

One-With-One Parent's Guide

So This Is Soccer!



THE One-with-OneTM Program
Total Player DevelopmentTM

So This is Soccer!

This booklet is for parents of first-time players. These days, many children are taking their first serious kicks of a soccer ball at age 4 or 5. Others leave it later — 6 or 7 years of age. The fact is, it's never too late to start playing.

So it doesn't really matter at what age your children start providing he/she (or they) have fun and enjoy the total experience. As a parent, this may be your own first real experience with soccer. In North America, many adults have not been exposed to the game having grown up on a diet of the more traditional North American sports — football, baseball, basketball and hockey.

With that in mind, the object of this book is two-fold:

1. To help you help your child have a fun time through soccer.
2. To let you, the parent, know more about the game so you can watch and, maybe participate in, and enjoy the world's favorite sport.

Have fun!

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Suite 3A 3033 King George HWY, Surrey BC V4P 1B8
604-531-8669 or call 1866-SOCCER-8

WHY SOCCER IS A GREAT GAME FOR KIDS

Soccer is becoming increasingly popular in United States and Canada. More children play soccer in Canada than the accepted national sport of hockey. More children participate in soccer in the U.S. than in baseball.

Why?

- Size is not a factor
- Almost any child can chase and kick a ball
- It's drug free: drugs do not enhance soccer performance
- It's healthy exercise because it's a running/endurance game
- There are no gender barriers: a great game for both boys and girls and, at the younger ages, they can and should play together
- Little space is needed, particularly with the scaled-down modified version of soccer recommended for the younger players
- Plenty of kicks of the ball and lots of action with modified and Micro Soccer™
- A game for life (from age 4 to age 94)!
- It's the world's favorite game and can be played anywhere in the world (except Antarctica!)

Another great bonus is that, in North America, soccer and education go hand-in-hand.



THE GAME SUCCEEDS BECAUSE OF YOU!

Although the game now employs tens of thousands of people (professional players, coaches, administrators, equipment suppliers) in North America, it only succeeds because of the hundreds of thousands of volunteers who coach, manage and administrate the community programs.

Can you help? You already are, just by reading this booklet. It will help give a broader picture of the benefits of soccer for your child (and for you!).

You can have fun helping your child learn and develop the skills that will bring greater enjoyment and accomplishment right in your own back yard, as we have shown in some of the pages in this booklet.

The chances are you will be asked to coach or assist the coach (if you haven't been already!). If you do get the invitation, don't dismiss the opportunity too quickly. You may not know much about the game and therefore, feel intimidated.

Don't be!

Some of the best soccer coaches in America and Canada started off from a zero soccer knowledge base, but they began with an open mind and a concern for the children — far better qualities than being a technical guru of soccer.



The game is the best teacher and good organization, changes of activity and fun soccer games are the key. We have included some recommendations of coaching books, videos and CD-ROMs at the back of this booklet, if you need any ideas for coaching young children. There is another factor, too!

In this hectic, demanding, bustling society, you just can't spend enough quality time with your children. Take on the role of parent coach and you'll be pleasantly rewarded by the chunk of fun, quality time that you will spend together.

At the younger age, we shouldn't really refer to the person in charge of practice or the games as "Coach" anyway. It's not coaching. It's "helping", "organizing" and "facilitating" even "fun raising."

However, if coaching or "facilitating" is not what you are comfortable doing, there are many other things that will help your child and other children enjoy soccer. Registration, equipment acquisition, sponsorship, orange supplier, team manager, club board member...or just a good, understanding, supportive soccer parent.

The game continues to grow and your child will grow with it, and your involvement will enhance the enjoyment for your child and his or her friends.

A SIMPLE GAME...

...ONLY COMPLICATED BY NUMBERS, COACHES (AND SOME OF THE RULES!)

At the basic level, soccer is a simple game. There is a field of play (boundaries) within which the game is played.

There is a goal (or "net") at one end into which the ball must enter for the attacking team to score a goal (not points: a "goal" is one goal). And another goal at the other end which the defending team does everything within the rules to stop the ball going in.

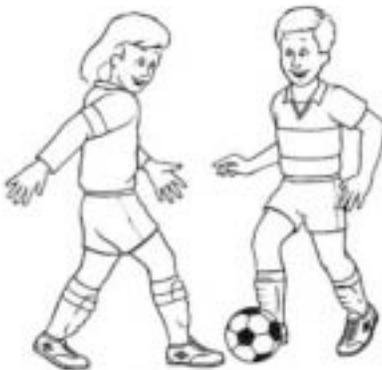
The ball is moved from one end of the field to the other by feet (either "dribbling" the ball or passing the ball). The exception is the head clearance or head pass (for young children, this doesn't happen often) or a throw by the goalkeeper, who is allowed to use hands to stop the ball from entering the net and to throw a pass. Similarly, when the ball goes out on the sides of the field, the game is re-started by a throw-in with the hands.

