



Report of the Technical Director Dean Foti

We remain steadfast in our commitment to grow the game of soccer through the development of players and coaches at all levels throughout our NYSW foot print. To that end, in the past year we have seen an Olympic Development Program that remains both strong in numbers (over 570 players ages 12U-17U) and highly productive on the field, a NYW Player Development Academy solidly in place in four districts (175 players from 10U-14U), an ever expanding menu of events for Recreation Soccer, an active and vibrant TOPSoccer program operating in several districts and a Coaching Education Department committed to the continuous evolution of a coaching education model that is more closely aligned with global best practices. NYSWYSA also continued to take the lead role in providing technical support services with regard to transitioning member leagues and clubs into alignment with US Soccer's Player Development Initiatives (PDI). Clarification and implementation of the PDI and its associated mandates for both player development and player safety was, and will remain, a top priority. We take great pride in serving our members, helping them grow while also applauding their successes and accomplishments along the way.

Olympic Development Program:

On the playing field, ODP players continue to experience tremendous growth. At the ODP Tournament this past year, where boys and girls teams in the three oldest age groups (i.e. 15U, 16U & 17U) compete for a Region I Championship, NYW sent three of its six teams through to the Region I Final Four. Two of the three NYW teams advanced to the championship game where one (the 01G's) walked away as Region 1 ODP Champions (and another birth in the National ODP Final Four, which will be held in Phoenix, AZ in early 2018). This marks the fourth consecutive year where NYW ODP teams have been crowned Region 1 champions.

This also marks the 01G team's second consecutive Region 1 Championship and their second shot at an ODP National Championship (they finished third in 2017).

Additionally, we saw the Region I coaching staff identify 25 NYW boys and girls for inclusion into their regional pools. These players will now compete for spots on their respective age group regional teams, which travel and compete both domestically and internationally. Inclusion on these teams provides invaluable soccer experiences and tremendous exposure to both college and youth national team coaches. In short, NYW ODP has firmly established itself as one of the elite Region 1 ODP programs and our goal is to continue to build on that until we can say that we are THE elite program in Region 1. For the third consecutive year, ODP player participation numbers have topped the 700 player mark. As always, I would like to acknowledge and applaud the important work that our member clubs and their exceptional coaching staffs do in continuing to develop talented players within the NYW footprint.



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NYW Player Development Academy:

The NYW Player Development Academy, which takes place each fall is open to all boys and girls ages 10 to 14, was conducted at four sites throughout the NYW footprint (Buffalo, Elmira, Rochester and Syracuse). In an effort to foster our region's young talent, the Academy is designed to expose young players to focused training sessions provided by nationally certified coaches. The Academy stresses a curriculum focused on improving fundamentals via a heavy emphasis on technical work and small sided games. The program stresses fun and progress in a positive learning environment. In 2016, participant numbers dropped (13%) to 175 participants. This marks the third year in a row where there has been a notable decrease in participant numbers. The drop continues to be largely attributed to the increase of playing opportunities that now exist for this age group (IE. the creation/expansion of fall leagues and fall tournaments). The fact that participant numbers are decreasing is mitigated by the fact that most of these children are not leaving the game of soccer, but are merely selecting to participate in a different soccer activity. As long as these activities provide a good soccer experience and don't disrupt the recommended best practices "training to game ratios" needed for proper player development, then positive growth will take place (i.e. eliminating training session opportunities, replacing them exclusively with games and skewing healthy "training to game ratios" has proven to be detrimental). Maintaining a proper balance with "training to game ratios" is the key to achieving healthy and maximal growth.

Coaching Education:

The 2016/17 year can best be characterized as a year of transition. The US Soccer Coaching Education Department has been in the process of re-defining its entry level licensing. The better part of 2017 was dedicated toward redesigning "grass root" level coaching education – i.e. moving it away from its current introductory F-License (on-line), which was a pre-requisite to the current E-License (18 hours), and moving it toward a series of Youth Modules (4 hours each) that cover 4v4, 7v7, 9v9 and 11v11 respectively. These youth modules will now replace the E- License. The 11v11 Youth Module and any two other youth modules (4v4, 7v7 or 9v9) will now be the pre-requisite for the D-License. As a result of this transformation, our ability to conduct the E-license ground to what amounted to a US Soccer imposed halt while the aforementioned Youth Modules were designed and the initial instructor staffs were trained. More details to follow in the next few months as we roll out our 2017/18 coaching education calendar. In 2016/17, NYSWYSA Coaching Education Program, directed by Chris Hershey, offered five E-License Courses (111 candidates) and two D-License Courses (45 candidates).



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Our own popular grass root coach development offerings (i.e. Coaching 100 Series) continued to be very popular. In 2016/17, the free Coaching 101 Course continued to be the most wide reaching course that we conduct. The informative icebreaker course, designed for coaches who are just starting out, gives candidates an improved sense of what a training session should look like (IE. structure) and sends them away with numerous samples of age appropriate training topics/exercises. These course offerings (totaling nearly 60 and spaced throughout the year) are implemented by Assistant Technical Director, Scott Craig and are outlined in more detail in his Assistant Technical Director's Report.

Connecting Kids to Colleges

A core value that permeates all of our programming continues to be helping youth players explore opportunities to continue playing soccer in college. With that in mind, college coaches are heavily represented on our ODP Coaching Staff, they are incorporated into our Player Development Academy Staff and Coaching Education Staff, and a dedicated section of our website now includes links to EVERY college soccer program within New York State (Division I, II, III, JC, NAIA, etc.). Our ODP curriculum includes lectures specifically aimed at educating players on the college recruiting process and a player's college search is a noted point of emphasis in ODP player evaluations. The annual State Cup Final Four at SUNY Cortland (National Championship Series) continues to be an important event on the recruiting trail for local and regional college coaches, as has the Region 1 ODP Tournament and Region 1 ODP Camp.

Recreation Soccer:

Assistant Technical Director, Scott Craig completed another year of extraordinary service that saw him reach out to players and coaches in every corner of the NYW footprint. Whether providing member recreation programs with coaching education (Coaching 100 Series courses), youth development days and NYSWYSA's popular flagship recreation festivals/jamborees, Scott has continued to be the face of NYSWYSA to our recreation members. Three full scale jamborees held in conjunction with the Rochester Rhinos (USL), Syracuse Silver Knights (MISL) and Syracuse FC (NPSL) games highlighted 15 events that were held throughout the 2016/17 year.

TOPSoccer:

Revitalizing the NYSWYSA TOPSoccer program has been the long term goal of program director Scott Craig. A detailed report of the growth in this important program during 2016/17 can be



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found in Scott's Assistant Technical Director's Report. TOPSoccer is designed for children with disabilities, ages 5 to 21. Its success and longevity within NYSWYSA truly proves that soccer is "The Game For All Kids!"

US Soccer Mandates:

NYSWYSA maintained its leadership role as the preeminent provider of the most up to date information regarding interpretation and implementation of the US Soccer Player Development Initiative (PDI) and also US Soccer's Recognize to Recover program which outlines player health and safety initiatives. A section of our website is dedicated to providing the latest available information in this area from US Soccer. The entire NYSWYSA staff and Board of Directors have been at the forefront answering questions, attending league meetings, conducting town hall meetings, clarifying information and providing tips on how to best transition into compliance with mandates and best practice guidelines. We take pride in being an accurate and reliable resource to our members. Please don't hesitate to call on us with any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dean Foti
NYSWYSA
Technical Director