn Kyle was once voted one of the 'hottest' soccer girls in the world. She now works as a first-rate analyst for TSN.
(Photo courtesy of rantsports.com)*

A certain segment of the Canadian women's soccer fans are closely linked to the U-20 team (U-19 prior to 2006), partly due to Canada hosting the inaugural FIFA U-19 Women's World Championship in 2002, a tournament in which the team won silver in front of 47,784 fans at Commonwealth Stadium in

Edmonton, Alberta. Canada also hosted the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup, where they were eliminated in the quarterfinals by England. Canada set the tournament and team record for attendance in the process, with 1,353,506 and 54,027 respectively.

Canada's under seventeen (U-17) women's national soccer team is a youth soccer team operated under the Canadian Soccer Association. Its primary role is the development of players in preparation for the senior national team. The team's most recent major tournament was the 2018 CONCACAF Women's U-17 Championship, which was postponed after Canada had played, dropping their quarterfinal game to North Korea. Canada placed third and qualified for the 2018 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup. At the 2008 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, Canada advanced out of group stage where they were defeated by Germany in the quarterfinals. Canada won the 2010 CONCACAF Women's U-17 Championship after beating Mexico in the final, but were eliminated at group stage of the 2010 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup. At the 2012 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, Canada matched their best results.

Former Canada fullback Rhian Wilkinson took on another step on her young coaching career in November (2018) at the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Uruguay. The thirty-six year-old native of Baie-D'Urfé, Que., who now calls North Vancouver home, is seen as a future Canadian women's national coach. She

was on Bev Priestman's coaching staff at the CONCACAF Women's Under-17 Championship, where Canada finished third to book its ticket to the World Cup. But Priestman subsequently left the Canadian Soccer Association to become an assistant coach with the English women's team, with Wilkinson taking over the team for the sixteen team Uruguay tournament that ran from November 13 to December 1st.

Canada opened Group D play against Colombia on Nov. 14 in Montevideo's Estadio Charrua before taking on South Korea on Nov. 17 and Spain on Nov. 21. It was a tough group, with Spain having done well recently in the age group. Altitude was expected to be a factor. The twenty-one player Canadian roster features four players who have already been called up by the senior side: Jordyn Huitema, Jayde Riviere, Maya Antoine and Ariel Young. Huitema is a regular while the other three have been called into different camps.

As the year (2018) came to a close Canada's U-17 could not close the deal. They were victimized by two early goals and had to settle for fourth place after a 2 to 1 loss to New Zealand on Saturday. The Canadian women found themselves down just fifteen seconds after the opening kickoff with New Zealand's Grace Wisnewski erasing the tournament record of twenty-two seconds for fastest goal. Wisnewski also scored in the thirteenth minute. Lara Kazandjian threw Canada a lifeline with a sweet left-

footed strike from outside the penalty box after New Zealand failed to clear its lines.

Canada kept pressing for the equalizer but New Zealand held tight through five minutes of extra time. Still the fourth-place finish was Canada's best ever at the U-17 world championship. Canada's previous best was seventh in 2008 and 2012. And it ranks as Canada's second-best showing at a FIFA championship, matching the fourth place that U-17 coach Rhian Wilkinson was part of as a player at the 2003 Women's World Cup.

The only Canadian team to do better (male or female) is the 2002 squad, featuring a nineteen year-old Christine Sinclair that finished runner-up to the U.S. at the U-19 Women's World Championship on Canadian soil. "Sometimes the games don't go your way and we lost a heartbreaker today," said Wilkinson. "But they pushed, they gave everything they had. I'm extremely proud of them today."

New Zealand also finished a record high, having previously never made it past the U-17 group phase. Marie-Soleil Beaudoin becomes the first Canadian to referee a U-17 Women's World Cup final and the third to take charge of a FIFA competition final after Sonia Denoncourt and Carol Ann Chenard.

Canada had sixty-two per cent of the possession and outshot New Zealand twenty-two to nine but only had a three to two edge in shots on target. The Canadians had ten corners to

New Zealand's two. "Possession is a stat. It doesn't tell the story," said Wilkinson. "They'll hurt tonight but they should be very proud of themselves," she added.

Disaster struck just five passes from the opening kickoff when Canadian defender Maya Antoine, looking to escape the New Zealand press, sent a back pass from within the penalty box to goalkeeper Anna Karpenko. Karpenko's first touch was a little heavy, allowing striker Maggie Jenkins to challenge. The ball squibbed away to Grace Wisnewski who beat a desperate lunging challenge from Jade Rose to knock the ball in from point-blank range. Karpenko buried her face in her hands.

Canada captain Jordyn Huitema was dangerous on the ball but had little support early. She had a chance in the twenty-second minute but Leat came off her line and beat her to a bouncing ball sent in from distance. The Canadian women lost 1 to 0 to Mexico in the semifinals after beating Germany 1 to 0 in the quarters. They advanced to the knockout rounds after beating Colombia 3-0 and South Korea 2 to 0 and losing 5 to 0 to Spain.

The draw for the 2019 Women's World Cup in France was held at the end of 2018 in Paris. Canada, ranked fifth in the world, was placed in Group E along with Cameroon, New Zealand, and the Netherlands. The Canadians will play their first group game against Cameroon on June 10 at Stade de la Mosson in Montpellier. They will then travel to Stade des Alpes in Grenoble

to face New Zealand on June 15. Canada plays its last group game on June 20 against the Netherlands at Stade Auguste-Delaune in Reims. The top two teams in each group will advance to the knockout round, along with the four best third-placed teams.

Canada has qualified for every Woman's World Cup except the inaugural event in 1991, and has made it past the group stage twice in six previous tournaments. The best result for the Canadians came in 2003, when they finished in fourth place. In the 2015 Women's World Cup held in Canada, the host nation placed sixth after losing to England in the quarter-finals.

This will be Captain Christine Sinclair's fifth Women's World Cup. She is one of nine players to have scored in four different World Cup tournaments, recording nine goals in seventeen matches.

*Thanks to Wikipedia, Canadian Press, TSN's Meaghan Johnson and The Star for
some of this information*

Chapter Sixteen

E-Sports-not your Father's Soccer

E-sports in North American football has grown into a way of life for millennials and now the world of soccer is joining this craze. According to Wikipedia, e-sports (also known as electronic sports or eSports) is a form of competition using video games. Most commonly, esports takes the form of organized, multiplayer video game competitions, particularly between professional players. Although organized online and offline competitions have long been a part of video game culture, these were largely between amateurs until the late 2000s, when participation by professional gamers and spectatorship in these events through live streaming saw a large surge in popularity. By the 2010s, esports was a significant factor in the video game industry, with many game developers actively designing toward a professional esports subculture.

The most common video game genres associated with esports are real-time strategy (RTS), first-person shooter (FPS),

fighting and multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA). Popular games for esports include *League of Legends*, *Dota 2*, *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive*, *Call of Duty*, *Hearthstone*, *Overwatch*, Tom Clancy's *Rainbow Six Siege*, *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds*, *Fortnite Battle Royale*, and *StarCraft II*. Tournaments such as the *League of Legends World Championship*, *Dota 2's The International*, the fighting games-specific *Evolution Championship Series*, and the *Intel Extreme Masters* provide live broadcasts of the competition and prize money to competitors.

Many competitions use a series of promotion and relegation play with sponsored teams, such as the *League of Legends World Championship*, but more recently, competitions structured similar to American professional sports, with salaried players and regular season and play-off series, have emerged, such as the *Overwatch League*. The legitimacy of esports as a sports competition remains in question; however, esports has been featured alongside traditional sports in multinational events, and the *International Olympic Committee* has explored incorporating them into future Olympic events.

By 2019, it is estimated that 427 million people worldwide will be watching some form of esports. The increasing availability of online streaming media platforms, particularly *Panda.tv*, *YouTube* and *Twitch.tv*, has become central to the growth and promotion of esports competitions. Demographically, *Major League Gaming* has reported viewership that is approximately

eighty-five per-cent male and fifteen per-cent female, with a majority of viewers between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four. Despite this, several female personalities within esports are hopeful about the increasing presence of female gamers. South Korea has several established esports organizations, which have licensed pro gamers since the year 2000. Recognition of esports competitions outside of South Korea has come somewhat slower. Along with South Korea, most competitions take place in Europe, North America and China. Despite its large video game market, esports in Japan is relatively underdeveloped, and this has been attributed largely to its broad anti-gambling laws which prohibit paid professional gaming tournaments.

The global esports market generated US\$325 million of revenue in 2015 and was expected to make \$493 million in 2016. The global esports audience in 2015 was 226 million people. According to a Newzoo report in April 2017, forty-two per-cent of the gaming market belongs to the mobile industry, and mobile is projected to claim more than fifty percent the market by 2020. The esports industry is expanding beyond PC and console, as developer Super Evil Megacorp created Vainglory, the first mobile multiplayer online battle arena game, and companies like Skillz bring esports tournaments to mobile games.

