

U.S. Futsal Federation No Longer Owns Trademark for 'Futsal', Needs to Update Website

Written by Tim Sheldon

The so-called U.S. Futsal Federation (USFF) is not presenting an accurate representation of itself on its website. It is continuing to state that 'FUTSAL® (five-a-side soccer), is a registered trademark of the United States Futsal Federation, protected by Federal Law,' when that is not the case.

By Tim Sheldon, Editor of www.futsalonline.com The original article can be read in its entirety by clicking the link <http://www.futsalonline.com/usffneeds.html>

U.S. Futsal and its CEO, Alex Para, previously controlled the trademark for Futsal, but it has since dropped its control of the trademark. The U.S. Futsal Federation is no longer sanctioned by FIFA or U.S. Soccer, and it is not the authorized governing body of Futsal in the U.S.

Para voluntarily abandoned his trademark on "Futsal" a year ago under pressure from FIFA and U.S. Soccer. He is now only trademarking the terms "U.S. Futsal" and "United States Futsal Federation".

Anyone is now free to use the word Futsal without worrying about violating this trademark, and we're moving into a new era of growth and development of Futsal in the U.S. that has been stymied for years by Para and the USFF.

It was not uncommon for the USFF to send out letters to independent Futsal promoters threatening legal action if they continued to use the term, "Futsal".

The new freedom is expected to lead to development of a national Futsal league, national marketing of new Futsal products and sponsorship of Futsal events by major corporations.

Para's attempts to control the term "Futsal" were the same as someone attempting to control the terms "baseball" or "basketball".

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"Futsal" is a generic term for indoor soccer that originated in South America and spread throughout the world. It is the common term for indoor soccer used all over the world.

Para's organization lost its affiliation with U.S. Soccer and FIFA because of this trademark issue.

The trademarks controlled the sale of soccer balls, the arranging and conducting of sports training clinics and indoor/outdoor sporting events, printing of instructional and teaching material and stationery, and sale of warm up suits, jerseys, trousers, footwear and headwear.

Para was listed as a separate registrant for soccer balls and instructional and teaching materials and stationery.

A separate trademark was attempted in 1991 by Sociedade Esportiva E Recreativa Perdigao-Serp of Brazil for sporting, playing, social and cultural services but was abandoned a year later.

We know that the USFF website has been updated in other ways, because the federation is now promoting events for 2010.

The U.S. Futsal Federation is still misrepresenting itself on the website by continuing to state that Futsal is their registered trademark, and that needs to be corrected immediately.

Futsalcanada note: Many futsal leagues in the US and Canada are close in proximity to each other and the confusion as to who the governing body of futsal in the United States is has long been a confusing issue for Canadian futsal clubs wishing to travel and compete down south. The only major group of futsal leagues with approval from US Soccer is operated by the Super F League, based in Kansas City.