



President's Report Rich Wagner

November 8, 2014

Thank you to all of the past and present volunteers who have made NY State West a leader within Region 1 and US Youth Soccer. Your tireless efforts have made a world of difference for the children throughout western/central New York.

I would like to thank our corporate sponsors for their financial support of NY West and our membership: Admiral, the exclusive apparel provider of NY West, Demosphere, Pullen Insurance, Dick's Sporting Goods, and Pearup. We are fortunate to have forged cooperative partnerships the Rochester Rhinos and the Western New York Flash that further support and strengthen the NY West programs, for which we are grateful.

In addition, we are indeed pleased to have Jeff Tipping with us again this weekend. Tipping was an accomplished player and college coach, starting in 1981 at Hartwick College, then moving to Muhlenberg College and eventually becoming the NSCAA Director of Coaching. Through Tipping's leadership the NSCAA gained national and international acclaim for its advances in coaching education and its broad based offerings. He is the 2014 recipient of the NSCAA Honor Award, their highest honor, which will be presented this coming January at the NSCAA convention in Philadelphia, PA. Tipping is sharing his time and talent with our members as featured Clinician at this weekend's Coaches Symposium held on Friday at the Rochester Airport Marriott and at the Field sessions at the Doug Miller Family Sports Park on Saturday. Joining Tipping at the Saturday workshop will be NY West Director of Recreation Soccer, Chris Pacilio, who will present both a classroom session and a field session that will focus on NY West's introductory Coaching 101 Course and the new Coaching 102 Course that focuses primarily on providing youth coaches with numerous age appropriate, on-field activities on selected topics. On Saturday evening, Jeff Tipping will serve as the featured speaker at the NY West Awards Banquet, which recognizes and celebrates the many achievements of the NY West membership.

Organization Vitality

NY West is very fortunate to have a very competent, dedicated and professional Board of Directors to set policy and direct the organization, and a top-notch permanent staff to operate the organization on a daily basis. I am always amazed when I review the annual reports at the breadth and depth of the accomplishments of this dedicated team, and I want to thank them personally for their tireless efforts to benefit the soccer community in the State of New York. They have selflessly contributed their time and

talents to serve our youth soccer players, who will become the leaders and achievers of the future.

The organization remains financially strong, despite the current economic climate, although over the year we have felt the pressure of rising costs. Despite this, NY West has strong net assets as well as reserves to operate, should an unfortunate emergency situation arise. In line with our financial policy, we have maintained a heavy percentage of our reserves as cash or cash equivalents, and as a result have stability in our financial position. This year we have again managed our expenses diligently to break-even fiscally for the year, while still reinvesting some of our reserve funds back into local clubs and leagues where the need is greatest. This includes over \$29,000 in grants to clubs and other member benefits, and a \$2,000 travel award for the Soaring Capital U15 boys team, who advanced to the National Presidents Cup tournament in South Carolina.

From a NY West calendar perspective this is a very exciting time for us. We are ramping up for the 2014-2015 player registrations, are hosting ODP tryouts across the state, are busy promoting and conducting coach education programs, are arranging new and exciting Recreation events, are organizing State Cup, Thruway League and Expressway League programs, are planning for next year's Academies, and are building platforms for more player development opportunities across the state.

