2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Dave Kreger · New York State West Youth Soccer Association · Saturday, November 14, 2026 · Rochester, NY

New York State West Youth Soccer Association is committed to strengthening youth soccer programming and responding to the evolving needs of its members. Our priorities are to expand access, support our soccer community, and foster continued growth of the game.

The recent addition of four assistant technical directors strengthens our capacity to engage member clubs, assess local needs, and develop programming across our service area.

NEW ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTORS

NAME	EMAIL
Jim Harrigan	ATDWest@nyswysa.org
Ryan Borcyk	ATDNorth@nyswysa.org
Eric Redder	ATDEast@nyswysa.org
Colton Bly	ATDSouth@nyswysa.org

In 2026/2027, we will prioritize bringing programs closer to the local communities we serve and expanding our offerings in player development, the Olympic Development Program, coaching education, TOPSoccer, and other areas.

OLYMPIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (ODP)

The NYSW Olympic Development Program (ODP) offers high-quality supplemental training that complements players' school and club experiences. Teams train with our professional coaching staff over the winter months with final team selections made in the spring.

This winter, our Pre-ODP (U10/U11) program will be offered in the Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Binghamton areas, while our U12 program will be offered in the Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse areas. For more information, visit our ODP website. It's not too late to try out for any of our age groups.

Participation continued to grow across ODP age groups. From 2025 to 2026, the U10/U11 Pre-ODP program added 38 players, the U12 to U17 indoor program added sixteen players, and U19 registrations increased by eight players compared to the 2024/2025 cycle.

NYSW was represented by nine teams at the ODP Tournament in both 2025 and 2026.

The ODP Northeast Sub-Regional event in Albany expanded its reach in 2025/26. Originally organized as "Friendlies" between NYSW and Eastern NY, the event now brings together state ODP teams from across the East Region. The late-April event included Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire,

New Jersey, NYSW, and Eastern NY. This expanded format offers players another opportunity to compete and be evaluated by East Region ODP coaching staff and college coaches.

In 2026, twenty-four players were selected to attend regional identification camps, with seven earning selection to their respective age group's East Regional ODP Team. The girls will travel to Orlando, Florida, in November, followed by the boys in January 2027, to participate in the ODP Inter-Regional Event. In addition to competing against teams from the South, Midwest, and West regions, players will be considered for selection to their age group's ODP National Team.

ODP participation at the state, regional, and national levels offers meaningful developmental experiences and exposure to college and youth national team scouts.

We appreciate the continued commitment of our member clubs and their coaching staffs to player development. ODP serves as a complement to the work of club coaches. Through collaboration and flexible scheduling, we can provide valuable development opportunities while respecting players' existing commitments.

Maintaining a coordinated calendar for NYSW players requires ongoing communication with club coaches. Their feedback remains essential as we address the challenges of each season. Our shared objective is to support every player's development through a balanced, collaborative approach.

I sincerely thank the NYSW ODP coaching staff for their expertise and commitment to player development. Their dedication makes it possible for us to deliver high-quality programming.

NYSW FALL PLAYER DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

The NYSW Player Development Academy offers fall programming for boys and girls ages 9 to 14. In fall 2026, Olean became the fifth location, joining Buffalo, Elmira, Rochester, and Syracuse. Nationally certified coaches deliver a curriculum centered on technical fundamentals and small-sided games, supporting player development in a positive and engaging learning environment.

Fall Academy participation grew from 124 players in 2025 to more than 230 in 2026. Additional locations are planned for fall 2027, along with a Spring Academy to be offered in April of 2027.

COACHING EDUCATION

Coaching education will continue to evolve in 2027 with expanded offerings from U.S. Soccer and NYSW. U.S. Soccer's new Player Development Certificates will replace the current Grassroots courses. NYSW will offer a U.S. Soccer C course in spring 2027 and its first-ever B course in the second half of the year. In January 2027, we will also host the U.S. Soccer Club Technical Leadership course (CTL1), designed for club technical leaders from across the country. State-level offerings will include coach 101/201 courses, goalkeeper courses, a club leadership course, and a rebranded six-hour State Diploma course. Additional coaching education opportunities will be announced throughout the year.

