

SASH

HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Newsletter of the Society for American Soccer History. Number Two. Spring 1994.

SAM T.N. FOULDS (1905-1994)

Sam Foulds died on Jan. 9 in New Hampshire. We could say that a bit of SASH died with him, but Sam would not have viewed it that way. Sam knew that SASH was going to have to fly without him someday, accomplishing what he hoped it could powered by his inspiration and example rather than by his presence.

Sam Foulds wore many hats in his 76 years of involvement with soccer: player, coach, administrator, journalist, historian. It is, of course, this last capacity that is the most significant to SASH. Sam's interest in the history of soccer in the United States is, in large measure, why SASH is here.

We can best serve Sam's memory as an organization by remembering, and trying to emulate, some of the qualities that most marked his work as an historian of his sport.

Sam was not a jealous historian. He had compiled immense files of information on American soccer history, but he was not interested in hoarding this information. His foremost concern was always for the good of the sport, and he was eager to help other historians, always willing, in the manner of an especially helpful librarian, to share this information with those who had an interest in it.

Managing to escape the trap of many historians, Sam had a mind that was not rooted in the distant past with only a nod for more recent years. He was just as excited about the soccer history that was being made today. When SASH put out a questionnaire last year about the particular interests of individuals, Sam replied that one matter he was especially interested in researching was the reasons for the failure of the New York Cosmos despite their large following and resources. The rise and fall of the Cosmos was something that had happened in Sam's seventh decade of involvement in soccer. This was very recent history for someone of Sam's age to be taking a particular interest in, but Sam was not one to feel that history was something that only went up to a certain date and then ended.

Sam was very much involved in the effort to get SASH started right up until his final days. The month before he died, he had produced the first issue of SASH's quarterly newsletter, an effort for which he had eagerly volunteered. Shortly before that, he had been involved in the selection of the topic for this year's American Soccer History Symposium and in various other discussions concerning the effort to get SASH off the ground.

At the meeting at which the groundwork for SASH was laid, Sam had allowed that because of his age, he did not want to become an officer of SASH. However, he never let the fact that he was nearly 90 years old hold him back from assisting in the efforts to get this organization that he had inspired off the ground. And it is particularly significant to the study of American soccer history that he never allowed his age to stop his huge accomplishment of compiling records. His greatest feats in that work came in the last decades of his life.

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Sam was never one to be gloomy. He had a marvelous ability to look on the bright side. Making the 1928 United States Olympic team would have been the pinnacle of his career as a player, but he was left off in a somewhat controversial decision. Did he look back unhappily at that event? Most certainly not. While the Olympic team was away in Europe, Sam was happy to point out, he met his future wife. He viewed what had happened to him in the Olympic selection as a very fortuitous event.

Sam Foulds turned 88 years old last summer, but was still as productive as could be, with a fantastically lively mind. We will miss Sam Foulds the man terribly, but we will enjoy the fruits of his labor for decades to come. How fortunate we were to have had him with us for so many years.

Membership Notes

The organizing committee of SASH wrote to the members in early February to tell you about the beginning of plans for both the first general membership meeting of SASH on June 9 and the American Soccer History Symposium on June 10, both in Oneonta, N.Y. Now there is quite a lot more to report about both events.

The membership meeting will be held at Morris Hall at SUNY-Oneonta, previously called Oneonta State University, possibly in the same meeting room that will be the site of the symposium the following day. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. Among the items likely to be on the agenda are:

1. Consideration of a resolution of tribute to Sam T.N. Foulds. This will be written in advance of the meeting and made available to members when they arrive in Oneonta.

2. A report from the organizing committee on the activities and accomplishments of SASH in the 12 months since the first organizational meeting.

3. Election of officers. The proposed constitution calls for election of officers by mail. This year, an interim election will be held at the meeting itself, to choose officers to serve until the time designated by the by-laws for the next election for each office. Eight offices will be up for election: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and four directors (members of the executive board). The proposed by-laws call for the two-year terms of the president and treasurer to expire in odd-numbered years, so the members elected to those offices this year will serve only one year. The proposed by-laws call for the two-year terms of the vice-president and secretary to expire in even-numbered years, so the members elected to those offices this year will serve full two-year terms. The proposed by-laws call for the directors to serve four-year terms, with one director's term to expire each year. After the election, it will be determined by blind draw which of the four directors elected this year will serve until 1995, which until 1996, which until 1997 and which until 1998. Any member wishing to run for office should inform Albert Colone or Lois Emanuelli, the executive director and curator of the National Soccer Hall of Fame, at (607) 432-3351. Candidates should plan to be present at the meeting. Among the subjects that the proposed by-laws cover is the creation of an Nominating Committee to conduct future elections by mail.

