



Technical Department Overview

The technical department continues to engage with the technical leaders from clubs across the state and at all levels (Grassroots to Competitive). We have increased our presence, contact, and relationships with the technical leaders at our members clubs. One of the primary focuses for 2018-2019 has been the ongoing integration of technical staff and player development initiatives into our competitions pathway. With the growth and development of our programs and competitions pathways (7,500 games) we have significantly increased our reach and the opportunity to influence and educate a broader community (i.e., players, coaches, parents) has never been greater. The integration of technical and competitions is critical to creating the optimal environment for all our members.

Club Development & Standards

The technical department is currently working in collaboration with some of the worldwide leaders in assessments and consulting for youth soccer academies to implement the 'Iowa Soccer Club Standards Initiative'. This long-term project is designed to assess and support Iowa youth soccer clubs (90 clubs) to reach their organizational potential. The key components include: assessment, advising, and supporting clubs in all facets of their organization in order to improve soccer at all levels in Iowa. The timeline is as follows.

Club Standards Project Timeline	Activity
Phase 1: March-July 2018	Assessment Development
Phase 2: August-November 2018	Pilot Study & Data Collection
Phase 3: December-May 2019	State-wide Club Assessment
Phase 4: June-July 2019	Data collection and assessment
Phase 5: August-December 2019	Club Reports and Visits

Our daily contact and relationship with clubs has improved significantly and this assessment will play a critical role in helping to raise the standards at the youth club level throughout the state of Iowa.

Coach Education & Licensing

U.S. Soccer implemented their new Grassroots coaching education and licensing pathway in early 2018. Our goal is to make education easily accessible and low barrier (Coach Licensing = Better Coaches = Better Environment = Better Player Experience). Starting August 2018, Iowa Soccer committed to providing coach education and licensing for free to all member clubs/coaches which is a significant step towards achieving our goal. This is a tremendous commitment to our goal of having 100% licensed coaches across the state of Iowa at all levels. Starting August 2019, there will be mandatory coach licensing when coaching at various levels within our competitions pathway. We are hosting more coach licensing courses at club specific locations which increases accessibility, attendance and reduces the burden for coaches to gain access to education. We have increased our contact and the number of coaches completing coach licensing courses in 2018 and expect to increase further in 2019. Two additional points: 1. we are in the process of finalizing coach education courses in Spanish (January 2019) to help increase our outreach to the Hispanic population. 2. We are in the process of bringing National Licensing (C License) to the state of Iowa to help provide our local coaches with the opportunity to attain national level licensing locally and at a reduced cost; 2. We are increasing the number of coach educators being licensed by US Soccer (target is 8-10 for 2018-2019) which will increase our ability to meet the needs of our membership across the state.



Olympic Development Program (Ross Moffat)

While ODP Programming across the country continues refine its identity at the national level, Iowa ODP is clear on its objectives and is evolving rapidly. Again this year we had a record number of players attend tryouts - 800 players participated in tryouts; 590 players are currently active in Iowa ODP. Iowa ODP serves the players in two key areas: 1. Player Identification; 2. Player Development

An intimate knowledge of the elite competitive players in Iowa allows the ODP staff to speak with conviction when pushing players toward opportunities beyond Iowa (i.e. Regional ODP, National Team, Development Academies, and College Recruitment); it is critical that the most elite players are afforded the same opportunities as those in larger cities or states. A review of the Iowa ODP programming calendar shows that we are expanding programming and exposing our elite high school players in particular to opportunities across the country via multiple college recruitment events during 2018-2019 ODP season.

Iowa ODP currently plays a key role in supplementing the daily soccer development taking place within the club environment. For this reason, regionalized training centers (West, Central, and East) have been created in order to ensure we are capturing and developing the talent pool within the youngest three age-groups. These regional training centers also help to increase the contact with players as well as reduce the travel/expense for players as they take advantage of the opportunities ODP offers. In addition to curriculum focused on maximizing individual development within the collective team, Iowa ODP also recently incorporated an online technical training app to empower players to take ownership over their own developed beyond the contact with the ODP coaches. Additionally, Iowa ODP has partnered with 'Team Cura' to ensure that we are maximizing character development in addition to the soccer work being done on the field. In addition to player development, ODP is serving a key role in developing coaches within Iowa. Age-group coaching assignments have been set to allow for a mentor/mentee development programs to be implemented and the coaches are consistently challenged to use their Iowa ODP resources to learn and evolve.

Academy Program

The U9-U10 Academy Program continues to be a program that is growing and positively impacting our players at a critical stage of their development. There is still room for continued growth required to enhance the player experience. We have introduced an official application process for clubs to apply to be part of this program which is an important step in standardizing the quality of the program as well as keep clubs accountable to meeting standards set by ISA. The application and assessment process is an annual process.

Player & Coach Development Initiatives

One of the target initiatives for 2019 is to identify the minority populations (players and coaches) across the state and work to support them with their needs and provide them with more opportunities. There is a growing minority population playing soccer throughout the state of Iowa that we need to identify and foster stronger relationships with. Our goal is to identify, develop and then support the key leaders within these organizations with the resources and tools to grow and reach their potential.

Department: Technical

Submitted By: Gareth Smith