



Bahamas Football Association

Executive

Anton Sealey, President
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Fred Lunn, Exec Vice President
Carl Lynch, Vice President
Richard Wilson, Vice President
Stanley Darville, Vice President
Samuel Haven, Vice President
Pierre Lafleur, Vice President
Neider Dos Santos, Tech Director

Contact

P.O. Box N-8434
Plaza on the Way
West Bay Street
Nassau, Bahamas
Tel: (242) 322-5897
Fax: (242) 322-5898
Email: lehaven@bahamas.net.bs
Web: bahamasfootballassoc.com

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Bahamas football

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BAHAMAS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

BFA rallies to help young soccer player

Pairing up with the Bears Football Club and Nicole's Butterfly Kisses BFA helps raise funds for 12 year old footballer Hailey Davis who was recently diagnosed with Leukemia.

An impressive 33 teams came together in May to play beach soccer and raise funds for young Bears' footballer Hailey Davis. The tournament was a huge success, raising more than \$36,000—all of which has helped defray the cost of chemotherapy for Hailey.

Division winners were: U11 Boys: Tambeary | U11 Girls: Cavalier | U13 Boys: Baha Juniors | U13 Girls: Baha Juniors | U15 Girls: St Andrew's Hurricanes | Men: Cavalier | Women: Cavalier

The best news is that Hailey is responding well to her treatment and her parents are hopeful she will be able to come home for a visit this summer.

Organizers and Hailey's family extend a big thank you to everyone who made the day such a great success.

Bahamas to host 2009 FIFA World Congress

It is one of the world's largest international organizations. Comprising 208 members, more than the United Nations, delegate numbers can swell to 2,000 when it convenes. It is FIFA's Congress, the legislative body of the world's most popular sport, and it will convene in the Bahamas in 2009.

The selection of the Bahamas from among 9 bidding countries was formally announced in Sydney, Australia last month at the closing of the 2008 Congress. On hand for the announcement were BFA President Anton Sealey, General Secretary Lionel Haven, and Executive Vice President Fred Lunn. With well-deserved enthusiasm, President Sealey called the announcement "a great, great honor for the Bahamas and the BFA."

The massive congress and its attending multi-lingual media contingent will be one of the biggest international meetings ever held in the Bahamas. Incredibly, the venue, Atlantis' Paradise Island Hotel, will present FIFA

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Bahamas eliminated from World Cup Qualifiers

A two-game loss to Jamaica earlier this month has ended the Bahamas' 2010 World Cup Qualifying Competition.

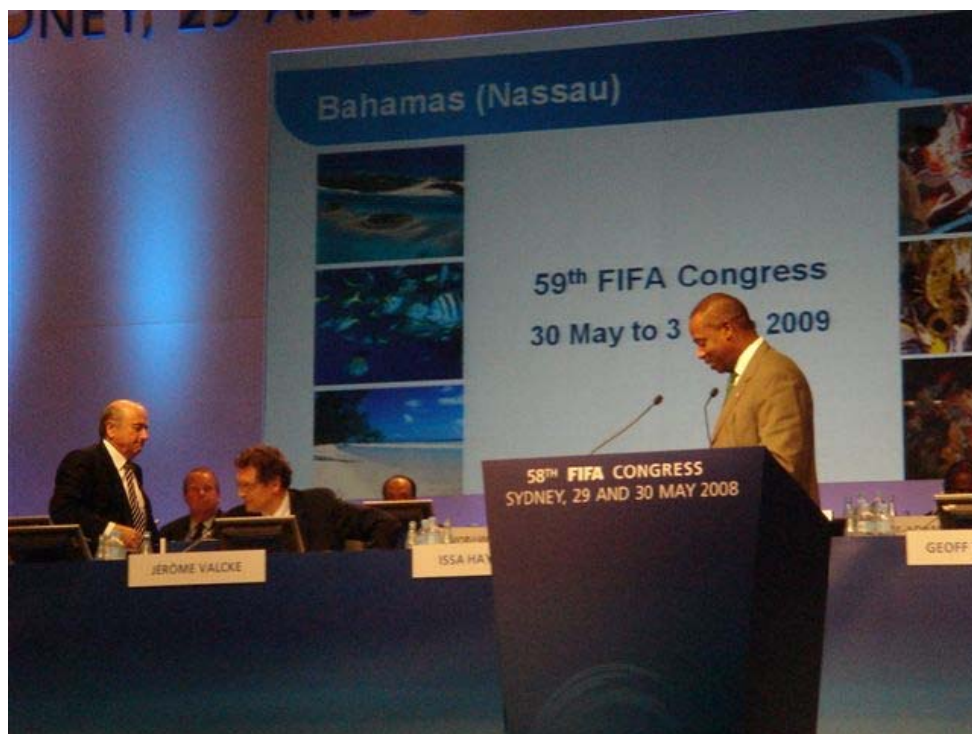
Both second-round matches, held in Trelawny, Jamaica, were dominant wins for the Reggae Boyz while the Bahamas' young team was unable to score. Jamaica's 13-0 aggregate propelled them into the next round and ended the Bahamas' run.

