Alabama Soccer Association Olympic Development Program 2016-2017

By Zac Crawford, Technical Director Alabama Soccer Association
Rainedout.com Notifications

Text ALODP16 to 84483 to receive ASA ODP State Pool 2016-2017 alerts from Alabama Soccer Association.
What is ASA?

Alabama Soccer Association
- ASA is the state governing body through US Youth Soccer and US Soccer

**Mission** is to foster the physical, mental, and emotional growth of players of all ages, by creating and increasing opportunities for wholesome participation.

**ASA** is the fastest growing state in the country
- 2 years in a row
- 25,000+ registered youth players
- 2,000 coaches, referees, and administrators
What do I do?

Technical Director for Alabama Soccer A

Oversee:

◦ Olympic Development Program

◦ Grassroots Soccer/Outreach- TOPS

◦ Education- Coaching, Parents, etc.
Who Am I? Zac Crawford

- Life-long soccer player across different levels.
- First job as a youth referee
- Played collegiately at Bethel College
- M.S. in Cognitive Psychology
- M.S. in Human Performance/Sport Management
- USSF “A” License
- USSF National Youth License
- NSCAA Premier Diploma
Who Am I? Rob Dominguez

- Life-long soccer player across different levels.
- M.Ed in Secondary Ed.
- Dean of Students and teacher at The Altamont School
- Technical Director at Birmingham-area club
- UEFA “B” License
- Experience coaching in the UK working with National Team and Premier League players and managers
US YOUTH SOCCER OLYMPIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, REGION III- Opportunities to DEVELOP as Player

**MISSION**: identify elite level Region III players and facilitate their selection to the U.S. National Team programs

ODP does not replace a player's involvement on a team with an ASA member association, but rather supplements that experience. **Club team commitments come first.**
USYS Region III
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN ALABAMA ODP?
Opportunities to DEVELOP as a Player

The primary benefit to the player is to be

**train and play** with and against the best players in their age group to further their development as soccer players.

The opportunity to represent our state, region, and country in competition.
Benefits - Development as a Player

- Step outside of their normal training environment
- Different roles than on club team
- The individual player’s development is enhanced because he or she must learn to adjust to varying groups of teammates.
Benefits- Quality over Quantity

- Highly organized, functional training sessions that are based off of the US Soccer curriculum.
- Quality instruction from nationally licensed coaches.
- Quality competition. Games against other state association ODP teams.
Benefit- US Soccer Curriculum

An opportunity to play within the US Soccer Curriculum the 1-4-3-3 shape. The ODP style is to build from the back (goalkeepers are not allowed to punt the ball), maintain a rhythmic possession based game, with quick transitions.
Benefits- Exposure

- Exposure to regional and national teams.
- Exposure to college coaches.
- Getting exposed for growth opportunities.
What is the Process?

What should you expect?

ODP is a supplemental training program. Your CLUB team commitments ALWAYS come first.

**Alabama ODP State Staff:**

- Club coaches
- High school coaches
- College coaches

**All coaches are:**

- Nationally licensed
- Committed to enhance the development of each player, while assisting them in obtaining college scholarship opportunities.
The Program- 2000-2003 Birth Years

Scouting/Recommendation System
- Returning Players
- Open Tryout

The above groups will comprise a squad of players called the ‘State Pool’. The State Pool phase will take place in the Fall. This phase will consist of approximately 4-6 training opportunities.
State Team Selection

ASA understands that conflicts will arise.

Players must register and attend at least one session to be considered for the State Team.

State Pool Training → State Team Selection → State Team Training → Region Trials

Spring

22-26 Players selected
State Team Selection

Players are evaluated in the US Soccer 1-4-3-3 System and playing style.

Coaches meet before and after each session to compare notes.

Each head coach ranks the players every session.
Events for Development and Performance

Sub-Regional Events

- **Girls 00-04** Jan 7-8- Gainesville, GA
- **Boys & Girls 00-05** Feb 17-19- Memphis, TN

International Events

Spain

- **00/01 Combo team**
  - ~ 16 players per team, one team in each age-combo per gender

- **02/03 Combo team**
  - ~ 16 players per team, one team in each age-combo per gender
Region Trials- The Pinnacle Event

- The trials are designed to provide high level training and competition for these elite participating players.

- Matches are playing in the morning against other states, training in the evening with Region Staff Coach.

- During this training and competition, players who are capable of performing at a higher level of play are identified for possible Regional Team and National Team participation.
Region Team Selection

- Region Trials
- Region Pool Selection
- Region Events (Invitation)
- National Pool
12 state associations converge on Alabama for several weeks of trials in June and July. Thousands of players attend events at the University of Montevallo and the University of Alabama.
Region Team Selection

- 40-60 players selected from camp
- Holdovers on the boys side for 2-3 days training under regional coaches
16-18 players are selected to participate in National camps, Inter-Regional events, and/or international trips. The National Staff Coaches attend these events and evaluate players for inclusion into National Pools.
For youth soccer in the US, via ODP, this is the pinnacle of achievement. Players who have made it to this level are eligible for selection to participate on the Youth National Teams for their respective age groups.
What Benefits Do Players Who Are Not Selected To Region Pools Get From Region Trials?

