

From My Memoires: The Development of Youth Soccer in the USA by Hans Kopp, First President of OYSAN

Foreword

Youth soccer in the United States is not historically documented as one of the contributions of Americans of German origin and other ethnic groups who came to the shores of the United States after World War II. The ethnic groups had one thing in common; they brought their favorite sport with them. We have to take our hats off and give the men and women serving their organizations, full credit to promote youth soccer in their new surroundings, their new homes, on state, regional and national levels, as we see it today throughout the nation.

Among other prominent nationalities besides Germans in United States Soccer, were Italians, Ukrainians and British just to name a few. The most notable Germans were Werner Fricker the national chairperson of the United States Soccer Federation and Hall of Famer from Philadelphia, John Hilske, the Mid-West regional youth chair, Robert Gansler our former National and Mid-West Regional coach, Lothar Osiander, the regional coach from the West and Kurt Lamm our former national secretary.

Right: Hans Kopp as first president.



To mention are George Derra of Kansas and Herbert Haller Sr. from our local area. Several key positions, in Mid-West State Associations, among them Kansas, Illinois, Michigan, Nebraska and Ohio were held by US citizens from Germany. There were also Donauschwaben (Germans from the former Austria-Hungary) among them. The most prominent as highest ranked officers involved in the development of soccer in the United States, were Werner Fricker, president of the USSF, Robert Gansler, as Mid-West Regional and National Coach, Herbert Haller Sr. as one of the great teacher lending a helping hand. Finally, I am very humbled by the fact that I can include myself into this group by serving on the National Coaches Committee from 1975-1977, the Olympic Soccer Development Program as director of the Mid-West Region from 1977 to 1984. In addition, as a founder and contributor of the Lake Junior Soccer League in 1964-1974 and as founder of the OYSAN 1974-1984. In March of 2007, I was among several other distinguished colleagues recognized and honored at the annual National Soccer Workshop in St. Louis, Missouri, as one of the founders of the United States Youth Soccer Association. It most certainly was one of the highlight of my carrier as a coach and administrator of more than 20 years.

Freedom is precious to all humankind. This holds true for the descendants of the minority group of Germans settling in Hungary after the Turkish war by invitation of the Hungarian Parliament of 1722-1723.

To give you a little background of my life. I was born in Bacsszentiwan what was part of Hungary during the time of Austria-Hungary to German parents, whose ancestors immigrated from the Palatinate and German Lothringen (now French Lorain) to Hungary in 1764-1768 after the war against the Ottoman Empire. After WWI, Hungary was truncated; our region occupied by Serbia becomes part of Yugoslavia. At the conclusion of World War II all citizens of German ethnicity, young or old, guilty or not, were collectively accused of war crimes. This collective accusation, a crime in itself, did cost the lives of 1/3 of the population of the German nationality minority group making their home in this part of the world for more than 250 years. The citizens' of German ethnicity would experience the brunt of the communist hatred.

My parents deported to Russian slave labor camps on Christmas Day 1944 and I, along with my brother and grandmother, like all citizens of German ancestry in Yugoslavia, expelled from our home in March of 1945 placed into the dead camp of Gakowa for a period of more than 2 years. Living under extreme conditions, we suffered greatly from starvation and disease. My grandmother, murdered by the Communist Partisans of Yugoslavia, was one among thousands of victims who perished. One third of the German population (60,000 of 240,000) perished during 1945 and 1948. I am one such survivor who escaped to Hungary in April of 1947 and from there to Austria in August of the same year.

After our arrival in Salzburg my father, uncle and aunt found work at a farm estate. My father asked the school principal if we could attend school. Of course, the principal answered; "Yes" and soon after, I made friends with the boys in school. It was a wonderful feeling to be free and have friends who would include me into their games, among them soccer, table tennis and skiing. When spring of 1948 arrived, soccer would be our favorite pastime. Every day after school we would end up on a small meadow and made goals with our school bags, while one of the boys produced a "Fetznlöcherl" a stuffed rag ball and we played three on three four on three or four depending how many boys showed up.

We learned that one of our neighborhood communities had organized a soccer club and four or five of us boys asked if we could join. This was great and since my idol was Ernst Melchior, the right wing of the Austrian National team at that time, I would play right wing. At the start, we did not do so well since other clubs had formed earlier and we did not actually have a real coach. However, luck was with us when a man walked to the training field and introduced himself as our new coach. The man was a physical educator in the army, but worked on a farm because there were no jobs as physical educators. The coach was a great disciplinarian on the field and a great game tactician and with our acquired skills with the rag ball; we began to win some games and moved away from holding the lantern at the end of the youth division we played in.

One day our Center Half was injured and had to leave the field. Since, substitutions were not permitted at the time during those years, the coach moved me to the center half position where I did very well and we ultimately won the game 3:1 with ten players on the field. The Center Half, position in the Vienna System was a natural position for me. I would play this position from here on in. My new idol became Ernst Ozwirk, perhaps the greatest Center Half of his time who would not only play on the Austrian national team, but in the a game England against the rest of the world.

Our town fathers in Austria insisted we do the administrative work ourselves and I too became involved administratively. My experiences from Austria would become vital in the development of youth Soccer in Cleveland, Ohio and perhaps even the USA. Should you like to read more about my early childhood, please go to the WebPages below:

<http://www.donauschwaben-usa.org/history.htm>

http://www.donauschwaben-usa.org/Human%20Misery_Life%20in%20a%20Death%20Camp.htm

The History Prior to the OYSAN

Milestone 1: in the region of our state association, was set when in 1964 at the general meeting of the Sport Club Donauschwaben, today known as Concordia Soccer Club, renamed in honor of the first Germans arriving on the "Concord", the "German Mayflower", new officers were elected. Heinrich Haller, elected new president stressed the importance of youth soccer by making the statement; "without a strong youth soccer development program from the ground up, senior soccer would not have a future". He named Franz Schönberger as head coach, who worked as assistant head coach during 1963 and 1964 with Otto Thuransky, who introduced youth soccer to the club during that time. Franz was also looking for an assistant to help him with

a second team he wanted to form. I volunteered my help, while Otto became manager of the senior team of the club.

