

## **Goalkeeper Training Philosophy**

### **Academy and U-12 ODP Level**

GK's are welcome at the various NYSWYSA Academy/U12ODP sites - but we still will work primarily on each player's footwork/technical ability in these young age groups (regardless of whether they are GK's or field players). If a GK attends, they train as a field player for the first half (approximately) of the training session and the last portion of these Academy/U12 ODP sessions they would be utilized in goal when games are played. The philosophy of the Academy/U12 ODP is that all players in these young age groups need to be better and more comfortable with the ball at their feet, including goalkeepers - if a player commits him/herself exclusively to the GK position at such a young age and then primarily receives the majority of their training in the form of GK training, when they get older they often become GK's who are good with their hands but deficient with their feet.

Playing in the field in the early years is critical in developing foot skills (which the game dictates the modern GK needs more than ever before), decision making (a critical dimension that is commonly deficient in GK's that have minimal field playing experience) and cultivating a player's overall tactical understanding of the game.

If you are looking for position specific goalkeeping training, this may not be exactly what you're looking for (in that the GKs will not be off to the side with a position specific GK trainer). We feel though that the training they receive and the manner in which we integrate them is age appropriate for U12 GKs. We begin position specific goalkeeper training in our ODP program with the U13 age group. Please feel free, if you would like, to follow up with your Academy/U12 ODP site director regarding more specific information as to how he integrates GKs into his training sessions.