UASC Tryzub: 60 championship

The volleyball team was Philadelphia Recreation Center champion twice, while the chess team captured the Philadelphia Cup an equal number of times. Meanwhile, the soccer team captured the America Ukrainian newspaper Cup and became champion of a tournament held in New Brunswick, NJ.

The Ukrainian sporting flame burns brightly. Tryzub’s eventual accomplishments in the sport of soccer can only be styled as legendary.

The road to success began in 1956, when its amateur Majors Division team was the finalist for the coveted national U.S. Amateur Cup, losing a hotly contested championship game in St. Louis. The following year, under the team name “Philadelphia Ukrainian Nationals,” Tryzub entered the American Soccer League as a professional team and captured second place in 1957, losing only its matches against the powerful Uhrik Truckers.

In 1960, a revitalized Ukrainian Nationals team took the championship. (“Nasha Druzhyna”) captured four U.S. Open Cup professional Championships (1960, ’61, ’63, ’66) and lost in the finals once; they were crowned American Soccer League professional champions all seven years.

In the words of Philadelphia Inquirer sports journalist Melvin Dursloy, “The best soccer team in the country, obviously suppressing some strong emotion, are the Philadelphia Ukrainian Nationals.” In fact, this number of professional championships also elevates the Ukrainian Nationals to the status of the most successful professional franchise in all of Philadelphia sports history.

Tryzub was the first soccer team in the United States to have home games televised and played in the first indoor regular season soccer game in Atlantic City’s Convention Hall in New Jersey. Soccer teams from around the world visited Philadelphia to play “Our Team”.

The Ukrainian Nationals were the U.S. professional soccer champions in 1960, 1961, 1963 and 1966 — First round: Alex Ely (U.S. Soccer Hall of Fame), Ivan Borodyak, Nazar Warsarnuk, Gene Krawetz, O. Ferreyra, Andy Racz, L. Oliver, K. Yakovino, O. Switch, Vyslyav Glisovic (coach and manager).
achievements are well documented in the broadcast media, newspapers, sports magazines, soccer Web sites, the U.S. Soccer Hall of Fame (a fabulous and social, heritage and cultural affairs and activities, and professional soccer and amateur sports (soccer, volleyball, table tennis, golf, chess, track and field and swimming). Although many adults have participated in these amateur sports activities, developing the Ukrainian youth was the primary focus of the third of these three divisions.

Once completed, “Tryzubiwka” became home to nine soccer teams, two volleyball teams, a chess team, a table-tennis team and a golf league. Soon to be emphasized and manned were the first of three Ukrainian Nationals (a constant source of agitation for the Soviet Politburo, no doubt). Undeniably, Tryzub was a significant factor in keeping alive not only the flame of Ukrainian sport, but also the very Ukrainian name and identity.

The flame continues to burn. From the very beginning,

display) and even in the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Above it all, however, the Ukrainian Nationals brought joy, pride and self-esteem to Ukrainians throughout America and even the entire world. At a time when the Russian occupiers were trying to eclipse Ukraine and all aspects of Ukrainian heritage and culture, the incredible news kept streaming about these Ukrainian National’s a constant source of agitation for the Soviet Politburo, no doubt. Undeniably, Tryzub was a significant factor in keeping alive not only the flame of Ukrainian sport, but also the very Ukrainian name and identity.


Tryzub placed high priorities on establishing and maintaining a home base and on active participation in the broader Ukrainian community. On North Broad Street in the Logan section of Philadelphia, it purchased a parcel of property upon which it developed a modern clubhouse and hall. Club “Tryzub” became a popular place for Ukrainians to gather socially. It was a venue for cultural, artistic and theatrical events. The Ukrainian community used it frequently to mark personal and community celebrations, commemorations and milestone events.

As such, Tryzub’s programming consisted of three divisions (“lanky”), housekeeping and social activities, and professional soccer and amateur sports (soccer, volleyball, table tennis, golf, chess, track and field and swimming). Although many adults have participated in these amateur sports activities, developing the Ukrainian youth was the primary focus of the third of these three divisions.

