

BCFOA President Mid Year Update 2022

Members,

This the time of year when there is no shortage of sports to watch. But for us, it is time for us to enjoy being on the field. All our leagues are in full swing. One thing that is strange, no rain games yet. I just jinxed it I know. I hope everyone is enjoying this extended summer.

Thank you to the executive for resolving matters in their respective areas. Lots of things go on behind the scenes that most are unaware of. This year there has been members reaching to us to get clarification on several items. We appreciate the respectful and professional manner of which the emails have been received over the year.

Karen Madill has been continuing in updating the website and making it more user friendly. The CFOA insurance form is on our website should you need it. Quick reminder that if you are injured, please submit an incident report to Karen. The insurance claim however goes directly to the insurance company. Those details are on the insurance claim form.

Community Football

The Contracts for community football had to be redone. One contract last year was with the BC Community Football Association. All but a couple of leagues pulled out of that organization and joined the BCPFA directly. As such, contracts had to be done with each league. Thanks to Sandy Bains and Kevin Rowe in assisting to make that happen.

The community football championships will take place in late November or early December in Victoria. The BCPFA will be running the event and as such, BCFOA members will be assigned. I am still awaiting logistic details, but we will need officials from the LMD to assist.

High School

Looks like we have a handful of new members again this year. I know the season is well on its way. Walter Becker is already after me to help him for games in Chilliwack where I moved to a couple of months ago. I would like to thank Frank Roberto and Len DeJulius for their support over the last couple of months. Very much appreciated.

A committee will be formed after the season to look at mechanics to bring us closer together as a larger organization. There is a good possibility we may be taking on more games at the community level so having consistent mechanics will aid that greatly.

BCFC

Our biggest issue this year was getting officials for Prince George. Funding was provided for travel and education to get the few officials in Prince George ready for the season. Welcome back Steve Rowe!! However, we still do not have enough, so officials are required from the LMD. The BCFC is going through some difficult financial times. They wanted us to have officials drive to P.G. to save money. They were reminded that when discussion began over two years ago about PG joining the league, we advised that we would not be driving. That has not changed.

BCFC reduced the number of officials from 7 to six. The CFL had pulled their funding for the 7th person. The contract allows for 6 officials. They also eliminated the observer and evaluator positions. Again, the contract allows for this. We have utilized our education funds, so we still have evaluations being done. Much like we did in the past.

Recently we ran into an issue that saw only five officials assigned for a game in PG. I had a friendly discussion with the President of the BCFC. He was reminded that there is no place in the contract for five officials. We can go to 5 in a six-person crew if we have an injury. On a 5-person crew, if we have an injury, the game is over. To have a 5-person crew I would have to agree as per a clause in the contract for special circumstances. I was not, so they paid for the 6th person to be flown up from Vancouver.

The addition of PG to the league has created a tremendous overall financial burden. Hopefully they can sort through this.

BCPFA

As part of an ongoing agreement the BCPFA provides yearly funding for provincial education. This covers travel and expenses for our educators to deliver officiating levels for our clinics. At the request of the BCPFA they also want the funds to cover the manual costs for levels 2 and up. This they feel is a step towards retention.

Further to that, they have requested we participate in a study group on officiating recruitment and retention. They were seeking our input as part of a larger plan to obtain Provincial funding. Kevin Rowe chaired the committee on our behalf. I know many people participated and lots of ideas were surfaced. A report was submitted with several action items included. To date we have not heard back from the BCPFA on the status of this.

Kevin Park is the new president of the BCPFA, taking over from Frank Naso. Big thanks to Frank for his support of our officials during his tenure. Kevin has spoken to me about moving forward with talks for an amalgamation of the LMFRA. Nothing concrete to report on that.

I made a request several months ago for additional education funding to assist in getting officials in PG ready for BCFC football. Enough money was received to cover the costs for two educators to go the PG in July prior to the start of the BCFC season.

CFOA

Each year a committee made up of the CFOA executives request RIC applications for the Canada Cup (U18) and the U16. This is done at the request of Football Canada as these events are funded in part by them. The rest of the funding comes from the PSO. This year both events were hosted in BC. A request is also made for Local RICs for each event. This year Carey Anderson was selected as the local RIC for the Canada Cup in Kelowna and Hans Vanderdoe for the U16 in Langley. Both represented us well and did a great job. Thank you.

Karen Madill was selected as the RIC for the women's championships in Regina. This was a great learning experience for Karen. Congrats and thank you.

Insurance fees have stayed very low for us over the years. However, given the upward costs of everything we will likely see an increase of \$3 to \$4 in the coming years.

Football Canada

FC created an Officiating task force to see what they could do to assist officials across the country. As a CFOA executive I was part of this. Representatives from respective PSOs and various leagues were part of the conversation. General discussion took place on the state of football and issues surrounding recruitment and retention. From the initial meeting Football Canada committed to 3 things

- 1) Promote the safety changes to football to show the game is getting safer,**
- 2) Update the Learning for Officials and look at making it no cost to officials. (Some of the manual updates are already being done through the CFOA)**
- 3) Look at ways to create and fund a national recruiting campaign for officials.**

That was several months ago, and I have not seen any follow up.

The Canada Cup and U16 are the two biggest FC events each year. This year the women's championships were added on. Our representatives were Charles Way for the U16 and Hassan Cohen for the Canada Cup. I am sure both enjoyed the events and gained some valuable experience.

Closing comments

Firstly, I would like to thank Heith Eddleston for putting together a written proposal for the roles and responsibilities as they pertain to education and allocation. Most of this was understood but we have never formally documented it in detail. He did this on his own to contribute to the association for the future. We are looking at adopting these and placing them into our guidelines / policy. The executives responsible for High school will be creating a similar document using Heith's as a template.

Things happen in our lives that make you examine your priorities. I am sure many of you have gone through this especially since we had a non- football season due to Covid. As I examine the reasons for being involved in football myself, I find it is the same now as it was over 40 years ago. First it is the enjoyment of being involved in the game and seeing some great games.... sometimes. It is supposed to be fun, right? For me the biggest thing is the comradery of all of you. This has become more important to me since I retired. For over 35 years the group of people I saw every day, worked with closely, depended on each other for our well being and in some instances our lives, was no more. Football for me has filled some of that void. Thank you.

As the executive continues to strive to support, collaborate and value the contributions of our membership, we must remember that your wellness is very important. Ask yourself to treat people that way you want to be treated in a respectful and mentoring manner. We need to understand that not all members are going to officiate in the CFL or the AAA High School Championships. This association sustains and develops members in several leagues and as the President of the BCFOA, I am very proud to say we are the only association in Canada who can officiate Canadian and American games.

Remember to have fun!!

Regards,

Nigel Bushe

President BCFOA

VP CFOA