Milestone 2: was set, when after the meeting Franz and I had a discussion to outline some of the important steps we needed to take. Since we both immigrated to the USA, Franz from Germany and I from Austria we understood how leagues were constructed. We concluded to form a youth soccer league and arranged for a meeting to which we invited all organizations interested to field teams and join such a league. The meeting took place at the German Central in Parma, Ohio one evening in January of 1965. John Theiss, of the German American Soccer Club, and president of the senior Lake Erie Soccer League, presided over the meeting. The following four men, Franz Schönberger and Hans Kopp of the S.C. Donauschwaben, Mike Febel of the German Central and Myron Radcykewycz of the Ukrainian American Society, were present. This meeting decided that the name of the new league should be Lake Erie Junior Soccer League. At the meeting officers were elected; Franz Schönberger as president, Myron Radcykewycz as vice president (whom we never saw again afterward) and I as the program director.

Besides being the president, Franz Schönberger was also charged with the duties of promoting youth soccer in the communities around Greater Cleveland. Working with our communities would also get him involved, promoting youth soccer in the high schools. In succession, Franz made the acquaintance Mario Gerhard, a teacher in Mentor on the Lake, who after his move to Chagrin Falls introduced Erhard Langer for the first time. Mario left the Mentor teams in the capable hands of Joan and Glenn Korenko, sister and brother and Sam Bothwell, an Englishman. Thus Mentor on the Lake was the first none ethnic community to embrace youth soccer. The next community organization to follow was Broadview Heights with Phil Seil as coach. With Broadview Height, Earl Paterson and John Tyma became involved in youth soccer and it was Joan, Glenn, Earl and John who were the first none ethnic persons who embraced youth soccer. Later North Royalton organized under Jim Tyma, the brother of John. In succession Chagrin Falls, Bedford, Solon and other communities began to promote our sport and the ball started to roll, although a lot of work was still ahead.

In addition, of making the schedules and assigning referees, I, was charged with the duties of developing the younger age groups. After an assessment the ages of our players playing on four teams in 1965, I concluded that we would need a minimum of six years to complete this task. By 1971, after six years, we were to operate five age groups and two divisions in each age group. During those years, all the teams are traveling teams.

In 1967, Franz Schönberger became one of the organizers and director of the indoor soccer tournaments sponsored by the S.C. Donauschwaben, held at the Cleveland Turners Hall on Lorain Ave. in Cleveland, while I was named the director of the first "youth soccer juggling contest" held during intermissions of the games. Robi Stahl of Broadview Heights became the first youth juggling champion. Robi Stahl is best known as the former husband of Michelle Akers, first star member of the national women's world cup champion soccer team.

In 1967, Otto Thuransky of the S.C. Donauschwaben is appointed youth commissioner by the senior board of our state association and joined in the efforts of promoting soccer. Otto, whom we can credit as placing the first youth soccer team on a field in Cleveland after WWII in 1963, co-authored the first constitution with me. He was responsible to organize the first youth soccer training camp in the state and appointed me to run a select team program (ODP).

In 1968, the members of the district of the German Beneficial Union of Pittsburgh, renamed Greater Beneficial Union of Pittsburgh now "GBU Financial" in Toledo, formed teams. The same year, the first Select Team Soccer Tournament held in Ohio was staged at Broadview Heights with U14 and U16 team from the Greater Cleveland area playing sides from the Toledo area.

In 1968 Walter Schönberger, son of Franz, became the first player to be selected for a regional youth soccer team. That time, we, were attached to the eastern region of the USSF, and had to play our cup games against teams from that region. The first youth state cup champion

was the S.C. Donauschwaben 1968, who traveled to Rochester N. Y. to play in the first regional cup competition by a youth team from Ohio.

Dettmar Cramer's visit in Cleveland

Milestone 3: In 1969, Dettmar Cramer visited Cleveland for the first time to hold a training camp held in Broadview Hts. Since I was the Select Team director, I made all the arrangements for the training camp and became well acquainted with Dettmar the most fascinating soccer personality I have met, called by many the soccer professor.

In 1970, I took over the duties of the head coach of the S.C. Donauschwaben teams, as Franz Schönberger became president of the Club. The six years program of the league I was heading was completed. We now could count ten divisions in our league with five first "Premier" divisions and five second divisions. The S.C. Donauschwaben now had the most teams during their history with 10 teams and more than 150 youth players.

***Dettmar Cramer** (born 4 April 1925 in Dortmund) is a German former football player and coach who led Bayern Munich to the 1975 and 1976 European Cup. Cramer is the father of modern football in Japan. Known as the "Football Professor", because of his attention to detail and also as "Napoleon" because of his diminutive 1.61-meter stature.

Cramer began his career at Viktoria Dortmund and Germania Wiesbaden. The beginning of his managerial career, led him to clubs such as Teutonia Lippstadt, VfL Geseke, FC Paderborn, and TuS Eving-Lindenhorst. At the turn of the year 1948–1949, Cramer found himself in the service of the German Football Association (DFB) for the first time. Until 1963, he served with the designation, "Head Coach" for Western Germany soccer team under the DFB (Deutscher Fussball Bund" in Duisburg.

Little known, Cramer attempted to make the jump into a career in journalism at this point. He became lead editor for sports for German television station ZDF. Feeling largely isolated from the football world, Cramer decided to call it quits after only six months on the job. Afterward he is sent by the DFB to Japan to serve as a football instructor and became the FIFA Coach traveling the world to underdeveloped soccer countries, which also brought him to the United States in 1969 and coached. Subsequently he was appointed as the US National Men Team coach.