US SOCCER COURSES

In 2025/2026, we delivered two C License courses, three D License courses, and 26 grassroots courses. The C License offering marked a return to this level of instruction after several years. Forty-eight coaches earned their C License, nearly forty of whom were from the NYSW footprint.

During the 2025/2026 cycle, nearly 460 coaches participated in U.S. Soccer courses, up from 299 the previous year. This growth reflects a strong commitment to coaching education. Congratulations to all participating coaches, and thank you for your dedication to the game and the players you serve.

COURSE	COACHES
C License courses	**48**
D License courses	**47**
7v7 Grassroots courses	**69**
9v9 Grassroots courses	**148**
11v11 Grassroots courses	**147**

In 2027, U.S. Soccer will introduce Player Development Certificates to replace the current Grassroots courses. A new D Certificate curriculum will also feature a four-week course rather than the current nine-week format.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATES

Under the new coursework, the current 4v4, 7v7, 9v9, and 11v11 Grassroots courses will transition to three age-specific Player Development Certificates (PDCs).

PDCS	PLAYER AGES	PRIMARY EMPHASIS
U6/U8 PDC	Ages 4 to 8	Early experiences, enjoyment, safety, and age-appropriate learning
U10/U12 PDC	Ages 8 to 12	Developing players through age-appropriate, player-centered coaching
U14/U16 PDC	Ages 12 to 16	Supporting players through later childhood and adolescence

WOMEN IN COACHING INITIATIVE

Twelve women coaches participated in the free women in coaching initiative we offered in 2026. We remain committed to providing dedicated coaching education opportunities for women, with instruction delivered by women educators.

In 2027, we plan to provide more opportunities for women in coaching throughout our soccer community. We also plan to expand the women in coaching initiative, increase its visibility, and to provide more coaching educational opportunities to women in NYSW.

STATE COURSES

We delivered GK1 and GK2 courses in the Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse areas, as well as four state 101/201 courses and the annual six-hour state diploma. Rebranding and curriculum updates for the state diploma course are planned for 2027. Almost sixty coaches took part in our state course offerings in the 2025/2026 cycle.

A club leadership course has been developed for the coming year to support club leaders in addressing the operational and technical challenges of youth soccer administration.

We also partnered with the Buffalo Stallions and Soccerdrive to introduce the Buffalo area's first "coaches collective," a free, symposium-style coaching clinic featuring classroom and on-field presentations. The event was designed to bring coaches and clubs together in a collaborative setting. Look for additional opportunities like this in your area in 2027.

I want to sincerely thank our U.S. Soccer-licensed coaching education staff for their commitment to supporting players and coaches. Their expertise and dedication make these coaching education opportunities possible.

U.S. SOCCER EDUCATION STAFF

- Jim Harrigan
- Eric Redder
- Dan Kane
- Diana Groth
- Darek Panol
- Steve Mastronardi
- Colton Bly

For questions about coaching education, upcoming courses, or hosting opportunities, contact Dave Kreger, Lead Coach Educator/Technical Director, at coachinged@nyswysa.org. Additional information is available on the NYSWYSA coaching education website.

Members should consult the website regularly for additional offerings and scheduling updates.

TOPSOCCER

TOPSoccer (The Outreach Program for Soccer), an official New York State West and US Youth Soccer program, serves children and young adults ages 5 to 21 with mental or physical disabilities. The program expands access to soccer for participants who have not traditionally been served by the youth soccer system.

TOPSoccer programming was offered at Binghamton University and University of Rochester in 2025/26. Establishing consistent programming across our service area remains a priority. Individuals interested in participating, hosting a program, leading sessions, or volunteering as a TOPSoccer buddy may contact Dave Kreger at techdir@nyswysa.org. Information about local programs is available on our website.

LOOKING FORWARD

Planned additions to local programming include: Spring Academy, camps, clinics, 4v4 festivals, and other coaching educational opportunities.

These initiatives reflect our commitment to accessible programming and strong member partnerships. We will continue to engage clubs, teams, players, and coaches to ensure our offerings respond to the needs of the communities we serve.

Thank you to our member clubs, coaches, volunteers, and families for their continued support.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Kreger
Technical Director
New York State West Youth Soccer Association