

RICHMOND SENIOR SOCCER

Mr. Joe Paller,  
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T.34 S.1

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Joe had been playing soccer while growing up in Vancouver.

1951 he moved to Richmond. Soccer was then managed by Jim Carpenter. He had a young team, and an older team.

Joe started playing senior soccer in the Richmond Legion. There were seven teams in each division and Joe's team played Division 3, Mainland League.

In 1951 Richmond Legion won the Division . . . this team progressed to Division 2, won that and went on to Division 1. Joe names three friends as strong soccer players: Jack Daniels, Gordie Warren and Joe Kropinak.

A new division developed, making soccer into four divisions.

Joe's team stayed in Division 2, and won it two

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years later . . . so the team progressed to division 1.  
. . . then soccer not good so team put back to division 2  
next year . . . soccer getting more competitive.

Junior soccer group formed that year, seniors  
cast off. Junior group were slated to take over  
franchise and did under controversy, but juniors did  
not win one game. In 2 - 3 years, Junior team dropped  
to Division 5 . . . and Seniors were all recalled.

1958 was the year now, the Seniors were then  
30 years old . . . came back winning Division 5.  
Top players were Elmer Buchanan and Russell Buchanan.

Soccer was operating on relegation system so the  
Senior team progressed to Division 2.

1963 - 64, Dennis Hedges was team manager then but  
couldn't make Saturday games due to work hours so Joe  
offered to become manager. Team successfully went to  
Division 4 with old players staying together. Ended  
up fourth place.

1966 Joe began system of bringing up more junior  
players and keep a few older players to help . . . ended  
up second, lost final game 3 - 2 with two good players  
injured in game. . . /3

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1967 in Division 3 team had eight good players coached in Richmond. Brought in Neale MacKechnie, experienced coast soccer centre man, who helped win the league.

1969 in Division 2 was Richmond's best year in competitive soccer. Won the league, losing only one game. Had 11 shut-outs in 18 league games. This tied the record on the mainland, Division 2. Same year lost the Imperial Cup final 2 - 1. MacKechnie was the coach and Joe Paller, manager.

1971 - 72 the team was in Division 1, and ended up third.

1972 - 73 (last year) one of the three teams tied for first, but Joe's team lost in round robin.

1973 - 74, MacKechnie is back as coach. Lost four players from last year because of new league formed called B.C. Soccer League. Joe's team in Division 2. Richmond lost players to Vancouver teams. Whole incentive of soccer is giving young players a chance to make the

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best team, also forming an affiliated team.

The new league has 7 divisions: has 10 teams in each league. Name changed from Mainland Soccer League to B.C. Soccer League. No longer Coast League.

Joe's team had an option of going Division 1 but club chose Division 2. Players wanted to earn their way to promotion. So far this year is good: 4 wins and 2 losses.

Soccer finishes end of March, weather permitting. Problem: its hard to hold Richmond players here. Joe is only one calling players, while they get 10 calls from Vancouver teams. Soccer going ahead here.

Forward idea: better playing conditions.

Refereeing has improved 100 per cent in last three years. This is because the Referee Association has had more meetings for referees, better schools for referees, and more money is paid. The referees get more respect from the players.

All senior soccer games are at Minoru Park.

Sponsorship is harder to obtain for senior soccer.

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Joe suggests a Canadian fund or provincial grant of \$200 could be given to club presidents to help out. Referees cost \$16 a game. The Municipality supplies fields, nets which team put up and takes down. Vancouver doesn't supply this.

The need in Richmond for a more solid executive governing senior soccer under rules of Canadian Soccer Association, Joe Paller believes.

Dellis Cleland