

STRATHROY-CARADOC *Minor Soccer Association*

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Strathroy-Caradoc Minor Soccer Association (SMSA) was established in the Strathroy area in 1961 with two teams. It was the dream of three devoted soccer enthusiasts who started the organization in a booth at the local coffee shop. Today, the SMSA has more than sixty teams, and over nine hundred players.

Over the years, the SMSA has created many valuable programs and concepts. Most notably, the SMSA revolutionized youth sports with its “EVERYONE PLAYS” and “BALANCED TEAMS” philosophies. In the SMSA, each child who registers is guaranteed to play at least half of every game. To help create evenly matched games, all SMSA players are placed on new or ‘balanced’ teams each year. These decisions are made based on each player’s skill level and the overall ability of the team.

Since its establishment, the SMSA has continued to grow and offer its membership relevant programs.

- In 1985, the SMSA developed their MINI SOCCER PROGRAM, designed for boys and girls ages six to nine years. In 1992, the SMSA introduced their TIMBIT SOCCER PROGRAM, proudly sponsored by Tim Hortons Strathroy, since its inception, and designed specifically for children ages four and five years.
- Also in 1985, the SMSA developed its first girls program. Today, over half of the SMSA’s registered players are girls!
- In 1999, the SMSA introduced their COMPETITIVE SOCCER PROGRAM, offering children ages eight to nineteen an

opportunity to play a higher calibre game at the 'intermediate' and 'premier' levels. This program bloomed into the MIDDLESEX UNITED COMPETITIVE SOCCER CLUB.

- Since 1999, the SMSA has implemented their PASSBACK: UNIFORM OUTREACH PROGRAM, which has outfitted teams in Portugal, Columbia, South Africa and Guatemala, whose soccer passion is equal to ours, but who cannot afford even the most basic equipment. The SMSA is able to fulfill these deserving soccer dreams, when parents donate to our organization, their used, but still playable, uniforms, shoes, balls, shinguards and gloves.

The SMSA is a non-profit organization, who is supported by more than five hundred parent volunteers. Parents donate their time as coaches, referees, team parents, administrators or sponsors.

The SMSA is a member of the Canadian Soccer Association. Throughout the years, the SMSA has also maintained relations with governing soccer bodies such as the Ontario Soccer Association, Elgin Middlesex Soccer Association, West Middlesex Youth Soccer League, London District Youth Soccer league, and most recently, the Western Counties Soccer Association. In addition, the SMSA works with seventy-five corporations whom are part of the SMSA's TEAM OF SPONSORS.

The SMSA is continually working to improve the education of its parents, and volunteers. A strong emphasis is placed on ethics, as well as sportsmanship.