

## **President's Report for AGM, November 15, 2008**

NYW's fiscal year ended August 31, 2008 and Caps 26 years of supporting youth soccer and our members. Thank you to all of the past and present volunteers who have made our state a leader among Region 1 and US Youth Soccer. Also, thank you to our corporate partners: Demosphere, Pullen Insurance, Score, The American Soccer company and exclusive apparel Provider of NYW, and Varsity Communications.

I'd also like to publicly thank our State Office Staff:

Dan Watson	Operations Manager, Risk Management Director
Donna Mizerak	Accounting, Registration Payments & Billing
Terri Raeder	Risk Management, ODP & Coaching Course Administration
Sandy Ostebo	Director of Public Affairs

I'd like to thank our dedicated Coaching Staff:

Glen Buckley	State Director of Coaching
Chris Hershey	Associate Director of Coaching (Buffalo/Rochester),
Mark Spacone	Associate Director of Coaching (Buffalo/Southern Tier)
Jim Hewlett	Associate Director of Coaching (Rochester/Syracuse),
Maureen Dracup	Associate Director of Coaching (Syracuse/Twin Tiers)

I'd like to thank our program leaders:

Millie Blaakman	State ODP Administrator
Ginger Wetzell	State ODP Administrator
Scot Boniface	TOPSoccer Coordinator
Bill Campbell	State Youth Referee Administrator
Dave Stephan	State Cup Chairman

And your State Association Board of Directors:

Rich Wagner	First Vice President
Matt Dimas	Second vice President
Curt Regruit	Secretary
Brian Lang	Treasurer
Tim Mellander	Registrar/web Coordinator
Kevin Arnold	Binghamton District Commissioner
Roger Best	Rochester District Commissioner
Greg Firenze	Syracuse District Commissioner
Michael Russ	Buffalo District Commissioner

Last but certainly not least, we want to thank YOU, our members!!

The last few years have been challenging ones for many individuals and businesses throughout New York State West. With a difficult economic backdrop the Board at NYW has embarked on a multiyear campaign to review our organization and our work to ensure that we are fulfilling our stewardship responsibilities to the fullest extent. We want to thank you for your steadfast partnership in our efforts, and to share with you the foundation for our work as we move into the future.

As a Board we continue to strive for efficiency, simplicity, and support for our members. We will continue to guide NYW State Association decisions with an emphasis on, “Kids First”. We are committed to being a financially sound and sustainable organization that delivers high quality services, with the utmost integrity for the benefit of all kids.

The last few years we have embarked on a three phase process:

**Phase I:** Study our business processes, member services, and delivery mechanisms. We hired an independent firm in 2007 to make this assessment. This has contributed to our recent successes.

**Phase II:** Implement - which is where we are now

**Phase III:** Grow revenues through alternative methods: Sponsorships, Grants, Programming Etc

As discussed during last years AGM , Phase I began with an independent study of our association performed in 2007. This study provided us action items to implement to improve efficiencies while maintaining our member services. These recommendations should enhance our abilities in resource development, relationship development, and knowledge management. As a result some of our staff have adopted new and different roles.

We are in phase II now. Implementation. As everyone will tell you, “I want it completed yesterday”. While that notion has benefits - “haste makes waste”! We are fortunate to have a deliberate open board with diverse backgrounds and strengths. This Board has examined, discussed, debated, and pursued a variety of projects. I am proud to be associated with the Staff and the Board. Together we are making a positive difference for the good of the game and our membership.

While we are extremely proud of our progress to date, we still have opportunities for continued improvement of your State Association. To maintain our sustainability we must consolidate more of our activities into our state office. This consolidation and further development requires the attention and leadership of an Executive Director. This is an investment that pressures our operating budget. With good leadership, attention to detail, continued cost containment, and the pursuit of excellence, we plan to refine and integrate many operations that are completed outside of the office into the office. This will be a multiyear undertaking.

Our intention is productivity enhancement without sacrificing quality. We have spent the last 6 months preparing for a new Executive Director to lead our Association. Our hope is to hire a qualified person over the next fiscal year. There will be a start up training and assessment period. From there we expect the consolidation of some activities and the expansion of growth opportunities.

NYW had a good year financially managing to garner a surplus. While our revenues were up marginally, NYW really benefited from continued expense management. We did lose a major corporate sponsor due to their own financial difficulties. Further, the Board approved new financial processes for even better reporting and resource management. Our Treasurer, Brian Lang has spearheaded new Board adopted financial policies and procedures, updated personnel policies, and corporate card expense policies. Thank you to Brian Lang, the Board, and our staff for diligently managing our resources. You will see a detailed analysis of this in Brian Lang's Treasurer's report.

