

# FRANK KLEIN

## The Rhubarb Patch



Who knows—if Fred Bednarski keeps kicking footballs out of Memorial Stadium at Austin with his soccer style footwork, this old, old universally played game may gain its rightful place in the Texas sports picture.

Bednarski, the immigrant who learned soccer in Poland, has stirred some interest in the game in this part of the world.

And that's something which Dan Gallegos and his associates in San Antonio Soccer Assn. have been trying to do for many a year. Sometimes the stirring has been difficult.

And that's something which Dan Gallegos notes happily, SASA is getting some solid help in selling the game of soccer. It's coming from excellent foreign players stationed at Lackland and Brooke Army Medical Center.

At Pittman-Sullivan Field, the Lackland players will be in action Sunday afternoon and on future Sundays. They play as fine a brand of the game as has ever been seen here, according to Gallegos, and it is certain to upgrade the play of SASA senior and junior teams who will see them.

Gallegos believes that when the games are returned to Brackenridge Park's No. 2 soccer field the game will really catch on again. It has drawn up to 5,000 persons there on a Sunday afternoon in years gone by. The polo layout is being re-conditioned this season.

He points out that more and more U.S. servicemen are learning the game while stationed abroad. It's played in 80 nations. And increasing number of servicemen in the San Antonio area are expressing interest in playing the game each year, meaning the fan potential grows proportionately.

"Why shouldn't the game draw 5,000 persons?" asks Gallegos. "It's a highly skilled game and as tough a test of a conditioned athlete as you can find. What other sport calls on an athlete to keep on the run for one and a half hours, or for two 45-minute halves separated by a 15-minute rest period?"

At 47, this is Gallegos' first year away from the soccer field as a contestant. He's turned to refereeing. Only last year, when 46, he played a full game or two.

Gallegos and his SASA associates would like to see San Antonio schools adopt the sport.

The idea has merit. Much has been written about the lack of good equipment for junior high school football teams. Soccer is easily financed and just as many—eleven—can play. Two soccer balls could last a team a season and cost no more than \$20. Give a boy a pair of tennis shoes and a short and jersey and he's ready to play.

SASA holds an annual election of officers at 8 p.m. Monday at New York Paint and Body Works, 105 N. Colorado. You're welcome.



Dan Gallegos

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