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Cover photograph by Tony Triolo

## 22 Soccer Is Now an In Sport

The pro game has come indoors, six men to a side on hockey rink-size pitches bounded by boards off which players bounce both the ball and themselves. The result: such furious action that substitutes must be inserted every few minutes and more goals are scored than you have fingers.

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LOOKING AHEAD to Augusta is Lee Elder, the first black to qualify for the Masters. But he has had 10 months since the Monsanto to get ready and that has created problems for him, says Jerry Kirshenbaum.

FIVE FACES OF EVE: These days the woman athlete is not always sure whether she should be ruthless or relaxed. Pat Jordan pays a visit to Penn State where a hockey coach gently admonishes: "Fight, Ladies, Fight!"

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED is published weekly, except one issue at year end, by Time Inc., 541 N. Fairbanks Ct., Chicago, Ill. 60611, principal office Rockefeller Ctr., N.Y., N.Y. 10020. J. R. Shepley, President. C. J. Grum, Treasurer. C. B. R. Secretary. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, Ill. and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Dept., Ottawa, Canada and for payment of postage in cash. Subscription price in the U.S., \$14.00 a year.



# THE SPORT THAT CAME IN FROM THE COLD

*Pelé might shudder, but indoor soccer, with six men to a side and played on a hockey-sized field, leads to more action and scoring* by **TEX MAULE**

To a soccer purist, it is an abomination. To a goalkeeper, it is a nightmare. But to the fans who have watched the first formal competition in indoor six-man soccer, it is a joy.

Last week, at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, the North American Soccer League staged its fourth mini-tournament leading to the national indoor championships in mid-March, and the crowds, 9,000-plus, were enthusiastic. So were the spectators in Dallas, Rochester and Tampa in previous tournaments. And it is not hard to understand why.

Unlike outdoor soccer, goals come quickly indoors. Unlike basketball, they do not come too quickly. Unlike hockey, they are readily apparent to the naked eye. Unlike pro football, strategy and tactics are simple, easily understood and, at the moment, in a state of flux.

"We are still working out how to use the boards and how to handle substitutions," says Ivan Toplak, coach of the San Jose Earthquakes. Toplak was an assistant coach for the Yugoslavian national team in the 1974 World Cup and was once a world class player himself. He is a quiet, thoughtful student of the game and a bit conservative, but his San Jose club seemed the most skillful of the teams at adapting to the special needs of indoor soccer.

"It is an all-round game," he said after the Earthquakes had demolished the Seattle Sounders 14-4 in Friday night's competition. "Everyone has to attack and everyone has to defend and they have to change in an instant."

In Paul Child, a 22-year-old British transplant from Birmingham who used to play for Aston Villa in England, Toplak has probably the most accomplished indoor soccer player in the world. Child

is extraordinarily good outdoors, too, but the indoor game fits him like a hand-made boot.

"You've got to go the course to know it," he says, "and I've played more indoors than most chaps."

Child is built perfectly for indoor soccer, a game made to order for economy-sized athletes. At 5'9" and 155 pounds, he is small enough for the requisite agility and big enough to pack a wallop when he blocks an opposing player into the boards, a tactic at which he excels. Cheerful and open, he has lived in the U.S. for three years. His wife is a registered riding teacher in England, and eventually they will have their own riding stable in Los Gatos, a small community near San Jose. He cleared 78 acres of woody land and built the stables with his own hands, so that the exigencies of soccer seem easy to him.

"I use the boards as well as anyone," he says. "But, then, back in England we used to play one day a week indoors. I played five a side in White City, in the *London Express* tournament, too. It's a different game and it takes time to learn how to use a wall pass."

Says Ron Newman, coach of the Dallas Tornado who grew up in England in the '30s, "We learned it playing on the cobblestones in the street. We played the ball off the walls of the houses along the lane and got to be quite good at it. Six a side isn't new, either. We used to do that for fun, mate. In the old days, if there weren't more than 12 players and we wanted a scrum, then we went at it six a side. So we all know the game. We

*continued*

*As L.A. attacks the Vancouver goal, fans get a closer look than they would outdoors.*





# INDOOR SOCCER *continued*

just don't know quite how to manage it with all the boards about on both sides and the ends. But that will come, won't it?"

Indeed it will. From the first mini-tournament in Dallas in January to the latest in San Francisco, the players have become increasingly accomplished at using the boards.

"It's a bit like billiards, now, isn't it?" says Johnny Moore, a diminutive striker for the Earthquakes who doubles as their assistant general manager and thinks nothing of working a 14-hour day. Moore may be the only indoor soccer player who ever scored a goal on a header. Since the goal is only four feet high, it is difficult for a tall man to get the ball down far enough. Moore is 5'5".

"It wasn't really a header," he says. "The ball was rolling down off the top of the goal and right in my face and I just nodded it into the net."

"We're learning the use of the boards," he continues. "The Earthquakes are lucky, since we have played more games indoors than most. So we know to stay away from the boards with

the ball and force the other chaps into them when they are on the attack. The boards play for you on defense. You put a man into the wood, there is no way he can control the ball."

There are no lulls in the indoor game, since the ball is always in play, unless it is kicked over the wall into the crowd, which happens rarely. Consequently, free substitution is a necessity in the game. No player, no matter how fit, can go for more than three or four minutes without being relieved.

"You can't play like you do outdoors," says Moore. "There, you know, you can cut down the pace of the game, make it slow and deliberate and find the time to rest yourself. Indoors, you have to make your mind up to it. The secret of the indoor game is that you go on for four minutes, run until you drop and then get the hell out of there."

Child agrees. "After three or four minutes, man, your legs go like Jell-O," he says. "Because there's no letting up, you see. I'm a striker and I've never thought of myself as a defensive player. I don't play defense that well, but in the indoor game I must get back as fast as I can go and at least get in someone's way, so that

I'm running all the time. I don't really mark anyone when I go back, but I hope I hinder them a bit."

The frantic pace makes the game more dangerous than the outdoor version, because there is much more physical contact with other players, the boards and the unforgiving floor. Indoor soccer is played on an artificial turf with a much shorter nap than the artificial turf used for football or baseball, and it is usually laid over either ice or cement, so that it has little or no give. The short, bristly nap is almost as abrasive as sandpaper, and soccer players, except for the goalie, don't wear pads.

"It's a good pitch in some ways," says Child. "The ball runs true, you know, and you have no trouble keeping your feet, but it's not a kind surface when you are put down. I fell over once in practice and got a great burn on my bum. All our lads have the rug burns on them, but I suppose there's no way it can be helped, is there?"

Child got another burn on his bum in the Earthquakes' game against the Seattle Sounders in the Cow Palace. A Sounder had taken advantage of one of the many quick turnarounds that mark the game and had broken free, looking as if he would have a one-on-one shot at the Earthquake goalie. But Child sprinted up from behind and threw himself at the ball, looking for all the world like Lou Brock sliding into second. He prevented an almost certain goal but, unfortunately, he was not sliding in the dirt around second base. The bristles of the artificial surface shaved a saucer-size layer of skin off his hip.

"It smarts a bit," he said after the game, regarding the angry red mark, "but you take that, don't you?"

Like most soccer players, Child looks like a distance runner in hard training. His body is lean, with no layer of fat between skin and muscle. Mirko Stojanovic, a Yugoslav who plays in the goal for San Jose, seemed chubby on the field. In the dressing room, shorn of the long pants, long-sleeved jersey and assorted sponge-rubber pads that protected him from rug burns as he flung himself back and forth across the 16-foot-wide goal mouth, he looked like a heavyweight boxer who had just drained himself to make the light-heavyweight limit.

"It is not a pleasant thing to have to do," he said, his eyes half closed from

*continued*



exhaustion; he had been bombarded by 68 shots. "But it is the thing I am paid to do. And I do it as well as I can. Indoors, it is difficult because the ball comes at you from everywhere. And when it goes by outside the goal, you cannot relax because it has not gone over the end line. It has hit the backboard and it is right back in front of you with so many people kicking it. It has changed the whole thing of playing in the goal. Now, when a goal shot is wide, I must go wide with it and trap the ball against the backboard so that it does not come back out to haunt me."

Moore sympathizes with Stojanovic. "It's bloody impossible to play in the goal," he says. "Forget the shots. When we played an exhibition game against Dallas, I reckon we kicked that kid they had in goal seven or eight times. Because, you see, he's always diving for the ball and there are people coming up, and I figure I myself kicked the poor lad at least three times. It's a sad thing for the man in the mouth of the goal."

Still, with all the physical contact and the kicks and the battering on the boards, indoor soccer remains a refreshingly decorous sport. There have been none of the disgraceful fights that mar hockey, and the crowds, unlike those at outdoor games in Italy and South America, accept adverse decisions without throwing things or attempting to assault the referee.

When a ball is kicked into the stands it is thrown back onto the field, and if it doesn't come back quickly the crowd chants, "Throw it back."

The bartender at the Hunt Club, a small watering hole in the Cow Palace, may have put his finger on the reason. After a long, inactive evening, he looked sadly over the bar at a lone customer and said, "It was a wasted night. We never should have opened. Everybody is here with his wife and kids. They don't drink. I wish rodeo was back. The rodeo brings in the real drinkers."

The only time a fight seemed imminent was in Dallas, when a Yugoslavian striker fired a cannon shot by a Yugoslavian goalkeeper and the two yelled at one another.

"Had nothing to do with the game," the goalkeeper said afterward. "We are from different peoples in Yugoslavia. His great-grandfather tried to kill my great-grandfather, and I have not forgotten

*continued*

that. It has to do with Yugoslavia, not soccer."