4. Consideration of the proposed constitution and by-laws of SASH. A committee of members headed by Jack Huckel has been working on this subject since last June, using as a starting point the constitution and by-laws of the Society for American Baseball Research, also known as the Baseball Historians. Copies of the proposed constitution and by-laws will be available to members when they arrive in Oneonta. Those wishing to see copies sooner can obtain them by writing to organizing committee member Jack Huckel at 65 Castleberry Dr., Gansevoort, N.Y. 12831.

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5. Discussion of plans by the National Soccer Hall of Fame to establish a scholarship fund in memory of Sam T.N. Foulds to provide grants for soccer history research. The Hall would like SASH to be involved in administering this, particularly in terms of passing judgment on the worthiness of proposed research projects.

6. Consideration of activities planned by SASH in the coming year, particularly with a view toward recruiting members to serve on committees conducting those activities.

7. In lieu of the annual treasurer's report, since there will have been no official treasurer prior to this meeting, a report by the executive director of the National Soccer Hall of Fame on SASH's current financial position.

8. Setting of the dues rate for 1995.

If you have other items that you would like to see on the agenda, please write to Al Colone (National Soccer Hall of Fame, 11 Ford Ave., Oneonta, N.Y. 13820), Roger Allaway (1263 Stirling St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19111) or Jack Huckel (65 Castleberry Dr., Gansevoort, N.Y. 12831).

There also has been a good amount of progress on the symposium since the letter to you about it in February. At that time, only three of the key participants had been lined up, the keynote speaker (Soccer America founder and chairman Clay Berling, a SASH member) and the group leaders on the early and later ASL (journalist and author Colin Jose, a SASH member, and broadcaster and former ASL commissioner Mario Machado).

Leaders have since been lined up for all three planned groups on the North American Soccer League, a group on the Major Indoor Soccer League, a group on the United States Interregional Soccer League, a group on the American Professional Soccer League and a group on the American League of Professional Soccer Clubs.

The group leaders on the NASL will be Wayne Rasmussen, the athletic director at Eastern College in St. Davids, Pa., and the author of a doctoral dissertation on the history of the selling of pro soccer in America, and former NASL coaches Gordon Bradley and Al Miller. The group leader on the MISL will be former MISL and Chicago Sting executive Doug Verb. And the group leader on the USISL will be USISL commissioner Francisco Marcos.

In most instances, we have attempted to find group leaders who were personally involved to some degree with the leagues in question. We have taken a different tack in the case of the APSL, which has become a fairly sensitive topic as a result of its announcement last month of expansion plans for 1994 and its challenge to the USSF's decision to award top-division status to Major League Soccer. We decided not to seek a group leader who had been personally involved in the APSL, but rather to seek someone both articulate and neutral. We have chosen SASH member Jack Huckel, who is the men's coach at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., and one of the historians of the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

The last group will be on the American League of Professional Soccer Clubs, which was a short-lived (1894 only) attempt by baseball club owners to form a soccer league to put their stadiums to off-season use and was possibly the first attempt to market a professional soccer league to ticket-buying Americans. Because this is a too obscure a topic to put on the shoulders of a single group leader, we are putting together a panel of people who have made a study of this era of American soccer. So far, this includes SASH members Albert Colone and Mike Burnham, and we hope that it will include several others.

We realize that changes in plans can happen and that the possibility that one or more of our group leaders won't be able to make it to Oneonta does exist. We would like to have some backup alternatives. Any SASH member who plans to be at the symposium and would be interested in being available as a backup group leader should let us know, by writing to either Albert Colone (National Soccer Hall of Fame, 11 Ford Ave., Oneonta, N.Y. 13820) or Roger Allaway (1263 Stirling St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19111).

At present, the schedule of events for the annual Hall of Fame Week at the National Soccer Hall of Fame in Oneonta looks like this:

Thursday, June 9, 7:30 p.m.---SASH general membership meeting at Morris Hall, SUNY-Oneonta.

Friday, June 10, 9:30 a.m.---American Soccer History Symposium at Morris Hall, SUNY-Oneonta.