While the Bahamas did defeat Jamaica at the U23 level last October in Haiti, it was a very different squad they faced this month in the World Cup Qualifier. Team Jamaica is made up of seasoned professionals, many of whom play in the English Leagues. The Bahamas National Team is largely comprised of U23 members.

Technical director Neider Dos Santos summed up the performance of team Bahamas. "The results were what I would have expected. The players played hard and they tried, but we played a professional side. Team Jamaica was made up of professional players that play in the English Leagues; our team has no professionals so we are not at their level" said Dos Santos.

General Secretary Lionel Haven described the experience as "another important step in the country's developing game." Said Haven, "Our young players, many of whom have professional aspirations of their own, got a first-hand taste of what the level is like." Clearly evident was the difference in experience, speed of play, and composure.

While it might be easy to get discouraged over losses on the bigger stages, the last decade has seen real national progress in football development and performance. The Bahamas is still a developing country in the sport. Yet its growth, evolution, and commitment to bettering the level of the game nationally are unquestionably its greatest assets and bear well for the future.



BFA President Anton Sealey at the podium at the FIFA Congress 2008 making presentation to FIFA President Joseph Blatter. Below, Fred Lunn, Anton Sealey and Lionel Haven in front of Sydney Opera House, Australia.

(FIFA Congress, continued from page 1) with its first-ever opportunity to house all Congress participants in the same hotel. Bahamas Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honorable Brent Symonette, MP, has confirmed the support of the Government of the Bahamas, a key prerequisite of FIFA in their review of bidding countries.

In addition to the hundreds of delegates from Member Associations around the world, the event will bring some of the biggest names in the world of football to our shores. FIFA's Executive Committee, under the direction of President Joseph Blatter and General Secretary Jerome Valcke, is comprised of such past greats as Michael

Platini and Franz Beckenbauer, who along with CONCACAF's President and General Secretary, Jack Warner and Chuck Blazer, will lead the proceedings here in the Bahamas.

Of the 63 FIFA Congress held to date only five have been conducted in the CONCACAF region. FIFA has an entire branch (MATCH) that works year-round to organize and ensure the smooth running of each Congress. The 2009 FIFA World Congress will be held 30-31 May. Bahamas General Secretary Lionel Haven says, "we have worked very hard these last years to take the Bahamas to the world in football. Now football will bring the world to the Bahamas."



Bahamas referees called up for regional tournaments



Varnette Laing has been appointed as a Referee to the CONCACAF Women's U17 Championship in Trinidad & Tobago. The tournament runs from the 17th to the 28th of July. The 8 teams that have qualified

to compete in this tournament are: Costa Rica, USA, Trinidad & Tobago, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico, and Jamaica. Varnett is an experienced FIFA Referee who has officiated a number of important regional matches including CONCACAF Women's Gold Cup. The top 3 teams from this tournament will go on to represent CONCACAF in the FIFA U17 2008 Women's World Cup in New Zealand.



Sean Thompson-Palmer has been appointed as an Assistant Referee to Group B in the Caribbean Qualification Zone of the CONCACAF Men's U20 Tournament in the Cayman Islands. The tournament runs

from the 21st to the 28th of July. The 4 teams in this tournament are: Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. This is Sean's first appointment as a FIFA Assistant Referee, having been nominated just this year. The BFA extends congratulations to both and wishes them successful tournaments. Remember: developing our refereeing base is crucial to the future development of football in the Bahamas!

The future of football in the Bahamas is full of promise! Get involved and be a part of it!

Football fan wins Mercedes

Football fan, Livingston Marshall, was the lucky winner of the BFA's Grand Raffle first prize, a 2008 Mercedes Benz C180. The second prize winner of two tickets to the FIFA World Cup 2010 South Africa Final Match was young Alexander Klonaris.

Mr. Marshall told the BFA Executives that he bought the ticket by chance while attending a training session of the men's national team some weeks back.

At the drawing, carried live on Island FM radio, BFA President Anton Sealey spoke about the association's programs and initiatives, mentioning the work presently being done at the BFA facility as well as upcoming plans for the continued development of the National Center. The raffle was designed to help generate the necessary funds to complete the plans at the facility, and the President thanked all who supported the raffle by purchasing a ticket, Tyreflex for their support in the raffle and making the car available for the event, Creative Edge Marketing for their tireless and wonderful support of the raffle, and the accounting firm of Deloitte for overseeing the raffle and draw.