The three previous tournaments were decided on goal difference, with the winners of the first round playing the losers and the champion being the team that had outscored its opponents by a bigger edge in the two games. In Dallas and Rochester all four teams wound up 1-1, with Dallas and the New York Cosmos advancing on goal superiority. In the Tampa tournament, Miami and Tampa won both of their games, Tampa advancing on goal difference.

On the opening night in San Francisco, the Los Angeles and Seattle teams were beaten 15-4 and 14-4, respectively, and almost certainly eliminated. So the soccer owners changed the rules to accommodate the public.

San Jose challenged Vancouver to change the rules and play it in the final, since both teams had won overwhelmingly. Vancouver, which had a one-goal advantage, accepted gracefully.

"The people want us to play Vancouver," said Dick Berg, general manager of the Earthquakes. "Heck, the finals will be a knockout. Winner against winner. We're not an old sport. We can change to accommodate what the people want. The only reason we had to stick to the formula for the first three tournaments was that that's the way they played those tournaments. It's great when the teams are equal, because everyone is still alive the second day. But when it doesn't work, we're flexible."

And, sure enough, the game was reasonably close, with San Jose beating Vancouver 7-3, advancing the Earthquakes into the finals along with the winners of the three previous tournaments. Child, paying no attention to the bruise on his hip, scored three times for a total of seven in the two-day event.

The format change saved Terry Fisher, the Los Angeles coach, a further embarrassment, too. After Vancouver had lathered his Aztecs 15-4 in the first game on opening night, he lectured his players on their shortcomings.

"The most discouraging part of the game," he said, "was when I looked up and saw all the photographers squatted down behind our goal."

With time, experience and practice, the teams will eventually even out. It might be rugged on photographers; but it will be super for spectators.

**END**



# Parents, Kids Find Soccer Safer and Cheaper

By Kathleen Maxa  
Washington Star Staff Writer

Exactly when the first soccer ball was kicked in the United States is one Great Moment in Sports History which, alas, was never recorded. But ever since, the game's loyalists have been predicting the decline of America's own beloved brand of football and the rise of King Soccer.

And it appears — at least in Suburbia, the new center of soccer power — that baseball as well as football may be suffering from the effects of soccer's slowly growing popularity.

In Northern Virginia, where soccer has received its biggest boost in this area over the past five years, organized youth baseball seems to be feeling the biggest pinch. In Alexandria,

the number of youth baseball teams has dropped from 25 two seasons ago to 17 this summer, while the number of soccer teams have grown steadily.

IS THE reason soccer itself, or is it, as some people claim, the absence of a major league baseball team in Washington to stimulate the youth?

In January, 1974, a distributive education class at T. C. Williams High School in Alexandria conducted a phone survey of 530 residents of the Washington Metropolitan Area on their interest in seeing a major league baseball team return. Those sampled were broken into age groups. Asked, "How many games do you think you would attend per

year?" the majority of respondents under 21 replied "between one and five per year," compared with "between six and 12" for the majority of respondents over 21.

In compiling a facility-use study for 1975, the Fairfax County Recreation Department found that boys soccer (which is played year-round in the county) is its biggest sports program, boasting 1,796 teams and 25,503 young players, compared with 1,023 teams and 14,778 participants in baseball, and 214 teams and 5,775 participants in football.

"With soccer going year 'round now," said George Sachs, an FCC recreation specialist, "our biggest problem is enough field space for soccer."

STILL, YOUTH soccer teams and leagues are springing up as fast as sponsors can be found. The kids, it seems, can't start playing the game young enough. It's not uncommon to see five- and six-year-olds refining their kicking styles in their backyards in eager anticipation of the day they turn eight (the usual qualifying age for youth soccer leagues).

Meanwhile, bewildered dads may be seen standing forlornly in those same backyards, wondering whatever happened to the good old days when sons played catch or tossed footballs with their fathers. To kids who grow up playing soccer, developing that throwing arm seems as obsolete as learning to fox trot.

"Neither of my kids has ever played organized baseball," said an Arlington father of eight- and 10-year-old sons. "By the time I was eight, I was a veteran baseball player."

Youth soccer, probably even more than youth baseball and football, has been fostered by parents. "Soccer is not a sport kids normally gravitate to," said Clarence Dade, director of the Jelleff's Boys Club in Washington. "There is no influence from television and up to now there have been very few native American star soccer players for kids to emulate. But if the kids are stimulated through skill clinics and organized programs they will take it up."

See SOCCER, D-5





# SOCCER

Continued From D-1

**TWO OF** the key reasons why adults have encouraged youngsters in soccer is cost and safety. While the kids say they prefer soccer to football or baseball because it is fast moving, everyone gets to play and physical size doesn't matter, adults see that the cost of equipping a youngster in soccer is far below football and even baseball and that the risk of serious injury seems lower, too. "I won't let my kids play football," said one Arlington mother, "But I don't have that fear of serious injury with soccer."

Jim Goheen, manager of Irving's Sports Shop in Rockville, who noted that football equipment sales for 1975 have dropped off by about one-third in his store, offered this explanation: "Definitely the reason football has fallen off is because of the economy. It would cost about \$60 to outfit the average youngster for football, as opposed to about \$10 for soccer — \$29 top price, depending on the shoes."

"Cost is a very important factor in determining what sports to offer in the schools," said Bill Savage, athletic supervisor for Fairfax County Schools. "Our local schools have to generate the money to pay for equipment and supplies in any sport."

**"FOOTBALL IS** very expensive. We have seven coaches per team because of the contact involved. You have to have greater supervision." And then there is the cost of equipping the usual 40-45 players that make up a high school football team."

Still most athletic administrators, like Savage, defend football's enormous cost because they say the sport

pays for itself. "In our county," Savage said, "Football gate receipts support football, soccer, cross country, field hockey, golf, gymnastics, indoor track, softball, baseball, tennis, track and field and, to some extent, wrestling."

This year Fairfax County High Schools are expanding their soccer programs from varsity and junior varsity teams to an increased emphasis on intramural soccer and girls' soccer.

Baseball, on the other hand, while still more expensive to equip than soccer, is not a revenue producer in the schools.

**THERE'S NO** question, orthopedists say, that the injuries sustained in soccer tend to be less serious than those suffered by football players.

"Not only is the injury rate in soccer much lower (than football), merely from the standpoint that there isn't as much physical contact," said Dr. P. M. Palumbo, Jr., an orthopedist and team physician for the Washington Redskins, "but the intensity of injury is lower, too. In soccer, most of the injuries are to the knee, as with football. But the type of injury is somewhat different. The injuries seen more commonly in soccer are milder degrees of sprains than we see in football and torn cartilages in the knee. Muscle strains in the lower extremities are also common in soccer. But in football, major ligament tears are more common. You seldom see a severe tear of ligaments in soccer."

"I don't think you should encourage anybody to play football," said one leading local orthopedist. "There are just too many disabling injuries. All that equipment gives them a false sense of security and probably if no

one wore any the injuries would be fewer."

**BASEBALL INJURIES**, for the most part, tend to be acute injuries, such as those received when a player is hit with a bat or ball.

"Occasionally you'll see elbows injured when kids start Little League too early," added Dr. Stanford Lavine, an orthopedist and team physician for the Washington Bullets.

So far, baseball and football coaches are reluctant to predict what effect youth soccer's growth will have on the future of their respective sports.

In Fairfax County, an athletic-interest survey (for both intramural and interscholastic sports) of 42,000 high school students conducted last year, found more boys planning to participate in football program (4,742) than any sport, compared with baseball in which 2,755 boys said they planned to participate and 2210 who planned to play soccer.

While soccer's showing as a poor third in this survey may be accounted for by the fact that the bulk of Fairfax County's young soccer players are not even high school age yet, Athletic Supervisor Savage pointed out that the survey could also be interpreted to read that the boy who plays youth soccer may be ready for a change in sport by the time he reaches high school, particularly if the youngster has the physical size to play basketball or football.

But if more and more youngsters grow up learning to kick before they can throw or pass the dilution of the quality of either football or baseball would seem inevitable. Meanwhile, football and baseball coaches cling to the hope that soccer's popularity has peaked — or at least will peak very shortly.





# Americans Have Adopted Soccer, Making It Their Fastest-Growing Team Sport

Continued From Page 1

behind the counter didn't know what I was talking about; he asked me if I meant a hockey puck. Last year that store sold nearly \$1 million worth of soccer balls, equipment and uniforms."

As recently as three years ago Hank Eichin, the soccer coach at the University of Wisconsin's Green Bay campus, saw a sign in a Colorado Springs department store advertising "soccer" balls. But such a spelling is unlikely now.

Dave Krause, the owner of Wolf's Sporting Goods in Rockville Centre, L.I., reports that in the first six months of 1977 he sold 3,000 soccer balls; in 1971 he sold a total of 1,200. Krause says that "soccer is kicking Little League baseball in the teeth."

The major growth of the sport is on the youth and professional levels, where more people are playing and watching the game than ever.

## A Huge Crowd and a Photo

On June 19 a North American Soccer League game between Tampa Bay and the Cosmos drew 62,394 fans to Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J. The impact of the crowd was such that Mike Martin, the general manager of the Cosmos, was shivering with excitement when he announced the attendance. The following day The New York Times ran a photograph of the crowd, a photograph that John Chaffetz, the owner of the Los Angeles Aztecs, said "brought tears to my eyes."

The following Sunday, a game between the Aztecs and the Cosmos attracted 57,191 paying customers to Giants Stadium, outdrawing a Yankees-Red Sox baseball game at Yankee Stadium.

"We didn't drink champagne on that one, because by then it was old hat," joked Phil Woosnam, the N.A.S.L. commissioner.