Friday, June 10, evening---Hall of Fame Dinner.

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Saturday, June 11, late afternoon---Hall of Fame Induction Ceremonies at Wright National Soccer Campus.

Saturday, June 11, late afternoon---United States Interregional Soccer League All-Star Game at Wright National Soccer Campus.

Saturday, June 11, evening---Post-game reception and dinner, site not yet decided.

The National Soccer Coaches Association of America and the National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials Association have announced their 1994 inductees to the National Soccer Hall of Fame. In addition, the United States Soccer Federation has announced the nominees from whom its inductees will be chosen.

The NSCAA inductees will be John Eiler and Jeff Vennell. The NISOA inductees will be Allen Feld, Sal Esposito, Michael Moskowitz, Rosella Bernabei and Charlie Lee.

The USSF nominees, from whom an undetermined number of inductees will be chosen are James Bradley, Geoff Coombes, Paul Danilo, Gino Gardassanich, John Hughes, Frank Kelly, Ted Konsewicz, Pat McBride, Gerhard Mengel, Lloyd Monsen, Hans Stierle, Larry Surock, Adam Wolanin, Bill Wolstencroft and Joseph Zyzda.

All of this year's inductees to the Hall of Fame will be inducted on June 11, two days after the SASH meeting.

Now that you've helped to get this organization going, you're probably curious about your fellow members. Who and where are we? You'll be finding out more about that in coming months, through the June membership meeting, the membership directory and future issues of the quarterly. For now, however, we ought to tell you this much. As of March 20, 1994, there were 63 members of SASH, from 21 states plus the District of Columbia and two foreign countries. As yet, we are a somewhat Northeast-oriented organization, but perhaps we will balance out a bit as time goes by. Those 63 members on March 20 break down as follows: Nine from Pennsylvania; eight from New York; four each from Maryland, California, New Jersey and Massachusetts; three each from Virginia, Florida and Illinois; two each from Connecticut, Rhode Island, Georgia, South Carolina and Missouri; one each from Arizona, Washington, Texas, Ohio, Kansas, New Hampshire, North Carolina and the District of Columbia; two from Canada, and one from Germany.

Included in this envelope you will find a copy of the entry about you for the first SASH Membership Directory, which we expect to be sending to members this summer. If there are any changes or corrections that you would like to make in the item about yourself, please send them to Roger Allaway, 1263 Stirling St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19111, preferably by May 1, or give them to him at the SASH meeting in Oneonta in June.

The article that begins on the next page is the first installment of something that we will be printing in installments over three issues of the SASH Historical Quarterly. This is a paper that was presented by former Philadelphia amateur and professional player Len Oliver, who is a SASH member, at the first American Soccer History Symposium in Oneonta on June 12, 1992. The entire paper is nearly 6,000 words, considerably too long for us to reprint in a single installment, but you will be seeing the rest of it in coming issues. You may remember that in the letter that accompanied SASH's original membership solicitation last fall, we said that not all SASH members need be involved in historical research, but that we hoped that some of those who aren't might take an interest in writing about their own reminiscences of American soccer in earlier days. We would like to see this newsletter become something of a forum for those reminiscences. We hope that what Len Oliver wrote two years ago about soccer in Philadelphia some decades ago will both interest you and inspire others of you from various parts of the country to similar efforts. And you needn't worry about having to match this sort of length. That would be too much to ask. Reminiscences of 500-1,000 words are what we are hoping for.

Len Oliver was a collegiate star at Temple University, played in the American Soccer League for Philadelphia Uhrik Truckers and Baltimore Pompeii, and was a member of the United States team at the 1963 Pan-American Games in Sao Paulo, Brazil. In this installment, he talks about earlier days, of street soccer and youth soccer in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood.

AMERICAN SOCCER DIDN'T START WITH PELE:
PHILADELPHIA SOCCER IN THE '40s AND '50s

by Len Oliver

In a recent article in *USYSA NETWORK*, the writer stated that "the first generation of true American players has grown up, and is beginning to take over the grassroots coaching reins..." For young Americans who began playing soccer in the '40s in urban America, these words ring hollow. People writing about soccer seem to forget the generation of young Americans exposed to the game from their immigrant fathers three decades before Pele's debut in the North American Soccer League in the mid-'70s. This paper is written to remind us that American soccer didn't start with Pele.

