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Society for American Soccer History Newsletter November 2022

The SASH newsletter is a quarterly review of happenings in the field with quick access to content of interest to the members. If you have questions or wish to contribute to the newsletter, please contact the editor Brian D. Bunk, newsletter@ussoccerhistory.org

A Message from the President



Dear SASH members,

The fall is for homecomings, and I was lucky enough to spend a week in New Jersey recently. It was a time for visiting family, good eating, and even some soccer history.

My mother and I made a trek to Kearny on the 138th anniversary of the first American Football Association Challenge Cup match. It took place on a small lot at the Clark Thread Company complex, a national landmark that is currently undergoing a massive residential redevelopment project. That match literally kicks off the history I'm writing on the AFA, which is more or less a quest to learn about one of the oldest national soccer associations in the world.

I am a chapter or two away from completing the book, and I've spent many hours trying to figure out the AFA's story in New Jersey cities like Harrison, Kearny, Patterson, as well as other soccer towns in Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. I hope that *The Dear Old Mug: A History of the American Football Association, 1884-1924*

is ready for publication in early 2023 and that it stands in the same category as books recently completed by other Society members.

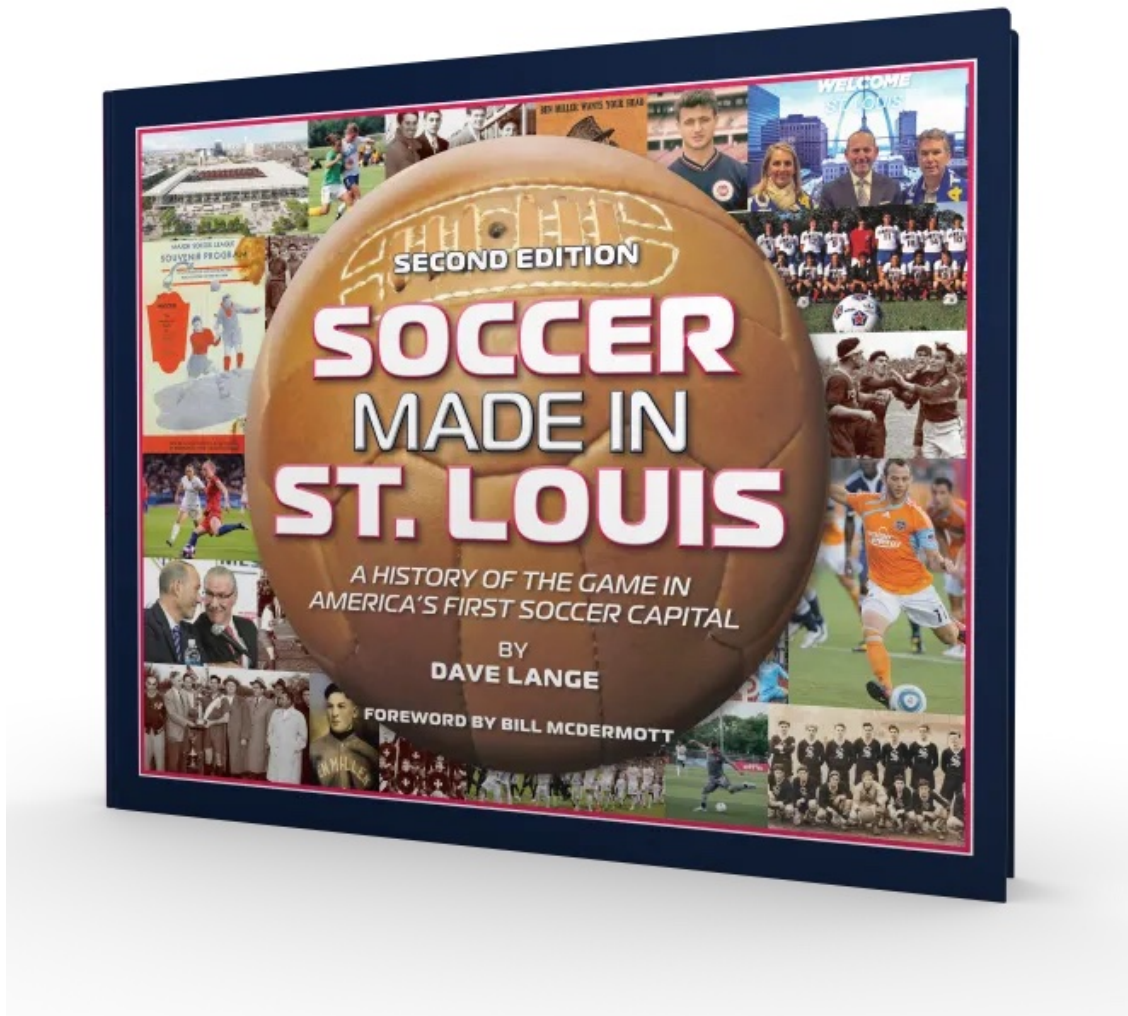
My mother endured my ramblings about early American soccer history, but did so with the promise of a free meal. Tops Diner is rated the top diner in the state and it sits across from the old mill. Her favorite is one of the house specials — meatloaf.