On the youth level the figures are more impressive. In 1964, when Stierle founded his American Youth Soccer Organization, he had nine teams. He expects 8,750 teams by October. In 1972, when Don Greer founded the rival United States Youth Soccer Association, he had 30,000 youngsters enrolled. This year he has 228,000.

The combined registration figures of these organizations show that there are 350,000 youths 18 and under playing organized soccer in the United States, and there are estimates that the number runs higher than a million when youngsters who kick the ball around in unaffiliated recreation leagues are counted.

"But after that crowd of 62,000 hit Giants Stadium all those figures become ancient history," cautions Kurt Lamm, general secretary of the United States Soccer Federation. "That crowd will double the number of participants. When they write the history of soccer in this country, that afternoon will be Day One in all the books."

Clive Toye, former president of the Cosmos, thinks that the base of youth soccer will be the key to the sport's success in coming years. Toye calls the youth boom "just like a sausage machine."



Girls playing soccer in Manassas, L.I. Partly because soccer has a low injury rate and requires minimal equipment, it is popular with youngsters.

"We're squeezing so many kids in at the bottom, it'll take a few years for the numbers to show up at the college and pro levels," he said.

There are, however, already some explanations for the growth of soccer among American youngsters:

① There are no size requirements. Unlike basketball or football, soccer offers no natural advantage for the tall or bulky child. Girls can play soccer as easily as boys, and organized leagues encourage them to do so.

② Soccer is inexpensive to play. Unlike hockey or football, in which expensive protective padding is needed, soccer requires only a ball. A ball that will survive two years of constant play costs about \$15.

③ Soccer is a wonderful conditioner. The primary action is running. "Soccer players do it for 90 minutes," is a slogan of the N.A.S.L.

④ There is a very low incidence of injury, especially compared with football and hockey. This is attractive to parents. Ma McMahon of Manassas, whose 12-year-old son, Chris, plays soccer, said that she would not let Chris play football, because of the risk of injury.

⑤ Youths do not find soccer boring. Said 12-year-old Walter Distler of Manassas: "Baseball is boring. You gotta wait so long in the outfield to touch the ball that you feel like sitting down during the game. In soccer, you can be like the quarterback every time you kick the ball, and you can get the ball just by running to it."

⑥ Because the action is continuous, there is an absence of the "Little League parent" syndrome. It's virtually impossible for a coach to stop the action and give instructions to the players, as so often happens in youth baseball, basketball and football leagues.

Consequently, few kids are "turned off" from the sport by the coaches and the parents, as often happens in the other sports.

⑦ It is a team game, which helps in the socialization process. In addition, it is the international game, which gives children a sense of the world community.

⑧ Soccer is very chic now. The sport has its greatest appeal in the suburban, white, upwardly mobile segment of society, where being chic is sometimes paramount. Parents are enrolling their children in soccer programs now, just as this segment of society enrolled its children in Little League baseball programs in the 1950's and 60's, when baseball was the chic suburban team sport.

The areas where soccer is growing fastest include the Pacific Northwest, California, Texas, Florida, Minnesota, northern Virginia and suburban New York. In Greece, N.Y., a suburb of Rochester, where there were once four baseball diamonds and no soccer fields at a neighborhood park, there are now three soccer fields and only one surviving baseball diamond.

And the level of talent and sophistication among the young American soccer players is interesting.

Two years ago a report came out of Dade County in Florida that a Swedish exchange student had been cut from a scholastic soccer team because he couldn't beat out the American youths. Ten years ago, when soccer was still largely an "immigrant" sport, that Sweden would have been the team's star player.

Don Greer, from Castro Valley, Calif., tells of officiating a soccer match between teams of 12-year-olds last year and wondering why one team used a formation that didn't employ an outside forward.

"Don't you recognize the 4-2-4 offense?" one 12-year old asked Greer, leaving the adult momentarily speechless.

What Toye calls the "sausage machine" effect is beginning to squeeze itself into the scholastic arena. In 1971 there were 2,217 high schools fielding soccer teams. In 1976 the number was 5,794.

Ron Gilbert, soccer coach at Brandywine High School in Delaware, remembered that when he moved to Delaware in 1961 there were only five high

schools in the state with soccer programs.

"Now," he says, "32 of the 39 high schools in the state have soccer programs, and five of those that don't are in the middle of Wilmington."

## Lack of Inner-City Growth

These figures reflect the sport's lack of growth in the inner-city area. Regionally, only the Midwest, where football still is king, and such sparsely populated states as Wyoming, Idaho and South Carolina—where there are few adults qualified to teach the game, since there are few adults who have been exposed to it—have resisted the boom. The most startling lack of growth, however, is in the inner city.

"If you're talking about blacks in soccer," says Hans Stierle, "out of our 125,000 registered players only a handful are black, an insignificant percentage."

There are two basic reasons for this: One, the inner-city youth looks to high-paying professional sports such as basketball and football for upward mobility out of the ghetto. Two, soccer isn't televised nationally on a regular basis yet, and many inner-city residents see the world beyond their neighborhoods only through television.

It is perhaps strange that the cities where the N.A.S.L. has its most consistently high attendance—Seattle; Portland, Ore.; Bloomington, Minn.; Tampa, Fla.; Dallas—are what Kurt Lamm calls "absolutely American cities." Cities such as Chicago and Toronto, where large ethnic populations were supposed to have guaranteed large crowds, have not drawn well.

Toronto, where the team is made up almost entirely of Croatians, averages only 5,000 fans a game, far under the league average of 13,300. After a recent game with the Cosmos had drawn 22,000 fans, a spokesman for the Toronto team said:

"As far as I'm concerned, our season just ended. We have 14 games left, but the rest of them will be watched by the usual 5,000 Croatians."

## Chicago Team Looks to Suburbs

Similarly, the Chicago franchise is doing poorly, averaging only 5,200 fans a game.

"We don't seem to be able to pull the ethnic groups together," said George Fishwick, a team vice president.

Jim Walker, the general manager, said that another problem was the stadium, which is in the city.

"We're going to have to move to a suburban stadium," Walker said. "Our fans come from the suburbs, and they don't want to drive to the city."

Clearly, the Cosmos have been the success story of the league. Their attendance figures, helped by an advertising budget of more than \$350,000 so far this season, have given the

N.A.S.L. credibility nationwide despite weak franchises such as Connecticut and Rochester, which regularly attract fewer than 5,000 fans. Promoting their star players, such as Pele, Franz Beckenbauer and Giorgio Chinaglia, the Cosmos have all but certified the popularity of a sport that might have gone unnoticed on the professional level had the huge crowds been drawn instead to Seattle or Portland.

"You have to do it in New York," said Woosnam, whose reaction to the crowd of 62,000 in Giants Stadium was an immediate, unspoken "Jackpot." Woosnam says:

"New York is the key. You have to sell the New York media and Madison Avenue. You can only do that with numbers, and the Cosmos gave us the numbers."

Woosnam heartily predicts that "in as few as five years, but in no more than 10, soccer will become the biggest pro sport in this country, bigger than football."

But pro soccer still has a long road to travel. The Cosmos are only two years removed from the rock-

studded field on Randall's Island. Only last year there were 54 persons watching the sudden-death shootout that concluded the Connecticut-San Antonio game after a one-day postponement due to heavy rain and darkness. Only one day before the Cosmos drew 62,000 to Giants Stadium, an American Soccer League game between two California franchises had drawn 250. The average N.A.S.L. crowd of 13,300 is nothing special, and the average A.S.L. crowd of 2,700 is embarrassing to a sport with goals so lofty.

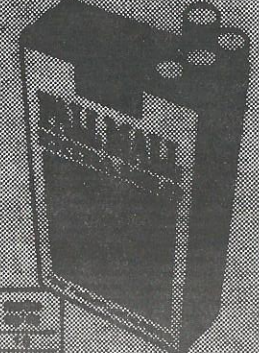
The point is, of course, that the coronation of professional soccer is premature.

Clive Toye tells the story of the time in 1971 when he scheduled the first Cosmos Fan Club meeting at the Roosevelt Hotel. He showed up with two members of his staff and eagerly awaited the arrival of the fan club. Two members of the fan club showed up. There were only two members of the fan club.

"That's how we began," Toye says, "and we won't forget it."

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40% tobacco	6	0.1
30% tobacco	5	0.1
20% tobacco	4	0.1
10% tobacco	3	0.1
0% tobacco	2	0.1



# Is Soccer America's Game of Tomorrow?

It's already the No. 1 game in most of the world, and now, here in South Florida, thousands of boys — and girls — are beginning to discover why. . . By William Montalbano/Photography by Marlin Levison

In pre-teen flag football at Miami Shores the blue shirts are steadily advancing on the green shirts. On the sidelines two should-be-proud fathers are wool-gathering.

"It's just not the same, is it?"

"Sure isn't. I can't get excited about it."

"Yeah. I wish the soccer season would start."

"You don't have to huddle up and you don't have to wait for the pitch. It moves, Dad, it moves all the time." — Dennis Montalbano, 10, fullback.

"It's a fun game. You run a lot and get into shape." — Helen Rassi, 10, fullback.

"The teams from Arizona, Ohio, Maryland, Virginia and New Jersey will be arriving at different times during the day. The Mexicans are coming together on one flight. The kids from Canada should be in by chartered jet around midnight Christmas night." — Wayne Martin, mulling the logistics of the Junior Orange Bowl Soccer Tournament; 94 teams, boys and girls 10 to 16, beginning Saturday.

**N**o offense, football, but there is a heresy blowing in the Christmas wind.

It is called soccer. And for thousands of kids all over South Florida it is proving a new-found, quickly embraced kick in the grass.

South Florida is one of dozens of metropolitan areas across the United States where soccer is in breathless bloom as a major youth sport.