My earliest soccer memories were watching my father play in the late '30s and kicking a ball in the streets with my twin brother, Jim. I remember above all the pungent smell of liniment in the changing rooms for my father's teams--they had no locker rooms, just places to change--and hanging around with Jim as our father prepared for a match with his German-Hungarian club. The "Hunkies," an outstanding amateur soccer team in late '30s Philadelphia, were no different than the other ethnic clubs that dotted the Philadelphia landscape in this period. They were Scots on the Bluebells, the First Germans, the Irish playing with the Celtics, along with union-backed teams like the Bricklayers or Hosiery Local, or corporate teams such as Bethlehem Steel and Fleischer Yarn. Ethnics dominated Philadelphia soccer, although Philadelphia nurtured a sizeable number of home-grown talent.

My father was a blur in his red and black jersey--running, passing, tackling, yelling--a 5'7" pesty Scottish center half moving up and down the field under the traditional 2-3-5, soccer's mainstay system since the 1870s. And he seemed to be always full of mud.

Jim and I shared in oranges with the players at halftime, sometimes kicking a ball with a sympathetic player. These early experiences created an accepting, pleasant soccer environment for us. But beyond the liniment, the ethnic clubs, and the post-game parties where someone was always good for a soda, we had the streets of Philadelphia's Kensington where we grew up in a working-class neighborhood of red-brick row houses on a tight little street. Helen Street was our playground, a garage door our goal. Streetlights and curbs were merely additional obstacles to be overcome. We went 1 vs. 1 for hours on that street, joined occasionally by cousins and neighbor kids for 2 vs. 1 or 3 vs. 2 games. Time skipped by and 25-20 was not an uncommon score.

We always kept score, building in an early and not-to-be-forgotten competitiveness. We invented ways to take each other on without instruction, now called "self-teaching" by the licensed coaches. We also fought with each other and with neighbor kids. Our father, a former amateur boxer in Scotland, had taught us to use our fists when we were five years old: "If you're going to play this game, you have to know how to fight," words reminiscent of an earlier era of rough-and-tumble ethnic soccer.

Whatever we did with the ball on Helen Street, we learned the rudiments of soccer techniques and tactics with tough, challenging opponents, inventing moves as we needed them. We shielded, overlapped, changed pace and direction, jockeyed, executed wall passes, and nutmegged each other without ever hearing the terms.

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Occasionally our father would join us, but the long hours of work during World War II took him away most of the time. He did find time to train the Bluebelles, and our joys came in getting a used "T-ball," as they were called then, a bloated leather misshapen bladder-filled ball that rolled in curious and unpredictable directions. We could depend on a hand-me-down pair of Hotspurs or Mansfields once a season, soccer shoes with high tops, steel toes and replaceable nail-in leather studs. When our father brought home a torn Bluebelles white-and-blue striped jersey, we fought over it to decide who would be "the big player" that day. This wasn't used equipment--it was new for us and helped us to identify with the older players.

How difficult it is to explain to young players today, including my daughter, who is a good player, how we felt about these clunky old shoes when they think nothing of paying out \$100 or more because they like the purple and yellow stripes on the shoes, or \$60 for a slick, imitation leather ball that never loses its shape.

We loved the game in the streets. Adults were not around to teach us the Coerver techniques or tell us to "lock your ankle." And when we wore those clumsy Mansfields we moved our 1 vs. 1 to the 100-year-old abandoned Franklin Cemetery down the street, where tombstones became our goal posts and the winos our spectators.

We especially looked forward to seeing the pros, usually at Cambria Stadium at Torresdale and Kensington Avenues, as it was on the trolley line and we could see the Philadelphia Americans take on the Brooklyn Hispano or Ponta Delgada of Fall River. Our heroes were "Lefty" Mervine, Philly's superb left halfback, or "Dutch" Christian, a right fullback who played more by intimidation than skill, or "Duke" Nanoski, the peppy center forward.

But the name that sent murmurs through the crowd and excited the kids was Billy Gonsalves of Brooklyn Hispano. Gonsalves, often called the "Babe Ruth" of American soccer, was a dominating center halfback who stood at 6'2" and came in at 210 pounds. After watching the imposing Gonsalves direct traffic in the midfield or drive powerful shots from 35 yards out, we returned to Helen Street to imitate his moves. Later on it was Walter Bahr and Bennie McLaughlin of the Philadelphia Nationals who became our idols, two of the best American-born players of the era.

