



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT, SUMMER 2022.**



As the first full summer season for our new club comes to an end I'd like to review with you some of the positives and negatives. First the positives. When five established clubs decide to get together as one new club there is always the potential for things to go horribly wrong and to our great relief that hasn't happened. And as we emerged from the shadow of a two year pandemic when soccer activity was very restricted we were unsure what sort of season it would turn out to be. So 2022 has established a foundation on which we hope to be able to build in the future.

This summer Valley United had a total of 1,062 registered players, comprising 552 minis (up to and including U11s), 250 youth (U12 to U18 inclusive) and 260 Senior players. We fielded a total of 14 youth teams.

One major positive this summer was the appointment in July of Findlay MacRae as our new Technical Director. Findlay has a vast amount of experience both in soccer and in business and is thus extremely well qualified to deal with issues both on and off the field.

We also took some major steps forward in developing the management side of the club. This stuff is not very glamorous or exciting but it is essential both for

the proper management of the club going forward and for our goal of achieving accreditation by Canada Soccer and Soccer Nova Scotia. There are four stages in Canada Soccer's Club Licensing program and we hope to be awarded the first level, Quality Soccer Provider, by the end of this year.

On the field we achieved some success, winning two Provincial Championships. The U18AA Boys, who were featured in last month's newsletter, won all 14 of their league games plus Provincials. The U13B Girls, who are featured elsewhere in this newsletter, won all their games in the Valley League without conceding a goal and went on to win their Provincial Championship also. Congratulations to both teams.

A number of our players were also recognized by Soccer Nova Scotia by being selected to Provincial teams, including some who were also selected to the Vancouver Whitecaps training program.

As mentioned in last month's newsletter we organized and ran the annual Valley Kickoff Tournament in June which attracted 30 teams from Windsor to Yarmouth and beyond. And at the end of the season the fields at Lockhart-Ryan hosted Provincials for the U18 Girls, U18 Boys and U15 Boys age groups.

On the negative side, we were very disappointed that we were unable to run the Gunn Baldursson Tournament due to lack of sufficient referees. We certainly hope that we will be able to run it again next year.

Another disappointment was that due to Findlay not being appointed until July we were unable to organize the camps and clinics which are certainly in our plans for next year.

As a Board we place great importance on communicating with our members and we realize that we have thus far fallen short in this area. We have however made a start with these newsletters and our new and (hopefully) much improved website should be up and running within a matter of weeks. The new address is [valleyunitedsc.ca](http://valleyunitedsc.ca) and it is now operational though still under construction. We also recognize the importance of maintaining an active presence on social media and this is a priority for our new Communications Team.

A longer term concern is the marked drop off in registration from mini to youth. The eight schools in our catchment area have roughly 230 girls and 230 boys in each 2-year age group e.g. U13, U15 etc.. At the U11 age group we had 144

girls and boys total out of around 460 students in the local schools, so a participation rate of around 31%. At the U17 and U18 level we had only 61 players out of around 690 local students, a participation rate of only 9%, and the U17AAA Girls and U18AA Boys included quite a few players from outside our catchment area so the true participation rate is even lower. We certainly hope to increase participation rates in the older age groups in the years to come.

As a club we enjoy many advantages. We have access to good grass fields with underground irrigation which has allowed the fields to survival this long, hot, dry summer. We have access to a local indoor facility at the SoccerDome in Kentville and to an all weather turf field at Acadia. If we are successful in increasing our registration numbers and fielding more teams we will need more fields but that will be a good problem to have. In the meantime we will continue to strive to deliver the best possible soccer experience to our members at fees well below those of comparable clubs in HRM.

Troy Lenihan, President, Valley United SC.

## **TEAM OF THE MONTH, U13B GIRLS.**



The U13B Girls capped off a very successful season by winning Provincials at Lunenburg on Labour Day weekend. They started the season strongly by winning the Valley Kick-Off Tournament and went on to be undefeated in regular season play, scoring 42 goals and conceding none. They secured their spot at Provincials by making it to the final of the league championship where they suffered their only loss of the season, to West Hants Banfield, in a penalty shootout after the game ended 0-0.

At Provincials they defeated Halifax County United 3-0 and Queens County 2-0 in round robin play then beat Northside Storm from Cape Breton 2-0 in the semifinal before again defeating Queens County 2-0 in the final.