After lunch, she even agreed to visit the new soccer sculpture in Harrison, perhaps the most beautiful and meaningful statue of its kind in the entire country.

Mom, meatloaf, and musings about soccer history. A perfect sort of homecoming.

-Tom McCabe

Interview with Author Dave Lange



The second edition of SASH member Dave Lange's book on the history of soccer in St. Louis has just been published by the [Reedy Press](#). Dave kindly agreed to answer a few questions for the newsletter.

SASH Newsletter: Thanks for speaking with the newsletter about your book. Perhaps you might introduce yourself and explain how you became interested in the history of soccer in St. Louis and why you originally wrote the book.

Dave Lange: Any kid who was educated in the St. Louis Catholic parish system, as I was, was exposed to soccer almost from the time they learned to walk. So soccer was never a “foreign” game to me.

I started covering sports in high school and in college for a weekly newspaper chain, whose owners happened to have a piece of the St. Louis Stars of the NASL. I remember writing about the Stars as early as 1972. I went to college at SIU-Edwardsville from 1973-76 and was a student assistant in the sports information office. SIUE was then one of the top college teams in the nation, with future U.S. Soccer Hall of Famer Bob Guelker as the head coach and Pat McBride, another future U.S. Soccer Hall of Famer,

as one of the assistant coaches. Through them, I heard stories about the great teams and players in St. Louis soccer's past.

After graduation, I eventually became the soccer writer at the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, then one of two daily papers in the city, where I learned more about the heritage of the sport in St. Louis. The failure of the newspaper steered me into corporate public relations, but I stayed close to the game when I coached my son's club team at Busch Soccer Club for 10 years. That's where I learned a great deal about soccer skills, tactics and fundamentals and earned a USSF national D coaching license and a coaching certificate from the Dutch football association (the KNVB). While coaching, I reconnected with some of the great players in recent St. Louis soccer history who were coaching other local club teams.

All of this leads up to 2007, when local attorney Jeff Cooper was on the verge of bringing an MLS team to St. Louis, back when a millionaire could afford one. He commissioned Reedy Press, a local publisher, to do a book on the history of St. Louis soccer that he wanted to have published when his MLS team started. Different chapters of the book were assigned to different writers. Well, MLS expansion fees spiraled beyond Cooper's means and his MLS efforts ended. Meanwhile, I was the only writer who had finished his chapter. Josh Stevens of Reedy Press decided to go ahead with the book anyway and asked me to write the entire book, which became the first edition of "Soccer Made in St. Louis," published in 2011.

I was fortunate to cover the sport at a time when some of the greats in St. Louis soccer, such as Frank Borghi and Harry Keough from the 1950 World Cup team, were here to tell their stories. And I witnessed first-hand the NASL in St. Louis, the great St. Louis U.-SIUE-UMSL-Quincy teams of the 1970s, the explosion of indoor soccer in the early 1980s, and the great players of those years. The relationships I built with players, coaches and owners were parts of those experiences. All of them were eager to share their stories. I am indebted to them.