The late 1960’s saw the collapse of the American Soccer League in the wake of the heavily funded North American Soccer League. Despite a few years of success and a championship in the highly competitive German American League of New York, Tryzub decided to abandon its professional sports franchise in favor of a sharper focus on amateur sports. Since that time Tryzub’s Majors Division soccer team, a perennial Pennsylvania State Champion in either the U.S. Amateur or the U.S. Open Cup, or both, and its other amateur teams, youth and adult, have captured numerous championships and awards. Tryzub also rapidly realized that owning its own sports facility was an absolute necessity for further growth and development. In 1978, it purchased a 38-acre tract of land in Horsham, Pennsylvania. Countless volunteer hours by many Philadelphia-area Ukrainian Americans developed this farm of corn fields into a modern sports and social facility that includes six soccer fields, four tennis courts, volleyball courts, a clubhouse, a social club and hall, parkland and a multi-pavilion forested festival stage and grove. A swimming and a tennis team joined the roster. The highly lauded adult U.S. Majors Division team became the heart and soul of the Ukrainian Nationals and continued, in most years, to march through their competition at the local United Soccer League and Pennsylvania State Cup levels.

In 1988, “Tryzubiwka” hosted the first of three Ukrainian Diaspora Olympiads and Youth Rafties. It was an absolutely perfect celebration of the Millennium of Ukraine’s Christianity. Close to 800 athletes and 12,000 spectators from throughout the free world partook. The athletes proudly represented 10 Ukrainian sports and youth organizations. This international extravaganza gave Ukrainians, young and old, men and women, an opportunity not only to compete, but also to socialize and to develop lasting friendships. Despite social and logistical challenges that would overwhelm others, Tryzub planned and executed the event with the precision of a Swiss watch.

A contemporaneous thaw in Soviet autocracy gave Tryzub an opportunity to re-establish direct contacts and communications with sports associations in Ukraine. In 1990, a year before Ukraine’s declaration of independence, Tryzub arranged for the famed L’viv Karpaty soccer team from Ukraine to tour the United States for a series of exhibition matches. A year later, Tryzub representatives, as part of a delegation sponsored by the Ukrainian Sports Federation of America and Canada (known by its Ukrainian acronym — USCKA), joined other Ukrainian Diaspora sportmen in a memorable tour of Ukraine. Meetings and celebrations with numerous teams and sports associations highlighted this very emotional reunion with our ancestral homeland.

Tryzub in the new millenium. Tryzub’s 50th anniversary in 2000 witnessed monumental improvements to the facility in the guise of a grand addition to its clubhouse and...
social hall and a dramatic expansion and modernization of its kitchen. Tryzub also hosted its second highly successful Olympiad and Youth Rally that year. Tryzub recently also upgraded its electrical service and attached connections to municipal water and sewerage systems. Plans are set to develop an artificial turf fully-lighted soccer field to handle training and play in the winter and in inclement weather. Numerous other landscaping upgrades are underway. Much to its credit, Tryzub, in the new millennium, also refreshed its approach to governance and development by seating younger activists onto its Board and Executive Committee. This initiative produced almost immediate and lasting results. “Tryzubiwka” is now home to no less than 29 youth teams in age brackets from Under-9 through Under-20, boys and girls. And, of course, Tryzub’s pride and joy, its Ukrainian Nationals Majors Division team, continues to be the premier torchbearer. A great number of Ukrainian boys and girls have graduated from Tryzub’s extremely challenging program and have gone on to excel, with scholarships in hand, in the soccer programs at their respective colleges and universities. Tryzub has also had the foresight to weave its way into the fabric of its local community. The Township of Horsham and many other communities that surround “Tryzubiwka” have expressed great gratitude to Tryzub for its work and dedication to youth sports and cultural and artistic programming. Tryzub has become a distinct, uniquely colorful and yet inseparable Ukrainian piece of its broader community. As in the days of old, the Ukrainian Nationals keep the name and idea of Ukraine alive in the minds of many non-Ukrainians.

Many Happy Years! One of the greatest baseball hitters of all time, Ted Williams, once told an admiring public that success in sports, not unlike success in all aspects of life, is not a matter of simple good luck, but a matter of hard work and preparation meeting opportunity. There can be but little doubt that Tryzub’s record of excellence stems from Ted Williams’ school of thought and play.

Happy Birthday Tryzub! Best wishes for a bright and prosperous future — Mnohaya Lita!

(Continued from p. 9)

mark milestones in their own lives and in the life of their community. Tryzub’s Ukrainian Folk Festival (scheduled next year for Sunday, Aug. 21) for instance, annually marks the anniversary of Ukraine’s Independence. Nearly 2,000 people attend this fun-filled and entertaining cultural event.


Tryzub’s future — the youth teams (2010).


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Tryzub’s Annual Golf Outing (2001).


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