The Big Expansion and its Growing Pain

Milestone 4: was set when the community organizations playing in the Lake Erie Junior Soccer league in 1972 decided, after a dispute with the state commissioner, to go their own way and form the Ohio Amateur Soccer League (OASL). This presented a huge setback for the ethnic teams in the Lake Erie Junior League, but did set the stage to develop more community soccer organizations. For me personally it was heartbreaking, since I was one of the founders of the league. I became the president of the Lake Erie Junior League. However, was compelled to resign after only a couple of months holding this office. The reason was clear; our club decided to join the OASL and it would have been a conflict of interest to continue as president. Within the OASL, I was also in a position to make it possible for me to bring in all other ethnic teams, with stipulation that they assume playing under a "Nick Name" into the league. The SC Donauschwaben would become Concordia at that time. Phil Seil became the first president of the OASL, Joan Korenko the secretary, Earl Patterson the treasurer and with the Tyma brothers John and Jim, strong supporters of the youth soccer movement needed. Joan and these men with Mario Gerhard would become a vital asset in bringing soccer into our schools.

Dettmar Cramer's second visit in Cleveland

In 1972, the USSF held the first licensing clinic in Ohio at the Walsh Academy under the direction of Dettmar Cramer, who was a great teacher and former assistant soccer coach of the

German National Team during the 1966 World Cup in England. After a week of outstanding presentations by now the National Coach of the USA and vigorous training sessions and tests, nine of us, out of 35 participants passed. The facts spoke for themselves, when we saw only a small number of coaches or prospective coaches could pass the tests.

It made me think and I questioned Dettmar. He explained in great length and detail to me, as to why he passed only so few candidates. Dettmar an excellent judge in character said; "Hans, first it is an international licensing program and perhaps two or maybe three of you could pass the exam in Europe. Among us were four college coaches I passed, because we do need coaches in the colleges and schools to further our efforts. We also need to spearhead and demonstrate, as well as, inspire others this is the main reason I did passed the five best". Then he continued; "we need coaching schools on levels below the national "A", "B", and "C" licensing programs for dads and even moms to satisfy the demands of the ever increasing number of players and teams. We need outstanding competent instructions for our youth even if they may not be able to demonstrate all the skills required for international licensing programs. From this day forward, I began to promote such an idea among various organizations, one of which was our senior state board.

In 1972, several persons from other state associations lounded a petition to the USSF to provide for an autonomous youth division as a branch of the USSF among them Don Greer, Julius Roth, Peter Jebens and Sandy Hodgins. When Dettmar informed me of their efforts during his presence in Cleveland, I supported it.

I did not go anywhere with my demands to our senior body in regards of a coaching school and state cup for our youth teams. I also found the need for a coaching school below the levels of the national "A", "B", and "C" licensing program essential as Dettmar suggested. As the Secretary of the Lake Erie Junior Soccer League, I began to pressure Colin Commander, President of the Ohio Soccer Federation to contact USSF in regarding the matter. Colin claimed it was up to the USSF to organize such a coaching school and not to me.

In 1973, Herbert Haller of the S.C. Donaueschwanen is appointed as a replacement of Otto Thuransky as the commissioner and took over the youth cup programs.

The Development of Youth Soccer in the USA

Milestone 5: In May of 1974, the United States Soccer Federation convention is held in Alaska. On the agenda was the formation of a youth soccer division of the Federation. The convention delegates approved a youth association and opted to reorganize it as equal. I am not sure how much influence Detmar had at the convention in accepting the petition by the youth delegation. I would expect a lot. The reorganization saw the realignment of many state associations, as well as, regions. Ohio, now realigned with the Mid-West region has a unique problem. The Tri State Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky Soccer Associations did become Indiana and Kentucky Associations leaving Ohio with two associations. The two associations had to decide now to combine as one or work as an Ohio South and Ohio North association. The representatives decided to work as two associations for two reasons one; they would be easier to administrate and two; we would gain double the benefits. The delegates also proceeded to draw the map for the two associations, but promptly misplaced the notes. It took me 2 years to get USSF and other sources to find the agreement of the borders made then. Finally, Frank Borroni, the delegate from our senior association found his notes and I proceeded to make a map to be included into our OYSAN manual.

Right: Hans Kopp, as youth coach.

At the same meeting in which, the United States Youth Soccer Association is formed and Don Greer is elected president and mandated to form state select teams from each of the associations in response to an



invitation to take a US Youth Select Team to travel to Germany. Dettmar Cramer made the arrangements and extended the invitation to Don Greer.

At moment's notice commissioner, Herbert Haller had no time to form and work with a select team and a decision is made to send the state champion, which was the Donauschwaben (Concordia) team to the first Mid-West Regional State Select Team Tournament held shortly after in Chicago. The Ohio team unofficially came in first place and Missouri second; Walter Schlothauer, Wolfgang Urban, Marcel Stochitoiu and Julius Feitl were selected to play on the first Mid-West Regional Team in the first regional tournament held in Dallas. Here the selection of players was made by McAlpine, named as our national youth coach, for the first national youth team to play in Germany in 1975. Walter Schlothauer, Marcel Stochitoiu and Wolfgang Urban were named to the team. Since Marcel Stochitoiu was not a citizen, he was not permitted to travel with the team. Thus, Walter and Wolfgang became the first players from the state of Ohio to represent the United States in the first international youth soccer game ever played by the USYSA.

The Formation of the Ohio Youth Soccer Association Ohio North vs. Ohio South

During the first years 1966-1967: Otto Thuransky established some contact with the Ohio South playing region but could not make headway. They were in contact with SAY Soccer and had embraced their philosophy, which was directly in conflict to ours. SAY Soccer is a recreational program, which is based on the motto; everyone signing up is placed into a pool from which a draft is conducted and everyone showing up should play an equal time. Ours was based on quality education and the players that did excel because they worked hard on themselves should be playing on an "A" team in an competitive environment while the other should be playing on a "B" team with players who just want to play which for us was a recreational division.

