



# ALBERTA SOCCER ASSOCIATION

*The Governing Body of Soccer in Alberta*

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## COVID-19 Membership Update Meeting Minutes for 1A (9:00 AM) and 1B (7:00 PM) Monday March 30th, 2020 Video Conference Meeting

### 1. Call to order

#### Present Members Meeting 1A

Airdrie -Melissa Collinson  
CUSA-Pearl Doupe, Raj Uppal  
CWSA – Jacquie Hartlein  
Tri-County SA– Jim Wolters, Pamela Wolters,  
Robin Alley  
CASA – Tammy Olson  
EMSA – Dragos Niculescu, Mario Charpentier  
EIYSA – Dan Curtis  
EDSA – Mike Thome  
SASA – Chris Spaidal  
SPDSA – Debbie Ballam  
NWPSA – Darren Snider  
RDCSA – Ado Sarcevic  
Canal Links SA – Henry Faucher  
ASA BOD: Shaun Hammond, Julie Beschell, Adam  
Berti, David MacEachran, Steve Cupit  
ASA Life Member: Adrian Newman  
ASA Staff: Shaun Lowther, Tammy McNutt, Dave  
O’Neill, Jordan Stewart, Matt Thomas, Carmen  
Charron, Claire Paterson, Geraldine Ratcliffe

#### Present Members Meeting 1B

LSA – Frank Spadavecchia, Arlene Paiha  
NWPSA – Christine Donovan  
Canal Links SA – Henry Faucher  
BCSA – John Brazzale  
EDSA – Mike Thome  
MHSA – Robert Cavicchia  
SSDSA – Paul Anwender  
BRSA – Sara Letorneau  
Lakeland – Wayne Roach  
SPDSA – Debbie Ballam  
Fort McMurray SA - Aaron Bessong  
FDSA - Peter Mundy  
ASA BOD: Shaun Hammond, Julie Beschell, David  
MacEachran, Steve Cupit  
ASA Staff: Shaun Lowther, Tammy McNutt, Dave  
O’Neill, Jeannie Hawksworth, Franc Cioffi,  
Carmen Charron, Geraldine Ratcliffe



## 2. Current Situation Summary (presented by Shaun Hammond)

### a. Alberta - current and future

- **All activities are suspended until April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**
- CSA suggests that the shutdown may go longer, through the end of May.
- ASA is implementing bi-weekly meetings (conference calls) with all Districts, regular informative/update emails. As soon as new information is identified, it will be communicated to our membership.
- ASA will be sending a communication for Districts to distribute to parents, as an update to our members.
- Concern over no outdoor season, or a shortened season: the ASA Risk Management Committee is examining a best, worst, and most likely case scenario and working to mitigate these risks for each option (including financial and operational mitigation).
- ASA is evaluating online engagement strategies for players, referees and coaches.
- New Brunswick began a skills program for players, through online tutorials (today, March 30<sup>th</sup>).

### b. CSA - current and future

- Complete shut-down of all sanctioned activities, without a tentative date for resuming activities.
- CSA is evaluating lifting suspension on all activities, based on how the health crisis and risk level of social activities, develops in each Province.
- ASA is pressuring CSA for remote options for engagement (online).
- CSA has launched Canada Soccer Nation: a four-part, coach education tutorial, imparted by John Herdman. It is free of charge, but it is only open to the first 500 registrations. PSO's are pressuring CSA to extend this to more participants.
- Active pressure from PSO Presidents to defer and/or reduce the CSA player levy for the outdoor (2020) season.
- **National Competitions: CSA has defined June 30<sup>th</sup> as their deadline to determine/communicate whether National Competitions take place this year.** There will be no financial penalties for teams who withdraw their participation.
- If National Competitions do not occur in 2020, host venues will not be awarded 2021 (as those host have already been assigned). However, they will be given priority for hosting in 2022.
- Annual Meeting of Members has been postponed to the last week of June 2020 (tentatively).
- CSA's Steven Reed and Peter Montopoli agreed to conduct weekly President's conference calls, to improve their communication with PTSO's.



### 3. Actions being taken by ASA

#### a. Financial sustainability -Please refer to the Summary of ASA Actions (provided via email)

Districts have submitted their information, which will be kept confidential. The information will be used to determine plans of action for business/operational/financial continuity, and thus help identify the pressure on different Districts.

*\*Typo in presentation: player levy is \$11.75 -not \$11.96.*

#### i. ASA/Districts

Based on ASA's analysis, the average per player subsidy to ensure business continues across the Association (excluding HR), will be \$11.75 per 2019 registered player.

#### ii. Request to Government of Alberta

ASA cannot provide this subsidy entirely on its own. Therefore, ASA is seeking relief from CSA and the Government of Alberta (Covid-19 grant funding).