As you will see in Tim Mellander's Registrar report our player registrations were up for the year. Thank you to all of our members!! We also welcome many new member clubs into New York State West, including newly served areas in the Watertown Region:

- 1000 Island Soccer Club
- Athletic Club of Syracuse
- Auburn Avalanche
- Carthage F.C.
- Cavaliers Soccer Club
- Copenhagen Soccer Club
- Crooked Lake Soccer Club
- Doug Miller Soccer
- Elba Soccer Club
- Greater Binghamton Soccer Association
- Lions Soccer Club
- Lyme Soccer Club
- Northern New York Youth Soccer League
- Northern Oswego Soccer Club
- Skaneateles Soccer Club
- Syracuse Surge Soccer Club

We are also fortunate to welcome two new member leagues for clubs to participate in: The Champions League of Western New York and the Thruway League.

From a NYW calendar perspective this is a very busy time for us. We are ramping up for the 2008-2009 player registrations, hosting ODP tryouts across the state, are promoting and conducting coach's education programs, and building platforms for more player development opportunities. Simultaneously we finalized our proposed budget for the year ahead. The emphasis continues to be on expense containment, identifying revenue opportunities, and new programming. Each area is a significant task in and of itself.

We do face challenges in our business objectives. As a volunteer Board, we are stretched thin. Our District Commissioners, our Registrar, and the Executive Committee are all working extremely hard to support your efforts. I would argue that most, if not all, are operating at full magnitude. .

We have enormous tasks and responsibilities and are operating at or near capacity. The solution is we need more volunteers to help us help you. If you have interest in volunteering in the areas of; public relations, State Cup volunteers, TOPSoccer, sponsorship development, grant writing, legal and compliance, policy committee, marketing, State Cup Chairperson or President's Cup Chairperson, then please email our state office manager, Dan Watson with your interest. Dan can be emailed at [danwatsonnyw@stny.rr.com](mailto:danwatsonnyw@stny.rr.com)

Glen Buckley, our State Director of Coaching report addresses the success of the Associate Directors of Coaching. The Board is pleased with their efforts to support your clubs, provide coaching course opportunities to our coaches, as well as providing numerous youth modules to develop the children. Thank you Glen, Mark, Jim, Maureen, and Chris.

Speaking of TOPSoccer, we enjoyed a tremendous year of success adding several new and exciting programs under the new leadership of Scot Boniface. Across the state we have seen new programs start, weekend jamborees blossom, and awareness grow. Scot's report will provide more detail on the various programs. I must note that this was a special year in NYW's TOPSoccer history in that Dennis Chavez's Binghamton Program has just celebrated its tenth anniversary!! Congratulations to Dennis and his dedicated volunteers. You are making a difference for children and parents and we at New York West applaud your efforts.

Another special recognition goes to the Doug Miller Soccer Academy and the Penfield Rangers Soccer Club. Both Clubs have gone above and beyond to help support the TOPSoccer programs. This year the Doug Miller Soccer Club started their first annual golf tournament to benefit TOPSoccer. This was held at the beautiful Midvale Country Club in Penfield NY and raised over \$1,800 dollars to benefit the children. Thank you to Doug and his terrific staff who made this day a great event and huge success. More details are coming on the 2009 golf tournament!!

NYW thanks and appreciates the financial and volunteer support of the Penfield Rangers Soccer Club. This year they hosted their annual tournament and graciously donated \$5,000 to the Rochester TOPSoccer program. To date the Penfield Rangers have donated over \$10,000 to the TOPSoccer Program.

The Board approved the training and development of "TOPSoccer" coaches. Scott Boniface, Glen Buckley, and Chris Hershey are prepared to assist any club in preparing coaches to help

children with disabilities enjoy the game of soccer. They will attend an education/certification symposium in February '09 in Kirkwood Delaware. This will further help us train, educate, and promote soccer playing opportunities for all children.

Another proud moment for NYW was the appointment of Teresa Doermer to lead Region 1 TOPSoccer initiatives. Please join us in congratulating Teresa as she assumes her new role to serve not only the children of New York West, but of the entire Region 1 soccer community. While we are enjoying this TOPSoccer player growth, we feel like we are only scratching the surface in helping all kids enjoy the game. We have committed ourselves to strive to expand the playing opportunities throughout the districts. Look for more exciting expansion plans and opportunities. Thank you again to everyone who makes the TOPSoccer programs such a success for the children.

The 2008 US Youth National Championship Series, the country's most prestigious National Youth Soccer Tournament (also known as State Cup) was very successful. The US Youth Soccer National Championships cap a year long series of competitions for boys & girls teams in multiple age brackets as teams earn their way from the top teams in their state to the Regional Championship tournament, and ultimately to the National Championships.