Ohio South created community mass sign-ups with coaches of little coaching and playing experience while Ohio North had very competent coaches with playing experience. We believed that we needed coaches with fundamental knowledge of coaching and teaching the game. Ohio North, was created out of the ethnic organizations as a base. If it was a community in which soccer was played, a coach with an ethnic background headed such an organization with prior soccer experience. Among them were Mentor (Mario Gerhard later Chagrin Falls) Chagrin Falls Erhard Langer, Broadview Heights Phil Seil, North Olmsted Boris Smith, Berea and Middleburg Height Hans Kopp.

The other big difference was the distances between the location and the distances the soccer playing communities were apart. Therefore, all of our teams were considered traveling teams. Only, later when the communities actually created individual soccer organization on large scales we could speak of them as in-house recreational leagues who based their philosophy on the SAY Soccer in the south, which was fine with us. To provide the best service to the organization we worked hard to establish United States State Coaching and Referee Schools.

Milestone 6: By far the largest milestone was in 1974, with the formation of the Ohio Youth Soccer Association-North (OYSA-N). After several meetings by a committee charged with the formation of our association failed, a second committee comprised of Herbert Haller, Mario Gerhard, Earl Patterson, Joan Korenko and Andy Sheparovich is formed. This committee decided to approach me to offer me the presidency of the OYSA-N. Herbert Haller approached me first and then Earl Patterson who convinced me to except the position with the words and I quote; "this will give you the opportunity to install all programs you have been promoting".

One might have thought that the first order of new business was to write a constitution, but it was the second one. The first one was to organize a state coaching school. After a long discussion on the phone with the national coach Walter Chyzowych, our association is approved to run a pilot soccer coaching school program in our state. Because, of my interest in the coaching school Walter Chyzowych spoke to Don Greer to appoint me to the national coaching

committee. Thus, I became a founding member of our National State Coaching Schools System “D” “E” and “F”. The format approved and inaugurated on May 14 1977 in New York City, at the United Nations Building during our first medical symposium. About five or six of us members from the coaching committee were present who approved the system in less than half an hour, based on the pilot programs in operation since 1975. Interesting to note is; it is the only program, which has never changed from its original conception.

Milestone 7: We can say was the election of officers Hans Kopp, President, Andy Sheparovich, Vice President, Joan Korenko, Secretary and Earl Patterson, Treasurer, writing the constitution and incorporating the Association. Designing the coat of arms, logo and running our state cup program that we already had established during previous years, which was a task of the state commissioners appointed by the governing senior body that was responsible for all soccer activities prior to the reorganization of the USSF and the formation of the USYSA.

Establishing contact with all soccer playing communities was my next priority. I contacted many offices of local chambers of commerce, from whom I learned, that soccer is already introduced to a degree in several of their communities throughout our prospective association. After locating the soccer playing communities in Steubenville, Austintown, Boardman, of course we knew of the soccer playing communities of Cleveland, Akron and Mansfield, Columbus we also were able to locate the soccer playing communities in Canal-Fulton, Ashland, in the Firelands of Elyria, Lorain, as well as, Hudson, Maumee, Findlay.

This meant to travel and visit all the communities throughout northern Ohio, though I still had not found the borders of our jurisdiction. I called Frank Borroni again and he began to search for his notes from the convention of 1974, He found them and I created a map based on his notes and sent it to the president of Ohio-South and proposed a common logo differentiating Ohio North and Ohio South. Now understanding our border better, I also learned that Lima was part of ours association but not Columbus where Don Greer had sent me not to long ago to hold a coaching clinic was not a part of our association.

The original Coat of Arms of the Ohio - North Youth Soccer Association Designed by Hans Kopp 1975

Description: The coat Soccer Association-North State of Ohio with a soccer unity and strength. On the left red, white and blue, the United States. In the white OYSA. If the shield used by “North” is placed on the left blue field inside the circle state symbolizes safety, while the red circle camaraderie and friendship. red circle bordered by a gold Association, bordered by another red circle.



of arms of the Ohio Youth features the outline of the ball, symbolizing our sport, side, it features three stripes in colors of our State and the field, it features the letters itself as our logo, the word below the soccer ball. The light surrounding the outline of our learning experience and fun symbolizes always fair play The shield mounted inside the field with the name of our

Note: The design originally indented for both associations of Ohio. To distinguish them from each other the word “North” or “South” would be placed on the lower left underneath the Ball or in the circle below the name, depending if it was a patch or the logo by itself. However, the south association wanted their own design.

Milestone 8: we see as the appointment of coaching and referee school directors. One cannot go to the soccer playing communities who were asking you; “what do you have to offer for 50 cents”. We wanted to offer coaching and refereeing education, without having these programs in place it did not make sense to me to visit all the communities that were playing soccer. I found it absolutely necessary to bring help to them in form of our coaching school, referee school in addition of a recreational state tournament. It meant to find a coaching school director. This presented a problem in as much, that the senior association did not want to approve Klas DeBoer wanted to nominate and appoint Frank Borroni to work with us. This did not work, since Frank was not available when we scheduled clinics, nor could he work with the communities who needed help or could create a coaching staff to work with him. I found myself doing the chores of the state coach and school director at the same time. A couple of years later Klas DeBoer moved out of the area and we had to look elsewhere for a state coach.

I was introduced to Robert Dowdy of the Akron University and after a lengthy discussion over a glass of beer; I was convinced that he was the right man. I appointed him without asking the permission of the senior association, who after informing them agreed with my decision realizing that Frank had no time to devote to the coaching school. His appointment was a huge success and a big addition for our association, not only was he able to establish a model state coaching school, but also could provide the needed staff for it with his assistant coaches of Roy Messer and Tom Nash from the University of Akron and Glenn Korenko of Mentor. With the nucleus of coaches, most important for our association, the Akron University connection became a vital link. The same time Robert agreed to be our state coach and again provide the necessary staff for a player pool for the teams. Both, the coaching school and the development programs, were hailed as one of the best in the region to model after.