The second edition of the book has just been published. Why did you feel an updated version was needed? Can you briefly summarize any changes and/or updates?

The updated version was needed because the story of soccer in St. Louis has taken a dramatic turn over the past 10 years. In 2011, when the first edition was published, the St. Louis Athletica of WPS had collapsed shortly after the start of the 2010 season and the second-division AC St. Louis men's team went out of business after that season. It seemed that the once-proud history of soccer in St. Louis had reached an all-time low. But a series of events in the last 10 years culminated in the establishment of an MLS expansion franchise, supported completely by female-led, well-heeled local owners, who paid almost entirely for the construction of perhaps the best soccer stadium/training complex in the USA. So, there was a need to explain how all of that happened since 2011.

The primary changes were a new chapter covering 2011-present. It also was an opportunity to include new material that's come to light in the last 10 years on the

earlier history of the sport in St. Louis. Finally, the second edition adds all-time directories of St. Louis players in the NASL, MLS, NWSL, World Cup, and U.S. National Teams (although I learned after publication of a St. Louisan, Jackie Billet, who played one game for the USWNT in 1992).

What collections or archives did you use to research the book?

Newspapers.com was an immense help. St. Louis newspapers are available on newspapers.com all the way back to before the Civil War. Previously, only the St. Louis Post-Dispatch was available starting in about 1875. In addition, some personal collections became available from people who approached the St. Louis Soccer Hall of Fame. The StL HOF then handed off those items to me. For example, the family of U.S. Soccer Hall of Famer Jimmy Roe made available an extensive collection of materials that included personally taken action images of the Stix, Baer & Fuller-Central Brewers-Shamrocks team that won three consecutive National Challenge Cups and made it to the Cup finals six straight seasons. Another person donated a complete collection of “The Shot,” a St. Louis soccer monthly produced by Bill Keough (Harry’s older brother) in the late 1940s. Finally, the family of a photographer provided action images he had taken at St. Louis Major League games at Sportsman’s Park in the late 1940s.

There also have been some important historical soccer books published since the first edition of “Soccer Made in St. Louis” came out. David Wangerin’s “Distant Corners” and your “Football to Soccer” shed important light on the early years of soccer in the United States.

You conducted dozens of interviews for the book. What advantages do you feel those had over other types of sources? What challenges did they pose?

Being a former daily newspaper sportswriter, I had been trained to interview people and use direct quotes from them in a way that hopefully motivated readers to read what I had written. People love to read about other people. Telling people’s stories in their own words personalizes a story and helps bring it to life. Direct quotes also add another dimension to a story. Becky Sauerbrunn is a good example. One of her strengths, it’s been written, is her ability to “read the game.” What does that mean, and how can that be explained to a reader? I asked Becky to give an example, and she responded, in her exact words:

“An example can be when I’m numbers down in a situation and have to assess quickly what the best-case scenario is. If I have two attackers bearing down on me, how do I position myself to take away one of their players? I force the player on the ball away from their second player and turn the situation from being numbers down to a 1v1. And maybe I have to give away the shot to do that, but can I position myself that the shot is from a bad angle? I know my goalkeeper will have the front post covered. That’s reading the game, assessing the danger, finding a solution that is as risk-free as possible, and then executing the plan.”

How could I possibly improve on that?

The challenges that recorded interviews impose are, first of all, transcribing them — a real chore for lengthy interviews. (I've come to love interview subjects who would rather answer questions by e-mail.) Another challenge is weeding through interviews to find the quotes that are most relevant. Finally, direct quotes about “facts” (such as when it happened, where it happened, etc.) need to be checked with other sources. It's human nature that memories can be faulty, so “statements of facts” must be verified.

What was the most surprising or the most compelling story to emerge from your research?

Billy Gonsalves, hands-down. Two knowledgeable people who saw him play said he was the best they had ever seen. One of them was Harry Keough, and he'd seen every great player (and played against many of them) in the world from the 1930s until the 2010s. Harry told me about Gonsalves on two separate occasions. The other person was Bill Glennon, one of the owners of the NASL San Jose Earthquakes, who was born in St. Louis and played in the 1930s in St. Louis. Mark Demling, a St. Louisan who played for the Earthquakes, shared an e-mail from Glennon with me in which Glennon raved about Gonsalves. And, there's Bill Keough's three-part series on Gonsalves in Soccer America in the 1970s. I thought Bill might have stretched things a little, but Lynn Berling-Manuel told me that she remembers no one questioning what Bill wrote in that series.

