



MBYSA Motion for Feb 26th 2024 - Internal memo

Positioning to support our request for SSDSA to rescind the 50% by law

Context

It is our perception that local district clubs are resistant to our free access, affordable approach to soccer, as we seek to bring back competitive soccer to Mahone Bay, and support our players progressing in the game within our club culture and coaching style.

The primary resistance / contention is that because we offer free or low cost accessible programming other local clubs will lose players and not be viable organizations.

MBYSA Positioning

COST VS QUALITY

Families and players that have been paying for access to other clubs are choosing to send their players to MBU for training and programming. There is a percentage of our players who cannot afford access to other clubs but a greater number who are choosing to come to us.

Seen in this light, the invitation to other clubs is to raise their game. This is their opportunity to further communicate their programming, culture, coaching approach and facilities to attract players and families, rather than block our emergence as a new club. **We believe that families and players have the right to choose a club based on the location, facilities, coaching philosophy and culture.**

The South Shore District Soccer Association clubs blocking our ability to put out teams locally and supporting the monopoly of SSU to enter teams into NSSL, undermines this basic right of choice for families.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Mahone Bay United Soccer Association

www.mahonebaysoccer.com

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We want as many people as possible enjoying the benefits of the game.

Blocking MBYSA's ability to put out competitive teams perpetuates a soccer system that is inequitable. **MBYSA centers access to the game, creates an open front door to players and families that have so often been excluded from soccer because of cost, culture, transport and family circumstance.**

EXCLUDING TALENT

This is not only about the right to choice for families and equitable access. It is also about **throwing open the doors to a stream of talent that can increase the player base in the sport, and surface community leaders and talented soccer players.** At the moment these players are put in through the back door by relational agreement with the clubs themselves or via funding sources which require them to identify as "in need". This process is not transparent, highly selective and can be demeaning. MBU wants all of our players to walk on the field proud and ready to play as equals in the game. Therefore, there are no hoops to jump through to play.

ORIGINAL REQUEST FOR 50% RULE REVIEW FROM APPLICATION LETTER

There are stipulated conditions for the application as a new club to join SSDSA. One of these conditions is:

"Teams do not consist of a team(s) or a majority of players which were previously registered with an existing club."

We read this as an inequitable and unfair requirement for participation in SSDSA for a new club and in direct contradiction to Soccer Nova Scotia policy 6.1.10 :

"A player's obligation as a registered player for any season with a club shall cease when the season has ended."

MBU understands that the intention behind this condition of application by SSDSA is to protect existing clubs from a drain of players and to not dilute the scope of regional soccer opportunities for young people. However, the actual impact of this rule is that it excludes and discriminates by preventing the emergence of any new soccer club in the region for the following reasons:

1. For clubs serving equity deserving populations like MBYSA that want to join the association this is a real barrier. This stipulation clearly highlights the challenges the region has with equity, diversity and inclusion. If we are to be a welcoming community such discriminatory policies should not exist in our public institutions

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2. The majority of families seeking to play soccer on the South Shore will have already signed up to the available clubs over the summer season, based on location, cost, relationships and interest.
3. Therefore, a new club which has not been available for sign ups, is very unlikely to be able to field players in teams that are a majority “not previously registered”. The participants would have to be immediately new to the region or having previously never played soccer.
4. The demand is quite simply unrealistic. Other than Minis who have not played the game before, it is simply not possible for a club to have three teams worth of players suddenly move into the area, or to discover a new source for an entirely new player base.
5. Furthermore, we have built an incredibly strong player base and an enthusiastic club following, which we have been feeding into the other clubs in the region. It is not unreasonable for us now to want to engage those players and families in our own competitive teams.
6. Our region is growing in its numbers of young families and children. Mahone Bay United offers another option to meet this growing demand. Many kids currently miss out on competitive soccer because clubs have full rosters and wait lists.

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