Registration Trends

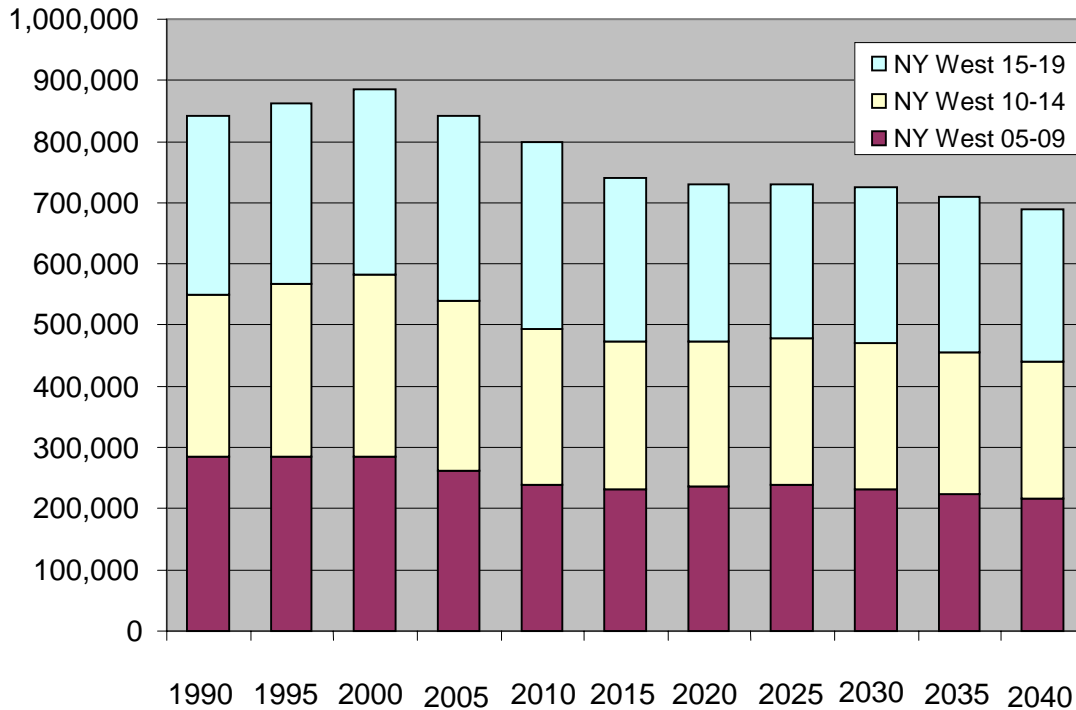
Player registrations have followed a downward trend over a number of years due to the fact that the youth population is declining in general in the State of New York. We undertook to quantify this trend by comparing our registration levels with population data for youth in the NY West geographical area. What we have learned is that our registration declines follow closely the population declines of the youth within the age bands of our soccer players. The chart below shows the youth population in three age bands within the NY West geographical area.

NY West has felt the impact of this youth population decline over the past 15 years as a rather gradual decline in our registered player base that follows the population trend very closely. Fortunately, though, this youth population decline is projected to end in 2015 so that we can expect our player registrations to stabilize at current levels for the next decade or more.

At another level of detail, the number of registered soccer players compared to the youth population represents a 10% penetration rate in both the 5-9 age band and the 10-14 age band. But player penetration drops to 4% in the 15-19 age band. Further investigation has led us to believe that this rather drastic drop in penetration at the older age band is due to the fact that these older players drop out of recreational soccer programs after about age 14. The implication of this is that unless recreational players develop their individual and team soccer skills sufficiently to advance to more competitive travel teams they lose interest and drop out of soccer altogether.

NY West member clubs are very likely experiencing similar trends in their player registration bases.

NY West population - Ages 5-19



Regional and National Impact

This past year has been a tumultuous one for youth soccer at the regional and national level, because the USYSA undertook to restructure the regional organizations and to replace the existing bylaws with an entirely new bylaw structure. As an organization, you can be thankful that the NY West executive officers became deeply involved with these proposed changes, and were able to influence the bylaw structure to have minimal impact on the future regional and national programs. In this process, the NY West president was selected by Region 1 presidents to lead and represent Region 1 in a day-long bylaws discussion with the USYSA national board. In addition, he was appointed to serve as the Region 1 representative on the USYSA bylaws committee. This involvement, along with the support of the NY West executive committee, helped galvanize the Region 1 presidents to press for new bylaw revisions that protected Region 1 interests and allowed them to continue the Region 1 programs uninterrupted.