Half the team has played together since mini soccer in Hantsport with the others all being from the surrounding communities. The leading scorers were Alysa Brown with 16, Mallory Ducarme with 15, Khloe Jodrey with 14 and Oakley Yeaton with 12. Goal keeping duties were shared by Sarah Newcombe and Lorain Dorey who between them conceded only 5 goals in 21 games in all competitions.

Congratulations to the team for their positive energy, teamwork and the successful season they accomplished.

Shown in the picture at the top are:

Back row L-R: Elisa Ferraro, Ava Moore, Khloe Jodrey, Oakley Yeaton, Kylee Yeaton, Abi Johnson, Alysa Brown, Mallory Ducarme, Olivia Boudreau, Linda Riley and Marie Doucette (coach).

Front row L-R: Eve Schneider, Lorali Dorey, Sarah Newcombe, Emily Whitman, Esme Black and Rachael Ross.

Missing from the picture are manager Jamielee Chambers and assistant coaches Holly Ross and Ben Johnson.

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS.**



EdenValley Poultry is the major sponsor of the Valley Kick-Off Tournament which starts the Valley soccer season off every year. EdenValley Poultry is a major processor of chicken and turkey and employs 430 people at their plant in the town of Berwick. Thank you EdenValley for your continued support.



Bank of Montreal has supported soccer in this area for years and continues to do so. In addition to the financial support they provide to Valley United they are the shirt sponsor for all three of Canada's Major League Soccer teams, the Vancouver Whitecaps, Toronto FC and CF Montreal. Thank your BMO for your continued support.



Tim Hortons is a huge supporter of community sport for younger children. They supply shirts, shorts, socks, balls and medals to over 250,000 soccer players

aged 4-8 across Canada, including Valley United. They have a similar program which supports over 90,000 young hockey players so thank you Tim Hortons.

## **SUPPORT AXEWOMEN AND AXEMEN SOCCER!**

The Atlantic University Sports soccer season is now underway.

The Women's team, coached by Amit Batra, are the defending AUS Champions and are off to a strong start this season, winning their first 3 games.

The Men's team, coached by Valley United Technical Director Findlay MacRae, has had a difficult start to the season with injuries to key players and has only one point from their first 3 games.

Remaining home games for the Acadia Soccer teams are

Friday September 30th vs Cape Breton.	5.00 and 7.15
Thursday October 6th vs UPEI.	5.00 and 7.15
Friday October 14th vs Mt. A.	5.00 and 7.15
Friday October 21st vs Moncton.	5.00 and 7.15
Saturday October 22nd vs UNB.	5.00 and 7.15

The Women's game precedes the Men's game. All AUS games are streamed by Atlantic University Sports. The camera work is not quite up to English Premier League standards but at least there is no VAR!

Both teams feature players who have played for and coached for Valley United.

Let's go Acadia!



## MEET THE COACH - ANGELA MORRISON.



Angela Morrison has long been involved with soccer on the Valley. She returned home from the USA after coaching NCAA D1 soccer for 12 years. Currently working for Sport Nova Scotia, Morrison organized and coordinated the VUSC mini program this summer, coached the U10 Boys Skill Centre and was head coach for the U15AAA Boys

team, while also serving on the Board of VUSC.

A native of Economy, NS, she arrived at Acadia in 1992. She played five years as goalkeeper for the Acadia Women's Soccer Team while acquiring a Bachelor of Physical Education. She helped Acadia to four consecutive AUS Finals from 1993-1996 and a sixth AUS Championship in 1996. In that year she and her team set a National Record by completing the 13 game regular season without allowing a goal against.

After graduating from Acadia she went to play professional soccer in Japan for two years after which she earned a B.Ed. from the University of Maine and a Masters degree in Educational Leadership from the University of North Dakota. She started coaching as an assistant at U. North Dakota then held head coaching positions at U. North Dakota and San Diego State before assisting fellow Nova Scotian Neil Sedgwick at the University of Montana.

Along the way she achieved coaching certification from the US Soccer Federation, the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and Canada Soccer.

In 2009 Angela returned to the Valley to take up the position of Technical Director for Valley District Soccer Association and also coached the Acadia Women's team. Since then she has served as a Community Sports Development

Coordinator for Sport Nova Scotia while also acting as President of the old Wolfville Soccer Club and Vice-President of VUSC.

Angela was inducted in the Acadia Sports Hall of Fame in 2019.