Do you have thoughts about the new St. Louis club that is set to join MLS? Do you feel that the folks behind the team have a sense of the city's rich history of soccer?

St. Louis City SC is really a dream come true. If this was a novel, I don't think any publisher would print it because the story is so far-fetched. The chances of MLS coming to St. Louis seemed nil in April 2017 after St. Louis City voters refused to pass a proposal to direct proceeds from a city tax to help fund an MLS stadium. That effectively ended the bid of investors from St. Louis who were led by Paul Edgerly of Boston's Bain Capital. Seemingly out of nowhere, the Taylor family from St. Louis that owns Enterprise Holdings, the largest rental car company in the world, decided to take up the challenge, along with St. Louisan, minority investor and former MISL player Jim Kavanaugh from the previous ownership group. Kavanaugh is the co-founder of World Wide Technology, a technology services provider with more than \$13 billion in annual revenue. The new investors needed only 10 months from first announcing their intentions to securing an MISL expansion franchise. Carolyn Kindle, a top Enterprise executive and granddaughter of founder Jack Taylor, leads St. Louis City, making it the only female-led MLS franchise. The Taylor family has a history of donating generously to numerous projects in St. Louis, and in other communities where Enterprise operates. Kindle has said that the soccer team, and the stadium and training facilities at the western end of downtown, are envisioned as ways to remake the City of St. Louis. The city's image has, to put it charitably, suffered a great deal in recent decades.

The Taylor family probably had only a superficial knowledge of the history of soccer in St. Louis when they first became involved. Kavanaugh, who played high school and college soccer in St. Louis, helped the Taylors in learning more about the history, and

they have made sincere efforts to acknowledge and celebrate the soccer history of St. Louis.

Image courtesy of Reedy Press

Change in Tax Status



SASH is pleased to announce that we are now a certified 501(c)(3) public charity! Donors may be eligible for a deduction in federal income taxes under IRC Section 170. We are confident this will allow the organization to pursue grants and donations that will help further our goals.

Introducing the Archive Room



The SASH website is pleased to host a new regular feature called the [Archive Room](#). It will featured the work of Roger Allaway, based on articles that were originally posted to the website www.BigSoccer.com between 2010-13. A new installment will appear twice each month. Check back for the latest!

Podcast on USFA President Elmer A. Schroeder



A new two part podcast series by the show *The Crime Reel* examines the unsolved murder of Elmer A. Schroeder, the first native-born president of the United States Football Association. The episodes are based on original research by Ed Farnsworth that was published on the SASH website. Click the links below to access the episodes and the original article.

[Episode 1: The Murder of Elmer Schroeder](#)

[Episode 2: Schroeder's career in soccer](#)

[Original Article](#)

Image courtesy of Ed Farnsworth

Soccer Sculpture Dedicated



A Nine-foot bronze sculpture of a soccer player now graces Library Park in Harrison, New Jersey. The piece was commissioned by Friends of Harrison Soccer and the Harrison Education Association and made by Polish artist Andre Iwanczyk. The goal is to honor the many clubs and players from the region who left their mark on the history of soccer in the United States. SASH President Tom McCabe visited the monument and wrote about it [here](#).

Image courtesy of Michael Battista ([@MichaelBattista](#))

SASH Sessions and Events



Upcoming SASH Events

November 4, 2022: Book Talk with Matthew Hughes, author of *USA 94: The World Cup That Changed the Game*. The event begins at 12:00 EST and will be held via Zoom. Click [here](#) to join the discussion.