The game becomes more complicated as the numbers increase, culminating in the adult 11-vs-11 version of the game. The 11-a-side game is totally unsuitable for children under 11 years old. Why? Because 22 players are sharing one ball. In 60 minutes of play, if the time with the ball was shared equally, it would mean each player would be in contact with the ball for less than three minutes — and some wouldn't get as much as that. The leading authorities of soccer recommend leaving serious 11-vs-11 soccer until children are 13 years or older.

Scaling the game down to make it Kids' Size Soccer is logical, educationally sound and...much more fun! More kicks of the ball! More goals! More saves! More everything!

Playing "position" is for the birds (or for older kids). As soon as players start playing permanent positions (striker, midfielder, left side defender, goalkeeper, right winger), it's recognition that they have particular

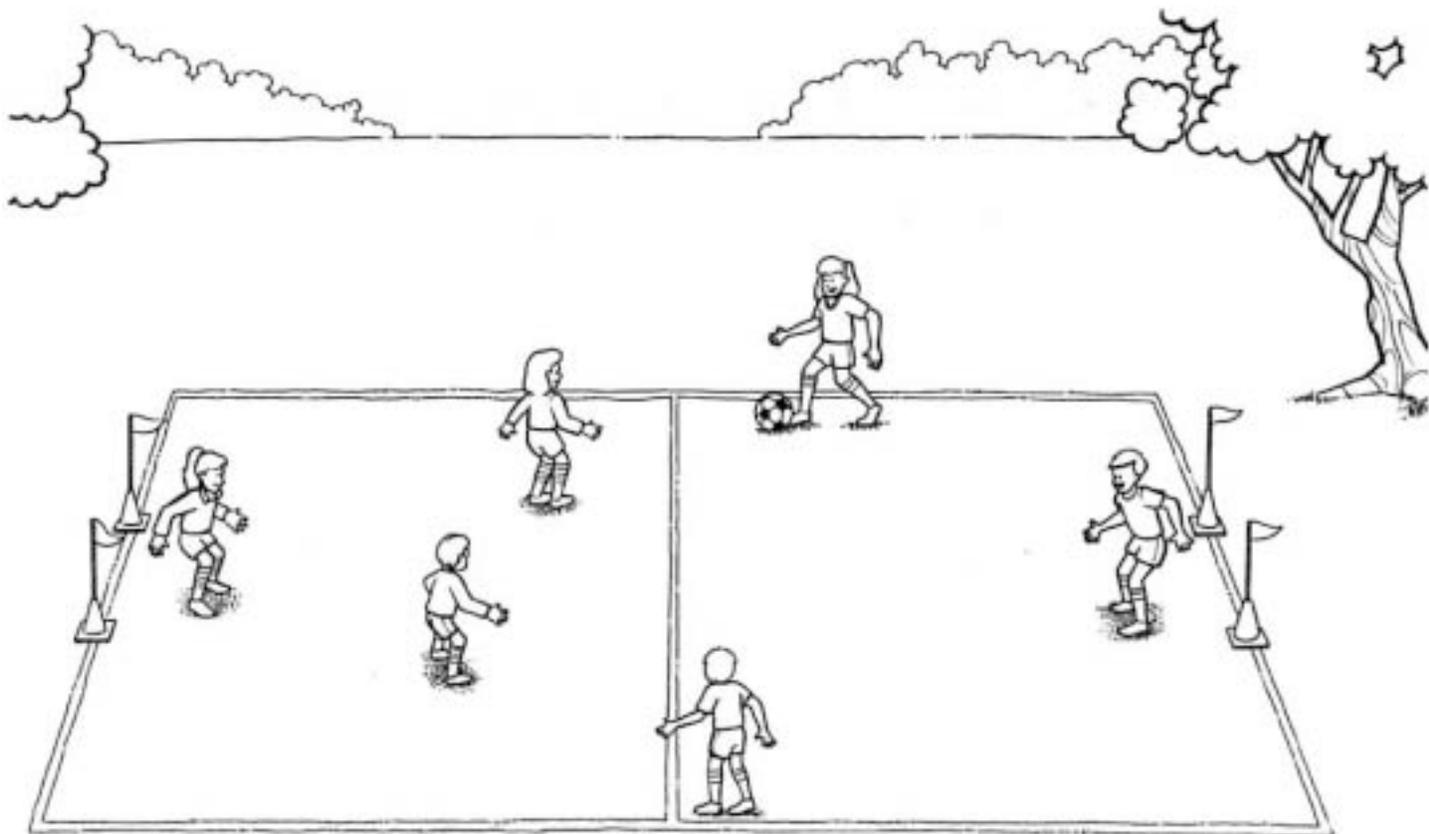
abilities which are more effective in certain parts of the field. But it's also an admission they have weaknesses that should not be exposed by being in certain parts of the field. A poor shooter must be found a position away from the scoring action. A player with a weak left foot must be played on the right side of the field. A poor header of the ball cannot be played in the center of the defense.



