

Joe Jahraus

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Joe Jahraus' art provided Oklahoma Soccer members with logos, mastheads, and bumper stickers for decades, but few knew that Joe provided much more to OSA than his drawings. The University of Missouri School of Journalism graduate met his wife Sharon in college. His first job was with Ralston Purina's advertising section. Within a year Joe was contacted by Hallmark Cards and he and his family (which now included Jon and Laura) settled in Kansas City. Joe's job at Hallmark was Creative Director of the Contemporary Card line that evolved into today's Shoebox cards. After four years with Hallmark, Skelly Oil Company brought Joe on board and back into the field of advertising.

1972 marked Joe's transfer to Tulsa with Skelly. He was now Director of Advertising and Jon was playing soccer as well as Laura. As with most young parents in the 1970's, the Jahraus family saw soccer as an alternative to other highly competitive sports. Joe was involved in the initial meeting at Thornton YMCA where Green Country Soccer was created. "I was there with the leaders of what would become GCSA and OSA." says Jahraus. From that first meeting a core leadership developed and the sport was under way. "I remember taking a reel of film about Pele and the sport of soccer to several organizational meetings throughout the city to make our civic leaders and the movers and shakers of Tulsa aware of soccer and what it had to offer our youngsters as a sport along with football and baseball ... the rest is history."

In 1980 Skelly merged with Getty Oil and Joe became Assistant Ad Manager and in charge of sales promotions. "Getty sponsored all major league professional sports on the east coast and we became highly involved with the North American Soccer League. When the Roughnecks were purchased and came to Tulsa, Getty became a big-time sponsor." Says Jahraus.

Getty held a contest for the team name and it was Joe who created the iconic Roughneck posed next to a huge soccer ball for the new NASL team. "I drew the name of the roughneck character and Roy Harwood developed the lettering for the logo." During that time, Joe attended a referee class and began officiating matches. He would continue officiating and coaching Laura's soccer team for several seasons. And, like many other soccer volunteers would mark lines, set up nets, and serve as a club officer. For Joe, the growth of soccer in Oklahoma has been remarkable. While the design of Green Country Soccer and the Roughneck logos are part of his legacy, what impresses Joe is opportunities they have to play soccer from the youth leagues on through to college teams throughout the United States. As Joe says, "A long way from that first meeting at the YMCA."