

Sports

Soccer



The history of soccer can be **traced back more than 2,000 years to ancient China**. Greece, Rome, and parts of Central America also claim to have started the sport, but it was England that transitioned soccer, or what the British and many other people around the world call “football”, into the game we know today. The English are credited with recording the first uniform rules for the sport, including forbidding tripping opponents and touching the ball with the hands.

Soccer, also known as “*the beautiful game*”, was first played in Cobourg as **part of the school sports programs in the 1960s**. At that time each of the High Schools fielded teams, and matches were played on school fields.

Gradually, as soccer became more popular, teams and leagues were formed in Cobourg, Hamilton Township, Port Hope and surrounding communities. The Cobourg Soccer League was incorporated in the early 1980s and **ran out of John’s Barber Shop on King Street. Registration forms were kept in a bottom drawer.**



John's Barber Shop on King Street

In the 1980s and 1990s there was an annual tournament between teams from the Cobourg area and as far away as Kingston and Rochester. In 1986 the tournament, known as the “*Pepsi Challenge*”, was held at Donegan Park, Cobourg. In all, **approximately 700 individuals participated on 46 teams in 6 categories**. They came from Orono, Ajax, Oshawa, Bowmanville, Kingston, Central Frontenac, Port Hope and Trenton (all in Eastern Ontario) and from Greece, New York. The winning team trophies were **inscribed with an eagle and maple leaf representing our two countries**.

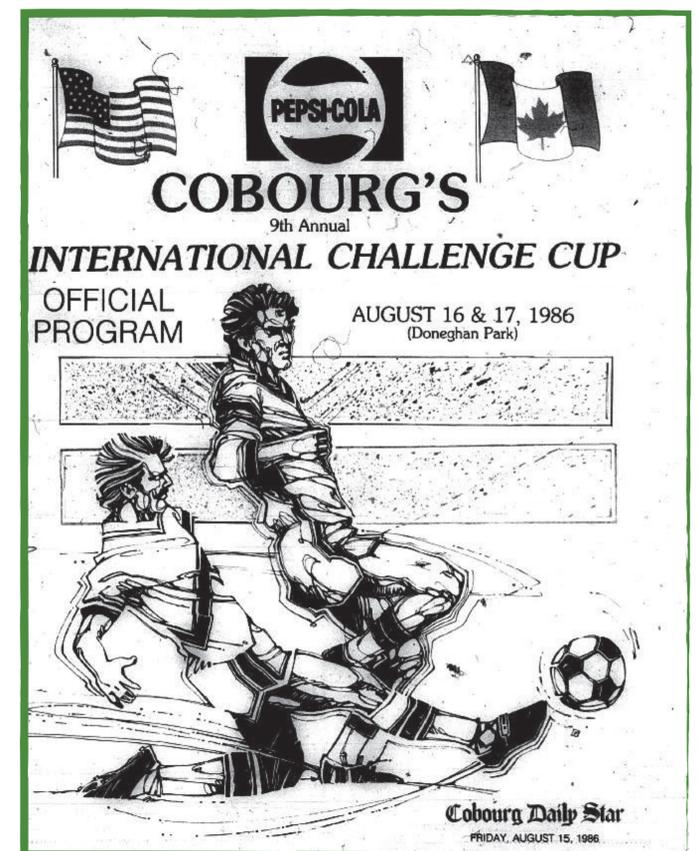
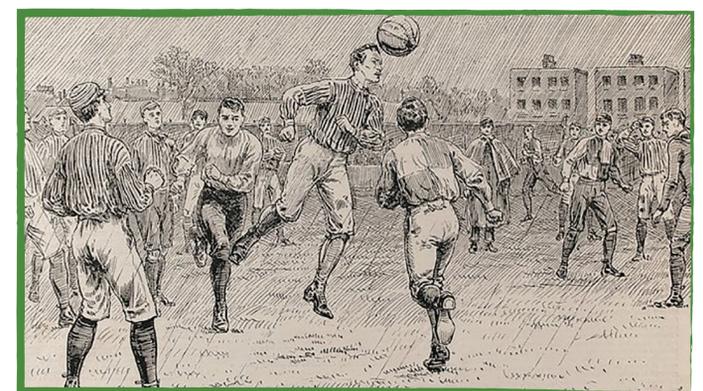


Photo courtesy of the Cobourg Public Library



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Today

Today the Cobourg Soccer Club teams play the outdoor season in a series of fields located along D'Arcy Street. **The Rotary Fields and Lions Fields were once part of the old Military Supply Depot.** The land was sold to the town of Cobourg and developed into soccer pitches by the Cobourg Soccer Club. The indoor season is played in the repurposed Baltimore arena which has a special playing surface created with the aid of a Trillium grant.

Northumberland United U16 Boys 1998



Photo courtesy of the Cobourg Soccer Club



The sport's popularity has continued to grow locally to the point where **soccer now reigns as the largest sports program in Cobourg**, with 1,350 outdoor players and around 400 players in the indoor winter league.

NORTHUMBERLAND UNITED UNDER 16 BOYS 1998 ONTARIO CHAMPIONS

Back Row (L to R)

Jim Birch (Manager), Robbie Charron, Ian Sturzenegger,
Michael Cheshier, Jordan Birch, Vaughan Elder, Ed Kowalczyk,
Kris Duncan, Paul Hanley (Coach), Dave Cheshier (Assist. Coach)

Front Row (L to R)

Mat Theriault, Josh Bickle, J.P. Desjardins, Pat Essig,
Dzung Nguyen, Alan Hanley, Jon Niles