Regarding e-sports, a press release sent out in fall of 2018 stated, Montreal Esports Academy (MEA) announces with an immense enthusiasm the launch of the very first one hundred

per-cent Esports-Studies Program in Canada. Our program operates under a formula equivalent to the various traditional Sports-études programs already offered in Quebec. This program, launched in collaboration with the Édouard-Montpetit High School of la Commissions scolaire de Montréal, is a major step forward for the growth of e-sports in Quebec and Canada.

Such a program has the same benefits for participants as traditional sports programs. Improvement of physical and psychological health, socialization, reinforcement of the sense of belonging (team spirit), increase of self-motivation and reduction of school dropping, to name only these. Coaching and education are great ways to prevent cyber-addiction and cyberbullying. Our program promotes a healthy and structured video game practice.

The program will be officially presented at the Édouard-Montpetit High School Open House (French only), on Sunday, September 30, 2018. We invite you to attend in large numbers! At the event, we will open the first registrations for 2019 which will allow us to probe the interest and adjust the number of groups accordingly. Our program will begin in September 2019.

Our program is built on the acquisition of sustainable skills and applicable to other areas. Students will go to their regular school in the morning and travel to the MEA for e-learning in the afternoons. Thirty-six weeks – five days a week – four hours a day; and one flexible day per week for study or play

Distribution of daily time (approximate)

- 30 minutes of physical activity
- 75 minutes of theory
- 120 minutes of play
- 15 minutes break

Our program is the first in Canada to offer instruction focused on the healthy practice of video games and to do so in a formula equivalent to the various traditional Sport-études programs. It is therefore through our unique approach that we can differentiate ourselves from e-sport concentration programs or other similar programs. In addition, our program is one hundred per-cent e-sports and does not include programming, art or other. It is important to note that our program is not a *Sport-études* program. The fact that e-sports are not recognized as a sport in our province is blocking access to all government programs such as Sport-Studies. (End of press release)

FIFA e-World Cup, formerly known as the FIFA Interactive World Cup (FIWC), is an eSports tournament held by FIFA and its presenting partner EA Sports. Each tournament has players competing in games of the latest incarnation of the FIFA video game series. The open qualifying format allows millions to compete in the initial online stages, which has resulted in the FIWC being recognized as the largest online eSports game by

Guinness World Records. The most recent champion is Mosaad "Msdossary" Aldossary of Saudi Arabia.

The inaugural FIWC took place in 2004 in Switzerland, over the years the tournament has grown significantly. In 2010, the FIWC first appeared in the Guinness World Records but it was not until 2013 that the competition saw the current record of more than 2.5 million players signing up.

On October 1, 2015, the FIWC 16 kicked off, marking the 12th edition of the tournament. For the first time in the history of the competition Xbox One and four players competed against each other. With the integration of the new consoles the number of participants increased significantly, compared to previous years when the FIWC was only available on PlayStation 3. Over two million players attempted to qualify for the Grand Final in New York City. On March 22, 2016, Mohamad Al-Bacha from Denmark won the FIWC title in the Apollo Theater, beating Sean Allen from England in the final match.

In 2018, the FIFA Interactive World Cup (FIWC) was renamed to the FIFA e-World Cup (FeWC). The 2018 Grand Finals was held from August 2, 2018 through August 4, 2018 in the O2 Arena in London, England. Thirty-two finalists (16 on PlayStation 4 and 16 on Xbox One) competed in the group stage and round of 16 on August 2, 2018, with the second leg of the round of sixteen

and the quarterfinals taking place on August 3, 2018. The semifinals and final took place on August 4, 2018.

The FeWC online qualification takes place on PlayStation and Xbox Networks, and can be accessed through the latest version of EA Sports FIFA on Xbox One and PS4. The players qualify via the console playoffs where the top 16 players make it through to the e-World Cup finals. Players can also qualify for the FeWC by competing in one of the FIFA Global Series tournaments throughout the season, with the top sixteen at the last event automatically qualifying for the FeWC.

Thirty-two players compete at the Grand Finals of the FeWC. The participants are divided into four groups (two for each console) with the top sixteen players moving on to the knockout stage. While Group Stage, Round of 16, Quarter-finals and Semi-finals are played on one console (Xbox One or PS4), the Final is a two-leg match with one game on each console. The Grand Final is a multi-day event with draw and competition being broken up into three days. The winner is crowned in a live show at the end of the event.

In 2016, the FIFA Interactive World Cup World Ranking was introduced to help seed the players in the tournament according to their previous results. The ranking takes into account both the qualification phase for the current edition and previous FIWC Grand Finals. FIFA Interactive World Ranking explained

The FeWC 2018 champion received \$250,000 in prize money and a ticket to the Best FIFA Awards where he has the chance to meet the greatest of the real football world. FIWC 2015 Champion Abdulaziz Alshehri from Saudi Arabia was able to meet Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi among many others, while 2016 champion Mohammad Al-Bacha talked it up with Marcelo Vieira and Manuel Neuer.

The runner-up of the 2018 FeWC Grand Final receives \$50,000 in prize money. The FeWC Grand Finals is streamed live on YouTube and Twitch. For the first time, the Final Showdown of the FIWC16 was also broadcast on TV. The broadcast was shown in more than 100 countries around the world. Fox Sports 1 showed the Final live in the United States. The show was moderated by host Kay Murray. Former US footballer Alexi Lalas and Spencer Carmichael-Brown (Spencer FC) analyzed the matches with Leigh Smith and John Strong commentators for the games. The trophy was handed over by former Spanish International David Villa.

The ePremier League (ePL) is an arrangement between the league (England) and its official gaming partner EA Sports and launched this past January (2019) with a series of online qualifiers to determine who will advance to the next stage. This means any player with a copy of the EA Sports FIFA 19 video game and a PlayStation 4 or Xbox One console can enter the competition, provided they are registered and are sixteen or older. All twenty

clubs will have a live playoff round, allowing the best player from each console to compete for the chance to represent their team at a live final in London at the end of March.

And it is not just the rest of the world who are embracing e-sports, it's happening in Canada also with Toronto and Vancouver are home to an esports Overwatch League franchise.

The Overwatch League, which just completed its first full season, bills itself as the world's premier pro esports league that has teams in the United States, England, South Korea, China and now Canada. Overwatch is a first-person-shooter video game, played in teams, that has claimed to have more than forty million players worldwide. Chris Overholt, who stepped down suddenly on Wednesday from his position as CEO of the Canadian Olympic Committee, has been named the Toronto team's first president and CEO. Vancouver's team is controlled by the owners of the NHL's Canucks who purchased a franchise and are calling them "Vancouver Titans".

Just a little over two months ago, Philip Balke was at BMO Field, watching Toronto FC cap off its historic 2017 season with an MLS Cup victory over the Seattle Sounders. Now he's suiting up for his hometown team as the club's first-ever esports athlete. "There's no other feeling like representing your city," Balke told Sportsnet over the phone. A twenty-three year-old currently attending York University, Balke's story is not unlike many

Canadian athletes. He grew up in Iraq but immigrated to Canada and the Toronto area in the early 2000s when he was ten. Soccer was always a big part of Balke's life, always playing it one way or the other as he grew up.

Balke was a skilled footballer on the path to reaching the professional level. He played in League 1 Ontario, a semi-pro league that would rank just behind the United Soccer League, in which Toronto FC II plays, in terms of competition level. However, Balke broke his ankle playing a couple years ago and was forced to re-evaluate his future career goals.

Luckily, he always did have a pretty good backup plan. "I played in League 1 Ontario two years ago before breaking my ankle so that kind of set me back," Balke said. "So after that I really picked up a huge hobby for [EA Sports FIFA] and I really got into it. All of my friends were saying, 'Hey man, you should start playing competitive FIFA.' So I said, 'OK,' and last year was really my breakout year." Breakout year is putting it lightly.

"Phil sort of put Canada on the map in terms of FIFA last year," MLSE Esports manager Shane Talbot said. "He came from obscurity into the limelight by [drawing] a tournament favourite at the FIFA Interactive World Cup, a guy named 'Tass.' It was unexpected and he ended up going on to finish in the top four in that event.

On Canada's West Coast the Vancouver Whitecaps FC were one of nineteen Major League Soccer clubs to be represented at the first-ever eMLS Cup in 2018. The eMLS Cup is a tournament featuring some of the best FIFA eighteen gamers in North America. Each of the participating MLS teams has selected an eSports athlete to represent them in the tournament. Competitors will select their squad of eleven starting players, seven bench players, and five reserve players. But there are a few tailored rules for the MLS gamers to abide by. Each gamer must have at least three MLS players on the field at all times, including at least two from the MLS club they represent.

The 'Caps went on to sign Erfan Hosseini as the club's first official eMLS representative. Hosseini, who goes by Skill Shack, was the winner of the Whitecaps FC FIFA 17 Tournament last August at the Sport Chek store at Metro town in Burnaby, BC. The seventeen year-old, who will be the youngest eSports athlete at the tournament, was also recommended by renowned FIFA eSports analyst and commentator ChuBoi. "I obviously want to win the eMLS Cup. I hope I can win it for the 'Caps. It's going to be tough, but I know my abilities," said Hosseini. "I know I can do it. I expect myself to win."

