



Exploring Youth Soccer Development Models

October 8, 2017

Why are We Here?

- Children play the “beautiful game”
- Children want to (or we believe they need to) improve their game
- Existing development models have gaps
- Gaps should and can be addressed
- Deciding how to address them requires new ways of thinking
- It takes a village... so, let's begin



What Will We Do?

- Parents talk, coach listens, host takes notes, facilitator ensures we all have a good time
- Approximately 2 hours
- Two major focus areas – club experience & supplementary development experience
- Structured discussion – theme by theme (stay focused)
- We are sharing, not arguing
- Time at the end to share missing thoughts/ideas



We Will Complain & Brainstorm

- Existing club soccer model flaws and ways to fix them
- Existing DA model flaws and ways to fix them
- Supplementary development models, their flaws, and ways to fix them
- Designing a perfect club/DA model
- Creating a perfect supplementary development model
- Unknown complaints & wild ideas...



Club Soccer Model – Discussion Outline

- Club/Team Discovery & Selection
- Tryouts Process
- Player Development – Key Elements
- Coach
- Training Regimen
- Game/Competition Schedule
- Parent dynamics
- Uniforms
- New Club Model



Club/Team Discovery Process

- How do you decide where your child should play next season (club, coach, team, logistics, other criteria)?
- What is wrong/missing/ineffective in how you make that decision?
- Club marketing & positioning to attract parents/players – what do clubs do wrong today?
- What is the ideal you envision to decide which clubs/teams to expose your child to?
- Any specific comments/issues re: DA model?



Tryouts Process

- Can you pls complain about how players are chosen to join a team: tryout process – what is wrong with it?
- Does DA identification process make sense? What do you not like about it?
- Can you think about how a tryout process should be designed?
- Do you have any other thoughts/ideas on how clubs, coaches, parents, players select each other?



Player Development Model - 1

- Please complain about what is wrong with player development – anything goes...
- Goal setting
- Training sessions
- Player feedback management
- Thinking
- Competitiveness
- Skills
- FUN



Coaches

- Complain about coaches (Jeremiah, pls leave the room 😊)
- Disposition
- Character
- Knowledge
- Skills
- Experience (playing & coaching)
- Communication style
- Think about what drives you/player crazy about coach



Training Regimen

- Complain about training regimen pls...
- Too much, not enough, wrong kind
- 3 times, 4 times, 5! Times
- 1 hr 15m, 1hr 30m, 1hr 45m, 2hr?
- Development vs winning
- Right way to play vs right way to win
- Do facilities matter?
- What would be an ideal – for you? For your player?



Game Competition Schedule

- Complain about game schedule pls...
- Frequency – once a week, twice a weekend
- Types of games (league, tournaments, state cups, etc.)
- Quality of opposition
- Distance traveled
- Purpose – to win at any cost or to develop at any cost?
- International competition?



Parents Dynamics

- Complain about how clubs/coaches/other parents manage parents...
- "My player is better than you give him/her credit for..."
- "You play him/her in the wrong position..."
- "He/she does not get enough minutes in games..."
- "We have no idea where he/she stands with you..."
- "We do not know what he/she needs to work on..."
- "Can you explain why this or that..."



Uniforms

- Do you care if your child wears Adidas or Nike, or whether a kit is from a brand that's ½ the cost of big names?
- Do you have any other complaints about uniforms?
- Do you have any complaints about how uniform ordering/delivery process is usually set up?
- What should clubs do better regarding uniforms, club branded gear for parents, etc.?



Supplementary Training

- What kind of training do you believe your player needs?
 - Technical – ball control, speed with the ball, passing, etc.
 - Positional – moves and ball skills for specific positions
 - Athletic – speed, agility, endurance
 - Fun – games & competitions to enjoy
- What are the biggest barriers today?
 - Availability of high quality providers
 - Logistics
 - Finances
 - Combination of the above or other...



