

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

of Chicago



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54th USSFA CONVENTION
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS... JULY 10, 11, 12, 1970

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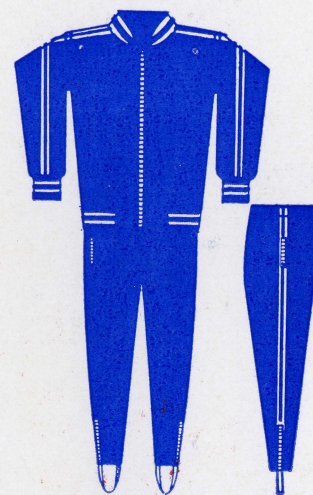
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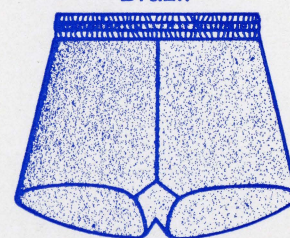


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Brazil



ILLINOIS SOCCER ASSOCIATION

and the

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

Celebrating its

50th Anniversary

WELCOME THE

54th Annual Convention

OF THE

UNITED STATES SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JULY 10, 11, 12, 1970

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LADIES COMMITTEE: Mrs. Helen Kracher, Mrs. Katie Koos, Mrs. Millie Hemmings, Mrs. Maria Kulas and Mrs. Bunny Meyers.

HONORED GUESTS: Mrs. Genevieve Netto and Mrs. Mae Triner.

UNITED STATES SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, INC.

Office of the President
c/o STAATS-HEROLD
60 - 20 BROADWAY
WOODSIDE, N. Y. 11377

June 29, 1970

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE
Chicago, Illinois

A half century devoted to the promotion of soccer football in the United States is an enviable record of which all who have contributed to it can be justly proud.

My fellow officials of the U.S. Soccer Football Ass'n join me in extending to you the heartiest of congratulations on the achievement of this historic milestone.

It is our heartfelt wish that the National League may continue to go forward towards our common objectives and join us in developing soccer football in America in order that it may soon take its place as a truly major spectator and participation sport.

With all good personal wishes to your officials, players and member clubs,

Sincerely yours,
ERWIN A. SINGLE
President, USSFA

ILLINOIS SOCCER ASSOCIATION

GEORGE E. FISHWICK, Chairman FRANK J. KRACHER, Vice Chairman
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IRVING NUSSBAUM

July 11, 1970

William P. Hemmings, Pres.
National Soccer League, Inc. Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Hemmings:

May we extend our heartiest congratulations to the officers and members of the National Soccer League upon the occasion of the league's Golden Anniversary.

This event in itself is a worthy contribution to the sport of Soccer Football. But the many other contributions the National Soccer League has made to the growth of the game in this country add still more prestige to your name.

The National Soccer League and its members have provided many distinguished leaders, who have served the State Association and the United States Soccer Football Association well and devotedly.

Clubs of your league have had their names inscribed on all three National trophies, Junior, Amateur and Open. Over forty of your representatives have been named to United States National teams, others have been elected to the Hall of Fame. Referees who graduated from your ranks have been accredited with National and International honors.

Your league has grown in numbers and in quality. At the present time the memberships in the Junior and Juvenile Division are the largest on record.

On this most auspicious occasion we proudly congratulate all those who have contributed to this proud record from 1920 to 1970.

May the tradition of good sportsmanship and full support of the game which you have established through the past years continue long into the future.