For younger players, the soccer world is their oyster. They can all shoot, save and score. They can all defend and attack as the game ebbs and flows from one exciting goal area to another. The smaller the numbers on a side, the greater the opportunity to do all of these things.

Offside, perhaps the most complicated rule of soccer, is unnecessary until players enter 11-vs-11 play. We'll leave that to the later guide for parents of older children.

The next page shows the Micro Soccer™ game which is our game for fun learning and playing. The One-with-One™ program progresses children of ages 4 and 5 towards the Micro Soccer™ game, but at four years of age 3-vs-3 soccer is still too big. Two's company, three's a major crowd for 4 year olds!



EQUIPMENT

The basic equipment for soccer consists of:

- **JERSEY**
- **SHORTS**
- **SOCKS**
- **SHIN GUARDS**
- **SHOES**

At the youngest level, a T-shirt is fine as a jersey and some organizations include the jersey or T-shirt as part of the registration fee.

Shin guards are essential. It's a law of the game. While 4, 5 and 6 year olds are not likely to tackle dangerously, it's necessary to get children used to wearing them. Try to make sure you don't have shin guards that are too big.

Remember: They are shin guards not knee guards!



Soccer shorts are designed to give freedom of movement as well as making a young player feel good (a real soccer player!) and they cost only a few dollars.

The same with the socks. The law says shin guards should be covered by the socks, so that's why soccer socks are knee length and can be folded over at the top of the shin guard.

Shoes, cleats, soccer cleats...these are usually the most expensive item of equipment, but also the most important! The major problem is: As the children grow, their shoes don't!

At the top levels of the game, the pros and college players have at least three pairs of shoes (sometimes four or five) to cater to the different playing surfaces and conditions. Hard surfaces, soft grass, AstroTurf and wet conditions each demand different considerations and different cleat formations and combinations. That, too, is for a later guide.

At younger ages, one pair is all that is needed for most surfaces.

Our recommendation is to use a “molded” shoe which has 20 to 30 small cleats molded into the sole of the shoe. Most soccer specialty stores will know exactly what you want if you ask for “molded” shoes. It may not be grammatically correct or properly descriptive for a non-soccer person, but if the sales person doesn't know what you mean, you're in the wrong store. “Multi-studs” will elicit the same response.

The design of the sole varies by manufacturer, but they all do the same job. They give a good grip on grass and dirt fields and stop kids from slipping and sliding even when it's wet. Later on, as the intensity of competition heightens the momentum of the game, the “molded” shoe on its own won't be good enough for all surfaces, but there's no need to worry about that until children are 12 or 13 years old.

If children are playing inside on a gymnasium floor, the “molded” shoe is not suitable. A flat-soled sports shoe is fine.

How fast do children grow out of them? Too fast!

This is where you have to make some choices. Do you buy shoes a little on the big side and start by wearing two pairs of socks? Do you buy the cheapest? This could produce blisters and discomfort. Do you get involved with a soccer swap? Some clubs have a system for swapping shoes. Providing some precautions are taken, that can work, although some may not like the idea!

The best advice is not to go for the cheapest — if you can afford it. But don't go for the top-of-the-line either. It's unnecessary. And buy them a little on the large size and use ankle socks below the soccer socks until the child grows into them.



THE BALL IS EVERYTHING

The ball is the most important piece of equipment. Without it, no game!

In the old country, and in the old days, you could be the most popular kid on the block if you owned a soccer ball, because not too many did. There would be a knock on Jimmy's door and Mom might open it.

"Can Jimmy come out to play?"

"No! He's doing his homework."

"Oh! I see. Well...can we borrow his ball then?"

FIFA, the governing body of soccer, categorizes soccer ball sizes.

Size 5 is the adult ball.

Size 4 is for 9 to 12 year olds.

Size 3 is for players under 9.

There is also a specially developed Micro Soccer™ ball which is lighter, more child-friendly for kicking and doesn't hurt as much if a child is inadvertently hit with the ball. Its size is in between the Size 3 and 4 (3.5).

Whatever ball is used make sure it is a hand-stitched leather or synthetic leather. The plastic, laminated soccer balls that are now thankfully fast disappearing from the fields of North America are not child-friendly or even adult-friendly. They hurt to kick, to head and if accidentally hit by a misplaced pass or shot.

Our belief is that every child should have a soccer ball, to bring to practice and to have fun in the back yard.



“WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING.... IT'S THE ONLY THING!”

Vince Lombardi, the great football coach, certainly knew what he was doing with his teams. He was credited with the above quotation, but for sure he wasn't coaching 4 to 7 year olds.