According to Redbull.com, FIFA should be one of the biggest eSports games on the planet, up there with the likes of League of Legends, Dota 2 and CS:GO. Last year, FIFA 16 registered a user base of more than sixteen million, and when you

consider that Ultimate Team fans spend cash on in-game pack purchases, EA's football franchise makes a lot of money.

People love watching it, too – the likes of Wroetoshaw, Miniminter and Castro1021 have spent years entertaining their millions of YouTube subscribers with their comedic pack-opening reaction videos or compiling the ultimate FUT Draft. However, while it's one of the biggest games in the world, it hasn't been one of the biggest eSports. Certainly when you compare prize pools for the biggest events, FIFA's has been dwarfed by the big MOBAs like DOTA. For example, the winners of last year's International received \$9.1m, while Mohamad Al-Bacha won \$20,000 for his FIFA Interactive World Cup victory.

Are things changing though? This weekends (October 2018) FIFA Ultimate Team Championship Final was the biggest tournament in the game's history. Over six million players have competed in the FUT Champions Weekend Leagues since FIFA 17 was released, and now the thirty-two best players in the world are playing for a share of the \$400,000 prize pool. What's more, the event is not only being broadcast on Twitch, YouTube and Facebook, but also BT Sport. There may not be any Premier League action on Saturday, but football fans can watch the world's best FIFA players in the FUT Champions final from 5pm on Saturday.

Is this the start of something big for FIFA? Can EA's football (soccer) game go on to become one of the most popular eSports around?

Many, many sources were used for this chapter including Sportsnet.ca, whitecaps website, Wikipedia and Adam Savage

Chapter Seventeen

Musings and Thoughts

In this chapter this book presents what insiders are saying about the state of soccer along with smaller tid-bits of interesting information and gossip along with gaming and fantasy football/soccer information.

In 2017 Global News commissioned an Ipsos poll regarding the cost of children sports. Nearly a third of respondents who were Gen X parents (between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-four) said they had taken on debt in order to pay for things like dues, fees and equipment. The share of Millennials (between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four) who said the same was smaller, at twenty-six per cent, possibly because these younger parents have kids who aren't old enough yet to independently attend such activities. Only twelve per cent of Baby Boomer parents said they resorted to debt to bankroll their children's extracurricular activities. And surprisingly for a hockey-crazed Canada, it was soccer that came in as number two

(swimming was number one) on the list of most popular activities. Fully one-quarter of parents said they would sign up their little ones for the ball game this fall. By comparison, only fifteen per cent said they planned to have their kids play hockey. Price may have something to do with the newfound popularity of soccer, too. Parents anticipated spending just shy of \$250 to get their kids to kick a ball around a soccer field. By comparison, families expect to pay \$755 on average on hockey, the most expensive of all activities reviewed by the survey.

* * *

A combined North American soccer league between Canada, Mexico and the United States could be the main legacy of the 2026 World Cup hosted by those nations, the president of the Mexican top-flight division Enrique Bonilla said on Wednesday. Although the majority of venues are proposed to be in the U.S., it is Mexican teams who have dominated on the continent, winning all ten editions of the CONCACAF Champions League. Liga MX also remains the most watched soccer league in the U.S. and attracts average crowds of more than 26,500. However, revenues for global TV rights and sponsorship across North America pale in comparison to the top leagues of Europe. Bonilla believes that is something that could be changed with a new combined continental top-flight division.

“It’s a possibility, a North American league. We have to determine how and see the pros and cons but I think that’s a way to grow and to compete again,” Bonilla told reporters at the leaders’ summit at Chelsea’s Stamford Bridge stadium. “If we can make a World Cup then we can make a north American league or a north American cup. The main idea is that we have to grow together to compete.

* * *

Major Arena Soccer League (MASL) is a North American indoor soccer league representing the highest level of professional arena soccer in the world. The MASL features teams across North America, with teams playing coast-to-coast in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The league was organized as the Professional Arena Soccer League on May 18, 2008, as an offshoot of the Premier Arena Soccer League (PASL-Premier), the nation's largest amateur league. The league was originally nicknamed "PASL-Pro" to distinguish it from PASL-Premier.

In 2011, it was announced the professional league would officially be referred to as simply PASL, while the amateur league would still be referred to as the PASL-Premier. On March 17, 2014, one day after the 2013/14 Major Indoor Soccer League Championship finale, United Soccer Leagues President Tim Holt announced "a number" of teams would not be returning to MISL the following year. In April 2014 it was officially announced that

six teams joined PASL for the 2014/15 season. The league announced a change in its name from the Professional Arena Soccer League to the Major Arena Soccer League (MASL) on May 18, 2014. This represents a merging of the MISL and PASL names. MASL fielded twenty-three teams for the 2014/15 season.

In February 2016, the current owner of the Baltimore Blast, Ed Hale, announced his intentions to leave the MASL and form a new league, the Indoor Professional League. Hale was later announced as the chairman of the league, and Sam Fantauzzo, former owner of the Rochester Lancers, was announced as the first commissioner of the league. The St. Louis Ambush, Baltimore Blast, and Harrisburg Heat announced plans to join, along with the expansion Florida Tropics SC. In July 2016, the MASL was reformed as a new not for profit entity, separate from the previous MASL, LLC.

In 2016, the new MASL announced that the Blast, Heat, and Ambush would return to the MASL while the Tropics would join the MASL as an expansion team. This effectively ended the IPL split with the MASL. In October 2017 it was officially announced the Major Arena Soccer League 2 (M2) would launch in December 2017. The M2 serves as the developmental league for the MASL. As would be expected the game of soccer has gained an unprecedented upsurge in terms of popularity worldwide, and more so in Canada thanks to enhanced satellite TV coverage of diverse leagues globally.

When it comes to soccer betting in Canada, most gaming enthusiasts in this country prefer the traditional lottery offered by provincial retailers. However, now more than ever, many Canadian gamers are embracing online wagering that is offered by many sportsbook establishments on the internet. This can largely be attributed to the high odds they offer (you stand to gain thirty per-cent to sixty per-cent more than you would in the lottery). Not forgetting the heightened level of convenience that surrounds making bets from wherever you might be situated.

To make things even better, some of the most reputable sportsbooks facilitate for soccer betting in Canada, which naturally means they can effectively cater for this gaming market's distinct preferences and requirements. For instance, you can effortlessly make your wagering on any soccer team you wish using the Canadian dollar which as most seasoned gamers would appreciate can enable you to save a significant sum of money from the waiver of the usual steep exchange rates that characterize this industry.

Bodog - this iconic firm happens to be one of the oldest and most reputable sportsbook gaming establishments that is geared for the Canadian market. You can rest assured of utmost security of your financial data as Bodog has a one-hundred per-cent clean security record, and its systems have never fallen prey to hacking. This firm's credibility is also solid, and it has never failed to make any payments for more than nineteen years to

date. It supports mobile betting and offers a one hundred per cent signup bonus that can accrue up to one hundred and twenty dollars and other lucrative promos. It retains a 24/7 customer service team that can effectively sort out any of your queries. You can make bets and deposits using the Canadian dollar. Apart from soccer, you can bet on hockey another popular Canadian game on Bodog . Its paying schedules are as follows; three business days for bank transfers, ten business days for cheques and five business days for credit cards.

Pinnacle Sports is a firm that was established in 1998, and is widely acclaimed for its consistency of high paying odds. It is licensed to carry out online gaming by the government of Curacao (a leading provider and regulators of e-gaming services). It has a 24/7 customer care crew waiting to answer your queries. When it comes to security of your payment information, Pinnacle sports utilizes a 128-bit certificate based encryption technology ensuring top security.

You can make mobile betting and deposits using the Canadian dollar. You also get a signup bonus for life among other attractive promos. Its bank transfers are processed within two to five business days and e-cheques within twenty-four hours. Apart from soccer, you can bet on tennis games or football.

Sports Interaction is a Canadian based and regulated sports gaming establishment and is licensed by the Kahnawake

gaming commission. It has set up a 24/7 customer care team who can be invaluable in clearing out any issue that might be bothering you. Sports interaction utilizes Verizon secure socket layer (SSL) encryption, which is undoubtedly one of the most advanced and safest online payment gate-way. It effortlessly caters for mobile wagering, and offers one hundred per-cent signup bonuses that can run up to one hundred and twenty-five dollars plus other attractive promos. You can use the Canadian dollar in making wagers and deposits. Its payment schedule is as follows; cheques sent by mail are processed within five to eight days, while those by special courier are handled in two days. Apart from soccer you can bet on hockey, lacrosse, rugby among plenty other popular games.