#### iii. CSA/PTSO

ASA is working with other Provincial Associations to pressure CSA for relief of their \$9 per player levy. CSA has not confirmed whether or not there will be relief from their levy.

#### b. Retention - players, coaches and referees

- The longer the period of inactivity, the greater the risk of losing players as they find other interests and activities. This applies both financially and operationally (i.e., participants).
- **We must recognize that there are significant economic pressures on AB families.**
- We must plan for a **"QuickStart" strategy – with a focus on grassroots and recreational players** (youth and adults), who make up 75% of registered players in the Province. We must strive to get that population of players quickly engaged and back in the game, as soon as the ban is lifted, to minimize the number of participants who find other sporting options.

c. Pressuring CSA with other PTSO

i. Communications:

When the ban is lifted, all other sports -particularly summer sports (i.e.: volleyball), will be moving quickly and aggressively to engage their members and players.

ii. Innovations (online courses, etc.):

Presidents have urged CSA to engage the federal government to help support sport, in addition to engaging CONCACAF and FIFA to identify global best practices that we can apply locally.

iii. Grassroots focus

We must focus on Grassroots to get players SAFELY out on the field enjoying the game they love.

#### 4. Competitions

a. Alberta Summer Games

*Most likely* to be cancelled -the final decision will come from the Government.

b. Provincial Competitions

i. Indoor 2019-20 – **Cancelled**. If we were to postpone this competition until later this year, it would be logistically difficult for teams to compete with the same rosters. Facility availability also contributed to this decision.

ii. Outdoor 2020 – Decision will depend on the length of the shut-down. ASA is looking at several different options (listed below). **Ultimately, the decision to run this competition will be highly influenced by whether National Competitions will be held by CSA (TBD by June 30<sup>th</sup>).**

- “Normal” Provincials – re-scheduling of dates, but same format.
- Modified Provincials: FA Cup style provincials (North FA Cup, South FA Cup, and a finals day in a Central location)
- Worst case scenario: No Outdoor Provincials

**\*Request to Districts: Please send any and all ideas for other formats. We have no shortage of ideas and innovation for this year.**

## 5. Online Referee Update (presented by David O'Neill)

### a. Referee Refresher

- **Now fully online, available Province-wide since March 26<sup>th</sup>.**
- ASA has requested District hosts and DRA's to contact referees who may not have registered for the 2020-21 year yet.
- Series of video review modules that referees go through, focused on Law changes introduced this year. Referees must answer quizzes at the end of each module, and obtain 100%, before they can move onto the next section, to ultimately receive their certification.
- **New FAQ section** -where referees can submit questions (received by Dave). These questions will then be answered directly to the individual who submitted them, and added to an FAQ bank, published on refcentre.
- Referees can go back and review all this information -allowing them to refresh their knowledge once again, closer to the start of the season.
- **Follow-up "office hours" style sessions available** to imitate in-class questions that may require complex answers and/or back-and-forth Q&A. These will be scheduled on evenings and weekends, for referees who have completed the refresher modules - **starting April 15<sup>th</sup>.**

### b. Entry Level

- On-line modules (not certification), are being developed in collaboration with Canada Soccer and other PSO's – **estimated to start April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**
- Consensus amongst instructors, that in-class and field portions of the course are crucial, therefore, **1-day in-person or 2 evenings in-person Certification sessions to follow online modules**, after suspension is lifted.
- If a date for suspension being lifted is advised in advance, we may be able to secure facility bookings ahead of time (depending on availability).

### c. Mini

- On-line modules (not certification), are being developed in collaboration with Canada Soccer and other PSO's – **estimated to start April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020**
- (Same as with EL) Consensus that in-class and field portions of the course are crucial, therefore, **1-day in-person or 2 evenings in-person Certification sessions to follow online modules**, after suspension is lifted.
- ASA RDC members strongly believe that on-line education is not enough to prepare young referees for their first time on the field.

Finally, ASA will have a bi-weekly, online laws of the game and referee trivia quizzes to promote engagement across the board, for all referees.

## 6. Online Technical Update (presented by Shaun Lowther)

### a. Coach Education

#### i. Community Stream

1. Active Start (already developed), FUNdamentals, Learn to Train & Soccer For Life (currently being developed) -**starting on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Coaches will be classified as `Trained` until they can complete an on-field session once suspension is lifted. Only then will they be `Certified`.

