



Ivan G. Somlai

BC Water Polo's New President Brings Rich Historical Background to the Position

BC Water Polo is proud to introduce the new President of the Association: Ivan Gyozo Somlai. Ivan is no stranger to the sport of water polo and brings with him a wealth of historical experience.

Becoming interested in the sport of water polo in 1969, Ivan was the key figure behind the revival of Water Polo in Alberta, first at the Calgary Central YMCA, later supporting the Calgary Glencoe Club water polo development, and then Mount Royal College. From 1972, he was the CWPA's (Canadian Water Polo Association) Southern Alberta Regional Director

Ivan became the President of the Alberta Water Polo Association in 1974-75, and had by that time 100 registered players playing the sport in the province.

In the mid-seventies, Ivan collaborated with the Technical Director of Water Polo Canada, Rezso Gallov and with support from Sport Canada, in developing the Water Polo Sports School, North America's first such specialist School, based in Ottawa. as a model of age group selection and instruction in the sport. Ivan became the Assistant Coach and Games Plan Manager under Dezso Lemhenyi, the illustrious Hungarian coach of the Canadian Men's National and Olympic Water Polo teams in preparation for the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal. Our Canadian team placed 9th, the highest in its history.

Returning to his home base in Alberta, he co-authored with Rezso Gallov "Coaching Water Polo", a technical book used for decades.

Another stint followed as Alberta Water Polo Association President (1978-1979). Ivan was involved in the development of Water Polo Canada's Bronze, Silver, Gold badge program, and instrumental in the development of our national referee system.

His "daytime" job, through university work or as a private consultant, took him around the world, and Ivan spent long years in Nepal, Pakistan, traveling to places well off the grid, serving his passion for conflict mitigation, and the development or enhancement of basic needs and increased cooperation (see <http://ethnobureaucratica.weebly.com>)

Residing in his home base of Kamloops, Ivan's return to the water polo scene could not have come at a better time for BC Water Polo, as the organization expands its promotion of the sport to the furthest reaches of our Province in quest of returning the sport of water polo to the BC Summer Games.