Like aforementioned, sportsbook gaming offers a high level of flexibility that the conventional lottery can never provide. To begin with you can easily lay wagers on individual games or if you deem it fit, even parlays. These online soccer betting services in Canada are also noted for their lucrative odds and more to the point, plethora of betting options available. Both in terms of the soccer leagues and competitions you can bet on and how you actually do it. Some of the most popular leagues include the EPL, Bundesliga, Lalage, Dutch Redevise, Portuguese league, Italian Series A and even South American leagues. Not excluding soccer matches in international tournaments held across the globe such as the FIFA world cup currently underway in Brazil. This kind of

soccer betting in Canada offers extremely versatile wagering options that are peculiar to this game.

* * *

Another way to enjoy soccer is to play it online. You no longer have to worry about the weather outside, because you can play a fun game of soccer indoor, with one of many companies' soccer games! Re-enact headshots from real games or become an overhead champion in soccer games! Even play a game of soccer slime or android soccer, both of which feature classic, arcade gameplay. If you like table games, then, look no further as many games have varieties of table soccer action.

Keyboard controls in soccer games are player-friendly and meant to turn you into an all-star in no time! Within minutes, you'll be putting heavy spin on free kicks and dancing around your opponents with ease. Many soccer challenges feature in-game tutorials which will help you learn controls and allow you to practice before playing a real game. But, if you want to just launch into soccer action right away, then go ahead! In most soccer games, a standard keyboard will be all you need to control your players. Yet another source of entertainment, although not as big as North American football or hockey is called fantasy soccer.

Fantasy football known as fantasy soccer in Canada and the United States) is a game in which participants assemble an imaginary team of real life footballers and score points based on those players' actual statistical performance or their perceived

contribution on the field of play. Usually players are selected from one specific division in a particular country, although there are many variations. The original game was created in England by Bernie Donnelly in 1971 and is still going strong fort-seven years later. Fantasy football has evolved in recent years from a simple recreational activity into a significant business due to exposure via the internet.

An emerging variant is club-based fantasy soccer in which participants select players from within their own club. Participating clubs typically have more than one football team and adopt club fantasy football to increase communication and banter between teams. Some clubs charge a nominal amount for players to enter a team and either use the proceeds as a fundraiser or to fund the fantasy league prizes. Club fantasy football leagues tend to be less sophisticated than the national variety since most clubs run them on a spreadsheet. Niche sports websites now offer online versions with both paid and free versions available.

Most fantasy football leagues, especially those run by national newspapers, ask participants to select eleven players within a price budget. There is usually a restriction on the number of players per club; a typical selection would be to select one goalkeeper, four defenders, three or four midfielders and two or three forwards. Some games are squad-based, where participants choose not just a first eleven but also a set of substitutes. In smaller leagues played by a small group of people, players are

bought by bidding between the rival managers rather than for a set amount of money. This means a particular player can only play for one team, and thus any points he accrues are credited to that team only. Typically, most leagues offer the chance to transfer players in and out of the team as the season progresses, in case of injury, suspension or loss of form.

Points are then gained or deducted depending on players' performances. Points systems vary between games but typically, points are awarded for some or all of the following achievements; playing in a match (or part of a match e.g. at least sixty minutes) Scoring a goal, making an assist (the pass or touch leading to the goal), keeping a clean sheet (goalkeepers, midfielders and defenders only, saving a penalty, the goalkeeper saves three shots or more and win of the team. The number of points each achievement or offence is credited with varies between different games, for example in the Daily Telegraph league, three points are awarded for an assist, and five for a goal. Due to the emphasis placed on assists and goal scoring, the value of players can differ greatly from real-life football, both in terms of individuals and position. For example, Claude Makélélé, a world-class central midfield player, was rarely considered a valuable player in fantasy football because he was not an attacking player, as evidenced by three league goals in eight years at Real Madrid and Chelsea, and zero for the French national team in seventy-one appearances.

For this reason some fantasy football games have changed their scoring system to put greater emphasis on real player performance instead of emphasising goals and assists. For instance the game KAISER uses player scores gained by computer analyses based on dozens of different criteria. These scores are supplied by the data provider OPTA.

The game Oulala Fantasy Football uses a sophisticated scoring system. With seventy different points scoring criteria, which includes a matrix of any action that a player can perform, the criteria of seventy rises to a total of two-hundred and seventy-five dependent on each player's position on the field. Detailed actions include corners won, shots on/off target, successful dribbles and provoking an offside as well as many more others. These stats are sourced from Opta Sports and update in real time.

Most fantasy football games provide a choice of joining either private or public leagues. Public leagues are open to everybody and mostly there are leagues for each club or leagues for each country. League members then compete against each other and in some cases there are cash prizes for winning those leagues. Private leagues let the manager play with their friends only. Some games combine this with having unique teams in the leagues. This means that every Premier League player exists only once. As a result, there is a lot of activity on the transfer market where players are exchanged in between the community members.

At the start of the season fantasy soccer leagues can be set up in various ways. For leagues with unique teams, i.e. leagues where every player exists only once, there are at least two different starter options. Option one is a player auction. Every player is auctioned and the manager of a community needs to bid for the players. Managers have a certain budget for the auction. Option two is a player draft. Each manager is allocated a certain number of players.

For leagues without unique teams, i.e. every manager can own every player if he has sufficient funding, there is usually neither a draft nor an auction but managers can pick their players until they have used up their budget. Various fantasy football games with unique teams offer the option of a player auction. At the beginning of the season, players are put on a transfer market and manager can bid for them. Some games even continue this auction system during the season (e.g. kaiser.co.uk). Kaiser also offers the opportunity to take the league to the next season. In this case new leagues can be started throughout the season without making it less interesting.

The draft is an option to jump-start a league. This is especially interesting for leagues that are set up during the season. From day one, managers can line up their team for the next match day and trade players with other community members or using the computer. The draft is a common feature for NFL

fantasy football games and the German Bundesliga. More than one Premier League manager game offers a similar feature.

Another fantasy soccer league came out by ESPN in October of 2018. Their new game lets you compete against your friends or people from around the world in head-to-head fantasy soccer matchups for the Champions League, Premier League, La Liga and Liga MX. Pick your eight-man team and compete in the Champions League, Premier League, La Liga or Liga MX, then go head-to-head in leagues against your friends or people around the world. Sign up for free!

ESPN Fantasy Soccer is free to play, and you can start your league whenever you want -- your season starts when you want it to. So get a league together with friends or join a public league and pick your team today! You'll select a team of eight players from your preferred league and compete in head-to-head matchups every week, then watch as you move past your rivals to the top of the table.

The men's national team will play in Vancouver this spring, their first visit since a World Cup qualifier against El Salvador in 2016. BC Place will host Canada's next CONCACAF Nations League qualifying match against French Guiana on Sunday, March 24 (2019). At stake is a spot in the 2019 Gold Cup, as well as a place in Group A of the 2019/20 CONCACAF Nations League.

“Vancouver has played host to some of the most important matches in Canada Soccer history that were some of the highest attended sporting events in Canadian history,” said Canada Soccer president Steven Reed. “We expect that this critical CONCACAF Nations League match will be no different.”

Vancouver has drawn over 20,000 people for each of the last three visits by the national team, including a crowd of 54,798 to see them take on Mexico in March 2016. Though not a World Cup qualifier this time around, one player on the pitch will be of particular interest to the hometown crowd.

The match will be a homecoming of sorts for Alphonso Davies, who has begun playing with Bayern Munich after his time with the Vancouver Whitecaps. The now eighteen years old, Davies plays an important role for Canada. The men’s national team has had a good run of play of late under new head coach John Herdman. Canada finished 2018 with its first-ever perfect record, albeit in just four matches. Herdman led his team to four wins against New Zealand, US Virgin Islands, Dominica, and St Kitts and Nevis, outscoring teams fifteen to zero along the way. None of those teams are highly ranked, but you have to start from somewhere. Three teenagers, including Davies, started three consecutive competitive matches for the first time in program history.

Our country moved up three spots on the last FIFA world ranking, up to seventy-sixth. Canada is perfect through their first three qualifying matches in Nations League qualifying, but still need a result to advance. “We need to get a result to guarantee our spot in Group A of CONCACAF Nations League, so we are putting all our focus and attention on achieving that outcome,” said Herdman. “As the qualifying round progresses, you are facing nations from higher-seeded pots, so you know the matches will get harder.”

“It is always important to play at home so that our heroes in red shirts are visible to our young fans and supporters,” said Herdman. “For the players coming back into Canada, there is always that extra excitement playing on home soil, they know what it meant to them growing up to see the men’s national team playing in their communities. For us all, there’s no better feeling than seeing your stadium filled with red and hearing your fans singing the national anthem.”

Sources for this chapter include, Erica Alini, Christian Radnedge, Canadianbettingsites.net, Wikipedia, play soccer sites (poki), ESPN, Reuters and Rob Williams of the dailyhive.com

Epilogue

The principal reason for this book, on soccer aka football, is that for more than one-hundred years, there has been a common thread winding through Canadians and their very own brand of soccer. Although at times soccer partially disappeared from the public consensus, for the most part it has been an essential and affirmative part of Canada`s conscience. It has bent but never has it broken and today it is more popular then-ever, both at the grass-roots and pro level.