Winning is everything in the professional leagues, in the Olympics and in the World Cup of Soccer, but for young players starting out in the game it is irrelevant. It will do more harm than good if they are brainwashed by the importance of winning and losing too early. The parent will have the biggest influence on the right philosophy and environment for their child.

You can hear it already.

“Whaddya mean? It's not about winning? Of course it is! That's the way we played!”

Just a note to relieve anxieties. We know winning and losing becomes increasingly important as children move into their teens and begin to take stock of the adult world they will soon be joining. In soccer, as we have pointed out elsewhere, a good team and a good coach will play players in positions that emphasize their strengths and minimize their weaknesses. The successful coach will play players alongside one another who complement each other, but also to compensate for their respective weaknesses.

“The total team performance should be greater than the sum of the parts...!”

There is very clear evidence to show that many, many young athletes who are outstanding at 7 years of age are not outstanding at 17, and vice versa.

Our role as soccer parents in the early years is to allow the children to develop a love for the game. They will only do this if they are allowed to express themselves, to make mistakes and learn from them, to try all the skills of soccer and to grow with the game without pressure from Mom or Dad to “do well.”

“Get stuck in, you wimp!”

A shout from a frustrated father to his 6-year-old daughter a few years ago is still reverberating around the soccer fields of West Vancouver. One wonders if she continued playing! Why would she...if given a choice?

It's our job as parents to try to make the game of soccer (or baseball or basketball or hockey) as enriching an experience as we possibly can. And if our young players only run up and down the field for 40 minutes...make some good kicks and some not-so-good ones, but enjoy the whole experience...we are all doing a great job and the children are keeping fit and healthy.

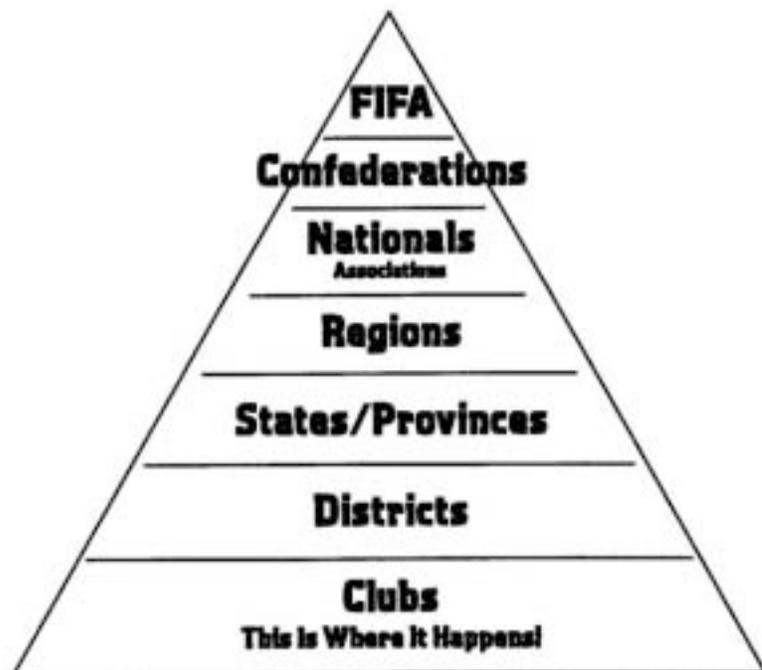
THE SOCCER PYRAMID

Soccer is truly the world's game. The Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA), which has headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, has 198 member nations — 13 more than the United Nations. The world is split into six confederations: Europe, Africa, Asia, Australasia, South America and then our own, called CONCACAF (the Confederation of North America, the Caribbean and Central America with ? member countries.)

Each country has its own national association — the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) in America and the Canadian Soccer Association (CSA) in Canada. Every national governing body is represented at FIFA through elected officers in each confederation.

The U.S. is divided into four geographical regions: North East, South East, Mid-West and Western States). Canada, with its much smaller population, does not have regions, but splits down into 10 provincial associations.

The U.S. is further complicated because it has the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA) with over three million registered players. There is also an American Youth Soccer Association (AYSO) with 500,000+ registered players and Soccer for American Youth (SAY) with approximately 100,000 registered players. Both AYSO and SAY are affiliated directly with the governing body (USSF).



After the four geographical regions, most states have their own State Senior Soccer Association and a separate Youth Soccer Organization.

Canada no longer has a Canadian Youth Soccer Association as it amalgamated with the senior governing body (CSA). There are no other youth soccer organizations in most communities other than some parks and recreation and youth programs for areas without a recognized youth club.