There are, believe it or not, 10-year-old center forwards in this town who have played in the Orange Bowl often enough to know they prefer grass to a carpet, and fifth-grade goalkeepers who can discourse with aplomb on the relative merits of hamburgers served visiting teams in Cape Coral, Fla., and Toronto, Ont.

This is the corn-flakes-and-peanut-butter brigade, mind you, not the children of newly arrived immigrants, but bedrock all-American kids weaned on Florida sunshine and the Miami Dolphins.

There is something else. Their sisters are playing the game, too, in increasing numbers. And playing it well.

If you haven't passed a South Florida playground lately you may remember soccer as a game everybody else in the world but us is crazy about.

In a good year, with an all-out effort, a few ringers and a little luck, maybe the U.S. Olympic team can stagger past Haiti. Putting an

American team on the same field as teams from giants like Brazil, Holland, Uruguay or North Korea is pitting Mickey Mouse against King Kong.

Soccer has been around in the United States for a long time, but hardly anybody has noticed. Beyond high school and college teams, where soccer has traditionally been the athletic refuge of those not good enough to play football, soccer was principally an ethnic Sunday morning diversion for those who remembered spring in Prague or Hamburg or yearned for the playing fields of Buenos Aires.

Although the presence of a player like Pele can excite a passing ripple of national interest, professional soccer is played mostly to empty seats in the United States. Pele is great. But Pele, playing, will never get as much type as Larry Csonka, not playing.

But don't go away. With runaway growth, the quality of grass roots soccer as played in South Florida and other American hotbeds is improving by corner kicks and penalty shots. The future seems so bright that the men who make youth soccer go share a quiet dream none of them would have dared entertain a few years ago: Maybe in another decade a team of American Johnnies will take on Jacques and Johan, Juanito and Joao and come home a winner.

Already a South Florida father who surrenders himself to a winter of football on the tube does so only at the peril of losing athletic touch with his kids. And maybe even his wife.

The kids love soccer because it is fast and because it does not require great size or strength. Fitness, agility and concentration are most important. Their mothers are flocking to the game because it is easy to understand and because the risk of severe injury is remote.

"It is a fast, controlled game, and it is not violent. The violence is directed against the ball, not the other guy," says Miami Toros coach Greg Meyers, a logical leading advocate of local youth soccer. "Take a woman to a soccer game and inside 20 minutes she's yelling. In football, it might be two years before she knew what first and 10 meant."

"When I first started coaching soccer and something went wrong on a corner kick I'd call

**Right: Kevin Connolly goes for the ball during a practice game at Miami Shores Soccer Club. At 13, Kevin is already a well-traveled player: He recently won the National Soccer Skills competition at San Jose, Calif., and played for the Miami-Dade Soccer Club's Under-14 team in Toronto**



WILLIAM MONTALBANO is The Herald's Latin-America correspondent, and an unrepentant soccer fan.



## SOCCER

Continued

up Gus and say, 'Hey, what happened?' — Biscayne's Ralph Foster, one of Dade County's most senior and winningest coaches. "We all got lured into this thing to begin with because Gus was looking around for competition." — Coral Park's Lou Confessore, at 37 another of Dade County's soccer oldtimers.

Gary Gussman, physical education instructor at Miami Shores elementary, "the grand old man of Dade County youth soccer," (he winces at that) has sweated through some rough games.

Few have been as tense as the 1975 under-10 state championship game against Key Biscayne. Trailing 2-0 after the first half, Miami Shores battled back to tie at the end of regulation time. Two extra periods were scoreless and Miami Shores finally won on penalty-kick tie breakers.

Gussman abandoned the jubilation on his own bench to seek out a gritty Key Biscayne fullback who, playing the game of his life, had given the Miami Shores attack fits all afternoon and then, in defeat, seemed midway between exhaustion and tears.

"Son, you screwed us up all afternoon. You played a super game," said Gussman.

Gary Gussman is one of those coaches to whom the game is important — he and Ralph Foster each had three state championships this year — but the sport matters most.

Gussman, 48, played soccer with Army teams in Germany after World War II. When he came to Miami Shores in the late 1950s he found a soccer desert. For a time he was the only American playing on a German-American team in Hollywood.

What began as classroom vs. classroom at Miami Shores soon spread to the town community center as something to do before the football season. (Today the kids at Miami Shores play lacrosse to get into shape for soccer.)

Little by little the gospel according to Gussman won new converts around Dade County. Gussman and fellow coach Glen O'Hearn would visit local parks and put on demonstrations for kids and coaches. They were looking for other people to play. By 1964 there was a recreation league along with an oldtimer adult league populated mostly by Latin Americans, and soccer had begun to spread to schools.

"I once played on a team here with 13 different nationalities represented. I guess the camaraderie got into my blood," says Gussman, whose teams have been yearly visitors to the Robbie Invitational Tournament in Toronto. He is now dreaming of taking a kids' team to Ireland.

"The kids take to soccer like crazy. It is easy to play and easy to teach, an activity for total development. You don't have to be the monster of football or the giant of basketball. I guess I identified with the sport at first being a small guy myself."

The recent growth of the sport among South Florida kids leaves him delightfully stunned.

"It's gone way beyond me now. I'm not a promoter, I prefer coaching. Soccer has grown much we have outstripped the capacity to provide officials. We have been running clinics for high school and junior college players to train them as officials.

"As big as we are, there are places that leave us standing still in numbers. In quality



Gary Gussman is the "grand old man" of Dade County youth soccer. "The game has grown so much," he says, "we have outstripped capacity to provide officials"

we are as good as anybody. An English sports-writer once wrote that if the Americans ever take soccer seriously they could be world champs in five years. I believe it."

"I planned it that way." — Coach Randy Netlow, wryly, after his under-14 team gasped to a 1-1 tie with one second left to play and won the championship from a Canadian team in overtime at the Robbie Invitational Tournament.

"One of the high schools in Dade County has a Swedish exchange student this year who couldn't make the varsity soccer team. Ten years ago he'd have known more than the coach." — Lou Confessore of Coral Park.

**T**he best soccer in the world is played in Europe and South America, where the game, aside from being a sport, is a way of life and nearly a religion.

The South Americans are masters of skill — kicking, shooting, passing, ball control. The Europeans are more disciplined and tend to run more.

South Florida kids are being taught an amalgam of the two different styles. Kevin Connolly, a 13-year-old from Miami Shores, won the national skills championship in his age group in competition at San Jose, Calif. Rafael Jiminez, a 9-year-old goal-keeper at Coral Park, is the state skills champ of his age group.

Besides a flock of recreation league state championships, South Florida kids showed well in regional championships at New Orleans last winter. Of five local teams invited to the Robbie Tournament last summer — two boys' and three girls' teams — one won the championship, a second lost in the finals and a third was eliminated in the semi-finals in round robin competition between teams from the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Coral Gables, whose soccer is leavened by its own and Key Biscayne's playground veterans, is currently high school state champ. Strong soccer teams at the Dade Junior Colleges and at Florida International University profit from the graduates of local youth soccer, and a number of South Florida players are starring at universities around the country.

"It used to be when we heard we were going to play Mexico in a tournament we got

scared. Now they are just another team," says Gussman.

Soccer is a fast and subtle game, a bit like chess. The ball is always in play, never hidden. Scores are seldom high, the action always stops when the ball goes out of bounds.

There are 11 men (or women) on a side. Only the two goalkeepers may touch the ball with their hands. The others strike the black and white ball with the feet, head or chest toward the other goal.

"You can only do so much coaching in soccer," says Key Biscayne's Ralph Foster. "About 70 per cent is individual effort. It is a great game for intelligent kids who like to think and move. You can't call time out and tell them what play to call, they must learn to work together."

A typical soccer team breaks down into a front line for both offense and defense, and a three or four man line in front of the goalie. The action is so fluid that, as the game is played professionally in Europe and South America, everyone but the goalie is a potential scorer.

Position names may change from country to country and team to team, but the responsibilities are the same. The two outside men in the front line, called wings or outsides, bring the ball down the field and move it into the center. The players in the center of the front line are called insides or strikers. They score most of the goals.

The link men in the center of the field are called halfbacks or midfielders. The middle man in the center line is sometimes called the rover. Defensemen, or, more commonly, fullbacks, must ward off the attack. If a team plays with four fullbacks, the fourth man, who plays behind the other three, is known as the sweeper. Typical alignments are 4-2-4, 4-3-3, 4-2-3-1. A once popular 5-3-2 is not seen much anymore.

Lou Confessore is developing a system to explain the game to parental soccer illiterates, particularly those who see the world in terms of Eagles, Rams, Lions and Vikings.

The Confessore System: "The wings are like wide receivers. They must be able to fly, and to control the ball. The strikers are the running backs; they punch across the goals. They should be big, fast and aggressive.

"Your midfielders or link men are like modified quarterbacks on offense. They distribute the ball. On defense they are like linebackers, helping out. They run all the time and they need to be good, all-around athletes.

"The two outside or wing fullbacks are like cornerbacks. They play the wings man-to-man. Your center fullback, or stopper, is like a strong safety. He plays the attacking strikers head-on. Physically, fullbacks need to have about the same characteristics as the strikers. They are playing against one another all the time.

"Your sweeper is the free safety. He has no man-to-man responsibility. He needs to be a super kid who understands what goes on in front of him and can read the attack. His head is more important than his size.

"The goalkeeper needs to be a special kind of kid who is able to concentrate and to tolerate the extremes of going flaky from boredom and slaphappy from getting shot at. Goalkeepers are to be loved, not yelled at."

"Another two or three years, people who like soccer won't be a minority anymore." — Greg Meyers.