Soccer in Canada is also moving into a new era, one that interacts using the latest in computer technology. Due to smartphones and tablet`s use of applications, sports media has taken off and has become accessible from almost anywhere at any time. Not only can fans check the scores on different apps such as TSN, Sportsnet, ESPN and sports talk radio shows, but people can use social media apps to find out different scores. These apps give score updates, rosters, game schedules, injury updates, and much more right when it happens. People can get real time results right from their phone. They do not need to be at the game, or right by their television, to see how their favorite

team is doing. Now people can stream games right from their phone.

This type of fast, easy information is very important to sports fans, especially younger ones. As stated in Time magazine, “Enthusiastic fans are eager for updates on their favorite teams and the opportunity to rant about what went wrong in the playoffs or why their coach should be fired”. Many people want to discuss matters about sports, teams and games, and this article shows that with the sports apps, the news can be found at a moment’s notice.

Thanks to the smartphone, a fan no longer has to wait for scores or search the web for information on players. All the information is available at the palm of their hand. Sports apps do not always have to be about giving scores, as some applications include workout helpers, rule books, and even games. The rule books are important, because it spreads the knowledge about the game, and it can get people interested in new games. The games apps are a good way of teaching people how the game is played, and can give players a bigger interest in a specific sport.

Smartphones (and tablets) can not only be used just for scores, they can also help athletes become known and recruited. These days most everything is caught on camera, and that includes great plays made by athletes. Once a video is taken it will be spread through the social media sites in no time. Today, one

can even watch four Saturday soccer games at once on your big screen TV, providing you have the “right box”.

Another interesting piece of news is that FIFA is exploring the possibility of staging the World Cup every two years, rather than every four, the president of South American soccer’s governing body was quoted (story in New York Times by Rory Smith). Alejandro Dominguez, the president of the South American body, Conmebol, submitted the proposal at a FIFA congress in Kigali, Rwanda, in October. Dominguez said Friday that a biennial World Cup would serve as a viable — and even preferable — alternative to the expanded continental championships like UEFA’s Nations League and the Copa América.

Aleksander Ceferin, Dominguez’s counterpart at UEFA, has made clear his desire to incorporate South American teams into Europe’s new Nations League championship at some point. Though Dominguez, a Paraguayan, insisted he was not opposed to that idea, he said that he had encouraged FIFA to examine the benefits of changing the World Cup’s cycle instead.

Any proposed changes to the World Cup, FIFA’s marquee event, are sure to face opposition. A recent expansion of the quadrennial tournament from its current thirty-two teams to forty-eight for the 2026 event provoked fierce opposition before it was approved unanimously in 2017. Sepp Blatter, FIFA’s former

president, floated the idea of a World Cup every two years as early as 1999, but the concept failed to garner support.

But since assuming his post in 2016, FIFA's current president, Gianni Infantino, has been supportive of both new events and major changes to soccer's international calendar, including the World Cup expansion, a so-called mini World Cup of eight teams in off cycles and a multibillion-dollar proposal for an expanded club world championship. Each would produce vital new revenue for FIFA.

Sponsors are far more likely to invest in sports organizations that hold major events every two years rather than every four, something the International Olympic Committee has experienced. In the 1990s it started alternating the Summer and Winter Games every two years. He stressed that a shortened schedule would give more players the opportunity to compete in the World Cup, and the best chance to play in more of them. (Dominguez has championed expanding the 2022 Qatar World Cup to forty-eight teams, a proposal that is also under consideration by FIFA.)

"If we stay with this format, many players could not play more than two," Dominguez said. "So we see an opportunity there. There is a proposal put forward to FIFA to take it over, and say whether it is a global Nations League or whether there is an opportunity to play the World Cup every two years."

Such a move, Dominguez said, also would allow FIFA to alternate the tournament much more easily among its six member confederations. There would be “more solutions,” he said.

* * *

Professional soccer in Canada is broadcast on TSN. The Sports Network acquired the Canadian rights to Major League Soccer in 2011, airing twenty-four matches during the 2011 season that involved the league's Canadian clubs, Toronto FC and Vancouver Whitecaps FC. Its slate expanded to thirty games in 2012 with the debut of the Montreal Impact in the league. TSN's channels broadcast a package of other regular-season games, the MLS All-Star Game, MLS Cup Playoffs and the MLS Cup. In January 2014, TSN announced that it would take over broadcast rights to Whitecaps games beginning in the 2014 Major League Soccer season, under a separate deal. On October 27, 2011, Bell Media and TSN announced that they had secured broadcast rights for FIFA soccer tournaments from 2015 to 2022. The rights include the 2018 FIFA World Cup, 2022 FIFA World Cup, and the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup hosted by Canada. In 2017, TSN reached a five year extension to its Major League Soccer broadcasting rights.

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As 2018 came to a close, Major League Soccer (MLS) announced that it is shortening its season by a month, going to

single-elimination playoffs and scheduling the 2019 MLS Cup final for Nov. 10 in its earliest finish since 2002. The league announced the change Monday and will have an all-knockout post-season in place of a two-leg format for the conference semifinals and finals. MLS had started using a two-leg, total-goals format in 2003.

After then-U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann criticized the league's season as being too short, MLS stretched its schedule into December each year starting in 2012. Klinsmann was fired in November 2016. "The big challenge is for MLS overall, how can they stretch that season into a format that is kind of competitive with the rest of the world?" Klinsmann said in 2011. "Right now it's not competitive. If you have a seven, eight-month season, that's not competitive with the rest of the world."

MLS says the new format will reward teams with top regular seasons with greater home-field advantage. The league expands to 24 teams with the addition of Cincinnati next year, and 14 teams will make the playoffs. Each of the two conference winners will get first-round byes and be joined in the conference semifinals by the winners of the three first-round series.

The league will finish before the November international break — and before the start of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar that Nov. 21. The October break will be between the end of the regular season and the start of the playoffs. Opening day will be March 2 next year, and the regular season will end Oct. 6.

In conclusion soccer in Canada should always look back at its history, when it was called football and at the same time soccer should move forward using social media interaction including new media. The identity of Canadian soccer in general is of one to thrive, flourish, march forward and create a better future for all. Whether it's (soccer) played on a grass playground or in a large artificial turf stadium, may we (male and female soccer fans and players and management) all take that next step together and stride boldly onward.

Canadian Teams & Stats

Men's Professional club teams

Major League Soccer clubs

- Toronto FC (2007)
- Vancouver Whitecaps FC (2011)
- Montreal Impact (2012)

North American Soccer League (NASL) clubs

- FC Edmonton (2010)

United Soccer League clubs

- FC Montreal (2015)
- Ottawa Fury FC (2014)
- Toronto FC II (2015)
- Whitecaps FC 2 (2015)

League One Ontario

- Aurora SC
- Durham United FC
- Kingston Clippers
- FC London
- Master's FA
- North Mississauga SC
- North Toronto SC

- Oakville Blue Devils
- ProStars FC
- Sanjaxx Lions
- Sigma FC

- Toronto FC Academy
- Toronto Skills FC
- Vaughan Azzurri
- Windsor Stars
- Woodbridge Strikers SC

Première Ligue de soccer du Québec clubs

- CS Mon-Royal Outremont (2013)
- FC Gatineau (2013)
- FC L'Assomption-Lanaudière (2012)
- AS Blainville (2012)
- Lakeshore (2015)
- CS Longueuil (2012)
- Ottawa Fury Academy (2015)

Canadian Soccer League clubs

- Astros Vasas FC (1990)
- Brampton City United (2002)
- Burlington SC (2013)
- Kingston FC (2012)
- London City (1973)
- Niagara United (2011)
- SC Waterloo Region (2012)
- Serbian White Eagles (1968)
- St. Catharines Wolves (1996)
- Toronto Croatia (1956)
- York Region Shooters (1998)

Semi-professional and Pro-Am club teams

Pacific Coast Soccer League clubs

- Coquitlam Metro-Ford SC
- Fraser Valley Action
- Kamloops Heat
- Khalsa Sporting Club
- Langley Athletic FC
- Okanagan Challenge
- Penticton Pinnacles SC
- PoCo City FC
- Surrey United
- Vancouver Thunderbirds
- Victoria United
- Victoria Highlanders

Amateur club teams

USL Premier Development League clubs

- Thunder Bay Chill (2000)
- WSA Winnipeg (2010)
- K-W United FC (Founded 2010 as Hamilton Rage; moved to Kitchener-Waterloo in 2013)
- Calgary Foothills FC (2015)
- Victoria Highlanders (2009)
- TFC Academy (2015)

Senior club teams by province or territory

Alberta

Alberta Major Soccer League

- Edmonton Croatia
- Edmonton Drillers

- Edmonton Green and Gold
- Edmonton Scottish

- Calgary Callies
- Calgary Villains Elite F.C.
- Calgary Dinos Major
- Lethbridge FC

British Columbia

Fraser Valley Soccer League

- Langley United Football Club

Vancouver Island Soccer League

- Bays United FC
- Castaways FC
- Comox Valley United FC
- Cowichan FC
- FC Sagres
- Fernwood United Football Club
- Lakehill FC
- Powell River Villa
- Prospect Lake Soccer Club
- Nanaimo United FC
- Saanich Fusion FC
- Saltspring United FC
- Sooke Soccer Club
- Vantreights FC
- Victoria Gorge FC
- Victoria West FC