With the ever-expanding soccer programs in our Association it was equal as important to serve our refereeing needs and it became necessary to establish a referee school to recruit and train new referees. It was not enough just to have our state soccer-coaching program with Robert Dowdy as director, which was running successful, but there was also a need for a man who could direct the referee program to complete our educational state program.

At our national convention in 1977, we were introduced to our new national referee school director. After the meeting, I approached him about setting up a referee instructor’s clinic in Cleveland at the Cleveland State University. About 25 referees followed my invitation and were present at this clinic, among them, Ray Priestly.

My task was now to listen and observe to find a suitable candidate to fill this position. I saw Ray several times refereeing and found him during the seminar as being a very genially interested man of what was presented. He also asked several important questions and thus contributing to the meeting.

I made my decision and after the meeting, I asked Ray if he had a couple of minutes and explained what I had in mind. That we would give him a free hand in structuring the school and set up the curriculum and that I would provide him with all the contacts and help, we had made within our association.

Then I invited the two men for dinner at the Hollenden Hotel town down where our national instructor was staying. During dinner, we discussed the structuring of the school among many other questioned surfacing. When we parted, Ray received all the material he needed to start a refereeing school, such, a national refereeing manual, guidelines for the school and was offered any help he may need. Ray also assumed the chores as the referee coordinator between the senior and youth programs and as referee assignee for our programs. He also coordinated our youth programs with the senior programs to avoid problems with double scheduling referees.

The Formation of the Districts

Milestone 9: was to divide our state association into four districts. To establish the borders of our four districts, we needed to have the exact outline of the territories of our two state

associations. With the map at hand, we proceeded in creating a map defining the borders and jurisdictions of the districts, outlining the north association. The reason was twofold; first, we would provide more personal contact for the organizations in the local areas with someone close by they would know personally and two; for a state tournament during which we could have four champions, one from each district emerging, to play for the state title. The same time I found it useful to write a manual for our association, as well as, a manual for the Mid-West region. I also proceeded to write a piece on a philosophy of youth soccer development, a document I distributed nationally and became a helpful guideline for many state associations to follow.

Milestone 10: I saw the appointment of district commissioners. After several visits to the various soccer playing communities, I was able to maintain contact with soccer embracing groups and interest them to join our association. In district one it was Dominique Bugafurni of Steubenville, willing to take on the task as the first commissioner, while Jim Cook enthusiastically offered his services to function as the first commissioner of district four. Finally, we were able to find in Pat Hays as the first commissioner of district three, while I served as the commissioner of district two until Doug Lauer of Akron assumed these chores. These commissioners now delegated to serve existing leagues within their districts and help forming new leagues were none existed, began to form our association. They approached their task with enthusiasm and devotions. This made the difference you can see everywhere today. The commissioners also knew that they could call me and count on my help, or request a visit to their district anytime they wanted me to be there, to explain the functions and duties, as well as, the benefits to their members by holding membership.

After appointing the commissioners for our districts, I was finally able to organize the first recreational state tournament as a pilot program in 1980, at the facilities of the Donauschwaben at Lenau Park, home of Concordia. The reception of the program was enlightening. Several changes were made for the next tournament held in Hudson, Ohio in 1981. After the successful tournament in Hudson, I began to look for a sponsor for the program and was able to secure Sohio as our first sponsor for our 1983 and 1984 tournaments. The growth of this tournament, as well as, the state cup tournament, I found it necessary to find commissioners to run the programs. I proceeded to appoint Neal Doolittle with his wife Nancy on his side, as director of the state cup in 1983 and Sam Bothwell as director of the recreational state tournament in 1984. The recreational state tournament renamed in the honor of Sam in 1989, whom we lost while vacationing in Spain several years later. The same time the State Association named the U16 state cup; "The Hans Kopp Cup". The recreational state tournament now known as "Sam Bothwell Memorial Tournament" and is no longer a recreational tournament like it was intended. It replaced the "State Cup" of the OYSAN, Neal Doolittle was the director at the time I retired.

Girl Soccer an Interesting Birth

Milestone 11: The biggest task still was ahead of us the formation of; "girl soccer". After several attempt to form girl divisions within the Ohio Amateur Soccer League and the American Soccer League, formed after the OASL, I found, they had their hands full with running the boys leagues and decided to go a different route to bring girl soccer into our association. After consulting with, Joan Korenko, our secretary and first women coach in the state of Ohio, who holds the state license number 1 we concluded to locate all the girl and women soccer-playing teams in the area.

Perhaps there was another reason, why girl soccer did not get off the ground, as quickly as, I wanted because many men within some of the organization did not think much of girls playing soccer. Prior to that time, during the middle of the seventies, I found several groups of girls who embraced soccer within the recreational organizations who had coed teams. After we located girl's teams in North Olmsted and women teams among the ethnic groups, such as Concordia and the Ukrainian Americans, we decided to hold an organizational meeting with these groups at the Cleveland State University.

The meeting was held in June of 1980, during this meeting Joan and I presented our plans. Our first step was to form a league and then hold a tournament sponsored by the state association in July, followed by an election meeting for the league in August. This was in agreement with everyone present and we proceeded to propose a name for the league. I suggested the name; "Western Reserve Women and Girls Soccer League", which would include everyone in the area, this was accepted. The tournament held on a weekend in July, was well organized by Joan Korenko and her staff. It was well attended and a huge success and something to build on.

During the tournament, I proceeded to recruit heavily among the women for officers. I was able to propose a slate of officers at the following election meeting in August. The plan was a very simple one and it worked in the best interest of all women, the girls and the Association. Thea Amacher, of the Ukrainian American Soccer Club was elected as first president. With Gabi Bernhard and Astrid Gehrke of the Concordia Soccer Club, two devoted women offered their services in several positions and duties. Astrid Gehrke wrote a constitution which was a masterpiece of journalism, this made the league an instant success and girl soccer was on its way in our association. After 10 years of operation, the league was abandoned, since by now leagues within our associations formed girl division. Today we can say despite the short existence of the "Western Reserve Women and Girls Soccer League" it served its purpose.

