

ANZA~IJSL

Report for the Season 1996~'97

This will be my final report, after almost six seasons in the "chair". ANZA soccer has grown steadily over the years, and now comprises of 48 teams competing in six age groups. Our players vary in ability, but the improvement in standards at each age group throughout the season gives a feeling of satisfaction, and providing we keep the enthusiasm high, then the ANZA~IJSL will continue to grow.

Mr. Alan Clarke is taking over as the Chairman full time next season, and this year we have been well supported on the soccer committee by Mrs. Mary McBride and the lady coordinators.

The amount of pre-season preparation work, including the collation of registrations undertaken by the ANZA office (thanks ladies !) is immense. The work entails reviewing the age groups in accordance with the number of applicant received, and sorting out all the teams. It is a mammoth task, and needs time and patience to resolve. The number of teams was again increased this year to take up the continued growth in numbers, however we still end up with a wait list. Our apologies to those on the wait list who did not get a place, as the list moves at a snail's pace once the season settles down.

One aspect of the pre-season work which we still have not got right is the balancing of the teams. Some adjustments were made, but whilst the overall picture was improved, some teams still struggled. A grading system has been introduced to get a better mix next year, and we and the committee are always trying ways of making ANZA soccer a more enjoyable experience, without taking away the competitive element which makes football such an exciting sport.

An undoubted success this year was the change in team strip (...or uniforms) which the ANZA~IJSL supplied. The players looked most "professional" even down to the 5's! We are proud of our standards, and like anyone else appreciate the odd complement.

Another first this year, was the completion of the league programme without any Saturday rain-outs, a most remarkable experience, and one I have not seen in over ten years of ANZA soccer. Unfortunately we have lost the use of the Portsdown Road pitches for a few months, due to the PUB in their infinite wisdom, starting cable work half way through the season. Hopefully things will be back to normal before the start of next season.

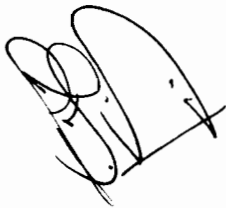
During the week-end of the 25th / 26th January this year, our Under 12 and Under 15 representative teams traveled to Kuala Lumpur for the Annual South East Asia Youth Soccer Tournament. On the Sunday morning, similar to last year, both our teams went into the final game knowing that if they won their last game then they would win the tournament. Last year it was the Under 15's turn, this year the Under 12's won an action packed game against the hosts Kuala Lumpur to take the cup. Congratulations to all the players of both squads, and thanks to their respective coaches, Ulli Niedermeyer and Tony Brogan for the 15's and Ross McKenzie and Alan Clarke for the 12's.

As indicated in previous reports, success like this does not happen overnight. The success of our senior representatives reflects the efforts of all the coaches and players from the 5's on upwards, ensuring ANZA has a continued seam of talented youngsters to draw on each successive year.

ANZA soccer relies on the volunteers, namely yourselves, to continue to grow, and our thanks go to each and everyone who has helped week in week out to make this possible.

My final word and vote of thanks, as always, goes to the referees. Where would we be without them !

Yours in Sport,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Peter Dixon', written in a cursive style.

Peter Dixon.
Chairman ANZA~IJSL