



## Report of the Technical Director Dean Foti

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In an ongoing effort to grow the game of soccer and also enrich the experiences of all those involved with the sport, NYSWYSA programming and services have touched unprecedented numbers of players, parents and coaches in 2014/15. Programming has stretched across all levels of play and into every corner of the Western New York footprint. The Olympic Development Program, the NYW Player Development Academy, our Coaching Education offerings, the ever evolving programming and service provided to our recreation soccer community and the technical support provided to our many clubs and leagues, are but a few of the ways in which we interact with our vast and varied youth soccer community. We can say with confidence that in the past year we have been able to positively interact with more of our membership than ever before – a trend we intend to continue going forward.

### 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. U-15's, U-16's & U-17's) compete for a Region I Championship, NYW sent three teams through to the Region I Final Four for the third year in a row – no other Region 1 state association can boast this. And for the second consecutive year a NYW ODP team (98G's) were crowned Region I Champions (in 2014 our 99G's achieved that feat). Of the fifteen state associations that make up Region 1, only the state of MD, Virginia and Eastern PA sent more teams to the regional semi's than NYW did. Additionally, we saw the Region I coaching staff identify a record 36 NYW boys and girls for inclusion into their regional pools (up considerably from 22 players in 2013 and 27 players in 2014). 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. NYW ODP has firmly established itself amongst the elite Region 1 ODP programs.

Traditional ODP (U13-U17) participant numbers remain consistent and strong, with a slight increase (8%) in participants in the upstart U12 ODP developmental program, which drew 179 players in 2014. ODP Camp participant numbers continue a downward trend, decreasing (19%), drawing 122 participants in the summer of 2015. All told, the ODP program serves over 600 players each season.

It bears repeating each year, but I would again like to acknowledge and applaud the exceptional work that our member clubs and their fine coaching staffs do, in continuing to develop talented players within the NYW footprint. I am committed to continuing to build relationships and, meet, interact and collaborate with as many club coaches as I possibly can. As always, my goal is

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to make the ODP program a valuable and viable supplement to the outstanding work that the club coaches do in developing their players. Our goals are the same - to provide the players of NYSW with good soccer experiences that will help each one of them reach their potential. By working together and being flexible we can optimize the number of these experiences that we provide to them (without overloading them). I welcome and value the input that I have received from many coaches and I am always willing to work together to create a compatible calendar for our NYW players. It is important that we all recognize that this is an ongoing process and that each year presents its own set of challenges. I admire the fine work that our NYW clubs do in developing players – your outstanding work shines through every time your players take the field, no matter what jersey they are wearing.

### NYW Player Development Academy

The NYW Player Development Academy, which takes place each fall and is open to all boys and girls ages 10 to 14, was conducted at six sites throughout the NYW footprint (Binghamton, Buffalo, Elmira, Rochester, Syracuse and Watertown). 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 2014, participant numbers dropped 27% to 247 participants. The drop can be attributed in large part to the dropping off-line of the Olean Academy and also the increasing number of fall soccer leagues emerging for these particular age groups.

### Connecting Kids to Colleges

NYSWYSA remains committed to bridging the gap between youth players who aspire to play at the collegiate level and the college coaches who scour the landscape looking for talented players to add to their rosters. To this end, many of our programs are conducted with this notion in mind. Whether it involves the ODP program, where over half of our coaching staff members are current head or assistant college coaches or the State Cup (National Championship Series), where we provided complete participant team rosters to over 60 college coaches at the 2015 championship finals at SUNY Cortland, we remain committed to connecting kids to colleges. If you want to play collegiate soccer, we want to help you find the place that's right for you – chances are you don't have to leave New York State to find that place.



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### Coaching Education

In 2014/15, we saw an increase in the number of coaches seeking certification and licensing. The backbone of our coaching education program (E-License, D-License, Coaching 101 course) included the delivery of nine E-License courses (over 200 coaches), two D-License courses (65 coaches) and over 50 Coaching 101 courses (477 Coaches). The increase can be attributed to minimum coaching requirements coming online for the NYSW Thruway League (E-License required for all coaches in 2015 and D-License required for coaches in Division 1 in 2016) and the new recreation soccer offerings (primarily the free Coaching 101 course) being fully implemented by both Assistant Technical Director, Scott Craig and Director of Recreation Soccer, Chris Pacilio.

Director of Coaching Education, Chris Hershey has now completed the transition to the revised curriculum and delivery of the new E and D Licenses per US Soccer Coaching Department guidelines. Plans are in place to offer an increased number of D-Licenses in the coming year to meet the growing demand.

### Recreation Soccer

The fruits of the Recreation Soccer Initiatives set forth three years ago by the NYSWYSA's Board of Directors were in full view in 2014/15. Director of Recreation Soccer, Chris Pacilio and Assistant Technical Director, Scott Craig delivered extraordinary service and programming that demonstrated NYSWYSA's commitment to the recreation soccer community. The popularity and broad distribution of coaching education offerings, along with the numerous recreation soccer festivals and youth developmental clinics, have enriched player, coach and parent experiences far and wide. Further details are provided in the Recreation Director's Report - in this area alone, programming and services provided to the membership reached well into the thousands.

### Good of the Game

- A newly created link on our nyswysa.org website will continue to provide the most current information to help guide our membership through the implementation of the new US Soccer Mandates regarding Small Sided Games and the Move to Calendar Year Age Matrix: [http://nyswysa.org/SOCCERMANDATES/index\\_E.html](http://nyswysa.org/SOCCERMANDATES/index_E.html). Our staff is available



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- to help members with questions, concerns and advice on how to help implement these mandates.
- Locally, regionally and nationally, the trend continues toward minimum coaching standards. Current and aspiring coaches are encouraged to start and/or continue along the US Soccer Coaching Education pathway. The Region 1 Champions League, the NYSW Thruway League and organizations such as the Olympic Development Program, the US Development Academy and the Elite Club National League (ECNL) have already, or, are moving quickly toward the implementation of minimum coaching requirements. To learn more about our coaching education offerings please visit us at: [http://www.nyswysa.org/coaching/index\\_E.html](http://www.nyswysa.org/coaching/index_E.html).
  - All coaches should register for the US Soccer Digital Coaching Center (DCC): <https://dcc.ussoccer.com/courses/home/>. This state-of- the art online educational platform allows coaches to create a personal profile, register for courses, communicate with technical staff, take part in online courses, create session plans with an online graphics tool, access an archive of U.S. Soccer training sessions and much more.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dean Foti  
NYSWYSA  
Technical Director