Last year's tournament was led by volunteer, Dave Stephan of Clarence and NYW First Vice President, Rich Wagner. Dave, along with Rich, Tim Mellander, and Dan Watson helped plan and deliver another exciting State Cup Championship. When one event ends, the planning for next year's State Cup Championship begins. The Committee has moved the event to SUNY Cortland and this will continue to be a three day tournament planned for June 6, 7 and 8 of 2009. More details will be coming and posted on the NYW website: [www.nyswysa.org](http://www.nyswysa.org)

Due to a number of other commitments State Cup Chairman, Dave Stephan, has stepped down. He is still supporting the State Cup effort. Thank you Dave for a terrific job leading this tournament! If anyone has interest in leading the State Cup tournament as State Cup Chairman, please contact nominating committee Chairman, Roger Best. He can be emailed at [rochester@nyswysa.org](mailto:rochester@nyswysa.org) .

In the National Championship Series, our U12 Boys State Champions, The Rochester Jr. Rhino's, went on to win the Regional Championships in Portland Maine, Congratulations to the boys and the Rhinos Organization. This is a proud moment for us all!!

Under the guidance of First Vice President Rich Wagner, the Board has adopted a new improved seeding process for the playdown games leading up to the final four championship. Rich will provide more details of this modification in his report. Additionally, NYW has approved the use of the same rules as National for the play down games that end in ties after regulation time ends.

Another first this year was the start of Project Passback as part of the State Cup final four tournament. Project Passback is a US Soccer Foundation initiative to help meet the soccer uniform and equipment needs of all communities – regardless of income, gender or location. This year we had 10 clubs donate everything from cleats and jerseys to soccer balls and nets and

provided over \$2,500 in donations. These donations were sent on to the Nicaragua Mission project. Thank you to all who supported Project Passback!

The Olympic Development Program, ODP, continues to make strides as the NYW program had a record number of players joining the Regional Pool; and a few making the national pool! A number of these players have traveled abroad to represent the United States, Region 1, and NYW. This year our players have traveled to Italy, France, England, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Holland, and the Ukraine. Thank you and Congratulations to all the dedicated ODP coaches, the parents, and the kids. NYW is proud of all your accomplishments.

This year NYW extended our Insurance Contract with Pullen Insurance. We went through a bid process and we are proud to announce that Pullen was selected again to provide insurance for the players. Additionally, last year Pullen Insurance provided a wonderful trip for two to Manchester, England to see Manchester United play at Old Trafford Stadium. With this generous donation NYW was able to provide a member raffle that shared fund raising dollars with participating clubs and your State Association. Thank you Pullen Insurance!

Goal Grant Program Update. At last years AGM a member goal grant proposal was adopted and voted in by the member clubs. This initiative supported our clubs with NYW providing \$32,000 towards the purchase of goals. 40 grants for discounted soccer goal purchases were submitted, approved, and distributed to our member clubs.

This year we appointed a new State Referee Administrator, Pat Tata, for a two year term. Thank you to Curt Hamlin for his dedicated leadership and welcome to Pat. Please support Pat in his leadership efforts.

As part of our focus on efficiency, simplicity, and supporting our members we adopted a new online Risk Management Process. The intent here is to improve security, confidentiality, ease of use, and streamline our operations. Through the diligent leadership of Brian Lang, Tim Mellander, Rich Wagner, Dan Watson, and Terri Raeder we were able to implement this process.

To support the good of the game we created a code of ethics template, a club accreditation program, and a zero tolerance code of conduct policy. The principles behind each policy are to promote fair and safe play, while emphasizing the principles of the game. These policies are for you to adopt in your clubs and leagues.

In 2007 NYW was alerted that matches were being played with non-registered referees. Allegedly some members are not complying with this policy of the US Soccer's compliance regulations (USSF 531.8), and we must all work together to reach compliance. Pat Tata, the State Referee Administrator and Bill Campbell, the Youth State Referee Administrator, are working diligently with us to help create more certification opportunities for referees. They will continue to offer referee certification clinics in your area. Please refer to the Western New York Referee Association website for details on certification clinics. Their web address is: <http://www.wnyreferee.org>. Please help us stay in compliance.

Additionally with the rapid growth of games is the need for more referees. If you or someone you know would like to become a referee, please visit <http://www.wnyreferee.org>. The Western New York Referee Association is always looking for more candidates.

### **NYW's 2008-2009 Objectives**

- Hire – Retain Executive Director
- Review best practices
- Develop sponsorship partnerships
- Increase communication and awareness of youth soccer playing opportunities
- Continue parent education
- Promote fair play
- Initiate Director's Cup
- Promote player, referee, coach, and fan safety through zero tolerance policy

NYW 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,

*Michael S. Radecke*

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