



President's Report – 2020 NYSWYSA Annual General Meeting

By nature, I am an optimist. Growing up, it was instilled upon me that even in difficult times, if you look deep enough there are “silver linings” to be found. In all of my experiences I have certainly found that to be true.

To say that the past soccer season was difficult is an understatement. However, the response to the COVID pandemic by the NYSWYSA membership is truly quite remarkable. As challenging and frustrating as it has been, all of you have been relentless in your commitment to find ways for our young players to enjoy the sport of soccer. You have had to continuously respond to the uncertainty of, the complexity of, and the constant changing of COVID safety protocols and mandates. It has required constant schedule adjustments, planning and re-planning. Despite the frustration and the obstacles there are important silver linings of which all of you should be proud.

- **Coaches:** You have demonstrated extraordinary new levels of creativity in running soccer training, both virtually and on the pitch. Additionally, your dedication to safety has enabled players to return safely to the field of play.
- **Referees:** Your dedication to ensuring safety on the field of play and your flexibility in responding to the constantly fluid schedules is extraordinary.
- **Administrators:** Your relentless commitment to keep abreast of the COVID pandemic status and protocols continues to provide necessary guidance for your programs, thus enabling sound decisions about how to proceed, and with the safety of everyone at the forefront.
- **Players:** Your desire to stay in the game has been evident by your participation in virtual or remote training sessions and the enthusiasm you've shown upon returning to the pitch.
- **Parents:** Thank you for your patience with the constant schedule changes, for the guidance you provide to your children, and for the input and ideas you have provided to all of us administrators.
- You all have had to make difficult decisions, be they personal, financial, and/or program-related. Not surprisingly, you have made them wisely, with prudence and safety as the guiding principles. That is admirable.

Like all of our membership, throughout the past 7-8 months the New York State West Youth Soccer Association (NYSWYSA) staff and Board of Directors has been busy planning, re-planning, rescheduling, analyzing, and adapting. I'm very grateful for and proud of both of them for their demonstrated commitment and their adaptability.

The effects of the COVID pandemic reduced player registrations dramatically for the 2019/2020 fiscal year, ending August 31, 2020. Registrations were at approximately 34,000 players vs. what normally would be 54,000 players. We were forced to cancel most of our planned programming, including ODP sessions and events, State Cup, our Futsal events, and coach education sessions, TOPSoccer, to name just a few. Financially, the impact was significant. Where reasonable and possible, we reduced operating expenses. However, due to the lost revenue, we ended the fiscal year with an approximate \$127,000 deficit. As of August 30, 2020, NYSWYSA's current assets stood at \$628,673, most of which is comprised of our operational reserves. The reserves represent approximately 5-6 months of operating



expenses for the association. Generally accepted business practice for a non-profit is to maintain operating reserves equating to a minimum of 6 months of operating expenses, with a 9-12 month reserve considered optimum.

Looking forward to the 2020/2021 fiscal year, the proposed NYSWYSA budget includes various assumptions regarding reducing expenses and lost revenue. A few of the key assumptions are as follows.

- We are assuming that player registrations will be 20% lower than the 54,000 players expected in a normal year. This assumption was arrived at by benchmarking with the other East Region state associations to assess the anticipated lingering effect of the COVID pandemic.
- Included in our budget assumptions is the anticipated cost of the credit for player pass fees which NYSWYSA recently announced that it will extend to our members. We estimate the cost of those credits to NYSWYSA will be approximately \$70,000.
- NYSWYSA recently made the decision not to renew the lease of our office space. Therefore, our staff will continue to work remotely for the foreseeable future.
- Travel to national meetings and conferences is being reduced significantly.
- Given that the programs and services provided to the NYSWYSA membership will continue to require the same human resources, we have not planned any staff reductions. Important critical programs and services include the following, among others.
 - o Olympic Development Program (ODP)
 - o Women's Coach Initiative
 - o Urban and rural soccer outreach
 - o Coach Education
 - o Risk Management
 - o US Youth Soccer National Championship Series (i.e. State Cup, East Regionals)
 - o TOPSoccer
 - o NYSWYSA league management
 - o NYSWYSA Fall Academy
 - o Policy and governance advocacy with US Soccer and US Youth Soccer

With the assumed lingering effect of COVID, particularly relating to player registrations, NYSWYSA projects that the 2020/2021 fiscal year will have a \$227,000 deficit, which will be paid for from the association's reserves. That will necessitate us to strategically work to replenish the reserves over the following 5 years. At this year's NYSWYSA Annual General Meeting, we will therefore propose the following fee increases. With these proposed increases, NYSWYSA's registration fees will still comparably remain at the lower tier of benchmarking fees with other state associations.

- For the 2021/2022 fiscal year.
 - o \$1.00 increase in the NYSWYSA player registration fee (from \$11.25 to \$12.25).
 - o Increase in the primary and secondary player pass fee to \$10.
- For the 2023/2024 fiscal year.
 - o Increase the player pass fee to \$12.



We continue to be hopeful that soccer programs will be able to proceed this year as planned. While there is still much uncertainty regarding 2020/2021 season, I am confident that we will “weather the storm”. As a giant soccer family, we will get through this together. Of that I am very confident. To all of our membership, thank you very much for all that you do for youth soccer.

Respectfully submitted,

Curtis R. Regruit

President, New York State West Youth Soccer Association.