The First Women's League as per Gabi Bernhardt

In 1980, four main women's groups got together to begin formulating a women's league. These groups were Concordia, Farmore Cafe, The Emeralds, and the Ukrainian Americans. Mr. Hans Kopp around this time was also interested in the development of women soccer. Hearing of our groups' desires to form a league, he kindly offered his services to help develop the by-laws and constitution of the new league. With these beginnings, additional women groups desired to join the new league, and they met to elect their first board members in August of the same year after a tournament staged by the Ohio Youth Soccer Association in July. The officers were: Thea Amacher (president), Astrid Julian (secretary), and Gabi Bernhardt (registrar) competitive women soccer in the Cleveland area became a reality now.

In Unfamiliar Territory

When our family purchased a house in Middleburg Heights in 1973, I became curious; what type of programs was available for children within the communities of our area. I decided to go to the YMCA in Berea. The young director with many ideas greeted me very enthusiastically and when I came out of our meeting, I was the soccer coach of the YMCA programs. Within 2 years, the membership tripled and we had three teams. Since many of the boys were also boys' scouts, their fathers became great supporters. Because we had no fields to play on, the fathers managed to get a permit to use parks fields. However, we could not place anything permanent on the field and again the fathers constructed portable goals made out of wood, which they had to bring to the field on game day and again remove it after a game.

Since the park had huge open fields and the moms, who were among the first soccer moms brought their sons, but also their daughters. The girls at first would play by themselves and it gave me the idea to include the girls into our training sessions. There did not seem to be a lot of resistance among the boys although some of them did look cross-eyed at the girls and were reluctant to tackle them, but quickly changed their minds when the girls did quite well and often were physical enough to challenge the boys.

The assistant recreational director of Middleburg Heights, who learned about the soccer program in Berea called me and asked for my help establishing a recreational soccer program. Therefore, I took on the chores to set up a coaching clinic to teach the parents briefly, how to coach soccer teams. Here too, we had many girls come out to play on coed programs. Since we

had many girls, too old to play for the Middleburg Heights recreational program, enough to make a team, one of the moms asked me if I could coach the girls separately. Now, I found myself again in unfamiliar territories; coaching an all girl team. While teaching them skills, which in itself was no problem, but when I wanted to see how they progressed with their skills, one of the girls stopped each time I looked to see her progress. She insisted she could do it, but not when I was looking. When asked why, she told me she was embarrassed if I looked. I assured her that I was the coach and she need not to be embarrassed, but it did not work.

Middleburg Heights quickly made a playing schedule for the recreational teams and I volunteered to be the coach of one of the teams. The children were the 10-year-old boys and girls. During one of the games, one of the girls, hit in the face by a ball. It hit her very hard and she came running off the field crying. I went down on my knees in front of her to comfort her and dry her tears. Then I told her she does not have to go on the field again if she did not want too, but told her if she wanted to go back on to let me know.

As the game progressed neither team had scored so far, she came to me and asked to put her back into the game. I did not want her hit again and inserted her as forward. I was wrong and as the game unfolded, she promptly hit again in the face. However, here is the difference; the ball went from her head into the goal for the game winner. There were no tears now, but nothing but cheers and jubilation. What a difference it made. Both of these girls would play for several years on the Middleburg Heights girl's team and in the 1980 OYSAN inaugural girl's tournament.

The Growing Pains High School Soccer and the Olympic Soccer Development Program

Milestone 12: The positives and negatives of our High school soccer programs as viewed by our two associations: The promotion of soccer in our high schools was an ongoing effort since the formation of the first league. We recognized from early on the value of playing soccer in the schools. It helped establish and promote soccer in the communities much faster as we could as association since most people did not quite comprehend the purpose of the association. The



other fact was that many organizations called themselves associations and thus confused other association with ours since they had no idea what the difference was.

Left: at a Mid-West regional ODP meeting in Chicago 1977. Seated are L/R Hans Kopp, John Hilske and Walter Chyzowych.

Several men and women throughout the state distinguished themselves in this effort. Franz Schönberger perhaps was one of the first, as president of the Lake Erie Junior League. Mario Gerhard undoubtedly as teacher in Mentor and as teacher in Chagrin Falls was one of the first whom we can credit in our area promoting the sports among his colleagues in other schools. Among those people were also, Joan Korenko, from the Mentor School System and Tom Hatfield of the North Olmsted high school. In the OASL, Earl Patterson and John Tyma, whose sons starred in the Broadview Heights high school soccer program together with Toni Niccoli, Broadview Heights high school, Jim Tyma, founder of the North Royalton soccer program, became viable supporters of the parents groups, effectively promoting our sport in the high schools. In addition, Earl Patterson became our liaison to the High school soccer movement, while treasurer of the OYSAN. The High Schools of John Marshall, West Tech, Rhodes, were among the first schools, other than the ones mentioned, like Mentor, Broadview Heights, Chagrin Falls, North Royalton, North Olmsted and Solon, starting to play soccer in 1968.

During the first year's high school soccer, there were absolutely no restrictions set by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, as we already knew existed in football and other sports. However, when one of the coaches in the southern region trained with his school team during the whole school season, the Ohio High School Athletic Association began to restrict the playing time for the school teams, limiting them to a fall season. As a result, we had to restrict our playing

season for players attending high school, to a spring season only. This was perhaps not ideal for the development of our players in the older age groups, but acceptable to us. However, when in 1977 a ruling by the High School Athletic Association came down, which restricted the high school players from playing soccer during the entire school year. This ruling would kill all youth soccer activities in the leagues or stifle it substantially. An injunction filed on our behalf, in court by the Civil Liberties Union granted would not be heard until 1984.