"Things are going crazy. New teams are





## SOCCER

Continued

popping up everywhere. We may double again within a year." — Wayne Martin, commissioner, Dade Youth Soccer Association.

Dick Fries, who was drawn into youth soccer six years ago by fullback and halfback sons at Cutler Ridge, thinks the boom hit about three years ago.

"Not so long ago there were perhaps 120 kids of all ages playing youth soccer in Dade County. Now there are upward of 7,500 or perhaps even more, who knows?"

Wayne Martin, who succeeded Fries as commissioner of the Dade Youth Soccer Association, estimates there are now 200 youth soccer teams in Dade County for kids between 7 and 16. There are four different youth soccer associations. The DYSA, the largest, counts 114 teams, of which 30 are girls' teams.

"Some clubs play boys and girls on the same team," says Martin. "Nobody cares. If a club is big enough for a girls' team so much the better. If not, we let the girls play anyway."

Bill Sheldon, co-chairman with Martin of the Junior Orange Bowl Tournament opening this weekend, estimates there are 8,000 pre-college kids playing organized league soccer in South Florida, not counting recreation department and intramural programs.

**D**ade County is the hotbed — perhaps half of all the youth soccer in Florida is played here. But the fever is spreading.

"Coral Springs in northwest Broward regis-

tered 600 kids for soccer the first day, and the Greater Hollywood Soccer League has about 1,000 kids playing. This year for the first time the game is moving into Palm Beach County," says Sheldon.

Perhaps the biggest soccer club in Dade belongs to Palm Springs, with about 600 players. Dade soccer veterans like Miami Shores, Coral Gables, Key Biscayne, Cutler Ridge and Coral Park boast healthy and growing clubs of between 200 and 300 members each.

Dick Fries remembers when Cutler Ridge had two traveling teams. It now has 220 players. Not too long ago, Ralph Foster coached one team on Key Biscayne, 23 boys. Last year Key Biscayne fielded 14 teams, 10 boys', four girls'.

Many clubs begin organized league competition for seven-year-old boys and for girls of nine or 10. A player advances every two years into a new age division, usually spending alternate years on a junior varsity or 'b' team at the age level to which he has just arrived.

South Florida enthusiasm is just one piece of a growing national soccer ferment. St. Louis, Boston, Denver, the Washington D.C. suburbs, New Jersey, Texas and the West Coast north of San Francisco are all showing enormous overnight gains in youth soccer. Soccer buff Sheldon brandishes a press cutting from Boston which says that 150 kids played football this fall and 900 played soccer in the Wellesley, Mass., recreation program. Like most areas where youth soccer is growing, Wellesley is suburban and white.

Despite Miami's Latin American flavor, the impetus for grass roots soccer growth has come

from such white upper middle class enclaves as Miami Shores, Key Biscayne and Coral Gables.

Outsiders often imagine South Florida produces good soccer teams because of its large Cuban population. A misconception. Baseball is the Cuban national sport. Soccer madness does not become overwhelming until you reach the South American continent.

The growing image of soccer as a game for privileged suburban kids is disturbing to some of the senior coaches around Dade County.

"We are trying to break into black areas," says Lou Confessore, "but the black coaches don't know any more about the game than the white ones did a few years ago. We need to get black college kids to go back and coach. It is a slow process — a labor of love."

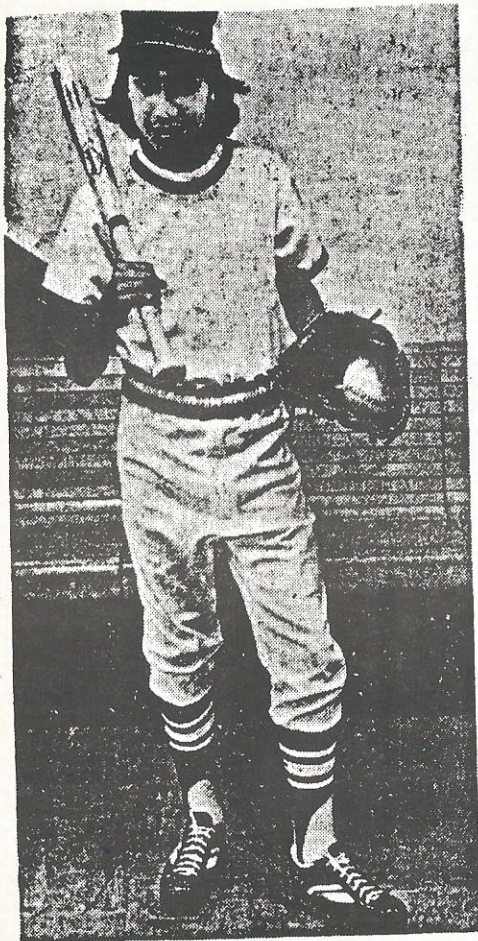
**T**hanks to South Florida's climate, the youth soccer season begins here in December. In the Mid-Atlantic states soccer is a fall sport and in Canada it is played in the summer.

Whether climate is an advantage will become apparent beginning next weekend when local youth soccer goes big time with the 94-team Junior Orange Bowl featuring teams from five states, Canada and Mexico.

"Believe it or not we have already had inquiries from European and South American youth teams for next year's tournament," says Sheldon.

For a growing legion of South Florida kids who are learning to their delight that a ball is something to kick as well as to catch, it looks very much as though the soccer best is yet to come.





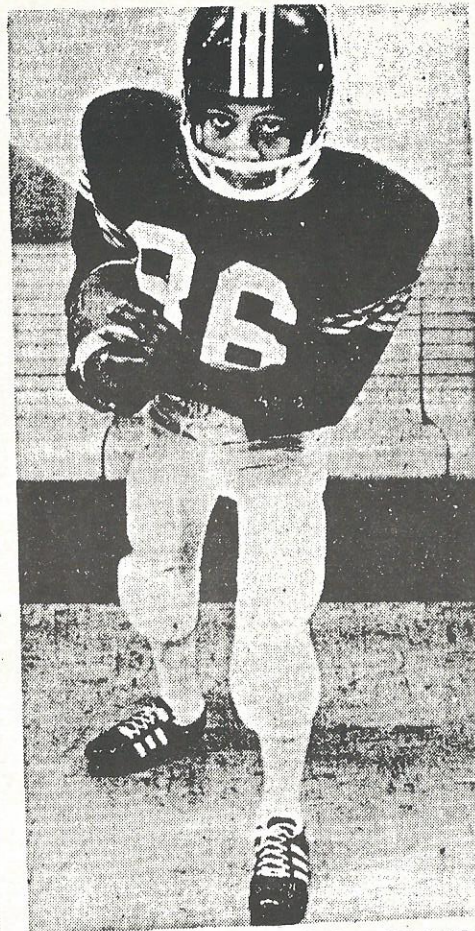
**\$65.49**

Ralph Quintanilla models a complete baseball uniform (supplied by The Sportsman) at a cost of \$65.49. Included are a cap (\$3.49), uniform (\$18), socks (\$2), shoes (\$14), glove (\$20), wood bat (\$5), fielder's glove (\$20) and official Little League baseball (\$3).



**\$45.89**

David Jones models a complete soccer uniform (supplied by Irvings Sports Shop) at a cost of \$45.89. It is composed of far less equipment than needed by baseball and football players. Included are a jersey (\$9.99), shorts (\$4.50), shoes (\$13.95) and the soccer ball which is priced at \$10.95 for the junior league version.



**\$89.32**

Anthony Washington models a complete football uniform (supplied by Irvings Sports Shop) at a cost of \$89.32. Included are shoulder pads (\$24.95), helmet (\$8.99), pants with knee pads (\$14.99), jersey (\$8.99), socks (\$2.50), shoes (\$17.95) and ball (\$14.95).

—Washington Star Photographer Randolph Rount

Washington Star  
**Sports**  
 • Finance • Comics  
 • Classified  
 SECTION D  
 TUESDAY  
 NOVEMBER 4, 1975



**A**s major sports centers go in this country, Los Angeles might be described as typical. It has a pro football team, a pro basketball team, a pro hockey team.

Two major league baseball teams inhabit the area, which also has bigtime college football, basketball and track. Pro golf regularly visits the city, now enriched by pro tennis and pro volleyball teams.

Boxing occurs regularly, as does wrestling. All year-round, the roar is heard of stock cars, rally cars, dragsters and motorbikes. Rodeo riders, roller skaters and ice skaters come through town, and, of course, the horses are standing on the ledge of racing 24 hours.

This preface is offered with the idea of dramatizing the bravery of the North American Soccer League, trying desperately to expand the sale of this form of entertainment in precincts already up to their shorts in sports.

It is a matter of great frustration to those who follow and sponsor the game that its acceptance is so slow on this continent when, for generations, it has been the No. 1 pastime on the rest of the planet.

Unmistakably, soccer is a fine game, demanding skill, balance and endurance. Also, in order to play it, one needn't weigh 260 pounds, rise 7 feet, or hit with the impact of a shore patrol's stick.

When the late Abe Saperstein formed the late American Basketball League (not to be confused with the current but tottering American Basketball Association), he promised to feature average-looking players.

"The public is tired of looking at freaks," said Saperstein, who stood 5-feet-2. "It wants people it can identify with."

The fact the ABL went bust may have indicated the public indeed is partial to freaks, explaining the hard struggle of soccer in North America. But even if the sport isn't the most successful here, it is clearly the gamest. It has been fighting for years to establish a beachhead. It loses its bladder each season, but, undaunted, it keeps coming back.

#### Don't Look Now . . .

And, steadily, its base keeps broadening. The North American Soccer League has expanded to 20 teams. Also, at the last inspection, 800,000 kids in North America were playing soccer in high schools, prep schools, colleges and junior leagues.