December 2, 2022: Book Talk with James Brown, author of *Mud, Blood and Studs*

Recent SASH Sessions

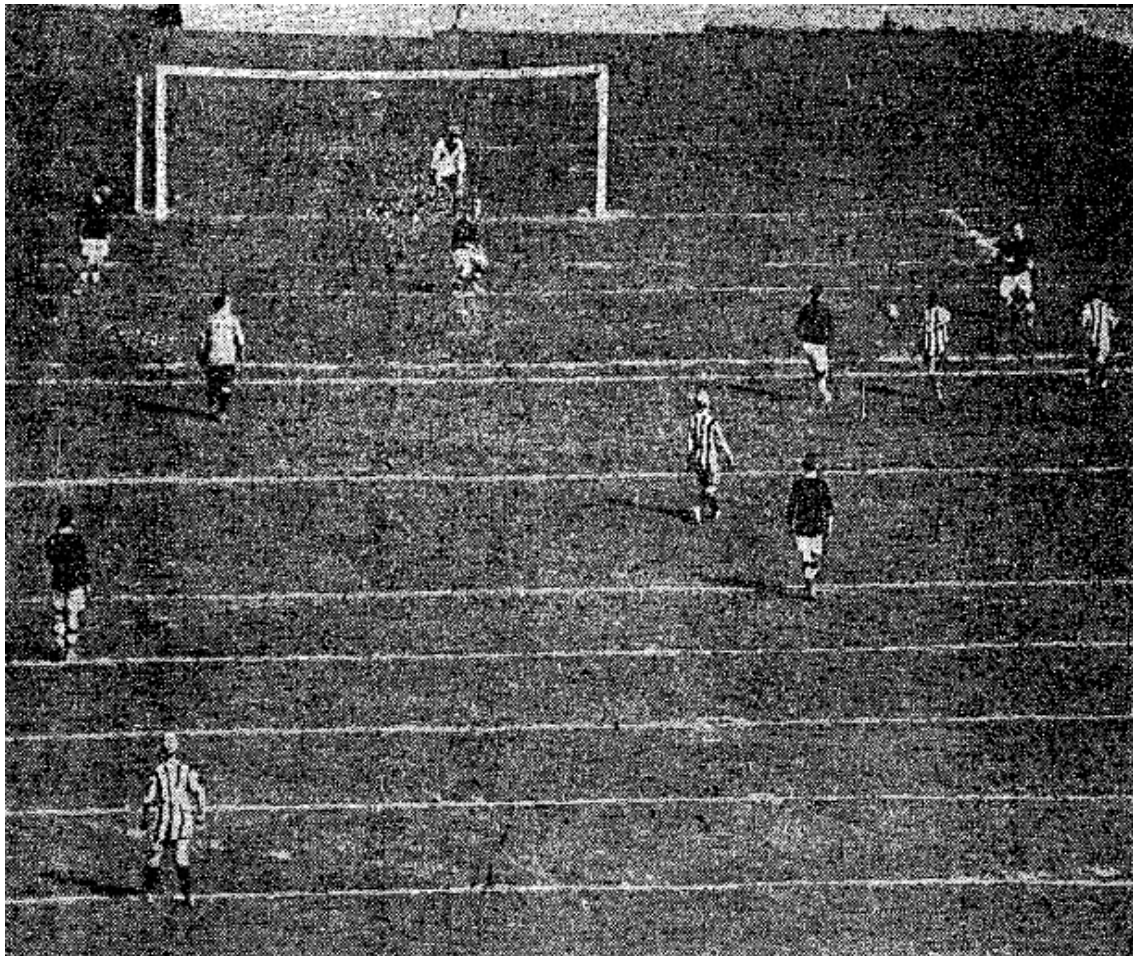
[The Athletic's Pablo Maurer and Matt Pentz. June 22, 2022.](#)

[An Illustrated Guide to Anglo-American Football History Before 1850. July 8, 2022.](#)

[Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the New York Cosmos First NASL Championship. August 26, 2022.](#)

[Great Lakes Soccer from the 1880s to the 1930s and the Emergence of the Intercity League. September 16, 2022.](#)

[20th Anniversary of the 2002 FIFA U-19 Women's World Championship. October 7, 2022.](#)



In case you missed it, a story from the archives:

[100 Years ago the Dick, Kerr Ladies Soccer Team Played in Washington DC](#)

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