Yours for more soccer,
GEORGE E. FISHWICK

CONGRATULATIONS

to

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

CHICAGO

on its

Golden Anniversary

and Best Wishes to

ILLINOIS SOCCER ASSOCIATION

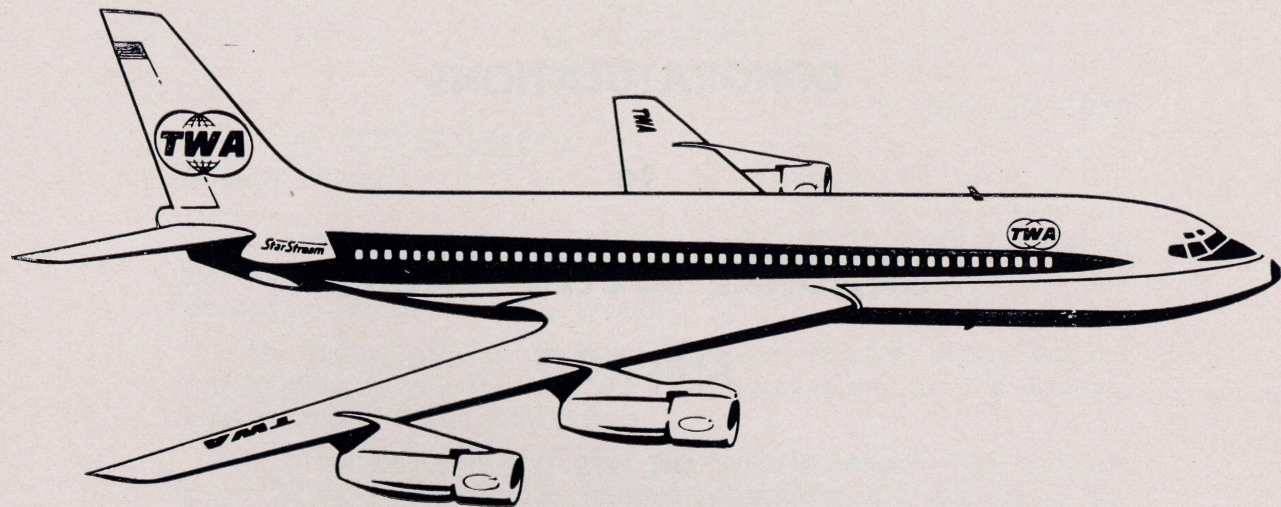
Hosts to

54th ANNUAL USSFA CONVENTION

from

Friends of Soccer





Sportsmen on the Move...

Fly TWA



Half Century of Progress

by Abe Korsower

Fifty years of recollection is always a tough task to record, especially when it involves perusing old files which often disclose as many sad things as good and joyous ones.

Borrowing a phrase the City of Chicago used in 1933, when the then World's Fair was advertised as the "Century of Progress," we can point with pride to our contribution as "A Half Century of Progress."

Although Chicago soccer dates back as far as 1883, when the late and beloved Dr. Peter J. Peel, began organizing teams in the shadows of the Gary steel mills, it was not until the nucleus of the present National Soccer League was organized, that real strides forward were taken.

With the founding of the league, then known as the International Soccer Football League, Inc., the conglomerate mixture of Scots, Germans, Poles, Swedes etc., embarked on a unified effort to bring order into the local scene which was hectic with inner battles between clubs and leagues.

Of the original group, only two clubs, the SPARTA A.B.A. and NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN A.A., are still in existence today.

The first officers of the newly formed league were: Frank Foldi, president, E. Olson, vice president, Fred Eifler, secretary, and Fred Klotz, treasurer.

Two years later, one of Chicago's most dedicated and forceful soccer pioneers, Edward J. O'Donnell, took over the reign as president and served the league well for 15 consecutive years.

His terms of office were succeeded by a three year

stint of Joseph C. Trimmel, who in turn relinquished the post to Thure Gustafson in 1940. Three years later Trimmel returned as president, but by then the last vestige of competitive leagues vanished and Chicago became a one-league city.

At the end of 25 years of existence the league, now called National Soccer League, Inc., boasted a roster of 23 senior and twelve junior and juvenile teams, a drop from their previous high membership of a 73 team total. The reason was of course obvious.

Those were the war years, with over 600 registered Chicago players in the service of Uncle Sam.

The second quarter of the century saw the growth of the league reach new heights. With the advent of William 'Bill' Hemmings as president, a new era in Chicago soccer dawned.

Operating with judicious efficiency, Hemmings remained at the helm for more years than he cares to admit, yielding the reins for a short span to newly named 'Hall-of-Famer, Jack Maher.

Not to be overlooked are the equally dedicated, and often more valuable services of the secretaries, without whose cooperation even the best president would fail to accomplish his goals.

The records are incomplete, for the secretary's job is more demanding and their turnover in office more frequent.

The ones that come to mind (any omissions are completely unintentional) as having performed in efficient fashion include the indefatigable Ernie Plambeck, Jack

(Continued on page 9)



SPARTA-FALSTAFFS

Left to right, front row: Wolf, Fraser, McDermott, Silovsky, Pearson, Waldrom, Waldrom, trainer. Back row: Scott Peterson, Nudera, Mrnka, Trimmel, Hamous, Rezek, Volk, manager.

**Best Wishes to the
NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE**

50th ANNIVERSARY

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Walter Dudek

Half Century of Progress . . .

(Continued from page 7)

Parry, Bobby Jones, Hugo Ritt, Richard Giebner, Sal Alaniz, Frank Koos, George Meyer, and their present man, Joe Kapinos.

George Fishwick's service on the league secretarial position was on such high level as to serve as a springboard toward national honors which include the presidency of the USSFA, and an honorary life membership in the league.

Today the league, reputed to be the largest in the nation, has a membership of 54 clubs fielding 126 teams, competing in six senior and five junior, juvenile and midget divisions.

Prospects for the future are brighter than ever. Through the efforts of several enterprising clubs, Chicago has become one of the prime stopover points for touring foreign teams, providing the local fans with annual international games.