Challenge/Quality Matches/Quality Opponent

Humbling/Exposed

Exposure to college and national staff coaches

Opportunity to be recognized/ Pride in accomplishment
What are the odds of Regional Pool?

12 state associations
- Each state sends 1-3 teams. 14-18 players per team

- Region Pool- 200-450 in each age group

PLAYER PROGRESSION TO NATIONAL POOL
- State Teams: 71%
- Region Pool: 19%
- Region Team: 10%
Administrative Items

Register at least one week prior to each event.

Check emails/ODP News Page Frequently

Refund requests must be made by completing the ODP Refund Request Form. Documentation (Dr.’s note) is required to submit the form.
Administrative Items

Please check website first, if you can’t find the answer there, then contact ODP Administrator Martha Disko

Communicate absences via the survey monkey link, not through emailing Zac or Martha

Financial Assistance is available on a case by case bases.
Role of ODP Parent

Become familiar with the ODP Handbook

Be sensitive to the pressure that most players feel when participating at ODP.

NO COACHING.

Stay in designated areas during events.

Be part of the development process, not part of the under development process.
THE CYCLE OF UNDER-DEVELOPMENT

1. Parents put pressure on coach
2. Coach focus on team development
3. Individual player development suffers
4. Players don’t reach their potential
5. Parents transfer child to another club
Development Components

**TECHNICAL**
Ability to control the ball. Touches

**TACTICAL**
Ability to solve soccer problems (cognitive)

**FITNESS**
Endurance, speed, strength, agility

**PSYCHOLOGICAL**
Enjoyment, coping with anxiety, confidence
Learn to play before learn to compete
Training > Games

Practices are far more important for development skills than games
  ◦ many more touches, more opportunities to make decisions and solve problems. – School tests

Youth soccer’s biggest problems:
  ◦ OVER COACHING by parents AND coaches
  ◦ Children learn from trial and error
  ◦ MISGUIDED EMPHASIS ON GAMES

Tournamentitis
### PRACTICES VS GAMES

(*R = REC, S = SELECT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>GAMES PER YEAR</th>
<th>PRACTICES PER WEEK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U-8</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-10</td>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-12</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>1-2(R*) 3(S*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-14</td>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>2(R) 3-4(S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-16</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>2(R) 3-4(S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-18</td>
<td>35-45</td>
<td>2(R) 4-5(S)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responsibility of the Soccer Parent

Parents must:

- Make sure their player is SAFE.
- Understand the role of sport
- Understand the odds of playing pro
- Be a role model, not a bystander
- Understand the club/evaluate the club and coaches
- Understand the pursuit of excellence
Role of the Soccer Parent

Understand the role of sports

- Develop a healthy lifestyle (Sport = Leisure)
- Games: Learning Opportunities not Contest
- Develop life skills
  - Social skills
  - Positive self-image
  - Values, character and coping skills
Role of the Soccer Parent

Understand the odds

- Academy/Select/ODP no guarantee of success
- ~ 410,000 male HS players
- Only 5.7% high school soccer players to NCAA
- Only small percentage get athletic scholarship
- Only 1.9% of NCAA soccer players go pro
- Only 0.09% of high school go pro
- Need to prepare your child for disappointment. Not build up his/her hopes unrealistically.
Role of the Soccer Parent

Be a role model

- Actively Listen to your child
- Sideline behavior – NO COACHING!!!
- Referee Crisis
- Dealing with performance (unconditional love)
- How to praise and how NOT to praise
- Don’t compare or be critical of others
- Don’t become his/her coach
- Focus on process/journey (paradox of sports)
- Shield from abuse, NOT from life lessons
Role of the Soccer Parent

Understand pursuit of excellence

Intrinsic motivation (if you need to push....)

Know the opportunities

   Academy - Select soccer – ODP – College ID Camps

Know the two best coaches in the world:

   Watching professional soccer
   Playing pick up games

How to reach potential

   Touches on the ball
   Self training
   Learning from the pros
   Practice to game ratio

Focus on process. Where is he/she at 18?
MAIN Role of the Soccer Parent

Let the players make mistakes.
RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

www.alsoccer.org or email zac@alsoccer.org

- Parent Education page (under ‘EDUCATION/Resources’)
- Articles
- US Soccer Best Practices Guide

WWW.USYOUTHSOCCER.ORG
WWW.USSOCCKER.COM
If we take care in the beginning, the end will take care of itself