As part of the restructuring process, the Region 1 administration has changed significantly. Bob Palmeiro, Region 1 director and leader for 25 years, resigned and was replaced by Natalie Schwoeble from PA West. One of the two deputy directors, the

accountant, the administrator, and the league officials were all replaced by new staff. So we have seen many personnel changes in Region 1 and along with this will be some administrative changes to be sure.

One of the first changes that Region 1 undertook was to form a new structure for the Region 1 premier leagues. The regional premier league and the two sub-regional leagues have been consolidated into a single Champions League structure, with three divisions. The highest division will be for the best premier teams in the region. The second division will replace the sub-regional leagues (the Colonial and Northeast leagues), and a third division has been added to increase the opportunities for premier teams to play at the regional level. NY West had 56 teams apply to the new Region 1 Champions League which is more than ever before. We are fortunate to have Chris Pacilio, a NY West Board member, to be appointed to serve as one of the Region 1 Champions League Commissioners.

In October, NY West hosted the Region 1 Fall Meeting in Corning, NY. This was attended by more than 125 Region 1 administrators, including the Chair, Deputy Directors and administrators of the region, as well as state presidents and administrators of each Region 1 state association. The president of USYSA, John Sutter, was also present for much of the meeting. The event included a coach workshop, focus sessions, the Region 1 business meeting, and an awards banquet, as well as opportunities for participants to tour Corning area tourist attractions. NY West did a magnificent job of hosting the event, and many attendees expressed their pleasure that this was the best Region 1 Fall meeting that they ever remembered.

Observations and Progress

As in the past, we have worked hard this year to ensure that NY West is a financially sound, well-run organization with the excellent professional staff necessary to serve our membership on a daily basis.

More than likely, you have benefitted from one or more of our events and programs, and these have been executed by our highly dedicated, enthusiastic and professional staff. These include Amy Gush, our Executive Director, who manages all of the daily operations of the organization efficiently, our Technical Director, Dean Foti, who manages all of the player and coach development programs of the organization in a highly efficient manner, Chris Hershey, our Director of Education, Tim Mellander, our Associate Director, who handles registration, Thruway league administration, and a variety of internet technology and communications projects, Donna Mizerak, our accountant, Mike Kozak, who handles Risk Management issues and administers the Expressway League, and Terri Raeder, our office staff. In addition, we added Scot Craig, Assistant Technical director to our staff this year to help address the recreation initiatives, focus on club development, and assist the coaching education efforts. Each of these people provides vital services for the organization, and if you have interacted

with any of them you know that they are dedicated to providing the services you, our members, want and need.

Our core values continue to cause us to strive for efficiency, simplicity, and support for you, our members. These values guide the NY West State Association decisions with an additional emphasis on, "Players First." We are committed to being a financially sound and sustainable organization that delivers high quality services and programs, with the utmost integrity for the benefit of all kids.

The foundation of our future success is based on the recognition that the soccer community is a pyramid with continual development at all levels of play – this includes a large number of younger recreational players at the base, some of which develop skills allowing them to move up to competitive travel teams, with a few of the best players moving to premier and elite teams.

With this perspective in mind, the NY West Board of Directors and paid staff have outlined the following guiding principles that focus our attention and operational decisions:

The core programs of NY West should:

- Enable every child to have an opportunity to play and develop to their fullest
- Improve performance at the Regional and National levels

These programs should be accomplished through:

- Growing the culture of soccer within the state
- Strongly promoting recreational soccer programs
 - Increasing the interest in general play
 - Fostering parent education to encourage players
 - Encouraging pick-up soccer as a fun way to develop players
- Improving the quality of coaching at all levels
- Re-investing in members so that local clubs can develop players

As an organization, NY West has devoted considerable attention again this year to focusing our programs and events to execute the various elements of these guiding principles, with the expectation that this will set the framework for our future growth. Every thing we do and every decision we make is measured against these principles.

This is an important exercise for the entire soccer community, of which you are a part. We strongly encourage you to participate with us in this key endeavor, and to focus your efforts on these guiding principles as well. Please feel free to call or e-mail our Executive Director, Amy Gush, or me as President, or any Board member you may know, to offer your assistance or give us your suggestions. You can find our contact information on the NY West web site at <http://nyswysa.org> .

