



British Columbia Football Officials Association

To all BCFOA Members,

As we come to the end of another eventful season, I look back on some of the events and challenges we've gone through together, and the process often includes looking back to where the last year ended and how we arrived at where we are now. In doing so, I was reminded that I opened this report with a sad notification that Bud Lancey had passed away. This year I am again saddened to have to mention the recent passing of Don Barker and of our own Larry Rohan.

Larry was a long time member of this association. He was a personal friend and mentor, and a mentor for many of us. Larry was involved in football almost his entire life. He played, officiated, educated, observed, evaluated and honestly helped so many of us become better officials. He was respected by all in this game and loved by many. May he Rest in Peace.

My thanks as always to Nigel Bushe, our VP – Canadian and his education chair, Hieth Eddleston, his allocator, Larry Rohan and all his evaluators and observers who worked hard and made a success of the CIS and BCFC seasons. Experienced and capable, they all combined to deliver the kind of processes and product we can all be proud of. It doesn't just happen, I know, it takes organization and work. Next year will be a challenge without Larry, but there are people who are capable of stepping up to take over all the things he did for us. I expect the new executive will hold discussions with everyone involved to take steps to make a smooth transition.

I also want to express my gratitude to VP – High School, Ben Eskildsen who worked tirelessly during his first season with a huge learning curve to improve the on field product for our BCSSFA client. He helped the negotiation committee deliver a new contract with High School that saw a very large increase in game fees and for the first time, a recognition of and funding for evaluation and observation programs as well as enhanced educational opportunities. His education chair, Len DeJulius and allocator Walter Becker both did a good job delivering that product. Ben will provide details of what steps and progress they made. I made mention last year about the amount of complaining and grumbling that seemed to be coming from a small group and honestly had hoped this year might be better. Again, this included out and out personal attacks, slurs, rejection of assignments based on a sense of being entitled to better games and crew make up, etc. I challenged those members who honestly feel that there is a better way for us to do things, by all means step forward and get involved, but to be honest most of it was just more negative complaining without offering any solutions. This is an embarrassment to this association where the vast majority are working hard to be better and to improve the entire experience for all. Although I have always tried to listen to all members' thoughts and concerns, I find I can't tolerate the ongoing and unchanging complaining any more from this small group. I am frankly tired of this and that is part of why I feel it's time for a new face to lead the BCFOA.

I would like to take another opportunity to thank Craig Nichols for his great job this year. Armed with completely new software, new procedures and some new revenue money, he has a complete and firm grasp of our finances and I know he has other plans to improve the operation even more so next year. With the changes we've seen and others we can only prepare for, Craig, in my view, has placed the association on a very solid foundation for us to move forward with a number of programs that were postponed or cancelled in previous years simply due to a lack of funding. I am aware of some of his plans and wishes for the upcoming season and I like the ideas. Thank you Craig for a job very well done.

All the other executive members are to be thanked, especially Al Sleightholme, Rob Kozak and Rob Fehr who all made positive contributions.

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There are a number of things that the executive will need to tackle next year, including the ramifications of a new BC Societies Act, and increased educational requirements in the Interior and on the Island, expansion of the high school evaluation program and the transition from all that Larry Rohan did to a few new people who will have to fill rather large shoes. .

Finally, as I sign off as President for the last time, I wish to thank all the members who have supported me for all these many years. Too many to mention everyone involved in the various positions but suffice to say that I was always impressed with the level of passion shown by so many for our game. I can count so many of you as friends. I want to wish the new President, Dave Sullivan, all the best and offer my full support as he works to make positive changes to this association. I know he also shares that passion and is qualified and capable.

I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and hope all of you a healthy and happy new year. Thank you again for the opportunity to have served for so many years. I'm sure I will find something new to do with the BCFOA next year.

Mark Newlove