In some institutions, it has replaced football—for two reasons. The first is economic. The second is safety. The incidence

*Mel Durslag is a regular columnist for The Sporting News and a contributing editor to TV Guide.*

# Is Soccer Kicking Around Football?

Maybe it's about time for a more "civilized" national sport.

by Mel Durslag

Globe Photos



Mainliner April



## "This is a marvelous game. Do you realize that you can outfit a whole soccer team for what it costs to dress one professional football player?"

of broken collarbones, torn ligaments and tooth departure is noticeably less in soccer, which is known to incite fans to outrageous deeds, but isn't dangerous on the field.

The history of big-time pro soccer on this continent is one of tender pathos, particularly for those who have backed it with cash. Conversant with the game's immensity in Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa, promoters were so certain in 1967 that it would draw in North America and that millions could be heisted from television that they formed two leagues, embracing 22 teams.

Either great confidence was vested in the sport, or great lunacy existed among its sponsors, because the leagues, amazingly, overlapped in five cities.

Proprietor of one late franchise, Jack Kent Cooke, who went on to own the Los Angeles Lakers, Los Angeles Kings and 71 percent of the Washington Redskins, said rapturously of soccer:

"This is a marvelous game. Do you realize that you can outfit a whole soccer team for what it costs to dress one professional football player?"

Booking his games in the Rose Bowl (capacity 106,000), Cooke didn't find soccer so marvelous when he looked at an audience one night of 1251, of whom only 600 were paid.

When Ralph Wilson, part owner of the Detroit franchise, telephoned the office to inquire about business, he was told:

"Losses are up."

Zealously, CBS plunged into soccer, reasonably sure that it could be sold to a public thirsting for sports on TV.

When the rubble was cleared at the end of 1968, CBS had lost \$2 million on soccer and had bade it *bon voyage*. The owners had parted with \$20 million, and only six teams remained.

So you can see what the journey back has encompassed. It has been slow, painful and expensive, but then history teaches us that suffering is a prime propellant.

### Grown in a Football Culture

Played on this continent between April and August, soccer has the disadvantage of bucking baseball—and being judged by football. Raised in a football culture that



Photo: Pat Canova

now has lived some 85 years, many American viewers watching soccer on TV keep waiting for someone to knock down the outside left, or the right fullback.

When the goalie fields the ball and no one creams him, a lot of viewers are disappointed. They go away grumbling, "There's a game that *should* be played in short pants."

It also is a fact that most pro players in North America today are foreigners whose names don't mean much to local fans. The faster homegrown talent is developed and brought into the league, the better it will be for attendance.

Nor will the coaches be pained. Because of language problems, coaches can communicate with most of their players today only through interpreters. That isn't easy when one has a squad comprised of Portuguese, Mexican, Yugoslavian, Hungarian and German performers.

It's almost like coaching placekickers in the National Football League. Don Shula of Miami has told the story for years about the first field goal booted by Garo Yepremian, the celebrated Cypriot. Coming off the field, Yepremian shouted ecstatically:

"I keek a touchdown!"

Many officials in the North American Soccer League suspect that recent expansion to 20 teams can be ascribed, in part, to a growing interest here in the World Cup, which is even larger in scope than the Olympics.

With pardonable pride, the National Football League keeps pointing to its Super Bowl TV audience of 65 million.

The last World Cup was seen by 800 million. Among them was a sizable segment of Americans and Canadians who paid up to \$10 for the privilege of watching in theaters.

Those who have adopted the game here are vocal, if not fanatical, as most converts are. Great soccer cults have burgeoned in such places as San Jose, Portland, Tampa, Seattle and Vancouver. They have T-shirts, bumper stickers and posters espousing the virtues of their sport, and they engage detractors in the press in raucous arguments.

But while such loyalty is to be admired, it doesn't assure that soccer has the situation comfortably in hand on this continent. Most franchises lose and face a continuing problem of enlisting fresh investors.

As an offering to the game last year, the New York Cosmos, with the help of their rivals, consummated a deal to bring Pele to the North American League.

A former shoemaker from a small village in Brazil, Pele rose to Sugar Loaf heights and accumulated vast riches as a soccer demigod. He had retired, presumably to scout the girls at Ipanema, when a stroke of Yankee ingenuity, keyed to a tax-free corporation deal set up in Bermuda, brought him back to the pits.

Predictably, he stirred crowds and focused attention on the game, as his sponsors had hoped. CBS, making a triumphal return to soccer, televised his first appearance.

But Pele alone isn't the antibiotic that will deliver matchless health to soccer in North America. The road ahead is jagged, because, as pointed out above, nobody gets blindsided, or clothes-lined, or gang tackled.

In this country, it takes a while to develop a taste for a game of such civility. ■



## Soccer Soars

Larry Day was nervous. It was only a practice game, but Larry, who is twelve, knew that a tough contest loomed. Besides, nearly his entire family would be watching—Brother Mike taking pictures, Sister Judy and Mother Phyllis cheering and providing oranges to cool off the 82° day in Seattle, and Father Dale, who once coached the team, offering encouragement.

A Little League ball game? No way. No. 4, Larry Day, was off to help his Federal Way United Tornado team take on the Auburn Checkmates in a soccer match. Following Coach John Young's instructions—"Make them run, then in the second half we'll break them open and score"—the Tornado won handily, 4-0, as Larry turned his nervousness into

across the turf. The U.S. Soccer Federation estimates that more than half a million youngsters play organized soccer and projects 3 million by 1980.

Why have the kids gone bonkers over soccer? Mainly because more of them can play it. The most appealing part of the game is its simplicity. In Atlanta, where there are 8,000 junior players, Y.M.C.A. Soccer League Coordinator Barry Christiansen explains: "Anybody can kick a ball. The kid doesn't have to be a certain size like football or basketball players." Other attractions are that kids need little equipment and are rarely badgered by overzealous parent-coaches. As in the pro leagues, no timeouts are allowed; once the game begins, the players are virtually on their own.

Youth acceptance of soccer has begun to make itself felt at colleges. At the University of Southern California, Soccer Coach Nuri Erturk gets at least 200 letters a year from students looking for soccer scholarships. While many of the better college teams are still stocked with foreign players, things are changing. Nine years ago, the U.C.L.A. team had 32 players from 22 countries. Now 75 per cent of the squad is American. One thing keeping more U.S. players off the top teams is that they generally lack the finesse of the foreigners.

The game is also on the verge of becoming a successful commercial venture. The North American Soccer League, just eight years old, already has 20 teams playing in four divisions and plans to add four more next year. Though many teams are still losing money, their owners are far from bailing out. Two years ago the L.A. Aztecs were on the block for \$150,000; now they are worth an even million, but the owners have rejected the bid. One of them, Pop Star-Soccer Freak Elton John, has brought George Best, onetime star forward for Manchester United, over from England to attract the local crowds. The biggest

joining the pros. After watching him last season, Seattle Sounder Defender Dave D'Errico marveled, "The only way you can stop him is to trip him." As far as Larry is concerned, his course is set. Says he: "I'd like to go to England to play in the off-season."



sparkling, speedy play. After the game, it was home to watch the pro Seattle Sounders on TV. The only missing element in the otherwise perfect day: Grandma Irene, 78, was off in Portland, Ore., unable to use all her persuasive powers to move people out of her view of the field as she has been known to do.

On every level—junior (ages 6 to 19), college and pro—soccer is attracting thousands of families like the Days. In 1964 the American Youth Soccer Organization started in Torrance, Calif., with 100 boys and nine teams. Today the association has 4,100 teams in 14 states and 62,000 kids, including 15,000 girls, booting the checkered, leather balls

across the turf. The biggest league-round draw is the New York Cosmos' legendary Pelé. Average attendance in the league in its first four weeks is roughly 10,000. And that should be boosted when League Commissioner Phil Woosnam signs a two-year deal with CBS to broadcast at least 15 games.

**Future Stars.** Regardless of the network deal, the pro league can count on growth, with American youngsters offering a pool of future talent. Some day, perhaps, young women may play professionally. According to one Atlanta coach, "Girls have a better sense of position on the field and don't bunch up as the boys do." More likely, however, is that in a decade, Larry Day will be





## Red Smith

# Abe Saperstein's Boy Jerry

When Jerry Saperstein, out of the University of Illinois, received his master's at the University of Arizona, his father telephoned him from Los Angeles.

"What are your plans now?" Abe Saperstein asked.

"I was thinking I'd just go on with graduate school," Jerry said. "Economics."

"What for?" Abe asked. "What would another degree prepare you for?"

"Gee," Jerry said, "I don't know. Teaching, I guess."

"Come on out here," Abe said. "I need you."

**Sports of The Times** Wearing the shorts and T-shirt that were de rigeur on the Tucson campus, Jerry drove to Los Angeles.

"Dad looked me over," Jerry recalled recently. "First of all," he said, "go get yourself some clothes." He pulled a roll from his pocket and peeled off some bills. I don't remember how much he gave me, but I wasn't used to seeing that kind of money. The next day I was in Bismarck, N.D., with the Kansas City Bombers, who were a farm team for the Globetrotters. With the Bombers, rookies developed the skills they needed to make it with the Globetrotters.

"The day after Bismarck we were in Regina, Saskatchewan, then Minot, N.D., Billings, Bozeman, Kalispell, Mont., Yakima, Wenatchie, Puyallup, Wash. One night stands. Spokane was the big town."