Vancouver Metro Soccer League

- Columbus Clan F.C.
- Dynamo FC

- Pegasus F.C.
- Sapperton Rovers
- Surrey United Firefighters
- Tsawwassen Soccer Club

- Vancouver Croatia Soccer Club
- Vancouver Firemen
- Vancouver Greencaps
- Victoria Athletic Association
- Westside FC

Manitoba

Manitoba Major Soccer League

- F.C. Lusitania
- SC Hellas
- Adriatik FC
- F.C. Northwest
- Maples Juventus
- Winnipeg Lucania FC
- Sons of Italy Lions S.C.
- Dynamo FC Winnipeg
- Winnipeg Germania

New Brunswick

- Atlantic Soccer Club (play in USL S20)
- Moncton Codiac First Touch (play in Maritime Soccer League)
- Miramichi United (play in the North Shore Moosehead Senior Soccer League)^[1]
- Dalhousie Strikers (play in the North Shore Moosehead Senior Soccer League)
- Caraquet
- Campbellton Celtic
- Moncton Rovers

- Shediac Rams
- River Valley Reds
- Lokomotiv F.C.
- FDSA U-18

- Codiac U-18
- Wanderers U-18
- Celtic FC U-18

New Brunswick Premier Senior Soccer League

- Fredericton Picaroons Reds
- Fredericton Wanderers
- Fundy United
- CS Dieppe
- Chaleur FC
- Les Aigles d'Edmundston
- PEI FC (Prince Edward Island)

Southern Region Soccer League

- Saint John Soccer Club

Newfoundland and Labrador

- Burin Eagles
- Marystown United
- St. John's

Newfoundland and Labrador Challenge Cup

- Conception Bay Strikers
- Corner Brook United
- Feildians
- Holy Cross
- Mount Pearl
- St. Lawrence Laurentians

Northwest Territories

Yellowknife FC

Yellowknife Adult Soccer League

Source:

- Arctic Solo
- City Cabs
- Coyotes
- DeBeers
- JTFN
- Midnight Sun Mayhem
- The New Guys
- Overlander
- Pepsi-Territorial Beverages
- Pickaxe United
- Ryfan Medicine Shop FC
- Taiga Yoga FC

Nova Scotia

Senior A / Premier level

Nova Scotia Soccer League

- Dartmouth United
- Halifax City
- Halifax Dunbrack
- Suburban FC
- Valley United
- South Shore
- Western Halifax FC
- Halifax County

Senior B level

Halifax Soccer League

- Dartmouth United Chard
- Halifax City Metros
- Dartmouth United Soccer Club
- Dokdo FC
- Dartmouth FC
- Predators
- Pumas
- Halifax Conn FC
- Halifax City YG
- Dartmouth Storm
- ARFC
- Sackville United
- Halifax United

Capital Inter-District Soccer Association (CISL)

- Bedford Soccer Association
- Scotia Soccer Club
- Sackville United Soccer Club
- East Hants Soccer Club
- Valley United Soccer Club
- Cole Harbour Soccer Club
- Dartmouth United Soccer Club
- Storm
- Eastern Passage Soccer Club
- Porters Lake Soccer Association
- Halifax City Soccer Club
- Halifax County United Soccer Club
- Halifax Dunbrack

- Common Seniors Coed
- Eurotrash Seniors Coed

Metropolitan Indoor Soccer League (MISL)

- Bedford Soccer Association
- Scotia Soccer Club
- Sackville United Soccer Club
- East Hants Soccer Club
- Valley United Soccer Club
- Cole Harbour Soccer Club
- Dartmouth United Soccer Club
- Storm
- Porters Lake Soccer Association
- Halifax City Soccer Club
- Halifax County United Soccer Club
- Halifax Dunbrack

Metropolitan Senior Women's Soccer League

- Halifax Dunbrack Soccer Club
- Dartmouth United Soccer Club
- Storm
- Halifax Hotspurs
- Cole Harbour Soccer Club
- Halifax County United
- Timberlea Titans
- Scotia Soccer Club
- Rednex

- Forest Hills
- Wanderers B
- FHU Saints
- Bedford Soccer Association
- Whitecaps
- Lady Drillers
- Halifax Explosion
- Sackville United Soccer Association

Citadel Women's 7 Aside Soccer League

- Gaels
- Dynamos
- Wildcats
- United
- Hurricane
- Banshees
- Dartmouth Rebels
- Greyhounds
- Tsunami
- Lightning
- The Ladybugs
- Scotia Soccer Club
- Clippers
- Stingers
- Cruisers
- Free Spirits
- Bedford Soccer Association
- Sistars
- Porters Lake Soccer Association
- Still Kick'n

- Phoenix

Metro Senior Men's Soccer League

- All Blacks
- Athens United
- FC Bedford
- Bluenose United
- Celtic Masters
- Chester Merchants
- Cole Harbour
- Concertia
- Darkside

- Dartmouth United Masters
- DU Strong
- Halifax County United
- HeadShoppe FC
- Heat FC
- Hellas Mas
- Metro Mariners FC
- Old Scotia
- Sacktown AC
- Sporting Futures
- Storm FC
- Wolves FC

Highland Soccer League

- Antigonish Celtics
- Dock Rovers
- Stewiacke
- Truro CC Riders

Other

- Amherst United (play in the Codiac Soccer League based in Moncton, NB)

The following known adult first division teams play in Nunavut:

- Cambridge Bay FC
- Coral Harbour FC
- Fluffy's 2233
- Ikumaks
- Rankin FC
- Sarliaq
- Stunners
- SWAT
- Team AC

- Team Iqaluit
- Team Nunavut

Ontario

District leagues

Main article: Ontario Soccer Association

There are twenty-one district associations, each with their own leagues.

Level	League divisions		
1	Provincial Elite		
2	Central Premier		South Premier
3	Central Region Central	Central Region East	South Region
4	MJ District East		MJ District West
5	Provincial U21 Elite		
6	Provincial U21 East	Provincial U21 Central	Provincial U21 South
7	South Region U21		Central Region U21

Provincial Elite

- Aurora Ulster Thistle
- Caledon FC
- Durham Celtic
- GS United
- Hamilton Sparta
- Panathinaikos
- PCC Mississauga
- Richmond Hill Madrid
- Vaughan Azzurri
- Woodbridge Strikers

Central Premier

- Aurora United FC
- FC Ukraine United
- Glen Shields
- Gold Line
- HFC Toronto
- Peniche CC
- Scarborough Azzurri
- Sporting Toronto
- West Rouge
- Wexford Hi Profile

South Premier

- Ebony Jrs
- Guelph Rangers
- HNNK Dalmacija
- HNNK Livno
- HNNK Zagreb
- Lakeshore United
- Mississauga Portofino
- Oakville Hrvat
- Olimpia Toronto
- Wisla United

Central Region Central

- Aurora Hearts
- Barrie City
- Bradford Wolves
- Collingwood United
- Owen Sound FC
- Toronto Golden Eaglets
- Toronto Irish FC

- Veneto Lions
- Wisla United

Central Region East

- GS United - East Metal
- Olympiakos
- Pana 2.0
- Peterborough City
- Queens Park Rangers Toronto
- Toronto Celtic FC
- Toronto Elites
- Toronto Skillz Academy

South Region

- AC Soccer Diavoli
- BAS
- Burlington Clash City
- Caledon
- Clarkson Sheridan
- Club Italia
- Croatia Norval
- Guelph Oaks
- Orangeville Athletic
- Universe FC

MJ District East

- Ajax FC
- Ajax Integration
- Cobourg Crew
- FK Macedonian Lions
- GS Oldtimers
- Kawartha Lakes
- Scarborough Azzurri Blues B

- Whitby Iroquois

MJ District West

- Annex FC
- Ararat
- Hungaria SC
- Korean Red Devils
- Markham SC
- Mooredale SC
- Scarborough Gunners

Provincial U21 Elite

- FC London
- Guelph Oaks
- Markham City
- North Mississauga
- North Toronto
- Oakville Blue Devils
- Sigma FC
- Toronto FC
- Vaughan Azzurri

Provincial Under 21 Central

- Aurora United FC
- Durham United FA
- Masters FA 99
- Sanjaxx Lions

- Sigma FC
- Woodbridge Strikers

Provincial Under 21 East

- FC Durham Academy

- Greater Sudbury
- KNSC Lions
- Markham SC
- Wexford Hi Profile
- Whitby Iroquois

Provincial Under 21 South

- Burlington Bayhawks
- Erin Mills Eagles
- North Mississauga
- Oakville SC
- PCC Supersonics
- Waterloo

South Region Under 21

- Cambridge United
- Croatia Norval
- Georgetown Mustangs
- Guelph Oaks
- Milton Magic
- Mt. Hamilton
- Oakville SC

