

OFA Presidents Address 2017 AGM

Good morning and welcome one and all. This has been a very enlightening year as President of the Ontario Football Alliance, the provincial governing body of amateur football in our province.

I understand that some folks at the league level have voiced concerns that perhaps I am indifferent to what transpires at the league or team level. The truth is quite the contrary yet in my experience there were multiple concerns that my predecessor was too involved and interfered in the ongoing business of football at the league level. I am not the sort of individual, I believe that you folks are the ones best prepared to operate your teams and your leagues and that it is in the best interests of all programs that I stay out of your way until you need the OFA. So, if you have not seen or heard from me understand it is because you do not need me.

In this past year we have improved our governance via our new board structure which relies on a Board of Directors comprised of professionals offering their expertise in business areas where we require their input. It has allowed us to focus on building our business and moving towards growth and development with the input of these professionals and I am grateful to those who have served and those who agree to serve now and in the future.

On the football side, I have attended and offered guidance and assistance where needed to Ontario's teams at the Flag Nationals where our athletes performed admirably on the field and behaved as exceptional ambassadors of Ontario off the field. I was able to assist again with our U16 team at the East Challenge last summer. With more than 35 young men under our care, I must say I was most impressed with the behaviour of our players and more impressed with the quality of our coaching staffs. The leadership and direction that our staff provided was indeed impressive. That admiration was equalled if not surpassed by the staff that accompanied Team Ontario to Arlington, TX in early 2018. Unfortunately, I was struck with a physical challenge en route to Texas and was not able to perform many of the tasks I set for myself during the trip. However, being visually impaired, offered me an interesting perspective on indy period and meeting time with players. Many of you may have heard me comment on what a tremendous job our coaches did during that week, how well organized every minute of every day was and what an outstanding effort was put out by Josh Prior and Tina Turner.

I have arrived at the conclusion that the most significant assistance I can provide to our teams is to provide media service. Phonetic spelling of players names for PA and broadcast folks helps put our kids best foot forward. When we were holding tryouts, I networked with assorted media sources in those

markets in hopes of recruiting more athletes to the try outs and to help spread the word about Team Ontario programming. After rosters have been set, I have provided local media with details on local players, what programs and schools they represent and how happy we are to have them on our roster. The end result of trying to create an increased media presence is to recruit more candidates to try out for our provincial teams

Shortly, I will be meeting with members of the Provincial Legislature to discuss the possibility of allowing PSO's to provide tax receipts to athletes who participate on a National or International level for their province. I believe that this will open the door for more athletes, some of whose families can not afford to have their kids participate. The intent is to not ask the province for funding but make the opportunity affordable for all athletes.

It is my intention to hold a series of, football town halls across the province. These meetings will invite the various football factions within a community to attend and discuss ideas, thoughts, notions on how we might improve the game in all its disciplines going forward.

Again, thank you for taking time out for everything you do for football and for making the time to be with us today.