Opposing players who stayed with us were Jackie Hynes with the New York Americans, and Ed and Clarkie Souza of Fall River. I recall watching the balding Clarkie Souza dribble three opponents on the Philadelphia Nationals' old home field, Holmes Stadium on Erie Avenue, go for goal and suddenly step over the ball, heel it to change direction, and completely befuddle his mark as he drove the ball into the far corner. I worked on that move for weeks until it became part of my own repertoire of dribbling moves. Always emulating, acting out what we had seen--something so desperately needed on the pro scene in soccer today for the youngsters coming up and seeking their own heroes.

Coaches today do not structure a youth player's formative years in this manner. They teach by books and tapes, drills and freeze situations and dribbling through cones. The streets are dangerous, cemeteries are off limits and no substitute for playgrounds, teams are organized for 4-year-olds, coaches have formal training, too much individualism is suspect, and kids are coached, or at times overcoached, in the proper techniques. We were left alone to develop, with lopsided, worn leather balls and an instinct to 1 vs. 1 or 3 vs. 2 without adult supervision or coachable moments.

By the time we were 9 years old, in 1942, we were ready for formal teams, which in the Kensington neighborhood meant the Lighthouse Boys Club soccer program, the famed incubator of youth soccer in Philadelphia since the turn of the century. We also played American football and baseball, as good American kids, but given our choice, we were always drawn to the streets and our soccer ball--our natural element.

Youth Soccer with Lighthouse Boys Club

Lighthouse was founded in 1897 by Mrs. Robert Bradford, a Philadelphia socialite. This was a time when Jane Addams and other social reformers were establishing their settlement houses and neighborhood centers to help the wave of European immigrants and their youngsters cope with urban life. Lighthouse capitalized on its Scottish, Irish and English neighbors' passion for soccer and early on created a soccer foothold in the Kensington

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community. Most boys started with the Club at 9-10 years of age, often staying with the Lighthouse teams until they were ready for play in Philadelphia's top First Division or the pros. For years, Lighthouse had provided the senior amateur teams and the pros with top-class, home-grown American talent. For example, the 1936 Olympic soccer team had four former Lighthouse players in its ranks, a tradition that went back to the 1924 Olympics.

Lighthouse offered us age divisions, a club for practices, a large field complex, and retired English and Scottish players to coach "the lads." My first coach, Ozzie Lynn, a wrinkled, stolid Englishman who could still drive a ball 60 yards, appeared every Saturday morning, rain or shine, in the same old, patched green sweater to put us on the field. By this time, we had mastered the basic techniques from our years of intense street soccer, so Ozzie's task was to instruct us: "Don't hold on to the ball," "Get it up the field," or "Put it in the net." We did this with regularity, often ignoring his exhortations to play "the English game."

Coach Ozzie told us where to play, still in the traditional 2-3-5, and we did it. We changed in a one-room, timbered clubhouse with no showers or heat, often shivering until we moved onto the field and started running. We always walked the three miles to the field, arriving ready to play without warmup or stretching, and walking home afterward, our boots over our shoulders. Raw, tough, hard soccer where we honed our skills, applying what we had learned in the streets to real, full-sided games. We now started to learn positions, heading (seldom done in street soccer), and a tactical sense of the game.

We were low-income kids, so our equipment consisted of the hand-me-down, high-top Mansfields or Hotspurs--the only shoes available, colored sweatshirts for uniforms, and usually *Popular Mechanics* or some other pulp magazine for shin guards. They made good reading at half time, The Club supplied one ball per game and an older player to referee. We came with a love of the game and good techniques and skills, but we had to learn to play on the larger field with a full team.

But the street soccer moves paid off. Just a few years later, we were playing against some of the best players in the country, and I made it to the U.S. Olympic Team final tryouts in St. Louis in 1952 at the age of 18. When I think of our years in the streets, unsupervised, I wonder if we would have been better players with trained coaches, as many youngsters, both boys and girls, have today? Probably. Would we have faced the twin danger of being overcoached while being discouraged from taking risks and working on new moves on the field? Possibly. Did we gain an appreciation for the game, confidence in our skills, and a competitive drive that would last a lifetime? Absolutely.

In the next installment, Len Oliver talks about club and amateur soccer in Philadelphia as he lived it as a teenager. Also in the next issue of the SASH Historical Quarterly, the minutes of the SASH general membership meeting in Oneonta on June 9, something that should be of interest to all of you, but particularly those of you who are unable to be there.