Central Region U21

- East York
- FC Durham Academy
- Glen Shields
- Oshawa Kicks
- Richmond Hill Raiders
- Sanjaxx Soccer

- Toronto High Park
- Woodbridge

Prince Edward Island
Senior Men's Divisions
First Division 2010

- Avondale Islanders(Churchill Arms)
- Ise's Trout/Churchill Trout
- Boston Pizza Masters
- Gahan House Growlers/East Side Mario's
- Souris Lamplighters/Black Rafter Lounge
- Montague
- Harbour Bridge
- Sporting Intentions
- Sam's Restaurant/Montague Sam's

Second Division 2010

- MacQueens
- Keltic Tide
- StayCanada.ca
- Kensington
- Summerside United
- Hils Sports Grill
- Morell
- Dutch Inn

Clubs

- Central Queens Clippers
- Charlottetown Abbies
- Eastern Eagles
- Eliot River Ramblers
- Fort Augustus
- Kensington
- Morell

- Sherwood Parkdale Rangers

- Souris Lamplighters
- Stratford Foxes
- Summerside United
- West Prince
- Winsloe West Royalty Blues

Quebec

Ligue de soccer élite du Québec, Division 1 (AAA)

- Canonniers de Longueuil
- Casalciprano SC
- Celtix du Haut-Richelieu
- Corfinium AFA Saint-Léonard
- CS RDP Condores
- Dragons du CSVR
- Lachine SC
- LaSalle-Lakeshore United
- SC Panellinios Montreal
- Royal-Sélect de Beauport

Ligue de soccer élite du Québec, Division 2 (AAA)

- Association de soccer de Hull
- Association Trifluvienne de Soccer
- Club de Soccer Chomedey
- Kodiak de Charlesbourg
- Cosmos de Granby
- CS Longueuil
- Griffons d'Outremont
- FC Mont-Bruno
- Fury de Rimouski
- Jean-Talon 2007
- Lakeshore SC
- Red Star Dollard SC

Ligue de soccer élite du Qué

- Lakeshore SC
- Les Verts de Sherbrooke
- Terrebonne
- Brossard
- St-Hubert
- Fédération Sportive Salaberry

AA level leagues

ARS Lac St. Louis

Association Régionale de Soccer-Football Concordia

Lac St. Louis Metro League

Ligue de Soccer Laval Laurentides Lanaudière

Ligue de Soccer Québec-Métro

Ligue de Soccer de la Montérégie

A level leagues

Ligue de Soccer de la Mauricie

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan's Premier Soccer League (SPSL)

- Austria-Capitals Football Club
- Huskie Sr
- Lakewood Saskatoon
- Regina East United
- Saskatoon Arsenal
- Yorkton United
- Saskatoon Adult Soccer

Yukon Territories

Whitehouse Senior Metro League

- Yukon Brew
- O.R.C
- AcmeLabs
- The Soccer Shoppe

Canadian Colleges and Universities

Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA)

ACAA

- Holland
- STU
- MSVU
- UKC
- Crandall
- Dalhousie AC
- UNBSJ

RSEQ

- Ch. St-Lambert
- Garneau
- Dawson
- Sainte-Foy
- Ahuntsic
- Montmorency
- Lionel-Groulx
- Vanier
- John Abbott

PAC West

- Douglas
- VIU
- Capilano

- KPU
- Quest
- Langara

ACAC South

- Lethbridge Kodiaks
- SAIT Trojans
- Red Deer Kings
- Lakeland Rustlers
- Medicine Hat Rattlers
- Olds College Broncos

ACAC North

- Keyano Huskies
- NAIT Oaks
- King's Eagles
- Concordia Thunder
- GPRC Wolves
- Augustana Vikings

OCAA Central

- Humber
 - Sheridan
 - Niagara
 - U of T Mississauga
 - George Brown
-
- Seneca

OCAA East

- Algonquin
- Cambrian
- Centennial

- Fleming
- Durham
- St. Lawrence (K)

OCAA West

- Fanshawe
- St. Clair
- Mohawk
- Redeemer
- Lambton
- Conestoga

Canadian Interuniversity Sports

- Acadia
- Cape Breton
- Dalhousie
- Memorial
- Moncton
- Mount Allison
- Saint Mary's
- St. Francis Xavier
- University of New Brunswick Varsity Reds
- UPEI
- Alberta
- Calgary
- Lethbridge
- Saskatchewan
- Trinity Western
 - UBC
 - University of the Fraser Valley
 - Victoria
 - Brock
 - Carleton

- Guelph
- Laurentian
- Laurier
- McMaster
- Nipissing
- Queen's
- RMC
- Ryerson
- Toronto
- Trent
- Waterloo
- Western
- Windsor
- York
- Concordia
- Laval
- McGill
- Montreal
- Sherbrooke
- UQAM
- UQTR Patriotes

Youth soccer clubs

- Ancaster Soccer club
- Brams United Girls Soccer Club
- Calgary Blizzards Soccer Club
- Calgary Foothills Soccer Club
- Calgary Rangers Soccer Club
- Calgary Southwest United Soccer Club
- Chestermere United FC
- Deerfoot Soccer Association
- Edmonton Juventus Soccer Club

- F.C. St-Leonard Soccer Club (Montreal, Quebec)
- FC Mont-Bruno (Saint-Bruno-de-Montarville et Saint-Basile-Le-Grand, Quebec)
- Kleinburg Nobleton Soccer Club (Vaughan, Ontario)
- Lakeshore Soccer Club
- Leamington S.C. United Soccer Club
- Lions Lyceum Athletic Club (Montreal, Quebec)
- Markham Soccer Club (Markham, Ontario)
- Northwest United Soccer Club
- Richmond Youth Soccer Association
- Saanich Fusion FC
- St-Lazare Hudson Soccer Club
- Vaughan Soccer Club
- Waterloo Minor Soccer Club
- Wexford Soccer Club (Scarborough, Ontario)

Women's clubs

Professional club teams

Women's Premier Soccer League

- North Shore Girls Soccer Club (NSGSC)

League 1 Ontario

- Aurora SC
- FC Darby
- Durham United FC
- Kingston Clippers
- London FC
- North Mississauga
- Pro Stars FC
- Sanjaxx Lions
- Vaughan Azzurri

- Woodbridge Strikers

W-League clubs

Calgary Foothills WFC

- Laval Comets
- Quebec City Amiral SC

Most Canadian international appearances (as of 2017)

<i>Pos</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Years</i>	<i>Apps</i>	<i>Goals</i>
1	<i>Julian de Guzman</i>	<i>2002–2016</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>4</i>
2	<i>Paul Stalteri</i>	<i>1997–2010</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>7</i>
3	<i>Randy Samuel</i>	<i>1983–1997</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>0</i>
4	<i>Dwayne De Rosario</i>	<i>1998–2015</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>22</i>
5	<i>Mark Watson</i>	<i>1994–2004</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>3</i>
6	<i>Atiba Hutchinson</i>	<i>2003–</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>6</i>
7	<i>Lyndon Hooper</i>	<i>1986–1997</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>3</i>
8	<i>Alex Bunbury</i>	<i>1986–1999</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>16</i>
9	<i>Nick Dasovic</i>	<i>1994–2004</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>2</i>
	<i>Kevin McKenna</i>	<i>2000–2012</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>11</i>

Most international goals by a Canadian (as of 2017)

<i>Pos</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Years</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Apps</i>
1	<i>Dwayne De Rosario</i>	<i>1998–2015</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>81</i>
2	<i>Dale Mitchell</i>	<i>1980–1993</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>55</i>
3	<i>John Catliff</i>	<i>1984–1994</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>44</i>
4	<i>Alex Bunbury</i>	<i>1986–1999</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>65</i>
5	<i>Ali Gerba</i>	<i>2005–2011</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>31</i>
	<i>Tosaint Ricketts</i>	<i>2011–</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>55</i>
7	<i>Igor Vrablic</i>	<i>1984–1986</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>35</i>
8	<i>Kevin McKenna</i>	<i>2000–2012</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>63</i>
	<i>Carlo Corazzin</i>	<i>1994–2004</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>58</i>
10	<i>Paul Peschisolido</i>	<i>1992–2004</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>53</i>
	<i>Tomasz Radzinski</i>	<i>1995–2009</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>46</i>

Soccer Canada awards for 2018

Canadian Players of the Year

Voting was done by Canadian media and coaches, selecting first choice, second choice, and third choice. The award celebrates Canada Soccer's top footballers in recognition of their 2018 achievements with both the National Team and their respective club teams. Final winners were announced on December 11th and 12th. Below were the finalists followed by the eventual winners.