The late Abe Saperstein was a little round man from Chicago who took a homeless basketball team called the Savoy Ballroom Five, renamed it the Harlem Globetrotters and built it into the most popular medium of sports entertainment in history. Goose Tatum, Marques Haynes, Meadowlark Lemon and the rest played in 144 countries before millions. Nobody knows exactly how many millions they have drawn but two world records are theirs without dispute—greatest basketball crowd: 75,000 in Berlin's Olympic Stadium, and smallest crowd: one, Pope John XXIII in Castel Gandolfo.

### Soccer Under a Roof

"Unless our paths crossed accidentally," Jerry Saperstein was saying, "I never saw my father until I joined him with the Globetrotters after doing my hitch with the Bombers. After he died I kept the team going until the chance came to sell it and make my mother secure."

A 37, Jerry qualifies as a veteran in sports promotion. He has been involved with the National Basketball Association, World Championship Tennis, World Team Tennis and with ice shows. For a while he was president of the New York Sets (now the Apples) in World Team Tennis. He

owns the San Francisco Shamrocks of the Pacific Hockey League.

Now he is into a new dodge—indoor soccer. In about a month he will announce the formation of the Super Soccer League, a 16-city organization that plans a 32-game schedule this year over a four-month span roughly coinciding with the baseball season. Home of the New York team, he says, will be Nassau Coliseum.

"It's a terrific game indoors," Saperstein said. "The field is approximately 30 by 70 yards with Plexiglas boards like in hockey so the ball is always in play. With six players to a team, and no out-of-bounds, everybody has to play both offense and defense and there's no way to slow the game down. We'll have widened goals for higher scoring, and a certain amount of body contact is permitted. You can put another player against the boards."

### The Bandwagon

The goal, obviously, is to cash in on the boom that made itself apparent last September when 78,000 customers packed Giants Stadium in the New Jersey Meadowlands complex to watch the Cosmos with the matchless Pele. Last year was the first time there was convincing evidence that soccer, by far the most popular team sport elsewhere in the world, was at last capturing the American public.

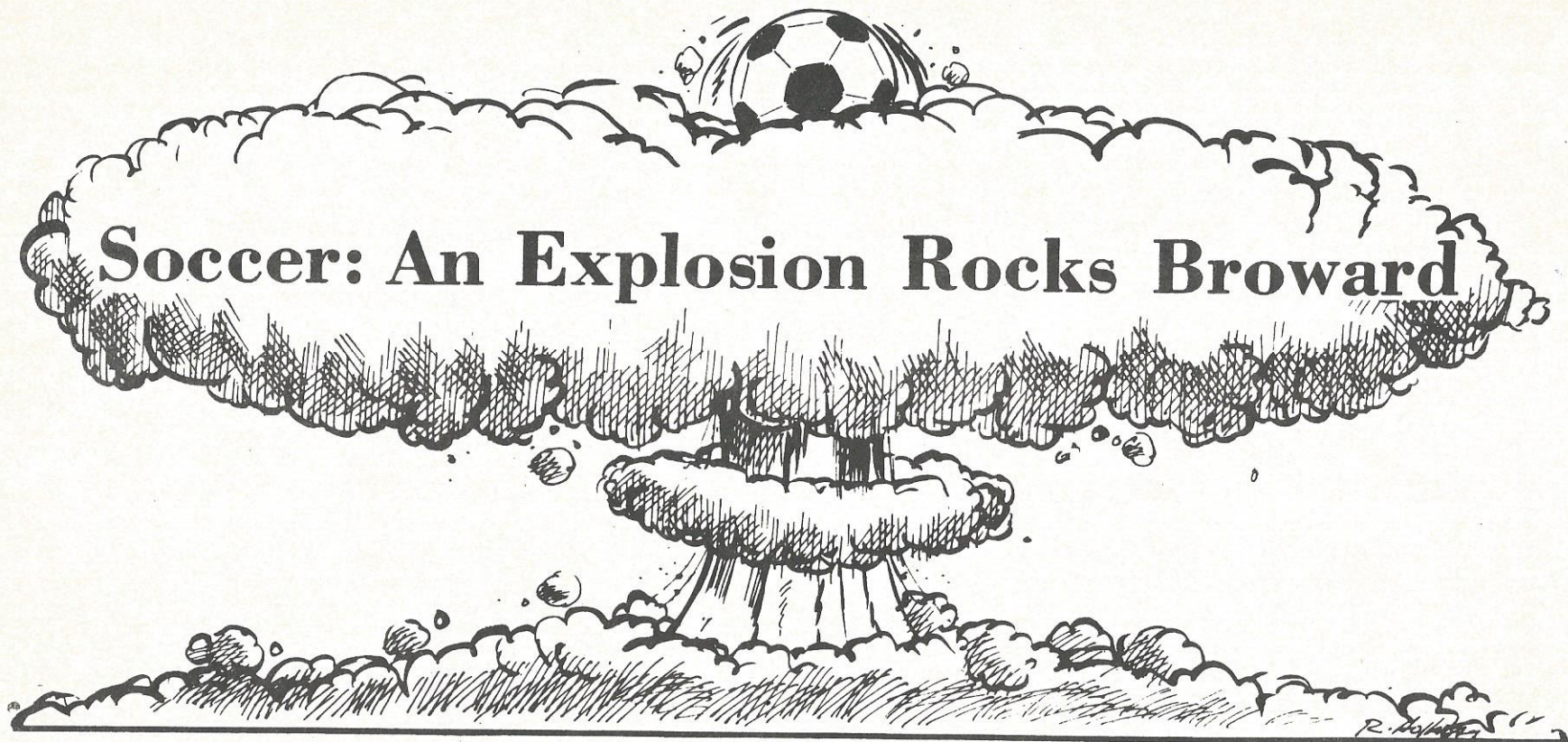
The North American Soccer League began experimenting with the indoor game in 1973, when a test match was played in Atlanta. There were more than 100 shots on goal and a final score of 16-15. The close-up action, highly visible, brought a favorable response from spectators. Later, tournaments were conducted in Dallas, Rochester, Tampa and San Francisco. Committed to long-range development of the traditional 11-man game, the N.A.S.L. directors recommended sponsoring the indoor game in the winter but found that many of the more desirable arenas were already booked for other attractions.

"Sixteen home games and 16 away will come to about two games a week," Saperstein said. "People say, 'Won't your season conflict with the N.A.S.L. season?' Well, summer is the offseason for the professionals in most other countries, so we can import a certain number of top pros but we want to specialize in kids out of the thousand American colleges that have soccer programs."

"I plan to announce the location and ownership of franchises and release a schedule March 9. I'm not sure yet who'll have the New York franchise. Maybe I will, at least in the beginning. As of now I'm president and chief executive officer of the league. We know we need a strong franchise in New York. As they say, if you're going to flop, flop in Kenosha."



# High School Sports



By Davis Lundy  
Staff Writer

The way things are going, Jerry Saperstein's Super Soccer League is just a few years away from generating the kind of enthusiasm for the sport now found on the high school level.

And the North American Soccer League won't mind at all. Over the course of the last year, the battle cry for high school soccer enthusiasts has been "As go the Strikers, so do we."

Since last season, the number of public schools playing soccer has increased from seven to 17. In the private schools, the increase was from four to five. The strength of soccer in the area has doubled, from 11 to 22. With more abundant fields, the numbers would be higher. Imagine the NFL jumping to 56 teams next year or the major leagues with 52.

"We're simply filling a need that is present," said Clarence Noe, Broward County Athletic Director. "It's a good sport and it takes care of a group of kids that most of the winter sports don't take care of."

That "group" wasn't around a year ago when only seven public schools — Miramar, Cooper City, McArthur, Northeast, Hollywood Hills, Coral Springs and Dillard — and four private schools — St. Thomas, Riverside Military Academy, Pine Crest and Westminster Academy — fielded teams.

Until this year, soccer wasn't recognized by the Broward County Athletic Conference.

"One big reason why the sport has grown the way it has is the Strikers,"

said Cooper City Coach Al Rosenberg. "They have been very instrumental in promoting local soccer at the youth level and on the high school level. When you get it going at the club level, it's going to eventually reach the high school level. It can happen quickly. Where the kids didn't ask for it a year ago, now they do."

Rosenberg was around during the early years of soccer in the area, in 1973 and 1974. Since less than a handful of teams played in Broward, Rosenberg was forced to take his teams into Dade for matches.

"We didn't win very many," he remembers. But neither did Tampa Bay. "We didn't get routed too many times and I knew even then that soccer would make it in Broward."

With the arrival of the Strikers, things just took off.

"Soccer is the kind of game that once you get a taste of it, it's hard to forget," said Ron Newman, general manager and coach of the Strikers. "The growth of the sport is much faster here than it was, say, 10 years ago in Dallas."

Newman has players like goalie Gordon Banks under full-year contracts, which allows them to be present at coaching clinics at high schools or club league clinics in the area.

"We, of course, want to fill the stadium," said Newman, "but we want to develop players from the area, create future fans and people who might help the sport in the future."

It cost Cooper City High \$1,500 last year to supply its team, which covers

everything from uniforms to Gatorade. The coaching supplements are paid by the county. These days, a good sport is one that's inexpensive like soccer.

The tremendous growth of the sport has created three main problems — coaches, fans and fields. The last two are interrelated.

"It's just near impossible to find coaches who are qualified to work with the teams," said Rosenberg. "We've got people coaching who are as inexperienced as the players. But, you have to remember that the main thing is that they are out there."

As one first-year soccer coach said, "It's like the blind leading the blind but it's fun."

The growth of the sport was far too much for the number of fields. Schools are using makeshift fields and the ones available while hoping for expansion in the future. The lack of fields makes keeping a set schedule a job no one short of the government could handle.

"But without a doubt, the biggest problems we've had is with the fans," Rosenberg said. "We've had several instances where we've come close to ejecting fans because of the way they've behaved."