#### ii. Licensing Stream

1. C Licence and B Licence Part 1 – starting date to be determined
2. B License Part 2, CSA Youth & Children’s Licence -**starting on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

### b. Grassroots

- Preferred Training Module (PTM) information video/webinar, conducted by John Clubb, Lianna Hall (GP) and Allan Siwella (MH) – **starting online on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.**
- North American Indigenous Games – Facebook page was launched for players and coaches to stay connected (**March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020**).
- Developing a ``3 skills video competition for U12`s`` -**starting on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
Districts will have to submit videos to ASA and prizes will be given out.

### c. Player Development

- REX player webinars – lead by Jordan Stewart - **starting March 31, 2020**
- Technical Team Open House Webinar -**starting April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
Members will have the opportunity to discuss different technical components.

## 7. Scenario Planning

### a. May 1 Start

Unlikely and getting more so every day. However, if this does occur, we must look at registrations during April -which is very unlikely.

### b. Prior to June 15 Start

Will require an intense “Quick Start” program: registrations, facilities/field bookings, referee certifications, etc.

c. Prior to July 15 Start

This scenario gives us more time to prepare, however, it would create the challenge with Outdoor Provincial competitions (pending CSA decision on National Competitions).

d. Other – Districts submit all ideas:

- Running grassroots/recreational leagues into the summer (not until end of June, as traditionally done)

e. No outdoor season

**All scenarios:** it is essential we stay in contact with our players/coaches/referees and most important: parents. This may create financial stress on parents under the current economic climate. If ASA can get CSA to defer their player levy, ASA will be requesting the Government of AB to subsidize the remaining \$2-3 difference (\$11.70 over \$9). We are arguing that, as a minimum, soccer in AB contributes \$50-56 Million to the Provincial economy. But the key will be to keep our members engaged so that when the suspension is lifted, they return to soccer.

## **8. Comments/Questions**

### **1A Meeting (9:00 AM)**

Susan Cress (CMSA): Thinking about CSA, will they lift the shut-down on the entire country, or would they be willing to do partial suspension lifts, Province by Province.

Shaun Hammond (ASA) will take this question to the Presidents meeting, this afternoon.

Shaun Lowther (ASA): this was discussed at last week's meeting of Exec. Directors. CSA is looking at this as a viable option but have not made any decisions yet.

Susan (CMSA): In the scenario of a July 15<sup>th</sup> start date, would there be a possibility for us to stretch the season to extend until Sept-Oct. If National Competitions are cancelled, then that would give us 12 weeks of play, before entering the indoor season.

Shaun Hammond (ASA): The key is to get as much playing/season time, if we are able to run an outdoor season. We are not ruling anything out yet and all ideas for format will be reviewed.

Melissa Collinson (Airdrie): With a focus on the grassroots programs, what will the "QuickStart" process look like for this group, as they usually only run until the end of May. Is the expectation for us to push grassroots programs until later in the summer?

Shaun H. (ASA): We are looking at extending the grassroots/recreational programs, to run outside the traditional months and length. We don't want to shut down their programs at the end of June (as traditionally done), we want to keep them engaged.

Melissa (Airdrie): We are looking at summer camps and festivals to run throughout the summer, as a means to have a busier season, if the suspension is lifted for May or June.

Mario Charpentier (EMSA): Suggestion - For ASA to cancel T2 and T3 Provincial Competitions, so that leagues can run into Aug-Sept.

If the outdoor season gets cancelled, do we still have to pay CSA and ASA player levy fees?

Julie Beschell (ASA): No, if no players have registered, then there will be no CSA or ASA player levy.

With regards to delaying payment – we are delaying the requirement of payment for the Indoor 2019-20 season. We are delaying this until an outdoor/indoor season can occur, so that we can ensure you can hold on to your cash flow to deal with current issues in your associations. Therefore, the payment has been deferred until Sept./Oct. this year.

Mario C. (EMSA): If districts are able to run an outdoor season, that is shorter in length, we can only charge half of the regular registration fee. Will CSA and ASA also cut down their player levy fees?

Julie B. (ASA): We have control only over what we charge to our membership -not CSA's player levy. We have reserves in place so that we do not have to charge Districts a full fee. We are looking at keeping a healthy ecosystem for all our organizations. We cannot confirm the fee amount as of today, because we don't have information on what kind or how long, the outdoor season will be.

Mario C. (EMSA): I understand that you cannot commit to an amount, but I would like to recommend to ASA to set a percentage (pro-rate) the player levy fee, so that Districts can have an idea of what their registration fees should be. This is specifically important for the QuickStart programs ASA is asking us to implement.

Shaun H. (ASA): We understand that you need some predictability on fees, and we will discuss this with the Risk Management Committee.

Mario C. (EMSA): Online courses, will they be free, or will there be a fee associated?

