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Ontario soccer association planning ?phased in? approach to summer sport

by BRIAN LOCKHART

Ontario Soccer, the governing body of the sport in Ontario, says there will be a ?phased in' approach to the return of soccer in Ontario this summer that is being prepared at both the national and provincial level.

Currently each provincial or territorial Soccer Association is working on a specific ?Return to Play Guide' that will include safety protocols and recommendations.

The guides will included subjects that clubs must comply with as directed by national soccer authorities as well as by medical authorities at the provincial and territorial level.

Ontario Soccer plans to finalize their guide this week and it will be submitted to Canada Soccer for review.

As each province submits a guided, it will be reviewed nationally. Guides will be designed to protect the health and safety of participants in the sport.

Each club in a district must then be cleared and approved to play before getting back out on the soccer pitches.

At the present time in Ontario, there is not yet any indication of a time-line for the return to the sport, however, there is some expectation that a decision will be made some time in June.

The Shelburne Soccer Club has hopes of getting back out on the soccer pitches in July, however, they still must wait for directives before starting games this summer.

?Keeping with the current news, Ontario has reached the peak earlier than anticipated successfully flattening the curve through social distancing, said Shelburene Soccer Club president, Chris Valade, through an on-line video on the Club's Facebook page. ?With this in mind, we are confident our soccer season will commence in July with a full ten weeks of play through august and September.?

The Club has made accommodations for those who may have difficulty paying registration fees due to the current situation.

Soccer fields are currently open, but only for those who are family members and for recreational use.

Large groups of people are still not allowed to congregate on any town property.