BACKYARD FUN

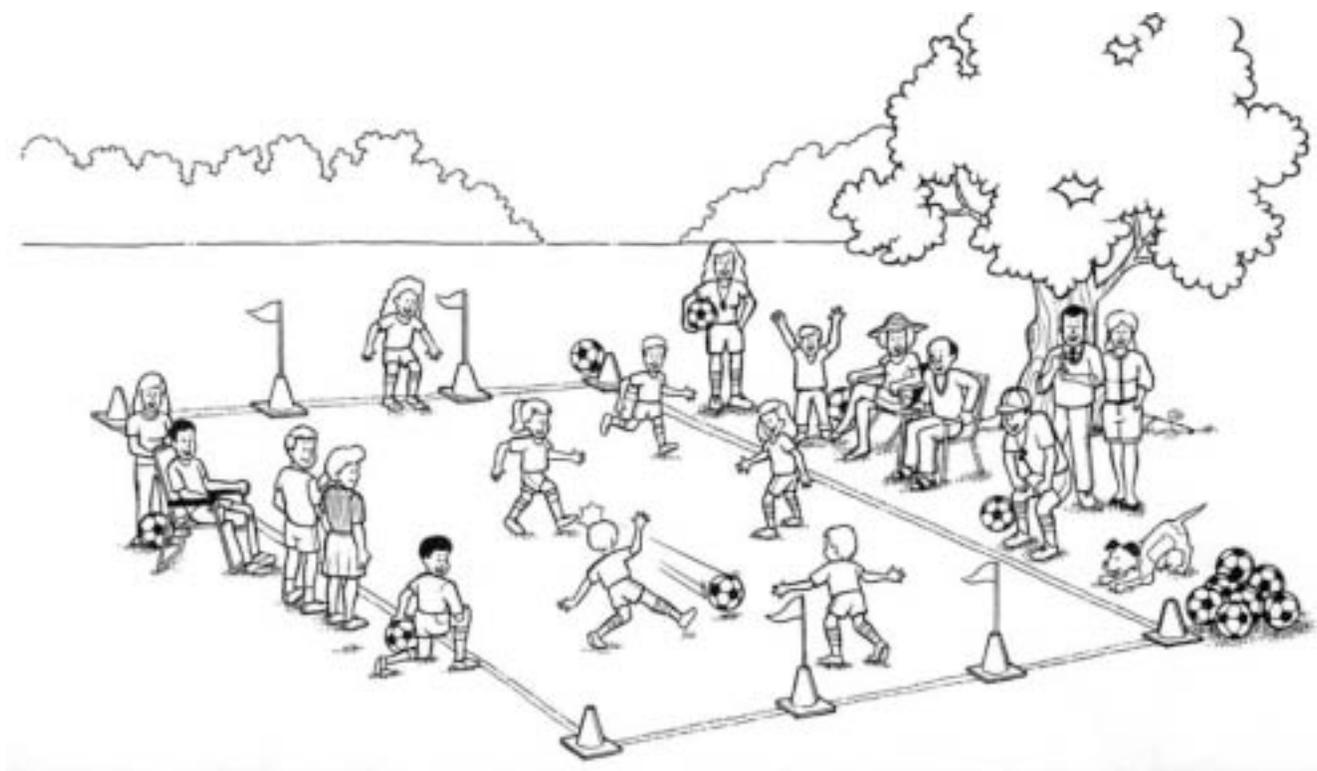
You can have plenty of soccer fun with a ball in the backyard, or in the park if the yard is not big enough. From 1-vs-1 to 2-vs-2 to Micro Soccer™; Jungle Runs, etc., etc...you name it. The scope is almost unlimited.

One major thing you should do when you go out for soccer fun is to encourage your child to kick with the "other FOOT." Two-footed players in soccer are much admired and it makes it more fun to play when you are not afraid of kicking the ball with your non-dominant foot.

There is another consideration.

Most of us are naturally right handed, and right footed. Yet the game of soccer is played equally on both sides of the field (right and left)! Left-footed players are always at a premium. Much admired, coveted and invaluable! Developing the left foot (or the right foot, if you are a natural left footer) not only makes a player more complete, it opens up all sorts of exciting positional opportunities later when they move into competitive 11-a-side play.

Have a look in your child's Kick Start activity book for fun back yard games.