These brief notes, by far too limited to do justice to all who served the cause of soccer in Chicago, cannot be complete without mentioning the likes of Eli Koror, whose work on behalf of the referees spans the entire half century and then some, of Jimmy Niotis, whose love of the sport is nationally known, and of course without the names of Dr. Peter J. Peel, Fred W. Netto, and Joseph Triner.

Our reference to the sad notes one finds in a history, is of course to the last named trio, whose selfless work on behalf of Chicago and national soccer will forever stand out as an example of everything that is good and worthwhile in life.



Jack Johnston, Dr. Peter J. Peel, Fred W. Netto and Joe Triner

They were the pillars of sportsdom, against whom the faltering leaned for strength, the doubting for courage and the novices for wisdom.

Their names are forever enshrined in the hearts of those who knew them, and their contribution to the sport shall be remembered as long as there is a soccer game being played in our city.

COMPETITION THROUGH THE YEARS:

While local clubs in a variety of leagues competed against each other, with an occasional match against touring teams spicing the season, it was not until the mid-20's that Chicago received its biggest boost in soccer.

Under the leadership of Sparta, the league undertook its first international promotion, by fielding a Chicago All-Star team against the then Europe's "Wonder Team" Hakoah from Vienna, Austria.

The year was 1926, and a mid-western professional league was well established.

Hakoah defeated Sparta 6 to 1, on May 9th, but when they came back on May 19th, they were defeated by the All-Stars, 3 to 2. The promotion was a rousing success, with a reported 27,000 fans turning up in Soldier Field.

Soccer was nearing the big-time stage. Five months later, Sparta was once again instrumental in its promotion, bringing in Sparta of Prague, Czechoslovakia.

This time the All-Stars were the first to face the visitors, losing a respectable 1 - 0, but Chicago's Sparta took a 9 to 0 beating three weeks later.

One year later, in 1927, it was . . . you guessed it . . . Sparta leading the way to promotions. During the month of May, a favorite month for touring teams, the national team of Uruguay, then preparing for the 1928 Olympics (which they won), downed Sparta 1 to 0, on May 15th, but lost to the Bricklayers 3 to 2 the next day.

Encouraged by the results Sparta invited the Vienna Hakoah for a return visit, this time holding the visitors to a 2 to 2 tie, with the Peel Stars (other leagues did not cooperate) losing 2 to 1.

One month later, on June 19, the Chicago All-Stars established themselves as a team to be reckoned with, walloping Maccabi - Tel Aviv, 4 to 1.

Things looked good for soccer then. Professional football was in its infancy, baseball had little competition, but soccer was drawing seven to nine thousand fans to local league games. It was the era of prosperity, with the 1929 Wall Street crash far from everyone's mind.

The Glasgow Rangers took on the Illinois Stars in June, winning 4 to 1, at a time when the Rangers were the best known team in the world.

An Italian All-Star team, called PALESTRA-ITALIA, toured the country and Sparta was again at the forefront. They engaged the highly touted Brescia team and pulled an upset by winning 5 to 1. Sparta was ready then, and took the team on a tour of Mexico, getting good results and getting Chicago's name on the front pages of sports papers.

And so it went.

In 1929, the year of the crash, only Preston North End of England ventured into Chicago, beating the Amateur All-Stars, 6 to 2, and the Pro All-Stars the next day (Tired? ?) 3 to 2.

Five games were on the international soccer menu in 1930, MARTE of Mexico losing 5 to 3 to the Bricklayers and 3 to 2 to Sparta. Sparta lost to the Glasgow Rangers, 4 to 1 and again to the famed M.T.K. of Hungary, 5 to 1.

Chicago's Maccabi, then a semi-professional team making its mark, took a beating from the M.T.K., 7 to 2, but got their feet wet in promotional activities.

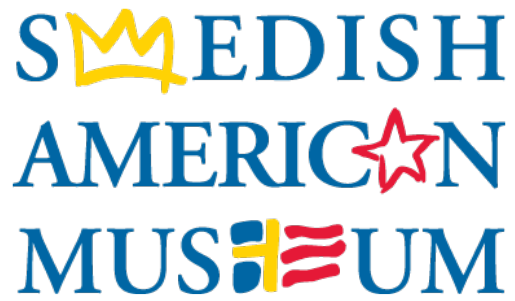
Then came the depression years.

The Scots, Welshmen, and South American players, began to leave this area, the attendances began falling, and players had to pitch in for gas to travel from one field to another. Coal City, Rockford, Dalzel, and a few other small towns where soccer flourished, became empty of players and one by one folded.

From 1931 through 1937 only one foreign team ventured on tour per year.

Glasgow Celtics in 1931, Audax S.C., Chile, 1934, Scotland's national team in 1935, (3 to 0 vs Illinois All-Stars), Maccabi-Tel Aviv in 1936, Charlton of London, in 1937, then . . . BOOM!! The WAR — 1938 through 1940 . . . nothing.

(Continued on page 13)



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