

Tribute to Donald Lall: Lenasia Football Association (Ahmed Jogee)



(Seated L-R) Amrit Donald Lall and Vincent Naidoo. (Standing L-R): Solly Mangera, Seeraj Abass, Derek Eastwood, Ahmed Jogee and Bashir Bagus

Late Sunday evening on 2 November 2025, Donald Lall was called to rest and left this mundane world.

Ahmed Amrit Donald Lall Dhawakieram, fondly known as “Thaba”, chaired the Lenasia Football Association (LFA) and later the Lenasia Soccer Association (LSA) from the late 1960s until 2004. His iron-fisted leadership, sound administration and constitutional expertise propelled LFA/LSA to unprecedented growth. Under his stewardship, the local soccer league expanded to include divisions from Under 8 to the Senior Challenge League.

His club, Daffodils FC, was one of the first teams to affiliate to the Lenasia Football Association in 1957. Lall did what was best for his community. The fact is that under his leadership people from different walks of life affiliated to the non-racial Football Association. This organisation attracted clubs from the former Western Transvaal (Klerksdorp, Potchefstroom, Rustenburg), Roshnee, Grasmere, Roodepoort, Dobsonville, Alex/Wynberg, Eldorado Park, Azaadville, Ennerdale, Noordgesig and Soweto, with literally every school in Lenasia having players in the league. LFA/LSA was a well-oiled Association with sound administration. This was under Lall’s tutelage and his hardworking Executive Committee.

During the pre-season, Lall religiously arranged and ensured that the playing fields, Lenasia Soccer Stadium and “Tech Grounds” were ready for amateur, semi-professional and professional teams playing in Lenasia. He worked through the Johannesburg City Council. He made sure that Tech grounds, which was the hub of Lenasia football, were properly marked with poles and nets for the junior to the senior teams. He ensured and secured a safe and conducive environment for soccer from early March to mid-October each season.

Lall had a Memorandum of Understanding with cricketers also using Tech Grounds. He ensured that fixtures and referees were arranged and the season concluded in accordance with the programme set out for over four decades. The year-end LFA/LSA Banquets were the cherry on the top. With this he attracted lucrative sponsorships under challenging conditions with companies such as Coke and Simba, including local business houses such as Tahiti Pharmacy, Shiraz Delta, Royal Foam contributing funds.

The Old Post Office Building was the administration hub of Lenz football in the early years. This office was active from 6pm to early mornings on Mondays to Thursdays. It was here that soccer Council meetings, DC meetings, affiliation and registration of clubs etc took place. It was here that Soccer Officials met pre-season for planning.

In 1982, when there was a Federation Professional League’s pro-spot vacancy for a Transvaal team due to Botafago FC becoming defunct, Lall encouraged Vina Behari’s Swaraj team to apply for admission. Swaraj FC was successful in their Pro-status application, which coincided with LFA’s 25th anniversary celebration.

In 1991, when football unity was achieved Lall once again outsmarted all to serve as the Chairman of the Lenasia Soccer League (LSL). Lall served on the broader South African Football Association (SAFA) structure. He retired due to ill health from football after the Soccer World Cup held in South Africa in 2010.

Last year the LSL honoured Lall with some great soccer icons for their contribution to Lenz football and development. His simple message was, "Thank you for honouring me while I’m alive." This year he was one of the recipients of Eastwave Radio’s Nelson Mandela Community Awards.

Lall was a seasoned community person, who also served and advised community organisations. He was a family man. Football, he dearly loved, and he was passionate about its development in Lenasia. The name Donald Lall or “Thaba” will be carved with pride when our football history is fully written. May the Almighty grant him a high status in heaven, forgive his shortcomings and give his family and loved ones patience and strength during this difficult period.