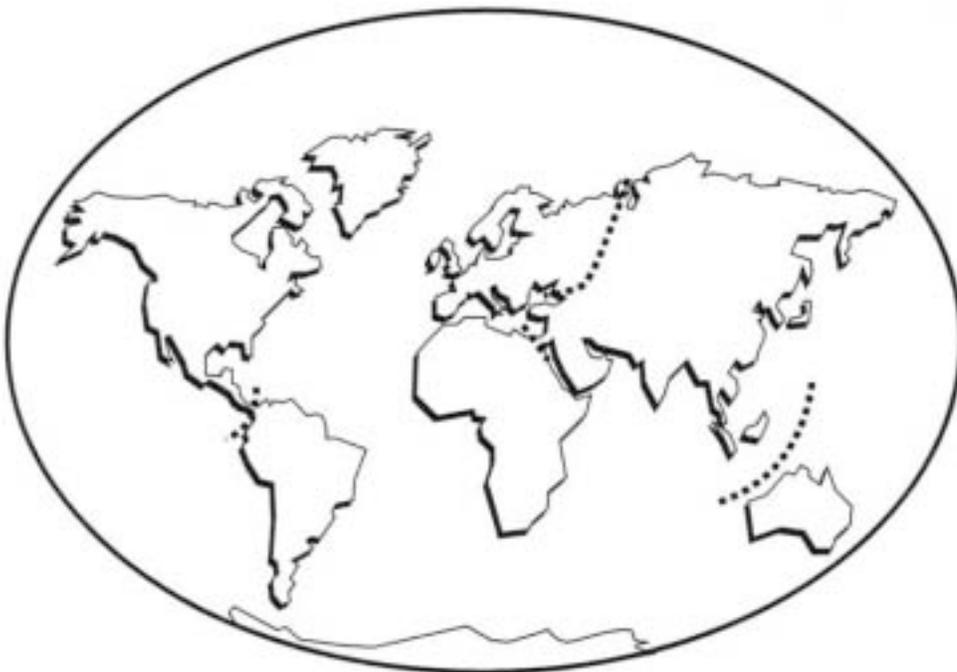
HISTORY OF THE GAME

Soccer has been played in some form or other since civilization began. Historians believe that cave men played their own brand of soccer, using whatever was available for a ball (rocks, animal bladders — feed first, play later!), even human heads. However, it was around 2000 years ago that the first games of “football” were recorded.

The modern game has its roots in England, where it goes back to the third century. The present laws of the game began to take shape in 1848, when the private schools of England met at Trinity College, Cambridge, and drew up the “Cambridge rules” to help standardize the laws of football. The English Football Association (known the world over as “The FA”) was formed in 1863, and remains the main authority on the laws of the game worldwide, in cooperation with FIFA.

British sailors took the game around the world. But in the United States and Canada, the immigrants who helped make these countries great brought their game of football with them. From Boston's Oneida Football Club of the mid-19th century, to the immigrant miners of Nanaimo, British Columbia about the same time, the game “arrived” in North America a long time ago and has been gaining momentum ever since.

The soccer world finally organized itself internationally by forming the world governing body (FIFA) in 1904. The first World Cup of soccer was organized by, and played in, Uruguay in 1930. Of the 13 nations, only four were from Europe (Yugoslavia, Rumania, France and Belgium) and the United States was there from Day One.



It is only in the last two decades — with the extension of participation of countries from Asia, Africa, Australasia, Central America, the Caribbean and North America — that the World Cup has become truly global. In 1982, the number of World Cup finalists was increased from the 16 nations to 24 to accommodate this growth. In 1988, the decision was made to go to 32 qualifying teams starting with the World Cup in France.

The play downs for each World Cup take over two years. No sooner has World Cup finished that, within a matter of months, the play downs start for the next quadrennial — to whittle down almost 200 nations to the 32 finalists.

In America and Canada, the “soccer explosion” has continued now for three decades with millions of young players involved in programs. While soccer is well established in the communities and colleges, it is just starting to establish itself as a major spectator sport. The North American Soccer League appeared to have made a breakthrough with teams such as the New York Cosmos, Tampa Bay Rowdies, Minnesota Kickers, Montreal Manic and Vancouver Whitecaps drawing major league-sized audiences. But the league was unable to sustain itself and folded in 1985.

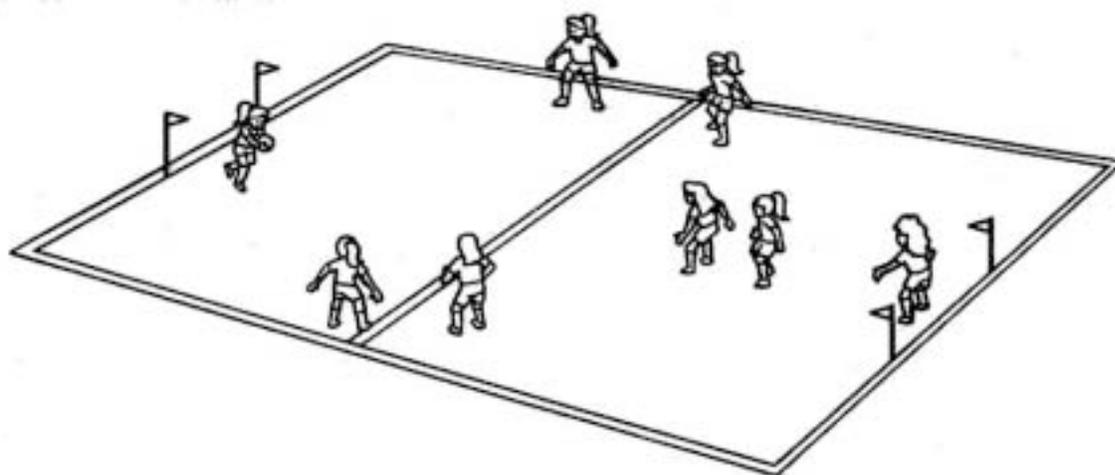
The L.A. Olympics in 1984 showed the world that the United States could organize major soccer events. The “football” component of the Olympics easily outdrew every other sport. This so impressed the world, and in particular FIFA, that the men’s World Cup for 1994 was played in the United States.

