

# Inter-county soccer games heating up as the end of league play approaches

**Alex Tough Sports Views**



Not too much local and topical news this week, however, here goes.

The Inter County League heats up as the end of the league play is approaching. Two weeks to go and neither the first nor second division are decided.

Results from last week show a close battle for first and last place in the top division and another close fight for first place in the second division.

Leaders Crown and Anchor slipped for the third week in succession with a home tie with United. Meteor creep towards the top with a 2-1 victory over TOS and are three points behind. Meteor have a game in hand and can take the title with a tie and a win. Guess who meet in the last league game? This week Meteor meet rejuvenated

Mariners at Cedarvale at 8:45 p.m. in an important match for both squads.

Mariners won their first match of the season 2-1 over Villa in Acton, after being a goal down in three minutes. Mariners need to take a point or three against Meteor to have a chance of remaining in the top flight.

Villa are tied with Mariners and require a point or three from their remaining two games to have the same chance of staying up. Maybe the league deciding rules will be required. Villa travel to Eagles this week at Alcott, also at 8:45 p.m.

Meanwhile, Crown have a bye and United entertain TOS at Meadowglen at 7:00 p.m.

Second division leaders, Merseyside, have three games to play and are two points ahead of Marlin and the title is between these two sides. Merseyside host Laurentians and Marlin host Stingers. Fourth place Blazers host Ajax at Alcott at 7:00 p.m.

Surprise team, Milton, host Tredon.

Some play for fun, some for 'real.' The League is composed of both types of teams and players. The standard of play is mixed, as are the ages of players. We are seeing, today particularly, the advent of much younger teams. Their legs and lungs will test the older players, even with experience and skill, and the contests are closer than before.

To be competitive, players and teams need to be closer to ages and skills. Fitness is also a factor. Older players need to be in a state of full fitness to be able to remain with younger players. Training for matches is an absolute and soon we may not see the less fit players who turn out week after week. No more may a once a week appearance be sufficient for play in the Inter County.

It is difficult for players of over 25 years these days to live with the younger element, no matter the sport or recreation. Think about it,

or not, as you may.

After the World Cup and all its hype and poor play and officiating, leagues all over the globe are returning to their bread and butter. It will be interesting to see what the return of European competition will mean for England and it's two representatives in the coming season.

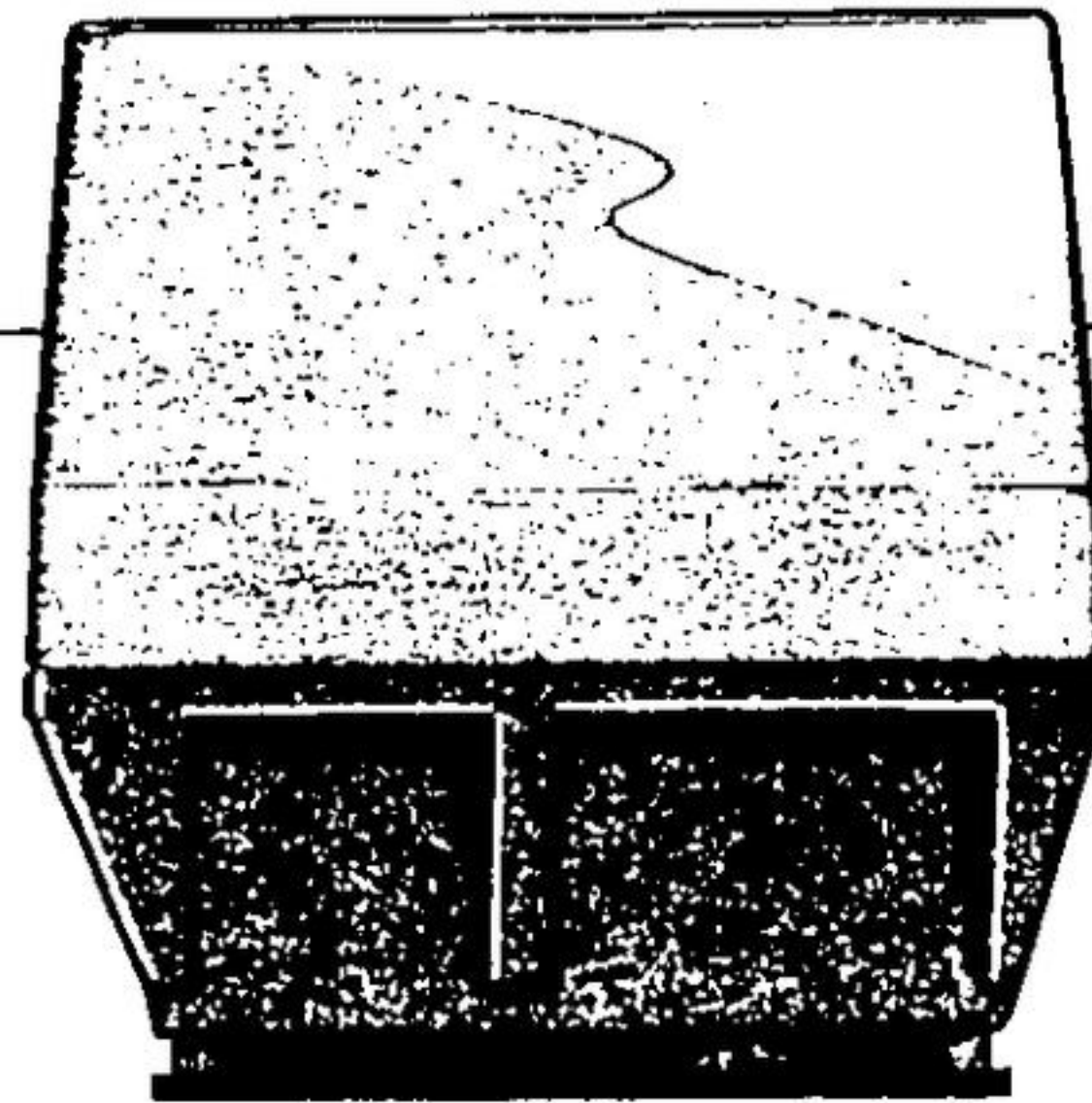
Aston Villa and Manchester United have been allowed to play and the 'fans' will be on trial more than the teams. The clubs are two of the oldest and most respected organizations in England and it seems that most opponents country's wished to see the English clubs readmitted. Unfortunately, the ban on Liverpool has been extended and the club has to wait a few more years before returning.

I have always felt that the ban on Liverpool without a corresponding judgement on Juventus as a result of the Heysel 'disaster' was unfair, to say little of the European soccer authorities part in the ticket allocations system leading to the

problems at the famous/infamous cup finals. The so-called behaviour of other countries 'fans' has left a lot to be desired and for the most part, teams have gone less punished than the English. Hopefully, the hooliganism and vandalism will vanish and we will be able to watch the game in peace.

This week is the week of the Ontario Summer Games and soccer is part of the proceedings. Quarter, semi finals and finals of the boys and girls Ontario Cup will be held in Kitchener on Thursday to Sunday. Teams from Oakville, Burlington and Clarkson represent our district. Unfortunately the timing of the early games is 4:00 p.m. and a little too early for participation. Hopefully, the weather will become more co-operative for the games, which cover the under 18 age group.

The remaining semi finals take place in North York, Oshawa, Scarborough, and Etobicoke the following weekend. The finals are in Hamilton in September.



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