New Club Model – 0

Expense Category	AS IS	TO BE	Comments
Registration Fee	\$350	\$500	Reallocate uniform budget to club fees to run PDP program for all club players 2x week
Uniforms	\$300	\$150	Contract for club uniforms with low cost providers seeking to build presence in US
Gear (cleats, pads)	\$350	\$350	Can't do much about it :))
Annual Team Fees	\$2,500	\$3,500	Re-allocate travel budget to team fees to double coach's salaries
Travel Expenses	\$3,000	\$2,000	Limit games to league games, State Cup, Regionals, Nationals (no tournaments); mandatory 3-player car-pools to day trip games
Total	\$6,500	\$6,500	No change in family expenses!!!



New Club Model – 1

- Club X for players and families who are interested in a developmental environment with very firm operating principles and club values:
 - Best players who: (a) love the game, (b) watch the game, (c) have growth mindset, (d) ready to follow club model
 - Parents who: (a) understand and/or ready to learn the game, (b) prepared to work together to support players, (c) ready to follow club model
 - Coaches who: (a) see themselves as teachers first, (b) ready to serve players every day, (c) played professionally, (d) follow club model



New Club Model – 2

- Imagine a club where your player is supported by a team of coaches:
 - who all follow the same development model and game principles,
 - who have player service mindset and pride themselves on making each player grow and overachieve (instead of winning at any cost),
 - who encourage & motivate players, and value thinking over heft,
 - who all played professionally in the past and know what “best” is,
 - whom players love to be around,
 - whom parents trust to make best decisions for their player,
 - who are open to frequent feedback and ideas



New Club Model – 3

- Unique club rules:
 - Every coach is a former pro
 - Every coach is evaluated by kids, parents, and other coaches twice a year – in December and June
 - Player assessments in August, December, March, and June with detailed, multi-point feedback (combined with personal goals)
 - Parents are encouraged to be open with the coach
 - Coaches are encouraged to develop relationships with parents
 - Coaches are paid 2x what other clubs pay - \$20K per team
 - 2 teams per coach, plus one club session – target \$50K p.a.



New Club Model – 4

- Unique club rules:
 - No tryouts – players are evaluated in training over 2 weeks
 - No cuts – unless players do not follow club development model (4 weekly training sessions, 1 game analysis per week presented to & self-reported by parents – randomly to the team, progress in line with the rest of the team on quarterly assessments, compliance with Club Conduct Code)
 - 18 players max per team (initially)
 - Equal playing time, unless State Cup final, Regional, or National
 - 2nd team in an age group formed if 18 players + right Coach (!!!)
 - No A or B teams – every team is equal; if more than 1 team per age group, players may be asked to move teams for squad balancing



New Club Model – 5

- Unique club rules:
 - 4 sessions per week
 - U9-U12 – 2 team training sessions, 2x1000 touch club sessions
 - U13-15 – 2 team training sessions, 1x1000 touch club, 1 club positional session
 - U16-U19 – 3 team training sessions, 1 positional club session
 - During puberty age, positional sessions will be organized by physical characteristics of players as opposed to age
 - Master classes by MLS, USMNT, and Int'l coaches twice a season
 - Summer pre-season – older age groups double up
 - Attendance mandatory unless excused



New Club Model – 6

- Unique club rules:
 - Coaches are evaluated by players (questions differ by age to account for level of maturity), parents, and other coaches on both coaching dimensions and player development results
 - Players are assessed 4 times a season in August, December, March, and June in a comprehensive session aimed at tracking dev. progr.
 - Assessment results are shared with parents and players
 - Parents are encouraged to approach and speak with coaches
 - Coaches are encouraged to build relationships with parents
 - Special Club Ombudsman elected from among parents



New Club Model – 6

- Unique club rules:
 - Coaches are evaluated by players (questions differ by age to account for level of maturity), parents, and other coaches on both coaching dimensions and player development results
 - Players are assessed 4 times a season in August, December, March, and June in a comprehensive session aimed at tracking dev. progr.
 - Assessment results are shared with parents and players
 - Parents are encouraged to approach and speak with coaches
 - Coaches are encouraged to build relationships with parents
 - Special Club Ombudsman elected from among parents

