

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Key to Our Growth in Soccer?

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1. Opener: “Stories from the Streets”



- ▶ What do we mean by Player Development
- ▶ Definitions
- ▶ All Levels/Genders
- ▶ Spectrum: U5s to Our National Teams

2. Learning the Game

- ▶ Top Players—Their Soccer Development
- ▶ Enter “Coaching”
- ▶ “Player’s Game—the Ball as Teacher”
- ▶ “The Game as Teacher”



3. Soccer as a Player's Game

“Situational Game” (Not “Episodic”)

Players Making Soccer Decisions

Our Penchant for Instructing Our Kids

Back to “Street Soccer”

4. Coaching Younger Kids (U5-U10)

- ▶ US Youth Soccer Numbers
- ▶ Characteristics of Younger Players
- ▶ Definition of “Coach” at this age:
“Mr. Keating”—What a Coach Does
- ▶ Introducing Small-Sided Games
 - “Let Them Play!”

5. Coaching Pre-Teens/Teens

- ▶ Technically Adept—Increasing Sophistication
- ▶ “Dawning of Tactical Awareness”
 - Attacking Principles
 - Defending Principles
- Why They Leave the Game

6. Sins of “Over-Coaching”

- ▶ Younger Ages—“Let Them Play”
- ▶ Non-Playing Parent Coaches
- ▶ Don’t Do in Practice What Isn’t in the Game!
- ▶ “Freeze Soccer”/Socratic Method
- ▶ When in Doubt—Don’t Coach!

7. Where We Are in Player Development

- ▶ Increasing Numbers
- ▶ Increasingly Competitive at All Levels
- ▶ MLS/USL/Overseas Opportunities
- ▶ Becoming a:
 - Good Player
 - Good Coach
 - Soccer Fan
- Understanding the “Soccer Culture”