NY West Programs

The programs of NY West have brought enormous benefit to our member clubs and players, covering a wide range of subjects that address our foundational concepts noted above. You can see the details of these programs by reading the reports of those responsible for the programs:

- ✓ State Cup – Curtis Regruit, First Vice President
- ✓ Executive Director – Amy Gush
- ✓ Technical Director & Olympic Development Program – Dean Foti
- ✓ Registration & Data Base/Website Management – Tim Mellander
- ✓ Recreational Soccer Directors Report – Chris Pacilio
- ✓ TOPSoccer – Scot Boniface
- ✓ State Youth Referee Administrator – Bill Campbell
- ✓ Expressway League – Mike Kozak
- ✓ Financials – Susan Gurak, Treasurer
- ✓ Nominating Committee – Roger Best

You can find these reports online at: <http://www.nyswysa.org/assoc/843898.html>

Key Program Highlights

While these reports summarize the achievements of the organizational programs during the year, there are a number of excellent accomplishments that together make for a spectacular year for NY West leagues, teams and players.

- ✓ The U12 Girls Greater Binghamton team won the Region 1 NCS tournament
- ✓ The U15 Boys Soaring Capital team won the Region 1 Presidents Cup tournament and advanced to the National tournament
- ✓ The U15 Girls ('99G) ODP team won the Region 1 tournament and advanced to the National tournament
- ✓ NY West had 45 premier teams participate in regional and national league play, and 10 were first or second in their divisions
- ✓ The recreation initiative touched 90 clubs, 630 parent coaches, and 3000 players
- ✓ NY West revamped their coach education program to cover two tracks – one for parent coaches and another for coaches who want a license for career advancement
- ✓ NY West continued to connect outstanding players and teams with college recruiters, at the State Cup tournament and the ENY showcase
- ✓ The referees association certified 1900 referees and sent 15 to the Region 1 Championship tournament and 2 to the National Championship tournament

- ✓ TopSoccer is thriving in Buffalo, Amherst, Lockport, Syracuse, and Watertown with 342 players and 345 volunteers over 33 weeks of the year
- ✓ NY West provided more than \$31,000 in grants and awards to member clubs, bringing the total to over \$120,000 in the past four years
- ✓ NY West advanced the risk management process in a number of practical ways
- ✓ NY West communicated with members via StrikerWest, our monthly eNewsletter, and our web site got heavy use having received 745,000 page views
- ✓ NY West finished the year with a small net positive financial balance, despite significant pressure from increases in non-discretionary expenses
- ✓ NY West added Scott Craig as Assistant Technical Director, to address recreational initiatives, club development and coach education
- ✓ NY West hosted the 2014 Region 1 Fall Meeting in Corning, NY in October
- ✓ NY West influenced USYSA governance of regional programs to great advantage
- ✓ Region 1 elected Natalie Schwoeble Director after Bob Palmeiro resigned

Leagues

We are fortunate to have many leagues that serve our member clubs, including State Cup qualifying leagues in all six of our districts. These leagues play a crucial role in providing a framework for travel and premier teams to challenge each other and to develop to the fullest extent possible.

Last year NY West revised its policy on small-sided games to be consistent with the USYS recommendations, found at <http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/coaches/RulesSmallGames/> The NY West Board strongly recommends again this year that all of the NY West leagues adhere to the US Youth Soccer State Technical Directors Coaching Education Department guidelines, which are summarized as follows:

Age Group	Players	Field Dimensions
U5 & U6	3 v 3 no goal keeper	30 x 25 yards
U7 & U8	4 v 4 no goal keeper	35 x 30 yards
U9 & U10	6 v 6 including the goal keeper	60 x 45 yards
U11 & U12	8 v8 including the goal keeper	80 x 55 yards

This is particularly important at the U12 age level for state cup qualifying leagues, since they are a feeder for the State Cup and Region 1 National Championship Series, which only allow 8v8 play at that age level.

