



## 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. This was without a doubt, the most challenging year that I can remember. I have had the pleasure of serving as your President for almost a decade (not consecutively) and don't remember a year with so many positive and negative events.

I want to begin my report by taking a minute to remember Bud Lancey, a Life Member of this association. Bud passed away last Sunday. He was my personal friend and mentor, and a mentor for many of us. Bud played football, coached and officiated. Bud was involved in football almost his entire life. He educated, observed, evaluated and honestly helped so many of us become better. He was a man larger than life in everything he did, but was never too big not to stop and help a player, coach or official who needed his council or advice. He was respected by all in this game and loved by many. May he Rest in Peace. **Bud's Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, January 30th at 1:30 at the Old Orchard Hall, 646 Bentley Road (just off of loco Road) in Port Moody.**

The BCFOA started the year with basically no money after all the bills were paid and we undertook to address that throughout this season by cutting budgets, withholding fee increases and being very prudent and strict with our accounting procedures. We found many areas that we used to rebuild a reasonable "buffer" to be able to pay those bills and expenses that come in between now and the start of the next year. I am happy to report that all early indicators show that we've been able to do just that. Craig Nichols has done a masterful job in getting us back in the black and on a strong financial footing. Through the measures I've noted and Craig's single minded and relentless effort, we have a firm grasp on our affairs.

I've been working with the other members of Football BC over the past 2 years and this year that work came to a head. Along with BCFC, BCSSFA and BCCFA, we were finally able to force an Annual General Meeting for the first time since 2010, from the "appointed president", Larry Reda. At that meeting the information we had been looking for almost 5 years was still not provided. We managed to argue for a proper election of officers and replaced the president, vice-president of finance and vice president of communication on October 4. Since that time we have met almost weekly to try to get to the bottom of the financial situation and operation of Football BC. Sadly, it appeared that without the employee's cooperation, we were facing an uphill battle. As recently as this past week, the BCCFA withdrew it's membership taking with it, the \$122,000.00 in membership fees it would have paid. With this reduction in future income, the 2016 provisional budget went from a deficit of about \$65,000 to over \$195,000. Clearly even the efforts and efficiencies we were proposing to manage the association and maintain the programs could not overcome that amount. This past Tuesday the BCFC also withdrew as a member and your BCFOA executive has voted to do the same. It is with a very heavy heart that I will propose a motion later in this meeting to ask our members to ratify the executive's decision to withdraw our membership. This will leave only BCSSFA as paying members, and their president has indicated that it will only be a matter of weeks before they will have to do the same. I will speak to this more during the agenda item for this issue.

Several of our members were honored as they were selected to take part in post season games at high levels, including Dave Hawkshaw and Murray Clarke, who were selected to work the Grey Cup and Nigel Bushe who worked the Vanier Cup. Scott Hyde and Taylor Anderson worked the Canadian Bowl, Sandy Bains, Davin Overland and Chris Shortt worked CIS semi-Finals. Congratulations gentlemen.

My thanks 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. Good job done by all involved.

I also want to express my gratitude to VP – High School, Tim Lederman who worked tirelessly to try to improve the education and on field product for our BCSSFA client. His education chair, Len DeJulius and allocator Walter Becker both did a good job delivering that product. Tim will provide details of what steps and progress they made, but to be honest, there was more complaining and bitching from a half dozen or so members who felt the process and results to be flawed. Perhaps this is to be expected, as there never seems to be smooth High School season, but frankly this year was one of the worst for the weekly complaining about every aspect from education, assigning and every other point. It 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. As president, I tried to let most of it go as just simple and usual complaining from certain members, but the whole thing reached a new low this past year. If members 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 negative complaining without offering any solutions. This is completely unproductive and will not be welcome next year.

There are many things we are tasked with next High School season, including the negotiation of a new contract. There will be opportunities for anyone interested to make their thoughts known, so I hope those with strong opinions will take advantage of those opportunities to be a positive part of the changes ahead.

I would like to take another opportunity to thank Craig Nichols for his great job this year. He took over for the venerable Ken McKinnon and armed with completely new software, old procedures and no money, picked us up, instituted new procedures, reworked our entire accounting system and helped rebuild our finances. I know he has other plans to improve the operation even more so next year. Thank you Craig for a job very well done. I'm sure the stress contributed to your amazing weight loss. Congratulations.

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

There are a number of things that the executive will need to tackle next year, including the aforementioned High School contract, the ramifications of a new BC Societies Act, and increased educational requirements in the Interior and on the Island.

As I look forward to another year as your president, 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 serve.

Mark Newlove