The '94 World Cup was outstanding , both commercially (biggest crowds ever for a World Cup final and the largest number of television viewers) and in terms of the quality of entertaining soccer. Consequently, the base was laid for the re-establishment of a top flight pro league — the Major League of Soccer, which commenced operations in 1996. It didn't do any harm to soccer in America that the U.S. team made it to the second round of play in '94 World Cup, surprising many world experts with their brand of soccer and competitive spirit. It also helped that the U.S. eliminated one of the favorites, Columbia, in the first round.



AMERICAN WOMEN'S SOCCER PROGRAM HAS LEAD THE WORLD

The American team won the first WOMEN'S World Cup — held in China in 1991 — and the first Olympic championship for women at the Atlanta Olympics (1996). The biggest challenge for the United States is to maintain its #1 position. Girls' and women's soccer is gaining great momentum around the world and the American team will need to meet the challenge of stiffer competition.



In 1999, the US women's team beat China at a sold out Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA, to become once more, the World Champions.

Four years later, they had to settle for 3rd place, but came back in 1994 Olympics in Greece to win the gold medal.

In 2007, the World Cup returns to China and this will be a great test for many nations, including the US, as the standard of women's soccer has made dramatic strides in the past 10 years.

SOCCER'S INTERNATIONAL APPEAL

The fact that anyone can play soccer anytime and anywhere has created a world full of players, and a world full of fans.

Television has been the biggest factor in making players from every corner of the world household names. The European Championships, the South American Championships, the World Club Championships, the Olympics and the World Cup are all watched by a worldwide audience.

For instance, as far back as 1982, the championship game of the men's World Cup played in Spain between Italy and West Germany was watched by an estimated audience of one in every five of the world's population — a billion people!

In terms of participation, there are over three million registered players in the United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA). The 2003 National Soccer Participation survey reported over 19 million Americans over the age of 6 play at least once a year, while over 8 million play more than 25 days a year.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ATTACKER: A player looking to help score a goal when his or her side is in possession of the ball.

BALL CONTROL: The act of receiving the ball from a pass or interception using the feet, thigh or chest.



BICYCLE KICK: An overhead kick made famous by Pele, the legendary Brazilian player.

BLIND SIDE: An expression to describe a run made by an attacking player without the ball on the back side or blind side of a defender in order to receive the ball in an unmarked position.

CAP: An award given to every player who represents his or her country in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In years gone by, a tasseled, gold-braided cap was given to every player for each game. Today, one cap is given for a series of games such as the World Cup. Being "capped" has come to mean being selected for your country.

CHALLENGE: Where an opponent tries to separate a player from the ball. There are certain strict rules applied to ensure that a challenge is fair and safe.

CHIP PASS: A short, lofted pass over opponents. It is executed with a short, stabbing action under the ball to make the ball go high and spin backwards so that on returning to the ground it does not run away from a teammate.

CLEATS: Pieces of leather, rubber or plastic attached the sole of the shoe and sticking out from the shoe to prevent slipping.

COACH: The teacher of an athlete or sports team.

CORNER KICK: Awarded to the attacking side when a defender plays the ball over the defending end line. The kick is taken from the corner nearest where the ball went out of play.



CROSS: A pass that is made for the wings (flanks) into the penalty area, often in the air.

DEFENDER: A player helping his or her team prevent the opposition from scoring.

DIAGONAL PASS: A slanting pass played through and behind opponents, producing an opportunity for a teammate to run on to the ball.

DIRECT FREE KICK: A free kick where a shot can be taken directly at the goal by the kicker (usually awarded for a major foul).



DRIBBLING: The skill of running forward with the ball under close control while evading challenges from the opposition.

FAKING: Pretending to do one thing before doing another in an attempt to unbalance and fool a defender.

FIELD: The area where the game is played, bordered by the goal lines and the sidelines.

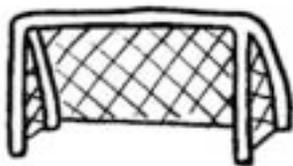
FORWARD: A player in an advanced position, where the main expectations are for skilled attacking play.

FOUL: An illegal challenge such as a trip, push or kick; or a deliberate hand ball. A foul is punished by conceding a free kick to the opposition.

FREE-KICK: A free pass or shot awarded after a foul by an opponent — such as tripping, handling, etc. In 11-a-side soccer, the opposition has to stand at least 10 yards from where the free kick is taken. In small-sided soccer the distance is 5 yards.