In 1977, during our regional fall meeting, we learned from our national chairperson, that he needed a reliable person to run the regional select team program on a larger scale, with a director on the helm. John Hilske our regional commissioner pointed at me at our regional meeting and asked me to take on the chores by saying; "with you I always know where you stand on issues and can count on you". He had me removed from the National Coaching Committee to head our regional select team program.

Indeed, it is an honor and privilege to serve in such high policy making capacity but also a great responsibility for me. Because, I was an administrator, as well as, a nationally licensed soccer coach, I assumed a unique position between our national administrative body and the coaching body and became the spokesperson for the coaches for the most part, who usually were not represented at a national administrative meetings. This was not always appreciated by our national chairperson Don Greer, since he was more of a politician and subsequently we did not always see eye to eye. It was important for me to support the many concerns brought to my attention within the national coaching staff in the interest of our players, or in fact I experienced firsthand, while serving as national camp director on three occasions.

The last training camp in which I served as director, held in 1983 at the military base of Fort Sam Houston, in San Antonio, Texas. It was extremely generous to say the least, about the sincere efforts of several military officers connected with soccer, to allow us to hold a training camp there, but we faced several serious problems when we arrived. One of them was the heat; it was 104 degrees in the shade, so we could only train early mornings. Two, we had to be driven by bus to the mess hall at 6:00 AM for breakfast, and after one day, no one would get up to be bused to the mess hall 2 miles away, to eat. Instead the players would go to a deli around corner of the barracks and eat junk food and drink pop.

This caused severe stomach cramps and diarrhea in several players. Three; there were no windows in the room, no sheets on the mattresses or pillows, no water fountain and no lounge to relax. I found it necessary in order for the 72 players to rest, to take them to a shopping mall or museum, so I could get them ready to play in the evening. My report about the condition of the camp did not impress our national chairman Don Greer and he released me as the director of the Olympic Development Program, despite my outstanding contributions and my pioneering work within the program over 7 years. Don could not take constructive criticism and rumbled on when someone critiqued him or his work, especially when it came from coaches, who had the interest of the players in mind and knew what was needed to be accomplished and how to do it.

To be placed in the position as director of the Olympic Development Program, was a challenge. However, it was also a giant task and at that uncompensated. The latter was not a problem, but one expected top quality performance and I am proud to say, I was always able to give just that.

Part of my duty was to appoint a regional coach, set up the regional state tournaments so that player could be evaluated and assessed. After the evaluation of players, I had to set up the regional training camp and make sure the player and coaches get there. Our first select team regional state tournament took place in Dayton, Ohio. The format was a World Cup style tournament with twelve teams from our 14 state associations. The states from the Dakotas had no teams at that time. From there we went to Wisconsin twice and then we moved to the University of Indiana.

The format of the tournament was quite simple, I seated four teams and drew the other two teams to create four groups of three teams playing round robin. The winners, second place and third place teams then grouped according to the standing again into four groups playing a

knock out system. This format was very well received by the coaches, since they could evaluate the prospective players from the region during light competitions, followed by strong competitions. The first regional state coach was Robert Gansler of Milwaukee, (two years) followed by Robert Dowdy of the University of Akron (five years). The first girl/women regional coach was Herbert Haller of the Concordia Soccer Club. The first regional camps were held in LaPorte, Indiana (three years) before we moved to the University of Indiana. The first and only camp director of coaching during the seven years, I held the position as regional director, was Robert Dowdy.

Soon after the first encampment of the star players from the states, we received various complaints from players, restricted by their high school athletic associations. The varied differences in High School rules became a huge problem, which needed addressing. Many states in other region did not experience the problems we had in the Mid-West like in the states of Missouri, Minnesota and Ohio. Following these findings, I proposed to change the name from "Select Team Program" to "Olympic Soccer Development Program", which was accepted by our national select team committee during the 1979 Sports Festival held at the Air force Academy in Colorado Springs.



Above: the Ohio-North U16 team as the Midwest State Champion. Coaches standing left: Glenn Korenko and right: Hans Kopp.

This made it possible for the High school players to participate in the program. Since so many men from our state association were involved in pioneering youth soccer on the regional and national levels, we must consider their many contributions as a part of our history and we should be proud of these men. We also should note with great pride, that our U16 team was the winner of the first regional tournament held for the U16 age group in 1979, while our U19 team was runner up in the finals of that year behind Missouri. Many of our players were selected to the regional team from year to year; however, I remember not all their names so that it would be unfair to name only the ones I do remember. One of our players was selected to play on the mid-west team at the United States Sports Festival in 1979 held at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

I also would like to mention, that the Mid-West region was the only region to have a regional state tournament during my time as director of the program. For our other three regions, the evaluation of players was a real problem since they had no vehicle to compare players against all the other states in their region and often were not able to be fair to the players in evaluating the top players. This did show quite clearly at the Second National Sportsfestival in Colorado Springs in 1979. In a round robin, national tournament the Midwest would win all their games and the Mid-West would place most of the players on the national youth team. I also worked with McAlpine in 1983 during the national camp at Fort Sam Houston.

A Reflection on the Past

While we reflect on the past, I would also like to do the same on our philosophy I wrote years ago. This document stressed the important: "**Safety and fun in a learning environment**". The first order of coaching and administrating is and should always be safety. Without a safe field, equipment to wear, as well as, promoting safe and fair play, we should not go on the field. The second order of coaching should be fun, so that the players are always looking forward to enjoy playing the game and enjoy the camaraderie among each other. If you can you not provide such an environment, you are missing the boat. The third order of coaching is creating an environment for a learning experience. Should you not be able to achieve this; you have failed in your duty and the greatest challenge of a coach's responsibility. Remember you are the extended arm of our parents. You are in a position faced with the obligations, the challenge, and the duty to help shape the future of the girls and boys around you, so that they will become responsible

citizens of our nation. Do not run up and down the sidelines yelling like a fool, because winning is so important to you. The children do not remember the score days later, but will remember the fun they had with their friends. Most of all do not come to promote your special interests in the name of our children. These groups have come and gone in the past, promoting equipment, uniforms, travel agencies and the like. They never actually helped our programs, in fact some of them have been rather damaging.