Shaun L. (ASA): Initially, CSA was going to charge a fee for the online coach education. They have been asked to waive this fee but they have not confirmed yet. The Referee Refresher courses are free.

Shaun H. (ASA): Will argue to Steven Reed that it will cost them more

Mario C. (ASA): When you say that 78% of ASA registrations are grassroots, how is ASA defining grassroots?



Tammy McNutt (ASA): That percentage is representative of players who are registered to play a recreational season that does not lead to post-season competitions. In other words: U5 to U11, and Tier 4 and lower (recreational).

Debbie Ballam (SPDSA): What will the ASA membership fees be come indoor? Normally if a player doesn't play outdoor, then the full fees are due for a player come indoor.

Julie B. (ASA): We will come back to you with potential fees for the indoor season, based on a few scenarios, next time we meet for a districts meeting.

Jacquie Hartlein (CWSA): Any thoughts on staffing?

Shaun H. (ASA): We will shift our focus from the last district survey on programs value and efficiency, to re-evaluate which programs are most valuable to our membership in this new scenario and how these must be adjusted moving forward.

Adam Berti (ASA): the Federal Government announced more details this morning about the 75% wage subsidy: Businesses and non-profit organizations seeing a drop of at least 30 per cent in revenue due to COVID-19 will qualify for the government's 75 per cent wage subsidy program, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced today. That was just updated in the last hour about the 30% drop in revenue qualification for the subsidy. In my own business I am taking advantage of some of the slow down to have my staff pick up projects that are on the back burner and work on improving our processes, so we come back stronger.

### **1B Meeting (7:00 PM)**

Mike Thome (EDSA): What is going to happen with referee registration fees? Could there be a deferral of registration fees, so that officials can begin officiating as soon as the season begins? (i.e.: eliminate the financial barrier for individuals who may no longer be able to pay the \$65 registration fee)

Dave O'Neill (ASA): Technically, referee registrations for 2020-21 will begin on April 30<sup>th</sup>. As of today, we are not anticipating a reduction in the registration fee. With regards to a deferral on registration fees, I will have to discuss with Shaun Lowther and Tammy McNutt, as ASA does anticipate significant revenue from referee registration fees.

Mike Thome (EDSA): Is CSA only considering deferring player fees, or also reducing fees?

Shaun H. (ASA): We (ASA and PSO President's) have pressured CSA to either defer or pro-rate player levy fees. They have not decided on this yet.

Mike T. (EDSA): Commentary -If there are Nationals Competitions, then there must be a Provincial Competition. But if Nationals are cancelled, then there is no need for Provincials, and thus we can run full outdoor seasons into September (even if we begin in June/July). We can charge full fees (as previously calculated).

Shaun H. (ASA): CSA has committed to distribute -to all Provincial bodies; the different financial relief packages available to sporting associations by the Federal Government.

Paul Anwender (SSDSA): Are the potential scenario dates (mentioned earlier in the presentation) coming from ASA or CSA?

Shaun L. (ASA): These are dates determined by ASA, but they are not cast in stone, so they can be flexible.

Wayne Roach (Lakeland): Will the outdoor season be viable at all? Clubs haven't been taking in any registrations, therefore, they do not have any revenue coming in. If the outdoor season does take place, then we need to begin collecting fees at some point. If Provincials do not take place, I can estimate a large drop in team registrations from this district.

(Christine Donovan (NWPSA) echoes this in the chat: Some clubs have already cancelled their outdoor season while others are still waiting, although with very low registrations).

Tammy McNutt (ASA): One of the questions in the post-conference call survey is: `what is the cut-off date for Districts to determine whether you can run an outdoor season`? The problem for the Risk Management Committee is that associations and clubs in our Province have a very diverse set of pressures, and thus differing scenarios and cut-off dates.

Mike T. (EDSA): Has ASA had any discussions about cancelling Provincial Competitions that do not lead to Nationals? What will happen to AMSL?

Shaun H. (ASA): This question came up in the AM meeting, and we need to be able to provide an opportunity to the recreational tiers to compete at a Provincial level, to keep them engaged.

Shaun L. (ASA): The main objective, for ASA and for all other PSO's, is to get players safely back on the pitch. If we can run Provincial Competitions and/or Nationals, then that is secondary at this point.

With regards to the AMSL and AYSL, we are open to having a flexible format, depending on when activities can resume -i.e. FA Cup style competition, etc.

Debbie Ballam (SPDSA): Commentary in chat- `We don't want CSA to demand that the outdoor season is cancelled one way or another. At this time the season is determined by COVID-19 and the direction by the government. The SPDSA is still working on alternate ways to run a season. We are not cancelling yet.`

1A Meeting adjourned: 10:12 AM

1B Meeting adjourned: 8:08 PM