Canada Soccer Men's National Team Program (#CANMNT)

- Scott Arfield | SCO / Glasgow Rangers FC
- Milan Borjan | SRB / FK Crvena Zvezda (Red Star Belgrade)
- Lucas Cavallini | MEX / Puebla FC
- Jonathan David | BEL / KAA Gent
- Alphonso Davies | CAN / Vancouver Whitecaps FC
- David Junior Hoilett | WAL / Cardiff City FC
- Atiba Hutchinson | TUR / Beşiktaş JK
- Cyle Larin | TUR / Beşiktaş JK
- Liam Millar | ENG / Liverpool FC U-23
- Jonathan Osorio | CAN / Toronto FC
- Samuel Piette | CAN / Impact de Montréal
- Ballou Tabla | ESP / FC Barcelona B

Canada Soccer Women's National Team Program (#CANWNT)

- Janine Beckie | USA / Sky Blue FC | ENG / Manchester City FC
- Kadeisha Buchanan | FRA / FCF Olympique Lyonnais
- Allysha Chapman | USA / NC Courage | USA / Houston Dash
- Jessie Fleming | USA / UCLA
- Stephanie Labbé | SWE / Linköpings FC
- Ashley Lawrence | FRA / Paris Saint-Germain FC
- Nichelle Prince | USA / Houston Dash
- Rebecca Quinn | USA / Washington Spirit
- Sophie Schmidt | GER / FFC Frankfurt
- Desiree Scott | USA / Utah Royals FC

- Christine Sinclair | USA / Portland Thorns FC
- Shelina Zadorsky | USA / Orlando Pride

Canadian Youth International Players of the Year:

The Canadian Youth International Players of the Year award celebrates Canada's top two youth footballers in recognition of their achievements with Canada Soccer's National Youth Teams, with an emphasis on their performance at age-category international competitions.

Men's EXCEL Program

- Alessandro Busti | ITA / Juventus U-23
- Mathieu Choinière | CAN / Impact de Montréal
- Derek Cornelius | SRB / FK Javor Ivanjica
- Jonathan David | BEL / KAA Gent
- Julian Dunn | CAN / Toronto FC II
- Liam Millar | ENG / Liverpool FC U-23
- Noble Okello | CAN / Toronto FC II
- Shamit Shome | CAN / Impact de Montréal

Women's EXCEL Program

#canw15 #canw17 #canw20

- Maya Antoine | CAN / Vaughan SC | Ontario Super REX
- Wayny Balata | CAN / CS Lakeshore | Québec Super REX
- Julia Grosso | CAN / Vancouver Whitecaps FC Girls Elite BC Soccer REX
- Jordyn Huitema | CAN / Vancouver Whitecaps FC Girls Elite BC Soccer REX
- Anna Karpenko | CAN / Vaughan SC | Ontario Super REX
- Jayde Riviere | CAN / Markham SC | Ontario Super REX
- Jade Rose | CAN / Unionville-Milliken SC | Ontario Super REX

- Andersen Williams | CAN / Vancouver Whitecaps FC Girls Elite BC Soccer REX

Alphonso Davies was voted the Canadian Player of the Year after a standout season with Canada Soccer's Men's National Team and yet another breakout season with Vancouver Whitecaps FC. Of note, he helped Canada climb to current third-place position in qualifying and within a point of reaching the Concacaf Gold Cup and Concacaf Nations League Group A. Davies of Edmonton, Alberta was honoured from a vote shared by Canadian media and Canadian coaches. Davies shared the 2018 Canadian Players of the Year award with co-winner Christine Sinclair from Canada Soccer's Women's National Team. "He has been a standout performer for club and country and that is just a consistent reality now for Alphonso Davies," said John Herdman, Canada Soccer's Men's National Team Head Coach. "For club, he picked up many an accolade, culminating with what looks like one of the biggest signings out country has ever seen. "For Canada, every time he has been asked to take a responsibility and support the team, even playing out of position, he has shown his character. He is just a humble guy who loves the game and will do whatever it takes to be successful. "For Canada, every time he has been asked to take a responsibility and support the team, even playing out of position, he has shown his character. He is just a humble guy who loves the game and will do whatever it takes to be successful."

In 2018, Davies won Vancouver Whitecaps FC Player of the Year honours after leading the league in duels won (258) and setting a record for dribbles completed (123). He scored eight goals, co-led the team with eleven assists (youngest player in league history to record double digit assists), was selected to the annual All-Star Game, and was named MLS's best prospect in their Under 22 Ranking. In July, his rights were transferred to Bayern Munich on an MLS-record transfer fee that could total more than \$22-million US (\$29-million Canadian), with Davies joining the German champions in late November (2018) after he turned eighteen years old.

At the international level, his four assists in three matches were the second-most in a single season for Canada since 2000 when assists have been regularly recorded. He played in all 270 minutes of Concacaf Nations League Qualifying, fired six shots, and completed ninety-five percent of his team-best 151 attempted passes.

Christine Sinclair has been voted the Canadian Player of the Year (2018) in recognition of another successful season highlighted by scoring the winning goal that qualified Canada for the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019™. It was the nation's most important goal of the year as Canada Soccer's Women's National Team qualified for the FIFA Women's World Cup for a seventh consecutive time.

Sinclair from Burnaby, British Columbia was honoured from a vote

shared by Canadian media and Canadian coaches.

“Christine Sinclair showed that you can continue to add layers to your performance, regardless of age, if you work hard,” said Kenneth Heiner-Møller, Canada Soccer’s Women’s National Team Head Coach. “Her great physical shape helped her play every minute for Portland Thorns FC and also led Canada to yet another FIFA Women’s World Cup™.”

“Her ability to lead her line as well as the players around her while at the same time performing at her level is simply remarkable and unique. Sinclair is a notorious goal scorer, but she should also get credit for her ability to set up goals. She is an important part of the build-up play for both her club and our Women’s National Team.” In 2018, Sinclair played all 2,160 minutes for Portland Thorns FC as they finished second in the league. She scored nine goals, finished second in the league with seven assists, and won the Thorns Supporters’ Player of the Year award. In the playoffs, she helped the Thorns reach the Championship Final.

At the international level, she led Canada in goal scoring for the fifteenth time in nineteen years, scoring eight goals and two assists in twelve international matches. She finished second on Canada with 979 minutes played as the Women’s National Team won eight of twelve matches, including a 7 to 0 win over Panama on 14 October to qualify for the FIFA Women’s World Cup France 2019. With a second-place finish at the Concacaf

Women's Championship, Sinclair collected her eighth Concacaf medal since 2002 (one gold, six- silver and one bronze). With 177 international goals to her credit in all competitions, she is in second place just seven goals back of all-time leader Abby Wambach (184).

Canada Soccer has named striker Jordyn Huitema and defender Derek Cornelius as the 2018 Canadian Youth International Players of the Year. Huitema was captain of Canada's fourth-place team at this year's FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Uruguay, scoring in three of five matches. Huitema scored ten goals in sixteen youth international matches in 2018, including winning Golden Boot honours with five goals at the CONCACAF Women's U-20 Championship in January. Cornelius was a standout for Canada at the Provence Toulon tournament in May and June, with Canada finishing sixth at the prestigious international youth tournament in France. Canada went undefeated with Cornelius in the lineup at centre back, including a 1 to 0 win over Turkey in which Cornelius was named Canada's man of the match.

This marks the 26th edition of the Canada Soccer Player Awards, with Alphonso Davies a first-time winner and Christine Sinclair a 14th-time winner for the Canadian Player of the Year award. Amongst men's footballers, Davies finished first in voting ahead of runner up Atiba Hutchinson, third-place Jonathan Osorio, fourth-place Milan Borjan, and fifth-place Scott Arfield. As

part of the 2018 Canada Soccer Player Awards, Derek Cornelius and Jordyn Huitema were named Canadian Youth International Players of the Year, Jacob Orellana was named Canadian Futsal Player of the Year and Damien Wojtiw was named Canadian Para Soccer Player of the Year. James Pantemis, meanwhile, was named the 2018 winner of the Allstate Canadian National Teams Good Hands Award.

A special thank-you to Wikipedia for part of this chapter, of course there are many more soccer teams in Canada than this list. We also salute Soccer Canada for the awards piece and pics along with the Vancouver Province for various quotes.

About The Author

This author has spent sixty two years following Canadian and English soccer, especially his cherished Vancouver Whitecaps. After writing the very successful book Three Down Football, Turcotte thought it appropriate to write a book about his “other love” - soccer.

Turcotte was just six years old when he started playing soccer in North Vancouver. In his late twenties he coached the Brakendale Whitecaps for seven years near Squamish, a team that his son starred on. A few decades later, Turcotte and his son Rick could be found at Whitecaps home games as season ticket holders. Many of the family events with the Turcotte ‘clan’ involved the Whitecaps (going to games and watching them on television). Today the author watches his six year old granddaughter as she plays soccer in West Kelowna.

Turcotte has owned and published nine newspapers, seven magazines and now six books. His company The Boundary Creek Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd. was established in 1896 and is the publisher of this book including his other books, Reed All

About It . . . memoirs of a controversial publisher; Gold, Indians & War; Greenwood – The Early Years of Canada’s Smallest City; When Canadian Newspaper Publishers Were King (read by over twenty-nine thousand people) and his highly successful novel titled - Three Down Football. He and his wife, now of twenty-four years, reside in the Okanagan of British Columbia and Turcotte was, is and always will be an aficionado of Canadian soccer.

-30-