The Thruway League, now in its seventh year, serves Premier teams in upstate NY and is a State Cup qualifying league for both NY West and Eastern NY. It has expanded in the past year to include 203 teams in 28 divisions. As administrator of the Thruway League, NY West has taken an active role in the registration and scheduling processes. This arrangement benefits the participating teams and has contributed to the advancement

of the competitive quality of teams in the NY West area. There are regional and national benefits to the premier teams participating in the Thruway League. The National Division champion has an automatic promotion into the Region 1 Champions League if they apply. And the Presidents Division champion gets an invitation to the Regional President's cup tournament with a chance to advance to the National tournament.

NY West has 45 premier teams that participate in Region 1 Leagues and National Leagues, as shown in the table below. Of these teams, ten have finished either first or second in their divisions. We applaud the quality and success that these premier teams have enjoyed.

Premier League	Divisions	NY West teams	First place	Second place
Region 1 Colonial League	21 of 24	30	5	3
Region 1 Premier League	10 of 24	12	1	1
National League	3 of 20	3		

Initiatives for the 2014-2015 seasonal year

The NY West Board retains a strong focus on initiatives that support the guiding principles for the coming seasonal year. These are intended to maintain, strengthen, and grow the entire base of players – from recreational, to travel team, to premier, to elite players – with the support needed from clubs, coaches, referees, administrators, volunteers and parents, so that we as a soccer community working together can develop each player to achieve the best of their ability.

These initiatives include the following:

- ✓ Implement benefits to return value to members:
 - Coaching education: build upon the successful Coaching 101 course to expand our parent coach education program to more clubs and coaches
 - State Cup qualifying league: administer, expand, and improve the Expressway League that serves the Twin Tiers and Southern Tiers districts
 - Grant Program: fund grants for extraordinary expenditures to help further club operations, for clubs that apply and are approved
 - Health and Safety Education: promote child safety and concussion management to inform coaches and players, and make practical resources available to clubs
- ✓ Focus attention on support for recreational programs of member clubs
 - Club Involvement: organize small-sided festivals jointly with local clubs to foster enthusiasm among players, coaches and administrators
 - Watching soccer – organize events to encourage recreational players to attend and watch the professional teams in our geographical area play soccer

- Coach Education: make a recreational coach education program widely available to member clubs, and provide the first parent coach education course free
- Volunteer participation – assist recreation clubs with identification and retention of volunteers to administer their programs
- Communication: provide recreation administrators with practical resources for administering, coaching and training recreational players
- ✓ Maintain focus on NY West guiding principles
 - Define and execute practical programs and events for each element of the plan
 - Use them to prioritize activities, and to make operational and policy decisions
 - Communicate progress to members and involve them in the process
- ✓ Maintain existing programs as strong, vital elements of player development
 - Maintain strong Coach Education, Workshops, Academy, and ODP programs
 - Maintain a vital State Cup tournament with improvements to address feedback
 - Build solid relationships with state universities and colleges for player benefit
 - Administer the Thruway League, and use it as a feeder for President's Cup
 - Develop new sponsorship partnerships to supplement revenue
 - Maintain 100% Risk Management compliance among coaches, managers, administrators, and referees involved NY West youth events
 - Continue parent education & promote fair play

NY West welcomes your input, your support, and your volunteer efforts. We will continue to promote leadership, integrity, fair play and sportsmanship for all. Thank you for your support.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rich Wagner, President
New York State West Youth Soccer Association
11397 LPGA Drive
P.O. Box 1247
Corning, NY 14830
president@nyswysa.org
www.nyswysa.org

P. S. We always need more volunteers to help us serve you. If you have interest in volunteering in the areas of: State Cup tournament, Recreation programs, TOPSoccer, sponsorship development, grant writing, legal and compliance, Risk Management policy, marketing, public relations, financial and budget matters, Adjudication committee, President's Cup, then please email our state Executive Director, Amy Gush with your interest. Amy can be emailed at agush@nyswysa.org