GOAL KICK: Taken from in front of the goal after the attacking team has shot and missed the goal and the ball has gone out of play.

GOAL POSTS: Two vertical posts of wood or metal that are placed on the end line of the field to be the objective of the game. To score “a goal,” the ball must go through the posts. The goal posts are sometimes joined across the top by a horizontal bar to form the “goal.”



GOAL: The award for getting the ball over the goal line and inside the net, i.e., to score a goal.

GOALKEEPER: The only player who can handle the ball in the goal box (or penalty area in 11-a-side play).

HEADER: A pass or shot made with the forehead.

INDIRECT FREE KICK: A free kick where the ball must first be passed to a teammate before a shot can be taken at the goal (usually awarded for a minor foul).

JAMBOREE: A soccer festival where multiple games are played for fun and records and standings of wins and losses are not recorded.

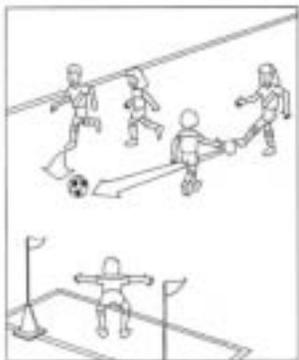
JERSEY: Name of the shirt that's part of the team uniform.

KICK-OFF: The way a game is started, or re-started after half time or after a goal is scored. The ball is kicked off from the center of the field.

LOW DRIVE: A powerful low shot or pass made by striking the ball with the front of the foot (laces).



MLS: The Major League of Soccer, the premier professional soccer league of the United States.



MULTI-STUDS: Shoes with numerous small rubber cleats molded into the sole of the shoe.

OFFSIDE: A special rule for 11-a-side soccer which places some restrictions on when and where the attacking players can go in the attacking half of the field.

OPPONENTS: Players on the opposing team.

PASS: The movement of the ball from one player to another — usually by kicking.

PENALTY AREA: Area in front of the goal which varies in size according to the age of players and the size of the field. If a foul is committed by a defending player in the penalty area, it can result in a free shot at goal (see penalty shot). In adult soccer, the penalty area is often referred to as the 18-yard box because the penalty area extends 18 yards along the goal line from each of the goal posts and 18 yards out from goal (the 18-yard line). In adult soccer, the penalty shot is taken from inside the penalty area —12 yards in front of the middle of the goal.

PENALTY SPOT: The place within the penalty area from which a penalty shot is taken. In 11-a-side soccer, it is 12 yards out from the center of the goals.

RECOVERY LINES: The straight line back to goal after a field player has been caught out of position following a failed attack or attempt to tackle.

RECTANGLE: A four-sided figure with two sides that are longer than the other two; the shape of a soccer field.

ROUND-ROBIN: A formula used in tournament or jamboree play where each team in a group plays each other once. Usually there are four teams per group.

SAVE: When a goalkeeper, and sometimes a defender, stops the ball from entering the goal.



SHIN GUARD: A piece of protective equipment worn over the shin and under the socks. The shin guard helps to prevent injury from a misplaced tackle.

SHOT: An attempt to score a goal by kicking or heading the ball.

SHOUT! A word in soccer to describe the loud communication between players, required because of the distances involved and (sometimes) the crowd noise.

SIDELINE: The line that marks the limit of the field on the sides - sometimes called the touch line.

SIX STUDS: Shoes for use on grassy and/or wet fields with six plastic cleats screwed into the sole of the shoe.

STRATEGY: The overall plan for how to win a game.

STRIKER: An advanced forward player usually operating in and around the central area where shots on goal are taken.

SWEEPER: The rearmost central defender who organizes and covers other back defenders.

TACKLE: A challenge made by a defender with the feet, on an opposing player who has the ball.

TEAM: A group of players who combine together with a common purpose.

TEAMMATES: Players on the same side.

THROW-IN: A special way of re-starting the game after the ball has gone out of play over the sideline

TOURNAMENT: A short period of time, usually a weekend, sometimes a week, where groups of teams compete against each other two or three times a day culminating with a tournament champion.

TRIANGLE: A figure with three straight sides; a shape that is used in soccer to form a team play between three players.

UNIFORM: The standard jersey, shorts and socks worn by every player except the goalkeeper, who wears a distinguishing jersey.

UNMARKED: When one's own team has the ball, a player in an open position where there are no opposing players.

WALL PASS: A pass between two teammates where the player making the first pass moves forward and receives the ball back from the cooperating teammate who one-times the ball and therefore acts like a "wall."

WING: The area towards the sidelines in the attacking half of the field — sometimes referred to as the flanks.

ZONE: An area of the field which is not described by actual field markings. Usually coaches refer to and describe "zones" to give a player a better idea of where they should position themselves at different times of the game.

