

Canada gets its first ever FIFA Futsal Referee

Written by Administrator



A historical moment in Canadian futsal occurs with the announcement that one of our officials will receive their FIFA Futsal badge.

After numerous excellent performances at multiple North American competitions over the past five years, Chris (Krzysztof) Grabas has become the first Canadian to ever receive the honour. Futsal Canada sat down with Grabas to get his thoughts on his achievement and the sport at large. Even with his new designation he still remains humble, grateful, and hungry.

"It's a true honour to be the first Canadian but with this comes a big responsibility. It will open the eyes of all officials in Canada now that futsal may be a potential option to get to a higher level. I really appreciate the confidence that Isaac (Raymond) and Bob (Tibbo) have in me and hope to repay them with great performances."



The native of Saint-Léonard, Quebec has refereed futsal for five years while having worked as a

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soccer ref since 1997, achieving national status. He worked on his futsal craft through various leagues in Quebec, including the PLFQ, and has officiated at major tournaments and events, including many championship finals, like the CSA Futsal Championships, the Copa North America, 2016 PFL Challenge, and the Futsal Canada Championship Tournament.

After the announcement he now has his eyes set on some next level events.



"With the IOC potentially bringing futsal into the Olympics, that would be a great opportunity for me as would the CONCACAF competitions, like their club championships and World Cup Qualifying. Of course, the ultimate goal for all futsal referees is the 2020 World Cup and I want to earn an assignment there."

His advice for young referees?

"Much like South American players start playing futsal first before making the transition to soccer, I believe this is something referees should experiment with as well. They can learn the quick dynamics of futsal and be able to transition to soccer much easier; however, if they choose to move forward with futsal the potential to rise up the ranks is easier than it is for soccer. It really is a fantastic game to officiate. I enjoy the fast pace and the fact that there is very little to no stoppages in play compared to soccer."

Having a domestic FIFA badged futsal referee was a major goal that Ottawa native and FIFA Futsal Referee Instructor Bob Tibbo had long coveted after seeing three Americans receive the

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honour over the past decade. The advice he imparted on Grabas stayed with him throughout the years.

"Bob and Ed Marco always supported me and others looking to fine tune their game. The best advice I received was never to take any appointment lightly. Give it 110% and then some. Always look to help your fellow referees and be proud to be called a FIFA Referee."

This is the third piece of great news for Grabas in the last 18 months as he and wife Natalia welcomed their first born Krystian last year while he also became a CSA National Futsal Referee Instructor back in September.