Gratitude is your payment, when one of your former players comes to you in years later. You receive a call from another part of the country he or she may live now. You may have forgotten the players names, but tells you; "you were our greatest coach we ever had". On the other hand, may even say: "you have straightened out my live, without your help and influence on my life, I would not be the person who I am today". They may also reveal such information to you: "because of you, I am a soccer coach today, like you were".

As we entered, the 1980's of our association, we are proud to say it had become an association to model after. Association like Colorado, Oklahoma and Iowa did model their association after ours and we held up a high standard within our administration with Doug Lauer as vice president, Jon Wnoroski as secretary and the old reliable Earl Patterson as treasures, the only officer serving on my side all ten years. By 1983, we felt that the association as we wanted it to be, was completed and we were looking to retire at the end of our next term and hand over the reign to a new generation.

In my soccer career many coaches and administrators influenced me in my decision, however the most influential where my coach in Austria and above all Dettmar Cramer. Dettmar was most influential in US soccer, but he impressed me with his philosophy influencing me in my many decisions I had to make as President of the OYSAN, as well as, the Director of the Mid-West regional Olympic Soccer Development Program. With the idea and one thing in mind, the best for our children; "excellence in youth soccer" and developing excellent, responsible men and women.

Many years after my retirement after serving youth soccer for twenty-eight year I am asked from time to time about the differences between then and now. This is a valid question and I answered it the following way; the human body has never changed, therefore the skills have not changed, however are executed under much higher speed and more intense pressure. I learned most of my skills in Austria and refined them in the USA. The players today are so much more skillful on the pro-teams for the simple reason they train almost daily. The concept of reading the game, anticipating a play, patience and ball possession, depends strictly on the acquired skills of the individual and hardly changed. In women soccer it is the very much the same, however, it is not so much the power and pressure like in men soccer and therefore somewhat slower which makes it often more pleasant to watch.

The game has been my passion since I came to Austria in 1947. It provides us with many benefits for our health but also teamwork, tolerance getting along with the players around you and above all the camaraderie. One of the best examples is our national women soccer team, their camaraderie, enthusiasm on the field, their joy for someone else's success is nothing less than inspiring.

Finally, there were men and women who devoted thousands of hours starting as secretaries, treasurers, making schedules or simply carrying for the children as coaches and managers, as well as, parents bringing them to the fields, providing refreshments during the game and washing the uniforms after a game. My special Thank You goes to them in the names of all the children who benefited from their dedicated work. Also to the ethnic communities in front of them the Sport Club Donauschwaben who began to promote youth soccer first. In fact, all of our communities in our association from north to south and east to west, who embraced our sport, are to be commended. However, most of all I want to thank and express my personal gratitude to Franz Schönberger, Otto Thuransky, Earl Patterson, Joan Korenko, Robert Dowdy and his coaching staff. To this list I also include Ray Priestly and his referee staff, Herbert Haller, Phil Seil, Erhard Langer, Andy Sheparovich, John and Jim Tyma, Doug Lauer, Jon Wnoroski,

Dominic Bucafurni, Jim Cook, Pat Hayes, Neal Doolittle, his wife Nancy and Sam Bothwell. In addition to our women Thea Amacher, Gabi Bernhard, Astrid Julian my special thanks. A thank you to our high school coaches, in front of them Mario Gerhard and Tom Hatfield, Toni Niccoli for their contributions as pioneers.

These men and women made the difference in youth soccer in our state association, as you know it today. Some of them are inducted into our Hall of Fame already others have not yet. Those men and women who have not been inducted into our Hall of Fame yet should be entered on a priority bases. I am proud to say to have been a part of the soccer movement in our community, our state, our region and our nation. However, most of all I am proud to have been associated with such wonderful people, who worked unselfishly in the interests of our children.

Synopsis

Things we hoped for then when we founded our association, but could hardly visualize are now facts. As we celebrate US Soccer's 100th birthday in 2013 our national man's team qualified for the World Cup in Brazil now ranked as #13 in the world. New players show up on its roster and include players who play overseas but not only that, our Major League Soccer team players in absence of the players from overseas, managed tremendous successes. To our women National Team your success makes me very proud having been associated with Olympic Soccer Development Program, topped by the most memorable game against Panama during which they scored two goals in injury, time.

The greatest success story in US Soccer for the past two decades is without any doubt our National Women Soccer Team. Since 1979, I made efforts to separate the men program and the women program It was a difficult task but in 1984 I finally succeeded and the "Women Program" was separated from the men program. I am proud to say that I had contributed to the founding of our women programs. Since then it has amassed three World Cup titles, as well as, three Olympic Gold medals and have earned the No. 1 ranking in the world. Today if you asked me, what my favorite team sport is? My answer comes without hesitation; "watching our National Women Soccer Team play". Our women teams over time have thrilled the masses of little girls and boys of all ages including myself. Their enthusiastic, unselfish play is a delight to see and so are all the little girls with their faces painted cheering. Their electrifying last minutes goals, I am thinking of Amy Wambach's header against Brazil or Alex Morgan's header against Canada in the veining seconds. For me it is gratifying to have been a part of their movement during the time I served as director of the Midwest Olympic Soccer Development Program.

Our future looks bright, thanks and congratulation to all pioneers who made this possible. I might add all the players, men, and women for their unselfish work and dedication to bring us these most rewarding moments in the history of 100 years of United States Soccer.

Today the OYSAN is no longer the effort of a few dedicated men and women, but an extremely successful organization that grew out of a humble beginning. It has grown rapidly into a large all soccer serving organization still keeping the basic principles in view of serving our youth soccer community within the boundaries of the organization in northern Ohio. I am extremely proud to say that I was able to serve you as your First President.

