



Forward.

SUBJECT: THE NEED FOR A NEW MAJOR LEAGUE AND HOW IT DEVELOPED

Soccer, the largest, most successful sport in the world, suddenly burst on the American sports scene and has become in the short space of three years, the fastest growing professional sport in America. The national television networks are planning vastly increased coverage on this dynamic sport this coming year, and major corporations are actively seeking commercial tie-ins. Soccer has come of age and is the sport of the tomorrow - today.

In September 1977, over 78,000 spectators paid to see a soccer match at the Meadowlands in New York. They came for two apparent reasons; to see the famed Pele, and to see the New York Cosmos, a team that had captured the hearts of sport fans in the New York area. But no one player or no one team can account for this tremendous success alone: another ingredient was the game itself - Soccer. But Soccer itself is not without its problems; problems that could severely prevent its future expansion and growth. Firstly, the stadiums that soccer presently is being played is highly dependent on climatic factors. All the stadiums are open and extremely large in seating capacity; therefore, fans being assured that "there will always be a seat available" have failed to buy either season tickets or advance tickets. When the weather turns bad, these





potential customers, without the incentive of already having purchased tickets, are not dedicated enough (to suffer in the rain or high humidity) to leave the comfort of their homes. Secondly, the game itself is often difficult to see, being played on a field over 120 yards long and 70 yards wide. The action is not centered in one area of the field such as American football, but spans the entire area continually. Finally and most importantly, the game of Soccer, as presently played, is basically a low scoring game with a premium on defense rather than on offense. Many fans find this extremely boring. The North American Soccer League, with 24 franchises currently playing across the United States, recognized these problems and established an internal committee whose specific goal was to attempt to find answers to these problems. The result of the committee report were as follows:

1. Develop the concept for indoor soccer into a viable league format.
2. Play the games in modern, indoor, air-conditioned arenas with large but limited seating capacities.
3. Limit the size of the playing field to approximately 70 yards by 30 yards with hockey type plexiglass boards ringing the playing field and use a new type of synthetic surface to speed the game.



3. Change the rules to allow increased scoring by changing the size of the goal. (see Rules section); allowing fewer players on a side; allowing some body contact; and using unlimited substitution such as in basketball and hockey.

This report was accepted by the NASL and a trial game was set up in Atlanta in 1973 to test the concept. (A film of this game is available for viewing).

The results were astounding! The fans enjoyed sitting in a comfortable, climate-controlled arena; the playing field was highly visible and easily seen on television; and finally, the game was exciting with over 100 shots on goal and a final score of 16-14.

Rick Ragone, a member of the fact finding committee and a former member of the NASL Marketing Board of Directors, suggested that the NASL move from outdoors to indoors and adopt the newer concept in its entirety. Ragone reported that the new concept was considerably more exciting to the American sports fan but could not consider substituting it because of the long-term commitment they had made in dollars and time to establish traditional soccer in the United States. He recommended playing in the winter months, with the hope that the excitement and television coverage this new, indoor, exciting soccer would generate and stimulate interest in the floundering outdoor game.





In the following years, a number of indoor games were played in the winter months with substantial attendance and fan support but as the arenas themselves were unavailable due to prior commitments to basketball, hockey, and other attractions, the NASL decided, reluctantly, to only play in the summer months in outdoor facilities.

The increase in franchise values in american professional sports has been dramatic in the last 10 years. Owners who bought franchises in basketball, hockey, and football have for many years watched a dramatic increase in the value of their franchise. Soccer has experienced that same dramatic growth.

Soccer has shown the most dramatic increase of all. In the last 5 years, franchise values have increased from 75 thousand dollars in 1974 to 1.250 million dollars for an expansion franchise today.





The North American Soccer League expect their franchise values to significantly increase by 1984. The projected increases are directly proportioned to the Boom in youth soccer, which has directly influenced the attendance at all league cities.

Super Soccer, with its 6 men to a side, on a hockey sized rink, with such fast paced action, and an average of 15 goals scored before the second period is completed, offers the American sports fan all the ingredients that have made basketball, hockey and soccer so popular in the United States.

It is expected that Super Soccer, with its combination of ingredients, will experience great growth. The potential growth of the Super Soccer franchises is virtually unlimited.

When you consider that Super Soccer can fill the void in the summer months, which has been created through a lack of viable sports programming on television, Super Soccer values should increase dramatically.

The obvious success and the very real need of the concept remains - that an indoor, summer major soccer league should be formed - the sports public is waiting for it.