"Soccer is a sport that demands respect for officials. The fans are so close to the field and benches, it's hard to keep things under control."

"The fans just don't understand the bloody sport," said Newman. "What they need is education and they'll get it. Things will get better."

If things don't, remember that Super Soccer is designed for fan's excitement.





## Soccer

The North American Soccer League (NASL), buoyed by solid financial backing and a chance to play in the

Astrodome, has planted a franchise in Houston for the second time, hoping this one will blossom where the other withered.

NASL Commissioner **Phil Woosnam** awarded the franchise at a news conference Thursday to the Bayly Corp. of Denver and a group of Houston businessmen, including developer **Kenneth Schnitzer**.

Schnitzer also is part owner of the National Basketball Association Houston Rockets and the World Hockey Association Houston Aeros.

An Astrodome spokesman said the new team had signed a multi-year contract to play all of its home games in the Astrodome. The team will play a 30-game schedule, including 15 in the Astrodome.

Woosnam figures the new franchise will succeed where the old Houston Stars failed 10 years ago because of the growth of soccer in the United States.

When the Stars folded in 1968 the NASL was reduced to five teams and on the verge of extinction. Millionaire **Lamar Hunt** kept the league alive, Woosnam said, and since then "we have seen tremendous growth and development of soccer."

**Ben Woodson** will be president of the new club, which completes the NASL's current expansion from 18 to 24 teams. The league earlier placed teams in Detroit, Memphis, Philadelphia, Denver and Boston and moved franchises from Hawaii to Tulsa, Okla., and from Connecticut to Oakland, Calif.

**Hans von Mende**, a Denver attorney, will be general manager of the team, which as yet has no coach, players or name. The NASL season begins in April.

Von Mende thinks the team can draw 15,000 to 20,000 fans per game the first year, which would put it near the break-even point.

"If we do our homework and do it right, we can make money the first year," von Mende said.

The Tampa Bay Rowdies will be given the 18th pick in the first round of the NASL college draft to be held Jan. 23.

Besides the one pick in the first round, Tampa Bay will have three in the second round, including the 19th from Los Angeles as part of the **Randy Garber** deal in 1975 and the 22nd from Fort Lauderdale, which the Rowdies got in exchange for

## AROUND SPORTS

Colin Fowles last spring.

It moves like soccer and socks like hockey, say organizers who hope to launch play in a new "Super Soccer League" next year.

"We're combining a number of ingredients," sports promoter and league President **Jerry Saperstein** said Thursday in Miami. Saperstein said plans are to set up franchises in 16 to 24 cities with play to begin in June 1978.

As Saperstein and other organizers explained it, Super Soccer is played like soccer but indoors, on artificial turf, in an enclosure patterned after a hockey arena.

The result, they said, is a fast, rough, high-scoring game. "It has the excitement of dasherboard hockey. Our ball stays in play when it hits the dasherboard," Saperstein said. "We allow substitutions to maintain the level of competition."

"We've incorporated much of traditional soccer. I think we've incorporated much of the excitement and the speed of pro basketball."

Saperstein, 37, learned sports promotion under his father, Abe, in the Harlem Globetrotters organization. He once owned the New York World Team Tennis franchise and is owner of the San Francisco Shamrocks of the Pacific Hockey League.

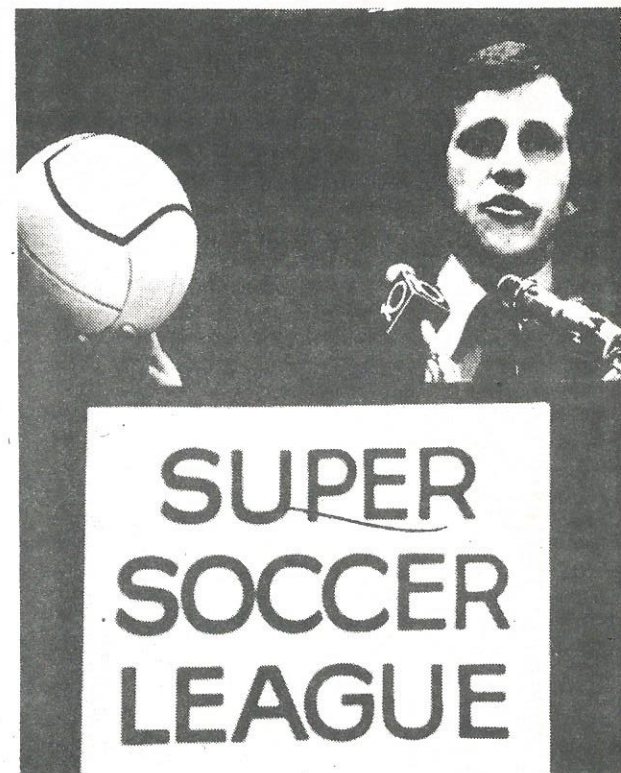
Saperstein told reporters Thursday that contracts for franchises have been signed with a number of owners. He declined to name any but said 16 franchises would be announced next month.

Some of Super Soccer's differences from traditional soccer are that it is played inside and the field is smaller, about 70 yards by 30 yards. Conventional fields are 110 to 130 yards long and 70 to 80 yards wide.

To create more scoring, there is a wider goal, fewer players on a side (six compared to 11), unlimited substitution and use of a hockey-style dasher board around the field to keep the ball in play.

Hard body-checking is permitted, similar to hockey, and there's a hockey-style penalty box for offenders.

**Richard Ragone** of Miami, introduced as a former official of the North American Soccer League, was named interim commissioner of the new league.



AP Photo

# SUPER SOCCER LEAGUE

THE SOCCER BALL OF THE FUTURE  
... Jerry Saperstein talks about super league



# Super Soccer

*The Name's Similar, But Indoor Play And Fluorescent Balls Aren't*

By Paul Moran  
Staff Writer

MIAMI — By virtue of self proclamation, there is new "major" soccer league about to edge its way into the national professional sports scene.

Enter Super Soccer — a 16-team league which intends to play the game — or at least a reasonable facsimile — indoors, on astroturf-covered hockey rinks with fluorescent orange balls and six-man teams.

"That's fine," said Ron Newman, general manager of the North American Soccer League Fort Lauderdale Strikers, "the more, the merrier. I think that any additional exposure of soccer is good. I don't think that they can possibly hurt the Strikers. I'm all in favor of it. I'd even like to see a game or two."

The league's formation was announced yesterday at the Omni International by its president and chief executive officer Jerry Saperstein. Among the potential franchise sites listed is Miami-Fort Lauderdale as well as several other cities where NASL franchises are currently operating with various degrees of success.

"If they take care to draw up their schedule so that they don't play on the same days we do, I think they might be successful," Newman said. "It's an exciting game to watch, but I don't know that you can do it without name players. People want to see stars."

Current plans call for the Super Soccer League to begin its first season in June and play a 32-game schedule, which means that its season will conflict with the NASL's.

"A great deal of thought has gone into the formation of the Super Soccer League," said Saperstein, who then admitted that no scientific market research study was

ever conducted. "In Europe indoor soccer has been gaining in popularity, especially in the Soviet Union and we believe that within the next four to five years that this will be one of the most important indoor spectator sports in the United States and Canada," Saperstein said.

Actually, the indoor game proposed by Saperstein and his associates is only fundamentally similar to traditional outdoor soccer. "We have taken traditional soccer, cut the size of the playing field, reduced the number of players on each team, widened the goals and moved it indoors. With some rule changes, we will have an offense-oriented game which will produce high scoring and will not be governed by the vagaries of weather," Saperstein said.

The indoor game will bear a distinct hockey flavor, with continuous play, body checking and a penalty box.

Super Soccer will apply to the United States Soccer Federation for membership and affiliation, according to Saperstein, and will recruit players from American colleges and universities as well as the international marketplace. However, Saperstein sees no future bidding war with the NASL.

"It will be league policy that we will neither approach nor sign players currently under contract to the North American Soccer League," Saperstein said. "We're not going to be the second professional soccer league in the sense that the World Hockey Association and the American Basketball Association were second leagues. There are 8 million soccer players in the world, only a few of which play in the NASL. We're going after American college and university players beginning tomorrow morning, or maybe even this afternoon," Saperstein said.

Super Soccer officials are in the process of negotiating with potential franchise owners in several cities. They claim to have received applications or been in contact with potential owners in: New York, Hartford, Philadelphia, Baltimore-Washington, Buffalo, Montreal, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago, Omaha, Kansas City, Indianapolis, Oklahoma City, Houston, Birmingham, New Orleans, Miami-Fort Lauderdale, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego.

Saperstein, 37, is also the president of Major League Sports, Inc., and was the main figure in a recent unsuccessful attempt to bring the World Hockey Association San Diego Mariners to South Florida. He is also a former owner of the New York franchise in World Team Tennis and is the current owner of the San Francisco Shamrocks of the Pacific Hockey League. Also listed among Super Soccer's founders is Dennis Murphy, who was also involved in the formation of the WHA and WTT; Rick Ragone, the league commissioner, one-time director of the NASL Marketing Corporation and member of the NASL General Managers' Committee; Fred Wise, a retired Miami industrialist and Dr. Elliott Gorin, a Beverly Hills, Calif. dentist.

League headquarters will be opened soon in Madison Square Garden. The first league meeting is scheduled for March 10 in Palm Springs, Calif and the first meeting of the Eastern Division will be a week later in Miami. The first player draft is scheduled for April 2 in New York.

"Right now our goal is to get 16 teams into operation by June," Saperstein said. "It will be a successful season if we have 16 teams still in operation at the end of the season."



Jerry Saperstein holds up one of the fluorescent orange balls that will be used in the new Super Soccer League.