The Grand Raffle was the first of the BFA's effort at fundraising, and with plans in mind to continue the development of the facility as well as the development programs for youth and national teams, additional funds will be critical to any success. The BFA thanks everyone who supported the raffle and asks that they continue their support in future efforts!

High School football on firm ground

The 2008 High School football season in New Providence ended on a high note. In the BAISS (private schools) tournament, St. Andrew's pulled off a truly unique feat by capturing all four titles—Senior Boys, Senior Girls, Junior Boys and Junior Girls—defeating old rival Queen's College, St John's College, and the big red machine of St. Augustine's in the process.

The GSSSA (public schools) tournament proved to be equally as exciting with the four divisions each yielding a different

champion. The Senior Boys finals saw RM Bailey defeat CV Bethel 3-1 to claim the title, while the Senior Girls from CC Sweeting became repeat champions, defeating CI Gibson 3-0 en route to their victory. The Junior Boys finals needed penalties to sort out the winners as LW Young and DW Davis played to a scoreless tie over the duration of the match, plus extra-time. In the end LW Young claimed the title. The Junior Girls Finals saw HO Nash defeat AF Adderley 2-1 to claim the title,

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Bahamas high school football: nurturing ground for national players of the future

BFA National Academy gets underway

One of the most important football developmental programs launched by the BFA will enter its 8th year in July when the annual National Academy kicks into gear.

Preparation for this prestigious summer program began months ago as the youth league season wound down and the Regional Soccer Center went into action. A precursor to the National Academy, the Regional program puts the cream of the crop from all Y League clubs through intense training and observation with the goal of nominating the most promising youngsters to the National Academy. Only twenty-two players from each age category advance to Academy level.

The popularity and success of the program is clearly evident. At the U9 level, for example, over 70 young footballers were nominated by their clubs for the regional program. Coaches had the unenviable task of narrowing this number down to the required 22.

Under the direction and support of Neider Dos Santos (BFA Technical Director) Y League and National coaches have rallied to support this critically important develop-



(Bahamas U-15 National Coach) leads the U-11 Boys, while Daria Adderley (Cavalier FC) leads the U-11 girls. Michael Hooper (Western Warriors) directs the U-13 boys and Vandyke Bethel (Bahamas Women's National Coach) directs the U-13 girls. Hutchinson also directs the U-15 boys and Bethel doubles up with the U-15 girls.

It is important for players who were not selected to be encouraged to continue their individual development, as nominations to the Regional program alone give an indication of their football potential. In fact, a number of youngsters who were not selected in 2007 and continued their training, made the selection this year, beating out 2007 Academy members.

The National Academy was first launched in 2000 and included Happy Hall, Dwayne Whyly, Cameron Hepple, Alex Vanderpool-Wallace, and Demont Mitchell among others. All are now members of the Bahamas Men's National Team which recently competed in the FIFA World Cup 2010 South Africa qualifications.

(High School football Continued from page 3)

With the Bahamas competing annually in overseas tournaments for players from U-15 on up, many of the high schools are now fielding players with international experience under their belt. BFA Technical Director Neider Dos Santos is pleased with the direction, but recognizes that there is much further to go. As more and more players get the experience, and more and more programs are made available to high school coaches, football at this level will continue to grow.

BFA General Secretary has contacted the Soccer Coordinator for the GSSSA to assess the needs of the association and, along with Technical Director Dos Santos, establish a program to assist these schools in meeting their needs.

Right: Grand Bahama's women's team, the Town and Country Predators, participated in the Annual Turks Island International Festival of Football earlier this month. Competition was stiff but the girls, ranging from age thirteen to forty-six, played well and improved their performance throughout the three nights of play.

International opportunities for women

With FIFA announcing a FIFA U17 Women's World Cup slated for 2010, the Executive Committee of the Caribbean Football Union has elected to hold a U15 women's tournament two years ahead of the Cup Competition. The event aims to give U15 women international experience and give participating countries an opportunity to see how their women's programs are faring with others in the region.

This first competition for U15 girls is by invitation only and only 9 Caribbean countries will be participating in this first exercise. The BFA was very pleased to learn that developments being made in the game nationally resulted in an invitation being extended to the Bahamas. National Women's coach Vandyke Bethel has gotten the ball rolling for the U-15 girls, with an initial training program of four days a week at the BFA National Centre for Football Development.

The girls competition is scheduled for July 30 – August 10, 2008 in Trinidad and Tobago. It will be an interesting taste of international play for them, but only serves to continue the development of the girls to match that of the boys. chance to advance more quickly up the ranks in the region is an exciting one.

The future of football in the Bahamas is full of promise!
Be a part of it!

